



Let's go and eat out!
Quality law for quality food

Eating out - Choice/Quality/Value

Restaurants: a diverse and important sector

Restaurants prepare and serve meals. This common feature is combined with great diversity in the type of cuisine (local, regional, national, and international) and the type of establishment (traditional, gastronomic and quick-service restaurants, hotel and on the work-place restaurants, cafes, bars and pubs).

Social changes are having a significant impact on where, when and what people in Europe eat. People have a wider experience of food than ever before, largely due to the opportunities for foreign travel and a willingness to try different cuisines. The increase in the number of working women and changing life styles have all meant that people spend less time cooking at home and eat out more.

Most restaurant customers are seeking a leisure experience that goes beyond simply acquiring food. Young people often enjoy the relaxed environment of quick-service restaurants. Other customers want to enjoy a good meal, presented in an attractive way, in an appealing atmosphere as part of an enjoyable social experience. Eating out plays an important role in the community throughout the European Union.

The culinary art of the various regions of Europe represents an important aspect of the European cultural heritage: restaurants maintain cooking traditions and they help preserving the variety and diversity of regional food. Many establishments are an integral part of the cultural and architectural heritage.

Things will continue to change. Eating patterns are not static. Only a diverse, creative and competitive sector can respond to changing customer demand. The sector lives and dies by its responses to the needs of its customers.

The hospitality sector employs 6.5 million people throughout the European Union. There are around 1 million food service operations employing an average of 4 people each and 95% of these employ 10 people or less.

HOTREC, Hotels, Restaurants & Cafés in Europe, is the spokesperson of hotels, restaurants and cafés at European institutional level in all matters affecting the sector. HOTREC brings together 34 National Trade and Employer Associations representing the interest of the sector in 20 different European countries.



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Comprehensive legislation on food safety and hygiene is essential for food business as well as for consumers. Food safety lies at the top of the sector's priorities and the sector works continually to improve its standards and procedures.

However, in recent years, legislation has been developed to cover, without distinction, a vast array of activities throughout the food chain from primary producers, manufacturers, packers, importers, retailers, industrial catering and a wide variety of food service operators. These differing sectors have different needs and require different solutions to the challenges and problems facing them. Encompassing all these differing sectors within the same texts has resulted in legislation, which is not appropriate for the restaurant sector.

Various proposals, currently in the legislative pipeline, fail to take into account the specific structure of the food service sector, which lies at the end of the food chain where the customer is next and last step. A more thorough examination of the impact of the existing legislation and its better enforcement may have made legislative changes unnecessary, at least as far as the restaurant sector is concerned.

HOTREC calls for legislation to be:

- Based on properly researched information;
- Proven necessary, after clear demonstration that the rules in place cannot achieve the objective through better enforcement;
- Proportionate to the harm it seeks to redress;
- Developed within the context of proper and continuous consultation of all stakeholders (food services, consumers, enforcement agencies), whose consensus should be sought. Better regulation is achieved through ownership by all the stakeholders;
- Accompanied by a rigorous cost/benefit analysis to be regularly reviewed throughout the different stages of the legislative process;
- Drafted clearly, simply and precisely, taking account of the persons to who they are intended to apply, with a view to enabling them to identify their rights and obligations unambiguously. The rules should be easily applicable to all establishments, including the very small operators.

HOTREC believes that good regulation, which can be enforced effectively, will ensure that safe food is delivered to the consumer at a price and quality providing value for money. The sector is dependant on an appreciation of the needs and expectations of its customers and therefore must respond to these needs.

It is essential, therefore, that HOTREC has a strong voice in the development of food related legislation.



National associations within HOTREC

MEMBERS

AUSTRIA

APHA-Fachverband Hotellerie
APRA-Fachverband Gastronomie
VVAT-Veranstalterverband

BELGIUM

Fed. Ho.Re.Ca. Bruxelles-Brussel
Fed. Ho.Re.Ca. Vlaanderen
Fed. Ho.Re.Ca. Wallonie

DENMARK

HORESTA-Association of the Hotel,
Restaurant and Tourism Industry in Denmark

FINLAND

FHR-Finnish Hotel and Restaurant Association

FRANCE

GNC-Groupement National des Chaînes
SYNHORCAT- Syndicat National des Hôteliers,
Restaurateurs, Cafetiers et Traiteurs
UMIH-Union des Métiers et des Industries de
l'Hôtellerie

GERMANY

DEHOGA-Deutscher Hotel-und Gaststättenverband
IHA-D-Hotelverband Deutschland

GREECE

HCH-Hellenic Chamber of Hotels

IRELAND

IHF-Irish Hotels Federation
RAI-Restaurants Association of Ireland

ITALY

FEDERALBERGHI-Federazione delle
Associazioni Italiane Alberghi e Turismo
FIPE- Federazione Italiana Pubblici Esercizi

NETHERLANDS

KHN-Koninklijk HORECA Nederland

NORWAY

NHA-Norwegian Hospitality Association

PORTUGAL

FERECA-Federação da Restauração, Cafés,
Pastelarias e Similares de Portugal
FIHOTEL-Federação da Indústria Hoteleira
e do Alojamento Turístico de Portugal

SPAIN

FEH-Federación Española de Hoteles
ZONTUR-Agrupación Hotelera
de las Zonas Turísticas de España

SWEDEN

SHR-Swedish Hotels and Restaurants Association

UNITED KINGDOM

BB&PA-British Beer and Pub Association
BHA-British Hospitality Association
RA-The Restaurant Association

OBSERVERS

CZECH REPUBLIC

NFHRCR-Czech National Federation
of the Hotels and Restaurants

ESTONIA

EHRA-Estonian Hotel and
Restaurant Association

HUNGARY

HAH-Hotel Association of Hungary

MALTA

MHRA-Malta Hotels and
Restaurants Association

SWITZERLAND

GASTROSUISSE

SSH-Société Suisse des Hôteliers

HOTREC