



Last summer has left many people wondering if the world is getting tired of tourists. Major destinations and key attractions are more popular than ever, safety concerns and the shadow of terrorism have not dented the appetite of travelers for unique places and experiences, and second or third-tier destinations are nowadays fully aware of the benefits of a shorter or longer tourist season. However, last summer was also marked by [demonstrations aimed at tourists](#). For several different stakeholders, the key question now is how tourism planning can embrace the expectations of both visitors and local communities.

In a proactive approach in 2015, [HOTREC](#) had noted that *“the expanding, unregulated, mass conversion of residential property to tourist accommodation is having a detrimental impact to local authority revenues, neighborhood cohesion, the supply of affordable housing and, in some cases even threatens to damage the character of the destinations that tourists travel to enjoy”*.

Since then, a key part of HOTREC’s mission is to share the latest insights of effects in different types of destinations along with respective efforts to define certain boundaries for Short-term Private Accommodation Rentals (STPAR) with Member Associations, public authorities all over Europe and international organizations. The 5th edition of the HOTREC STPAR Regulatory Bulletin is another step in this direction further to the 2nd webinar that took place in mid-September and the active role of HOTREC throughout the recent series of European Commission’s Workshops on the “Collaborative Economy”.

The city of Berlin responds to speculation over STPAR rules



Early in September 2017, it was reported that the [Berlin Administrative Court](#) ruled in favor of a resident who had applied numerous times without success for a permit in order to rent his main apartment on a temporary basis, and finally filed a suit against the State of Berlin. The [law firm](#) of the plaintiff interpreted the case as an opportunity for residents in Berlin who wish to rent their main apartment for as much as 182 days per year. More evidence suggests, however, that the court proceedings were terminated without any ruling because the plaintiff had been given permission by the District Office of his area (Pankow). [Berlin’s Department for Urban Development and Housing](#) has also commented that the current rules will not change due to a single case and that the District Office acted in the absence of any recommendation.

Housing concerns a wake-up call for Paris authorities



Although the growth of Airbnb listings has slowed down recently, the City of Paris estimates that more than 20 thousand regular housing units have been transformed into tourist accommodation in the last 3 years. Whoever wishes to advertise a property in Airbnb is now required to register with the city’s authority in advance. The submission of applications will begin early in October and all landlords and tenants will have to comply with mandatory registration by the beginning of December 2017. In fact, from December onwards all offers (especially online ones) should show the registration number given by the city’s authority.

Airbnb among drivers of rising housing costs in tourist neighborhoods, a joint-university study argues



[MIT and UCLA scholars](#) are among contributors of a recent research, showcasing how the ongoing increases in housing costs in popular areas in US cities and vacation hotspots are linked with the exponential growth of Airbnb listings. A key conclusion is that Airbnb has a significant effect in areas where absentee landlords add their second homes among online listings. In contrast, minimal increases of housing costs are observed in areas where landlords rent out an extra room of their main residence or advertise the entire property for a short period when they plan to be on holiday.

Airbnb the first platform to start collecting and remitting the tourist tax in the province of Quebec



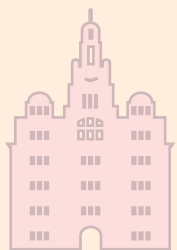
As of October 1, a 3.5 per cent lodging tax on STPAR bookings will be submitted by Airbnb as part of a new agreement with the Government of Quebec in August 2017. In 2016, the Quebec government would have collected \$3.7 million in taxes if the current deal had been in place, however very few hosts registered with the Province. [For the Tourism Minister](#), more agreements will be concluded with similar platforms in the near future because it is essential to *“draw a line between what the sharing economy is and what is a business”*.

Heavy fines discourage violations of new rules in the Balearics



Since August 2017, [Mallorca and Ibiza](#) are among popular destinations in the Balearic Islands penalizing with fines up to €40,000 those owners who rent their properties to tourists without possessing the required license. Online platforms are subject to heavy fines as well if they are found to advertise unlicensed properties. The rationale of the law is to facilitate the preservation of a maximum number of tourist beds across the Balearics, contribute to sustainable tourism development, and mitigate the effects of uncontrolled tourism activity.

Complaints prompt Liverpool city council to look at STPAR regulations



The neighborhoods of Merseyside came under pressure this summer, with the locals sharing their [bad experiences from Airbnb guests and hosts](#) with the media. [In a motion brought by 3 councilors in September 2017](#), there was a fine balance between welcoming STPAR platforms and new operators in Liverpool and renewing the commitment to proper regulations. The introduction of a cap of 90 rental days a year per entire property and the prospect of online platforms sharing their data with local authorities are among priority topics raised by the motion.

Disappointment over further delay to STPAR law enforcement in Greece



[STPAR regulations in Greece have not yet come into effect](#), despite legislative work done in December 2016 and May 2017. A joint-ministerial decision has not been issued yet so as to finalize important provisions, thus leaving STPAR activity without rules for the time being. A key pending issue is defining the terms of a framework for public authorities to work with online platforms on various issues. Another decision by the 'Independent Authority of Public Revenue' is also anticipated with regard to the establishment-activation of an online mechanism to deliver property registration. Besides these delays, the Hellenic Chamber of Hotels is particularly concerned on three additional issues; continuing tax evasion, the lack of requirements for companies involved in property management in the place of individual landlords, and the lack of quality criteria for STPAR properties and their facilities.



HomeAway®



tripadvisor®

Airbnb faces competition by fellow platforms and hotel chains

In late August 2017, [The Entrepreneur](#) published a lengthy report including interviews by Homeaway and Trip Advisor's executives. Through their vacation rentals' brands the two companies invest in different areas as a means to gain a competitive advantage against Airbnb; Homeaway in amenities and experiences for families and large groups of holiday-makers, Trip Advisor in the sequence of the customer journey through the integration of different products and services. Also, there is the case of [Accor growing the portfolio of Onefinestay](#) by acquiring French platform Squarebreak in July 2017.



Authentic food. Authentic people

Major platforms eye expansion in social dining and food tourism

Early in September 2017, two market deals reconfirmed the growing importance of gastronomy among the in-destination experiences of the "sharing economy" besides private accommodation and ride-sharing. First, [Paris headquartered VizEat](#) has acquired San Francisco based EatWith hoping to widen its network of 25 thousand home-chefs across 130 countries. Second, [Airbnb has included restaurant reservations](#) into its portfolio of services by integrating with Resy, a US-based dining booking service connecting diners exclusively with first-class restaurants and providing tailor-made translations of restaurant listings based on the native language of each user.

TOPOSOPHY

DESTINATION MARKETING AGENCY

The Regulatory Bulletin was prepared by TOPOSOPHY and was also based on information and comments received from the relevant HOTREC national associations.