

NORMAPME Position on the preliminary work items on golf services, on wellness spas and on thalassotherapy services, and on the extension of the WG2 scope

As recognised in point 2.2.2.6¹ of the revision 4 of the Business Plan, SMEs represent the overwhelming majority of enterprises in the tourism sector. Hence, NORMAPME urges P members of the Technical Committee 228 to consider Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) point of views when voting on the preliminary work items on golf, thalassotherapy and wellness spas, and on the scope enlargement of the working group on spas.

Golf Services

Golf clubs are mainly SMEs, as to a large majority they employ between 10 and 15 people. European golf owners are not in favour of the adoption of a preliminary work item on golf services, as the already existing national standards on golf services did not bring the expected added values and were very burdensome for clubs. Golf players pay no attention to the compliance with standards. In addition, these standards are not helpful for golf owners to better run their club.

Standards for golf services are not wished by golf owners.

Thalassotherapy services and Wellness spas

As stressed at the TC 228 plenary meeting in Marbella, NORMAPME opposes the proposal for new preliminary work items in relation to “Thalassotherapy services” and “Wellness spas services” in the framework of WG2.

As more and more hotels are providing services ranging from fitness to body, facial, regeneration and wellness treatments, standardisation in this field will certainly impact part of the hospitality industry. In particular, the term ‘wellness spa services’ is too wide-reaching (as it goes much beyond health cures which aim at treating illnesses) and standards on ‘wellness spa services’ would have an impact on a large part of the hospitality industry.

In this respect, we reiterate that there is presently no support from the vast majority of the European hospitality SMEs for the development of any standard which would concern services provided by its businesses.

NORMAPME could only accept new standardisation projects under the strict condition that they do not deal in any manner with hospitality services.

¹ The weight of SMEs in the tourism sector is overwhelming. The European tourism industry is a sector that is dominated by SMEs, with more than 99% of companies employing less than 250 people and approx. 94% employing less than 10. On average, tourism SMEs in Europe employ 6 people (micro-enterprise). In many countries they account for a significant part of the GDP. 6,5% of the total European SME turnover is accounted for by tourism SMEs.

Enlargement of scope of the working group on spas

NORMAPME, which opposed the creation of Working Group (WG) 2 on “spa services”, reiterates the disagreement with the widening of its scope, which was agreed at the first WG2 meeting in Madrid on 30 October 2006.

On that occasion, the participants adopted a resolution stating that: “*The WG agrees to focus solely on medical spas services as provisionally agreed*”.

The proposal to enlarge the scope of WG2 is blatantly in contrast with Resolution 3/06 (doc. N 06).

Hence, as already pointed out at TC 228 plenary meeting in Marbella, **NORMAPME considers that WG2 should work only on medical spas services, as agreed by WG2 members.**

To conclude NORMAPME would like to highlight that the ISO TC business plan clearly states that any undertaken activity should have sufficient support from the tourism stakeholders². In this light, NORMAPME declares that SMEs are against the adoption of the preliminary work item on golf services and the extension of the scope of the working group on spas. Concerning preliminary work items on wellness spas and on thalassotherapy, hospitality SMEs request the exclusion of their activity from the scopes.

²“It is also a strategic principle of ISO/TC 228 to follow Resolution 14/2007 adopted by the ISO body governing the Technical Committees’ work, the ISO/TMB” which requests to cover “only those work items where there is a known support among the stakeholders”.