



## Travalyst Certifications Initiative Second Iteration Overview

*Last updated: 3 Feb 2026*

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### About this document

Travalyst has commenced the second iteration of the Travalyst Certifications Initiative, in which we are updating the [initial set of criteria](#) to align with the impending [EU Empowering Consumers for the Green Transition Directive](#).

This document sets out the process undertaken to develop the [second iteration](#) of our Certifications Initiative. As key stakeholders in the certifications industry, your collaboration and feedback during the consultation period has been crucial. For further questions, contact us at [certifications@travalyst.org](mailto:certifications@travalyst.org)

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## About Travalyst

Travalyst is a coalition of some of the leading names in travel and technology, united behind a shared belief that travel and tourism can, and must, be a force for good. Together with our coalition partners, we leverage our collective expertise and reach to align the industry behind the same trusted sustainability data, empowering travellers, businesses, and policymakers to make more informed travel choices for the good of people and the planet.

## About the second iteration

Travalyst Certifications Initiative, since its first iteration, has aimed to support our partners and other industry stakeholders who choose to display certifications. As such, we have worked closely with the certifications industry on its journey towards compliance with our prescribed criteria.

We have now entered the second iteration of the Travalyst Certifications Initiative in which we are updating the [initial set of criteria](#) to align with the impending [EU Empowering Consumers for the Green Transition Directive](#). We have completed the process of updating our Certifications Initiative criteria within Q4 2025 and will be working on updating the [Travalyst List](#) in the following quarter, assisting certification schemes that may need to update their policies and processes to achieve regulatory compliance by the implementation date.

The second iteration has been developed in collaboration with a selection of our partners that display sustainability certification schemes, independent advisors with experience in the accommodation certifications sector, and our legal counsel, and finalised following stakeholder consultation in September-October 2025.

We expect the Initiative to continue to iterate informed by industry best practices and led by regulatory compliance. While the second iteration is open to certification schemes only, given its alignment with EU Empowering Consumers Directive, Travalyst aims to continue to iterate to remain inclusive and accessible for all key stakeholders in the industry. Please reach out to us with feedback.

Our legal counsel, [Vedder Price](#), has drafted a guidance document to support certification schemes in the accommodation industry in their understanding and application of the new rules. Please note this is not legal advice. You can find this guidance as a separate note on our website. For more information, please reach out to [hworthington@vedderprice.com](mailto:hworthington@vedderprice.com)

## Purpose

### ***For partners and wider industry***

We are updating our certifications criteria to align with the EU Empowering Consumers Directive and apply these criteria at a global level. By declaring compliance with the

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Directive, and as such, with our criteria, these certification schemes, and the corresponding sustainability labels, will be suitable to be displayed to European consumers by our partners and the wider industry if they choose to do so.

Importantly, Travalyst Coalition partners retain full discretion when deciding which certification schemes to display on their platforms.

### ***For certification schemes and accommodation providers***

Travalyst aims to support certification schemes in their journey towards regulatory compliance with the Directive by providing a guidance note on the application of the criteria ahead of the September 2026 implementation date.

Accommodation providers too will benefit from knowing which certification schemes are in compliance with the criteria, and as such, with the EU Empowering Consumers Directive. Ultimately, consumers will benefit from increased access to clear, consistent and compliant sustainability data to help make more informed decisions.

If necessary and based on the stakeholder feedback outcomes, Travalyst will continue to seek guidance from the European Commission to facilitate industry implementation of the EU Empowering Consumers Directive criteria for certifications schemes in the accommodation industry.

## **About EU Empowering Consumers Directive**

The [EU Empowering Consumers for the Green Transition Directive](#), set to enter into application in the European Union on 27 September 2026, mandates all sustainability labels<sup>1</sup> displayed to European consumers to be based on certification schemes that meet criteria set by the Directive:

*(Recital 7) the displaying of sustainability labels which are not based on a certification scheme, or which have not been established by public authorities should be prohibited by including such practices in the list in Annex I to Directive 2005/29/EC.*

It is important to note that this Directive has already been adopted by the Commission, and leaves no room at EU level for the industry to suggest changes to the criteria. It is also worth noting that there may be inconsistencies in the way this Directive is transposed into national law of Member States.

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<sup>1</sup> Per Art 1(b)(q) of ECGT, a “sustainability label” means any voluntary trust mark, quality mark or equivalent, either public or private, that aims to set apart and promote a product, a process or a business by reference to its environmental or social characteristics, or both, and excludes any mandatory label required under Union or national law.

## Criteria per EU Empowering Consumers Directive

Our [initial set of criteria](#) is being replaced with the set of criteria as listed below bringing it in alignment with the impending [EU Empowering Consumers for the Green Transition Directive](#). To be included on Travalyst's Certifications list, the eligible certification schemes (see [Who can apply](#) section) are required to meet the following criteria:

1. The certification scheme is open under transparent, fair, and non-discriminatory terms to all accommodation providers willing and able to comply with the scheme's requirements.
2. The certification scheme's requirements are developed by the scheme owner in consultation with relevant experts and stakeholders.
3. The certification scheme sets out procedures for dealing with non-compliance with the scheme's requirements and provides for the withdrawal or suspension of the use of the sustainability label by the accommodation provider in case of non-compliance with the scheme's requirements; and
4. The monitoring of the accommodation provider's compliance with the scheme's requirements is subject to an objective procedure and is carried out by a third party whose competence and independence from both the scheme owner and the accommodation provider are based on international, European Union or national standards and procedures.

**Important: Regulatory compliance with these criteria is the responsibility of the individual certification scheme owner. To reflect this, we adopt a self-declaration approach that ensures accountability. All applicants are expected to comply with the relevant sections of the EU Empowering Consumers Directive before applying.**

**Travalyst is making available a mechanism that enables schemes to identify and understand the implementation of criteria set by law and declare compliance. We do not take responsibility for the compliance of schemes.**

To support the certification schemes to self-declare compliance with these criteria, Travalyst, in collaboration with its legal counsel, Vedder Price, has made available a guidance note that interested entities can use as reference.

## Eligibility/Who can apply

Travalyst Certifications Initiative is open to:

1. Certification schemes promoting environmental and/or social characteristics for accommodations and stays anywhere in the world.
2. Wherein a certification scheme means a third-party verification scheme that certifies that a product, process or business complies with certain requirements, that allows

for the use of a corresponding sustainability label<sup>2</sup>.

This is a voluntary initiative. Eligible entities are invited to apply to be added to the Travalyst List by self-declaring compliance with the updated criteria.

Certifications currently on the Travalyst List will be required to undergo the same process of voluntarily applying to be (re)added to the Travalyst List by self-declaring compliance with the updated criteria.

All applicants will be given a period of three (3) months from the time of finalisation of the second iteration of the Certifications Initiative to complete the application and declaration process. Travalyst List of certifications, schemes and standards will be retired after this period, and replaced with a list of self-declared compliant schemes.

Sustainability labels or certification schemes established by EU public authorities (as defined in the Directive) will be considered to meet our updated criteria and will be approached by Travalyst to be added to the list of self-declared compliant schemes.

As stated above, our partners reserve the right to display certification schemes on their platforms at their own discretion.

## How to apply

Please see the Who can apply section for more information.

This is a voluntary initiative, and certification schemes are invited to apply to be added to the Travalyst List.

To apply, certification schemes will be required to complete the declaration form, available on the Travalyst Certifications page, to self-declare compliance with the eligibility requirements and with the criteria. Responsibility for ensuring strict compliance with all applicable rules and regulations (including the Directive) will lie with the certification scheme. While a guidance note from our legal counsel, Vedder Price, is being provided to support the industry in the application of the criteria as set by the Directive, certification schemes are advised to seek legal guidance for any clarification.

Each certification scheme is also required to self-categorise the requirements in its standard as having a) only environmental or b) only social or c) both characteristics. This categorisation is in keeping with the definition in the Directive of a sustainability label “...by reference to its environmental or social characteristics, or both...” and is aimed at providing

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<sup>2</sup> Note that this definition of a certification scheme is per the EU Empowering Consumers Directive. While no changes in the definition are possible, feedback may be provided on the application of this definition. Please contact us to share feedback.

transparency to our partners and the wider industry of the sustainability pillars that a given certification scheme addresses.

As mentioned, our partners reserve the right to display certification schemes on their platforms at their own discretion. Travalyst does not facilitate display on our partner platforms and certification schemes are requested to liaise with partners and other such organisations directly.

## **Data Quality**

To ensure data quality and adoption across all data distribution channels we believe standardisation is necessary. We therefore encourage certification schemes to provide high-quality, accurate, and consistent data for certification scheme details, certified properties, among others.

Certification schemes are requested to coordinate with Travalyst partners any additional requirements they may have for data collection and distribution in line with their organisational requirements.

Schemes are also requested to coordinate with the Travalyst Team on requirements for the ingestion of your data in our data hub.

## **Due Diligence**

Certification schemes are invited to self-declare compliance with the Directive criteria. It is the responsibility of certification schemes to comply with all applicable legislation (including the Directive), and the liability for such compliance remains with the individual applicant. As such, self-declared compliant certification schemes on the list made available by Travalyst are required to immediately inform the Travalyst Team of any breach, suspected breach, or other risk of non-compliance.

Each certification scheme on the Travalyst List is expected to complete the process of self-declaration at least once every year, and in cases of complaints, may be duly intimated to renew their declaration.

Certification schemes selected to undergo the due diligence process will be provided three (3) months to reassess and self-declare compliance with our [eligibility requirements](#) and [criteria](#). Certification schemes that are unable to complete the (re)application process within the stipulated period of time will be removed from the Travalyst List.

All certification schemes are invited to (re)apply to be (re)added to the list by following the [application](#) process. Declaration and feedback forms are available.

*For further questions, contact us at [certifications@travalyst.org](mailto:certifications@travalyst.org)*

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