PERFORMANCE BENCHMARKING FOR RESTAURANTS

MEDITERRANEAN TOURISM FOUNDATION | BRAIN THINK TANK | 26 NOVEMBER 2026

Know your numbers. Beat your benchmarks. Grow your business.

A Mediterranean-wide performance intelligence initiative for restaurants, developed with HVS expertise.

The ambition

The Think Tank will define a practical project brief and development pathway for a Mediterranean restaurant performance benchmarking system. Rather than comparing restaurants indiscriminately, the initiative should enable confidential, credible comparisons between genuinely comparable establishments across different Mediterranean markets.

The goal is to help restaurant owners and managers understand where they stand, which operational changes could improve performance, and how better evidence can support profitability, productivity, service quality and sustainable growth.

What success looks like

- Agree a small, meaningful core set of restaurant performance indicators, with clear definitions and calculation methods.
- Define fair peer groups by restaurant format, market, location, service model, size and seasonality.
- Design a trusted approach to data collection, confidentiality, quality assurance and anonymised reporting.
- Identify a practical pilot across participating Mediterranean destinations and restaurant types.
- Outline a sustainable commercial and delivery model, with partners, governance and next steps.

Programme — Thursday, 26 November | Hilton Malta

Time	Activity
13:00	Networking lunch — Spinola Foyer
14:30–14:45	Welcome, facilitator introductions and intended outcomes
14:45–15:10	What restaurant benchmarking is, why it matters and examples from different markets
15:10–15:45	Part 1 — Which indicators and comparisons actually help restaurants improve?
15:45–16:20	Part 2 — Mediterranean data model, participation incentives, trust and pilot design
16:20–16:45	Group proposals and discussion
16:45–16:55	Agree project brief, pilot partners and next steps
16:55–17:00	Conclusions

Our joint facilitators

Giovanni Fiorin — HVS. Bringing hospitality performance advisory and benchmarking perspectives.

Andrew Meli — Malta Hotels and Restaurants Association (MHRA). Bringing the restaurant and industry perspective to product relevance and adoption.

Five workstreams for discussion

1. Performance indicators that matter

Revenue per available seat-hour; average spend per cover; covers and table turnover; food and beverage cost; labour cost and productivity; gross operating margin; waste; guest satisfaction. Determine what is essential, optional and realistic to collect.

2. Fair Mediterranean comparisons

Agree restaurant categories, geography, currency treatment, seasonality, tourism intensity, service model and differences in labour, tax and operating costs. Avoid misleading league tables.

3. Confidential data and credible reporting

Explore standardised submissions, validation, minimum peer-group sizes, consent, privacy, secure handling, anonymisation and clear limits on access to individual business data.

4. Insights that drive action

Define dashboards, trends, gap analysis, peer benchmarks, practical recommendations, training implications and a clear improvement cycle rather than data collection for its own sake.

5. Business model and rollout

Who pays and why? Restaurant subscriptions, association or destination packages, HVS/MTF partnerships, onboarding support, pricing, local delivery partners, pilot destinations and phased expansion.

Key questions for participants

- What three metrics would change your management decisions tomorrow?
- Which differences between restaurants must be controlled before a comparison is meaningful?
- What would persuade an operator to share sensitive figures and pay for the resulting insights?
- What would an excellent monthly or quarterly benchmarking report look like?
- Which destinations, restaurant groups and associations could join an initial Mediterranean pilot?

Expected outputs

A concise draft project mandate; a prioritised KPI dictionary; a proposed peer-group and reporting model; confidentiality and governance principles; a pilot-market shortlist; and an initial business model with named follow-up responsibilities.

Participation and preparation

Participation is open to interested restaurant operators, tourism authorities, industry bodies, researchers and relevant advisers. The participant list below is provisional and may change or expand. No formal presentation is required; please bring practical examples of performance reports, KPIs or benchmarking schemes that have proved useful. Do not bring confidential restaurant data for circulation.

Appendix A — Initial participants and profiles

Participant	Role / contribution
Giovanni Fiorin — Facilitator	HVS; hospitality performance advisory and benchmarking perspective.
Andrew Meli — Facilitator	MHRA; hospitality industry and restaurant-operator perspective.
Joseph Mercieca	Country Terrace; restaurant operations perspective.
Salvatore Piccione	Professional role to be confirmed.
Jason Degiorgio	Operations Director, The Westin; hospitality operations perspective.
Richard Cleland	MHRA; industry perspective (specific title to be confirmed).
Ioannis Pappas	Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC), Greece; sustainability standards perspective.

Profiles reflect information supplied for planning and should be verified before external publication.

Appendix B — Working worksheets

Worksheet 1 — KPI selection

Proposed KPI	Why it matters	Definition / source	Comparable peer group

Worksheet 2 — Pilot and trust model

Decision area	Group recommendation
Initial restaurant segments	
Potential pilot destinations / partners	
Data privacy and minimum reporting rules	
Value proposition for participating restaurants	
Commercial model / who pays	
First 90-day actions and owners	

Worksheet 3 — Five-minute group presentation

Three most useful KPIs: _____

How we make comparisons fair: _____

Why restaurants would participate: _____

Proposed pilot partners: _____

First action and responsible contact: _____

Better insights. Smarter decisions. Stronger restaurants.