



IUF - International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations
UITA - Unión Internacional de Trabajadores/as de la Alimentación, Agricultura, Hotelería, Restaurantes, Catering, Tabaco y Afines
UITA - Union internationale des travailleurs-euses de l'alimentation, de l'agriculture, de l'hôtellerie-restauration, du catering, du tabac et des branches connexes
IUL - Internationale Union der Lebensmittel-, Landwirtschafts-, Hotel-, Restaurant-, Catering- und Genussmittelarbeiter-Gewerkschaften
IUL - Internationella unionen för livsmedels-, njutningsmedels- och lantarbetareförbund samt förbund inom hotell-, restaurang- och cateringbranschen

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IUF statement to the Extraordinary meeting of G20 Tourism Ministers April 24, 2020

The International Union of Food, Agriculture, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations (IUF) is the global trade union federation representing workers throughout the hotel and tourism sectors. The IUF is composed of 423 affiliated trade unions in 127 countries representing over 10 million workers.

According to the latest ILO Report on COVID-19 “a number of key economic sectors can be identified as suffering from a drastic fall in output. These sectors employ 1.25 billion workers around the world, representing almost 38 per cent of the global workforce. Depending on the country context, these workers are facing a drastic and devastating reduction in working hours, wage cuts and layoffs. Accommodation and food services sector is also severely affected, accounting for 144 million workers. More than half of these workers are women.”

Some estimates predict a loss in 2020 of 75 million tourism jobs worldwide with the Asia Pacific region hardest hit - losing over 48 million jobs. Europe is forecast to be the second hardest hit with an employment drop of 10 million.ⁱ

We read in many documents of the resilience of the tourism industry. Our view is that given the characteristics of the pandemic, the impact on human lives, habits and lifestyles, and the way the industry will be forced to reorganize itself, it will take many years to return to pre-COVID-19 levels of activity. To rebuild the sector without strong trade union voices guiding the policy development will guarantee a tourism sector that leaves millions of workers behind. In order to avoid this, we call for the adoption of an agenda that puts workers first and that fully protects workers' right to organize. This must start with the full application of ILO Conventions 87 (freedom of association) and 98 (collective bargaining).

Workers' rights cannot be “suspended” or “deferred” during this COVID-19 crisis or any other extraordinary events. Employers' obligations are based on ILO Conventions and human rights instruments. These global standards should guide a joint approach by governments, employers and trade unions to establish measures to protect tourism workers.

On behalf of the many millions of workers in the tourism sector who are currently laid-off or unemployed, we call on G20 members to:

- Develop and implement in negotiation with trade unions protocols to protect hotel workers. These must include provision of personal protective equipment, transport and occupational health and safety training. These protocols must apply to all workers, including those with non-standard forms of employment;
- Promote the WHO's "Operational considerations for COVID-19 management in the accommodation sector," which provides clear guidance to protect workers and guests, including the suspension of optional housekeeping programmes where guests can voluntarily forego housekeeping services;
- Ensure that bail-out policies for the tourism sector enable a shift to sustainable tourism built on decent working conditions and an end to precarious work in tourism. Bail-out funds should be linked to tourism companies' efforts to retain and support employees;
- Refuse to bail out companies registered in offshore tax havens and prohibit the use of government bail-out funds for shareholder dividends and share buybacks;
- Regularise all undocumented migrant workers to guarantee access to health care;
- Ensure that gender inequalities are not exacerbated in the context of this pandemic. In addition to their employment, women often also have to take care of their families, elderly and sick relatives. It also highlights that quarantine and physical isolation have led to an increase in domestic violence. Governments must do everything possible to implement or strengthen a comprehensive warning and protection system. We call on Governments for the ratification and full implementation of ILO Convention 190;
- Work with trade unions and employers to establish short-time work schemes so that workers are not let go during COVID-19 lockdowns but continue to receive their wages or a percentage of their wages. Where short-time work is not possible and lay-offs are unavoidable, there need to be targeted measures to provide income support and health care coverage for tourism workers;
- Call on the UN World Tourism Organisation to include the global trade union federations representing tourism workers in its [Global Tourism Crisis Committee](#).

The stakes for the tourism sector have never been higher. Governments together with employers and trade unions have an opportunity to rebuild the tourism sector with a vision of sustainability and decent work. We appreciate your efforts to bring this vision into reality, and we welcome further discussion on any and all of our action points.

References:

[IUF COVID-19 Demands: Hotels](#)

[IUF COVID-19 Demands: Equality](#)

ⁱ <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1104835/coronavirus-travel-tourism-employment-loss/>