More than six million jobs at risk in the EU and one million in the UK if Governments don’t provide exceptional flexibility, says WTTC

_Urgent call to prevent Travel & Tourism sector buckling under the pressure of COVID-19_

Gloria Guevara, President & CEO of the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC), has urged EU authorities and the UK Government to implement flexibility around consumer refunds to alleviate the unbearable pressure on the Travel & Tourism sector.

Research conducted by WTTC shows that 75 million Travel & Tourism jobs are at risk globally due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with at least 6.4 million losses across the EU, and one million in the UK.

WTTC, which represents the global Travel & Tourism private sector, says that this important measure will have a profound effect to reduce the damaging situation that the majority of tour operators and travel agents, online and offline, and are facing due to the previously unimaginable impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

WTTC is calling for exceptional flexibility around the existing Package Travel Requirements, which are not appropriate or fit for purpose in the present crisis circumstances, and should be suspended at least until August. Consumer protection will be unaffected, but travel agents and tour operators will have more time to refund those customers choosing to cancel their existing bookings. The current 14-day timeline for refunds is putting enormous burdens on businesses in the Travel & Tourism sector and will lead to major bankruptcies. These, in turn, will lead to more claims by consumers on credit card firms and ultimately government bonded schemes.

Gloria Guevara, President and CEO, WTTC said, “This measure should be implemented immediately and help lift the already crushing financial pressure on Travel & Tourism organisations and save the millions of livelihoods that depend on them.”

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For further information, please visit [wttc.org](http://wttc.org)

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About WTTC
The World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) represents the global Travel & Tourism private sector. Members include over 200 CEOs, Chairpersons and Presidents of the world’s leading Travel & Tourism companies from all geographies, covering all industries. For 30 years, WTTC has conducted research to quantify the economic impact of Travel & Tourism in 185 countries and 25 regions. Travel & Tourism is one of the world’s largest economic sectors, supporting one in 10 jobs worldwide, and generating 10.4% of global GDP. In 2018, the Travel & Tourism sector experienced 3.9% growth, outpacing that of the global economy (3.2%) for the eighth consecutive year.