

COVID-19 STATEMENT

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As the COVID-19 situation evolves, the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) observes that full or partial **travel restrictions** have been – and continue to be – introduced across the world. These decisions are made with **public health as the primary concern**.

This pandemic **affects every level of society** and we stand by those affected in these times. The impact of the pandemic on already slowing economies has made tourism particularly vulnerable, becoming the hardest hit sector so far. With 80% of the sector made up of small and medium-sized enterprises, millions of livelihoods in the world are left vulnerable.

Putting people first

People and their wellbeing must come first! UNWTO continues to work **closely with the World Health Organization (WHO)** to further a collaborative response to COVID-19. Following a high-level meeting at WHO headquarters in Geneva (10 March), we jointly underscore the importance of international cooperation and strong leadership in these difficult times.

This is a shared challenge and **everybody must be part of the solution**. Anyone travelling, whether for vital humanitarian missions, essential business or to keep supply chains functioning, has a **duty of care to themselves and others**. There can be **no excuses and no exceptions** as people around the world are living up to their responsibilities. If you do travel, stay safe and follow the existing simple but effective guidelines.

UNWTO operations

UNWTO has **implemented public health protocols** based on WHO recommendations and we are closely following the measures introduced by the government of Spain, our host country. All **UNWTO events** planned until 30 April have been suspended and will be rescheduled, based on the latest expert recommendations.

Living up to our social responsibility, and caring for the safety and wellbeing of their

families, **UNWTO personnel will be working from home** until the end of March, and we **remain fully operational** during these extraordinary times.

Stay home – but travel tomorrow!

Tourism is uniquely placed to **lead future recovery**. Our sector will provide the **jobs** people need to bounce back and will drive **economic growth** that will help whole **communities and countries** to recover.

But for now, we must be patient and stand ready.

By staying home today, we can travel tomorrow. And travelling tomorrow will support jobs, celebrate culture and promote international friendship and understanding.

Related links:

[Tourism and COVID-19](#)

[UN and COVID-19](#)

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