



**COVID-19
RESPONSE**

How are countries supporting tourism recovery?

UNWTO BRIEFING NOTE – TOURISM AND COVID-19, ISSUE 2

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Key conclusions

- **Governments have responded quickly and strongly** with the level and coverage of measures stepping up over time.
- **Most countries have adopted economy-wide stimulus packages** (fiscal and monetary measures) **along with job support measures.**
- Across all regions, **most measures** currently in place aim at:
 - i) **providing fiscal relief and financial support to SMEs and self-employed workers** (prevent bankruptcy, ensure survival and address liquidity shortage) and
 - ii) **promote the job retention** and secure employment.
- Due to its labor-intensive nature, and as one of the hardest-hit sectors, tourism is at the center of such policies.
- As the situation evolves and recognizing the need to implement tourism specific measures, **countries have begun to deploy measures targeting directly tourism**, particularly in those countries where the sector plays a significant role in the national economy, not only contributing to GDP but also to millions of jobs.
- During any crisis, **governance** is key and in some countries public-private partnership models have been reinforced and the **role of committees and task forces enhanced** with participation of stakeholders across **different levels of administration and private sector.**
- Alongside these measures, since mid-May a **growing number of countries have announced measures to restart tourism**, particularly safety protocols, and **to promote domestic tourism.**

An aerial photograph of a multi-lane highway interchange with several overpasses, surrounded by dense green trees. The road is light grey, and the vegetation is a vibrant green. The image is used as a background for the document.

Introduction

In an unprecedented crisis to the tourism sector, the COVID-19 pandemic is having a major impact across world regions. Available data shows that **international tourist arrivals have sharply decreased in the first quarter of 2020 (-22%), with possible scenarios for the year pointing to an annual decline of between 60% and 80%** when compared with 2019 figures depending on the pace of easing travel restrictions.¹

The outbreak of COVID-19 has impacted countries at different times, in different ways and in varying degrees. Yet, around the world, response to curb the pandemic has translated into national lockdowns and a wide implementation of travel restrictions and shutdown of borders² making tourism one of the hardest-hit sectors.

The extensive and deep impact of COVID-19 on tourism coupled with the relevance of the sector to the economy and jobs requires a strong support at national and international level through the relevant institutions.

Based on information from governments, international organizations and online official public sources, UNWTO has launched an [online interactive dashboard on country and international policy responses to COVID-19](#) covering 220 countries and territories and more than 30 international and regional institutions.³ This briefing note offers an overview and analysis of the main measures adopted by countries to mitigate the effects of COVID-19 in tourism and support recovery.

1. World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), UNWTO [World Tourism Barometer, Issue 18, May 2020](#).

2. More information on UNWTO monitoring of [Travel Restrictions](#).

3. This briefing note is based on information available at the UNWTO online interactive dashboard of Covid-19: measures to support travel and tourism as of May 22, 2020.



Countries' policy response

A closer look at the measures adopted across all regions shows that there has been a swift and strong response by governments around the world to the impacts of COVID-19. Along with health and confinement measures as well as travel restrictions,

countries have adopted a wide range of economic and social measures to respond to the crisis - in many cases supported by international and regional institutions.

Overall, the **immediate and first response from governments consisted of cross-cutting fiscal and monetary measures** to mitigate the economic impact of the crisis, with a **special focus on SMEs liquidity, and protect jobs** in the most severely affected sectors. As the situation evolves, countries increasingly adopted tourism specific measures as well as measures to reopen and restart the sector. This is particularly noticeable for countries in which tourism is a significant contributor to the national economy.

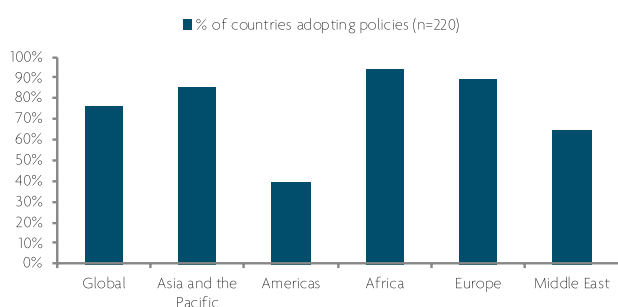
By far the **most common measures adopted by countries are economy-wide stimulus packages** targeting the most impacted sectors. Of these,

undeniably tourism is one of the most directly affected. **Fiscal stimulus packages** most commonly in place refer to exemptions or deferrals of VAT and corporate income tax, emergency economic funds and economic assistance, especially to SMEs and self-employed and investment programmes aiming at mitigating the immediate effects of the pandemic.

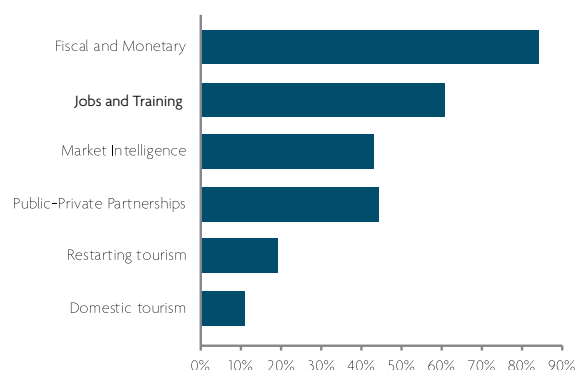
Additionally, the European Commission and other regional and international institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, regional development banks and other International Finance Institutions (IFIs)* and other organizations such as United Nations agencies and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

- Across all regions there has been a **strong and widespread policy response** to the impact of COVID-19 pandemic.
- Out of the 220 countries and territories analyzed, **167 countries** have reported specific measures to mitigate the effects of the crisis and accelerate recovery. Among them, more than **144 countries have adopted fiscal and monetary policies**, followed by **policies to support jobs and training** which have been implemented by **100 countries**.
- Fiscal and monetary policies are also the most popular in all regions.
- The most recent measures for **restarting tourism** are primarily being adopted in **Europe and Asia and the Pacific**.

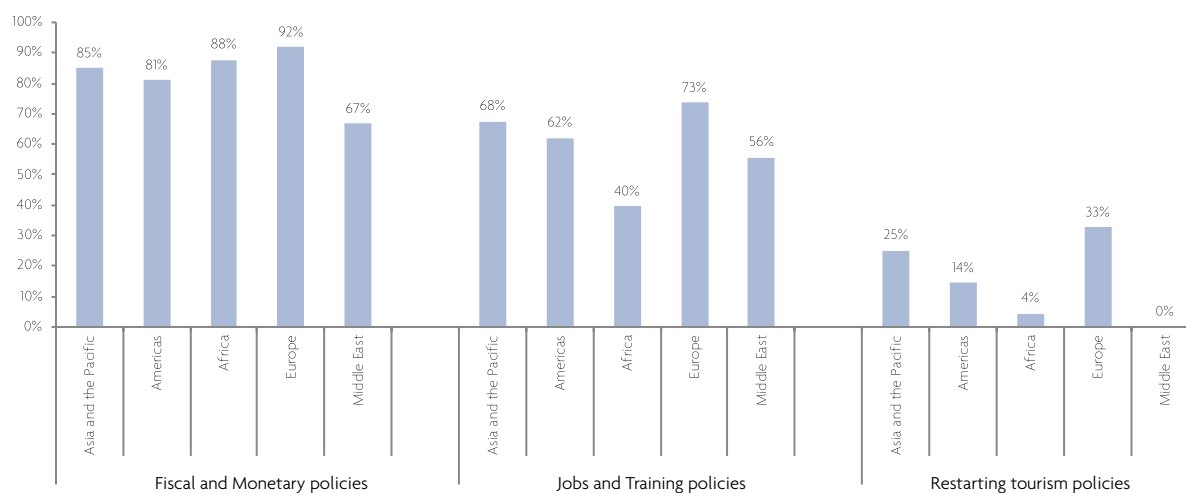
Overall strong and widespread policy response across regions



Adoption of main policies (% of countries, n=167)



% of countries adopting policies per region (n=167)



(OECD), have largely supported countries, especially with programmes for SMEs, self-employed and job protection through different mechanisms: special funds and loans, financial tools, technical assistance, recommendations, etc.

As for **monetary policies**, these generally include the creation of special credit lines at reduced, subsidized or zero rates, moratoria on loans and the introduction of measures to facilitate access to credit and finance, and less frequently, measures to ensure the stability of national currency and consumer prices. As in the case of fiscal measures, all these programmes aim to provide financial support to businesses and address liquidity shortage. In Africa predominantly, but also in some countries in other regions, governments have also received economic assistance in the form of loans, grants, special lines of credits, from international organizations, international financial institutions, such as the IMF, the World Bank, the European Commission and regional development banks.

As per **fiscal and monetary measures supporting tourism directly** these range from economic relief to tourism businesses, especially SMEs, such as the exemption or postponement of taxes, loan payments, and tourism related fees, to the introduction of financial instruments such as special lines of credit, new loan schemes, and investment programmes. Other tourism specific measures include credit guarantees for tourism businesses and incentive programmes to support airlines.

4. Such as the African Development Bank (AfDB), the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the Central American Bank for Economic Integration (CABEI), the Development Bank of Latin America (CAF), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the European Investment Bank (EIB), the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB), the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA).

The fiscal and monetary policies are complemented with a third pillar to protect the millions of jobs at risk through **specific packages to sustain jobs, income and livelihoods**. In many countries flexibility mechanisms have been put in place such as special incentives and relief funds for companies that retain their workforce, including the exemption or reduction of social security contributions, wage subsidies, special support schemes for self-employed workers such as exemptions, delays or reduced social security and fiscal payments.

As travel and tourism, a labour intensive sector, is one of the most affected with jobs at risk through the whole of the value chain, several **measures to protect tourism workers and ensure employment retention have been swiftly adopted**. In addition to furloughs and strengthening of unemployment benefits, other measures include training and skills development, particularly digital skills, assisting tourism businesses' digital transformation and access to innovative tools, as well as covering traineeships expenses, reskilling workers, exempting and reducing training levies.

Although up until now the overwhelming response involves the adoption of fiscal, monetary and employment measures, it is possible to **gradually observe steps towards data and intelligence systems to monitor trends and better respond to the impact of COVID-19 in tourism**. To this purpose, internal **crisis mechanisms** such as tourism coordination committees and task forces are created, together with monitoring systems, preparation of studies and surveys to gather information and adjust marketing strategies and future plans. In such quickly evolving situation, the **establishment of communication channels to disseminate information and guidelines with industry stakeholders** has also been prioritized in some countries. Additionally, a few countries are investing in access to real time data to provide timely and reliable information and guidance to stakeholders.

Similarly, **collaboration and partnerships between public and private sector and public/public coordination are increasing**. A common measure

under this category is launching solidarity and recovery funds engaging private sector stakeholders in the mitigation and recovery of the sector. The importance of collaborating with the private sector has been recognized by governments with the creation of joint committees and platforms in a number of countries. Moreover, it is likely that as countries focus on accelerating recovery, public-private partnerships will be reinforced.

The **most recent measures announced** indicate that some countries, mostly in Europe and Asia and the Pacific, are moving forward with **initiatives to restart tourism and promote domestic demand**. The establishment of health and sanitary protocols, certifications and labels for clean and safe practices and establishments is a crucial step to restore trust and confidence in the sector. With **domestic tourism as a priority** at the moment, marketing and promotional campaigns product development initiatives and special discounts begin to emerge in a few countries. Providing vouchers and other type of support and special conditions to domestic travelers, tour operators, travel agents and other tourism businesses emerges as a common measure to stimulate demand.

To conclude it is also worthwhile to mention that the first wave of measures adopted are fully in line with the 23 [UNWTO Recommendations for Action](#) launched at the onset of the pandemic. These are divided into three key areas – **(I) Managing the crisis and mitigating the impact, (II) Providing stimulus and accelerating recovery and (III) Preparing for tomorrow**⁵. The overview of policy responses provided shows clearly that while the first wave of measures adopted fall into the first and second areas, countries are taking initial steps towards rebuilding tourism and preparing for tomorrow. Following these Recommendations and recalling the [Priorities for Tourism Recovery](#)⁶, UNWTO has recently issued the [UNWTO Global Guidelines to Restart Tourism](#)⁷ which provide high-level guidance for reopening tourism operations and helping tourism sector emerge stronger and more sustainably from COVID-19.

5. More information on [UNWTO Recommendations for Action](#).

6. More information on [UNWTO Priorities for Tourism Recovery](#).

7. More information on [UNWTO Global Guidelines to Restart Tourism](#).



Examples of fiscal and monetary measures

- In **Norway**, the VAT on passenger transport, accommodation, cultural events and attractions has been reduced from 12% to 8% until 31 October 2020. **Germany** has also reduced the VAT rate to support tourism and hospitality industry. Similarly, the **Republic of Moldova** announced a 20% to 15% VAT reduction for hotels and restaurants. In **Turkey**, VAT on domestic airline flights has been cut to 1% from 18% for a period of three months. **Ecuador** has approved a six months VAT payment deferral as well as 2019 income tax for small companies, airlines, accommodation and food businesses and Seychelles has postponed the payment of corporate social responsibility tax, tourism marketing tax and business tax. **Brunei, Iran, Laos, Malaysia, Palau, Republic of Korea** and **Singapore**, have also adopted similar measures. **Côte d'Ivoire** postponed for three months the payment of capital income tax (IRC) to tourism and hotel businesses that are experiencing difficulties.
- **Egypt** postponed the payment of all dues on tourism and hotel establishments and declared exempted all bazars and cafeterias located in archeological sites from paying rent until tourism safely resumes. The Central Bank of Egypt offered tourism facilities low-interest funds, particularly for payment of salaries of employees and launched a financing initiative to support tourism, reducing the interest rate (part of this initiative is to be directed to the payment of salaries and operating expenses). As part of the initiative, banks can grant credit facilities with a maximum two-year repayment period, in addition to six-months grace starting from the grant date.
- In **Colombia** VAT for air tickets will be taxed at a lower rate of 5% and the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism (MINCIT) launched the credit line 'Colombia Responde' to alleviate the cash flow of tourism companies. **Mauritius** also temporarily suspended the passenger fee on air ticket and **Australia** is assisting the aviation industry through an Aviation Industry Relief Package that includes exemption on several aviation and passengers fees.
- **Cyprus** has approved a fund for the implementation of actions to support tourism in cooperation with airlines and travel operators, as well as actions to boost tourist demand from October 2020 to March 2021.
- Swiss Society for Hotel Credit SGH (**Switzerland**) grants amortization deferrals of up to one year to existing customers and finances investments of customers who have financed them from cash flow in the past two years. **Fiji** approved a new Hotel Investment Incentive Package.
- City tourism taxes and accommodation fees have been suspended or payment is postponed: i.e. **Belgium, Cameroon, Iceland, Turkey** and **Uzbekistan**.
- **Georgia** announced that property and income taxes for companies in the tourism sector will be deferred and banks will restructure debts for all individuals, especially for companies operating in the tourism industry and the government will pay interest on loans for hotels with between four and 50 rooms.
- **Croatia** set a 50% counter-guarantee of principal for working capital of tourism loans (interest rate 0.5% -0.75% -1.0%) while in Belgium, a loan at a reduced rate for the hospitality sector for companies has been created. In Brazil, the National Development Bank (BNDES) opened a working capital loan line for tourism and service sectors SMEs with preferential conditions.

- Some countries such as **Finland, Italy** and **New Zealand** have approved financial support to their national airlines, while **Brazil, Costa Rica** and **Norway** announced the suspension of tax on air passengers and other aviation taxes. In the **Russian Federation**, tourism companies and airlines will be given a right to postpone their tax payments. **Guatemala** has approved the deferment of taxes payments related to accommodation and airlines tickets. **Singapore** has also reduced airport fees.
- **New Zealand** approved a specific support package for Tourism New Zealand (TNZ) part of which will be allocated to promote domestic tourism and to prepare promotion campaigns in targeted foreign markets.
- **Kenya** set aside a special fund to help the tourism sector. Part of the fund will be used to restore destination confidence to ensure that Kenya remains a preferred travel destination globally and the rest will be used for the post-coronavirus recovery strategy in all Kenya's key source markets. In **Senegal** hard-hit sectors such as tourism and transport will receive direct support. **South Africa** made an additional fund available to assist SMEs in the tourism and hospitality sector which are under particular stress due to the travel restrictions.
- **Lithuania** approved the creation of a travel guarantee fund model to compensate for the losses incurred by tourists as a result of the insolvency of tour operators in case the tour operator's insurance or financial guarantee were insufficient. In **Poland**, tour operators shall get the refund of their contributions to the Tourism Guarantee Fund for canceled packages due to the epidemic.
- **China** approved a specific fund to refund travel agencies and asked local authorities to give travel service quality deposit back to travel agencies to relief pressure of their cash flow.
- In the **Czech Republic** both customers and tour operators can legally withdraw from the contract without charging a cancellation fee.
- **Belgium, Estonia, Norway, Peru** and **Portugal** have approved subsidies or co-financing of costs for postponed or cancelled events and up to the amount of the expenses incurred.
- Some countries have approved special funds to support startups, such as **Portugal** 'Mezzanine' Funding for Startups COVID19 (this includes startups in the tourism sector) – which injects liquidity into companies (already invested) through debt instruments convertible into share capital.
- In **Austria**, tourism enterprises that have had an active loan before the outbreak of COVID-19 can apply for the suspension of all loan repayments for the year 2020.

Examples of measures to protect jobs and promote training and skills

- In **Bulgaria** the government will assist businesses (hospitality, travel agencies and tour operators, restaurants and fast food establishments among other) by covering the insurance payments owed by the employers. **Serbia, Slovenia** and **Slovakia** have announced direct payments to the companies (or a percentage of salaries) that have been obliged to close due to the pandemic.
- In **Greece** workers whose labour contracts are temporarily suspended will receive a compensation while the state will cover their social insurance and health contributions. Similar flexibility in terms of social security contributions is seen in other countries and territories, i.e., **Argentina, Kuwait, Morocco, Mongolia, New Caledonia, Samoa** and in **Hungary**, where the contribution of payment liabilities of employers in their entirety has been cancelled and where the state would take over 70% of lost wages for three months in support of part-time workers. **Brunei, China, Fiji, Malaysia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Senegal, Singapore** and **Vanuatu** adopted similar measures.
- In **Gabon** employees placed on technical unemployment will receive an allowance representing between 50% and 70% of their gross salary. A similar initiative was adopted by **Botswana** and **Republic of Korea**. **Tunisia** announced an agreement for the payment of the April wages of hotel employees was signed between the Ministry of Tourism and Handicrafts, the Tunisian Hotel Federation (FTH) and the Tunisian General Labour Union (UGTT), **Italy** has also approved the suspension of withholding tax payments, social security and welfare contributions, including the tourism sector and extended the measure to cultural businesses. **Japan** expanded significantly the Employment Adjustment Subsidies so as to protect employment.
- In **Mauritius** the training levy will be temporarily reduced from 1% to 0.5% for operators in the tourism sector. A similar training fee reduction has been adopted by **Singapore**.
- **Cambodia** provided retraining and upskilling programmes for laid-off workers and announced to pay 20% of the workers' minimum wages employed in hotels, guesthouses, restaurants and travel agencies. Workers are required to attend a short course delivered by the Ministry of Tourism before.
- **Namibia** announced a wage subsidy for hardest hit sectors and the government will provide a wage subsidy to aid businesses in retaining jobs in the tourism, hospitality, travel and aviation and construction sectors. **Lebanon** allowed economic institutions to lend money without interest for five years to help them pay salaries.
- **Montenegro** announced that grants for salaries for April and May for the tourism sector will be given to entrepreneurs, tourism SMEs (upon-request, tourism companies will receive subsidies for the payment of salaries).

- In **Spain** the government eased the conditions of the temporary collective layoffs (known as ERTes) and introduced measures to support the extension of the period of activity of workers with discontinuous permanent contracts in the tourism and commerce and hospitality sectors linked to tourism. Similarly, **Sweden** eased short-term layoffs: employers' wage costs can be halved with the central government covering a larger share of the costs.
- In **Seychelles**, the government decided to allocate a special fund to the Unemployment Relief Scheme.
- **Ireland** and **Portugal** have developed online training programmes, workshops, webinars and networking meet-ups online, addressed to help businesses navigate the effects of COVID-19 and provide advice for employers impacted by the crisis, with special attention to the digital transformation and the need to upgrade digital skills. In **Israel**, the Ministry of Tourism operated a comprehensive training programme of professional webinars and web based courses, to preserve and enrich the human capital of the industry (hoteliers, travel agents, tour operators, tour guides, and other travel professionals).
- **Thailand** planned Community Capacity Building in Special Areas for Sustainable Tourism Project and other training and skills upgrading initiatives.
- The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities of **Egypt** and the Federal Tourism Association issued guidelines to all staff working in tourism on the measures to be followed for self-protective procedures and the Egyptian Hotel Association also conducted staff trainings to increase awareness in case of emergency, in addition to training on preventive measures aimed at increasing the preparedness of the sector and in accordance with WHO guidelines.
- In **Chile** the Undersecretary of Tourism, together with the National Tourism Service (SERNATUR) are adapting the technical assistance programme for businesses incorporating a strong digital component in business and digital management processes for tourism entrepreneurs.

Examples of market intelligence initiatives and public-private partnerships

- In **Flanders** the Walloon Tourism Observatory in collaboration with professional associations is conducting each week a survey among a number of tourist accommodation establishments to measure the impact of COVID-19. Similar surveys and questionnaires have also been conducted by i.e. **Albania, Armenia, the Cook Islands, Chile, Estonia, Hungary, Iran, Portugal, Seychelles** and **Switzerland**.
- In **France**, the Bureau of the Tourism Sector Committee meets regularly to provide support to the sector and in **Austria** the Ministry of Agriculture, Regions and Tourism is in permanent close exchange with the tourism industry and other tourism stakeholders (the Austrian National Tourist Office, social partners, industry associations, etc.) to discuss the current situation and further steps. In **Ecuador**, Five Working Committees have been created to reactivate the tourism sector. **Algeria** set up a monitoring unit specific to the tourism sector - chaired by the General Director of Tourism aiming at monitoring the developing impact of the current situation in consultation with operators and professionals including employers' federations and workers' unions. **Bangladesh** formed a Committee for Crisis Management of the Tourism Industry to tackle the difficult situation due to the outbreak of COVID-19. **Malaysia** established a Tourism Recovery Action Council (TRAC), and **Singapore** created a Tourism Recovery Action Task Force comprising representatives from relevant ministries and government agencies as well as private sector associations representing travel agencies, tourist guides, airlines, hotels and accommodation, among others. The **Republic of Korea** is conducting regular Public-Private Tourism Stakeholder Virtual Meetings to evaluate and mitigate the crisis (scheduled twice a week from 24 March 2020).
- **Thailand** created a Big Data Storage System Development Project to be ready to use in the form of Smart Data.
- In **Germany** the Federal Government Centre of Excellence for Tourism has set up the [corona-navigator website](#). This website is used to pool the latest news, facts and recommendations for action and provides guidance to all tourism stakeholders. In **Peru** a special section COVID-19 at www.turismo.in.pe, including more than 20 shared studies on trend reports, advice, and other strategic information for tourism entrepreneurs and Study on Peruvian traveler post-quarantine.

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- The Ministry of Tourism of **Greece** activated a Committee for Crisis Management to promptly respond to crises. The main responsibility is to minimize the potential damage to the image and the visibility of the Greek tourism through protecting travellers and restoring confidence. A similar initiative has been adopted by the **Bahamas**. In **Vanuatu** the tourism sector is part of the Recovery Cluster under the Vanuatu Business Resilience Council, a resource tool under the Vanuatu Chamber of Commerce that provides updates, tools, workshops and support to the businesses.
 - In **Poland**, the Department of Tourism has developed a Q&A guide for travellers and tour operators.
 - **Colombia** implemented a communication channel with Latin American tourism authorities and tourism organizations worldwide to share information on good practices. **Australia** undertook market intelligence analysis with a private company on bookings data for some markets.

Examples of measures and initiatives to restart tourism

Travel and Tourism Protocols

- The Secretary of State of Tourism of **Spain** created with the Spanish Tourist Quality Institute (ICTE) a Safe Tourism Certified system, a guarantee mark and certification of the implementation of the Risk Prevention System for the Health versus COVID-19 validated by the Ministry of Health. In the developing process representatives from the public sector at national, regional and local level participated, along with representatives of the private sector and trade unions. In this framework, the Ministry issued a series of Guides for reducing the spread of coronavirus SARS-COV-2 in the tourism sector for the various industry areas such as accommodation, golf courses, campings, travel agencies, etc
- Turismo de **Portugal** created the 'Clean and Safe' label to provide companies with information about the necessary hygiene and cleaning measures and to promote the country as a safe destination, reinforcing the confidence of the visitor to the country. Similar initiatives on labels and health and hygiene protocols have been developed by, i.e. **Costa Rica** and **Ecuador**. In **Albania** the Ministry of Tourism and Environment in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Social Protection have drafted 'The protocol of Anti-COVID 19 measures during tourism season 2020', which aims at guiding and regulating the necessary preconditions to be undertaken by tourism companies towards restarting the tourism season this year in order to protect health of employees and visitors. **Bulgaria** has formulated guidelines for accommodation establishments and a special declaration for tourists.
- **Lithuania, Latvia** and **Estonia** opened their borders to each others' citizens from May 15, creating a Baltic 'travel bubble'.
- **Estonia** has started to test one of the world's first digital immunity passports, created by a team including founders of global tech startups. A digital immunity passport collects testing data and enables people to share their immunity status with a third party using a temporary QR-code generated after digital authentication.
- **Kenya** announced gradual reopening of tourism establishments and vouching for bilateral tourism agreements and Covid-19 free certifications for East Africa countries.
- **Bulgaria** announced that the deadline for refunding from a tour operator is stipulated (13 June) in case the traveler does not accept the options given (a voucher or a tourist package replacement).
- Cancellations of an event as well as trips and travel packages due to the COVID-19 crisis can be compensated via vouchers: i.e. **Belgium, Croatia, Denmark, France, Italy** and **Portugal**.

Marketing and Promotion

- Travel vouchers issued by the government and granted to families to spend in domestic travelling have been approved by **Italy, Iceland, Lithuania** and **Republic of Korea**.
- Promotion and marketing campaigns and development of new products to attract international tourists and developing domestic tourism are in preparation in **Bosnia & Herzegovina, Georgia, Hungary, Iceland, Israel, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Thailand** and **Vietnam**.
- **Singapore** also launched a Marketing Partnership Programme and a fund to adopt tools to accelerate digital transformation, provide online training for tourism sector to upskill workers and provide additional assistance for travel agents.
- **China** conducted market intelligence to forecast the proportion of domestic tourism in the overall tourism demand. Tourism has been resumed and activities are encouraged within each of the provinces, the scale and scope of the activities being decided by each province. The Ministry of Culture and Tourism and the National Health Commission jointly called upon the provincial governments to reopen local scenic spots and attractions with limited admission on the premise of strict control.
- **Bahrain** is working on a crisis management action plan including building trust-based coalitions, keeping positive and in continuous contact with tour operators, focusing on co-marketing and joint promotion with other tourism partners.
- **Egypt** approved a new initiative promoting travel to upper Egypt during summer months (June, July and August) by offering discounts on entry fees to archeological sites in Qena, Luxor and Aswan, in addition to reduction of visa fees upon arrival at Luxor and Aswan Airports.



Overview of policy responses

This section provides an overview of country policy responses across the world, including both cross-cutting and tourism specific measures, as of May 22, 2020. This compilation is regularly updated to reflect the current status of worldwide measures to mitigate the effects of

COVID-19 in the travel and tourism sector and accelerate recovery. Detailed and updated information on individual countries is made available at the UNWTO [online Dashboard on Measures to Support Tourism](#).

POLICIES

COUNTRIES

FISCAL POLICIES

Cross-cutting measures:

- Exemption, reduction and/or deferrals of taxes and other social contributions for companies, in most cases targeted specifically at SMEs;
- Emergency economic funds and assistance to SMEs, (in some cases, facilitated through partnerships with financial institutions);
- Investment programmes;
- Deferral or discount in the payment of utility expenses to businesses and self-employed workers;
- Social safety net such as food, means of individual protection and other essentials for socially vulnerable and high-risk groups, including those with disabilities, and transportation.

Tourism specific measures:

- Exemption, deferral (up to six months) and reduction (up to 50%) of tourism related taxes to businesses in the travel, hospitality and other tourism related activities such as environment protection fee, tourism licenses, tourism marketing taxes, visa fees, capital gain taxes;
- Economic assistance for SMEs in tourism;
- Discount on utilities expenses for businesses;
- Cash flow assistance to travel agencies.

Albania, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belgium, Bhutan, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Brazil, Brunei, Bulgaria, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Dem. Rep. Congo, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, French Polynesia, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Honduras, Hong Kong (China), Hungary, Indonesia, Iran, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, Laos, Latvia, Lesotho, Macao (China), Madagascar, Malaysia, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Micronesia FSM, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, Netherlands, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Rwanda, Samoa, São Tomé & Príncipe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Togo, Tonga, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, United Kingdom, Uzbekistan, United States, Vanuatu, Vietnam, Zambia, Zimbabwe

POLICIES

COUNTRIES

MONETARY POLICIES

Cross-cutting measures:

- Reduction and/or exemption of interest rates;
- Interest rates subsidization (loan waiver, subsidization of certain parts of loan interests by the government);
- Special credit lines (mainly for SMEs and self-employers) and lines financed in cooperation with international financial institutions (e.g. IMF and WB) and other regional development banks;
- Co-financing and refinancing of credit;
- State guarantees for bridging loans used to cover temporary liquidity shortages;
- Access to loans for SMEs (state covers up to 90-100% of credit costs);
- Moratorium on loans;
- Measures to ensure the stability of national; currency and consumer prices.

Tourism specific measures:

- Financial funds for SMEs in tourism such as new loan schemes and preferential conditions for loans;
- Incentive program granted to airlines.

Albania, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belgium, Belize, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Brazil, Brunei, Bulgaria, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Dem. Rep. Congo, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Honduras, Hong Kong (China), Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kingdom of Eswatini, Republic of Korea, Kuwait, Laos, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Macao (China), Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Monaco, Montenegro, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Netherlands, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Rwanda, Samoa, São Tomé & Príncipe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Togo, Tonga, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Vietnam, Zambia, Zimbabwe

POLICIES

COUNTRIES

JOBS AND SKILLS

Cross-cutting measures:

- Furlough of employees (wages partially supported by the state);
- Direct subsidies for one-person-enterprises and micro-enterprises;
- Grants from the state to businesses of a percentage of the salary fund;
- Extension of layoffs in the case of seasonal workers;
- Reduction and/or deferral of social security contributions' payments;
- Exemption from or compensation of compulsory health insurance obligations;
- Temporary easing of conditions for the use of social insurance funds;
- Providing financial assistance to entrepreneurs for supporting contract employees with the wage level lower than the minimum monthly average salary;
- Cash-transfers for unemployed workers;
- Flexible mechanisms for companies to support employees' costs and reduction of salaries taxes;
- Telework is encouraged, whenever possible and schedule flexibility measures;
- Online training on digital transformation to support companies.

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POLICIES

COUNTRIES

JOBS AND SKILLS

Tourism specific measures:

- Reduction of training levy for tourism operators;
- Wages subsidies to aid businesses to retain jobs in tourism, hospitality and aviation;
- Financial support for trainees;
- Support businesses with training to develop digital skills;
- Retraining and reskilling tourism workers, including unemployed workers;
- Travel and tourism designated as a special sector for employment support;
- Capacity building programs.

Albania, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Australia, Bahamas, Bahrain Belgium, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Brazil, Brunei, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Canada, China, Chile, Colombia, Cook Islands, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, Fiji, France, French Polynesia, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong (China), Hungary, Indonesia, Iran, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Republic of Korea, Kuwait, Laos, Latvia, Lebanon, Macao (China), Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Mauritius, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Netherlands, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Portugal, Puerto Rico, Republic of Moldova, Rwanda, São Tomé & Príncipe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sudan, Sweden, Thailand, Tonga, Tunisia, Uzbekistan, United States, Vanuatu, Zimbabwe

POLICIES

COUNTRIES

MARKET INTELLIGENCE

Cross-cutting measures:

- Internal crisis mechanisms such as National Coordination Committees;
- Informational campaigns;
- Impact/assessment studies.

Tourism specific measures:

- Internal crisis mechanisms such as Committees/ Task Forces/Special Units;
- Communication channels such as digital platforms and others to inform stakeholders in the tourism industry;
- Monitoring data in real time to understand tourism demand and prepare surveys, studies and forecasts;
- Guidelines on the new situation available to businesses and professionals working in the tourism industry;
- Measurement of the impact in the short, medium and long term;
- Campaigns promoting virtual tourism.

Albania, Angola, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Cook Islands, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, Estonia, Fiji, French Polynesia, Germany, Greece, Holy See, Hungary, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Kiribati, Republic of Korea, Kuwait, Laos, Malaysia, Mauritius, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, New Zealand, Pakistan, Palau, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Seychelles, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Thailand, Timor-Leste, United Kingdom, Vanuatu, Vietnam

POLICIES

COUNTRIES

PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Tourism specific measures:

- Recovery funds to mitigate the impact in tourism;
- Solidarity funds with private sector donations;
- Committees and other groups that consult and engage with private sector stakeholders;
- Crisis management strategies;
- Platforms available to private sector stakeholders;
- Supporting businesses with investment programmes;
- Support businesses by facilitating their digital presence.

Albania, American Samoa, Argentina, Australia, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Brunei, Bulgaria, Burundi, Canada, Chile, China, Congo, Cook Islands, Costa Rica, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, Fiji, France, Greece, Holy See, Hungary, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Republic of Korea, Kuwait, Latvia, Libya, Malaysia, Malta, Mauritius, Micronesia FSM, Monaco, Mongolia, Myanmar, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Nigeria, Palau, Palestine, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Turkey, Uganda, Vanuatu, Vietnam

POLICIES

COUNTRIES

RESTARTING TOURISM

- Vouchers (preferred to reimbursement) for trips and travel packages cancelled due to COVID-19;
- Amendments in contract laws to protect both customers and tour-operators;
- Guidelines and recommendations on concluded tourist package contracts whose implementation is impossible due to COVID-19;
- Health and safety protocols, certifications and labels in tourism establishments (accommodation sector, restaurants, spa and wellness centres, etc.);
- Creation of safety corridors between countries to restart international tourism.

Albania, Australia, Belgium, Bulgaria, China, Cameroon, Costa Rica, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, Estonia, France, Georgia, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Republic of Korea, Latvia, Lithuania, Mauritius, Micronesia FSM, New Zealand, Portugal, Singapore, Spain, Thailand, Timor-Leste, United States, Vietnam

PROMOTING DOMESTIC TOURISM

- Holiday vouchers for domestic travel;
- Domestic tourism promotion and marketing campaigns;
- Fee waivers on air services charges on domestic airline operations and domestic and regional aviation security charges;
- Co-financing smaller promotional projects and executing projects on the domestic market;
- Product development initiatives;
- Forecast of domestic tourism demand.

Australia, Botswana, China, Egypt, Georgia, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Kenya, Kingdom of Eswatini, Republic of Korea, Lithuania, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Slovenia, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Vietnam

Key considerations moving forward

- A key challenge often emerging in the discussion of measures is the need to **ensure that support reaches the ‘real economy’** and is accessible for businesses and families in a simple and effective manner;
- Considering the high impact of the crisis, as well as the fact that **tourism is a labor-intensive sector**, countries should consider **specific programmes to support tourism** namely in restarting the sector (adaptation to new protocols) and recovery;
- This time is critical to **invest in human capital and talent** through special programmes and capacity building on digital skills, health protocols, etc.;
- Whole government approach (coordination among relevant ministries such as economy and finance, ministries of health, ministries of labour, ministries of foreign affairs, ministries of transport, ministries of tourism, etc.), **governance mechanisms** to ensure horizontal and vertical cooperation (national, regional and local governments) and public-private partnerships are critical;
- Measures should ensure solidarity and leave no-one behind with particular **support to the vulnerable groups** (informal workers, women and youth)⁸, but also to developing countries, especially those who heavily rely on tourism, such as Small Islands Developing States (SDIS);
- It is essential to **pinpoint lessons** learned and **elaborate a roadmap** to respond to future shocks as to build resilience in the sector.
- All measures and recovery plan should be fully **aligned with the SDGs and 2030 Agenda**.

8. See UNWTO on [COVID-19 and vulnerable groups](#)



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**COVID-19
RESPONSE**