

Sectoral Brief

Hotels, catering and tourism

Social protection

Working conditions in hotels and restaurants are largely characterized by irregular, often unsocial working hours; atypical forms of employment such as on-call employment or undesired part time employment; comparatively low pay, little job stability and poor career prospects. Difficult working conditions contribute to high staff turnover. On the other hand, the sector does provide employment to workers with little or no formal training, people who want to work part time and those who do not want to enter into a long term employment commitment, as is the case of many young people still in university or aiming to take up other areas of activity. People migrating from less developed regions find jobs in the sector, as do workers with family responsibilities. These factors favour the employment of women.

The presence of rather informal employment relations especially in small enterprises is related to the use of child labour. In the hotel and restaurant sector which also includes bars, children can be exposed to physical and moral hazards and be damaged for the rest of their lives. Other issues related to social protection include dealing with violence and stress in the workplace, helping migrant workers adjust to new working environments, and protecting employees and customers from HIV and AIDS. Read more about these issues in the cross-sectoral topics section ([link to topics](#)).

RISK AND CRISIS MANAGEMENT

It is evident and well documented that any major disruption to the security or safety of any tourist destination – from natural or man-made threats (terrorism, tsunami, global epidemics) - will have an immediate effect on demand for visits to that destination and a sharp impact through the loss of employment in tourism and related industries. Proactive measures and effective crisis management contribute to the social protection of workers in times of crises.

Recently, the current economic crisis has impacted various countries in differing regions, affecting some more than others. In the second half of 2008, a decline in international tourism began and intensified in 2009 after several consecutive years of growth. A sharp decline in tourist flows, length of stay, tourist spending and increased restrictions on business travel expenses led to a significant contraction of HCT economic activity worldwide. These effects resulted from increased unemployment, market volatility, economic and social insecurity, and a significant decline in the average household income.

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In September 2009, the ILO and UNWTO initiated a joint statement on employment and tourism in response to the ILO Global Jobs Pact that encouraged responses to the needs of the economy and readiness for recovery. A similar statement was also issued by the ILO and the International Hotel and Restaurant Association (IHRA) in January 2010. These statements aim to help alleviate the effects of the global economic crisis and to promote job creation and decent, productive employment in the tourism industry.

The ILO is also involved in risk assessment and crisis management by the IHRA and the UNWTO.

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USEFUL RESOURCES

Code of Practice on workplace violence in services sectors and measures to combat this phenomenon (pdf)

Violence at work in hotels, catering and tourism (pdf)

Emergency Response System

www.sos.travel