



Roadmap towards lifting COVID-19 containment measures: recommendations of the Social Partners of the European Horeca sector

HOTREC, the European umbrella association of Hotels, Restaurants and Cafés, and its trade union counterpart EFFAT, the European Federation of Food, Agriculture and Tourism Trade Unions, advise companies and employees to follow all necessary health and safety measures in view of the gradual reopening of businesses, after the global lockdown caused by COVID-19. Moreover, constant dialogue between the EU, governments, social partners and companies is key to support a progressive lifting of the containment measures.



The hospitality sector is facing an unprecedented crisis due to the COVID-19 outbreak. Thousands of companies face insolvency or count their days to survive, millions of workers lost their jobs or are on temporary unemployment or short-time work schemes. In view of policies to progressively open-up businesses across Europe, HOTREC and EFFAT welcome the [Joint European Roadmap towards lifting COVID-19 containment measures](#) issued by the European Commission, and underline that any reopening plans should be developed in cooperation with social partners.

Given the fact that after reopening, hospitality establishments will again be frequented by a high number of people, strengthened measures to guarantee hygiene and safety are needed. The social partners welcome the [WHO guidance for food businesses](#), as well as the [WHO guidelines for management in the accommodation sector](#). In addition, all national legislation requirements need to continue being respected, namely with regard to handling and serving of food.

“The health and safety of our employees and customers is our priority, and therefore, efforts on deep cleaning and on keeping the required social distance in our establishments will be key to promote a safe environment”, commented Jens Zimmer Christensen, HOTREC President.

Most countries have implemented policies aimed at protecting jobs and safeguarding workers’ income, and social partners in many countries have concluded agreements to guarantee jobs and to make sure that workers do not fall into poverty during this crisis.

“Massive layoffs of workers would aggravate the shortage of staff the hospitality sector has been experiencing for many years. To prepare for the reopening of businesses, the period of reduced activity should be used to re- and up-skill workers, to ensure that also in future we have a well-trained workforce. Moreover, we call for the swift implementation of the proposed package of EU measures for economic recovery, including the European Commission’s instrument for temporary [Support to mitigate Unemployment Risks in an Emergency](#) SURE, aimed at financing short-time work schemes.”, stated Kristijan Bragason, EFFAT General Secretary.

EFFAT and HOTREC call upon the EU and Member States to involve employers’ and workers’ representatives in all initiatives to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the hospitality-tourism sector and all anticipation and coordination plans for recovery.

For further information: www.hotrec.eu and www.effat.org

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What is HOTREC?

HOTREC represents the hotel, restaurant and café industry at European level. The sector counts in total around 1.8 million businesses, being 99,5% small and medium sized enterprises (91% are micro enterprises, i.e. employing less than 10 people). These businesses make up some 60% of value added. The industry provides some 10 million jobs in the EU alone. Together with the other tourism industries, the sector is the 3rd largest industry in Europe. HOTREC brings together 40 national associations representing the interest of this industry in 29 different European countries.

What is EFFAT?

EFFAT is the European Federation of Food, Agriculture and Tourism Trade Unions, also representing domestic workers. As a European Trade Union Federation representing 120 national trade unions from 35 European countries, EFFAT defends the interests of more than 25 million workers towards the European Institutions, European employers’ associations and transnational companies. EFFAT is a member of the ETUC and the European regional organisation of the IUF.