

Topics

Hotels, catering & tourism

RISKS 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, financial or food crisis, 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. The effects on employment and the well-being of enterprises in tourism destinations can be attenuated if the tourism authorities succeed in managing the situation well.

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.

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.

Links for further information:

- Travel Emergency Response System
www.sos.travel