



## **WTTC: U.S. Travel & Tourism saw labor shortfall of almost 700,000 in 2021**

*A report from WTTC, which represents the global private Travel & Tourism sector, projects up to one in 13 jobs will likely remain unfilled in 2022*

*WTTC provides recommendations that governments and businesses can use to address labor shortage*

**London (December 16, 2021):** A new analysis of staff shortages by the World Travel & Tourism Council ([WTTC](#)), which represents the global private Travel & Tourism sector, reveals the sector realized a U.S. labor shortfall of almost 700,000 workers during 2021. According to the report, the outlook for 2022 is only slightly more positive, with approximately 480,000 direct\* U.S. Travel & Tourism jobs, or one in 13 positions, predicted to go unfilled next year.

The figures from WTTC, produced in partnership with Oxford Economics, for the first time analyzed staff shortages across the U.S. and other major Travel & Tourism markets including the UK, Spain, France, Italy and Portugal, focusing on the period between July and December 2021 and 2022. As part of its report, the WTTC recommends actions (cited further below) that governments and businesses can use to tackle the Travel & Tourism labor shortage issue.

As unemployment rates decrease and travel demand rises, Travel & Tourism businesses have been left struggling to fill available job vacancies. The report details demand for U.S. Travel & Tourism jobs, tallying 6.6 million open positions during the second half of 2021, with labor shortages projected at 690,000, equating to one in nine unfilled vacancies, or a shortfall of 11%.

According to officials at WTTC, continued worker shortages in the sector could significantly hamper Travel & Tourism recovery in the U.S., as well as slow the eagerly anticipated return of the industry's robust economic impact in communities across the country. WTTC has developed solutions for governments and businesses to address the issue.

Julia Simpson, WTTC President and CEO, said: "The U.S. economic recovery could be put in serious jeopardy if we don't have enough people to fill these jobs as travelers return.

"If we cannot fill these vacancies, it could seriously threaten the survival of Travel & Tourism businesses across the U.S.

"Companies dependent on tourism have been hanging on for the upside; this is just another blow that many may not survive."

The global tourism body also warns reinstating damaging travel restrictions, such as the recent measures aimed at curbing the spread of the new COVID-19 variant, do not stop the spread of the virus and only damage livelihoods.

### **WTTC RECOMMENDS SOLUTIONS**

WTTC's report outlines recommendations for governments and businesses to tackle the alarming Travel & Tourism labor shortage crisis, recognizing the impact of furlough schemes.



These include facilitating labor mobility and remote working, providing safety nets, upskilling and reskilling the workforce and retaining talent, and creating and promoting education and apprenticeships.

## **GLOBAL LABOR OUTLOOK IN THE SECTOR**

WTTC's recent report revealed the devastating impact COVID-19 has had on the Travel & Tourism sector with 62 million jobs lost globally. However, the proactive measures and actions by many governments enabled the sector to save millions of jobs and livelihoods at risk through various job retention schemes.

This year, as the demand for travel began to strengthen in line with the easing of restrictions and the recovering domestic market, the labor supply has been unable to match the rising labor demand, particularly during the second half of 2021. All countries – across the UK, Spain, France, Italy and Portugal in addition to the U.S. – showed significant staff shortages, with employment demand starting to outstrip the available labor supply.

The global tourism body says staff shortages represent a key issue for the global Travel & Tourism sector, and while issues around supply and demand are set to gradually adjust during 2022, the problem is likely to remain.

The sector's recovery and economies around the world depend on businesses and governments being able to solve this critical issue to meet the returning demand for travel.

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### **Notes to Editors:**

\* Direct impacts as opposed to the total which covers direct employment, plus indirect and induced

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