

## 2020 : Worst year on record for tourism

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A Monitor Report

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**Madrid:** Global tourism suffered its worst year on record in 2020, with international arrivals dropping by 74 per cent when compared to 2019 according to the latest data from the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO).

Destinations worldwide welcomed one billion fewer international arrivals in 2020 than in the previous year, due to an unprecedented fall in demand and widespread travel restrictions.

This compares with the four per cent decline recorded during the 2009 global economic crisis.

According to the latest UNWTO World Tourism Barometer, the collapse in international travel represents an estimated loss of USD 1.3 trillion in export revenues - more than 11 times the loss recorded during the 2009 global economic crisis.

The crisis has put between 100 and 120 million direct tourism jobs at risk, many of them in small and medium-sized enterprises.

Due to the evolving nature of the pandemic, many countries are now reintroducing stricter travel restrictions.

These include mandatory testing, quarantines and in some cases a complete closure of borders, all weighing on the resumption of international travel.

At the same time, the gradual rollout of a Covid-19 vaccine is expected to help restore consumer confidence, contribute to the easing travel restrictions and slowly

normalise travel during the year ahead.