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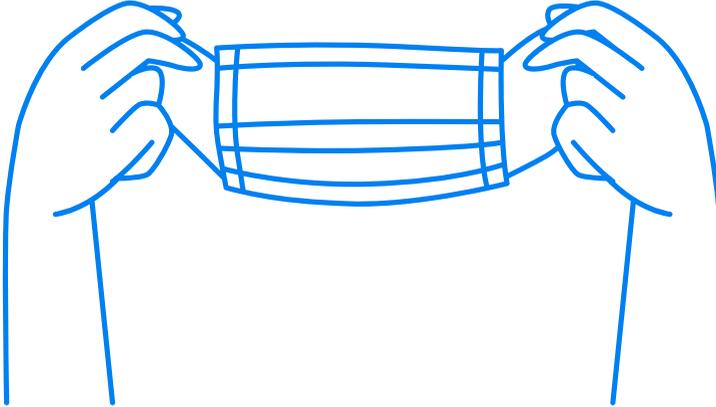


الاتحاد العربي للتقابات
ARAB TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION



Impact of the Covid 19 on the Transport Industry

RESEARCH PAPER



December 2020

RESEARCH PAPER
IMPACT OF THE COVID 19 ON THE TRANSPORT INDUSTRY

DECEMBER 2020

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Executive summary:

After a year of the Covid 19 pandemic, it is evident that the transport industry was the most effected on the economical level. The travel restrictions that were put in place to minimize the spread of the virus hindered the capability of companies to transport passengers from different places around the world and the freedom of movement. As a result, transportation revenues dropped significantly, therefore, transport workers' wages were deducted, other transport workers were laid off, and some transport companies closed due to bankruptcy.



Governments in the MENA region cooperated with private transport companies in response to the pandemic by facilitating Covid 19 (RT-PCR) tests, allocate places to serve as quarantine centers, restrict traveling, and help repatriate citizens to their home countries. The pandemic has put the governments and transport companies in the challenge of adapting to the new norms, consider new means of transport operations, the efficiency of services provided to passengers, prioritizing passenger's safety, and above all preventing the Corona Virus from spreading.

As a response to the pandemic; transport companies had to take all necessary precautions to somehow sustain international and local mobility. Logistics and transport companies are facing many challenges in order to adhere to safety procedures such as social distancing,



checking Covid 19 test results and other needed information, as these procedures will prolong traveling. Social distancing and managing queuing in innovative ways will lessen the absorptive capacity of the different means of transportation.

Since the transport industry is the most vulnerable and effected industry during the pandemic, it is anticipated that it will be the last to recover from the impact of Covid 19. The recovery of transportation is fully dependent on to what extent safety procedures were applied during the first wave of the pandemic.

Introduction:

The global health crisis that we are now experiencing has not struck the international community for over a century. In this unprecedented crisis, all countries and all areas of our daily lives are immensely affected.

By the time a remedy is discovered to stop the Corona virus from transmitting and putting an end to this pandemic, the sole weapon we currently have against the virus is to limit human contact as much as possible. The virus is incapable of traveling; we humans carry it from place to place causing havoc, unless our movement is constrained.

As a result, the world has come to a standstill, from local transport to global supply chain. The busy and active movements in the urban traffic and global trade routes have become calm, activity in the aviation sector has fallen by 90%, and the level of citizens' mobility in different parts of the globe has fallen to a single digit percentage comparing to the pre-pandemic era.

The transport industry finds itself in an unrepresented situation, one of its essential roles is to bring the world together, enable citizens meet face to face, and it is considered as the main facilitator of social interaction. Now that function has paused due to the movement restrictions put in place around the world.

Transportation must continue with its functions where moving people and goods is an imperative, not a choice. The role of transportation is fundamental and cannot be depreciated as it still contributes to nourishing and supplying other sectors that were immensely impacted by Covid 19 such as the health sector. Doctors and Nurses must be able to get to work, hospitals need to receive the necessary medical supplies, citizens restricted from movement rely on provisions being delivered to shops, and not least international supply chains must continue to move despite all the challenges to keep the inevitable economic impact as limited as possible. 1

The focus of the governments of various countries is to stop and control the community transmission of COVID-19 in order to restrain the severe damage, but a dynamic transmission of coronavirus infection makes it a strenuous task. Unavailability of clinical cure and delay in developing the vaccine further makes the situation worse than it has ever been in recent times. Meanwhile, the treatment is symptomatic, and oxygen therapy represents the primary treatment intervention for patients having a severe infection. Mechanical ventilation may be necessary in cases of respiratory failure to provide oxygen therapy, (Casella et al. 2020). The availability of such facilities is also limited, and it becomes enormously challenging to fulfil the requirement, especially when a lockdown is enforced around half of the globe. In the months of March and April 2020 lockdown was imposed in several countries to control the fatalities and loss of physical health.2

To date (30th November 2020) the number of Covid 19 cases have reached 64,3 million cases all over the world and 1,49 million people have died. 3

Covid 19 pandemic has severely impacted the tourism industry, oil industry, food industry, healthcare industry, and the transport industry.

During the Corona Virus pandemic, Transportation shifted from moving passengers to playing an essential core role in insuring that freight and key workers can continue to move, which leads to a sudden shift in the revenue resources for transportation to keep the operations going and experiencing unexpected financial shortfall.4

¹ [Transport in the Face of Pandemic](#)

² [Impact of Covid 19 on Logistics Systems and Disruptions in Food Supply Chain](#)

³ [Covid 19 Pandemic Data](#)

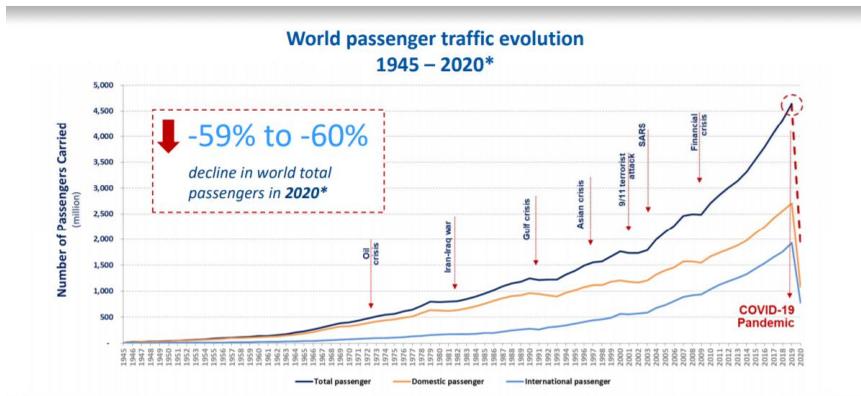
⁴ [Covid 19 Impact on Transport Sector](#)

The Impact of Covid 19 per Transport Sector

Civil Aviation:

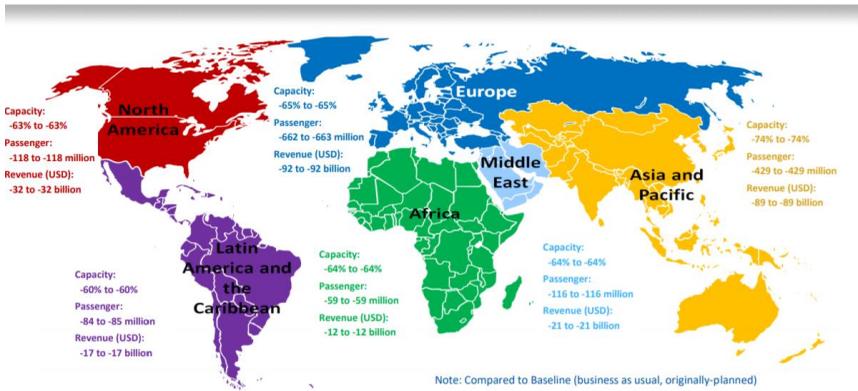
The civil aviation industry has been among the most severely hit sectors globally. Although the media has extensively covered the issue, the future remains unclear. The International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) actively monitor the economic impact on the industry and regularly publishes reports and forecasts.

The Charts below demonstrate the impact of Covid 19 on the international passenger traffic worldwide and on the revenues per region.



ICAO: World passenger traffic collapse with an unprecedented decline in history. ⁵

⁵ [ICAO - Effects of Covid 19 on Civil Aviation](#)



ICAO: Estimated impact on international passenger traffic and revenues by region for 2020⁶.

Focusing on the Middle East: IATA has released new data showing the impact of Covid 19 on the Middle East aviation industry and its economics that is caused by the shutdown of the air traffic.

Job losses in the aviation sector will reach 1.5 million. That is more than half of the region's 2.4 million aviation-related employment.

Full-year 2020 traffic is expected to decline by 56% comparing to 2019.

The region's GDP supported by aviation will continue to fall by up to \$85 billion as the previous estimate was \$66 billion.

Impact of Covid 19 on the Country level

The latest assessment from IATA Economics shows that the outlook at the national level has worsened for major aviation markets in the Middle East since June. For example, the passenger numbers, jobs at risk and GDP impacts for the five biggest Middle East markets all have declined:

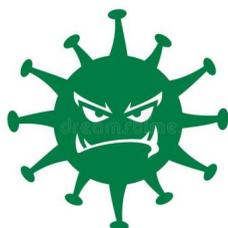
Country	June PAX estimate (Millions)	August PAX Estimate (Millions)	June Jobs at Risk	August Jobs at Risk	April GDP (US\$ Billions)	August GDP (US\$ Billions)
Egypt	-13.7	-14	297,200	298,300	-3.3	-3.5
Jordan	-3.8	-4		39,600	-0.8	-1.2
Morocco	-11.6	-12.3	534,200	569,100	-4.9	-5.6
Qatar	-5.0	-5.3	72,700	78,400	-2.8	-3.1
Saudi Arabia	-36.4	-39.2	299,200	322,500	-17.9	-20.1

⁶ ICAO - Effects of Covid 19 on Civil Aviation

United Arab Emirates	-32.3	-34.8	392,900	421,200	-23.2	-25.9
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Source: IATA⁷

Covid 19 has impaired the Middle East economy and the socio – economic impact is getting worse without air connectivity being re-established. Businesses which contribute substantially to the region’s GDP and provide thousands of jobs are at risk without these vital connections. “For the region’s economic recovery, it is imperative that the industry restart safely as soon as possible,”⁸ quoted by Muhammad Al Bakri, IATA’s Regional Vice President for Africa and the Middle East.



Restarting Aviation in the Middle East

To minimize the impact on jobs and the broader Middle East economy, an accelerated recovery of air transport across the region is necessary. This can be achieved through a cooperative government action in two priority areas:

1. Coordination of the restart of air transport across the region

Some countries in the Middle East are opening their borders to regional and international air travel but inconsistent application of biosafety measurements and unnecessary entry requirements discourage passengers and suppress the resumption of air travel. Governments need to implement the common global air transport biosecurity measures that are included in the International Civil Aviation Organization’s CART Take-off Guidelines.

2. Continues financial and regulatory support

In particular, direct financial aid such as wage subsidies and loans, an extension of the waiver to the 80:20 “Use it or lose it” slot rule, and a relief from taxes and charges. This is needed to help airlines in planning schedules amid unpredictable demand patterns. Some governments have applied relief measures to the aviation industry, despite that the situation is not improving and governments need to continue applying financial and regulatory relief measures.

“Airlines need to focus on meeting demand and not meeting slot rules that were never meant to accommodate the sharp fluctuations of such a crisis,” said Albakri⁹.

⁷ [IATA - Impact of Covid 19 on Civil Aviation](#)

⁸ [IATA - Impact of Covid 19 on Civil Aviation](#)

⁹ [IATA - Impact of Covid 19 on Civil Aviation](#)

IATA and ITF call on governments to ensure that the protection of health workers caring for those with COVID-19 is prioritized.

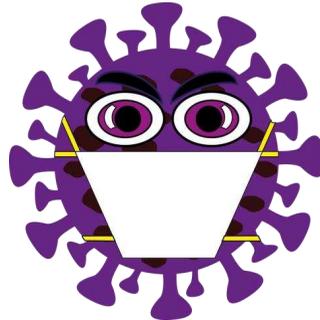
IATA and ITF also call on governments and health authorities to coordinate carefully between each other and with industry to ensure harmonized and effective action to protect the safety of passengers and crew. To this end, IATA and ITF are working closely with the World Health Organization, ICAO and other key organizations, to provide guidance, best practice and support.

It is crucial that governments understand the importance of aviation and support the aviation industry. Protecting transport worker jobs in this crisis will ensure that airlines can keep global supply chains functioning with air cargo services and that they are ready to lead in the economic recovery when the pandemic has been contained.

IATA and the ITF therefore call on governments to provide immediate financial and regulatory support for airlines, in order to maintain the sustainability of terms and conditions for air transport workers.¹⁰

Further, the **ITF encourages tripartite dialogue and calls upon governments to negotiate with trade unions the following:**

1. Recognise aviation as a public good that warrants strong government, regulation and oversight, planning, investment, and where appropriate, public ownership;
2. Establish and enforce a minimum level of transport connectivity, use 'travel bans' only as a last resort, and exclude air cargo operations from any travel restrictions;
3. Establish national tripartite aviation bodies of labour, government and employer representatives to develop strategies, coordinate investment and financial responses, plan the supply of labour, and oversee all aviation operations;
4. Immediately extend sick leave entitlements, maintain incomes and extend social protections to all workers, including formal, precarious and informal workers, regardless of their employment status;



¹⁰ [ITF - IATA Joint Statement](#)



5. Reduce subcontracting and outsourcing of airport services and jobs and, where appropriate, mandate airport authorities to directly manage and/or employ all airport staff, including outsourced and agency workers, in ground handling, security, cleaning and all airport services;

6. Prioritise use of airports for airlines with higher levels of public ownership to improve the financial sustainability of public assets;

7. Offer *conditional* financial relief and support packages to airlines, airport authorities and supply chain companies, including through debt relief, delays to tax and duties, and public ownership of shares;

8. Agree conditions, if they are not already in place, for these financial and support packages, including on the private repurchase of shares following the recovery of the industry, that:

- Protects the pay, terms, conditions and welfare of all aviation workers.
- Prohibits share repurchases, shareholder rewards and excessive executive pay.
- Democratizes ownership and governance, including through worker representation on the company board.
- Respects International Labor Organization (ILO) Conventions regarding freedom of association, collective bargaining, forced labor, discrimination, and occupational health and safety for all workers.

9. Cap profit levels to ensure reinvestment into debt reduction, fleet modernisation, staff training and education and other measures that enrich the company; and,

10. Prohibit shareholder rewards, excessive executive pay and share repurchases during the crisis.



The ITF calls upon aviation employers to recognise and negotiate with trade unions to:

1. Identify threats to workers health, rights and welfare, and to develop and implement workplace responses;



2. Provide free medical testing, treatment, training, equipment and facilities for training for all workers and any workers that perform any form of medical service as a result of COVID-19;

3. Guarantee paid leave, in the form of sick pay or holiday pay, from the first day of leave, for any workers threatened or infected by COVID-19, and protect wages and full pay for all workers through a variety of means, mutually agreed through collective bargaining;

4. Recognise and exercise their duty of care for *all* workers in their business and supply chain, provide formal and direct employment where possible, and guarantee the transfer of undertakings for

subcontracted labour where direct employment is not possible;

5. End precarious and non-standard forms of work in their business and supply chain to protect the health, safety and welfare of workers and passengers;

6. Improve scheduling, days of work and working hours to protect jobs and the health and safety of workers;

7. Agree sustainable rates for shareholder rewards, dividends and executive pay as the threat of coronavirus declines;

8. Ensure all workers can return to their habitual place of work should local and/or national containment measures financially or logistically inhibit them from doing so;

9. Protect the privacy and personal information of workers that undergo medical and other examinations and checks as part of responses to the threat posed by COVID-19, and share with trade unions any data contributing to corporate decision-making; and,

10. Respect ILO Conventions regarding freedom of association, collective bargaining, forced labour, discrimination, and occupational health and safety for all workers.

Government and employers should also engage with the ITF and trade unions through the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) as the appropriate forum to coordinate an international response to the crisis and prepare the industry for the recovery of the global economy.¹¹

¹¹ [ITF Aviation Demands](#)

Maritime Sector:

The shipping industry has largely proved resilient to the Covid 19 outbreak.

Despite the current difficult times, a vast majority of ports have succeeded to stay open to cargo operations. However, most of them still remain closed to passenger traffic.

Despite the disruptions at ports and to crew changes the shipping industry has largely continued to operate around the world, facilitating the movement of essential supplies and medicines that are needed to keep countries running and to deal with the global public health crisis.



SAFETY4SEA has listed a set of challenges that the shipping industry has faced during the Covid 19 pandemic and amidst the economic downturn and difficult operating conditions:¹²

1. Crew welfare:



One of the biggest immediate issues for shipping companies during the pandemic has been the inability to change crews, which is essential to ensure safety, crew health, and welfare. Port, border and travel restrictions have led crewmembers to extend their service on board ships, unable to return to homes and family. Most major ports have imposed restrictions on vessels and crew, 120 countries implemented restrictions, while 92 prohibited crew changes entirely, according to data from Inchcape Shipping Services.

Extended periods of working on board a vessel can lead to crew fatigue, which is known to be one of the underlying causes of human error; it is estimated to be a contributing factor in 75% to 96% of marine incidents.

ITF Coordinator for the Arab World region and Iran network Mohammad Arrachedi has reported that the number of cases and seafarers requests for ITF's assistance has significantly and evidently increased during 2020, if compared to 2019.

Seafarers' complaints are very often related to unpaid wages, medical assistance, repatriation and other aspects related to wellbeing in general.

"This year, the impact of Covid 19 on the seafarers is so negative and resulted in hundreds of seafarers stuck on board of the ships. Despite the expiry of their employment contracts, they are obliged to remain on board due to the Travel restrictions taken by the governments as part of their measurements against Covid 19. Seafarers were obviously victims to Employers who found the perfect excuses to escape from any liabilities towards repatriating their crew". Said Arrachedi.

Arrachedi added: "I used to receive 10 to 15 calls per week before the pandemic but then we jumped to deal with 30 and sometimes more. Emphasizing that many of these requests of assistance are structural cases of

¹² [Safety4sea covid-19 challenges](#)

abandonment, where the seafarers who contact us are not paid for many months and the owners do not feel accountable to afford food and other necessary provisions”.



2. Economic fallout threatens years of safety gains

As the world emerged from the first wave of coronavirus, the future for trade looked dreary. The International Monetary Fund says global GDP growth will fall to -3% in 2020, while the World Trade Organization (WTO) expects world trade to fall by between 13% and 32% in 2020. A partial recovery is expected in 2021, although this is dependent on the duration of the outbreak and the effectiveness of policy responses.

The pandemic has already started to affect maritime trade. The WTO Goods Trade Barometer showed a sharp reduction in the second quarter of 2020, falling to its lowest value on record. The biggest falls were in automotive products and container shipping.

The first half of 2020 could see a 25% fall in shipping traffic, with a 10% drop for the year overall, according to maritime analyst, Sea Intelligence.

3. Cargo damage and delays as supply chains come under strain

The coronavirus pandemic has brought about sudden changes for cargo transportation, impacting shippers, air freight and transport companies around the world. Although cargo transportation is widely recognized as an essential activity, a number of cargo handling companies shut down operations during the outbreak while ports have been operating under restrictions.

Cargo stored in high-risk areas without appropriate security controls or protective safeguards runs the risk of large losses from fire or extreme weather events, while delays may also result in cargo damage to perishable, or temperature-sensitive goods.

4. Disruption to maintenance raises machinery damage concerns

Ship-owners run the risk of delays and machinery breakdown as the pandemic hinders essential maintenance and servicing. Disruption in supply of spare parts and essential consumables like hydraulic oils can delay scheduled maintenance or result in crews using alternative grades or brands. At the same time, travel restrictions may affect the ability of specialist engineers to access ships to make repairs.

Machinery damage is already the most common cause of shipping incidents over the past decade, accounting for more than a third (9,081) out of 26,071 incidents analyzed between January 2010 and December 2019.

5. Cruise ship industry faces new reality with the increased hindrance

The cruise industry, which generates more than \$150bn in global economic activity and supports over one million jobs worldwide, effectively paused as a result of the pandemic. Before the outbreak, the industry had enjoyed impressive growth, with some 32 million passengers forecast to sail on cruise ships worldwide in 2020, up from 30 million in 2019. However, large coronavirus outbreaks on board a number of cruise ships, travel restrictions, and port closures. Cruise operators face an uncertain future with vessels laid-up.

6. Increase of floating oil storage brings potential exposures

As the price of oil plummeted amid growing concerns for the coronavirus economy, demand for floating storage hit record levels, causing tanker rates to hit new highs. In mid-May, 2020, there was more than 200 million barrels of oil and products on floating storage in tankers, around 5% of global-carrying capacity, according to data from S&P Global Platts. Many tankers are floating around major oil ports and terminals in the US, Europe and Africa, with potential exposures to extreme weather, piracy, and political risks. Which jeopardizes vessel crew's health and safety.





Oil products stored for long periods are also at risk of degradation and cargo loss. The quality of refined products can degrade over time or spoil with bacterial contamination, while some products are known to evaporate, resulting in cargo shortfalls.

7. Terminal Operations

Due to the first wave of the pandemic, the transport of cargo and freight has shifted from air to sea and caused a sudden need to accelerate the operations at the terminals to cope with the international supply demand without increasing the workforce. This led to putting dock workers under more pressure, worsen their working conditions by exceeding their working hours with minimal wages, and increase their vulnerability in catching the coronavirus. It has been noticed that the global terminal operators in the region have put more pressure on workers and breached CBAs.

The Mediterranean Sea has been a critical maritime and commercial route for millennia. It is home to 87 ports of various sizes and strengths, serving local, regional and international markets.

Commercial shipping transports around 80 % of global trade, and intra-Mediterranean maritime trade flows account for nearly 25% of global traffic volume.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the vulnerability of maritime networks, port efficiency, and hinterland connectivity in the Mediterranean to crisis situations¹³.

Cases from the region

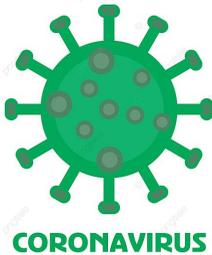
Egypt: The maritime sector has maintained its stability in providing logistics services and activities in the Egyptian ports despite the Covid 19 impact on the economy. Yet shipping companies are still suffering and the challenges are increasing due to the drop in oil prices, which prompted vessels to change their aviation lines from Suez Canal to Cape of Good Hope.

“The Suez Canal Authority (SCA) is set to lose over \$10m in revenue from container lines routing vessels via the Cape of Good Hope rather than its waterway”¹⁴

In 2020 The Suez canal Authority is set to lose over \$10m in revenue due to container vessels that bypass the Suez Canal and opt to the Cape of Good Hope during the pandemic.

¹³ [Impacts of Covid 19 on the mediterranean](#)

¹⁴ [Taking Cape of Good Hope rout instead of Suez Canal](#)



The impact of Covid 19 is reflected in the revenues of the shipping agencies, specifically the United Arab Stevedoring Company, where it has declared its losses during the first 9 months of the fiscal year 2019 – 2020. which reached up a percentage of 20,8%, the losses continued to reach the percentage of 70% during the year 2020 due to the 100% drop of the freight load.

The drop of oil prices had taken its toll on freight shipping in the Egyptian ports, where the biggest international shipping agencies opt for other aviation lines to avoid Egypt's high transit fees.

Carriers in general avoid using routes other than the Suez Canal as they are longer, the distance difference between the Suez Canal and the Cape of Good Hope is around 3,500 KM on the Asia – Europe sailing. MSC one of the biggest global shipping companies has shifted its vessels rout from Suez Canal to the cape as a result of the high Suez Canal transit fees.

On the contrary Agricultural exports has thrived in the Egyptian ports specifically Alexandria port, where agricultural trade has increased up to 37%. The fact is agricultural commodities and other essential commodities are the only motor for the world global trade, where unnecessary commodities' trade has significantly declined.

The increase in the number of vessels transferring commodities does not necessarily mean an increase in the profit earnings. The number of containers is the essence of the industry and the real indicator for trading. Therefore, the more vessels transfer less containers the more the revenue losses are.

If the Covid 19 breakout continues, Marine transportation will decline. However to ease the impact of the pandemic, closure procedures between boarders should be reconsidered.

As a vital facilitator of smooth functioning of international supply chains, the maritime industry should focus on building sustainability and resilience, including to ecological disasters and pandemics like COVID-19, as well as enhancing efficiency and operations, to remain viable and competitive on the global market.

Mid and long-term recovery is needed to further enhance sustainability and resilience of the maritime transport sector as a whole, for sustaining jobs, international trade, and global economy, as much as possible.

While the shipping industry managed to keep global supply chains functional, and ports remained open while protecting their workers, seafarers have been paying a high price. Many have been stuck on their ships, while others could not return to work as crew changes have not been possible during the pandemic. With improved expectations for the demand outlook, the joint UNCTAD-IMO call for governments to work together and facilitate crew changeover remains crucial.

UNCTAD supports informed and evidence-based maritime transport policymaking and decisions through the following three channels:

1. On-line statistics/ Policy makers and analysts can monitor key developments in maritime transport, including port calls, the time ships spend in ports, liner shipping connectivity and container port traffic via the UNCTAD maritime statistics portal
2. Nowcasts and economic barometer using shipping data and intelligence as inputs/ UNCTAD plans to elaborate an economic barometer that draws extensively on existing maritime trade indicators to leverage their timeliness and frequency, particularly the AIS data. Such a barometer could serve as an “early warning system” or leading indicator informing about the trajectory of business cycles.
3. Build capacity to improve risk management and “build better” in a Post COVID-19 world/ A set of lessons learned and good practices is being compiled and will be widely disseminated together with guidance on resilience building and future proofing of the maritime supply chain.¹⁵



The Leaders of the world’s highest maritime, aviation and labor authorities have issued a joint statement calling on governments to facilitate maritime crew changes and designate the millions of workers in critical transport industries through the present pandemic as “key workers”.

The international bodies also urged governments to remove restrictions stopping crew from disembarking from ships in ports. Currently, many transport workers cannot transit through a territory to an airport or other transport hub for a crew change and repatriation home. They say repatriation flights must be sped up.

Governments have been encouraged to grant all seafarers, fishers, offshore energy workers, and aviation and airports workers exemptions from national travel- and health-related restrictions in order to facilitate the resumption of crew changes on ships and aircraft, and in airports and cargo facilities.

The call adds pressure on governments to act urgently on maritime crew changes. Approximately 200,000 seafarers are currently stuck on board vessels across the world, unable to be relieved by fresh crew due to the Covid-19 restrictions brought in by governments across the world.¹⁶

¹⁵ [UNCTAD How Maritime Data can Help](#)

¹⁶ [ITF - Global Demands for Employers and Governments](#)



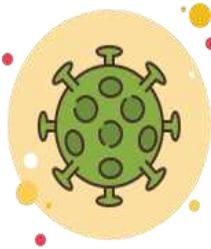
Road Transport Sector:

The road transport sector is essential to social and economic development and guarantees mobility across countries. Road freight transport services ensure the supply of essential goods, including food and medical supplies, as well as a vast range of materials upon which businesses and consumers depend. The road transport sector not only makes an important contribution to economic growth and job creation, but also prevents shortages of essential goods. Road transport in some countries has been declared an essential service.

In order to control the spread of COVID-19, many countries around the world have placed restrictions on domestic transit and/or closed border crossings for road freight transport services.

The resulting downturn in trade and supply chain disruptions will have an impact in all countries, and may further heighten the vulnerability of landlocked developing countries.

Shortages of essential goods or higher prices can affect the most vulnerable in society (including women, the elderly and informal workers). Urgent action by governments, the social partners and parties to road transport supply chains – including shippers, receivers, and transport buyers– will be critical in addressing decent work challenges for these key workers to tackle the present and future crises effectively.



Truck Drivers

Truck drivers have been described as “the unsung heroes of the road” in the battle against the pandemic. They are fundamental to keep supermarket shelves stocked with essential goods and deliver medical supplies. But policies such as border closures, travel bans, export restrictions, social distancing, lockdowns and closures of non-essential businesses have had an immediate effect on their day-to-day life, and their working conditions have quickly deteriorated. Actions that respect human rights and takes into account international labor standards and social dialogue can pave the way to decent working conditions for these vital workers.

In many countries, most drivers are self-employed and thus many fall outside the scope of labor and employment protection laws, which means that they are not eligible for critical employee benefits, such as disability compensation and health and unemployment insurance. They also may not be able to engage effectively in freedom of association and collective bargaining.

While businesses of all sizes have been affected by the pandemic, this unprecedented situation has resulted in the rapid deterioration of the liquidity and profitability of most MSMEs (Micro, Small, and Medium Sized Enterprises) in the industry. Independent drivers and MSMEs are especially at risk of bankruptcy.

Independent drivers are worried about how they will keep their businesses afloat as freight rates have went down. Workers in the sector, including dependent self-employed workers, are vulnerable, as they often must absorb the costs of ownership, maintenance and other vehicle operating costs, but may not be able to participate in social dialogue and may not benefit from the protection enjoyed by other workers, including social protection. Free,

independent, strong and representative employers' and workers' organizations are key conditions for effective social dialogue.

Responses and policies have to take into account the specific needs of women workers in the sector, as the economic effects of COVID-19 will affect them in a differentiated way to men. Women in the sector are often stuck in jobs that are low- or lower-paid or have a low or lower status relative to men, with few if any opportunities for career development. The road transport sector is still highly male-dominated.

New restrictions and closures at border crossings have a negative impact on working conditions in terms of waiting times, forced quarantine, mandatory testing and discrimination. Truck drivers spend a significant amount of time in the cabin, so rest areas and welfare facilities are important to manage the fatigue and well-being of drivers. The closure of commercial vehicle rest areas, welfare facilities and non-essential businesses including restaurants and repair shops, has negatively impacted their working conditions, leaving them with less access to fresh water and bathrooms. Professional thieves may take advantage of COVID-19 due to the closure of rest areas and a general shortage of safe and secure parking facilities.

The suspension of working or driving time rules may result in fatigue, stress and crashes. Many truck drivers may be confronted with longer working hours and a lack of rest periods during the pandemic, which may result in increased fatigue and exhaustion, affecting their physical and mental health, as well as their family life and relationships. The pandemic may intensify the pressure from supply chain entities, which may be an underlying cause of transport workers adopting riskier and unsafe driving practices. Careful monitoring and safeguards in these regulatory changes can help to prevent such negative effects and their related road safety outcomes including crashes.

Workers in risky environments should be provided with good quality personal protective equipment (PPE). No one should feel forced to work in conditions that unnecessarily endanger their health because they fear losing their job or a pay cheque.

Independent drivers and MSMEs may not have the capacity for emergency planning to quickly adapt their operations to pandemics. Clear and transparent information is essential to enable truck drivers to carry out the necessary planning and follow protocols and recommendations to remain healthy and safe. The sourcing and ability to purchase PPE and cleaning supplies may be limited for drivers. Other obstacles to adapt and manage their operations include discrimination and stigma at rest areas, shipper facilities and other delivery points due to fear of contracting the disease.¹⁷



¹⁷ [ILO - Impact of Covid 19 on Land Transport](#)

Public Transportation



During the first wave of Covid 19, the demand on oil has significantly dropped to more than 50% due to the closure that the world has witnessed. The pandemic has impacted public transport dramatically in general and ways of mobility specifically, as the new regulations that have been put in place interfered with the number of passengers using public transportation. The number of passengers entering public transportation waiting stops is so limited, sharing taxis is prohibited, and installing protective screens between driver and passenger became necessary.

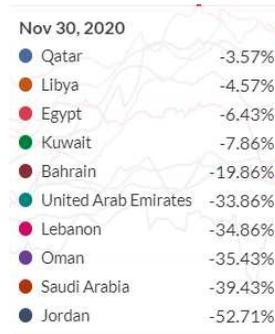
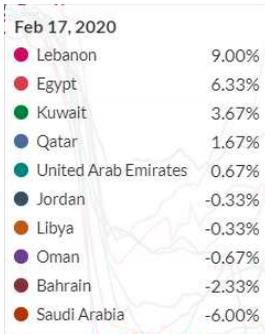
Covid 19 has put many obstacles in the way of public transport agencies and its workers. Thus, these companies find themselves incapable of paying drivers their wages, finance their commitments, and secure the operational expenses.

Our World in Data, represents data and research on how the pandemic has changed the movement of people around the world.



The number of visitors to transit stations in the Arab World has changed dramatically since the beginning of the pandemic. The chart below illustrates the huge drop down on public transportation demand due to the closure that the governments have imposed on their citizens to curb the Corona Virus from spreading.





This chart shows how the number of visitors to transit stations has changed between the period of (February 17, 2020/ the base line to November 30, 2020). This includes all means of public transportation such as subways, busses, train stations, metros, and taxis.¹⁸

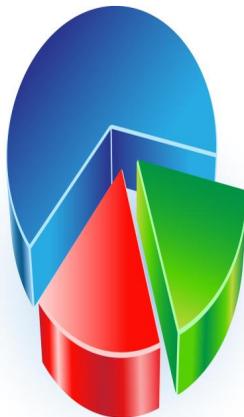
Cases from the Region:

Saudi Arabia: A study in Saudi Arabia has revealed that the demand on public transportation has decreased due to Covid 19 and its impact on 75% of the citizens' mobility. There will also be other changes imposed on the means of transport due to new precautionary procedures that will be put in place. (cite Saudi study)

Researchers forecast the digital economy will be dominate the public transport sector and that it will help recover from the impact of the crisis, where decision makers can benefit from these technologies and digital solutions to help the most vulnerable companies to thrive again. (Cite Saudi study) (add your opinion).

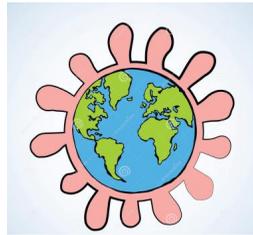
Transport companies are now seeking governments and decision makers' support in enacting laws that exempts them from paying taxes, insurance and licensing fees; and grant them financial facilitations and loans to shield their businesses from the pandemic.

On the other hand, Humanitarian NGOs are campaigning to protect public transport workers, compensate them financially to ease the impact of the crisis, and involve them in the decision making process and strategic planning to confront the crisis.



¹⁸ [Our World in Data](#)

North Africa: The pandemic and the way societies look at them has taken a toll on them, where they were not welcomed into the countries that import the goods. Drivers were treated as criminals, and they were detained by the local governments of which they deliver the goods too, which prolonged the dispatching procedures. This gives a glimpse on the impact of this treatment on the drivers' wellbeing and the damages that can occur on the goods.



The governments of North Africa are facing huge challenges, as the borders remain closed, the truck drivers often resort to unhealthy and miserable hotels for shelter. Truck drivers during their stay on the borders and while waiting for their Covid 19 tests for days they deal with a lot of people and a crowd of other inland drivers, which in return increases the possibility of catching the Corona Virus.

Some of the truck drivers reported that the treatment of the local citizens of the countries to which they dispatch goods to is unpleasant. They name the drivers as " Corona" and ask them to vanish from the place. Racism and provocation continued against drivers to the extent they were chased whenever they used sanitary facilities during their stops, and sometime they were threatened by the locals if they stop in the cities.

Jordan:

During the first wave of Covid 19, the government was content with only taking the temperature of the truck drivers and self-isolation afterwards. This procedure was not enough, as the transition of the virus by the truck drivers was increasing, specifically in the areas surrounding Jordan and Saudi Arabia borders.

Citizens demand that the drivers remain quarantined, without understanding the impact of this on the operations. The number of Jordanian trucks working on the borders are 22,000 trucks, other than the multinational trucks that might reach 44,000. Each truck has a driver and an assistant, so the Jordanian trucks only carry 44,000 workers, adding to them 2 workers for each multinational truck, and assuming that the borders receive hundreds of trucks on daily bases entails massive isolation centers to quarantine thousands of truck drivers for 15 days. Although this scenario seems to be ideal, but in fact it is very challenging in practicality. This will require high operational costs that will burden the government and as a result will not be able to commit to its consequences. Nor can truck drivers cover the expenses of isolation in quarantine centers as their low wages are insufficient to take care of additional costs.

The most practical solution and least sabotaging practice is handling, where Jordanian truck drivers carrying exports are not allowed to exit the Jordanian borders and the truck drivers carrying the Jordanian imports are prohibited from entering the country. Commodities will be handled from one truck to another by taking into consideration all necessary safety precautions.

Tripartite responses, involving workers, employers and governments, are key to addressing the implications of the pandemic.

The action taken by ILO has focused on three immediate goals:

- protecting workers in the workplace
- supporting enterprises and providing financial support
- supporting transit, corridor and trade facilitation, including the relaxation of a number of regulations. ¹⁹

¹⁹ [ILO Land Transport](#)



The ITF and IRU have joint demands for governments and international bodies in response to impact of Covid 19 on the land transport industry.

ITF and IRU call governments and international bodies to act immediately to:

1. Recognise that the job as a commercial vehicle driver is vital to the global economy, international supply chains and mobility of people.
2. Designate road transport as a key service when delivering vital services such as the essential mobility of people, food and medical supplies during the Covid-19 response.
3. Designate road transport workers as key workers and award them the same protection as other vital service workers during the Covid-19 response.
4. Rapidly develop and implement standard practice in cross-border logistics in order to guarantee the safety, health and wellbeing of drivers. This includes appropriate food and sanitary facilities at the roadside for long distance drivers through consultation with the road transport social partners, ITF and IRU, and industry experts.
5. Protect essential current and future mobility services and supply chains by offering, as a priority, government support to road transport SMEs aimed at safeguarding employment.
6. Initiate tripartite dialogue at the national level between governments, employers and unions to support the road transport industry and develop targeted action plans, including financial support.
7. Ensure access to post Covid-19 financial assistance for the road transport industry, in particular SMEs, in order to support the continuity and resilience of mobility and supply chains.
8. Demand respect to drivers by customers, shippers and authorities, this includes access to essential services, including clean sanitation facilities at loading and unloading points as well as border crossings for drivers²⁰.

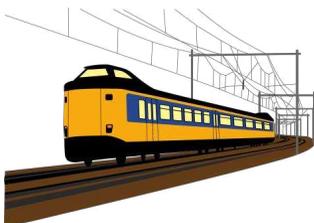
Railways Sector:

During lockdowns and mobility restrictions, governments made it clear that rail is an essential service that has to maintain a minimum level of service. The restrictions on rail operations varied from one country to another depending on the procedures they have made to halt the spread of the Corona virus.

Rail freight was essential in providing commodities such as food, coal, and health related materials (e.g. medicine, PPEs ...etc to communities during the lockdowns. Despite all this, overall freight traffic has been reduced during the Covid 19 pandemic. ²¹

²⁰ [ITF - IRU Joint Statement](#)

²¹ [UIC How the Railway Sector Fought Covid 19](#)



Restrictions on services and individual's movement on the global level combined with authorities' advice to not travel have led to a decrease of passenger volumes of approximately 80% for all national rail services during lockdowns. For international rail passenger services, the passenger volumes have dropped by almost 100% for all operators, in line with international passenger border closures. For freight operations, the volumes have been hit with an average estimated loss of between 10 -15% for most operators.

An estimation conducted by UIC shows the full year passenger demand is expected to decline up to 30% in revenues compared to 2019 while the freight sector is expected to decline an average of 10% in revenue compared to a year-ago period. This amounts to around \$125 billion for years 2020 and 2021 for a crisis which may last several years according to some economic projections.²²

Cases from the Region

Egypt: Egyptian National Railways were much affected by the limitation imposed on operating hours with a considerable rise in traffic during the two hours before curfew.

The Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics revealed that the train traffic was still affected by the Coronavirus pandemic and the railway revenues decreased. During the month of July, it recorded 181 million EGP compared to 234.4 million EGP at the same time in 2019. The number of railway passengers was recorded in July 16 million passengers compared to 24 million passengers at the same time in 2019.²³



In general the rail operators have shown they are resilient to the crises, but given these exceptional circumstances, governments are expected to take appropriate economic measures to support the rail sector, consistent with the priority given to a rail sector competitive with other transport modes, which is a key element for the future of the most sustainable and safest mode of transport.

Rail has the potential to be one of the most powerful tools to reverse the crises of climate change and COVID-19, whilst keeping the global economy moving. The rail infrastructure could be the bedrock of sustainable supply chains and a new economic model based on public goods and needs, instead of profit and private interest.

Privatisation and subcontracting have weakened global supply chains and, as a result, the ITF's response to and recovery from crises: public ownership and investment is the only means of making the railway sector a sustainable solution to these crises.

A well-funded and democratic railway sector is one of the great equalizers for society. Job mobility, public health, and skilled, well-paid employment increase when governments cooperate with trade unions, passengers, and impacted communities to develop and maintain rail networks.

²² [UIC Covid 19 Impact on Economics](#)

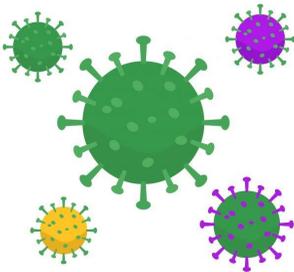
²³ [Covid 19 emapact on Egyptian Railways](#)



Privatisation and subcontracting pose significant health and safety risks to passengers and all railway workers. Privatisation reduces public accountability and transparency. Serious health and safety threats, including the transmission of COVID-19, are more likely to be monitored, identified and remedied in systems that are publicly owned and where working terms and conditions are defined through collective bargaining.

Subcontracted railway workers, including cleaning, catering and administrative staff, are disproportionately in precarious, informal and non-standard forms of employment. Without sufficient job security and social protection, these workers are sometimes forced to work when tired, stressed or unwell. This poses serious safety risks, especially if the COVID-19 virus is present within the workplace, community or supply chain.

Women are over-represented in typically subcontracted roles such as cleaning, catering and administration. This disproportionately excludes them from additional safety protection, higher standards of pay, enhanced terms and conditions, social protection and collective bargaining.



Publicly-owned, reinvested, integrated rail must be at the heart of a new economic model. Privatisation and subcontracting is unsafe, unfair and unsustainable. Long-term financial support for railways must be conditional on the fulfilment of public interests, including democratic accountability, decent work and equality. Rail is a public good – that must be ensured it is strong enough to help prevent and reverse future crises.

The ITF calls upon governments and rail authorities to negotiate with trade unions to:

Guarantee the health and safety of all rail workers and passengers

1. Recognise COVID-19 as an occupational disease.
2. Guarantee adequate and appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) and access to sanitary facilities for all workers.
3. Identify threats to and new pressures on workers health, rights and welfare, and develop and implement workplace responses, including standardised social distancing protocols and protections against violence at work and gender-based occupational segregation;
4. Provide access to free healthcare, and access to medical testing, treatment, training, equipment and facilities for training for all workers.



5. Guarantee paid leave, in the form of sick pay or holiday pay, from the first day of leave, for all workers.

6. Improve scheduling, days of work and working hours to protect jobs and the health and safety of workers.

Safeguard workers' rights to safeguard passenger safety

7. Respect the right to withdraw from a work situation that presents an imminent and serious danger to their life or health, without fear of retaliation.

8. Enforce ILO Conventions regarding freedom of association, collective bargaining, forced labour, discrimination, violence and harassment at work, gender-based occupational segregation, and occupational health and safety for all workers.

9. Protect the privacy and personal information of workers, and share with trade unions any data contributing to corporate decision-making.

Protect pay, conditions and jobs

10. Guarantee the full income, terms and conditions and employment of all rail workers during the COVID-19 crisis and any future disruptions to rail.

11. Recognise and compensate the key role of transport workers through line of duty and enhanced compensation and benefits, including access to compensation in the case of injury or death;

12. Negotiate a fair and transparent distribution of the impact of the COVID-19 crisis and any future disruptions across the industry.

13. End precarious and non-standard forms of work in the rail network and supply chain to protect the health, safety and welfare of all workers and passengers.



Build economic and environmental sustainability

- 14.** Recognise and exercise their duty of care for all workers in their business and supply chain; reduce subcontracting and outsourcing of rail services and jobs; and, where appropriate,
 - 15.** Increase public ownership of rail and mandate rail authorities to directly manage and/or employ all workers within the rail network, including outsourced and agency workers;
 - 16.** Guarantee democratic accountability in the planning, development and future of rail through worker representation in rail authorities and management.
 - 17.** Recognise rail as decarbonising infrastructure, with investment in electrification, as part of any environmental and decarbonisation targets, policies, strategies and spending.
- 18.** Promote fair transport including, fair pricing and taxation across the whole transportation system and supply chain.
- 19.** Collectively bargain with trade unions on any introduction or new use of technology and data, or changes to existing technology in the rail network.
- 20.** Reinvest profits into debt reduction, rail modernisation, staff training, education, gender-impact assessments and measures that increase the long-term sustainability of rail.

These measures must apply to all rail workers and all rail supply chain workers regardless of their job description, contractual arrangement and employment status and be responsive to different genders and migration statuses.²⁴

²⁴ [ITF Demands for sustainable Railways.](#)



Impact of Covid 19 on Women in the Transport Industry

The transport industry is highly gendered, and whilst all transport workers are being severely impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, there will be specific and additional impacts for women transport workers.

As the International Labour Organization (ILO) has recognised, the challenges arising out of this crisis have the potential to exacerbate existing inequalities. To avoid this, it is imperative that the transport industry – including employers, governments, investors and unions – action a gender responsive approach to ensure that inequalities are not reproduced, perpetuated or intensified.

Women transport workers are a part of the workforce which is the lifeblood of a global economy linking supply chains and keeping the world moving.

They are the drivers, conductors, ticket sellers, cabin crew, pilots, dockworkers and seafarers providing critical services, as the global community responds to the pandemic. But they are also the less visible workers keeping transport systems running, through vital work such as maintenance, security, cleaning, and administration services.

As a result of the gender –segregated nature of the transport industry, women are concentrated on the frontlines of this pandemic in customer – facing and cleaning roles with a higher risk of infection. This increased exposure, combined with a lack of adequate and appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) and the fact that women also make up the majority of precarious workers, means that women transport workers will disproportionality suffer the negative impacts of the coronavirus crisis.

ILO recommendation 205, demands a gender perspective in all crisis response, gender – inclusive social dialogue, and gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls for enabling recovery.

After Covid-19, going back to the ‘normal’ which for many women transport workers means being overrepresented in precarious employment without social protections, underrepresented in leadership and decision-making, facing violence at work and home, and sanitation indignity. This should not be accepted as normal. Instead, there is an opportunity to ensure that as we emerge from this crisis; there is a ‘gender equal new normal’ that guarantees good jobs for all workers.



ITF has set key priority areas to protect and enhance women transport workers' rights

Women on all decision-making bodies

Without women on decision-making bodies, analysis, strategy and policy will not adequately address the issues that women face.

ITF calls on employers and governments to:

- Ensure that women are always included on all decision-making bodies.
- Ensure gender parity in all decision-making related to monitoring and collecting information and feeding back into policy advice processes as outlined in the [UN Women, ILO, Unicef](#) recommendations.

Income and social protection

Income support for all women workers, including for migrant, precarious, informal workers and those in non-standard forms of employment (such as part-time, outsourced, 'gig' work) is essential.

Employers and governments must provide:

- Income protection for all workers who lose their jobs or are temporarily affected by Covid-19.
- Paid leave for any worker who is directly or indirectly impacted by Covid-19 due to infection, isolation or family or childcare obligations including those in non-standard forms of employment.
- Adequate measures for protection from infection including adjustment of work schedules with no loss of earnings for vulnerable and at-risk workers (and members of family) including pregnant workers and new mothers.
- Expansive coverage of unemployment benefits, relief packages, health insurance and other social protections that include informal workers and those in non-standard forms of employment.
- International cooperation for the urgent establishment of a Universal Social Protection fund [**G20 Labour_Employment PDF**] to provide partial support for low to middle-income countries' social protection systems and ensure social protection floors for the 28 poorest nations.

Access to sanitation and appropriate PPE

Access to sanitation facilities, clean toilets, sanitisers and clean drinkable water, already a major issue for transport workers, is critical in the response to Covid-19.

Employers and governments must ensure:

- Safe access to decent sanitation facilities and ample breaks, without fear of penalty, particularly given the shutdown of many public spaces often used by transport workers.
- Strict and regular cleaning and sanitation procedures in workplaces, which are inclusive and take account of the specific needs of transport workers such as menstruation, pregnancy, disability, menopause and pre-existing health conditions.

Women must also be involved in developing and implementing preventative health and safety measures, including:

- PPE and uniforms which are suitable for women's bodies.
- Provision of PPE including masks, gloves, hand-sanitisers and/or water and soap for all workers whose tasks require them.
- Working conditions that minimise transmission and facilitate social distancing with a gender inclusive and responsive approach.



Secure work

Overrepresentation in precarious informal work and non-standard forms of employment means women are more vulnerable to layoffs and loss of earnings without any form of income protection. Informal transport workers have no choice but to continue to work in order to earn a daily wage, despite the risk to their health and repercussions from the authorities. Migrant women also have no work in lockdown situations in many countries.

Without strong protections and secure conditions of employment negotiated with unions, many women may find themselves pushed out of the industry.

The ITF calls on employers and governments to:

- Urgently facilitate the transition of workers from the informal to the formal economy in line with ILO Recommendation 204.
- Ensure **universal** access to income protections, healthcare benefits and leave including for sickness, pregnancy and caring responsibilities.
- Re-skill women transport workers into new (formal) occupations in the industry.

Care before profit



There are many aspects of this crisis that women will face specifically and/or disproportionately, for example pregnancy and maternity risks as well as unpaid care responsibilities.

The ITF calls on employers and governments to:

- Recognise the extra care burden on women with additional measures to protect their incomes and jobs.
- Provide additional protections to pregnant women and those who have given birth.
- Provide protection of terms and conditions of work and continued income, including for maternity leave.
- Paid sick leave and carers leave.
- Ensure sanitary provisions and contraceptives are available for women stranded due to lockdown.

End violence and harassment against women

According to the UN, violence against women has increased during this pandemic by more than 25% in countries with reporting systems in place.

Violence against women will continue to escalate as unemployment, financial strains and insecurity increase. A loss of income will make it harder for women to escape abusive situations.

In more isolated work environments women find themselves at an increased risk of violence. Workers in customer-facing roles face increased risk of violence from the public. Scarcity of work is amplifying existing risks of sexual coercion particularly for informal workers. Isolation is exacerbating domestic violence and potential impacts including homicide and suicide. And economic strain has the potential to impact survivor support services and initiatives.



The ITF calls on employers and governments to:

- Provide safe commuting measures.
- Implement safety measures and reporting protocols for workers and passengers.
- Ratify and implement [ILO Violence and Harassment Convention, No. 190](#).
- Declare gender-based violence related services essential services.
- Ensure a coordinated response between health authorities, police, courts and social services.
- Sponsor awareness campaigns to address gender-based violence, including myths, stigma and underreporting.
- Provide information about support services.
- Increase financial support to shelters, hotlines and counselling services to meet increased demand.
- Increase availability of alternative accommodation to avoid confinement with abusers.
- Implement accessible systems to alert authorities and protect survivors.

New technology to benefit women workers

Women's jobs in transport are more likely to be vulnerable to the impacts of digitalisation.

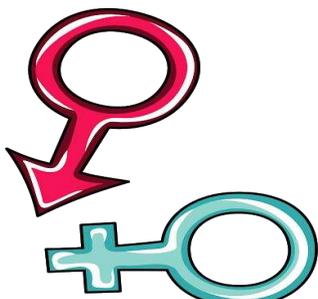
Employers and governments must ensure:

- Any measures implemented in response to the crisis, including the introduction of new technology, automation or digitalisation must benefit, not cost, women workers.
- Unions are included as key stakeholders in consultation on all new technological developments in transport, which must include gender impact assessments.

Gender impact assessments

Recognising how Covid-19 is affecting women and men differently is fundamental for creating effective and equitable policies and interventions. This will result in better outcomes for women but also for everyone.

It is critical that gender-responsive research is carried out into the economic and social impacts of Covid-19, taking into account intersecting aspects such as contractual and migrant status, race and disability. Obtaining gender-disaggregated data, including on evolving rates of infection, economic impacts, care burden and the incidence of sexual violence and abuse, is critical to ensure that policies, strategies and measures are evidence-based to meet the needs of women transport workers.



Gender-responsive economic stimulus

Stimulus packages must include:

- Gender impact assessments and gender-responsive criteria, designed through social dialogue, in projects and loan programmes in response to the crisis or re-purposed funding.
- Debt relief to enhance, not restrict, public spending on health, education, low-carbon infrastructure.
- Social protections to achieve secure and decent jobs, equitable access and gender equality.²⁵

Impact of Covid 19 on young transport workers:

Young workers are at the sharp end of the devastating economic consequences brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The pandemic's impact on workers has been severe but unequal. While older people have been more vulnerable to the worst of the disease itself, younger people have been more acutely impacted by the devastating economic impacts.

One in ten workers under the age of 30 has become unemployed in the last months. Over 70% of young workers have worked fewer hours and earned less compared to older workers since the pandemic. Under current circumstances, this is not expected to improve in the near future. Most young workers believe that it is very likely they will lose their jobs by August this year. Lack of networks and experience can make it more difficult for them to find other, decent, jobs and they can be pushed into work with less social and legal protection. Young workers across the transport sector are particularly vulnerable to job losses and reduced work. They are often disadvantaged due to the relatively short length of their tenure and therefore have relatively weaker protections. Many young workers in the aviation industry lost their jobs and costs-reduction strategies implemented by airlines and airports will continue to have a negative impact on working conditions, in particular on youth employment. Similarly, hundreds of young workers in ports around the world have lost their jobs due to their contractual status.



Young people are more at risk than any other age group from automation and digitalisation. A recent ILO study shows that the kind of jobs they hold are more likely to be automatable, in whole or part.

Young workers are also overrepresented in some of the most marginalised worker categories, 77% of the global youth workforce are in informal employment exacerbating their vulnerability during this crisis. Informally employed young transport workers in many cases have found their employment dry up almost overnight or are working in unsafe conditions.

²⁵ [ITF - Women Transport Workers and Covid 19](#)

The expanding non-standard forms of employment, the gig economy, particularly in urban areas, workers in food delivery and ride sharing continue to work across many of the world's cities during the pandemic. However, despite their role in providing key services, they continue to be employed precariously, low paid with irregular hours, poor job security, weaker or no health and safety protections, no provisions for paid sick leave and little or no social protections. Due to lockdowns, gig economy workers have seen their income fall and companies take no responsibility, continuing to hide behind fake selfemployment relationships. This employment relationship also means these workers are excluded from government wage subsidy and support programmes.

The growing informal economy in the global north also has an increasing number of young migrant workers. Over 70% of all international migrants are young. In 2019, over 38 million international migrants were under the age of 20.

Global inequalities mean the possibility of employment, even with exploitative conditions, leads young workers to migrate. Young migrants therefore usually live in overcrowded areas with low access to water and poor sanitation facilities. They also often have little access to information because of language and cultural barriers.

Due to their migrant status they usually cannot freely access local health care services and they need to pay for testing, care and treatment. All these conditions increase their vulnerability to the virus and lockdown measures. Across the world migrants are being stigmatised as 'virus carriers' and are victims of xenophobic and racist attacks. They are also locked out social security networks, including wage support and housing. Because of lockdown measures, young migrants are now jobless and stranded in places far from their homes. For international migrants, the loss of their job often means they lose their right to stay in the country, while Covid-19 related travel restrictions prevent them from returning to their country of origin.

In time of this unprecedented crisis, many young workers are requested to continue to work and provide essential services and goods. For instance, young seafarers continue to operate while travel restrictions are disrupting crew changes and repatriation, extending their service period and working hours, keeping them separated from their families for longer than planned. Too often though young workers in other key sectors such as public transport, warehousing and logistics that keep the supply chain moving, are not provided adequate personal protective equipment and they often operate in workplaces that are not adequately equipped with sanitation facilities, facing serious risks of contracting COVID-19 and limited or no access to protection schemes. Due to these unsafe working conditions, many young workers have fallen sick and lost their lives to the coronavirus.

Job losses, unsafe working conditions, precarious livelihoods, and disruption of social relationships have made young people more susceptible to mental health crises. They have and could continue to experience emotional and psychological breakdowns which could lead to self-harming behaviour or even suicide.

Young workers must not pay the price of this crisis. They are both the present and the future of the transport industry and must be central to the recovery. In line with the ITF's demands for workers across the various transport sectors, young workers must also be protected by:

1. Extending employment, income and health and safety provisions to all workers regardless of their employment relationship, duration of tenure or citizenship status
2. Giving all migrants, regardless of their status, temporary residence to facilitate their ability to access health, financial and welfare measures

COVID19 is highlighting the critical vulnerabilities of the youth workforce, increasingly engaged in underpaid and under-protected jobs. Both COVID19 and post-COVID19 economic, social and political choices and priorities have to address the root causes of young workers' vulnerability and promote youth employment such as: precarious employment relationships, hazardous working and living conditions, health and safety of workplaces, lack of equal rights for migrant workers, discrimination and informal jobs.



Young transport workers call for COVID19 interventions to:

1. Guarantee that all working and contract relationships ensure all young transport workers decent working conditions that fully protect and guarantee their fundamental rights at work, eradicating precarious work as well as all forms of forced and hazardous labour.
 2. Promote youth employment supporting the transition from school to work, offering job orientation and placement services, incentivising quality apprenticeships and ensuring entry level and youth friendly jobs, designing a set of policies “to promote full, productive and freely chosen employment” in line with the ILO Convention N122 and SDG 8.5.
 3. New employment policies are required to address the impact of new technologies on the labour market (ILO N122), to secure the transition of youth to jobs at lower risk of automation that match young workers interests and skills.
4. Invest in youth training and upskilling to prepare young workers to respond to new working arrangements and occupation shifts increasingly relying on digital tools and new technologies and enable them to acquire new technological skills part of an effective lifelong learning system.
 5. Support and campaign to build union membership, demand decent regulation, and develop new models to end gig exploitation and build fair platforms as per the ITF Platform Principles framework.
 6. Support young informal workers in transitioning to formal, decent and safe work while providing income security and ensuring fundamental human and workers' rights (ILO R204).
 7. Youth employment, skills development and stimulus packages should promote the integration of decent work and “green jobs” principles. This can be achieved by effectively pursuing environmental sustainability objectives, supporting a low carbon emission transport model and effectively contributing to the struggle for a just transition in response to climate change.
 8. Promote safe and secure working conditions to all workers including migrant workers, enforce their labour rights (SDG 8.8) and improve functioning of work permit and visa schemes.
 9. Stop discrimination and stigma. Covid19 does not justify racism and xenophobia and the spread of racist stereotypes can be even faster than the pandemic. Governments, institutions and companies have a

fundamental role in ensuring that their policies and interventions do not have any discriminatory connotations based on migration status, race and nationalities.

10. It is critical to ensure young workers' active participation in decision making processes concerning both COVID19 and post COVID19 interventions. They are often under-represented in these processes while their participation and effective engagement is crucial to tackle the problems affecting their employment and working conditions. Young workers' rights and voice needs to be included in all policy demands and responses not only to build COVID19 related interventions but mostly to contribute to rebuild a more resilient, fair and equal economic, productive and social system.²⁶



Recommendations:

Covid 19 crises is a global crisis, for this international bodies, governments, employers, and unions should seek global solutions:

- Consider COVID19 and similar epidemic an occupational disease and should be fully covered.
 - Secure free PPEs to all workers to guarantee that they carry out their jobs safely, and apply all needed safely protocols.
 - Encourage tripartite dialogue to address workers' issues.
 - Covid19 impact on women and youth is more than other categories. Governments are asked to look into the impacts, analyze reasons and take actions to protect the vulnerable categories.
 - Sustainable government's financial support to transport sector conditional to maintain decent jobs.
 - International financial institutions IFIs to revisit poor countries financial liabilities in order to enable them to resume their duties, including supporting different sectors.
 - Monitor the multinational enterprises and make sure they fully respect CBAs, and workers' rights as some multinationals took advantage of the situation and breached CBAs.
- Covid19 crises expedites the automation processes and lead to use many modules of automation. Future of work and its implementations should be discussed and agreed with unions and workers representatives to make sure gradual and accepted processes are agreed between all parties.
 - Covid19 crises proves that informal sector represents the majority of the workers in transport sectors. Subcontracting workers should enjoy decent union jobs, and governments should enforce legal ways to make sure informal workers are part of the formal respected jobs
 - Covid19 proves that public sector was the only guaranteed sector that supported countries. Governments should work to nationalize transport sectors wherever possible.
 - Equal distribution of Covid 19 vaccines to undeveloped countries as well as developed countries.

²⁶ [ITF young Transport workers](#)



Conclusion:

The Covid-19 crisis has greatly affected everyone worldwide. But workers in healthcare and other fields of care, as well as those working in vital services and sectors like retail, food production and transport, have been shouldering the most. They have also taken the biggest risks, with their health and safety at work insufficiently protected too often.

Transport workers in precarious jobs or the informal economy, have suffered from lockdowns everywhere. They are paying a high price, losing their jobs and livelihoods without enjoying proper protection in social security. This leaves many of them in poverty, unable to feed their families. Universal social protection is therefore needed more than ever. There is an urgent need for a global, coordinated effort to implement universal social protection, with major investment in funding it, especially to help the poorest countries and regions provide their populations with concrete support.

This crisis includes a prominent gender dimension. A good percentage of the 'heroes' of the crisis are women. Many of them are also migrants. Yet most of them are still suffering from poor wages and poor working conditions, while the crisis has increased their burden of unpaid work.

Before the pandemic young workers were stuck in all kinds of precarious jobs, including on-call work, temporary contracts, agency work, and undeclared employment. The situation during Covid 19 crises has even worsened.

An often-forgotten dimension of this crisis is its impact on migrant workers, many of whom work in vital sectors and services that ensure our societies can continue to run properly. But because of the precarious nature of their employment contracts or immigration status, they stay without the protection needed against the virus. Reports worldwide also tell us about migrants being forced to work in unsafe circumstances in jobs and sectors that cannot be considered 'vital' at all.

Often housed in overcrowded, unhygienic communal or worksite accommodation, and transported to and from the workplace packed in small buses, they are an easy target for the coronavirus.

Yet the focus is mostly on how to balance economic interests and public health risks, without even considering migrants' human rights, including protection of their health and safety. The pandemic has also led to forced repatriation and migrants being stranded at borders, without any support given to them.

This crisis has clearly shown the need to protect workers against the impact of viruses. So, the priority must include the protection of workers against biological hazards. Steps must be taken at national and international levels to recognize Covid-19 as an occupational disease, ensuring that workers enjoy proper protection of their health, job and income.

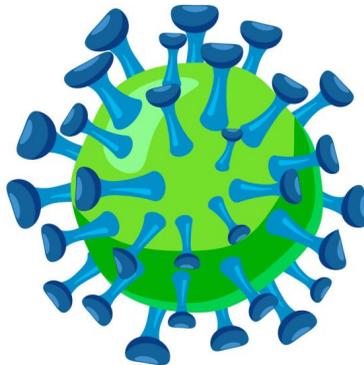
For millions of workers, the effects of today's crisis are already devastating. But the prospect of a quick, fair recovery are likewise gloomy, with the crisis making existing inequalities even worse. Yet ever more unions in various countries and regions are required to standing up for workers' rights and protection and claiming a place at the table

to discuss relief measures and recovery plans. The ILO is well placed to remind the international community of the key role that social justice, social dialogue and respect for workers' rights must play in any plan to deal with the current crisis and the recovery from it.

This is the moment to remind everyone that social justice and the fight against inequalities must be a top priority, with a central role for governments in tackling the employment crisis and its fallout: starvation and social unrest. This issue is an accident waiting to happen, with millions of workers in the formal and informal economy losing their jobs.

Governments, businesses and unions deeply understand that only with social justice and social dialogue as guiding principles there will be a proper recovery from the vast destruction of Covid 19 pandemic.

Unions worldwide are calling for a new social contract. This is the moment to show the world that social dialogue and tripartism are essential to recovering from a crisis as devastating as Covid-19.





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