

ITUC Covid-19 Job Cuts Tracker Methodology

The Job Cuts Tracker

The Job Cuts Tracker constantly monitors news headlines through Google news alerts. The alerts are designed to pick up stories that mention layoffs and related terms selected by the ITUC in original languages. Once the alerts arrive, the Job Cuts Tracker looks for mentions of the number of jobs affected and the company name. After this semi-automated selection, these results are then sent for human review.

Twenty countries were selected to give geographical, economic and population coverage:

Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Mexico, Nigeria, Russian, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom, the USA.

This includes:

- Seventeen out of twenty G20 countries (in bold)
- Eleven out of 37 OECD countries (Japan, USA, France, Germany, Canada, Mexico, United Kingdom, Spain, Australia, Italy, Turkey)
- Nine non-OECD countries (Argentina, Brazil, South Africa, Saudi Arabia, India, Russia, Nigeria, Indonesia, Kenya)
- Coverage of half the population of the world.

The search terms used by the Google news alerts that feed the Job Cuts Tracker were written by native speakers, in order to ensure they included the correct country-related terminology used for reporting job losses. Search terms in their original language for each of the countries are listed in Appendix I.

The Algorithm

The Job Cuts Tracker is able to semi-automate the process of selecting stories from the Google news alerts using an algorithm. This simplifies the human job of reviewing the stories.

It sifts through over 50,000 news headlines a month (approximately 13,000 a week) to identify layoff announcements, translating into English around 320,000 words of text a month (80,000 weekly) as part of this process.

Furthermore, the algorithm behind the Job Cuts Tracker is customisable. We are able to help it learn as we learn more about how news stories are reported, and this means it does a better job of suggesting relevant stories and identifying duplicate stories.

Human Review

The semi-automation of the search process of daily news articles relating to job cuts from twenty countries allows human review of the news articles which are most likely to be relevant.

Without the algorithm, the sheer volume of news stories coming in would have been overwhelming for a person to verify.

Once a story has been found by a Google news alert, and checked for relevance by the algorithm, the headline appears in the Job Cuts Tracker where it is reviewed by a human. The headline of the story appears in English (automatically translated where necessary) and the original language, with a link to the original story. The person doing the review checks that the Job Cuts Tracker has the correct company, number of job losses and country (all of which can be customised by the reviewer).

Often pronouncements about job cuts by employers are trailed in the media ahead of workers being informed or unions undertaking negotiating to save jobs. Human reviewers of job cuts assess the source (employer, union, government) of the job cut announcement to include credible threats to jobs as well as job cuts that have been formally made.

When a story is approved, it is added to the results section and contributes to the running total of job loss announcements. Stories can be rejected for not being a company lay off announcement, being a duplicate of another result, or being from not one of our focus countries. Stories are also gathered under the category 'regional or sector layoffs'.

Stories are filed under these categories, which allows for future analysis of job cuts by region or sector and other categories.

Analysis of Data

The ITUC analyses the data on a regular basis to look for trends and provide reports on job cuts. Job losses can be filtered and sorted by date, country, ITUC region, G20 group or OECD country, and company name.

Data has been collected for twenty countries since 15th August 2020.

Purpose of the Job Cuts Tracker

The Job Cuts Tracker does not replace the critical work of the ILO in measuring the economic impact of Covid-19 on the formal and informal economy.

The job cuts that the tracker identifies are only those that are reported in news articles. These will be predominantly large private sector companies reported in the national press, and local government or iconic small businesses reported in the regional and local press.

The Job Cuts Tracker aims to gather close to real-time data gathered from news sources that shows which companies are cutting jobs to give workers' unions, governments and international / multilateral institutions a picture of how things are right now for working people.

Credits

The Job Cuts Tracker service was created by ITUC staff working with freelance consultant [Joe Derry Hall](#).

APPENDIX I – ORIGINAL LANGUAGE SEARCH TERMS

English

layoff OR layoffs OR “job losses” OR “job cuts” OR redundancy OR redundancies

Turkish

işten çıkarma

işten çıkarılma

İşsizlik

Istihdam

French

Layoff : licenciement

Layoffs : licenciements

Job losses : pertes d’emplois

Job cuts : suppressions d’emplois

Redundancy : licenciement

Redundancies : licenciements

Italian

licenziamento, cassa integrazione, riduzione del personale, lavoro, impiego, perdita del lavoro, disoccupazione, disoccupato, disoccupata

German

Jobverlust – Jobverluste

Arbeitsplatzverlust – Arbeitsplatzverluste

Beschäftigungsverlust – Beschäftigungsverluste

Entlassungen

Kündigungen

Stellenabbau

Beschäftigungsabbau

Jobs - Beschäftigung

Bahasa Indonesian

PHK

Pemutusan hubungan kerja

Dirumahkan

Spanish

Despidos

Suspensiones

Suspensiones laborales

Recortes de empleo

Pérdida del empleo

Desempleo

Despido colectivo

Reducción/Recorte de personal/de plantilla

Paro

Portuguese

Demissões

Demissão em massa

Desligamentos

Cortes de funcionários

Cortes de empregos

Suspensão de contratos

Desemprego

Perda de emprego

Arabic

EGYPT: مصر

KSA: السعودية

فصل من العمل

فصل

عمل

خدمة

مفصول عامل

مفصولين عمال

المفصولي and المفصول

خسارة الوظيفة or خسارة الوظائف

فقدان وظيفة

فقدوا وظائفهم

فصل

عدد

بشركة

عمال

مفصولين

شركة

Russian

сокращение, сократить, сокращать, сократили, сокращают, сократил, сокращает, сокращения, сократит, сократят

увольнение, уволить, увольнять, уволили, уволил, уволило, уволила, увольняют, увольняет, увольнении, уволит, уволят

оптимизация, оптимизировать, оптимизирует, оптимизируют, оптимизировали, оптимизировал, оптимизировала, оптимизировало

безработица, рост безработицы, увеличение безработицы

сделать безработными, делать безработными, делает безработными, делают безработными, сделал безработными, сделала безработными, сделало безработными

оставить без работы, оставил без работы, оставила без работы, оставили без работы, оставило без работы

лишить работы, лишает работы, лишают работы, лишил работы, лишила работы, лишили работы, лишило работы

выбросить на улицу

“Companу” сокращает 500 работников

«Companу» сокращает 500 работников

Газпром (Gazprom) уволил 500 работников

ООО «Один» увольняет 500 работников

Газпром сокращает тысячи сотрудников

Japanese

失業(unemployment)

失業した(lost job)

失業者(unemployment person)

解雇(dismissal, lay off)

解雇する(fire)

解雇された(fired, dismissed)

倒産(bankruptcy)

倒産する(bankruptcy (v))

雇用喪失(job losses)

派遣切り(contracts are not renewed)

雇い止め(termination of employment (mainly used for temporary workers))