

Joint HOTREC-EFFAT Statement on Ukraine

16 March 2022

HOTREC and EFFAT, the European social partners in the hospitality sector, condemn Russia's invasion of Ukraine and deplore the loss of lives and the human suffering. The attack is a flagrant violation of international laws and agreements, and of Ukraine's territorial integrity as a sovereign and democratic state.

Real peace talks need to be established while safe humanitarian corridors need to open to allow civilians to leave the country. Reception and relocation plans within the EU have to be set up.

HOTREC and EFFAT welcome the activation of the [Temporary Protection Directive](#) by the European Council, allowing all people fleeing Ukraine to be protected and to access residency, housing, education, and labour, for one year, with a possible prolongation to three years.

Furthermore, we welcome the EU's [Guidelines on external border management](#) which clarify the facilitations available to Member States' border guards under the Schengen rules in conducting border controls. This will ensure efficient border management and help those fleeing the war to find shelter without delay, whilst maintaining a high level of security checks.

Specific attention must be paid to the situation of women and children fleeing the war zones, to protect them from gender-based and sexual violence, and in particular from human trafficking.

HOTREC and EFFAT call on the Commission and Member States to introduce measures to minimise the impact of the war on workers and businesses in the hospitality sector which has not yet recovered from the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and will be highly affected by this conflict. Such actions should include the continuation of emergency measures successfully used by the EU to tackle the COVID-19 outbreak (such as State Aid, SURE or other cohesion funds), by refinancing and refocusing them to address the consequences of the war on the economy and employment.

The social partners support the request for a suspension of the membership of the Russian Federation from the UN World Tourism Organisation, as discussed at the UNWTO Executive Council meeting on 8 March 2022, since Russia is not aligned with the organisation's fundamental principles and values.

HOTREC and EFFAT maintain their support to the employers' associations and trade unions in Ukraine and encourage all efforts our member organisations are undertaking at national level to provide shelter and protection to the refugees.

The social partners will continue to monitor the development of the geopolitical situation and its repercussions on our affiliates, working people and civilians at large.

HOTREC and EFFAT urge the immediate cessation of the military intervention, the withdrawal of Russian troops and equipment from Ukraine, a de-escalation of tensions and a return to diplomacy aiming at the instantaneous restoration of sovereignty and democratic freedoms in Ukraine.

HOTREC is the umbrella Association of Hotels, Restaurants, Bars and Cafés and similar establishments in Europe, which brings together 47 National associations in 36 countries, and is the voice of the European hospitality. HOTREC's mission is to represent and champion its interests towards the EU and international institutions, foster knowledge sharing and best practice among its members to further promote innovation, and act as a platform of expertise for the hospitality sector.

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EFFAT is the European Federation of Food, Agriculture and Tourism Trade Unions, also representing domestic workers. As a European Trade Union Federation representing 120 national trade unions from 35 European countries, EFFAT defends the interests of more than 30 million workers towards the European Institutions, European employers' associations, and transnational companies. EFFAT is a member of the ETUC and the European regional organisation of the IUF.

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