

TOURISM IN CRISIS: A THIRD OF HOTELS IN ROME CLOSED



The Covid-19 pandemic has been affecting the world for almost two years now and the tourism industry is one of the biggest victims of this unprecedented crisis. And while there have been some ups during these last two years, mostly there have been downs and a very gloomy situation and even gloomier prospects for the sector.

Countries heavily dependent on tourism have been affected most by the crisis, with their large cities suffering most in the wake of the worldwide pandemic. A prime example of how Covid-19 restrictions have decimated tourism is Rome, one of the most popular cities on the globe.

Third of Hotels in Rome Closed

The hotel industry in Rome is currently dealing with numerous issues. According to fresh data, 350 of the approximately 1,300 Roman hotels are closed at the moment, with another 50 set to close in the next couple of days.

The reason for this is that the current occupancy numbers have dropped to April 2020 data. The situation is also aggravated by the obligation to present the Green pass to enter hotels, a measure that the government has launched to convince Italians to get vaccinated.

However, stakeholders argue that no action has been taken to support the hotels in Rome affected by the measure. And because of this, over 7,000 people are at risk of losing their jobs in the next three months.

Mass Layoffs

And layoffs are yet another issue challenging hotels in Rome. Many hotels have already dismissed their workers, for example the Sheraton Hotel or the Hotel Cicerone. And, as mentioned, this may be only just the beginning.

In this context, unions have asked for urgent measures in support of the tourism supply chain and are calling for the urgent ban on layoffs and the activation of social safety nets to avoid the risk that companies dump the cost of the pandemic crisis on workers.

City Tourism at Risk

According to the city councilor for tourism, Alessandro Onorato, “the turnover of the sector is almost zero and we are paying the highest price among all the cities of art”.

“The pandemic has substantially stopped arrivals from countries that until recently represented an important slice of travelers heading to Rome. The crisis affects all the related industries: tour operators, tourist guides, tourist buses, taxis, shops, restaurants. The list is unfortunately very long,” he added.

To try and find a solution, Onorato has requested to convene an extraordinary municipal council with the Minister of Labor Andrea Orlando and the Minister of Tourism Massimo Garavaglia.

“We are grateful to the government for what has been done to date, but now more than ever we must strongly say that there is an enormous risk for the economic resilience of city tourism: disappearing or being sold off to international funds. We cannot allow it,” Onorato concluded.

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