

Virus sees Booking.com slash quarter of global staff

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Online travel agency Booking.com said Tuesday it will cut up to a quarter of staff worldwide due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, leading to thousands of job losses.

The Amsterdam-based [booking site](#), which employs around 17,500 people around the world, declined to give an exact number of posts that will be slashed, saying details would become clearer "in the coming weeks and months."

But it warned that "up to 25 percent" of employees could go in what it called an "extremely difficult step".

"The COVID-19 crisis has devastated the travel industry, and we continue to feel the impact as travel volumes remain significantly reduced," the company said in a statement sent to AFP.

"While we have done much to save as many jobs as possible, we believe we must restructure our organisation to match our expectation of the future of travel," it added.

Booking.com's Amsterdam headquarters was expected to be among the sites affected, Dutch media reports added.

Hard-hit by the slowdown in international travel resulting from the lockdown, Booking.com follows in the footsteps of other digital [travel](#) sites such as Airbnb and TripAdvisor, which have also laid off around 25 percent of their workforce.

Booking.com applied in April for state support.

Last month it received some 61 million euros (\$71.8 million) from the Dutch state, making it the third-largest recipient of support behind flagship airline KLM and Dutch Rail (NS), the ANP national news agency reported.

Founded in 1996, Booking.com has some 28 million listings on its website which is available in 43 languages.

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