



## Poor working conditions for hotel workers in Dubai

**Demanding working conditions, withheld passports and twelve hour working days without breaks or overtime pay. This is the reality for migrants working at hotels in Dubai, according to a report released by Swedwatch and Fair Action today.**

Every year thousands of Europeans travel to Dubai and the number is increasing rapidly. The hotel sector in the gulf region is completely dependent on migrant workers. The NGO:s Swedwatch and Fair Action have investigated the working conditions at three hotels used by vacationers travelling to Dubai with Apollo, Ving and Fritidsresor - Swedish subsidiaries to Rewe, Thomas Cook and TUI.

The findings, published in the report "Shattered Dreams" are disconcerting. Swedwatch interviewed 30 migrant workers, which revealed numerous violations. All apart from two workers had their passports withheld by their employer. They worked upwards of 12-hour shifts under demanding conditions and often without overtime pay. In several cases 3rd party recruitment fees were paid in order to gain employment.

- Some workers clean 30 rooms a day and this wears them down, mentally and physically. But because of the kafala system in Dubai they cannot change employers, says Olof Björnsson, the researcher at Swedwatch who interviewed the workers in Dubai.

According to international frameworks for business and human rights, as well as the sustainability policies of these European companies, the workers' rights must be respected. But the investigation by Swedwatch reveals a huge gap between policy and practice.

- The fact that none of these tour operators were aware of the rights violations at the hotels that they use is remarkable, since these problems are well known in the region, says Anneli Nordling, chairperson of Fair Action.

In the report Swedwatch presents ten recommendations to the investigated tour operators. The most urgent ones concern introducing routines for discovering and preventing human rights violations in their business. Another recommendation is that the tour operators should make sure that the hotels they use follow the local law on issues like working hours, recruitment fees and that they do not withhold the passports of migrant workers.

**Download the full report here:** [www.swedwatch.org/en](http://www.swedwatch.org/en)

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