

GENERATION Z RECOGNISES ITS RESPONSIBILITY IN SHAPING THE FUTURE OF TRAVEL IN EUROPE

Brussels, 1 July 2020: Generation Z Travellers believe that tourism benefits local communities, while also being aware of the personal benefits of travel, such as understanding other cultures and building life experiences and self-confidence. These were just two of the findings revealed in [the study](#) published by the European Travel Commission (ETC) aimed to understand the travel motivations and the broader world view of Generation Z¹.

As the world's youngest population grows, becomes more affluent and begins to travel, it is likely to cause major changes in consumer travel demand. Understanding Gen Z travellers and their concerns and motivations is fundamental to evaluating how demand for tourism could evolve in the years to come, and how it could impact tourism in Europe and worldwide.

As hyper-connected generation, Gen Z grew up in an era of unprecedented awareness about human behaviour, personal health, technology and humankind's impact on the environment. Major issues that have grown in importance since the start of the 21st century, such as globalisation, the 2008 financial crisis, terrorism, climate change, and advances in technology have played a strong role in shaping Gen Zers' attitudes and beliefs, and by extension, their travel behaviour.

The study includes a quantitative research carried among 2,800 Gen Zers aged 18-24 in China, Germany, the United Kingdom and United States to reveal their travel preferences and global outlook.

Mixing budget and luxury, with local food and urban culture

The survey found that among Gen Z, the top reasons for choosing a travel destination are value for money (47%), availability of cheap flights (45%) and safety and security (42%). When it comes to accommodation however, more than 1 in 3 respondents said they would most likely choose an upscale 4 or 5-star hotel suggesting that Gen Zers are happy to mix budget and luxury experiences for self-reward or when set against the cost of cheaper modes of transport. For future trips to Europe, trying locally produced food and drinks is their top priority (75%) followed by discovering the local urban culture (67%) and doing cultural activities, such as visiting museums and concerts (62%).

A generation constantly connected

Unsurprisingly, smartphones are the most important devices for Generation Z when researching and booking trips, as well as for making trip cancellations and changes. Chinese Gen Zers show a particularly strong preference for using smartphones for trip research (70%), underlining the importance for local tourism businesses of having mobile-friendly content and enabling payments through apps such as WeChat.

Travelling with purpose and a sense of responsibility

The study confirmed that Gen Z is growing up as a globally aware generation, conscious of their own responsibility towards the environment and the society around them. Climate change was cited by more than half of Gen Zers in Germany, the UK and the US as the issue most important to them (52%) followed by mental health issues (43%) and crime & justice (40%). Inspired by

¹ Generation Z is defined for the purposes of this study as those born between 1996 and 2012 (currently aged between 8 to 24 years of age).

Gen Zers such as Greta Thunberg, attitudes among Gen Zers in the UK and Germany around aviation tax and mobility appear to differ sharply from their older counterparts.

These attitudes towards the environment and mental health are among the issues that Europe's national tourism organisations (NTOs) will have to be aware of as they shape policy and marketing efforts around the demands of a distinctive generation. Recommendations around these essential topics are included in the report, as well as '12 trends driven by Gen Z that will shape the future of travel in Europe' to help guide the policy agendas of European NTOs in the medium to long term.

COVID-19 and Generation Z

Today Gen Zers are facing a disruption to their education, careers and future job prospects, while fearing for their health (already a major issue for this generation) and the health of their loved ones. The study presents some preliminary insights on the impact of COVID-19 on Gen Zers attitudes towards restriction measures to curb the spread of the virus, travel and freedom and suggests that the uncovered travel patterns and attitudes will likely continue post-coronavirus.

The full report can be downloaded from: <https://etc-corporate.org/reports/study-on-generation-z-travellers/>

The associated infographic can be downloaded from: <https://etc-corporate.org/reports/generation-z-travellers-infographic/>

**** ENDS ****

Media contact

Shane Bradley

Hume Brophy Communications

etc@humbrophy.com

Ph: +32 (0)2 234 6860

Note to editors

The European Travel Commission is an association of National Tourism Organisations (NTOs). It was created in 1948 to promote Europe as a tourist destination to the long-haul markets outside of Europe, originally in the USA and later in Canada, Latin America and Asia. It currently has 33 member NTOs, including 7 from outside the European Union. Europe is the world's no. 1 tourist destination with 742 million international arrivals in 2019 and more than 50% of the market share of worldwide tourism. For more information, please visit www.etc-corporate.org.