

EUROPEANS STILL OPTIMISTIC ABOUT TRAVEL BUT THEIR PLANS MAY BE HAMPERED BY HEALTH CONCERNS AND INTENSIFYING COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS

- *More than 1 in 2 respondents indicated that they intend to take a trip in the next six months, with the majority (80%) planning to travel within Europe*
- *Health and safety (21%) along with peace of mind (14%) are the most important factors for Europeans who are planning to travel*
- *The survey emphasises the urgency of a harmonised approach for tourism recovery in Europe, with quarantine measures being the primary concern for short-term travel*

Brussels, 8 October 2020: European travellers are eager to resume travel, but anxiety over a rising number of coronavirus cases and stringent travel restrictions may cause many to put their anticipated journeys on hold, according to a [new study](#) released today by the European Travel Commission (ETC) in the framework of a project co-funded by the European Union.

This is the first of six monthly reports that gauge short-term travel intentions of European travellers from ten high-volume source markets to better understand and respond to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on travel in Europe. The report also provides information on people's travel preferences, including types of destinations and experiences, holiday periods, and concerns relating to travel in the next months.

Despite the pandemic, Europeans remain optimistic about travel

A clear **majority of respondents (54%) indicate that they intend to take a trip in the next six months**, while 26% stated that they plan to travel by November 2020. Travel within Europe is a top choice with 41% intending to go on a trip domestically and 39% to other European destinations.

Notably, countries heavily affected by COVID-19 are still among the most popular destinations across Europe with **Spain, France and Italy** leading the ranking. Among those planning to resume travel sooner, the most appealing types of leisure trips are **sun & beach holidays** (25%), followed by **city breaks** (19%) and **nature/outdoors trips** (16%).

Europeans prioritise **health and safety** (21%) on their travels but also factor in **peace of mind and relaxation** (14%) as well as **affordability** (13%). Health-wise, 20% consider **air travel to be the least safe part of a travel journey**. For those with short-term travel plans, no factors are more important for decision-making than flexible cancellation policies (11%), social distancing in flights and transport (9%) and fully lifted travel restrictions (9%).

Travel restrictions and rising COVID-19 cases keep Europeans grounded

Anxiety about travelling remains high as Europeans must navigate complicated restrictions and a persistent pandemic. The ETC report found that primary concerns for those intending to travel in the short-term are **quarantine measures during a trip** (15%), **rising numbers of COVID-19 cases** (12%), the possibility of **falling ill at the destination** (11%) and **changing/unpredictable travel restrictions** (10%).

Coordinating European travel rules: A renewed urgency

The first report shows that quarantines, shifting border regulations, unclear booking and cancellation policies are creating obstacles for respondents with short-term travel plans and highlight the need for European governments to coordinate travel rules and regulations without delay.

"The report clearly indicates that Europeans' appetite for travel is robust, but it is also being held back by understandable health worries and a discouraging array of COVID-related rules and restrictions," said ETC Executive Director Eduardo Santander. *"A harmonised approach and streamlining travel rules at a European level is the only solution for restoring consumer confidence and kick-starting travel recovery."*

The ETC report surveyed nearly 6,000 respondents against the backdrop of the coronavirus pandemic and the unprecedented impact it continues to have on global tourism.

The full summary can be downloaded from: <https://etc-corporate.org/reports/monitoring-sentiment-for-domestic-and-intra-european-travel-wave-1/>

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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.

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