

EUROPEANS REMAIN UPBEAT ABOUT TRAVELLING, DESPITE DELTA VARIANT

- **Almost 70% of all surveyed Europeans plan to travel by the end of January 2022**
- **Of those with short-term travel plans, over half favour visiting another European country and 35% plan to travel domestically**
- **An increasing share of Europeans sticks to their original travel plans but concerns over rising COVID-19 cases at destinations have intensified by 20%**

Brussels, 23 September 2021: Rising COVID-19 cases and the Delta variant might have been affecting Europe lately but travel sentiment among Europeans has remained high over the summer. Almost 70% of Europeans surveyed stated they have plans to travel between July 2021 and January 2022, while significantly fewer expressed unwillingness (17%) or uncertainty (15%) about travelling in the short-term. This is according to the latest research on "[Monitoring Sentiment for Domestic and Intra-European Travel – Wave 8](#)"¹ by the European Travel Commission (ETC), which provides timely insights on Europeans'² travel intentions and preferences during the COVID-19 pandemic.

COVID-19 vaccine shows the way to steady tourism recovery

The COVID-19 vaccine remains an essential prerequisite for traveller confidence and booking behaviour. Recent vaccination rollouts allowed more than half (54%) of Europeans to feel much more optimistic regarding trip planning within the next months, with only 21% expressing scepticism.

Furthermore, 1 in 2 Europeans plan to book a trip as soon as they are vaccinated. At the same time, more than half (57%) of the respondents expect the EU Digital COVID Certificate to facilitate planning their next trip and crossing borders, while only 18% doubt that it will ease and simplify their travel experience.

Outdoor holidays are top choice for intra-European travel

The holiday mood and adaptation to COVID-19 travel restrictions have boosted demand for leisure travel to its highest point (72% of 'early-bird' travellers³) since this research began. At the same time, the strong appeal of the outdoors accelerated people's desire for an extended summer season. Over 20% of surveyed Europeans plan to embark on trips in October or November and spend time at the coast or in nature.

The survey shows that interest in intra-European travel has also grown to its highest level since last summer. Over half (53%) of Europeans with short-term travel plans prefer to visit another European country, with Italy, Spain, France, Greece and Croatia at the top of their destination wish list. However, the share of Europeans favouring domestic trips remains solid (35%). Of note is that travellers in the 54+ age group are more likely to travel within their own country than those in the 18-24 age range (44% vs 27%).

Europeans more comfortable with travelling as they adjust to life during the pandemic

In recent months, the share of travellers who have booked their entire trip has increased by 31% over the previous

¹Wave 8 features data collected in July 2021

² Germany, United Kingdom, France, Netherlands, Italy, Belgium, Switzerland, Spain, Poland and Austria

³'Early-bird' travellers and 'travel-ready' Europeans refer to survey respondents who are planning to travel in the next 6 months

survey, a clear sign of consumer confidence and the tourism offer returning in Europe. In addition, levels of uncertainty as to where to travel dropped by 20%. The number of respondents who refrained from planning trips also dropped by 20%, reaching the lowest point (16%) since September 2020. The vaccine rollout, flexible cancellation policies and fully lifted travel restrictions are the top factors boosting respondents' confidence in their next trip within Europe.

However, some concerns still hamper travel planning despite higher travel intentions. Europeans with short-term travel plans remain anxious about quarantine measures (18%), rising COVID-19 cases within the destination (16%) and changes in travel restrictions during their trip (15%). When it comes to personal health and safety, the top three areas of apprehension are air travel (17%), in-destination transport (15%) and cafes and restaurants (13%).

The full summary report can be downloaded from: <https://etc-corporate.org/reports/monitoring-sentiment-for-domestic-and-intra-european-travel-wave-8/>

ENDS

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. For more information, please visit www.etc-corporate.org.

MINDHAUS is a tourism marketing agency and part of a leading and independent communication agency in the EMEA region, the V+O Group. MINDHAUS is dedicated to developing, managing and marketing destinations, supporting & strengthening organisations, businesses and brands and successfully connecting them to the Visitor Economy. For more information, please visit www.vando.gr and www.mindhaus.gr.

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