

## LONG-HAUL TRAVEL SENTIMENT TO EUROPE IMPROVES DESPITE HIGH GLOBAL INFLATION

- More than 60% of potential travellers in Australia, Brazil, Canada, China and the US plan to travel overseas this year
- Personal finances remain the main deterrent to long-haul travel in January-April 2023
- Removal of China's zero Covid-19 policy has sparked hope among Chinese travellers, with 63% wishing to visit Europe

**Brussels, 1 February 2023:** The desire for overseas travel in 2023 has increased significantly in large travel markets compared to a year ago. Over 60% of potential travellers in Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, and the US intend to travel long-haul in 2023, with Europe being top of mind. Travel sentiment to Europe in the first four months of the year has also improved, with the most notable year-over-year increases observed in China (+21 points) and Brazil (+13 points). The exception to these positive trends is Japan, with 27% of respondents enthusiastic about long-haul trips in 2023 as a whole and 13% between January and April.

This is according to the latest Long-Haul Travel Barometer (LHTB) 1/2023 published today by the European Travel Commission (ETC) and Eurail BV. The LHTB 1/2023 provides a snapshot of travellers' sentiment for the year 2023 and dives into more detail for the first four months. The research examines<sup>1</sup> travel intentions to Europe in key overseas markets – Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Japan, and the US.

Commenting following the publication of the LHTB, Luís Araújo, ETC's President, said: *"ETC is pleased to see that long-haul travel sentiment is proving more positive this year than in 2022. A significant development that will surely have a major impact on travel to Europe in the coming year is China's reopening. The removal of China's zero Covid-19 policy has reinstated travel confidence among Chinese travellers, and China's sentiment index for travelling to Europe is now at values close to pre-pandemic times. This is hopeful news, but still, there remain concerns that in the context of inflationary pressures, personal finances may limit long-haul travel overall. Promoting Europe in overseas markets remains crucial for the sector's continued recovery in 2023."*

### Good value for less budget

Despite the positive outlook for 2023, high inflation continues to put pressure on individuals and influence their travel sentiment. Financial situations are key worries for Australian, Brazilian, American, and Canadian travellers. With this in mind, getting good value for less budget becomes essential for travellers. When asked what would provide comfort to plan long-haul trips in 2023, 41% of respondents mentioned an improved financial situation. Another 35% of respondents said bargains and attractive deals for travel to and located at the destination would be influencing factors.

The removal of Covid-19 border restrictions also remains essential for travellers' confidence, according to 35% of all respondents. Following from this, destinations that have fully lifted travel barriers may be perceived as more appealing in 2023.

### China finally ready to travel long-haul

The removal of China's zero Covid-19 policy in December 2022 has caused a positive change in the potential for long-haul travel. After two difficult years, the sentiment for travelling to Europe between January and April (115 points) has shown a significant improvement compared to the same periods in 2022 (94 points) and 2021 (103 points). Of Chinese respondents wishing to travel overseas in early 2023, 63% have a European destination in mind.

Nevertheless, important barriers remain to the immediate recovery of tourism flows from China. These include air

---

<sup>1</sup> Intention to travel is measured in an index that reflects the dominant sentiment expressed by a market, either positive or negative. Values above 100 index points indicate a positive evolution, whereas values below 100 indicate negative attitudes towards travel in a given period.

connectivity and capacity, the recent re-imposition of Covid-19 safety measures in some destinations, and health concerns.

For respondents in China, the main considerations when choosing a holiday destination are the tourism infrastructure, weather conditions, and the perceived safety of the destination. Notably, Chinese travellers are eager to return to luxury shopping in Europe.

### North Americans more eager to travel overseas

40% of US respondents intend to travel outside North America by April 2023, and 33% consider Europe as a destination. This marks a significant change to the same period in 2022, when only 28% of Americans planned to travel overseas, and 23% to Europe.

In the US, eagerness to travel is associated with a higher annual household income. Findings show that 55% of Americans earning \$75,000 or more look forward to travelling, compared to just 20% of respondents in the other income groups. In contrast to other markets, a large share of US respondents (20%) are open to solo travel.

The Canadian market is also on track for a gradual recovery. The share of Canadians planning to visit Europe between January and April increased from 15% in 2022 to 29% in 2023, with the sentiment index value remaining in positive territory (108 points). Yet, the majority (62%) of Canadian respondents will refrain from overseas trips at the beginning of 2023. The main deterrent for 39% of them is their disposable budget.

Canadians wishing to visit Europe in the next months will look for experiences revolving around history and culture, and the vibrant life of European cities. The top European destinations for Canadians are France, Italy, the UK, and Germany.

*The summary report can be downloaded from ETC's corporate website under the following link: <https://etc-corporate.org/reports/long-haul-travel-barometer-1-2023/>*

## ENDS

### Note to editors

The **European Travel Commission (ETC)** represents the national tourism organisations of Europe. Established in 1948, ETC's mission is to strengthen the sustainable development of Europe as a tourist destination and to promote Europe in third markets. Its 35-member tourism boards work together to build the value of tourism for all the diverse European destinations through cooperation in sharing best practice, market intelligence and promotion. For more information, visit [www.etc-corporate.org](http://www.etc-corporate.org) and follow [@ETC\\_Corporate](https://twitter.com/ETC_Corporate).

**Eurail BV** is the organisation dedicated to the management of Eurail and Interrail Passes. Eurail gives travellers from all over the world the opportunity to experience flexible, borderless travel across Europe. Eurail BV has over 100 travel partners across Europe, including accommodation providers, transport operators and attractions, offering additional special benefits to all Pass holders. The company is owned by over 35 European railway and shipping companies. For more information, visit [www.eurail.com](http://www.eurail.com) and follow [@Eurail](https://twitter.com/Eurail).

### Media contact

Shane Bradley

Penta

[etc@pentagroup.co](mailto:etc@pentagroup.co)

Ph: +32 (0)2 234 6860

This research wave is co-funded by the European Union



Co-funded by  
the European Union