

EUROPEANS DEFY COSTS AND CONFLICTS TO EMBRACE TRAVEL IN SUMMER 2024

- **75% of Europeans plan to travel between May and October 2024, with interest in leisure travel rising 5% compared to last year.**
- **Older age groups are especially eager to travel, while younger travellers are more likely to book in advance.**
- **Safety, pleasant weather and good value for money named top factors for choosing a destination.**

Brussels, May 16: According to the European Travel Commission's (ETC) latest report, 'Monitoring Sentiment for Intra-European Travel' Wave 18,¹ **intention to travel** between May and October 2024 among surveyed Europeans has reached 75%. This marks a significant 3% increase compared to the same period last year.

37% of respondents intend to embark on a **single trip**, and 57% are gearing up for **two or more getaways** during this period. Destinations in Southern Europe are preferred by 43% of travellers, with Italy and Spain topping the list.

With European air traffic now within touching distance of pre-pandemic levels, **intention to fly** to vacation spots has reached 55%, an increase of 5% compared to the same period last year. Meanwhile, 28% of travellers plan to **drive** to their destinations, and 13% are opting for more eco-friendly **travel by train or bus**.

Commenting on the findings, **Miguel Sanz, President of ETC**, said: *"It is very positive to see Europeans maintaining their desire to travel despite the ongoing geopolitical and economic circumstances. Popular destinations will continue their strong performance this summer season, but there are also great opportunities for lesser known and quieter destinations as many travellers look for peaceful, authentic experiences."*

Europeans determined to travel this spring and summer

Despite security concerns and financial constraints, Europeans are displaying remarkable resilience when it comes to travelling this summer season. **Enthusiasm for travel** is cutting across all age demographics above 25, reaching up to 81% among more mature travellers (aged over 55).

This determination, coupled with a desire to secure a holiday at a more favourable price, leads to **early bookings**. Some 52% of European travellers (including 56% of those aged 18-24) have already fully or partially booked their upcoming trips.

The most popular **trip length** is four to six nights, favoured by 36% of respondents. This is followed by seven to nine nights (26%) and more than ten nights (21%). **Travel budgets** have stayed consistent compared to a year ago, with 42% of respondents planning to spend up to €1000 per person on their next trip, covering both accommodation and transportation costs.

Perceptions of safety crucial when choosing a destination

Amidst geopolitical tensions, extreme climate events and economic uncertainties, prioritising **safety** has become paramount in shaping travellers' decisions. Feeling safe is the number one criterion when selecting a destination (16%), followed by pleasant weather (13%), bargains and attractive deals (11%), friendly local communities (9%),

¹ Wave 18 features data collected in April 2024. The survey was conducted in: Germany, the United Kingdom, France, the Netherlands, Italy, Belgium, Switzerland, Spain, Poland, and Austria

and lower cost of living at the destination (8%).

Despite the strong desire to travel, 22% of Europeans are worried about escalating **travel expenses**, and 17% are concerned about personal finances amid the current economic climate. Additionally, geopolitical tensions, such as the conflict in Ukraine and unrest in the Middle East, are adding to anxieties, with 12% and 10% respectively expressing unease. Disruptions in transport options (10%), overcrowding (9%), and extreme weather events (8%) are other important sources of concern.

Scenic beauty and local cuisine top holiday preferences

A significant proportion of European travellers are gearing up for intra-regional trips during **May-June** (34%) and **July-August** (44%). Additionally, 17% are planning on travelling in September and October. **Leisure travel** is on the rise, with 74% expressing a desire to indulge – a 5% jump on last year.

Italy and Spain top the list of **summer destinations** this year, each capturing 8% of respondents' interest, closely trailed by France (7%), Greece (6%) and Germany (5%).

This line-up reflects Europeans' desire for **Sun & Beach** trips (20%) and **City Breaks** (16%), which emerged as the most popular types of holiday for the following months. European travellers cite enjoying scenic beauty (19%) as their most preferred holiday experience, followed by trying local cuisine (17%), engaging with local cultures (15%), and admiring famous landmarks (15%).

The full summary report can be downloaded from: <https://etc-corporate.org/reports/monitoring-sentiment-for-intra-european-travel-spring-summer24/>

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 36 member tourism boards work together to build the value of tourism for all the diverse European destinations through cooperation in sharing best practices, market intelligence and promotion. For more information, visit www.etc-corporate.org and follow [@ETC_Corporate](https://twitter.com/ETC_Corporate).

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