

Press Release

Summer 2024: More Europeans Plan to Travel, But Taking Fewer Trips

- 75% of Europeans plan to travel in the coming months, up 6% from last year.
- Mediterranean destinations top the list for European travellers as holidaymakers opt for sun and beach trips.
- The number of Europeans flying to their destinations increases by 5%, though driving is still favoured by 28% of travellers.

Brussels, 2 July 2024: The latest report from the European Travel Commission (ETC), 'Monitoring Sentiment for Intra-European Travel – Wave 19,' reveals a notable **surge in travel interest among Europeans** for June-November 2024, marking a 6% increase compared to last year. This brings the proportion of respondents planning a trip to 75%. The rise is particularly driven by high wanderlust among **Spanish, Italian and British** travellers. In all three of these countries, eight out of ten survey respondents reported intention to travel during this period.

The study also reveals that 36% of Europeans plan to take **one trip** in the next months, an increase of 6% from the previous year. Another 33% will take a second trip, while only 24% plan to take three or more trips, perhaps indicating that financial pressures continue to impact travellers' behaviour.

Commenting on the findings, **Miguel Sanz, President of ETC**, said: 'Post-Covid travel trends appear to be solidifying, providing some much welcome stability for the tourism industry. Several key European travel markets are showing strong enthusiasm for the upcoming months. Now is a good time for destinations to take stock of this 'new normal,' which includes concerns about high costs and unfavourable weather, as well as travel planning done predominantly on digital platforms. This will enable tourism professionals to tailor their offerings to long-term trends in traveller behaviour and more effectively promote responsible tourism practices.'

Southern Europe stays top vacation choice

As summer arrives, there remains a strong demand for **Southern destinations**, with most European travellers (45%) choosing warmer locations for their next vacations. Interest in Europe's South is stable compared to 2023 but is down 10% from 2022. Meanwhile, **Western** (18%) and **Northern** (13%) destinations continue to see strong demand. Spain and Italy are the top choices, each preferred by 8% of respondents, followed by France at 7% and Greece at 6%.

This can be partly explained by travellers' solid preference for **sun and beach trips**, with 19% choosing this as their preferred type of holiday for the next six months. Other travellers opted for culture and heritage holidays (17%), nature and outdoors trips (14%) and city breaks (13%).

The perception of a **destination's safety** (16%) is the most important factor for travellers selecting a holiday spot, followed by pleasant weather (13), bargains (11%), friendly locals and stable temperatures (both 8%).

Peak travel periods are still popular with European holidaymakers. Most travellers surveyed intend to take a trip in the summer months: 45% will travel in **June and July**, and 39% opt for **August and September**. Only 12% aim to travel in October and November, suggesting that the heatwaves and overcrowding which impacted parts of Europe in the summer of 2023 aren't heavily affecting this year's plans.

More Europeans take to the skies

Air travel is the most popular mode of transport for inter-European journeys. Flights are favoured by over half (54%) of Europeans, up 5% from last year. This can be partly explained by fully restored air connectivity and the availability of low-cost flights to a diverse range of destinations across Europe. Travellers from the UK (73%), Spain (68%) and Italy (62%) are most likely to fly to their next holiday destinations.

Driving to a holiday destination is the second most popular option, with 28% of respondents choosing to travel by car – minor decline from 2023 (30%). This trend is particularly strong among Germans (40%), Belgians (38%) and Austrians (35%). Travel by **train** remains stable at 10%.

'New normal': Financial constraints, weather worries, and digital decision-making

The biggest concerns for travellers in summer and autumn 2024 include **high trip costs** (21%, down 3% from last year), personal finances (16%), and **geopolitical issues** (11% worry about the Russia-Ukraine war and 10% about tensions in the Middle East). **Extreme weather** and **transport disruptions** are also significant concerns for 10% of Europeans eager to travel in the next months.

Since this year, the survey also delves deeper into the impact of **climate events** on traveller's choices. 76% of respondents report adjusting their travel habits according to climate change. 17% said they will avoid destinations with extreme temperatures, a figure that rises to 32% for over 55-year-olds, indicating older travellers are the most concerned about coping with soaring temperatures. Overall, 16% of travellers prefer places with stable weather, 15% monitor weather forecasts, and 11% choose activities not dependent on the weather.

Nearly all European travellers use **digital sources** for their travel plans, online search engines and travel websites being the most popular. Despite some travel companies introducing artificial intelligence (AI) tools in their apps, only 6% of holidaymakers say they use AI-based tools for their planning. Early adopters of AI can be mainly found among the younger generation: 42% of travellers using AI apps for itinerary planning, and 35% of those employing AI platforms for travel purposes, are aged 25-34.

The full summary report can be downloaded from: <https://etc-corporate.org/reports/monitoring-sentiment-for-intra-european-travel-summer-autumn24/>

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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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