



WTTTC predicts a strong recovery of the European Travel & Tourism sector in 2022

Sector sees a surge of more than 250% in European bookings for Easter compared to 2021

WTTTC calls to remove all restrictions for fully jabbed travellers and allow free movement

London, UK: The World Travel & Tourism Council ([WTTTC](#)), which represents the global private Travel & Tourism sector, has revealed bookings for intra-European travel over the Easter period have increased by more than 250%, while summer bookings are currently 80% above 2021 levels.

According to WTTTC's knowledge partner ForwardKeys, the leading travel data and analytics company, intra-European flight bookings for the busy Easter and summer periods have surged ahead of last year, giving a welcome boost to Travel & Tourism businesses across the continent.

During WTTTC's participation at FITUR, the international tourism fair taking place in Madrid this week, the global tourism body gave hope to the struggling sector.

Forward Keys booking data revealed a strong recovery for intra-European travel for Easter and summer, set to increase by more than 250% and 80% compared to 2021, respectively.

Julia Simpson, WTTTC President & CEO, said: "Latest booking data shows Europeans are positive about travelling again. Bookings for Easter and summer are looking strong. Omicron has affected the start of the year, but as infections peak and the symptoms remain mild people are booking again.

"The problems occur when governments react with travel restrictions. The World Health Organisation says that closing borders is pointless when Omicron is already prevalent in society. All it does is damage the economy and livelihoods. '

“According to latest scientific evidence, although more transmissible, Omicron is less severe and leads to less hospitalisations and deaths. Therefore, we are calling on governments to reduce all travel restrictions and allow fully vaccinated travellers to move freely.

“Spain, that is hosting FITUR, a major Travel & Tourism trade fair, is keeping its borders open and is backing free movement and the economy.”

According to the booking data, intra-European travel during Easter and summer in 2022 is expected to perform below pre-pandemic levels by only 38% and 45% respectively.

However, as countries across the continent continue to relax travel restrictions, early indications show the recovery is gaining momentum and could edge even closer to 2019 levels as we head towards the summer.

In addition, during the first quarter of 2022, intra-European travel has witnessed a 275% surge in bookings, while latest booking data shows that international arrivals to European destinations will see an over 280% increase, compared to the same period in 2021.

Spain is poised to be the most popular destination for European travellers, with intra-European arrivals to Spain during the first quarter of 2022 currently up by 320% (YOY), followed by Turkey.

As travel restrictions continue to ease and consumer confidence continues to grow, the European Travel & Tourism sector should expect an increased demand for travel with a significant boost in bookings in the upcoming months.

In 2019, the global Travel & Tourism sector contributed nearly USD 9.2 trillion to the economy and represented 10.6% of all jobs (334 million).

According to WTTC’s research, in 2020, when the pandemic brought international travel to an almost standstill, 62 million jobs were lost, and the sector’s contribution to the global GDP fell by a staggering US\$ 4.5 trillion.

These losses have affected the many millions of livelihoods who rely upon a thriving Travel & Tourism sector, while significantly affecting the global economy and development.

-ends-