

INTERNATIONAL TOURIST ARRIVALS IN EUROPE ARE 60% BELOW PRE-PANDEMIC LEVELS



Amidst the Covid-19 pandemic, the tourism industry is suffering worldwide. This is also the case in Europe, as many countries across the continent struggled tackling the issue of the uncontrolled spread of the virus.

According to data from the European Travel Commission (ETC), the number of international tourist arrivals to Europe is predicted to decrease by 60 % this year in contrast to the pre-pandemic levels.

While a slight recovery has been noted in the European travel sector, we will still have to wait for some time to see a return to the figures from 2019. In this context, the ETC estimates 2024 could be the right year.

Greece the 'Best', Czech Republic the Worst

While the overall picture of international tourist arrivals is definitely not positive, some countries registered impressive numbers in a difficult situation. For example, Greece reported just 19% fewer overnight stays compared to 2019, mainly due to the opening of the country's borders for vaccinated tourists. Croatia also did relatively well (-37 % compared to 2019).

Other countries with slightly better performance than the European average include Montenegro (-44 %), Luxembourg (-45 %) and Monaco (-46 %).

In contrast, the Czech Republic was the absolute loser of the Old Continent, registering an incredible decrease of 94 % compared to 2019.

Summer Slightly Positive

Slightly positive data were registered during the summer months mainly due to the introduction of the EU Covid-19 Certificate as well as solid numbers in travel between EU countries.

In this context, hotel occupancy saw an improvement compared to 2020 in many destinations. For example, Slovenia, the UK, and Monaco reported occupancy rates at nearly 70 %.

Furthermore, air travel in Europe saw a slight improvement, although the difference with traffic during the pre-pandemic levels is still pretty evident (-58 %).

Chinese and Americans Missed

The absence of international tourist arrivals has been a big blow for major European destinations, especially that of long-haul travelers from the US and China.

The number of arrivals from the United States fell by 90 % this year compared to 2019 in 33 % of all destinations. **However, there were some countries that did better in this aspect as well - once again Greece (-38 %).**

Finally, Chinese tourists were also missed in the European tourism sector, as countries recorded a decrease of 90 % in contrast with the pre-pandemic data. With the cautious approach of Chinese authorities towards this health crisis, it seems reasonable to assume that these numbers will remain similar also at the beginning of 2022.

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