

TOURISM IN EUROPE: RAPIDLY CHANGING SECTOR



Initially heavily penalized by the COVID-19 epidemic, the European tourism sector now seems to be recovering strongly, potentially exceeding the pre-pandemic levels as early as 2023.

What is the current state of tourism in Europe? How has the sector prepared for this post-pandemic acceleration in growth? In the long term, what new travel experiences are emerging that will dominate the market?

Tourism in Europe: Flourishing Market Abruptly halted by COVID

The COVID-19 epidemic brings the booming global tourism market to a screeching halt.

Before the Covid-19 outbreak, travel accounted for 4.4 percent of GDP and 6.9 percent of employment according to OECD figures. International travel accounted for 6.5% of global exports in 2019 according to the World Trade Organization.

In total, the travel and tourism industry accounted for more than 330 million jobs, or 1 in 10 of the world's total, according to the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC).

Covid-19 has devastated a thriving industry that relies on the free movement of people. International travel came to a screeching halt as of March 2020, and an awful lot of countries played with their borders to restrict entry.

Forbidden or unable to travel, travelers have finally not moved: international arrivals have fallen by 70 to 75% in 2020 according to the World Tourism Organization, with 1 billion fewer travelers and 1.1 billion dollars less spent over the year. This is 10 times the deficit in travel spending in 2009 after the financial crisis that began in 2007.

The OECD predicts that tourism will be among the last sectors of the economy to recover lost demand once the Covid-19 crisis is over.

Changes in the European Tourism Market

Technology in tourism: smartphones and data targeting. The tourism industry, after its great shift to Internet usage, is now being transformed by 100% mobile players who are leveraging data-driven targeting and conversational artificial intelligence to acquire new customers and build loyalty.

Eco-tourism: Sustainable Tourism in Europe Increasingly Popular

Travelers are paying more and more attention to their social and ecological footprint, which influences the choice of tourist products they buy. Tour operators are seizing this opportunity to offer their most attentive customers an alternative to mass consumption, notably with the presence of more responsible establishments in their offer.

Specialized Tourism Closer to Travelers

More generally, specialized tourism is developing by offering travelers a combination of pleasure and functionality. One example is medical tourism, which consists of organizing a trip around a health intervention.

Date: 2022-06-20

Article link: <https://www.tourism-review.com/tourism-in-europe-recovers-fast-news12595>