



WTTTC and ETC call on EU Member States to effectively coordinate and align responses to the evolving epidemiological situation

Almost 900,000 Travel & Tourism jobs across the EU at risk if restrictions return

Reinstating severe restrictions would cause serious damage to the sector

A staggering €35 billion could be wiped off the region's economy this year

London, UK: The World Travel & Tourism Council ([WTTTC](#)) and the European Travel Commission ([ETC](#)), supported by a number of key travel stakeholders, have urged EU Member States to align their responses to the deteriorating COVID-19 situation and avoid imposing any limits to the freedom of movement across Europe.

The organisations say the sector cannot afford inconsistent and ever-changing national responses, and a joint EU approach is the only solution to saving the struggling Travel & Tourism sector in Europe.

The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) is now acknowledging that EU travel restrictions have not had a significant impact on reducing virus transmission, hospitalisations, or deaths.

WTTTC and ETC stress that measures aiming at restricting border crossing would not have any health benefits but could result in a huge economic impact to the region.

According to latest WTTTC research, up to 900,000 jobs are at risk across the EU's Travel & Tourism sector this year if travel restrictions are reimposed this winter.

Furthermore, governments across the EU could see up to €35 billion wiped from the sector's contribution to the economy before the end of 2021 if severe travel restrictions come back into force.

WTTC and ETC say EU Member States have the power to influence and drive forward the coordinated recovery effort needed to preserve the sector and only a coordinated approach will save the millions of livelihoods that depend on the sector.

Julia Simpson, WTTC President & CEO, said: “We urgently need to restore the confidence to travel and not create more uncertainty. It is vital we have a properly coordinated response across the EU which both businesses and travellers can understand.

“The vaccination rollout across the EU is among the best in the world with 65% of the population now fully vaccinated. We cannot afford to let all the hard-earned progress made this year to be reversed. This will have catastrophic consequences for jobs and livelihoods.

“While we fully recognise that protecting public health is paramount, we urge all EU Member states to continue using the EU’s Digital COVID Certificate, which has successfully allowed fully-vaccinated people to travel safely and freely.”

Luís Araújo, ETC’s President, added: “As the colder months approach and some European countries face a worsening epidemiological situation, we call on the EU governments to work together to ensure the freedom of movement across Europe”.

“We must avoid any further uncertainty or fragmentation. With the high vaccination rates, EU COVID Certificate and strict safety protocols in place, safe travel is absolutely possible. In the lead up to the highly anticipated holiday season, EU citizens need clear and coherent rules”.

Last year, WTTC research revealed more than two million Travel & Tourism jobs were lost across the EU, and its latest research reveals that if wide scale restrictions were enforced in 2022, a further three million would be at stake next year.

Following 18 months in which economies around the world have been already ravaged by the COVID-19 pandemic, WTTC research also shows that that if punishing restrictions were to remain locked in place for much of next year, it could result in more than €143 billion being wiped from the EU economy.