

# Global Travel Trends 2018/2019



## International travel outperforming economic growth

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In 2018, the number of outbound trips increased by 5.5 per cent, resulting in 1.4 billion international trips. Hence, once again tourism is a key growth driver of the global economy, which "only" grew by 3.7 per cent in comparison. Growth is coming from all regions worldwide, also from the mature markets Europe and North America, but the strongest gains came from Asian and Latin American markets.

For 2019, considering a slowing world economy, also a somewhat lower growth rate is expected for international travel. Overtourism could become another growing problem for the tourism industry, with more and more international travelers feeling the effect of overcrowded destinations. These findings are based on latest results of IPK's World travel Monitor®, an annual survey analyzing the outbound travel behavior in more than 60 countries worldwide, covering over 90 per cent of the global outbound demand.

### Asia is growth driver while Turkey showing strong recovery

Asia was the strongest source region last year, with overall 7 per cent more outbound trips. Latin America followed with a plus of 6 per cent, while there were 5 per cent more trips from North America and Europe. Looking at the destination regions, once again Asia but also Europe were the global winners by receiving 6 per cent more international trips each, while the Americas were clearly below with a plus of 3 per cent. Regarding destination countries, one of the biggest changes was the stagnation of trips to Spain in 2018, a destination that boomed in the recent past. On the other hand, destinations that were avoided by tourist in the past are recovering, above all Turkey with 8.5 million more visitors in 2018 compared to 2017. Holidays once again outperform business trips, due to the continuous downward path of traditional business trips, while MICE trips continued on a growth path. With international travelers staying slightly longer and also spending more when abroad, the turnover of international trips overall increased by 8 per cent.

### Effect of overtourism increasing

For the second year in a row, IPK International measures the perceptions of overtourism among international travelers. While residents in affected destinations have been protesting for years, also travelers are feeling more and more impaired by the onslaught of tourist in particularly sought-after cities. IPK's latest survey results show that meanwhile more than every tenth international traveler was negatively affected by overtourism. This is an increase of 30 per cent over the last 12 months. Cities strongly affected by overtourism were Beijing, Mexico City, Venice and Amsterdam, but also Istanbul and Florence. bothered by overcrowding compared to older travelers.

In particular, travelers from Asia felt a lot more affected by overtourism compared to e.g. Europeans. Interestingly, young travelers are a lot more bothered by overcrowding compared to older travelers.

## Fear of terror remains

Similar to last year, 38 per cent of international travelers currently claim that political instability and terror threats will have an influence on their travel planning for 2019. At that, travelers from Asia feel a lot more impacted by terror threats than travelers from other continents. In terms of what kind of influence terror threats will have on the travel behavior, the great majority states that they will choose only destinations which they perceive as "safe". The safety image of most destinations slightly improved over the last 12 months - even for Turkey, Israel and Egypt.

## Outlook 2019

With predictions of the global economic growth slowing down in 2019, also the forecast for international travel for this year is slightly below the performance in 2018. Overall, IPK International anticipates global outbound trips to increase by 4 per cent in 2019. Asia-Pacific remains leading with an expected plus of 6 per cent. Growth in the Americas is forecasted to reach 5 per cent, while Europe with 3 per cent is showing a weakening trend compared to last year.

Source: IPK International, World Travel Monitor®

## IPK International

IPK International is a tourism consultancy specialized in travel research, tourism marketing and tourism Masterplanning and counts among the leading tourism consultancies worldwide. Apart from tailored studies, IPK conducts the World Travel Monitor®, the world's most comprehensive tourism database on European, Arabian, Asian, North and South American outbound travel behavior covering more than 90 per cent of the international travel demand. The World Travel Monitor® is conducted in over 60 countries and has established itself as the largest continuous tourism study of its kind.

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