

# Crises in Tourism: Impacts and Lessons from European Destinations



---

# **Crises in Tourism: Impacts and Lessons from European Destinations**

A report produced for  
the European Travel Commission  
by TOPOSOPHY Ltd.

---

Copyright © 2024 European Travel Commission (ETC)

## **Crises in Tourism: Impacts and Learnings from European Destinations**

All rights reserved. The contents of this report may be quoted, provided the source is given accurately and clearly. Distribution or reproduction in full is permitted for own or internal use only.

While we encourage distribution via publicly accessible websites, this should be done via a link to [ETC's corporate website](#), referring visitors to the Research/Trends Watch section.

### **Published by the European Travel Commission**

Rue du Marché aux Herbes, 61,  
1000 Brussels, Belgium

**Website:** [www.etc-corporate.org](http://www.etc-corporate.org)

**Email:** [info@visiteurope.com](mailto:info@visiteurope.com)

**ISBN No:** 978-92-95107-72-4

This report was compiled and edited by TOPOSOPHY  
on behalf of the ETC Market Intelligence Group.

**TOPOSOPHY**  
PLACE MAKING & MARKETING AGENCY

**Cover:** The erupting volcano in Iceland.

**Copyright:** [Ása Steinarsdóttir](#), on Unsplash

# Foreword

In today's interconnected world, the tourism sector stands at the forefront of industries most susceptible to the ripple effects of global crises. From terrorism and political instability to the unpredictable nature of pandemics and natural disasters, destinations' challenges are varied and profound. In this context, resilience is no longer a luxury but a necessity - a foundation upon which the future of tourism must be built.

In response to this pressing need, the European Travel Commission (ETC) has undertaken a critical initiative to bolster the resilience of European tourism destinations. Through developing this report and the accompanying Crisis Management Checklist for National Tourism Organisations (NTOs), ETC aims to equip NTOs and their partners with the necessary tools to navigate the complexities of crisis management effectively.

The present report is strategically designed to enhance the understanding of European destinations regarding the multifaceted impacts of past and potential crises on the tourism industry. By providing insights drawn from destinations that have successfully managed crises, as well as lessons learned from less successful attempts, the report fosters a culture of collaboration and knowledge exchange – vital ingredients for confidently and competently facing future challenges. Additionally, the Crisis Management Checklist offered with this report will guide NTOs in systematically addressing all critical areas, from communication to resource management, internal operations, research and innovation, etc. ensuring a more effective and coordinated response to future crises.

ETC trusts that this report will be a valuable resource for European destinations as they prepare for the uncertainties ahead. By building resilience and enhancing crisis management capabilities, we can ensure that European tourism not only survives but thrives in the face of future challenges.

**Miguel Sanz**  
President  
European Travel Commission

---

## Acknowledgements

This report was prepared by Peter Jordan, Marta Mills, Dr Pantazis Pastras, Chris Armstrong and Manolis Psarros (TOPOSOPHY) for the European Travel Commission (ETC). ETC would like to place on record its gratitude to TOPOSOPHY's team for their creativity, unwavering commitment, and high level of professionalism throughout the project

This report forms part of ETC's ongoing Market Intelligence Programme and was carried out under the supervision of Piret Kallas (Estonian Tourist Board - Estonian Business and Innovation Agency), Steven Valcke (Visit Flanders), Lyublena Dimova, Rocio Lopez and Cornelia Keller (ETC Executive Unit), on behalf of ETC's Market Intelligence Group (MIG). We thank them for their input and dedication to this project.

The successful completion of this project would not have been possible without the active participation of the National Tourism Organisations across Europe. We sincerely thank all ETC members who generously contributed their time and insights to this report.

In particular, we wish to acknowledge and thank:

- All respondents to the ETC Survey on Crisis Management conducted in March and April 2024.
- Delegates who actively participated in the ETC Workshop on Tourism Crisis Management in Europe, held during the ETC General Meeting in Kaunas, Lithuania, on 23 May 2024.
- Interview participants from European NTOs who provided essential information to support the survey findings and enrich the case study content.

Your collective efforts and collaboration have been instrumental in the success of this project.

---

# Crises in Tourism: impacts and lessons from European destinations

## Contents

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>1. Introduction</b>  | <b>8</b>  |
| 1.1 A new era for crises in European tourism  |           |
| 1.2 How is 'crisis' defined?  | 9         |
| 1.3 Understanding the scale and scope of crises   | 11        |
| 1.4 Putting Covid-19 and the climate crisis into context                                      | 12        |
| 1.5 Methodology   | 13        |
| <b>2. Mapping crises and their impacts</b>  | <b>16</b> |
| 2.1 Categorising crises   | 16        |
| 2.2 The impact of crises on European destinations   | 20        |
| <b>3. Case studies on tourism crisis management in Europe</b>                                 | <b>26</b> |
| Greece: Athens Heatwave and Rhodes Wildfires (2023)   | 27        |
| Slovenia: Severe Flooding (2023)  | 29        |
| Iceland: Reykjanes Seismic Activity (2023-2024)   | 31        |
| Portugal: Algarve Water Shortages (2023-2024)   | 33        |
| Poland, Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia: The Impact of the War in Ukraine (2022 - Ongoing)      | 35        |
| France: Terrorist Attacks in Paris and Nice (2015-2016) and Their Impact on Tourism in Monaco | 38        |
| <b>4. Lessons on the role of the NTO in crisis management</b>                                 | <b>42</b> |
| <b>5. The phases of tourism crisis management for NTOs</b>                                    | <b>45</b> |
| <b>6. References</b>  | <b>48</b> |



# Introduction

A new era for crises in European tourism



# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 A new era for crises in European tourism

In 2022, the World Health Organisation stated that ‘the European Region is in a “permacrisis”<sup>1</sup>. The frequency of different crisis situations in Europe has been increasing in recent years, including those linked to climate change, emerging infectious diseases, and war. The COVID-19 outbreak, in particular, paralysed the EU tourism sector, putting the businesses and communities that relied on tourism under unprecedented pressure and revealing the structural weaknesses in the sector’s capacity to withstand crises.

The fact that tourism *demand* has recovered relatively swiftly in the wake of the pandemic may suggest that demand is fairly resilient. Yet it does not necessarily demonstrate that the *supply* side of Europe’s tourism sector - its destinations, its communities and local businesses - has become more resilient to withstand future crises, which are becoming bigger and more complex in nature. Already, other more localised crises (e.g. the war in Ukraine) have shown their deep impact on the European tourism ecosystem, both short and long-term. As a global, interconnected sector with complex supply chains and a high proportion of small and medium-sized businesses, the travel and tourism industry is particularly vulnerable to a wide range of risks, including terrorist attacks, epidemics, pandemics, natural disasters and other risks that challenge tourists’ safety.<sup>2</sup>

Yet while the National Tourism Organisations (NTOs) that contributed insights for this report agree that there is a critical role for their organisations to play in *responding* to crises, they also recognise that too often, the process of *planning* for this response and the recovery actions that will follow is left to one side for another day, as other more immediate tasks take precedence.

### The nature and scale of crises is changing

It would be a mistake to assume that certain countries or types of destinations are immune to a certain type of incident. For example, few would have expected Dubai to see a year’s worth of rainfall in the space of just 12 hours in April 2024, causing unprecedented flooding and forcing the closure of the city’s airport - a major international hub for airlines and one of the world’s busiest airports - for several days.<sup>3</sup> Looking ahead, there are many types of multi-layered crises that tourism sector stakeholders in Europe will have to prepare for in the coming years. Five key prerequisites suggest future crises to be bigger and more unpredictable in their nature, posing greater strategic and operational challenges for NTOs. These include:

1. **Crises are occurring on a larger scale than ever before.** For example, in 2023, Europe witnessed ‘the largest wildfire ever recorded, one of the wettest years, severe marine heat waves and widespread devastating flooding’<sup>4</sup>. Flooding, in particular, is occurring across several flood basins and affecting multiple countries at the same time.<sup>5</sup>
2. **The era of ‘always on’ communications and live streaming on social media** means that news of an incident is more frequently being broadcast while an incident unfolds from multiple points of view, meaning that ‘official’ channels are under instant pressure to catch up with the narrative,



rather than control it.<sup>6</sup>

3. **Misinformation, disinformation and the malicious use of artificial intelligence (AI) are already testing the public's ability to tell which stories, videos and images are real and which are not.** The destabilising impact of 'fake news' and mistrust of official sources is creating new challenges in maintaining order and keeping the public safe in the wake of incidents.
4. **Consumers expect faster and more personalised responses.** As consumers increasingly manage more of their personal and professional lives using live streaming, instant messaging and services are becoming increasingly personalised. They also expect a rapid, personalised and 'human' response when things go wrong. This extends to the way that business and governmental leaders behave in the wake of a major incident; being visible, showing compassion and proactiveness; to do otherwise may risk a backlash and further reputational damage.
5. **When the sustainability of tourism itself is being questioned, the blame for incidents may turn residents against visitors.** As awareness grows among the public about the negative impacts tourism can have on communities and the environment, this provides a febrile environment when crises hit, with the activities of visitors and tourism businesses coming under the spotlight more frequently.

The potential effects of crisis events on international tourism are likely to expand in both size and frequency as tourism becomes increasingly hypermobile and the global economy even more interconnected.<sup>7</sup> Thus, effective strategies for crisis preparedness, response and recovery are only going to become more relevant.

### **Against this backdrop, the purpose of this report is to:**

---

- Explore and map the many different types of crises that have affected the tourism sector in Europe in recent years.
- Draw key lessons from past crises and demonstrate cases of best practices from Europe and beyond
- Provide a practical guide for NTOs on how to prepare for, manage, and draw lessons from crises that may affect them.

## **1.2 How is 'crisis' defined?**

The word crisis can have many different interpretations, and in the age of media hype, it is often overused. For the purpose of this project, the term 'crisis' refers to a **sudden phenomenon, such as war, terrorist attack, economic decline, extreme natural events/disasters, or pandemics**, that have an economic, social, cultural, and political impact on individuals, society, and economies. In the context of this report, a 'crisis' is considered to affect tourism and occur on such a scale that it requires intervention by a National Tourism Organisation, implementing strategies in place to effectively prepare, quickly respond, and recover from the crisis. A categorisation of crises and their possible impacts on destinations are included in [Chapter 2](#).

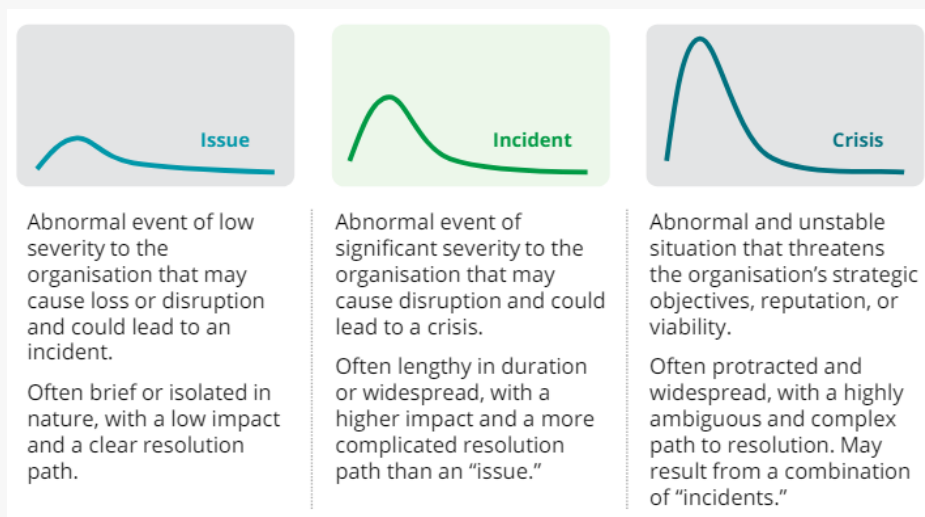
In relation to the definition given above, it is important to consider that although crises are instant and sudden, they can be drawn out over many years or even decades (as witnessed with wars or the climate crisis). Furthermore, crises do not end once the immediate incidents stop; indeed, they can have a long tail with repercussions occurring for many years after (as shown by the Covid-19 pandemic).

With this in mind, ‘crisis management’ for NTOs can be considered the general practice of preparing for and coordinating the organisation’s response to a crisis in order to minimise both short and long-term negative impacts on visitors, local communities, the natural environment, and businesses.

### The difference between a ‘crisis’ and an ‘incident’

In a highly global, interconnected sector such as tourism, there is a high potential for external factors (such as the weather, geopolitical events, technology failure or human error) to disrupt the normal flow of business activity, as well as the visitor experience. For example, the closure of a major hub airport for just 24 hours can have repercussions for many days afterwards and cause travellers and businesses to incur millions of euros in unforeseen costs.

The following diagram illustrates the conceptual differences between an ‘issue’, an ‘incident’ and a ‘crisis’ in the context of business management:



Source: [Deloitte India, 2019](#)

While ‘incident management’ and ‘crisis management’ are both used for risk mitigation, they are considered slightly different practices. Incident management is designated specifically for shorter-term emergencies (for example, an isolated cyberattack). It is about identifying, analysing, and solving any organisational hazards to prevent them from happening again and to fix and clear these issues before they become large-scale, company-wide crises. Crisis management is designated for larger crisis scenarios that can affect an organisation in the long term, for example, a strategy to handle an earthquake or cross-border conflict.<sup>8</sup> Further examples are given in the [Case studies](#) section of this report.

## Conceptualising the many incidents and challenges that can occur within destinations

As described in section 1.1, given the rapid nature of global communication and the power of emerging technologies such as AI, an incident that is not managed promptly and effectively at a local level may spiral into a crisis of national or even international proportions. Occasionally, even issues which may seem quite peripheral to the core function of tourism may have the potential to escalate into a reputational firestorm and turn small incidents into crises, particularly when fuelled by damaging content posted on social media. Examples include issues such as racism, LGBTQ+ rights, sexual harassment, animal rights, human trafficking and localised damage to the environment. This is particularly relevant given the growing expectation, especially among younger consumers in developed societies, that organisations, companies and brands (and potentially countries) should not just adhere to but be seen to model a consistent set of values, standards and behaviours.<sup>9</sup> This underlines why the consistent monitoring and evaluation of reputational risks that may affect perceptions of the national brand is so critical to NTOs.

Finally, according to the World Economic Forum's classification of crises, situations such as a decline in the workforce, large scale migration, and public health (pandemics and epidemics), are also considered (socio-economic) crises. While the shortage of skilled labour has certainly affected many European destinations (particularly in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic), for the purposes of this report, it is considered as an ongoing destination management challenge, as opposed to a major crisis as defined above. Similarly, large-scale migration caused by people fleeing war and conflict hasn't had a significant impact on European tourism. As for pandemics, section 1.4 below explains how Covid-19 has been addressed in this report.

### 1.3 Understanding the scale and scope of crises

Understanding the scale and scope of crises requires a comprehensive outlook that transcends geographical boundaries. Whether it is a natural disaster like the eruption of Iceland's volcano or a geopolitical conflict like the war in Ukraine, the impacts are felt far beyond the immediate vicinity of the crisis, both for the visitors and for the residents of the place affected. A single incident has the potential to set off a chain reaction, triggering cascading effects that ripple across regions and sectors, often leading to unintended consequences.

However, amidst the initial chaos and uncertainty, crises also present opportunities for adaptation and innovation, compelling individuals and organisations to reassess existing strategies and collaborate in novel ways. As the post-Covid years have shown, prioritising innovation is the key to unlocking post-crisis growth, for example, by responding and adapting to shifts such as the need for new offerings, the need for multiple forms of digital engagement with customers, and rapid changes in consumer behaviour.<sup>10</sup> Crises in tourism can also serve as catalysts for change, fostering resilience and prompting the exploration of alternative approaches to meet the needs of visitors, host communities and the environment.

There are several recent examples of how crises have led European destinations to adapt and innovate. These include:

- Losing a key market (Russian visitors due to the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022, or the Chinese

market due to Covid-19) has prompted several European NTOs to refocus and innovate in research, marketing and communications, product and experience development, and partnerships (e.g. with international and domestic travel trade; with other NTOs) to attract alternative markets as well as consumer segments (e.g. domestic, adventure, or sustainably-conscious visitors).

- Similarly, new government priorities following high inflation and the cost-of-living crisis, which pressure public funding for tourism promotion and development, have prompted European NTOs to rethink strategies for market and product diversification, fundraising, budget reallocations, and research and data collection.
- The climate emergency is prompting some national tourism organisations to build a more sustainable tourism sector (e.g. by introducing sustainable certification of local businesses or investing in a more environmentally sustainable, low-carbon and accessible tourism offer). For example, in Turkey, the National Tourism Organisation (TGA) started the Safe and Sustainable Tourism Certification Programme (led by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism) for tourism and hospitality companies with the aim to minimise the risks from environmental and social crises.<sup>11</sup>

## 1.4 Putting Covid-19 and the climate crisis into context

While this report examines the full range of crises which may affect the tourism sector (particularly in Europe), two major, long-lasting crises provide important context for the creation of this report and have highlighted the need for NTOs to upgrade their crisis management plans and the need for Europe's tourism sector to become more resilient.

The first of these crises is the **global Covid-19 pandemic**. Given its global scale and profound impacts on the tourism industry, it has tested tourism authorities across Europe, and lessons are still being learned. Considering the abundance of resources on the tourism sector's response and recovery from Covid-19, including publications and reports issued by the ETC (please refer to [www.etc-corporate.org/publications](http://www.etc-corporate.org/publications)), the focus has been deliberately shifted to the impacts and NTOs' responses to other types of crises that affect the European tourism sector. Pandemics, including Covid-19, are classified as one of the various socio-economic crises that an NTO may have to address.

The second of these major crises is the changing climate. Global heating is unleashing a whole series of incidents that lead to a variety of crises across tourism destinations, such as extensive heatwaves, wildfires, droughts, and floodings, causing biodiversity loss, natural resource scarcity, and changes in the landscape. According to Germany's federal environment agency, 'large-scale land loss' is being observed in the Mediterranean region.<sup>12</sup> For example, rising sea levels have swallowed up 40 metres of Es Trenc, one of Mallorca's finest beaches. Should global warming continue as projected, many more Mallorca beaches will disappear into the sea. Drought is exacerbating water problems in the Algarve region, one of Portugal's most popular destinations.<sup>13</sup> Outside of Europe, the increasing water scarcity on the Caribbean islands is additionally sowing potential for conflict between locals and the resource-intensive tourism industry.<sup>14</sup>

Additionally, high temperatures also took their toll on Europe's glaciers, which saw 'exceptional' ice loss in the Alps due to a lack of winter snow. According to the Copernicus report, over the past two years,



glaciers in the Alps have lost around 10% of their volume.<sup>15</sup> Rising global temperatures have reduced seasonal snow cover in the Alps by 8.4% per decade in the past 50 years, and the duration of snow cover in the Alps is now 36 days shorter than the long-term average.<sup>16</sup> As the prime motivation for visitors to come to many European destinations hinges on local landscapes, biodiversity, heritage and cultures, the sector's survival depends on the ability to retain and preserve as much of these natural resources as possible.

Climate change is also affecting European tourism demand (in terms of 'where' and 'when' to visit), and tourism expenditure already requires European destinations to be prepared to address them (see the **Quick Facts** on the next page). The authors of this report understand that the climate emergency is the biggest crisis that the world is facing today. 'Extreme weather events' such as heatwaves, wildfires, droughts, and floods are classified in this report as 'environmental crises' resulting from the climate emergency.

## 1.5 Methodology

The report was developed using a combination of primary and secondary research methods, including:

- Analysis of academic literature, industry reports, thematic blogs, media reports, NTOs' websites and other websites of companies specialising in crisis management.
- Online survey of CEOs and senior management staff (research, communications, HR) of European NTOs on the types of crises affecting European tourism destinations, the crises' impacts, and NTO's responses during preparedness, response, recovery, run by TOPOSOPHY between February and April 2024. 34 respondents participated in the survey.
- 1:1 interviews were conducted with eight representatives of European NTOs .

The full bibliography can be seen in the [References](#) section.



# Quick Facts

## Climate Change and Tourism Demand in Europe

Projections (in the 2100 time horizon) based on **data from 269 European regions show that tourism demand will reshuffle, particularly in coastal areas, with northern regions benefiting and southern regions facing significant reductions in tourism demand**; that pattern becomes more pronounced for higher warming scenarios.<sup>17</sup>

---

- Tourism demand's seasonal distribution is also expected to change gradually, with relative reductions in summer and increases in the shoulder and winter seasons. Following last year's high temperatures, the number of people planning to visit the Mediterranean in June-November 2023 has already dropped by 10%, and tourists are considering trips to the Czech Republic, Denmark, Ireland, and Bulgaria instead.<sup>18</sup>
- The lack of reliable snow will likely alter tourism demand in the Alps region, attracting around 120 million tourists a year. Ski areas below 1,500 metres will be virtually without snow in the near future, affecting about a quarter of Alpine resorts.<sup>19</sup> The market share of bigger ones at higher elevations is likely to increase due to an expected shift of ski tourism to higher altitudes.
- Assuming a strong global warming scenario, Alpine ski resorts could have 40% fewer snow days per year by the end of the century (snow on 137 days a year, 80 fewer than the current average from 2071 onwards), with natural snow cover potentially disappearing completely in one in eight resorts worldwide.<sup>20</sup>
- Ski resorts and cable car companies across Switzerland – which is warming at about twice the global average rate due in part to the heat-trapping effect of its mountains - have been struggling with the lack of snow, trying to occupy tourists with other forms of leisure such as opening alpine bike paths on Christmas day to compensate for a delayed ski season. In January 2023, only 16 out of 70 ski trails were open at the upscale Gstaad resort, and cable car usage was around 35-40% lower than the previous year.<sup>21</sup>
- Evidence of changing weather patterns influencing tourism demand has already been recorded in Spain, as tourists spend more in Spain's cooler coastal municipalities than in warmer ones. Between the summer of 2019 and the summer of 2023, tourism expenditure rose by 45% on average in cooler and by 35% in warmer places. Additionally, during the summer heatwaves of 2023, tourists reduced their spending during the hottest times of the day (between 12 noon and 5 pm) and increased between 10 pm and 7 am.<sup>22</sup>

# Mapping Crises

Types of crises and impacts on European Tourism



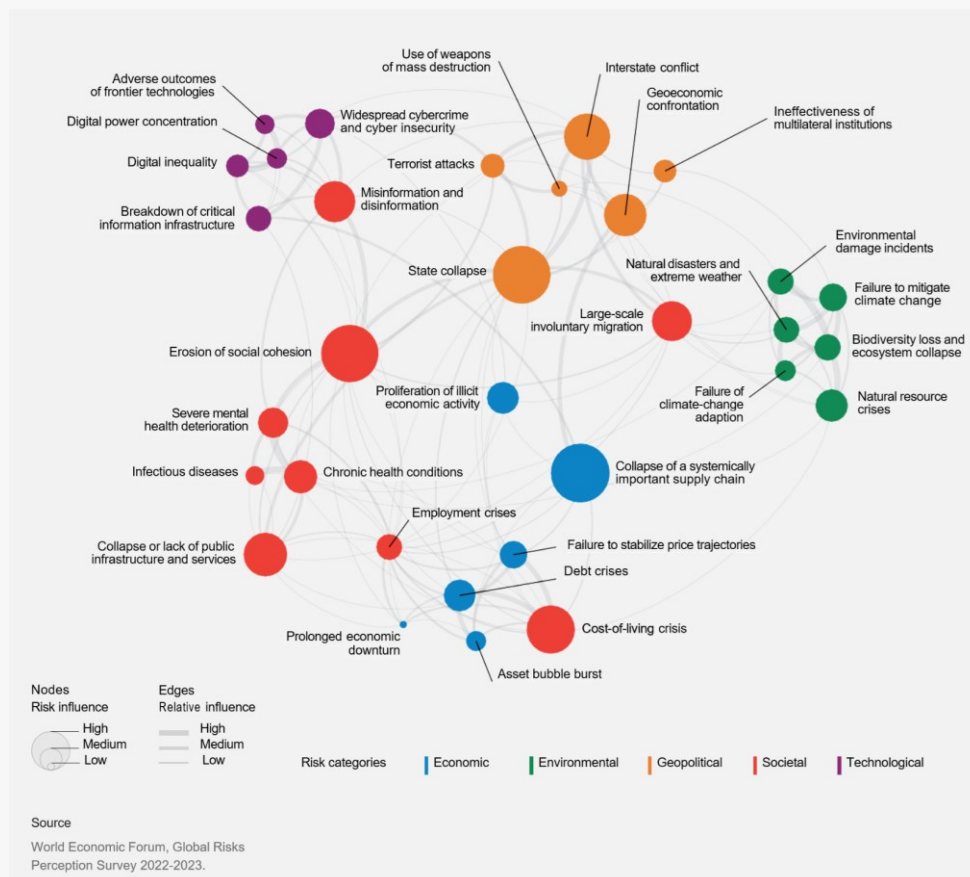


## 2. Mapping crises and their impacts

### 2.1 Categorising crises

The following diagram by the World Economic Forum illustrates the interconnected nature of global risks, with the thickness of each line indicating the relative level of influence of one set of risks over another.

#### Global risks landscape: an interconnections map



Source: [WEF Global Risk Perceptions Survey 2022-2023, p.10](#)

Building on the World Economic Forum's (WEF) [Global Risk Report 2023](#) and the WTTC's [Crisis Readiness Report](#), there are various types of crises that affect the tourism sector globally that can be categorised under the following risk categories: environmental, geopolitical, socio-economic and technological. It should be noted that the WEF's risk categories relate to the types of risks that affect various industries, not only tourism. The typology of crises used in this report is based on the risk categories suggested by the WEF, amended slightly to reflect the type of crises that is particularly relevant for European tourism (Table 1 below).

It's important to mention that on a global scale, and particularly in comparison to developing countries, Europe is relatively well prepared to respond to the various types of crises thanks to strong government institutions, good welfare systems, and affordable healthcare. Additionally, several civil protection and



crisis response mechanisms have been established by the EU and its member states - for example, the always-active Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC), the European Civil Protection Pool of assets pre-committed for immediate deployment inside or outside the EU, or the EU Solidarity Fund (EUSF) for the disaster-stricken regions in Europe aiming to 'effectively manage crises and protect people.'<sup>23</sup>

### **Types of crises relevant to European tourism**

Europe is an extremely diverse continent and, by global standards, enjoys a relatively temperate climate and sophisticated level of infrastructure, construction standards and communications, as well as dedicated multi-national level mechanisms for responding to crises and supporting recovery. Nevertheless, some of Europe's geographic and geopolitical characteristics pose risks, too.

In 2022, researchers defined an unprecedented global wave of more than 12,500 protests across 148 countries over food, fuel and cost of living increases, with the largest number in Western Europe.<sup>24</sup> Additionally, climate risks are threatening its energy and food security, ecosystems, infrastructure, water resources, financial stability, and people's health as the weather across Europe is getting more extreme, with heatwaves, droughts and flooding occurring simultaneously across Europe. Additionally, Europe also experiences a lot of contrasting extremes: while many regions experience heatwaves and drought, others see widespread flooding.<sup>25</sup> The three warmest years on record for Europe have all occurred since 2020, and the ten warmest since 2007. At the peak of a heatwave in July 2023, a record 41% of southern Europe was affected by 'strong', 'very strong' or 'extreme heat stress'.<sup>26</sup> Interestingly, scientists from the University of Cambridge and the Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz found that 2023 was the hottest summer in the Northern Hemisphere in the past two thousand years.<sup>27</sup>

All the above, coupled with European destinations' reliance on complex infrastructure to support visitors' needs (transportation networks, accommodation facilities and tourist attractions) and exposure to diverse geographic and geopolitical factors (political instability, border disputes, or international conflicts), creates uncertainties and travel disruptions, making tourism destinations particularly vulnerable to the following types of crises (Table 1).

**Table 1: Types of crises that European tourism is particularly vulnerable to**

| Crisis type   | Examples  |
|---|---|
| <p><b>ENVIRONMENTAL</b><br/>Extreme weather events (heatwaves, wildfires, flooding)</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Heatwaves:</b> In June 2024, an urgent warning was issued to anyone travelling to Greece as four holidaymakers died and more were missing due to the earliest heatwave on record.<sup>28</sup> In 2023, the EU's emergency response coordination centre issued red alerts for high temperatures for most of Italy, northeastern Spain, Croatia, Serbia, southern Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Montenegro.</li> <li>● <b>Wildfires:</b> The 2023 wildfire season saw the fourth largest burnt area on record in the European Union, at a total of around 500,000 ha, with 'extreme' fire danger in northern Europe in early summer and during July and August in the south in Portugal, Spain, Italy and Greece.<sup>29</sup></li> <li>● <b>Flooding:</b> In 2023, Slovenia experienced the worst flooding in history, and record amounts of rainfall from Storm Hans led to widespread flooding in Norway and Sweden, Storm Daniel caused flooding in southeastern Europe, most notably in Greece. In Italy in May 2023, an equivalent to six months' worth of rain fell within 36 hours across the Emilia-Romagna agricultural and tourist region.<sup>30</sup> In June 2024, rising Danube levels caused severe flooding in southern Germany, Austria and Hungary.<sup>31</sup></li> </ul> |
| <p><b>ENVIRONMENTAL</b><br/>Other natural disasters (earthquakes, volcanic eruptions)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Volcanic activity in Iceland has been rumbling on for months, centred around the Reykjanes Peninsula near Reykjavík<sup>32</sup>. After multiple earthquakes, the most recent series of eruptions happened at the end of 2023, when an explosion along a 2.5-mile fissure sent lava into the air a couple of miles northeast of the fishing village of Grindavík; another followed shortly afterwards.</li> <li>● In 2020, Croatia experienced two earthquakes, in Zagreb (March) and in Petrinja/Sisak in December, causing major damage amidst lockdowns due to the Covid-19 pandemic.</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>GEOPOLITICAL</b><br/>War and conflict</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The Russian aggression on Ukraine in February 2022 and the ongoing war have severely affected several European destinations (see description of impacts in <a href="#">Section 2.2</a>).</li> <li>● Over the last decade, Europe has experienced several terrorist attacks. For example, in November 2015, gunmen from the so-called Islamic State killed 130 people in an attack in Paris, France.<sup>33</sup> In Nice, July 2017, France's tourism sector was damaged after a gunman drove a truck into crowds celebrating Bastille Day in the Riviera city of Nice, killing 86 people and injuring over 300.<sup>34</sup> In March 2016, 32 people were killed, and more than 300 were injured after coordinated suicide bombings at Brussels Airport and the Maelbeek metro station in Brussels.<sup>35</sup></li> </ul>  |

| Crisis type   | Examples   |
|---|--|
| <p><b>SOCIOECONOMIC</b><br/>Civil unrest<br/>(strikes, protests, riots)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Inflation and rising costs of living, e.g. ‘Europe inflation protests’ across Europe (France, Germany, Romania, and Czechia) against the growing cost of living and inflation in 2022, attributed to the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine.<sup>36</sup></li> <li>● War and conflict, e.g. ongoing pro-Palestine demonstrations across Europe due to the Israel-Palestine conflict.</li> <li>● Political reforms and regulations, e.g. 2023-2024 European farmers’ protests (Belgium, France, Germany, Netherlands and Poland) against proposed environmental regulations under the European Green Deal (such as a carbon tax or pesticide bans), and trade in agricultural products with non-EU member states.<sup>37</sup></li> <li>● Immigration, e.g. Dublin riots in 2023.<sup>38</sup></li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>TECHNOLOGICAL</b><br/>Cybercrime, cyber<br/>insecurity</p>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● ‘Widespread cybercrime and cyber insecurity’ remain in the top ten global risks (both short and long-term). Alongside a rise in cybercrime, attempts to disrupt critical technology-enabled resources and services will become more common, with attacks anticipated against agriculture and water, financial systems, public security, transport, energy and domestic communication infrastructure.<sup>39</sup></li> <li>● The number of cyber-attacks continues to rise. These attacks are more sophisticated than ever, come from a wide range of sources inside and outside the EU, and target areas of maximum vulnerability.<sup>40</sup></li> <li>● Criminals combine phishing techniques and malware to attack hotels and travel agencies, obtain their access credentials to the leading travel booking platforms, impersonate them and defraud travellers who have made a reservation, undermining companies’ reputation and causing disruption.<sup>41</sup></li> </ul> |
| <p><b>TECHNOLOGICAL</b><br/>IT system failures</p>                          | <p>Although failures of IT systems at major airports or airlines may not be described as a ‘crisis’ with national proportions, they can still cause chaos and heavily disrupt the visitor experience. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The failure of electronic gates at Heathrow, Gatwick, Stansted, Edinburgh, Birmingham, Manchester and Bristol airports caused disruption and huge queues for thousands of passengers crossing the UK border in May 2024.<sup>42</sup></li> <li>● British Airways cancelled 175 flights affecting more than 20,000 passengers following an IT system failure at Heathrow in May 2023.<sup>43</sup> British Airways’ most notorious IT incident caused by ‘uncontrolled return of power’ affected about 75,000 passengers as flights were cancelled and luggage lost, causing disruption for four days in May 2017.<sup>44</sup></li> </ul>  |

| Crisis type | Examples   |
|-------------|--|
|             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check-in system failure disrupted airports worldwide in September 2017, including Heathrow and Gatwick, Johannesburg, Changi in Singapore and Reagan National Airport in Washington, Zurich and Melbourne.<sup>45</sup></li> <li>• Thousands of passengers and many airlines/airports have been suffering long delays and cancellations (about 500 flights) after a ‘technical issue’ hit UK air traffic control systems on Monday, 28 August 2023.<sup>46</sup></li> </ul> |

## 2.2 The impact of crises on European destinations

As explained in section 1.3, one type of crisis can trigger many different types of impacts, both in terms of disruption to tourism demand and supply. The socio-economic impacts from crises that most prevail in European destinations include:

- Impact on visitor numbers and travel flows: reductions/increase in tourism demand; loss of key markets; shifts in the seasonal distribution of tourism demand; shifts in visitor spending
- Impact on the local economy: job losses; changes to the labour market; financial losses to local businesses
- Impact on the destination’s image/reputation: long and short-term visitors’ perception of destinations being unsafe, not accessible, or with limited offer (e.g. due to restrictions in outdoor activities, cancellations of events, damaged infrastructure, changes to landscapes and depletion of natural resources caused by the crisis)

Table 2 below provides examples of how European destinations have been affected by different types of crises in the past decade.



---

**Table 2: Impacts of crises on European tourism**


---

## EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS

### Heatwaves, wildfires, droughts and flooding

#### HEATWAVES

- **Alterations to the availability and accessibility of visitor attractions (including closures)**
  - **Surge in medical emergencies**
  - **Changes to holiday plans**
    - Greece: Athens took the unprecedented step of closing its top tourist attraction, the Acropolis, to protect tourists after temperatures reached 45°C in July 2023,<sup>47</sup> and then again in June 2024.<sup>48</sup> Volunteers and first-aid rescue workers had been dispatched to the site.
    - Italy: Visitors to Rome have been returning home early because of the heatwave,<sup>49</sup> while hospitals have faced a rise in the number of medical emergencies. Admissions at one hospital reached their highest since the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>50</sup>
- 

#### WILDFIRES

- **Disruptions and cancellation of holiday plans**
  - **Negative destination image due to increased health and safety concerns and stress experienced by visitors caused by mass evacuations, travel disruptions, or loss of possessions.**
    - Greece: The wildfires in Greece in 2023 disrupted holiday plans and caused mass evacuations of tourists and residents. Overnight, an estimated 2,466 citizens had fled dwellings in 17 villages in Corfu popular with villa-owning Britons. In Rhodes, 19,000 people – mostly tourists – were evacuated in ‘the biggest evacuation in Greek history’<sup>51</sup>. The ‘chaotic’ evacuations have significantly impacted the destination’s reputation and visitor experience (stress).<sup>52</sup>
    - Portugal: in August 2023, 19 villages, four tourist accommodations and a campsite were evacuated in Alentejo near the Algarve.<sup>53</sup>
- 

#### DROUGHTS AND FLOODING

- **Restriction of resources for tourism businesses**
    - Portugal: Droughts and water shortages in the Algarve region (throughout 2023 and 2024) have imposed restrictions on the tourism sector companies to reduce water consumption by 15%.<sup>54</sup>
  - **Severe travel disruptions and damage to infrastructure; closure of attractions and cancellation of events**
    - Slovenia: Severe flooding in August 2023 caused severe damage to infrastructure, resulting in travel disruptions, closing several tourist attractions and hiking trails,<sup>55</sup> cancelling or postponing cultural, sports, and other events, and evacuating tourists from several campsites.
-

---

→ Italy: In May 2023, flooding in Emilia Romagna triggered more than 400 landslides, damaging and closing off hundreds of roads.<sup>56</sup>

- **Threat to lives**

→ Germany: Five people died during flooding in southern Germany in June 2024.<sup>57</sup>

→ Slovenia: Six people, including two Dutch tourists, died in a mountain area during the floods in Slovenia.<sup>58</sup>

---

## OTHER NATURAL DISASTERS

### Earthquakes, volcanic eruptions

#### VOLCANIC ERUPTIONS AND EARTHQUAKES

- **Alterations of the availability and accessibility of visitor attractions**

→ Iceland: Following multiple earthquakes and volcano eruptions on the Reykjanes Peninsula in November 2023, the residents of Grindavík were evacuated, and the nearby Blue Lagoon, the country's most popular attraction, has briefly closed, on and off<sup>59</sup> as a precautionary response to the eruptions, causing disruptions and affecting visitor experience.

→ Croatia: Four years on after the earthquakes in Zagreb & Petrinja in 2020 that caused serious damage to infrastructure, there are still major tourist attractions (museums, churches, etc) that are still undergoing reconstruction.<sup>60</sup>

- **Severe travel disruptions, reduced visitor numbers and a negative impact on the local economy**

→ Iceland: Eyjafjallajökull volcano eruption in 2010 caused a six-day shutdown of European airspace and the cancellation of around 100,000 flights, disrupting holiday plans, reducing visitor numbers and damaging to the local economy.

---

## GEOPOLITICAL

### War and terrorist attacks

#### WAR IN UKRAINE (2022 – ONGOING); PALESTINE-ISRAEL CONFLICT (2023 – ONGOING)

- **Loss of the key market**

- Several European destinations have lost a considerable market because right before the invasion in Feb 2022, 56% of Russian travellers intended to travel to Europe in 2022.<sup>61</sup> This includes Lithuania, Latvia, Finland, Czechia, Hungary, Montenegro, and Turkey. Cyprus has lost 90% of its second biggest market, Russia, and completely lost the Ukrainian market. Bulgaria has also lost two of its priority tourism markets, Ukraine and Russia.<sup>62</sup>
- Similarly, the Palestine-Israel conflict has caused the loss of the Israeli market in several European countries, for example, Montenegro, Hungary, Cyprus, Lithuania and Czechia.<sup>63</sup>

- **Negative destination image**

- Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Poland, Czechia and Finland: Following the outbreak of war in Ukraine, Europe's image as a safe place to travel suffered, particularly in US and Canadian markets, with countries closest to Russia, Ukraine and Belarus particularly affected.<sup>64, 65</sup>
- Bulgaria: 'The war raises concerns among tour operators, hoteliers and restaurateurs because of tourists' perception as an unsafe destination.'<sup>66</sup>

- **Decline in visitor numbers**

- Europe as a whole experienced a 7% slowdown in international demand for travel in the first two weeks after Russia's invasion of Ukraine.
- Countries in the Baltic region continue to lag behind due to challenges caused by the war in Ukraine, with Latvia registering the lowest post-pandemic international arrivals (-34%), followed by Estonia (-15%) and Lithuania (-14%).<sup>67</sup>

---

#### TERRORIST ATTACKS

- **Negative destination image**

- Belgium: Damaged destination's image, seen as 'less safe', prompting VisitFlanders to develop several communications activities for their present and returning visitors, e.g. a warm welcome campaign #shareourmile.<sup>68</sup>

- **Decline in visitor numbers and tourism revenue**

- France: After the Paris attacks, there were a million fewer visitors between January and June 2016 compared with the same period in 2015, with an estimated €750m (£644m) in lost revenue.<sup>69</sup>
  - The Ile-de-France region which includes Paris saw an 11.5% decline in foreign tourists and a 4.8% decline in French tourists.
-

## SOCIO-ECONOMIC

### Civil unrest

#### STRIKES, RIOTS AND PROTESTS

- **Negative destination image (perceived as unsafe) resulting in lower demand and lost revenues for the local economy**
  - Greece: Road closures, strikes shutting down archaeological sites, the blockading of the main port of Piraeus, and turning away thousands of cruise passengers have horrified people in Greece's vital tourism industry. Additionally, images of flaming buildings and riots in Athens — where three people died trapped in a burning bank in May 2010 — took an early toll, leading to the cancellation of about 20,000 overnight hotel stays in the capital and nearby resorts.<sup>70</sup>
- **Transport disruptions and flight cancellations**
  - Germany: Nationwide strikes of transport workers in Germany in Spring 2024, some of the most severe in decades, have caused significant disruptions at airports, public transport, and the country's largest port. Over 400,000 transport workers participated in the strikes, leading to flight cancellations at major airports like Munich, Frankfurt, and Hamburg, affecting approximately 380,000 travellers. Munich Airport closed for two days, affecting 200,000 passengers. The strikes have also affected Hamburg, Germany's largest port, with large ships unable to call at or depart from the port.<sup>71</sup>
- **Impact on visitor experience**
  - Greece: Following ongoing austerity-related strikes in 2008 and 2010, capital controls were imposed, indirectly forcing tourists to use cash (no notes left in ATMs during that period)<sup>72</sup>. In the first stage of the 2009-10 Greek crisis, violent demonstrations meant leisure tourism revenue dropped 10 percent for two years in a row<sup>73</sup>.
  - France: French officials have warned that strict new EU border controls for British holidaymakers due to be imposed in Autumn 2024 could lead to civil unrest at airports<sup>74</sup>.

## TECHNOLOGICAL

### Digital security (cyber-attacks; cyber-insecurity; data fraud)

According to the World Travel and Tourism Council, emerging risks such as digital security and resource scarcity are anticipated to become increasingly important for the tourism sector in the coming years.<sup>75</sup> European destinations are increasingly aware of it and some NTOs are taking steps to address it. For example:

- Spain: In May 2023, Tenerife Tourism launched its Tenerife Cybersecurity Tourism Master Plan (PDTC), the first of its kind to be adopted by a Spanish destination to strengthen cybersecurity in the tourism sector. The Plan includes 17 actions to be developed over four years, including creating a Technical Office for Tourism Cybersecurity, the governing body for island cybersecurity in the tourism sector, managed by Tenerife Tourism Board.<sup>76</sup>
- Finland: Visit Jyväskylä Region & Jyväskylä University of Applied Sciences created [\*\*10 tips GUIDE for improving cyber security in the tourism industry 2021.\*\*](#)

# Case Studies

Tourism crisis management in Europe and beyond





### 3. Case studies on tourism crisis management in Europe

This chapter includes a set of six case studies from European destinations, showing the impact of particular types of crises on tourism, the responses of national tourism organizations (NTOs), and the key outcomes and lessons that can be applied by other destinations facing future crises. In some cases, a short description of impactful responses by other NTOs dealing with the same type of crisis has been included as ‘further reading’. The case studies have been selected based on the severity of the crisis, its impact, and the effectiveness of the NTO's response. These responses are noteworthy for their extensive measures and the potential for others to learn from and apply these strategies elsewhere.



The case studies featured include:

- Greece: Athens Heatwave and Rhodes Wildfires (2023)
- Slovenia: Flooding (2023)
- Iceland: Reykjanes Seismic Activity (2023 - 2024)
- Portugal: Algarve Water Shortages (2023-2024) + a box referencing the Cape Town Water Crisis (2015-2020) and The Balearic Islands' Water Management Aid Package (2023)
- Poland, Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia: The War in Ukraine (2022 - ongoing)
- France: Terrorist Attacks in Paris and Nice (2015-2016), including a feature on the impacts of these attacks on Monaco

Following the six case studies, several resilience-building initiatives have been highlighted to demonstrate NTOs' preparedness and long-term approach to crisis management. These are included in the list '**Further Reading; Resilience Initiatives**' on page 41.

# Greece: Athens Heatwave and Rhodes Wildfires (2023)

The 15-day heatwave in Greece, ending on July 26, 2023, was the longest on record.<sup>77</sup> On July 23, nearly the entire population endured temperatures above 40°C. All regions, except the Ionian and Aegean islands, broke 15-year temperature records. In Athens' Patisia district, temperatures stayed above 30°C for 307 hours from July 12 to 26.<sup>78</sup> The island of Rhodes faced extreme heat and wildfires, resulting in no human casualties but damaging 135,000 hectares of forest and vegetation, burning over 50,000 olive trees and many domestic animals, destroying about 50 homes, and causing mass tourist evacuations.<sup>79</sup>

## Impacts on tourism

- Athens took the unprecedented step of closing its top tourist attraction, the Acropolis, to protect tourists after temperatures reached 45°C. Volunteers with the Hellenic Red Cross distributed free water bottles, and first-aid rescue workers were dispatched to the site.<sup>80</sup>
- The wildfires in Greece in 2023 disrupted holiday plans and caused mass evacuations of tourists and residents. In Rhodes, 19,000 people – mostly tourists – were evacuated in ‘the biggest evacuation in Greek history’.<sup>81</sup>
- The ‘chaotic’ evacuations have caused a significant impact on the destination’s reputation (increased health and safety concerns) and visitor experience (stress).<sup>82</sup>

## The response to the heatwave in Athens

The municipality of Athens introduced a series of [#CoolAthens](#) initiatives aiming to protect Athenian residents and visitors, such as:<sup>83</sup>

- Categorising and evaluating heatwaves for their health impacts in collaboration with scientists and other partners.
- New website dedicated to protecting and supporting residents during heatwaves with guidance on how to keep cool.
- Regular communication with residents through messages outlining the services offered during a heatwave (Early Warning Messaging System) and a helpline active from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.
- Providing the ‘EXTREMA Global’ application with real-time personalised risk information during hot days, including maps of the nearest cooling centres, the coolest routes to various destinations, and information on air pollution levels
- Training seminars by the Hellenic Red Cross for the municipality staff who deal with vulnerable groups.
- Support for the elderly through the ‘Help at Home+’ programme facilitated by volunteers of the Hellenic Red Cross.

## The response to the wildfires in Rhodes

- On 23 July, the Greek government released Q&As for Tourists Affected by the Wildfires with critical contact information and procedures for the affected visitors in Rhodes, covering emergency services, embassy contacts, repatriation, lost documents, and medical assistance.<sup>84</sup>
- The Ministry of Digital Governance funded and implemented ‘Rodos Week’: a financial assistance initiative in the form of a free 7-day hotel stay for adults (regardless of nationality) evacuated from Rhodes hotels in July 2023. Beneficiaries registered by hotels and travel agencies were able to receive an e-voucher, The Rhodes Pass (worth 300-500 euros), and can use it for a free stay in a similar hotel category during specified periods in 2024 (ongoing at the time of writing). Affected hotels, and travel agencies or travel agents were also able to benefit from Rodos Week by being able to host the voucher-holders in 2024<sup>85</sup>. The aim was to ensure tourism flows to the island and to support the sector’s recovery while restoring the island’s reputation. The initiative was **announced and promoted** by the Greek National Tourism Organisation under the Ministry of Tourism.
- An online “Rhodos Week” platform was created, featuring detailed FAQs and user manuals to assist beneficiaries in receiving help. Additionally, they could contact the Rhodos Week Helpdesk for further support.

## Outcomes and lessons

- It is likely that Greece and many other European destinations will be increasingly dealing with the impacts of heatwaves and wildfires. The ability of these destinations to prepare and respond efficiently is only going to be more relevant to ensure the safety and wellbeing of both visitors and residents.
- Cooperation to promote various initiatives is crucial to reach as many people in need as possible. Although the #Cool Athens initiatives were focused on residents, and not promoted to visitors, it is worth considering doing so if resources (for example for translation) are available.

## Slovenia: Severe Flooding (2023)

Between 3rd and 6th August 2023, Slovenia experienced record-breaking rainfall that affected two-thirds of the country. Some areas were immediately inaccessible and required residents' evacuations. On 8th August, access to remote areas and areas affected by landslides remained difficult.<sup>86</sup>

This was 'probably the most extreme flood event in Slovenia in recent decades, causing total direct and indirect damage, including post-disaster needs, close to EUR 10 billion, claiming three lives, and affecting tens of thousands of residents and tourists.'<sup>87</sup> Given that the incident occurred during peak tourism season, it was necessary for the Slovenian Tourism Board NTO (STB) to respond urgently to support areas that were both affected and unaffected.

### Impacts on tourism

- The flooding occurred at the peak of the tourist season. However, most of the country's key tourist attractions were largely spared. Most popular destinations in the Julian Alps, such as the Soča Valley, Lake Bled, or Bohinj, remained operational throughout August. Travel to the capital, Ljubljana, was possible by plane, train, bus, or car, and the central city area with the most popular tourist attractions was not affected.<sup>88</sup> However, not all international visitors were familiar with the country's geography, so it was important to clarify the true scope of the impact.
- Despite that, damaged railways, motorways and collapsed bridges in certain areas caused travel disruptions and restricted access to some outdoor activities and attractions. Several hiking trails were closed due to fallen trees and water-damaged paths. Some tourist cultural, sports, and other events, as well as water activities, were cancelled or rescheduled.<sup>89</sup> The floods also caused evacuations from campsites and damage to personal belongings of campers.<sup>90</sup>

### The response

Slovenian Environment Agency (ARSO) immediately issued a red weather alert, and the national emergency response plan for floods was activated.<sup>91</sup> As a public agency, the STB took on the role of communicating and regularly updating about the crisis and its immediate impacts on visitors and businesses by working closely with local DMOs. The aim was to reassure travellers by repeating that most of Slovenia remains unaffected and fully functional, countering the impression given by some international media that the whole country was affected.

- Communications with visitors: By setting up a dedicated webpage (on the STB website [www.slovenia.info](http://www.slovenia.info)) and with social media updates, the STB communicated in four languages on any new developments in the crisis-affected areas (e.g. closed locations or visitor attractions); warned visitors about possible contamination of drinking water in flood-affected areas and from flooded gardens or fields, and promoted alternative places to visit with the focus on safety, redirecting visitors to the non-affected regions.
- Support for businesses: The STB's representatives in neighbouring Italy, Austria, and Germany communicated with travel trade and local businesses in their local markets, providing regular updates on the developments in the affected areas to reassure the travel trade that most of

---

Slovenia is safe to travel. For the local SMEs, STB distributed government funding for promotion amongst DMOs with most crisis-affected businesses.

### **Key outcomes**

- Thanks to the swift NTO response, visitor numbers remained stable during August and September. Communications via TikTok, Instagram, and Facebook effectively engaged many visitors.
- NTO staff documented actions taken during the crisis, creating a guide to prepare for future events.
- A daily tourism counter launched in Spring 2024 (providing real-time information on domestic and international visitors) will help predict visitor flows and travelling patterns in crisis-prone situations such as during extreme weather events.
- A national intelligence hub (due to be launched in 2024) will include the environmental impacts of travelling in Slovenia, which will progressively help to monitor and mitigate climate impacts.

### **Key lessons**

- Adequate resource allocation is crucial. All staff worked on the organisation's crisis response for extended hours, and translations were done in-house in Ljubljana.
- Coordination with local DMOs is essential for real-time updates from affected areas, reassuring tourists, and making alternative arrangements.
- Crises can remind NTOs to encourage local tourism as a key market that will inevitably be the first to return following a crisis. However, this requires a better understanding of the different expectations of domestic and international tourists and adjusting communications accordingly.



# Iceland: Reykjanes Seismic Activity (2023-2024)

As of June 2024, the most recent series of earthquakes and volcanic eruptions have centred around the Reykjanes Peninsula near Reykjavik, Iceland, and occurred in November 2023 when the fishing village of Grindavík had to be evacuated. Currently, the volcano is still active, with predictions for another eruption in the not-too-distant future. The Icelandic Meteorological Office, The Department of Civil Protection and Emergency Management, and a team of scientists from the University of Iceland are closely monitoring the situation and analysing developments.

## Impacts on tourism

- The city of Reykjavík and the international airport were unaffected. The nearby Blue Lagoon, the country's most popular attraction, has briefly closed, on and off, as a precautionary response to the eruptions, causing disruptions and affecting the visitor experience.<sup>92</sup> It continues to open and close according to the direction of the wind, which carries gases.
- The Reykjanes Peninsula eruptions have caused so-called 'tourist eruptions' of dedicated 'lava chasers' who book at the last minute to get quite close to the crater to witness the lava flow.<sup>93</sup> Interestingly, Iceland's former president, Olafur Ragnar Grímsson, encouraged visitors to prepare for January (via his X posts on 23 Dec): "*The predictions are that in two weeks the eruption might start again! Book your flight now so you can witness the Earth being created!*"<sup>94</sup>
- In March 2024, the NTO published a short video update on travel safety for tourists that also explains the impacts on tourism.<sup>95</sup>

## The response

The [Emergency Response Plan](#) (first developed in 2018 for the authorities and the tourism industry) was activated in November 2023 to ensure all parties' orderly and coordinated response. The Tourism Action Board (ASF) and the Tourism Executive Group (FHF) were convened as part of the Plan to ensure the safety of tourists in Iceland, minimise the impact on the movement of tourists, ensure the flow of information to and from tourist operators to the Civil Protection Coordination Centre, and to communicate information to tourists and minimise the impact on Iceland's image and reputation.<sup>96</sup>

The NTO in Iceland plays a fundamental coordinating role, providing a link between the governmental authorities, civil protection, the industry and visitors. This includes:

- Engaging proactively with the media, including setting up an international media centre, where journalists can be based.
- Providing a platform for journalists to meet experts and decision-makers.
- Collaborating with Business Iceland (the investment agency) to monitor and respond to the news affecting the country's reputation, ensuring consistent messaging.
- Working with the Department of Civil Protection to use terms accurately and avoid misinformation about the scale of emergencies, such as avoiding the misinterpretation of the 'state of emergency'.

- 
- Coordinating communications and updates with local businesses to prevent misinformation.
  - Having a dedicated Head of Safety within the NTO for risk and crisis management, liaising with government agencies, and reporting to the CEO.
  - Conducting annual research on the financial health of tourism companies to better understand business challenges and better identify needs for potential support (ongoing since 2020).
  - Collaborating with university scientists on research to understand the impacts of various factors on tourism.

### **Key outcomes and lessons**

- One of the main aims of effective crisis communications is to ensure consistency of messaging and that the terminology used will help tackle disinformation. It is crucial to be proactive in engaging with local and international media, as incorrect headlines about what is happening can have (and have had) a direct impact on visitor arrivals into the country and, therefore, the country's GDP (in Iceland's case, at 8.3% approximately).
- According to the CEO Arnar Már Olafsson, having an internal Contingency Plan used to run protocols within the NTO and with others 'has proved very helpful'.<sup>97</sup>
- Iceland's geography means that the NTO must be continually vigilant and act to inform the media properly about what is happening to avoid unintended impacts on the tourism sector.

## Portugal: Algarve Water Shortages (2023-2024)

After ‘the worst ever’ water shortages in 2023, the Algarve, Portugal’s southernmost region known for its stunning beaches and vibrant tourism industry, experienced a severe drought in 2024. Although droughts are not new to the Algarve, the current drought stands out due to its prolonged duration and intensity. At the beginning of 2024, the six reservoirs in the Algarve were at 25% of their capacity, leading to government regulations to reduce water consumption by 15% in the urban sector, including tourism, and a 25% reduction in agriculture.

### Impacts on tourism

- To comply with new regulations, recent investments to decrease water usage have been made in golf courses, an activity normally associated with large water consumption, and very popular with tourists. To conserve water, golf courses are adopting drought-resistant plants, implementing precise watering systems that reuse water and only water at night. However, if the current measures prove insufficient, the Government will suspend the public water supply for irrigation of golf courses.<sup>98</sup>
- Over the past 2-3 years, the accommodation sector has already been implementing several water efficiency measures, such as installing flow reducers in taps, reducing irrigated areas, or raising awareness about water usage among tourists.<sup>99</sup>

### The response

To ensure the needs of the tourism sector are considered at the strategic level, Turismo de Portugal, the NTO, is a member of the Permanent Committee for Prevention and Monitoring of the Effects of Drought defines political guidelines, and approves and monitors the implementation of the Prevention, Monitoring and Contingency Plan for Drought.

At the operational level, in an attempt to encourage and involve tourists and local businesses in the region’s water-saving efforts, in March 2024, Turismo de Portugal introduced three key measures:

- A sustainability communication campaign “Save Water, be a Futurist” focusing on Algarve’s key markets (the UK, Spain, Germany, and France), aimed to reach tourists both pre-holiday, through promotion on social media with images of the Algarve containing mottos such as ‘Less pools, more Ocean’ and messages with water-saving tips; and upon arrival, through offline messages such as transparent suitcases and trolleys at Faro Airport filled with 235 litres of water – the amount that a ‘conscientious and responsible tourist can save per day.’<sup>100</sup>
- “Save Water” Seal certification for Algarve’s hotels and tourist accommodation providers, recognising companies’ voluntary adherence to a wide range (60) of water-efficiency measures. Their implementation will be monitored by ADENE – Agency for Energy - through a new portal allowing companies to report their water consumption levels. The programme is planned to be extended to other SMEs in the tourism sector.<sup>101</sup>
- €10 million funding programme to help businesses implement the measures required to achieve the ‘Save Water’ certificate. The programme covers 50% of the cost up to a maximum of €50,000

per company. Additionally, tourist accommodation companies will have access to a national €50 million funding programme, ‘Linha de Apoio ao Turismo + Sustentável’, to support investments in environmental sustainability.

## Key outcomes and lessons

- Thanks to the financial support, many businesses have already begun implementing the recommended water-saving measures, contributing to reducing the volume of water consumed by the urban sector in the Algarve by 15%. The president of Algarve Tourism, André Gomes, praised the collective efforts across the sector to comply with the regulation and noted a growing awareness among more responsible tourists regarding water conservation thanks to communications activities aimed at tourists (such as encouraging them to take shorter showers or reuse towels).<sup>102</sup>
- Although the full impact of the communications campaign is yet to be assessed, this case study demonstrates the importance of education and awareness campaigns to promote responsible behaviour amongst visitors.



### Further reading:

**[Destinations that have taken steps to manage water consumption in the tourism sector](#)**

### The Cape Town Water Crisis, South Africa (2015-2020)

The Cape Town water crisis (2015–2020) was a result of a combination of well below-average rainfall patterns, the increasing unpredictability of weather conditions due to climate change, population growth, and government mismanagement.<sup>103</sup> The crisis peaked between mid-2017 and mid-2018, with projections forecasting that the city would run out of water by April 2018. Cape Town’s “Day Zero” campaign communicated to its 400,000 residents the severity of the drought and articulated the need to reduce and limit water consumption. Hotels were required to ask guests not to take baths and limit their showers to under two minutes; and restaurants switched to disposable cups and stopped using table linens. In January 2018, The Western Cape Government and City of Cape Town with Support from South African Tourism issued [Guidelines to Visitors](#) to ‘come and enjoy, but be mindful of the drought’. It has been estimated the Travel & Tourism sector lost approximately \$71.3 million due to a decline in arrivals and spending.<sup>104</sup> Read more [here](#).

### Spain, the Balearic Islands: Water Management Aid Package (2023)

In 2023, the Balearic Government announced an aid package of eight million euros for the tourism sector, with the aim of promoting efficient water management in tourist establishments in the Balearic Islands. The aid, financed with European funds, allows tourist establishments to carry out improvements that include aspects such as the reuse of wastewater and rainwater, the replacement of swimming pool filtration systems, the installation of pool water reuse systems, the promotion of the awareness of visitors and tourist establishments to water consumption, among others. Read more [here](#)

# Poland, Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia: The Impact of the War in Ukraine (2022 - Ongoing)

According to UN Tourism, Russia's military offensive in Ukraine represents a downside risk for international tourism. The war has exacerbated already high oil prices and transportation costs and caused a disruption of travel, particularly in Eastern Europe. It has added additional risk to a weak and uneven tourism recovery post Covid, lowering consumer confidence (particularly in more risk averse markets and segments such as the US and Asian source markets) affecting the demand on European travel.

## Impacts on Tourism

- Loss of key markets: Before the invasion, Russian & Ukrainian outbound travel accounted for 3% of global tourism spending (worth US\$ 14 billion in 2020). In Europe, Russian visitors accounted for 10-20% in the neighbouring countries (Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, Finland, Moldova) and in coastal destinations such as Cyprus, Montenegro and Turkey.<sup>105</sup>
- Lower demand due to Europe perceived as being unsafe, particularly in US and Canadian markets, with countries closest to Russia, Ukraine and Belarus particularly affected<sup>106</sup>. For example, the main reasons for 'the crisis of inbound tourism in Lithuania' have been the 'unsafe situation' and the 'fear of travelling due to the war', with tourists from Germany, the US, France, Italy and the UK cancelling the highest share of bookings in 2022 and 2023.<sup>107</sup> As of Spring 2024, Estonia is still considered 'unsafe' by many potential travellers from Western and Southern Europe and long-haul markets, with many markets still 30% to 40% down compared to 2019.<sup>108</sup>
- Weaker economic growth, higher inflation and interest rates and higher oil prices, all caused by the war, have increased travel costs for consumers and added pressure on businesses, especially among small and medium sized businesses, threatening jobs and impacting livelihoods. For example, losing Russians as the biggest source market for Finland has caused extreme difficulties for businesses, especially in the eastern part of the country.<sup>109</sup> In Poland, hotels and travel agencies reported mass cancellations and a collapse in new bookings in the spring of 2022, causing fear and uncertainty amongst Polish tourism businesses.<sup>110</sup>

## NTOs' responses

The NTOs' responses tend to address the key impacts such as a perception of being unsafe, and the loss of a key market. Their responses are mainly focussed on reassuring visitors and the travel trade that the places are open and safe to travel, and on shifting efforts to attract alternative markets and market segments through refocusing marketing and communications, data and research, and product development. For example:

### Poland

The head of Polish Tourism Organisation (POT) commented that 'for those more distant from the crisis – such as in the US – the whole region of Central and Eastern Europe is often perceived as a war zone,



resulting in mass cancellations.<sup>111</sup> In response, POT communicated that despite receiving large numbers of refugees, Poland is not directly threatened by the war, it ‘remains a safe destination.’<sup>112</sup> The NTO has also stressed Polish hospitality that was evidenced through millions of Poles opening their homes, apartments, and hotels for Ukrainian refugees.<sup>113</sup>

POT closely monitored the situation and was prepared to shift its marketing strategy in a similar way as at the beginning of the pandemic, focussing campaigns on inspirational and educational aspects of Poland instead of pushing bookings.<sup>114</sup>

## Estonia

- VisitEstonia has provided continuous communication to the foreign target markets stressing Estonia’s location far away from the war zone and its NATO membership. VisitNarva, a local DMO located on the border with Russia, informed that Estonia is home to about 1,700 NATO troops.<sup>115</sup>
- The NTO has published tips to travel to Estonia with useful information on transportation, weather, safety, and more, with a key message that ‘Estonia is a safe country with low crime rates’.<sup>116</sup>
- Closing the border for Russian tourists meant that the NTO stopped maintaining the Russian-language tourism website, which may negatively affect Russian-speaking travellers living outside Russia (incl. the Russian-speaking population in Estonia and in Latvia).

## Lithuania

To reduce dependence on one market and certain tour operators, Lithuania is making structural reforms to the tourism data collected, disseminated, and used in the decision-making process. It also seeks to invest in infrastructure and create new means to promote Lithuanian tourism products and communicate abroad, targeting various markets.<sup>117</sup>

## Latvia

Following the loss of Russian visitors, the NTO has taken several measures such as the creation of new tourism products, promotion of domestic tourism, development of MICE and health tourism to attract new markets.<sup>118</sup>

## Key outcomes and lessons

- Tourists may not be aware of geographical or political nuances across Europe. It is important to explain that the country is safe and keep communicating the safety message to reassure potential visitors and the travel trade, particularly during the post-crisis recovery period.
- As the war is ongoing, the type of impacts and their intensity will also keep changing. Destinations need to be aware of a wide range of impacts and be prepared to address and respond to them at various stages of the crisis, putting these into context for travel agents and tour operators in key markets.
- Understanding the impacts of this crisis is crucial to understand how other conflicts can affect European tourism. This is already evident for some countries that are suffering the effects of the

current Israel-Palestine conflict, such as the loss of the Israeli market for Montenegro, Hungary, Cyprus, Lithuania and Czechia.<sup>119</sup>

- Collecting data that will allow NTOs to measure impacts of the key markets on their destinations, and regularly monitoring these impacts to identify trends, will help avoid over-dependence on one market and certain tour operators.



# France: Terrorist Attacks in Paris and Nice (2015-2016) and Their Impact on Tourism in Monaco

In 13 November 2015, gunmen and suicide bombers from the so-called Islamic State hit a concert hall, a major stadium, restaurants and bars, almost simultaneously - and left 130 people dead and hundreds wounded in Paris, France.<sup>120</sup> The city was only just beginning to recover from a gunman attack and massacre in January 2015 on the satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo.<sup>121</sup> In 2016, France's tourism sector was damaged again after a gunman drove a truck into crowds celebrating Bastille Day in the Riviera city of Nice, killing 86 people and injuring over 300.<sup>122</sup>

The fear of travelling and potentially long-term threats to destinations' reputations were minimised by a quick and coordinated response by the French authorities, including the NTO. Within days of the first attacks in January 2015, French President Hollande announced a deployment of over 10,000 military and police personnel across 830 key locations in the country, to reassure the French public and the world that France was safe. After two years of falling tourism numbers, France experienced 'impressive growth' in visitor arrivals in 2017.<sup>123</sup>

## Impacts on tourism

Destination perceived as unsafe, resulting in a drop in visitor numbers and tourism revenue:

- After the Paris attacks, there were a million fewer visitors to the capital between January and June 2016 compared with the same period in 2015, with estimated €750m in lost revenue. Paris was hit hardest, but other parts of the country also saw reduced numbers of tourists.
- Overnight hotel stays were down 8.5% in the Ile-de-France region, which includes Paris, in the first half of 2016, with an 11.5% decline in foreign tourists and a 4.8% decline in French tourists. This has threatened jobs and livelihoods, as about half-a-million people in the Ile-de-France region have jobs linked to tourism, making it the biggest employer in the area.<sup>124</sup>

## The response

- Coordinated promotion: The French Tourism Authority (Atout France), regional tourism boards, the industry (airlines, airports), and the tourism ministry worked together on a coordinated strategy to promote French tourism, resulting in a [Made in France campaign](#) that promoted places and experiences unique to Paris and France.
- Countering disinformation and false news through social media monitoring in nine languages across 190 countries; a full time social media manager working across Facebook, Twitter and Instagram; and hosting over 70 bloggers and YouTubers from 10 different countries to promote what the country had to offer.
- Promoting a Warm Welcome: Part of the promotional campaign included welcome posters at airports and ports, better information in visitors' languages and welcome text messages in home languages. Training initiatives for the hospitality sector were also implemented.

- 
- Data-based targeted promotional marketing, focussing on 16 key markets with the biggest drops in tourists, including Japan, Russia, and China.

Additionally, France made efforts to speed up visa approvals, rolled out more automation for passport control, introduced free WIFI at hotels and airports, and developed new apps specifically for tourists.<sup>125</sup>

## Outcomes and lessons

- A fast response to security concerns is crucial. Reassuring citizens that their country is safe and visitors that life goes on can be very effective for ensuring the long term fall out is limited. The swift response helped maintain domestic tourism, with domestic spending recovering completely within 12 months.<sup>126</sup>
- Up-to-date data showing the biggest drops in inbound tourists has helped to concentrate targeting marketing efforts towards the countries that mattered most.
- Allocating time and resources to counter disinformation is crucial for a speedy recovery.

## THE IMPACT OF FRANCE'S TERRORIST ATTACKS ON TOURISM IN MONACO

The terrorist attacks in France led to a decline in visitors to Monaco, as many travellers were concerned about security in the region, despite Monaco being a separate country and at a good distance from Paris.

- 
- To address this, Monaco focused on highlighting its distinct sovereignty and the strong security measures within its borders. The NTO also promoted alternative travel routes to Monaco that did not involve transiting through France, using other neighbouring countries instead.
- 
- Although some tourists remained hesitant, this proactive communication strategy helped many people feel more comfortable travelling to Monaco, thus reducing the negative impact on tourism and business travel.
- 
- The situation in Monaco also illustrates how the effects of a terrorist attack can extend to nearby areas. Neighbouring destinations should closely monitor such events and be prepared to respond quickly.
-



## Further reading: Resilience Initiatives

---

- The Queensland Government, **Australia: [Tourism Crisis Communication Toolkit \(March 2024 – Version 18\)](#)**, 2019. This toolkit assists Regional Tourism Organisations (RTOs) to prepare for, respond to and recover from potential crises and disasters. It outlines the roles, responsibilities and suggested actions for RTOs to take to manage crisis events.
- **Finland: [Compass: A Handbook for Safety in Tourism and Events in Helsinki](#)**, 2023. The handbook provides comprehensive safety information and guidance for safety in tourism in Helsinki, with the goal that ‘Helsinki is the safest capital to travel to in 2030.’
- **Ireland:** Failte Ireland’s [Climate Action Programme](#) offers dedicated support and investment advice for tourism businesses to empower them to become more sustainable.
- **Portugal:** Turismo de Portugal’s [Clean & Safe Label](#). A training programme and certification label for tourism establishments that incorporates a new dimension of security for tourist activities, covering risk situations arising from extreme natural events (e.g. fires, droughts, flooding) and cross border constraints (e.g. cybersecurity threats, war).



# Lessons Learned

The role of NTOs in crisis Management



## 4. Lessons on the role of the NTO in crisis management

This chapter presents an overview of the role of the NTO in preparing for, responding to, and recovering from crises. It draws on the results of extensive desk research as well as from the insights shared by European NTOs' CEOs and key members of staff dealing with crises. These insights were gathered through an online survey (March - April 2024), a series of in-depth 1:1 interviews (March-May 2024), and two interactive crisis management workshops for the ETC members held in Kaunas, Lithuania, in May 2024. Please note that specific examples of various European NTOs taking on various roles during crises, as described below, are included in the Checklist for NTOs on Tourism Crisis Management, which is a separate document (please refer to [www.etc-corporate.org/publications](http://www.etc-corporate.org/publications)).



### Fundamentally, what role should an NTO play when a crisis occurs?

NTOs can play several roles during the key stages of a crisis. While communicating and providing reassurance to present and future visitors, tourism sector businesses and the travel trade is paramount, NTOs can also provide significant support in facilitating and coordinating the crisis response, uniting other agencies and stakeholders, providing research insights (market trends, customer behaviour) to support data-based decision making, monitoring and evaluating crises, and countering disinformation to protect the country's national brand and reputation. Hence, the various roles of the NTO in crisis management can be summarised as follows:

**The trustworthy and proactive communicator:** updating, reassuring, tackling disinformation and being a source of trustworthy insights and guidance for tourism stakeholders and the media.

While the central government's primary job is to protect citizens, NTOs - working on behalf of the national government and its agencies (e.g. civil protection, police) - need to look out for the needs of visitors and the industry domestically and internationally. They should consider visitors currently travelling in the country and those who are planning to visit in the immediate future. Therefore, it is important for NTOs to proactively keep visitors and the tourism sector informed, providing clear, trustworthy information and the type of coordination and 'panoramic view' of a crisis that only a national agency can offer.

**The high-level facilitator and coordinator:** an organisation able to marshal and unite high-level decision-makers and industry sector representatives for a coordinated response.

The role of an NTO as a vital coordinating link between central government authorities, civil protection agencies, the tourism industry, and visitors, was proven during the early phases of the COVID-19 pandemic. Back then, NTOs helped central government agencies understand the pandemic through the eyes of those travelling into and out of the country and what this would mean in very practical terms for travellers and the travel industry.<sup>127</sup>

**Sector mediator and representative:** When a crisis occurs, NTOs can monitor and articulate the impacts on the tourism sector, particularly for the central government and the media. They are often in the position to provide guidance and logistical support to regional and local DMOs (if knowledge and

resources are lacking locally) and articulate the response that's required to reassure businesses, travel trade and other stakeholders.

Amid a crisis, visitors and businesses need reassurance that action is being taken, the situation is under control and is being monitored. With the livelihoods of many small business owners at stake and the attention of the international media, NTOs can provide a vital channel of communication for the government to demonstrate that it is taking action to address the crisis at hand. As Tourspain explained in the interviews for this report, 'the role of the NTO in generating trust, calm and stability should not be overlooked.'<sup>128</sup>

**The aggregator of data and insights:** With a national-level view of the tourism sector, NTOs are able to aggregate data from multiple sources to track the progress of response and recovery, drawing insights and recommendations that aid smart decision-making during all phases of the crisis.

As an agency handling data from multiple destinations across the country as well as airports and border agencies, NTOs are uniquely positioned to:

- Monitor and respond to crises during their unfolding and recovery phases.
- Monitor impacts across the industry and explain the needs of tourism businesses and visitors to the national government.
- Collect good response initiatives at the local level and scale these up to the national level.
- Conduct long-term planning, exploring "what if?" scenarios to identify the country's exposure to various risks.
- Adjust the country's tourism resilience to climate vulnerabilities, adapt products and guide the industry around shifting patterns of demand.
- Support regional and local DMOs in changing or enhancing their digital product offerings post-crisis.

**Safety and reputation monitor:** NTOs are well-positioned to monitor issues of visitor safety at the national level, and to coordinate a national response if needed. Additionally, NTOs have been responsible for monitoring national reputation and image from abroad, liaising with international media to provide clarity if required.

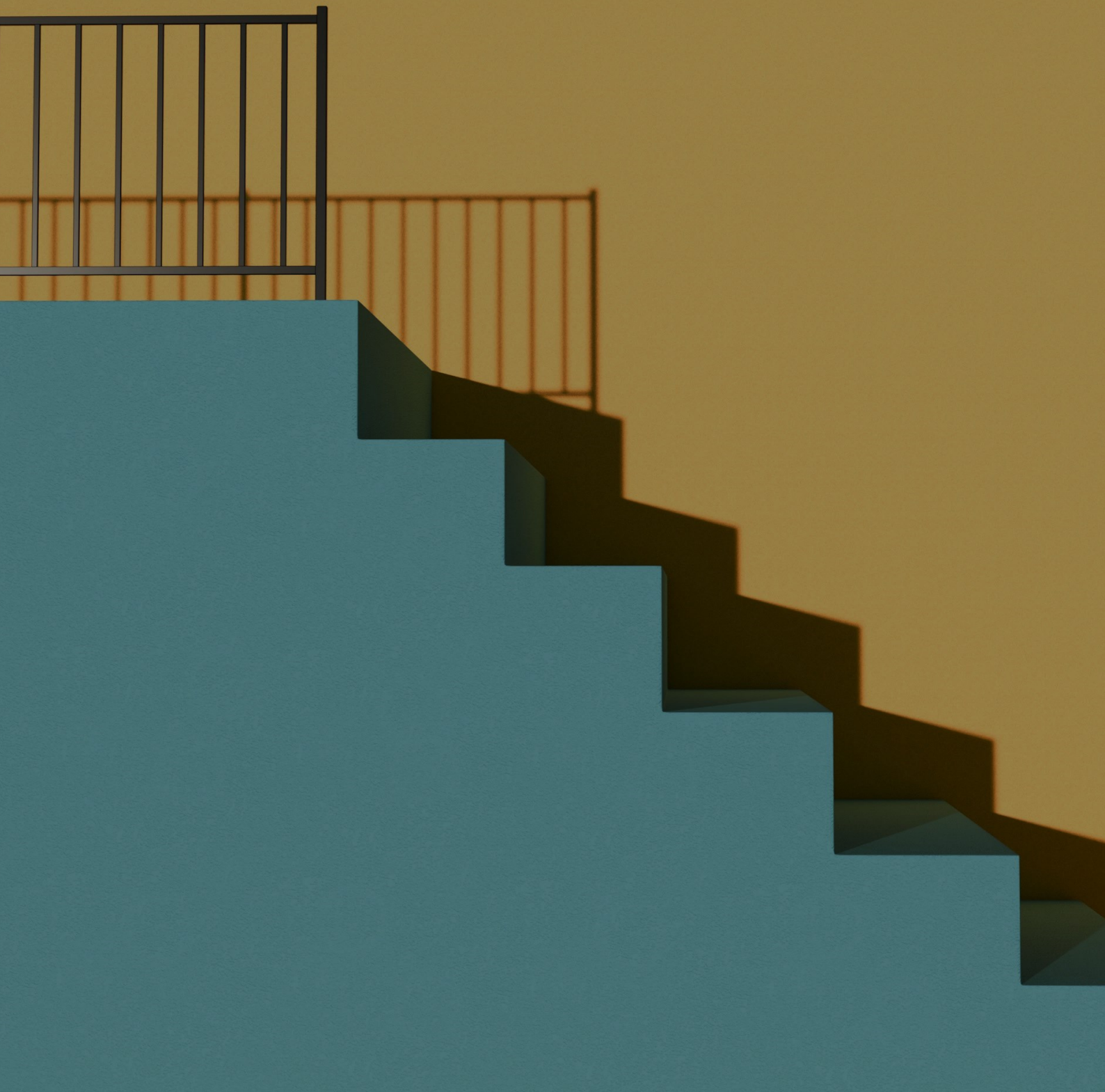
**Countering disinformation and misinformation:** All the roles described above significantly contribute to countering disinformation and misinformation<sup>129</sup> during a crisis. This research shows that NTOs understand that media reporting on a crisis can often lose context and important details, potentially causing confusion, anxiety and long-term damage to the destination's reputation. It is, therefore, crucial for NTOs to work closely with other government agencies for a more coherent narrative consistent with tourists, the travel trade, the media and other stakeholders, limiting the scope for rumours or hostile actors to cause further damage. To support this, NTOs can establish strong partnerships with skilled, trusted and respected subject matter experts and scientists (both within the NTO and beyond), to provide science-based data and separate facts from fiction. To summarise, an NTO's role in tackling disinformation and misinformation includes:

- Providing clear, unambiguous details about the nature and scope of the crisis.
- Ensuring that messaging is consistent with other government agencies. Giving the media access to respected sources of information and subject specialists to explain complex situations clearly and accurately.
- Supporting city/regional DMOs in ensuring their messages about local impacts reach international media in the correct markets and languages.



# Phases of Crisis Management

For National Tourism Organisations



## 5. The phases of tourism crisis management for NTOs

The recommendations to this report are set out in the form of a practical Crisis Management Checklist, to help NTOs plan their own response to a wide range of crises that may occur. The Crisis Management Checklist is based on a framework made up of four consecutive phases: preparedness, response, recovery and resilience.

By nature, crises are not linear; following a crisis, some degree of learning typically takes place (ideally, in a structured way) that helps organisations and communities to reduce risks and recognise the warning signs in order to be better prepared for similar crises in the future. Hence, the framework is designed as a loop, where resilience measures will help support future preparedness.



### What should NTOs focus on during each phase?

Detailed guidance for each phase of crisis management is provided in the **Crisis Management Checklist for the National Tourism Organisation** (see link below). However, the following two pages summarise a high-level summary of the key actions per phase.

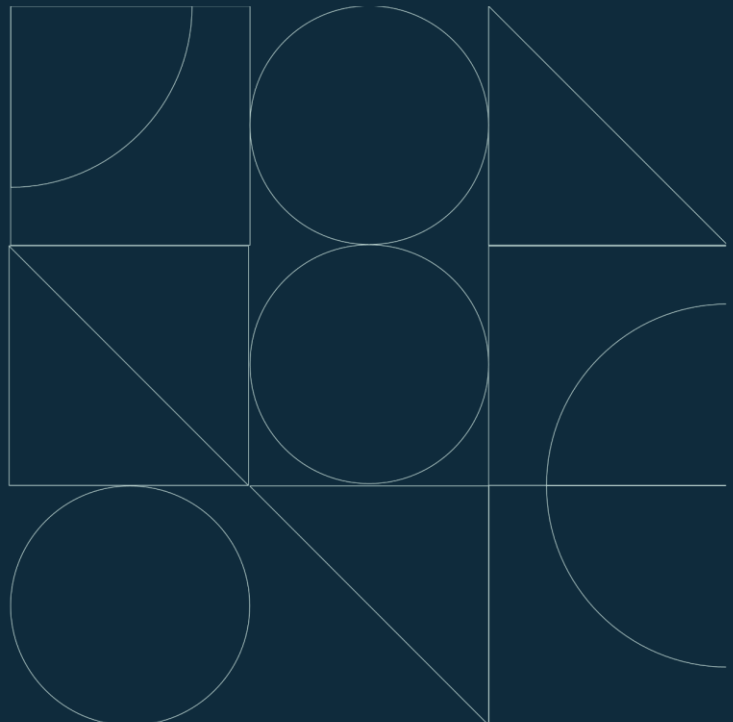
**The Checklist is set out in a separate document that can be accessed via:**

- ETC's website: <https://etc-corporate.org/publications/>
- Direct link to the publication: <https://etc-corporate.org/reports/crisis-management-checklist-for-ntos/>

## Crisis management checklist for National Tourism Organisations

Brussels, September 2024

EUROPEAN  
TRAVEL  
COMMISSION





# Phases of crisis management and key actions for NTOs

## 01

### PREPARDNESS

- **Identify** risks that pose the biggest threats to the tourism sector, what if scenarios and the internal and external partners who will be required to respond in the event of a crisis.
- **Create** a comprehensive crisis management plan and prepare the basic communications protocols and materials that will be ready to go out in the event of a crisis.
- **Organise** the teams, facilities and equipment needed to address the crisis adequately
- **Monitor and Update:** Monitor situations (e.g. extreme weather or major operators in a precarious financial situation) that have the capacity to become a crisis, and update plans regularly to ensure that they reflect the latest data and internal processes.

## 02

### RESPONSE

- **Clarify exactly what has happened.** Gather facts, information on impacts and central government responses and plan for all possible further developments.
- **Activate and implement:** Activate the NTO team and implement the processes that were set up during the preparedness phase. Deliver communications to affected businesses and visitors and facilitate cooperation between leading industry groups and representatives.
- **Support** internal teams who may be working long hours in stressful conditions by adapting working practises and office facilities to ensure that staff have the help they need.
- **Communicate** clearly and consistently to all stakeholder groups, taking into account the need to interpret local information for visitors in their language and address possible misinformation and disinformation.

# Phases of crisis management and key actions for NTOs

## 03

### RECOVERY

- **Evaluate** the impact of the crisis with internal teams and external stakeholders, with the aim of capturing useful lessons for future crises.
- **Adapt partnerships**, internal roles and work streams based on the lessons learned from the evaluation carried out above.
- **Monitor and test:** monitor the effectiveness of recovery communications to consumers and support measures for businesses. Test business support programmes with pilots that can be scaled up in the event of future crises.
- **Communicate: rebuild visibility in reliable source markets** and regularly communicate to build confidence and trust, reassuring visitors and the travel trade that the destination is safe.

## 04

### RESILIENCE

- **Train** internal teams to prepare for future crises by focusing on crisis simulation exercises as well as resistance-building measures that focus on sustainability.
- **Invest** in the product offer to ensure that it is easily adaptable to changing market conditions and invest in research on market diversification.
- **Collaborate and Innovate:** collaborate with NTOs that face similar threats and develop coordinated responses based on shared best practices. Build partnerships with the public and private sectors to find new ways of measuring crisis impacts and to develop more resilient products.

## 6. References

- <sup>1</sup> World Health Organisation (2022) Statement: The European Region is in a “permacrisis” that stretches well beyond the pandemic, climate change and war ([who.int](#))
- <sup>2</sup> Current Issues in Tourism (2017): Terrorism and tourism demand: a case study of Lebanon, Turkey and Israel: No 1 ([tandfonline.com](#))
- <sup>3</sup> CNN (2024) Chaos in Dubai as UAE records heaviest rainfall in 75 years (18-04-2024), ([source](#))
- <sup>4</sup> Carlo Buontempo, Director of the EU's Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S), in: Europe experiences widespread flooding and severe heatwaves in 2023 (22-04-22), ([source](#))
- <sup>5</sup> Copernicus Climate Change Service and the World Meteorological Organization (2024) The European State of the Climate 2023 (ESOTC2023). ([Source](#))
- <sup>6</sup> IATA (2018) Crisis communication and reputation management in the digital age: A guide to best practice for the aviation industry. ([Source](#))
- <sup>7</sup> Current Issues in Tourism, (Aug 2010) ‘[Crisis events in tourism: Subjects of crisis in tourism](#)’ ([source](#))
- <sup>8</sup> Deloitte (2019) Placemat on Crisis Management. ([Source](#))
- <sup>9</sup> IATA (2018) Crisis communication and reputation management in the digital age: A guide to best practice for the aviation industry. ([Source](#))
- <sup>10</sup> McKinsey (2020) Innovation in a crisis: Why it is more critical than ever (17-06-2020), ([source](#))
- <sup>11</sup> Data from ETC Survey on Crisis Management (March-April 2024\_
- <sup>12</sup> DW (2022) Tourist destinations under threat (07-15-2022), ([source](#))
- <sup>13</sup> The Portugal News (2023) Water shortage in the Algarve worsens (01-12-23), ([source](#))
- <sup>14</sup> DW (2021) Caribbean islands struggle with water scarcity (01-26-2021), ([source](#))
- <sup>15</sup> DQ (2024) Copernicus report shows year of weather extremes in Europe (22-04-2024), ([source](#))
- <sup>16</sup> Carbon Brief (2023) Recent Alps snow cover decline ‘unprecedented’ in past 600 years (15-02-2023), ([source](#))
- <sup>17</sup> Joint Research Centre, European Commission (2023) Regional impact of climate change on European tourism demand. ([source](#))
- <sup>18</sup> European Travel Commission (2023) Europeans Adjust Travel Plans due to Cost Worries (05-07-2023), ([source](#))
- <sup>19</sup> The Guardian (2023) Slippery slope? Alpine tourism in the face of climate crisis (13-02-2023), ([source](#))
- <sup>20</sup> PLOS ONE Journal (2024) ‘[Global reduction of snow cover in ski areas under climate change](#)’ report, quoted in: Swissinfo.com (2024) Swiss Alpine ski resorts face 40% drop in snow days (14-03-2024), ([source](#))
- <sup>21</sup> Reuters (2023) Snowless slopes spoil holiday skiing in Switzerland (05-01-2024), ([source](#))
- <sup>22</sup> Caixa bank research (2024) The impact of climate change on tourism in Spain: analysis and outlook (31-01-24), ([source](#))
- <sup>23</sup> European Council, How the EU responds to crises and builds resilience - Concilium. ([Source](#))
- <sup>24</sup> POLITICO (2023) Protests over food and fuel surged in 2022 — the biggest were in Europe (17-01-2023), ([source](#))
- <sup>25</sup> The Copernicus Climate Change Service (2024) ESOTC23: Europe’s contrasting summer, ([source](#))
- <sup>26</sup> Copernicus Climate Change Service and the World Meteorological Organization (2024) The European State of the Climate 2023 (ESOTC2023). ([Source](#))
- <sup>27</sup> Cambridge University (2024) 2023 was the hottest summer in 2000 years (14-05-2024), ([source](#)), based on: Jan Esper, Max Torbensohn, Ulf Büntgen. ‘2023 summer warmth unparalleled over the past 2,000 years.’ Nature (2024).

- 
- <sup>28</sup> The Independent (2024) Greece heatwave: Warning for tourists as four dead and more missing in record temperatures (17-06-2024), ([source](#))
- <sup>29</sup> The Copernicus Climate Change Service and the World Meteorological Organization (2024) The European State of the Climate 2023 (ESOTC2023). ([Source](#))
- <sup>30</sup> The European Space Agency (2023) Satellites map aftermath of Emilia-Romagna floods (20-07-2024), ([source](#))
- <sup>31</sup> Euronews (2024) Austria closes Danube for shipping as deadly floods spread across central Europe (05-06-2024) ([source](#))
- <sup>32</sup> National Geographic (2024) What you need to know about volcano tourism in Iceland (08-02-24), ([source](#))
- <sup>33</sup> BBC News (2015) Paris attacks: What happened on the night (09-12-2015), ([source](#))
- <sup>34</sup> BBC News (2016) Nice attack: What we know about the Bastille Day killings (19-08-2016), ([source](#))
- <sup>35</sup> Wikipedia, 2016 Brussels bombings, ([source](#))
- <sup>36</sup> AP News (2022) Inflation protests across Europe threaten political turmoil (22-10-2022), ([source](#))
- <sup>37</sup> Wikipedia 2024 European farmers' protests, ([source](#))
- <sup>38</sup> BBC News (2023) Dublin riot saw most riot police deployed in Irish state history (24-11-2023), ([source](#))
- <sup>39</sup> World Economic Forum (2023) Global Risks Report. ([source](#))
- <sup>40</sup> Communication from the Commission on the EU Security Union Strategy, Brussels, 24-07-20 ([source](#))
- <sup>41</sup> Tarlogic (2023) How do cybercriminals carry out fraud in the tourism sector? (03-11-23), ([source](#))
- <sup>42</sup> Euronews (2024) Chaos at UK airports as border gates fail again: What happened, and will it impact new EES system? (18-05-2024), ([source](#))
- <sup>43</sup> BBC News (2023) British Airways cancels dozens of Heathrow flights after IT problem (26-05-2023), ([source](#))
- <sup>44</sup> The Guardian (2017) British Airways IT failure caused by 'uncontrolled return of power' (31-05-2017), ([source](#))
- <sup>45</sup> Airport Technology (2017) Check-in system failure causes disruption for airports worldwide (28-09-2017), ([source](#))
- <sup>46</sup> International Airport Review (2023) UK ATC systems experiences 'technical issues', causing disruption (29-08-2023), ([source](#))
- <sup>47</sup> The Guardian (2023) Acropolis closes to protect tourists as Greece faces unprecedented heatwave (15-09-2023), ([source](#))
- <sup>48</sup> Euronews (2024) Greece heatwave: What travellers need to know as archaeological sites shut and wildfires loom (12-06-2024), ([source](#))
- <sup>49</sup> Intensifying waves prompt health warnings in Europe (18-07-2023), ([source](#))
- <sup>50</sup> Reuters (2023) Italian hospitals see jump in patients as heatwave bites (19-07-2023), ([source](#))
- <sup>51</sup> Greece 'at war with fire' amid chaotic evacuation of tourists from Rhodes | Greece | The Guardian, (24-07-23), ([source](#))
- <sup>52</sup> The Guardian (2023) Greece 'at war with fire' amid chaotic evacuation of tourists from Rhodes (24-07-2023), ([source](#))
- <sup>53</sup> The Independent (2023) Portugal wildfires see thousands evacuated amid 46C heatwave 8/08/23 ([source](#))
- <sup>54</sup> The Portugal News (2024) Tourism sector will comply with water cuts (10-01-2024), ([source](#))
- <sup>55</sup> I feel Slovenia (2023) Most of Slovenia is safe and open for tourists (04-09-2023) ([source](#))
- <sup>56</sup> The European Space Agency (2023) Satellites map aftermath of Emilia-Romagna floods (20-07-2024), ([source](#))
- <sup>57</sup> BBC (2024) Germany's deadly floods spread along Danube (04-06-2024), ([source](#))
- <sup>58</sup> DW (2023) Slovenia, Austria floods leave 3 dead (08-04-2023), ([source](#))
- <sup>59</sup> The National Geographic (2024) What you need to know about volcano tourism in Iceland (08-01-2024), ([source](#))
- <sup>60</sup> Data from the ETC Survey on Crisis Management (March-April 2024)

- 
- <sup>61</sup> Tourism Economics (2022) Impact of the Ukraine War on European Tourism. ([source](#), p.15)
- <sup>62</sup> Data from the ETC Survey on Crisis Management in NTOs(March-April 2024).
- <sup>63</sup> Data from the ETC Survey on Crisis Management in NTOs (March-April 2024)
- <sup>64</sup> ETC (2022) Impact of the Ukraine War on European Tourism, p.19 ([source](#))
- <sup>65</sup> Data from the ETC Survey on Crisis Management in NTOs(March-April 2024)
- <sup>66</sup> Data from the ETC Survey on Crisis Management in NTOs (March-April 2024)
- <sup>67</sup> ETC (2024) European tourism 2024 - trends and prospects (Q1/2024) May 2024, ([source](#))
- <sup>68</sup> Travel Trends Toay (2016) VisitFlanders introduces ‘#shareoursmile’ Campaign (29-06-2016), ([source](#))
- <sup>69</sup> BBC News (2026) Paris tourism hit by militant attacks, strikes and floods (23-08-2016), ([source](#))
- <sup>70</sup> CNBC News (2010) Greek tourism industry under threat (15-06-2010), ([source](#))
- <sup>71</sup> Data from ETC Survey on Crisis Management (March-April 2024)
- <sup>72</sup> CNBC News (2015) Capital controls: How Greeks and tourists will be hit (29-06-2015), ([source](#))
- <sup>73</sup> Reuters (2015) Capital controls hit Greek economy at worst time ([source](#))
- <sup>74</sup> The Times (2024) French warn of civil unrest as new EU border controls loom (27-05-2024), ([source](#))
- <sup>75</sup> WTTC (2019) Crisis Preparedness Management Recovery-Crisis Readiness. ([source](#))
- <sup>76</sup> DA news (2023) Tenerife to implement a Tourism Cybersecurity Plan, the first in Spain (15-05-2023), ([source](#))
- <sup>77</sup> Keep Talking Greece (2023) 15-day heatwave the longest ever recorded in Greece (28-07-23), ([source](#))
- <sup>78</sup> Meteo Service Greece (2023) Assessment of the recent heatwave – Temperatures (28-07-2023), ([source](#))
- <sup>79</sup> The Guardian (2023) ‘So many precious things were lost’: Rhodes after the fires|(01-09-2023), ([source](#))
- <sup>80</sup> The Guardian (2023) Acropolis closes to protect tourists as Greece faces unprecedented heatwave (15-09-2023), ([source](#))
- <sup>81</sup> The Guardian (2023) Greece ‘at war with fire’ amid chaotic evacuation of tourists from Rhodes, (24-07-23), ([source](#))
- <sup>82</sup> The Guardian (2023) Greece ‘at war with fire’ amid chaotic evacuation of tourists from Rhodes (24-07-2023), ([source](#))
- <sup>83</sup> City of Athens (2023) #CoolAthens ([source](#))
- <sup>84</sup> Greek Travel Pages (2023) Rhodes, Greece: Q&A for Tourists Affected by the Wildfires (23-07-2023), ([source](#))
- <sup>85</sup> Hellenic Ministry of Tourism (2024) “Rodos Week” platform officially launched (15-04-2024), ([source](#))
- <sup>86</sup> Reliefweb (2023) Slovenia Flood 2023 - DREF Operation Situation Report (18-08-2024), ([source](#))
- <sup>87</sup> Natural Hazards and Earth System Sciences (2023) Brief communication: A first hydrological investigation of extreme August 2023 floods in Slovenia, Europe. ([Source](#))
- <sup>88</sup> I feel Slovenia (2023) Most of Slovenia is safe and open for tourists (04-09-2023), ([source](#))
- <sup>89</sup> I feel Slovenia (2023) Practical Information: The majority of Slovenia is safe and open to tourists (30-08-2023), ([source](#))
- <sup>90</sup> DW (2023) Slovenia, Austria floods leave 3 dead (08-04-2023), ([source](#))
- <sup>91</sup> Reliefweb (2023) Slovenia Flood 2023 - DREF Operation Situation Report (18-08-2024), ([source](#))
- <sup>92</sup> National Geographic (2024) What you need to know about volcano tourism in Iceland (08-02-24), ([source](#))
- <sup>93</sup> Reuters (2023) Hooked on volcanoes? Tourists vie to catch Iceland's eruptions (30-12-2023), ([source](#))
- <sup>94</sup> Reuters (2023) Hooked on volcanoes? Tourists vie to catch Iceland's eruptions (30-12-2023), ([source](#))
- <sup>95</sup> Update on Travel Safety in Iceland in Light of Recent Volcanic Activity | Ferðamálastofa Icelandic Tourist Board ([ferdamalastofa.is](#))



- 
- <sup>96</sup> Response plan for the authorities and the tourism industry activated | Ferðamálastofa Icelandic Tourist Board ([ferdamalastofa.is](http://ferdamalastofa.is))
- <sup>97</sup> Interview with CEO Arnar Már Olaffson (May 2024.)
- <sup>98</sup> Potential “severe restrictions” to Algarve water - The Portugal News
- <sup>99</sup> Algarve hotels welcome 15% water cut: "It's not dramatic" - Portugal Resident
- <sup>100</sup> Creative water-saving campaign targets Algarve tourists - Portugal Resident
- <sup>101</sup> VisitAlgarve (2024) Save water, protect the future (05-04-2024), ([source](#))
- <sup>102</sup> Tourism sector will comply with water cuts - The Portugal News
- <sup>103</sup> Environmental and Energy Study Institute (2018) Cape Town’s Water Crisis: How Did It Happen? ([source](#))
- <sup>104</sup> WTTC (2019) Crisis Preparedness Management Recovery-Crisis Readiness. ([Source](#))
- <sup>105</sup> UN Tourism (2022) Impact of the Russian offensive in Ukraine on international tourism ([source](#))
- <sup>106</sup> ETC (2022) Impact of the Ukraine War on European Tourism, p.19 ([source](#))
- <sup>107</sup> Tourism and Regional Development (2023) The impact of war in Ukraine on the inbound tourism in Lithuania: replication of studies. Vilnius University of Applied Sciences. ([Source](#))
- <sup>108</sup> Data from the ETC Survey on Crisis Management in NTOs (March-April 2024)
- <sup>109</sup> Data from the ETC Survey on Crisis Management in NTOs (March-April 2024)
- <sup>110</sup> Notes From Poland (2022) Poland sees mass tourist cancellations amid war in neighbouring Ukraine (24-03-2022), ([source](#))
- <sup>111</sup> Notes From Poland (2022) Poland sees mass tourist cancellations amid war in neighbouring Ukraine (24-03-2022), ([source](#))
- <sup>112</sup> Travel Weekly (2022) Poland remains safe destination, tourism chief assures agents (11-03-22), ([source](#))
- <sup>113</sup> Polska Organizacja Turystyczna stoi przed wyzwaniem. Powód? Wojna na Ukrainie ([portalsamorzadowy.pl](http://portalsamorzadowy.pl))
- <sup>114</sup> Poland's Tourism Marketers Caught in Grip of Uncertainty Over Nearby War ([skift.com](http://skift.com))
- <sup>115</sup> Russian invasion to Ukraine is not a reason to cancel your trip to Narva! | Visit Narva (21-04-24)
- <sup>116</sup> Tips for planning your trip to Estonia | Visit Estonia
- <sup>117</sup> ETC Survey on Crisis Management in NTOs (March-April 2024)
- <sup>118</sup> ETC Survey on Crisis Management in NTOs (March-April 2024)
- <sup>119</sup> Data from the ETC Survey on Crisis Management (March-April 2024)
- <sup>120</sup> BBC News (2015) Paris attacks: What happened on the night (09-12-2015), ([source](#))
- <sup>121</sup> BBC News (2015) Charlie Hebdo attack: Three days of terror (14-01-2015), ([source](#))
- <sup>122</sup> BBC News (2016) Nice attack: What we know about the Bastille Day killings (19-08-2016), ([source](#))
- <sup>123</sup> WTTC (2018) Tourism recovery after terrorism: How France bounced back (05-07-2018), ([source](#))
- <sup>124</sup> BBC News (2026) Paris tourism hit by militant attacks, strikes and floods (23-08-2016), ([source](#))
- <sup>125</sup> WTTC (2018) Tourism recovery after terrorism: How France bounced back (05-07-2018), ([source](#))
- <sup>126</sup> WTTC (2018) Tourism recovery after terrorism: How France bounced back (05-07-2018), ([source](#))
- <sup>127</sup> Current Issues in Tourism (2021) Tourism organizations’ responses to the COVID-19 pandemic: an investigation of the lockdown period ([Source](#))
- <sup>128</sup> Data from interviews with NTOs CEOs on crisis management (March-April 2024)
- <sup>129</sup> Understood here as: Misinformation: “false information that is spread, regardless of whether there is intent to mislead.”; Disinformation: “deliberately misleading or biased information; manipulated narrative or facts; propaganda” in: [‘What is fake news, misinformation, and disinformation?’, National Library of Australia](#)

