

UNWTO: Europe, U.S. tourism lead strong start to 2022, but now facing new uncertainties

International tourism continued its recovery in January 2022, with a much better performance compared to the weak start to 2021. However, the Russian invasion of Ukraine adds pressure to existing economic uncertainties, coupled with many COVID-related travel restrictions still in place. Overall confidence could be affected and hamper the recovery of tourism, reports the UN World Tourism Organization in its latest update.

Based on the latest available data, global international tourist arrivals more than doubled (+130%) in January 2022 compared to 2021.

The 18 million more visitors recorded worldwide in the first month of this year equals the total increase for the whole of 2021.

While these figures confirm the positive trend already underway last year, the pace of recovery in January was impacted by the emergences of the Omicron variant and the re-introduction of travel restrictions in several destinations.

Following the 71% decline of 2021, international arrivals in January 2022 remained 67% below pre-pandemic levels.

Europe and Americas perform strongest

All regions enjoyed a significant rebound in January 2022, though from low levels recorded at the start of 2021. Europe (+199%) and the Americas (+97%) continued to post the strongest results, with international arrivals still around half pre-pandemic levels (-53% and -52%, respectively).

The Middle East (+89%) and Africa (+51%) also saw growth in January 2022 over 2021, but these regions are still 63% and 69% respectively below the 2019 levels.

While Asia and the Pacific recorded a 44% year-on-year increase, several destinations remained closed to non-essential travel resulting in the largest decrease in international arrivals over 2019 (-93%).

By subregions, the best results were recorded by Western Europe, registering four times more arrivals in January 2022 than in 2021, but 58% less than in 2019.

The Caribbean (-38%) and Southern and Mediterranean Europe (-41%) have shown the fastest rates of recovery towards 2019 levels. Several islands in the Caribbean and Asia and the Pacific, together with some small European and Central American destinations, recorded the best results compared to 2019: Seychelles (-27%), Bulgaria and Curaçao (both -20%), El Salvador (-19%), Serbia and Maldives (both -13%), Dominican Republic (-11%), Albania (-7%) and Andorra (-3%). Bosnia and Herzegovina (+2%) even exceeded pre-pandemic levels. Among major destinations Turkey and Mexico saw declines of 16% and 24% respectively as compared to 2019.

Prospects for recovery

After the unprecedented drop of 2020 and 2021, international tourism is expected to continue its gradual recovery in 2022. As of March 24, 12 destinations had no COVID-19 related restrictions in place and an increasing number of destinations were easing or lifting travel restrictions, which contributes to unleashing pent-up demand.

The war in Ukraine poses new challenges to the global economic environment and risks hampering the return of confidence in global travel.

The U.S. and the Asian source markets, which have started to open up, could be particularly impacted especially regarding travel to Europe, as these markets are historically more risk averse.

The shutdown of Ukrainian and Russian airspace, as well as the ban on Russian carriers by many European countries is affecting intra-European travel. It is also causing detours in long-haul flights between Europe and East Asia, which translates into longer flights and higher costs.

Russia and Ukraine accounted for a combined 3% of global spending on international tourism in 2020 and at least US\$ 14 billion in global tourism receipts could be lost if the conflict is prolonged. The importance of both markets is significant for neighboring countries, but also for European sun and sea destinations.

As destinations, Russia and Ukraine accounted for 4% of all international arrivals in Europe but only 1% of Europe's international tourism receipts in 2020.

Economic uncertainty and pressures

Even though it is too early to assess the impact, air travel searches and bookings across various channels showed a slowdown the week after the invasion but started to rebound in early March.

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) estimates global economic growth could be more than 1% lower this year than previously projected, while inflation, already high at the start of the year, could be at least a further 2.5% higher.

The recent spike in oil prices and rising inflation are adding extra pressure on businesses, consumer purchasing power and savings, UNWTO notes.

Singapore relaxes health and travel restrictions; move bodes well for TFWA Asia Pacific Live

In positive news out of Singapore, the government announced that it will allow all fully vaccinated travelers, whatever their country of origin, to enter the country quarantine-free and without the need for testing on arrival, effective April 1. Fully vaccinated travelers will simply need to take a pre-departure PCR or lateral flow (antigen) test within two days of leaving for Singapore.

This is very good news for Tax Free World Association and will greatly simplify life for those planning to attend the TFWA Asia Pacific Live networking event, which will take place from May 9-11 at Singapore's Marina Bay Sands.

Singapore is also lifting restrictions on large-scale social events, live performances, and alcohol consumption beyond 10.30pm. The number of people who can gather in social groups will be expanded from five to ten, and restaurants and bars will be able to serve up to ten fully vaccinated customers. While mask wearing indoors will still be mandatory, it will be optional outdoors.

Online registration is now open. through visitors@tfwa.com. For more information, please go to: <https://www.tfw.com/tfw-asia-pacific-live>

"The announcements today are very positive news for the entire travel retail industry, and mean that wherever you are in the world, fully vaccinated travelers can now enter Singapore without restrictions. I'd like to pay tribute to the Singapore Tourism Board and the authorities in Singapore for taking these positive steps. It is certainly heartening for us at TFWA as we continue our preparations for our May event, and we're certain that it will encourage many more of our colleagues from all parts of the globe to join us for what will be a long-awaited opportunity for our industry to gather in this vitally important region."

Erik Juul-Mortensen
TFWA President

Nadine Heubel to step down at Heinemann Americas, Nicolas Hoeborn will take over as Managing Director

Nadine Heubel, who has served as CEO of Heinemann Americas for the past six years, will leave Gebr. Heinemann on June 30, 2022. In order to facilitate a smooth transition, Nicolas Hoeborn will take over responsibility at Heinemann Americas as early as April 1.

"I would like to take this opportunity to expressly thank Nadine for her work and commitment to Gebr. Heinemann over 14 years. I wish her all the very best for her future in the USA, both professionally and privately," says Raoul Spanger, COO of Gebr. Heinemann. "At the same time, we are pleased to have a very good successor already in our own ranks in Nicolas Hoeborn."

Nadine Heubel comments: "I am very proud of what I was able to accomplish during my time with Gebr. Heinemann. I would like to thank my colleagues here on site, in the German headquarters as well as in other places around the globe. I am now looking forward to new tasks and challenges in my new home, the U.S. I wish Nicolas all the best and much success for the tasks ahead."

Nicolas Hoeborn will take over as Heubel's successor in the Americas. Hoeborn has been part of the Heinemann Americas management team since 2018 as Director Sales & Operations.

He first joined the Category Management of Gebr. Heinemann in 2008 and moved to the supplier side at Bacardi in 2011. Since 2016, Hoeborn was a Senior International Key Account Manager responsible for the global Gebr. Heinemann account and focused on setting and implementing sales and pricing strategies.



Nadine Heubel leaves Gebr. Heinemann after a stellar 14-year career with the travel retailer.



Nicolas Hoeborn steps into the top role at Heinemann Americas.

In his new role as Managing Director of Heinemann Americas, Nicolas Hoeborn will report to Thorsten Repenning, Director Sales Cruises & Ferries, which the company says will streamline and strengthen its activities in the cruise ship and ferry sales channel.

Gebr. Heinemann celebrates 50 years at Frankfurt Airport

In more news from Gebr. Heinemann, the company started operating its Duty Free Shops at Frankfurt Airport 50 years ago in March 1972, at the same time as Terminal 1 opened. The Hamburg family business is still the retail concessionaire at the airport today and now operates a total of over 30 shops with around 640 employees and a total sales area of around 12,000 square meters.

Gebr. Heinemann and the airport operator Fraport also established the Frankfurt Airport Retail (FAR) joint venture in 2017. For five years, the joint venture has successfully operated all Duty Free & Travel Value Shops at the airport as well as luxury boutiques and premium brand shops such as Hermès, Bottega Veneta, Saint Laurent Paris and Boss.

The cooperation between the Heinemann and the airport began even earlier: the first Duty Free counter at a German airport opened in Frankfurt in 1958. It was operated by the state and the goods were supplied by Gebr. Heinemann.

Nadine Heubel: In her own words



Nadine Heubel has been a superb ambassador for Heinemann in the Americas during her tenure here, and become an important part of the local business community, as a mentor, volunteer and in-demand speaker. Not only did she help steer the company's growing presence in the cruise channel, but she participated in a broad variety of social, business and education projects throughout Miami.

TMI here shares some of Heubel's parting thoughts that she posted on LinkedIn.

"With a mixture of both excitement and sadness, today we have announced my departure from Heinemann Americas, Inc. While it's difficult to summarize all my thoughts and feelings in just one LinkedIn post, the word that most immediately comes to mind when I consider the past 14 incredible years with the company, as well as my forthcoming career transition, is gratitude.

"At Heinemann, I have learned, grown, and led alongside some of the most intelligent and talented professionals in the travel retail industry. As I step away from Heinemann, I look forward to what the future holds and to discovering my next professional purpose.

Serving as the CEO of Heinemann Americas for the past six years has been an absolute honor and privilege. I am so proud of my team here in Miami and all that we have accomplished together – and I thank my colleagues for their hard work, dedication, and resolve, especially in the face of a pandemic and the acute challenges faced by our industry in the past several years. Together, and despite these hardships, we have secured contracts with some of the largest cruise lines in the world, launching and operating successful and innovative stores on first-in-class new builds for Royal Caribbean, Princess, and Carnival. We have forged relationships within our community, supporting local organizations, including Lotus House Miami, Best Buddies, and the AMAC Foundation. And leading this extraordinary team has made me a stronger, more collaborative, and compassionate leader.

As I make this transition, I look forward to dedicating additional time to my board memberships with Babson College's Center for Women's Entrepreneurial Leadership (CWEL) and UNICEF South Florida, and to mentorship with Endeavor Miami and Babson College's WIN Lab. And having recently entered the world of cryptocurrency, NFTs, and the metaverse, I am optimistic about the outlook for business in Miami. I am excited to dive deeper into the booming tech scene and to continue my passion of further enhancing the customer experience in the travel retail ecosystem... Stay tuned!

AAA: Cruise travel on the rebound in 2022

AAA Travel says cruising is making a strong comeback after the pandemic temporarily put a hold on sailings. The Auto Club Group's travel agency reports that cruise bookings during the past four weeks are twice as strong as this time last year and expects that positive momentum to continue through the travel season.

"Destinations are loosening travel restrictions and cruise lines hope to reach full capacity in the second half of the year," said Debbie Haas, Vice President of Travel for AAA – The Auto Club Group.

Hass reports that the AAA travel agency is seeing a wide mix

of bookings that range from short weekend excursions to worldwide voyages.

CDC lowers cruise warning

AAA has noted an increase in traveler confidence as COVID-19 cases trend lower. Another positive indicator came last week, when the Centers for Disease Control lowered its cruise travel warning to a level 2. That's the lowest level since the CDC began tracking coronavirus statistics. The downgraded travel warning still encourages travelers to be up-to-date on their COVID vaccinations.

AAA also reports: **58.3 million (23%)** Americans are considering a

cruise in the next two years; over half (52%) of the millennials surveyed say they are ready to return to cruising; and of those Americans who say they are likely to cruise again, 41% cite a better understanding of the risks of COVID-19 as influencing their decision.

Safer Sailing

AAA say Americans view cruising as safe as resort vacations and safer than exploring large cities. Some 43% of Americans who plan to cruise in the future are satisfied with the cruise industry's overall response to the pandemic, and the safety protocols that have been implemented.

Popular Destinations

Alaska, the Caribbean, and Europe are among the most popular cruise destinations. AAA says that there are growing options to sail out of the U.S. to exotic destinations like Africa, Australia, Iceland and Tahiti.

Carnival Corp. reports higher revenue per pax in 1Q update

Carnival Corporation & plc was optimistic on its recovery in its first quarter business update issued last week.

Among the highlights, revenue per passenger cruise day ("PCD") for the first quarter of 2022 increased approximately 7.5% compared to a strong 2019. This increase was driven by exceptionally strong onboard and other revenue, reports the company.

The company expects to have each brand's full fleet back in guest cruise operations for its respective summer season where it historically generates the largest share of its operating income. Carnival also reported a net loss of \$1.9 billion for the first quarter of 2022, with 75% of capacity operational.



The Disney Magic was the first cruise ship to return to the Cayman Islands since March 2020, when the island closed its borders due to the pandemic.

Photo: Disney Cruise Lines

Grand Cayman reopens to cruising with 4-week phased trial

Cruise ships returned to the Cayman Islands for the first time in two years on March 21, when the 1,750-passenger *Disney Magic* arrived.

The resumption of the Islands' cruise industry was approved by the Caymans' formal Cabinet to proceed in two-phases, with certain regulatory measures. Among these, cruise passenger arrivals will be limited to 40% of previous volumes.

During the four-week Phase I trial period, a total of twenty-one port calls have been approved, commencing with the *Disney Magic*. Six cruise lines – Disney, Carnival, Celebrity, Princess, MSC and Holland America -- will be stopping in the Cayman Islands with 15 different cruise ships.

These calls will bring about 74,000 cruisers to the destination.

In a statement announcing the resumption of port calls, Minister for Tourism and Transport Kenneth Bryan stated: "Cruise tourism makes up a significant portion of our tourism industry and the return of cruise passengers will bring welcomed relief to many Caymanians who depend on this industry for their livelihoods."

Grand Cayman is one of the last of the major cruise destinations in the Caribbean to re-open. Many other popular destinations in the Caribbean opened last summer.

If Phase 1 goes according to plan, the Cayman Islands will announce Phase 2 and request approval from the Public Health Administration.



MSC Cruises' Executive Chairman Pierfrancesco Vago and Formula 1 President & CEO Stefano Domenicali announce their new global partnership.

MSC Cruises named Official Cruise Partner of Formula 1 for 2022

Formula 1 and MSC Cruises have become Global Partners ahead of the upcoming 2022 season. The deal will begin at the Formula 1 Gulf Air Bahrain Grand Prix 2022, when Swiss-based MSC Cruises, one of the world's largest and fastest growing cruise brands, becomes the Official Cruise Partner of Formula 1.

MSC Cruises and Formula 1 are collaborating to bring some of MSC's most technologically advanced and glamorous ships port-side during select Grand Prix weekends, enabling MSC Cruises' fleet to complement the high-end experience of Formula 1 and drive global visibility for its brand.

Through this unique partnership MSC Cruises will be able to leverage Formula 1's growing global fanbase to showcase its extensive offering of quality vacations at sea and bring the thrill of Formula 1 to MSC Cruises' global audience as its ships sail to more than 100 countries around the world and host guests representing more than 185 nationalities.

As global leaders in their respective fields, MSC Cruises will also unite with Formula 1 to continue to drive toward sustainable change.

Both companies have long committed to becoming Net-Zero Carbon and are investing heavily in, as well as pioneering, state-of-the-art environmental technologies and solutions.

Marshall Retail Group opens first outlets at Sea-Tac with sodoPOP



Marshall Retail Group (MRG), a WHSmith company, has opened its newest store, sodoPOP, in the N Concourse of Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (SEA).

The eclectic concept was created specifically for SEA and is

Marshall Retail Group's first venture within the airport.

The contemporary pop culture hub, sodoPOP, was created in collaboration with Seattle's Museum of Pop Culture (MoPOP) and the collectable conglomerate, Funko.

Travelers can find a large assortment of trendy collectables at sodoPOP, including Funko brands like POP!, Paka Paka and Loungefly, band t-shirts, albums, Seattle sports memorabilia and merchandise, along with a mix of unique gifts that are local to the Seattle area.

The store features large art installations that pay homage to the different factions of sodoPOP's inspiration. Outside the store, a 4-foot-tall Freddy Funko figure and a statue of the Space Needle greet guests as they enter.

Delta to boost transit traffic at Korean airport

In another sign of expectations for further recovery in international passenger travel, Delta Air Lines has signed an agreement with Korea's Incheon International Airport and local lounge operators to increase transit traffic through the airport.

The agreement will bring more passengers through Incheon Airport and strengthen the airport's position as the best hub in North-east Asia with a more convenient and premium experience, said the Delta announcement.

Delta is the first foreign airline to sign the agreement with Incheon International Airport Corporation and the third-party companies – Pulmuone Food & Culture, SK Networks, Lotte GRS, SPC.

Delta, along with its joint venture partner, Korean Air, carries the most transit passengers over Incheon, connecting over 290 U.S. destinations to 80 Asia markets,

according to the airline statement.

Based on the agreement, the parties will implement the "Transfer Lounge Promotion" for Delta customers starting in April. Selected customers who fly with Delta and transit within 24 hours at Incheon Airport will be able to use free lounge coupons in agreed lounges, including SkyHub Lounge, Matina Lounge, Lounge L and SPC Lounge.

The Transfer Lounge Promotion will allow Delta to offer select customers access to various airport lounges regardless of ticket class or SkyMiles Medallion Status.

Currently, Delta One customers and SkyMiles Diamond, Platinum and Gold Medallion members have access to Korean Air's lounges.

As travel restrictions begin to be eased in Asian countries, this agreement is expected to encourage travel between Asia and the U.S. via Incheon Airport.



Tairo International
has an immediate opening for an
AREA MANAGER

Job Description:

Your responsibilities include, but not limited to:

Working with marketing to plan and executing visual merchandising initiatives; training and working with sales staff; monthly sales reporting and analysis; forecasting; maintaining promotion calendar including store level events; assist field in opening of new doors, etc.

Minimum Qualifications:

- bachelor's degree in business or related field
- Minimum 2 years' experience in a TR sales position
- Ability to travel 50% of the time

Required Skill Sets

- Project Ownership; relentless attention to detail; speed in execution; passion for the brands; analytics; ability to organize and prioritize workload; excellent verbal and written communication, organizational, multi-tasking, attention to detail, and problem-solving skills.
- Also: Proficiency with Outlook; proficiency in Excel/PowerPoint/Word; Strong presentation skills; Fluent English & Spanish written and spoken; Ability to travel.

Salary:

- Pay commensurate with skill set and relevant experience level.

- Job Type: Full-time

Benefits: Full scope of excellent benefits

Please send resumes to:
Rosane Garcia at
Rosane@tairo.com

Go Travel partners with Essential Communications

UK-based Go Travel has joined Essential Communications' travel retail client list, as the company eyes channel growth across its growing range of products. Go Travel has identified opportunities in four categories within its travel accessories that will create a more dynamic offer for travel retailers: electricals, comfort, luggage accessories, everyday essentials.

Go Travel General Manager Steve Worden said: "The timing feels right to target growth in travel retail."