

EUROPE LOOKS TO BOOST SUMMER TOURISM AS LOCKDOWN EASES



As Europe unwinds from lockdown the continent is faced with a new reality especially as it concerns tourism.

Europe's post-lockdown reality is one where many restaurants and beaches are expected to remain shut until June at the earliest, summer festivals have been canceled, and airport passenger numbers have plummeted.

The case is the same across the European Union where tourism accounts for about 10% of the GDP and 12% of jobs.

Secretary-General, European Tourism Association Tim Fairhurst says the tourism industry has been hard hit by the coronavirus pandemic.

Tourism and borders are slowly beginning to open in some countries such as Italy and Greece as they prepare for summer tourism. Both financially hit countries will allow some international travel as of June.

EU Commissioner Margrethe Vestager says the European Commission has offered guidelines to see borders reopen and assist transport and hospitality sectors safely welcome clients for summer tourism.

Alongside massive tourism rescue packages, EU countries like France are unveiling incentives to boost domestic tourism.

States are however not bound to the EU guidelines and experts say states may make their guidelines including possible quarantine, and limit border opening to neighbors and others with similar infection rates.

Scott Marcus, a senior fellow at Bruegel says there is a limit to how much vacation travel can be possible this summer. According to him, people who will decide to vacation at all will travel within their countries to reduce possible complexities.

With these realities Europe might have a summer without non-European tourists.

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