

2023

IS IT SAFE TO TRAVEL?

JANUARY 2023



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selective-travel.com



hello@selective-travel.co.uk



+44 (0) 2890 389 007



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THE PANDEMIC IMPACT

The world opened almost year ago in February 2022. Travel ‘took off’ exponentially, for want of a better phrase. But, not without its challenges. The fury that followed the lifting of travel sanctions found the whole of the travel and hospitality sectors ill equipped for the onslaught after the devastation that Covid-19 and lockdown brought about in 2020 in the UK and worldwide.



THE FACTORS

Now that the world has come to terms with the pandemic and Covid-19, certain factors loom large that will affect business travellers' appetite to resume travelling again in 2023. There are five principal areas that are cause for concern this year.

1

Travel disruptions brought about by strikes and climate impact.

2

Unrest here at home and overseas about the cost of living is seeing disruption from the end of 2022 creeping into the start of 2023.

3

Weather is a serious factor in the disruption of global travel with the effects of climate change having more impact around the world.

4

Terrorism and the threat of Terrorism is still a cause for concern with its global and digital reach.

5

Concerns around Covid-19 globally especially in China and less developed countries where outbreaks can occur without warning.



COVID-19

Even advanced countries are still affected by the virus as new strains mutate with regular occurrence, causing concerns on the home front. Travel is still banned in a few specific countries; however, with the likes of China now lifting travel restrictions, albeit slowly, in the coming months we hope to see normal business levels eventually returning to this part of the world.

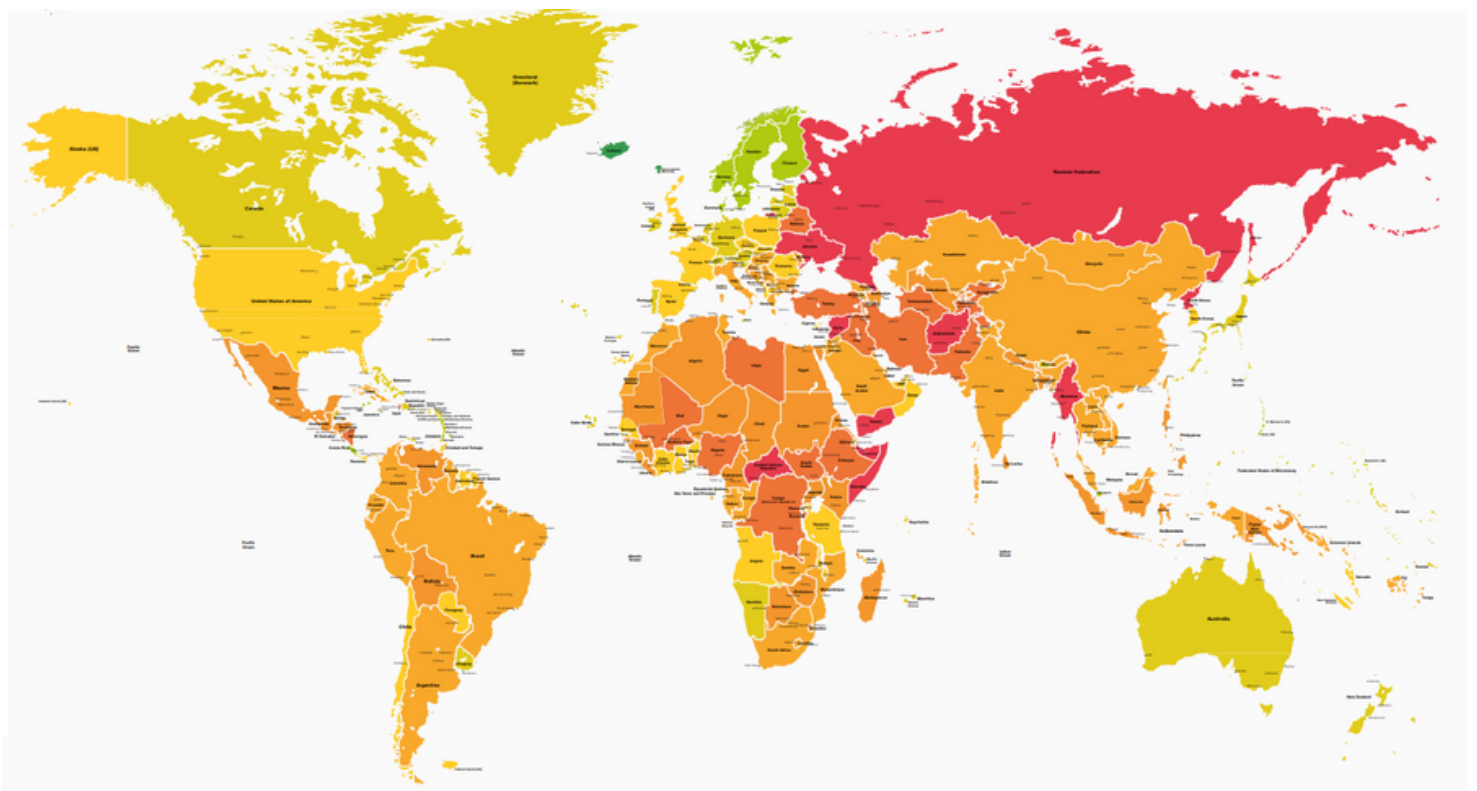


TERRORISM

There are major concerns over geopolitical and security threats. Many destinations around the world we considered 'safe' now offer greater risk than in previous years.

RISK COUNTRIES

Medical and security specialist International SOS has identified Afghanistan as potentially the most dangerous country in the world to visit in 2023. The organisation's recently published Risk Map 2023 named Syria the second-most dangerous destination to visit, followed by Ukraine, Mali, and Iraq.



Ukraine and Mali are new additions in 2023, with the remaining countries having featured in both the 2022 and 2021 forecast. While Mali's security risk has remained high for some time since the 2nd military coup in May 2021, Ukraine saw the biggest shift over the last 12 months – from 'medium' to 'extreme' – following Russia's invasion in February 2022.

Other nations whose security 'risk' was also categorised as 'extreme' include Central African Republic, Yemen, Somalia, and South Sudan, as well as certain areas of Nigeria, Democratic Republic of Congo, Pakistan, Mozambique, and Israel. International SOS stressed that security in Europe is still 'stable' despite Ukraine conflict and a recent rise in social unrest in Europe due to the cost-of-living crisis. Countries like the UK, Germany, and France remain at a low level.

It also drew attention to the Sahel region in north Africa, which saw an increased risk of militancy, and a rise in criminality in Colombia due, in part, to the socio-economic impacts of the pandemic. (Source: [BTN Europe](#))

SAFE COUNTRIES

At the opposite end of the spectrum, Norway was named as the safest destination currently, followed by Finland, Switzerland, Denmark, and Iceland.



“With travel and health risks on the rise in many regions, it is important for organisations to also focus on mitigating the ongoing impact of mental health issues,” said International SOS medical director Dr Irene Lai.

“Organisations must manage multiple physical and mental health issues to effectively maintain their Duty of Care responsibilities,” she added. (Source: [BTN Europe](#))



MOVING FORWARD

Greater onus will be on companies and organisations to make sure it is safe for employees to travel for work. International location and assistance organisations admit that security, medical, and health related incidents are seven times more likely to happen when travelling on business. It is imperative that a company knows its staff are fit to travel, that full and correct risk assessments have been completed, and that insurance and support mechanisms are in place to support its travelling workforce.



HOW SELECTIVE CAN HELP

By working with travel professionals within a TMC, your mitigation and liabilities can be reduced greatly. Organisations should ensure their employees are fully briefed on the health and security risks of travel to their destination before travelling. A TMC can help with policy and procedures and policy implementation to keep your travellers as safe as possible.



Digital control allows itinerary and dynamic tracking when checking in. In the case of an emergency, a TMC has the ability to find exposure and respond quickly, with control mechanisms that can quickly show where anyone is in the world within moments of the notification of any incident.

Travel managers will need more data and processes to help assess and approve travel as they did during the pandemic and will need this well into the future as new challenges arise. Online and Offline reporting suites can help with policy and planning for the company's future needs and limiting risk. Implementation of a travel risk management strategy will help improve trip effectiveness and safety before anyone starts their journey.

Start 2023 on a safer note and contact Selective Travel Management to see how we can help make your future safer.



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Talk to us today



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