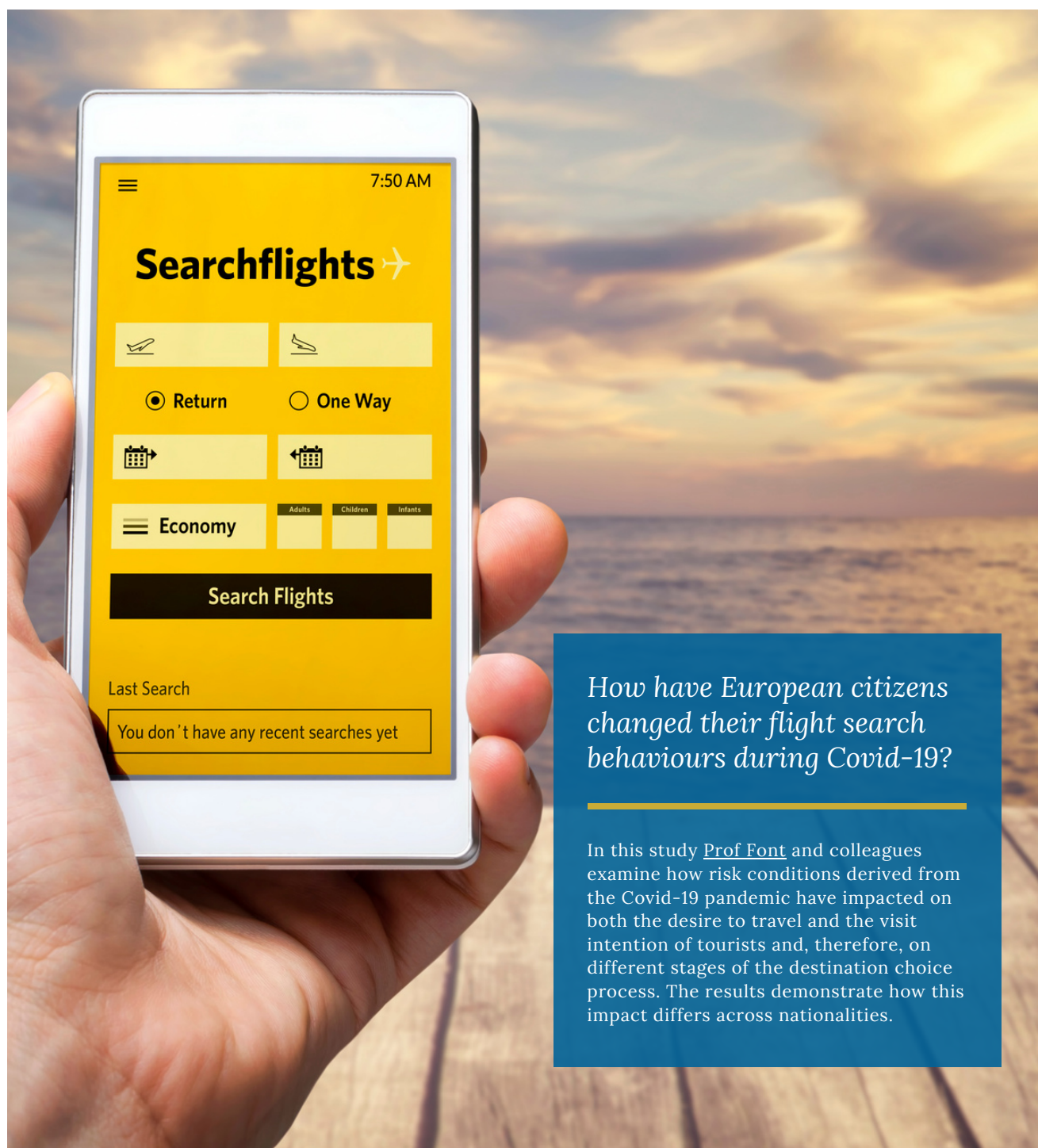


Academic Weekly Digest

School of Hospitality & Tourism Management



How have European citizens changed their flight search behaviours during Covid-19?

In this study [Prof Font](#) and colleagues examine how risk conditions derived from the Covid-19 pandemic have impacted on both the desire to travel and the visit intention of tourists and, therefore, on different stages of the destination choice process. The results demonstrate how this impact differs across nationalities.

The impact of COVID-19 on European tourists' attitudes to air travel and the consequences for tourist destination evoked set formation

Prof Xavier Font

We analysed 5,134 million flight searches and 379 million flight picks during 2020 for the 17 largest European tourism source markets. An unweighted index number was employed to measure the average variation for searches and picks, for the year 2020, in relation to the reference base period (year 2019). This was done for air travel in general and for Spain specifically. The study then proceeded to conduct an analysis of 17 international travel destinations that are in the evoked sets of the two largest outbound markets in Europe (Germany and UK). We also identified which markets are most favourable to Spain. Flight searches and picks on Skyscanner to Europe have registered a decrease in 2020 compared to the previous year of -36.2% and - 42.6% respectively and their evolution throughout the year has progressively worsened- in the last months of the year decline rates of over -70% for searches and - 80% for picks are achieved. But some countries are clearly more resilient to risk, and they should be considered first in any recovery plans.



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Tourist destinations
need to re-analyse
their marketing
strategies according to
their consumers' risk
perceptions.
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Instead of interpreting such desire to travel during periods of risk as a maladaptive response, we used it to make a methodological contribution by developing a tool to forecast the more profitable markets to target when striving for economic recovery of a tourist destination. We identified specific markets that have a high-risk tolerance, and provided some details about why certain markets may have a higher desire and intention to travel than others. The research design can inform cost-efficient marketing decisions in a situation of high uncertainty.

Further Reading:

Gallego, I., Font, X., & González-Rodríguez, M. R. (2022). The impact of COVID-19 on European tourists' attitudes to air travel and the consequences for tourist destination evoked set formation. *Tourism Management Perspectives*.

Link: bit.ly/3OG7x4B