

# European travel recovery continues in Q1, says ETRC

The European Travel Retail Confederation (ETRC) has released to its members this week the ETRC Business Performance Index for the first quarter of 2022.

Following the significant recovery pace shown in Q2 and Q3 2021, the industry recovery slowed in Q1 2022 in line with the previous quarter showing a sales deficit of 37% vs. the same quarter in 2019.

But international passenger numbers experienced a stronger recovery, taking the passenger deficit to 32% of Q1 2019 levels.

In addition, the rate of recovery is now fairly consistent between the core categories, with each having an index that closely tracks the overall market status.

“While the results are overall positive, a word of caution comes from the rate of spending per passenger which fell fairly significantly in Q1 2022, with levels being 7% down compared to Q1 2019,” ETRC said.

Steve Hillam, Managing Director at Pi Insight, said: “The recovery of travel retail in Europe continues to be underpinned by several key dynamics, although several of these trends, including sales recovering quicker than international passengers and increased rates of spend per passenger, reversed in Q1 2022. The next edition of the ETRC Index will tell us if this is just a hiccup or confirmed trend on an otherwise remarkably fast road to recovery.”

ETRC Secretary General Julie Lassaigue commented: “Q1 2022 saw a raft of challenges causing uncertainty for travelers in Europe, including renewed travel restrictions in response to the Omicron wave and most notably Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. We expect though Q2 2022 to show stronger results as a result of the rebound of international travel in the region.”

Developed as an exclusive service to ETRC members, the ETRC Index is compiled by Pi Insight thanks to data contributed by participating travel retailers of ETRC and the support of ForwardKeys for passenger data.

The index presents trends on historic aggregated sales movements (taking 2017 as reference year) covering airside airport retail in sales across four main categories – Beauty, Liquor, Confectionery & Fine Foods and Tobacco. It covers airports responsible for more than 90% of European traffic. Passenger data is powered by the ForwardKeys Traveller Statistics Tool.