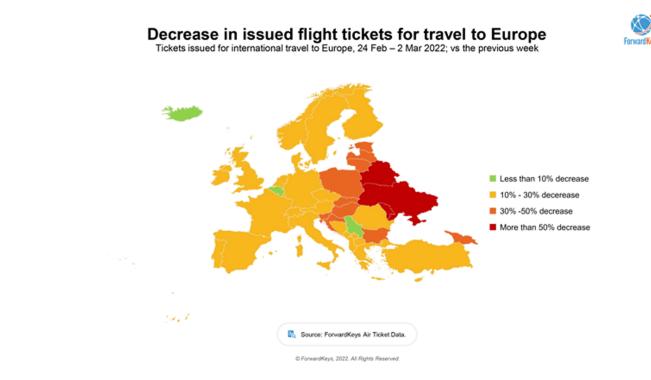
Russian invasion causes flight bookings to stall, especially to Eastern Europe

Air ticket data analyzed by ForwardKeys shows Russia's invasion of Ukraine caused an immediate drop in flight bookings throughout virtually all of Europe and within Russia domestically.

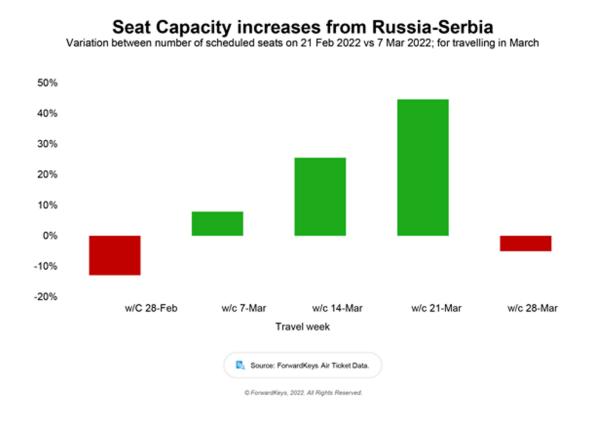
Comparing flight bookings in the week following the invasion, 24th Feb – 2nd Mar, to the previous seven days, the company found that, excluding Ukraine and Moldova, which closed their air space, and Russia and Belarus, which were subjected to flight bans and safety warnings, most affected were countries close to the conflict. The following chart shows the drop in bookings across the continent.



Intra-European bookings dropped by 23% while US bookings to Europe dropped 13%.



Meanwhile Serbia has remained open to Russian travel, which resulted in an immediate lift in bookings and seat capacity between the countries.



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Serbia showed 60% more flight tickets issued for travel from Russia to another destination in the

week immediately after the invasion than there were in the whole of January. During January the vast majority of Russian transfers through Serbia were to Montenegro, but that changed following the invasion.



Olivier Ponti, VP Insights, ForwardKeys, said: "Russia's invasion of Ukraine has made an immediate impact, stalling what had been a strong recovery in travel since early January. What I find surprising is that transatlantic travel and western European destinations have been less badly affected than I feared - North Americans can tell the difference between war in Ukraine and war in Europe, and so far, it seems that travellers regard the rest of Europe as relatively safe. There is also a strong pent-up demand. What's most notable is the speed with which Serbia has become the gateway for travel between Russia and Europe. However, these are early days in a global political and economic crisis; so, what happens to travel will certainly be affected by the progress of the war and the impact of sanctions. Over the coming weeks, I expect we will see inflation and possible fuel supply issues pulling back! what would otherwise be a strong post-pandemic recovery, as COVID-19 travel restrictions are progressively lifted."