

Passengers remain positive towards air travel - ACI survey

Airports Council International (ACI) World has published the second edition of the ASQ Global Traveller Survey which confirms that travelers remain highly positive with regards to their willingness to travel by air.

The 2021 findings were launched during the second day of November's ACI LAC/World Annual General Assembly, Conference and Exhibition, in Cancun, Mexico. Completion of the report was supported by InterVISTAS (Platinum Advisory Partner) and KONE, ICF and Plaza Premium Group as Premium sponsors.

Since last year's survey results, travelers have developed a more considered and informed perception of the pandemic, and this will influence their future flying behavior.

A new segment emerging from the research shows that 48% of respondents have traveled since the beginning of the pandemic. The survey suggests that respondents who have traveled during the pandemic are more likely to travel by air again sooner and more frequently. These observations highlight that, on returning to air travel, the journey feels safe and secure.

In contrast, those that have not yet flown since the beginning of the crisis tend to be less confident as they have not yet experienced the changes that airports have implemented across the passenger journey. This issue is further intensified by the lack of harmonized measures across governments, particularly regarding international travel.

The second new segmentation of the research was based on travelers' vaccination status, revealing polarized results. Even though all respondents are equally interested in traveling by air again, the vaccinated respondents, although protected by the vaccine, retain concerns about their safety when traveling and want clear reassurance that the airport environment is safe.

Such results highlight the importance and relevance of the ACI Airport Health Accreditation program which assists airports by assessing how aligned their health measures are with global standards and by building passenger confidence.

ACI World Director General Luis Felipe de Oliveira said: "Covid-19 has caused substantial changes in human behavior and provoked a whole new set of expectations affecting how products and services should be delivered and experienced, and the airport sector is no exception. While this dramatic shift presents a major challenge to airport customer experience teams who must meet and exceed a diverse range of new traveler expectations, it also opens new opportunities to improve overall levels of satisfaction.

"The 2021 ASQ Global Traveller Survey provides an updated perspective on the speed of return to air travel and offers key insights and guidance to help airports and other related stakeholders to evolve their customer experience strategies and keep their competitive advantage as the sector works towards a sustained long-term recovery.

"However, a key part of this endeavor to build passenger confidence is government support. ACI continues to call on governments to take action to implement risk-based, pragmatic approaches, such as mutual recognition of vaccines and interoperable solutions for proof of health status."

The report offers both a global perspective as well as regional insights. The guidance provides regional dashboards highlighting some of the key specificities that should be taken into consideration when designing a customer experience strategic plan for a specific airport.

ACI will also hold webinars on the topic, with the first occurring on November 30, 2021, which will reveal the findings from the 2021 ASQ Global Traveller Survey followed by a panel discussion from industry experts on how they are adapting their services and accelerating industry recovery.

During the second webinar on December 7, 2021, a panel of experts will offer their perspectives on addressing challenges and how to adapt infrastructure, technology and new revenue streams.