

20 May 2021
Press Release

The Announcement of the findings of “Online Survey on Post-Pandemic Travel”

Will and how will the pandemic affect Hong Kong citizens’ outbound travel preferences and behaviors? How strong is the pent-up travel demand and how soon will people start travelling again? Will more people prefer travelling in groups to travelling individually after the pandemic? How acceptable are the COVID-19 testing and quarantine requirements to travellers and will they cut back on their travel budgets?

To find out the answers, the Travel Industry Council of Hong Kong (TIC) and TKS Exhibition Services Ltd (TKS), the organiser of the Hong Kong’s International Travel Expo (ITE) combining Leisure & MICE travels, have jointly conducted an online public survey from 30 April to 7 May 2021. The majority of the invitees to the survey are visitors to the public days of ITEs held in the past years. The **response is most encouraging: 1,394 replies** were received and almost half of them have arrived in the first two days!

“We will share these very useful findings with our members, as well as our close business partners, such as the local/regional offices of the various national tourism organisations. We hope the information collected will facilitate their planning and preparation for the recovery,” Mrs Alice Chan, Executive Director of the TIC said.

“We welcome the professional input from the TIC, particularly on the survey questions,” said Mr K S Tong, Managing Director of TKS, “and agree that it is now time to work together to speed up the recovery! ITE Hong Kong 2021, which has been rescheduled to 29 July to 1 August 2021 at the Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Centre (HKCEC), will be one of the boosters.”

Overall, the survey findings are positive. While those concerning “**pent-up travel demand**” (*1) are close to expectation, findings related to “**travel budget**” (*2) are happy surprises!

(*1) **How soon** after lifting of travel restrictions will you travel abroad?

- Within 1 month (18%)
- 2 to 3 months (26%)
- 4 to 6 months (22%)
- 7 to 12 months (34%)

(*2) Will the pandemic affect your **travel budget** in the coming year?

- Will not (36%)
- Will Increase (16.8%)
- Not Sure (26.9%)
- Will decrease (19.4%)

52.8%
Will **NOT** cut or even **INCREASE** travel budget

The survey confirms that **safety** is a prime concern! Over three quarters of the respondents are willing to pay more for a safer journey (*3). Around 50% of the respondents consider **quarantine** both at destination and upon returning to Hong Kong unacceptable (*4a & 4b), which constitute a major deterrent to travel! Travellers are nevertheless more receptive to taking **COVID-19 tests** (*5) as over 70% of the respondents accept taking them at least once a week.

(*3) How much more will you pay for a **safer journey**?

- Up to 10% more (34.4%)
- 20% more (31.7%)
- Over 30% more (9.9%)
- No (24%)

76.0%
Willing to pay more for a safer journey

(*4a) What is your acceptable **quarantine period at destination**?

- 14 Days (3.1%)
- 7 Days (11.3%)
- 3 Days (33.2%)
- Not acceptable at all (52.4%)

(*5) How frequent are you willing to take **COVID-19 tests during the journey**?

- Every day (9.1%)
- Once every 3 days (22.3%)
- Once a Week (41.5%)
- Not willing (27.1%)

72.9%
Accept taking COVID-19 tests at least once a week!

(*4b) What is your acceptable **quarantine period after returning to Hong Kong**?

- 14 Days (4.7%)
- 7 Days (14.3%)
- 3 Days (33.1%)
- Not acceptable at all (47.8%)

It is important to note that travellers are much more concerned about **travel restrictions and quarantine period** and **hygiene measures** than price concession or flexible cancellation/ refund policies when selecting their destinations (*6)!

(*6) Which factor below is the **most important for choosing a destination**?

- Travel Restrictions and Quarantine Period (33.8%)
- Hygiene Measures (31.6%)
- Flexible cancellation / Refund policies (18.7%)
- Price Concession (16.0%)

Over 40% of the respondents consider that when **restrictions are only partially lifted**, it may be **safer travelling in a group** (*7). The majority of the respondents prefer travelling in smaller groups, with 40% opting for groups of 10 or less and 50% opting for groups of 11 to 20. (*8).

(*7) When restrictions are partially lifted, will it be **safer to travel in group than individually**?

- Yes (17.6%)
- Possibly (25.5%)
- Not Sure (23.7%)
- Will Not (33.2%)

(*8) After the pandemic, what is the **ideal number of participants in a group**?

- Not more than 10 (39.6%)
- 11 – 20 (49.9%)
- 21 – 30 (8.8%)
- Over 30 (1.8%)

The survey result shows that travellers from Hong Kong **prefer destinations that are safer and closer to home (*9)**. The most popular destinations are Mainland China, Macau, Taiwan and Southeast Asia. It is likely that travellers, out of safety concerns, try to avoid visiting destinations which were comparatively more seriously affected by the pandemic and longer-haul flights at the early stage of recovery.

(*9) When travel restrictions are completely lifted, which destinations will you visit first?

- Mainland China, Macau and Taiwan (34.8%)
- SE Asia (34.4%)
- NE Asia (14.9%)
- N America & Europe (8.2%)
- Australia, New Zealand and South Pacific (6.5%)
- S America, Africa and the Middle East (1.2%)

As to the type of holiday preferred, over half of the respondents chose “Cuisine, Health, Shopping & Recreation”, followed by “In-depth travel” and “Family Fun / Visit”.

(*10) When travel restrictions are completely lifted, which travel segment will you prefer?

- Cuisine, Health, Shopping & Recreation (50.9%)
- In-depth Trip (20.6%)
- Family Fun / Visit (9.3%)
- Cruise (4.1%)
- Business & MICE travel (2.8%)

It is noted that respondents who have participated in the survey represented mainly a mature, educated and middle-income group, with the majority of them being females (*11-*14).

(*11) Respondents by Gender

- Female (65.1%)
- Male (34.9%)

(*12) Respondents by Age

- Over 60 years old (14.6%)
- 40 – 59 years old (48.6%)
- 25 to 39 years old (33.7%)
- 18 to 24 years old (2.8%)

(*13) Respondents by Monthly Income (HK\$)

- \$50,000 or above (11.8%)
- \$35,000 - \$50,000 (11.5%)
- \$25,000 - \$35,000 (20.1%)
- \$15,000 - \$25,000 (30.8%)
- Below \$15,000 (25.9%)

(*14) Respondents by Education

- University or above (45.9%)
- Post-secondary (22.7%)
- Secondary or below (31.4%)

For enquiries about the survey, please contact the TIC at pr@tichk.org or TKS at info@tkshk.com. For enquiries about ITE Hong Kong, please contact TKS at travel@tkshk.com.

While care has been taken when conducting the survey and preparing this release, both the TIC and TKS will not assume any liability arising from usage of the above and related information by any third parties.

About the Travel Industry Council of Hong Kong

The Travel Industry Council of Hong Kong (TIC) was established in 1978 and has been a self-regulatory body of travel agents under the Travel Agents (Amendment) Ordinance since 1988. Its membership includes eight Association Members and about 1,700 travel agents. The objectives of the TIC are to maintain a high standard of professionalism within the industry as well as to protect the interests of both the trade and travellers. For details, please visit the TIC website: www.tichk.org.

About ITE Hong Kong:

First held over 30 years ago, ITE is Hong Kong's only travel fair! With days, admission policy, program and promotion for regional buyers and professionals separate from those for quality FIT, ITE effectively combines a trade and public travel fair! ITE Hong Kong is organised by TKS Exhibition Services Ltd and continues receiving the strong support from the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the People's Republic of China, with the Hong Kong Tourism Board, Travel Industry Council of Hong Kong, the Macau Government Tourism Office and various local and regional trade associations as Supporters.

ITE Hong Kong 2021, which incorporates the 35th ITE (Leisure) and the 16th ITE MICE, will be held from 29 July to 1 August 2021 at the HKCEC. For details, enquiry and space/booth booking etc., please visit www.itehk.com or contact TKS via Email: travel@tkshk.com | Wechat: [ite-hongkong](https://www.wechat.com/p/ite-hongkong) | Tel: +852 31550600.