

## **Travel to the Old World: Risks for Travellers to European Destinations**

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### **Background:**

Although many traveller health studies focus on Europeans visiting tropical destinations, travel to and within Europe also carries health risks. Using data from the ongoing ITIT (Illness Tracking in Travellers) study, we examined these risks among travellers to European destinations.

### **Materials and Methods:**

We combined demographic, climate, location, and self-reported symptom information to examine the patterns of health outcomes in travellers to Europe. In addition, post travel questionnaires provided information on diagnoses during and after the voyage. We compared these outcomes with ITIT travellers to other locations.

### **Results:**

There were 780 participants who reported travel to and within Europe, and 1,518 to other destinations. Travellers to Europe were on average older (mean 42 years) and predominantly female (59% vs. 50%). Travel was more likely business (21% vs. 13%) and less likely tourism (57% vs. 71%). Travellers to Europe were also less likely to be smokers, with 88% never smoking compared to 79% of other travellers. Rates of diagnoses and self-reported treatments were comparable between travellers to Europe and elsewhere. The most symptoms were reported in Italy, Germany, and Spain. Overall, travellers to Europe reported fewer symptoms than other travellers, with 29% of travellers to Europe reporting any symptom compared to 49%. However, symptoms were still reported, with 18% of travellers reporting respiratory symptoms, and 15% reporting general symptoms.

### **Conclusion:**

Travelling to Europe also comes with unique risks and a different traveller profile than travelling to other destinations.