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## Natural disasters worse for tourism than terror attacks



Paris has yet to see evidence that it has bounced back from November's attacks CREDIT: GETTY

By **Hugh Morris**, TRAVEL NEWS EDITOR

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**T**ourist destinations recover from terrorist attacks quicker than they would an environmental disaster, according to travel analysts.

In the wake of last week's Brussels attacks, when agents of Islamic State targeted the Belgian capital's airport and metro network, killing 35 (<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/belgium/12204399/Brussels-terror-attacks-metro-airport-suspects-live.html>), Euromonitor said that the bombings would only have a "short to medium-term impact" on the region's tourism.

Nadejda Popova, travel project manager at the company, said the attacks were likely to result in a "10-20 per cent decline in bookings", due to fears of future attacks.



Tributes written on city walls in Brussels CREDIT: YOAN VALAT

"However, this is not expected to have a long-term impact as the European travel industry has proven to be very resilient to such external impacts and recover fairly quickly," she added.

Brussels welcomed more than three million visitors in 2014, four per cent more than the previous year.



Paris deserted in the week following the attacks

Paris, which suffered similar attacks last November (<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/france/11995246/Paris-shooting-What-we-know-so-far.html>), saw flight bookings fall by 27 per cent in the week following, while hotel revenues were down 40 per cent in December compared to the same month in 2014. Air France-KLM said the attacks, which left 130 dead, cost it €70million (£55million).

- Mapped: The terror threat around the world (<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/maps-and-graphics/Mapped-Terror-threat-around-the-world/>)

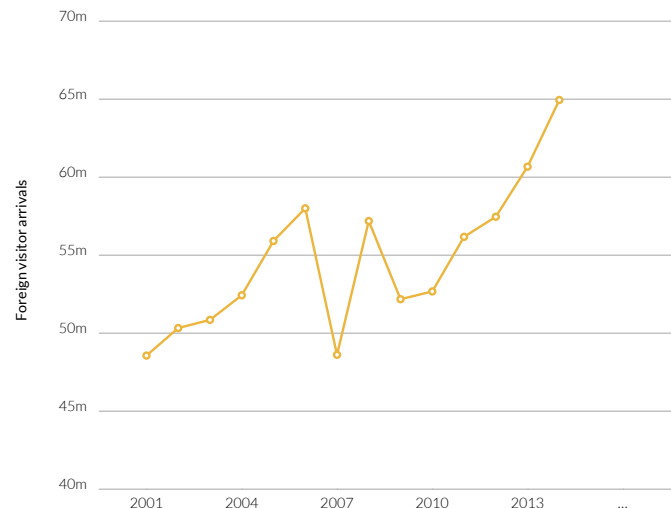
Official visitor numbers are yet to be released for the year but data from Travelsupermarket.com showed that Easter searches for the French capital dropped by half compared to last year.

But the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), based in London, says it expects visitor levels to Paris (<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/destinations/europe/france/paris/hotels/>) to return to normal three to six months after the attack, making this April and May a key time for the city.

A spokesperson for the WTTC said the same can be expected for Brussels.

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## Tourism vs terrorism in Madrid



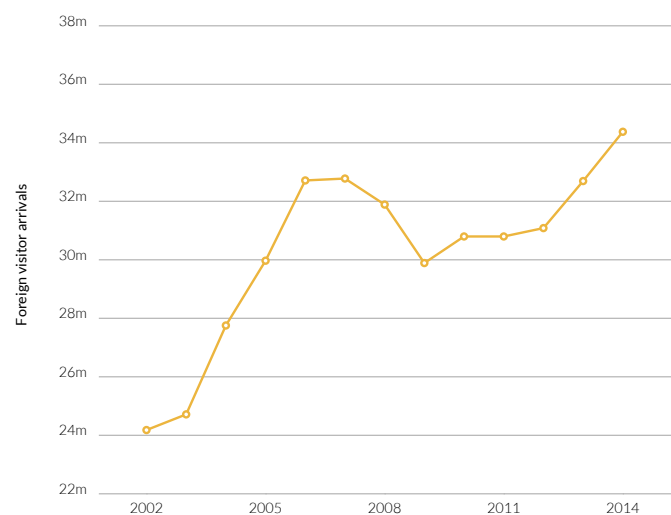
Powered by [Factmint \(http://factmint.com/charts/\)](http://factmint.com/charts/)

Source: Spanish Ministry of Industry, Energy and Tourism

In analysis of what crises can impact tourism destinations, considering disease, environmental disaster, political turmoil and terrorism, the WTTC says terror attacks have the least impact, with the average recovery time 13 months. Political turmoil in a destination can lead to a recovery time of nearly 27 months, the group found.

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## Tourism vs terrorism in the UK



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Source: Visit Britain

“In the case of Madrid [the train bombings of 2004], arrivals to Spain recovered to pre-bombing levels within weeks,” said the WTTC report.

“In the case of London [the 7/7 bombings], there was no notable impact on tourist arrivals to the UK at all.”

The analysis found that the scale of the attack often “has less influence on its overall impact than the context in which it happens”.

“For example, this can be illustrated by looking at the impact of two bombing attacks in Indonesia (2002 and 2005) compared to the Madrid bombing in 2004,” the report said.



A British family sunbathing in Thailand after the tsunami struck CREDIT: GETTY

“The two Indonesian attacks were quite different in scale (in terms of total death toll), yet the impact was relatively similar – 2002 calculated 891,000 lost arrivals and 2005 calculated 402,000 lost arrivals.

“In contrast the Madrid bombing had a similar death toll as the larger of the Indonesian attacks but a significantly lower (almost insignificant) impact on tourist arrivals.”

#### ○ Will terrorism derail West Africa's fragile tourism industry?

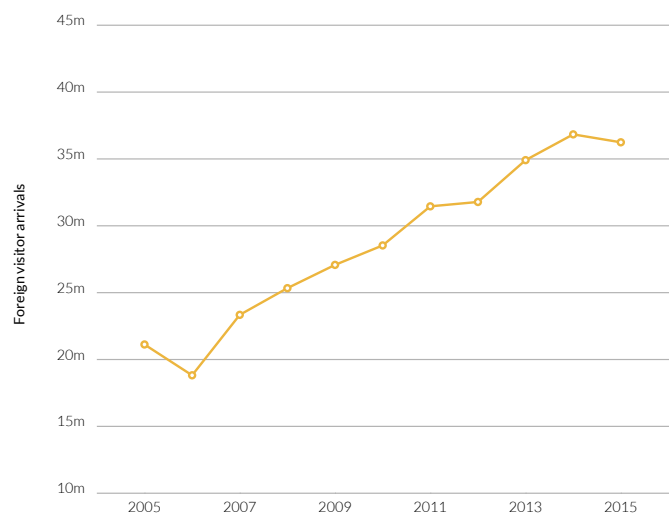
<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/destinations/africa/articles/terrorism-vs-tourism-in-west-africa/>

Yeganeh Morakabati, associate professor at Bournemouth University, told [Fox News](http://www.foxnews.com/travel/2016/03/22/terrorism-doesnt-really-affect-country-tourism-long/)

<http://www.foxnews.com/travel/2016/03/22/terrorism-doesnt-really-affect-country-tourism-long/> that the travel industry is resilient and that people have fairly short memories.

“And so as long as the attacks are a one-off, the impact tends to be small. This is what we have seen in the past,” she said.

#### Tourism vs terrorism in Turkey



Powered by [Factmint \(http://factmint.com/charts/\)](http://factmint.com/charts/)

Source: Minister of Culture and Tourism

The damage caused to infrastructure by natural disasters, however, can last much longer, as seen in the case of Thailand's 2004 tsunami (14 months), Haiti's 2010 earthquake (22 months) and Japan's 2011 earthquake (21 months).

#### ○ Holiday destinations where the terror threat is low (<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/galleries/Top-10-unusual-holiday-destinations-where-the-terror-risk-is-low/>)

There are no guarantees, however, as witnessed by the “immediate and precipitous” drop in arrivals to the US following 9/11, according to the Department of Homeland Security. It was not until 2007 that visitor levels returned to pre-attack figures.

A country currently experiencing the wake of both terrorism and political turmoil is Egypt, which saw visitor numbers tumble after the 2011 revolution, then again in 2013 following further unrest. 2016 figures are unlikely to make for happy reading after the crash of a Russian passenger jet in the Sinai peninsula in November, and the [subsequent Foreign Office](#)

[advice not to fly to the country](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/destinations/africa/egypt/articles/Is-Egypt-safe/) (<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/destinations/africa/egypt/articles/Is-Egypt-safe/>)'s Sharm el-Sheikh resort.

Turkey is another country where [unrest and terrorism threaten to derail its tourism industry](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/destinations/europe/turkey/articles/turkey-tourism-on-the-brink/) (<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/destinations/europe/turkey/articles/turkey-tourism-on-the-brink/>), with figures already showing a drop off for 2015 and early 2016, after a spate of bombings in both Istanbul and Ankara.

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