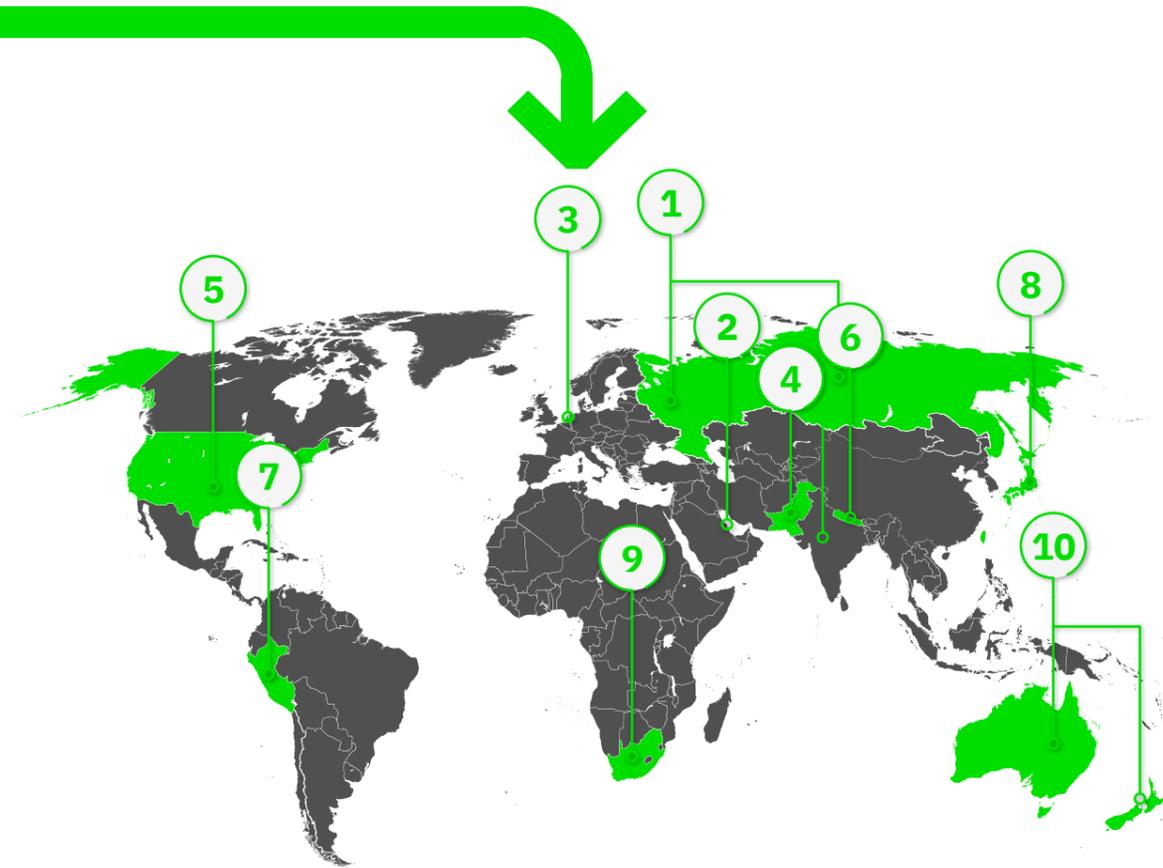


Global Travel Risk Review 2022-2023



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1: RUSSIA & UKRAINE

In February 2022, organizations with operations in Europe and elsewhere around the globe began executing their business continuity plans as the world observed and reacted to the Russian invasion of Eastern Ukraine.

Through FCM's travel alerts, companies were able to stay informed of the conflict, along with the impactful restrictions put in place by the US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), the UK's Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), and the EU's Air Safety Agency (EASA).

4: PAKISTAN

In June, Pakistan experienced monsoon rainfall at a rate of nearly three times observed on average over the last 30 years. Rainfall covered nearly a third of the country, wreaking havoc on crop productions and displacing nearly 33 million people.

The disruptions serve as a reminder about the threats posed by severe weather phenomena and climate inaction, as well as the impact it has on both travel and the global supply chain.

7: PERU

In South America, companies faced growing concerns as countries like Brazil and Peru faced political challenges and social unrest in a turbulent 2022.

Brazil hosted a contentious election between incumbent Jair Bolsonaro and former president Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, with Lula emerging as the victor after two rounds of voting. The refusal to accept election results has been divisive in South America's largest country, and travel programs have had to remain vigilant of disruptive and violent protests.

In Peru, the December 7th arrest of President Pedro Castillo was followed by gridlock, as protestors blocked major roads and airports in their demands for political reform.

9: SOUTH AFRICA

In South Africa, economic insecurity and supply chain issues plagued operations at airports like Cape Town and Johannesburg. Both airports issued a warning to airlines to prepare for delays and cancellations due to jet fuel shortages throughout the year and into 2023.

2: QATAR

A welcome byproduct of the softening of COVID-19 restrictions was the return to in-person sporting events. While 2021 was plagued by empty World Cup qualifiers, 2022 welcomed more than 1.4 million visitors to Qatar during the 2022 FIFA World Cup.

The global competition, however, put the spotlight on traveler safety and security, as well as the ability of Qatar to host such a large event. In the end, the opening ceremony and subsequent tournament went ahead with only minor disruptions. With the 2022 men's FIFA World Cup in the rearview mirror, travelers can now look forward to the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup in Australia and New Zealand.

5: UNITED STATES

The United States witnessed a significant increase in domestic and international travel in 2022, following a June 12th softening of its COVID-19 entry/exit requirements. Though the return to travel was welcomed with open arms, airlines had to contend with rehiring and retraining flight crews, as well as bringing grounded equipment back into service.

This was often under unforeseen circumstances, including a December 2022 operational meltdown for Southwest Airlines that stranded thousands of holiday travelers.

8: JAPAN

In March, a 7.4 magnitude earthquake struck off Japan's northeastern coast, triggering a low-level tsunami warning and knocking out power for millions of residents in the vicinity. The initial quake and aftershocks also caused transportation disruptions when a Tohoku Shinkansen train derailed. None of the 75 passengers and three crew members were injured. According to the USGS, there were 142 "significant" seismic events globally in 2022.

10: AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND

In February 2022, Australia began reopening its borders. The move was a sharp departure from Australia's "zero-COVID" stance at the onset of the pandemic and was welcomed with open arms from businesses operating in the world's 13th largest economy.

At the same time, New Zealand announced its phased approach to welcoming visitors for the first time in over two years, which culminated in the May 1st touchdown of flights from visa-waiver countries like the United States. The easing of restrictions has since resulted in an exponential increase in travel demand leading into 2023.

3: NETHERLANDS

Flight delays and cancellations caused by both airline and airport meltdowns proved to be a disruptive force in 2022.

Amsterdam Schiphol, the third-largest airport in Europe, suffered from lengthy security lines, lost luggage, and passenger caps following the European Council's recommendation to lift many COVID-19 restrictions. European business and leisure travel soared at a faster rate than anticipated.

Schiphol, though, was not alone. Many airports throughout Europe had to work hard to restore operations to accommodate trip numbers that rivaled pre-COVID-19 levels.

6: NEPAL

Nepal, a country on the European Union's Air Safety List, saw one of its deadliest years in commercial aviation. On May 30th, 2022, Tara Air Flight 197 from Pokhara to Jomsom, crashed shortly after departure with 19 passengers and three crew members onboard.

Seven months later, Yeti Air Flight 691 from Kathmandu to Pokhara's brand new international airport crashed on final approach with 72 passengers and crew onboard. The accident was recorded as the country's worst in nearly 30 years.

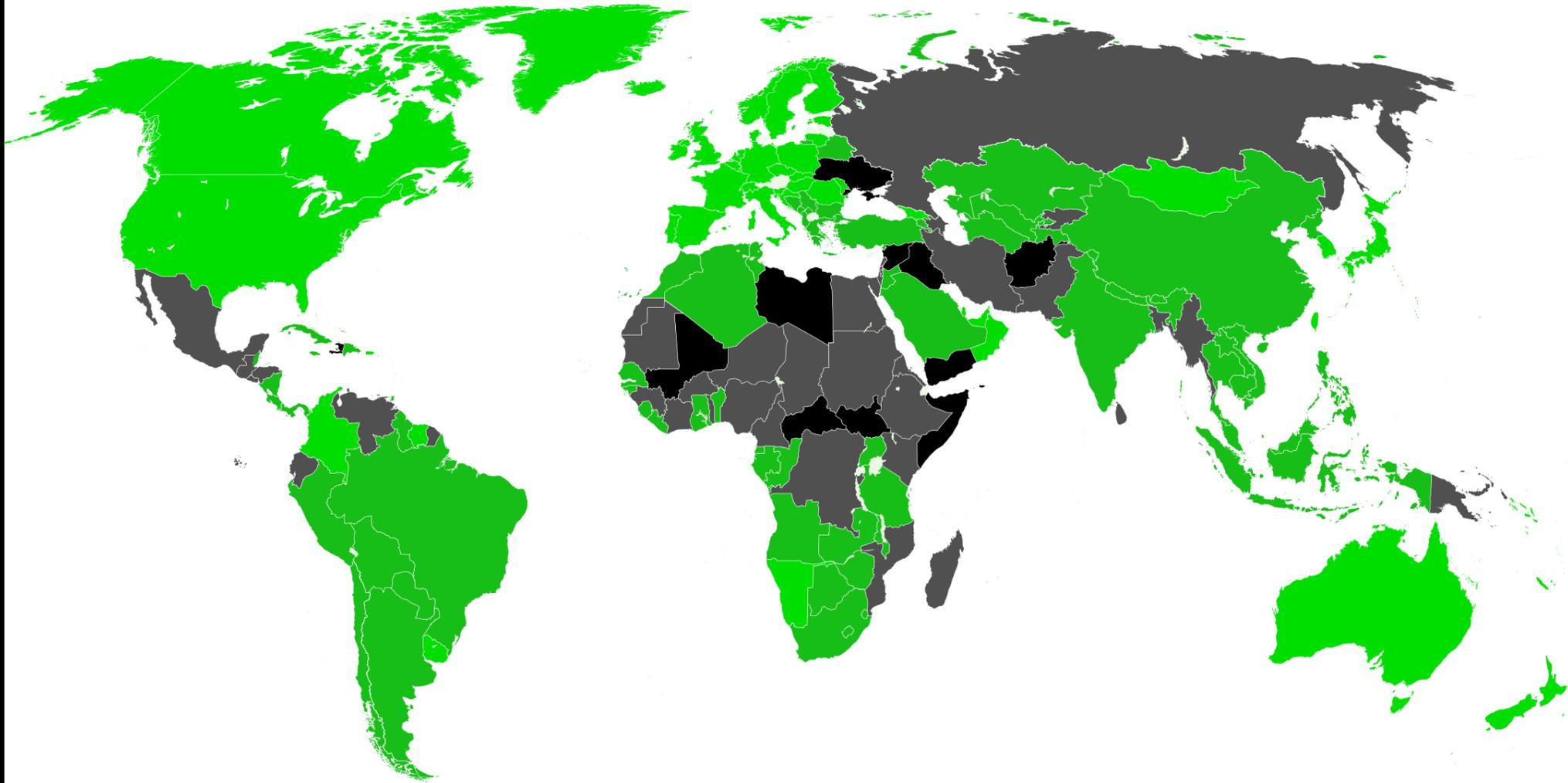
The event was just one of nearly a dozen airlines incidents and accidents monitored by FCM's Crisis Communications Protocol, an automated process designed to help travel managers become fully and immediately aware of critical incidents worldwide impacting their travel programs.

FCM's Global TRAVEL RISK Map 2023

ABOUT OUR RISK MAP:

FCM's 2023 Global Risk Map ratings are a compilation of several travel risk management sources. The information in this report does not, and is not, intended to constitute advice. Instead, all information, content and ratings on this update are for general informational purposes only.

Learn more about our Travel Risk Management Tool [here](#).



Security risk level

- MINIMAL** **Minimal Risk:** Most territories in this category will have a stable health and political infrastructure, as well as low overall crime rates nationwide.
- LOW** **Low Risk:** Most areas in this category will have a stable health and political system, with some unemployment and low crime rates.
- MEDIUM** **Medium Risk:** Most countries in this category will have a somewhat stable health and political infrastructure with moderate levels of crime.
- HIGH** **High Risk:** Most countries in this category will have unstable health and political systems with high rates of unemployment and exposure to violent and petty crimes.
- CRITICAL** **Critical Risk:** Most areas in this category will lack adequate health and political systems and experience very high rates of violent and petty crime.

2023: Lessons from the past to improve future capabilities



Remember those downstream risks

2022 served as a reminder that travel disruptions can come in many forms, and that downstream risks are just important as their catalyst. Companies should use lessons from the past to evolve and strengthen their operational resiliency in the face of what's to come.

For example, earlier this year, as COVID-19 restrictions eased, airports and carriers around the world had to come to terms with the fact that they were simply not ready for the large swaths of passengers returning to the skies. Companies were faced with a new dilemma: airport and airline operational meltdowns.

Overcrowding became a major concern. Large airports like Amsterdam Schiphol and London Heathrow forced carriers to cancel flights and asked travelers to arrive hours in advance of their departure. Heading into 2023, airlines also grappled with mass delays and cancellations, due to operational inefficiencies, pilot shortages, fuel shortages, and a range of other contributing factors.

In 2023, organizations should stay vigilant of everything from labor strikes to mass transit delays as providers continue to strengthen their operational capabilities.

Sanctions and supply flow challenges

In 2022, the world watched as countries placed airspace restrictions and other sanctions on Russia following their unprecedented invasion of Ukraine. Millions fled the country and companies were forced to rapidly respond as concerns about safety from Russia and Ukraine to Belarus, Poland, and Moldova. Airlines also had to pivot to suspend some flight routes and extend flight times to avoid airspace restrictions.

The conflict continues to be a destabilizing factor not just in the region, but around the world, and companies are encouraged to continue to monitor the conflict through 2023.

The Russia-Ukraine War is just one example of some of the geopolitical threats facing companies and their travelers around the world in 2023 and beyond. From social unrest in Brazil and Peru, to rising tensions between neighbors in East Asia and the Middle East, these trends can often result in actions that disrupt the free flow of goods and travel across both city lines and country lines.

Companies can mitigate their risk in 2023 by reviewing their business continuity plans and working with key stakeholders across the board to reintroduce or reinforce safety and risk best practices.

Large global sporting events are back

If 2022 was inspiring in one way, it was through the reintroduction of sold-out crowds at popular global events such as the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar. Though the event was in no short supply of controversies, companies were more prepared than ever to tackle travel logistics, thanks to a range of helpful security solutions offered by both the private and public sector.

The Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office in the UK, the Overseas Security Advisory Council in the United States, and a wide range of private risk management companies like Crisis24, were at the ready to support companies and their people in assessing the day-to-day match and transportation concerns throughout Qatar.

In 2023, keep an eye out for events such as the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup in Australia and New Zealand, the coronation of King Charles III and Camilla, Queen Consort in the UK, and the 19th Asian Games in China.

Are you truly focused on your people?

In 2023, the goal for all companies should be centered around "resilience" for all its people. People risk management has become a major cornerstone that encourages companies to focus not just on traveling employees, but all employees.

With global mobility at an all-time high, companies should work with compliance teams to have policies in place for a diverse array of staff – from road warriors to work-from-anywhere employees. Coming off the heels of its 2021 introduction, ISO 31030:2021 and its parent, ISO 31000:2018, have proven to be valuable frameworks for companies looking to build or strengthen their holistic risk management strategies.

With many corporate travelers hitting the road again, companies should focus on getting back to basics. They can start by reevaluating their travel policy and by bridging the gap between key stakeholders within their businesses, from HR and legal, to corporate security, communications, risk, and compliance.

In addition, companies should take into consideration environmental, social, and governance (ESG) initiatives as well as diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) needs when redrafting their travel and people risk management policies.

FCM's parent company, Flight Centre Travel Group, has announced an initiative empowering five employee

resource group coordinators across the Americas to provide support to equity-seeking groups within the organization. The initiative brings a voice to groups that are typically disadvantaged or discriminated against, often facing roadblocks to equal access in the workplace. This is a shining example of how companies can work to support different marginalized groups within their organization.

Cyberthreats remain

With new digital threats on the horizon, companies should consider cyberthreats facing their traveling employees in 2023. Organizations like the Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) in the United States, l'Agence nationale de la sécurité des systèmes d'information (ANSSI) in France, and the Australian Cyber Security Centre (ACSC) have all created useful tools to help companies better protect their people from malicious cyberattacks.

Double down on partnerships

2023 is the year that companies of all shapes and sizes will need to double down on partnerships that broaden their knowledge of travel and people risk management trends.

For example, FCM has worked closely with both public-private partnerships like the Overseas Security & Advisory Council (OSAC) in the United States, as well as with a diverse array of risk management companies including Crisis24 and Sherpa. Together, we track everything from 2023's new ETIAS Visa Waiver rollout, to health, transportation, environmental, geopolitical and ever-changing COVID-19 border and movement restrictions.

By the end of 2022, FCM helped its customers track nearly 1,300 travel alerts related to COVID-19 border and movement restrictions, and just under 15,000 alerts covering a range of categories from transportation-related incidents to severe weather phenomena. In 2023, FCM expects those numbers to remain the same as entry/exit requirements continue to evolve in the wake of new COVID-19 variants and as countries become less dependent on "zero-COVID" policies.

And while all of this may seem like a large obstacle, it's important to have a trustworthy travel partner by your side to help tackle each new challenge along the way. A partner with 24/7 travel assistance capabilities, intuitive products, and years of travel and risk management experience that aligns with your company's needs is essential to helping make 2023 the safest, smoothest, and most efficient year to date.

Is keeping your travellers
safe your top priority?
Ours too.

Let's talk >