Trump ban deters travellers to US 'beyond Middle East'

President Donald Trump's ban on nationals from seven mainly Muslim countries entering the USA appears to be deterring travellers from other countries around the world too, according to data from ForwardKeys.

Findings from the travel intelligence analyst show that after Mr Trump's initial travel ban *(imposed on 27 January)* net bookings issued from Iraq, Syria, Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan and Yemen between 28 January and 4 February were down 80% on the same period last year.

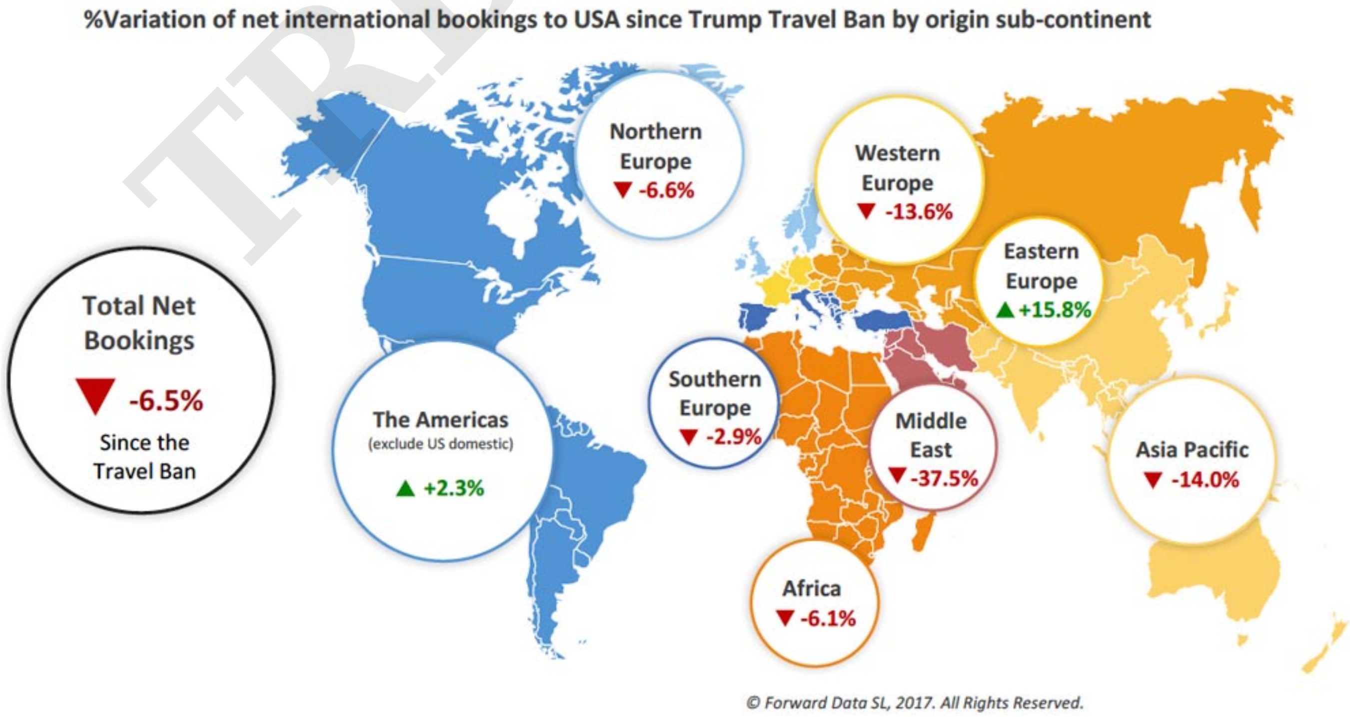
More interestingly, ForwardKeys also looked at wider international trends in bookings to the US and discovered a 6.5% negative variation compared with the equivalent eight-day period the year before.

"It suggests the turmoil over his ruling is putting off people travelling to the US from many regions of the world, beyond the Middle East," says ForwardKeys. *[It is important to note that the analysis excludes China and Hong Kong because of the seasonal effect due to the timing of Chinese New Year.]*

BOOKINGS DOWN FROM EUROPE

Over the aforementioned eight-day period, bookings from Northern Europe were down 6.6%; from Western Europe -13.6% and from Southern Europe -2.9%. Travel from the Middle East was down 37.5% and from Asia Pacific -14%.

"If one analyses total outbound bookings from each of those regions to provide a benchmark, in every case the USA has lost market share," adds ForwardKeys.



Contrary to this trend, bookings from Central & Eastern Europe and The Americas were up 15.8% and 2.3% respectively.

“However, when one looks again at outbound travel from those two regions of the world, total travel was up substantially; +12% from Central/Eastern Europe and +4.8% from the Americas, so the increases in travel to the USA look less impressive in this context,” clarifies ForwardKeys.

DOWN -38% IN MID-EAST

For the Middle East as a whole – beyond the banned countries – during the last year bookings to the USA were already down 8.8%, but bookings issued from 28 January to 4 February fell a much more dramatic 38%.

“The eight-day period coinciding with the travel ban is the first time since before the presidential election in early November that there has been a consistently long run of negative variations compared with the equivalent period the year before,” concludes ForwardKeys. “For reference, inbound bookings to the USA for the whole of the past year were down 0.4%.”

Olivier Jager, CEO, ForwardKeys, said: “The data forces a compelling conclusion that Donald Trump’s travel ban immediately caused a significant drop in bookings to the USA and an immediate impact on future travel.

“As inbound travel is an export industry *(it earns foreign currency)*, this is not good news for the US economy. However, one must bear in mind that this is just an eight-day snapshot from when the ban was put in place and we will continue to monitor what happens as the political situation develops.”