

# Presence of safety measures affects people's trust in the safety of tourist destinations

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According to the asymmetry principle of trust, information on negative events decreases trust to a much higher extent than information on positive events increases trust. A new study in the journal *Risk Analysis* examined whether this notion holds true with respect to trust in the safety of tourist destinations. Results show that proper safety measures have at least the same or higher impact on trust in the perceived safety of a tourist destination than the absence of such measures has on distrust.

Claudia Eitzinger and Peter M. Wiedemann questioned 640 participants through an online survey about their judgments regarding to what extent certain safety measures or conditions built up trust in the perceived safety of a destination in case of their provision and decrease trust in case of their absence.

These measures included whether one could be reached by phone in remote areas, whether detailed information on dangerous weather conditions is provided, if alcohol testing is present on ski slopes, and if there had been a major catastrophe in the past five years.

The presence of such safety-related measures and conditions had a significantly higher impact on trust than the absence of such measures and conditions had on distrust.

"The fact that the implementation of proper safety measures increases trust to the same or higher extent that the absence of such measures increases distrust reveals that a destination can only benefit from the

implementation of proper safety measures," the authors conclude.  
"Considering past research, this is a rather unexpected finding since it suggests symmetry rather than an asymmetry of trust in the context of voluntary tourism risks. In addition, it also contradicts common sense beliefs."

Source: Wiley

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