

# EUROPEAN TOURISM: SLOW BUT STEADY GROWTH



Although the current situation of tourism in Europe appears to be below historical average, stalled by the lack of proper joint efforts and infrastructure to facilitate sector growth, the future looks better because average consumers begin to feel more confident about their assets, in the afterglow of global financial crisis.

Tourism is greatly connected to macroeconomics and the current state of the economic landscape as a whole. Although individual markets and trends can definitely still be tracked on regional and national basis, ultimately the global situation is what really affects the entire industry, becoming a part of a true network, a chain reaction perhaps, that goes from the level of stability on a financial level of the single individual to influence the health of the entire system and vice versa, in a sort of symbiotic circle.

**In Europe, such as throughout the entire world, tourism is slowly, but steadily growing back to the magnitude of the olden days according to current trends**, which however, portray a very slow rate of overall expansion (the expansion rate is consistent throughout all areas, but not all areas are experiencing the same growth rate on a uniform level).

## **The Most Popular Destinations: Growth Trends and Tourist Budgets**

The Quarterly Report about European Tourism 2013 by European Travel Commission points out an increase in popularity for emerging destinations such as Iceland, Slovakia, Croatia, Poland, Hungary, Latvia and Montenegro, that have enjoyed a boost in the number of their foreign visitors, as opposed to the declining trends showcased by places such as Italy and, more dramatically, Cyprus.

On the other hand, United Kingdom, Germany, Spain, Ireland and France remain favorite destinations welcoming tourists from all over the world.

These trends are likely surfacing as the product of the tighter travel budget per tourist, who decides to travel to these less established, newly-developing touristic markets. There is a specific report model addressing these particular trends, dubbed "Tourism Decision Metrics" (also known, in short, as TDM). This particular report is updated in detail three times a year, accurately portraying the ongoing relationship between the current state of tourism growth and the overall situation of the wider economic landscape, that will invariably affect the budget (and therefore, the plans and decisions) that tourists can afford, time after time.

## **Traveling Trends and Choices of Travelers**

Intra-European tourism looks relatively healthy, although the market still strongly relies on the outbound flow from the USA, and China (constantly increasing). The flow of travelers coming from Japan has dramatically waned, as a direct consequence of the situation of economical struggle the country is currently facing.

Not unlike what we could observe within the European tourism market, the current global scene is experiencing a period of extremely slow expansion, although characterized by a rather steady process of growth.

According to airline traffic trends, the general passenger demand is also slower when compared to a few years ago. Regions like the Middle East are showcasing consistent development because of the current seat capacity improvements, able to accommodate more and more passengers for local and transit flights alike.

On the other side of the world, South America is also showcasing a similarly steady development, unlike Asia, which is currently experiencing a lower demand than in the past years.

In line with the trend of very slow expansion, there is a slow, but robust increase rate dominating the entire worldwide scene, although North America can currently be placed at the very bottom of this process, showcasing barely a 1% growth rate, very little when compared to the areas mentioned before, which are experiencing growth rates ranging from 6% to 15% (with the Middle East leading, as previously explained).

- Source:

Information sourced from the European Travel Commission's quarterly report (Q2 / 2013) produced by Oxford (UK) based economics company Tourism Economics. For more information and details, please refer to [etc-corporate.org](http://etc-corporate.org) and [tourmis.info](http://tourmis.info).

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