

US AND RUSSIAN TRAVELERS PREFER EUROPE



Tourism data published by Eurostat on the World Tourism Day showed that one-third of all of the non-European Union tourism nights was accounted for by the US and Russia in the European Union (EU). Further, the top extra-European Union destinations for EU tourists were the US and Turkey.

Tourism is an internal affair, as far as EU is concerned, as **the residents themselves spent about 90 percent of the tourism nights in the European Union.** In 2014, non-EU visitors spent in excess of 300 million nights in the tourist accommodation in the EU. The distribution among top non-EU visitors is as follows:

United States of America - 17.8 percent

Russia - 14.9 percent

China - 5 percent

Japan - 3.7 percent

Brazil - 2.5 percent

This shows that the visitors from the US and Russia were the main non-EU tourists and those from China, Japan and Brazil spent less than 5 percent of the total nights spent by non-EU visitors.

Tourism in the European Union has grown over the last decade. Extra-EU tourism increased by 75 percent in the EU in 2014 compared to 2005. This can be attributed to the phenomenal growth in tourism nights of 282 percent, 248 percent and 215 percent recorded by travelers from China, Russia and Brazil, respectively. While the growth remained moderate at 13 percent in the case of the US tourists, contribution from Japanese visitors declined by 11 percent.

In 2014, the three top extra-EU travel destinations as far as EU residents were concerned was the US, Turkey and Switzerland. The tourism nights spent by EU residents in these destinations were 14.1 percent, 11.6 percent and 4.9 percent, respectively, of the total. Travel pattern, inbound and outbound, was shaped by factors such as geographical location, historical and cultural importance and linguistic concerns.

For non-EU tourists, Italy was the most favorite destination. Italy accounted for 17.5 percent of all of the nights spent by non-EU visitors. Italy was followed by the UK (13.9 percent), Spain (13.5 percent), and France (12.2 percent).

The percentage of total tourism nights spent by travelers from different countries in the member states they visited are as follows:

US: the UK (23.6 percent), Italy (20.6 percent) and France (14.8 percent).

China: Italy (21.4 percent), the UK (21 percent) and France (17.6 percent).

Russia: Spain (18.4 percent), Greece (15.2 percent) and Italy (13.9 percent).

Japan: Italy (21.5 percent) and France (21.2 percent).

Brazil: Italy (23.2 percent), Portugal (17.9 percent), the UK (16.4 percent) and Spain (15.4 percent).

Non-EU tourists were important as far as Cyprus was concerned because they accounted for 40.3 percent of all the nights spent in accommodations. Cyprus was followed by Latvia

(31.2 percent), Bulgaria (26.9 percent), Lithuania (24.2 percent) and Greece (24 percent). On the other hand, the share was less than 10 percent in the case of Poland (5.7 percent), Romania (6.7 percent), the Netherlands (6.8 percent), Germany (8.1 percent), Slovakia (8.6 percent), Belgium (9.8 percent) and France (9.9 percent).

The shares of the visitors from the US, Russia, China, Japan and Brazil in terms of tourism activity in the EU was very different from one EU Member State to the other.

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