

# EUROPE REJOICES OVER POSITIVE NUMBER OF TOURISTS



The number of tourists in the world increased substantially in 2017, especially in southern and Mediterranean Europe.

France, United States, Spain ... or China: these are the countries most popular among travelers last year. It is in any case the top quartet of destinations that received the most tourists in 2016, the basis of work of the latest barometer of the World Tourism Organization.

**In general, the UNWTO observes a 7% increase in tourists worldwide – that is, spending at least one night at the destination, for leisure (53%), but also for reasons of health, religion (27%) or business (13%).** That is 1.3 billion people. The reasons of the global growth is explained by the UNWTO by the economic recovery and the strong demand of many traditional and emerging source markets.

## Europe Takes the Lead

Europe, in particular the southern Mediterranean, acts as a driving force (+ 8%). "Everything indicates that France remains the world's leading destination for tourism," said UNWTO Markets Officer John Kester, noting that the final data would be published in the spring.

"We expect Spain to become the second largest destination in the world," added UNWTO Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili. "The trend is clearly positive after two weak years," he explained.

## North Africa and the Middle East

After Europe, there comes North Africa and the Middle East. Egypt, Tunisia, Israel, Morocco, Bahrain, Jordan, Lebanon, Oman and Dubai show sustained growth, despite – in some destinations – a sharp decline in previous years due to terrorist attacks.

## Fewer Tourists in USA

"In North America (+ 2%), the good results of Mexico and Canada contrast with the decline of the United States, the main destination of the region," says the UNWTO, without revealing precise figures for the moment.

The Asia-Pacific region saw the number of visitors increase by 6%, while the Americas recorded the

lowest growth (+ 3%), despite "clear signs of recovery" in Central America and the Caribbean since the passage of cyclones Irma and Maria.

**2017 is marked by a strong recovery in international tourism spending by Brazilians (+ 33%) and Russians (+ 27%).** In Asia, it is the Chinese who spend the most, and in the Americas, it is the travelers coming from the United States. In Europe, it is the German holidaymakers who travel the most beyond their borders and spend the most.

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