

2018 TRENDS OF THE EU TOURISM



The European Tourism Commission recently presented its annual report titled “European tourism – trends and prospects for 2018”. In general, there was a 7% increase in international tourists for EU tourism, primarily due to the increase in the southern and Mediterranean destinations.

The main tourist destinations grew this year, and the growth figure in some areas even doubled. This mainly concerns southern destinations, of which **the first place in terms of growth was taken by Turkey**. The country made significant adjustments in the distribution of tourist traffic.

Strong growth across the continent

Overall, 32 out of 34 European destinations showed growth, with the first four countries showing double increase figures. Turkey’s increase in tourist traffic amounted to 23%. The cause of this phenomenon is apparently the practical elimination of security problems, as well as the fall of the Turkish lira. This made the country accessible and attractive to tourists. The return of tourists to Turkey contributed to the fall of one of the ‘exceptions’ of this summer – Spain, where the tourist flow showed a decrease in demand by 0.1%.

Greece also showed a double-digit increase of 19%, mainly due to “constant seasonal attractiveness”. They were followed by Malta (+16%). Here the main reason is seen in the fact that its capital Valletta was the designated cultural capital of Europe for the year. The growth of the tourist flow to Serbia by 15% is explained by the “visa-free policy for Chinese travelers”, as well as the significant improvement in the situation with air transportation in this country.

Foreign markets important for EU tourism

At the same time, the tourist flow to Europe is largely generated by foreign markets. For example, Iceland, which showed a growth of 6%. This was gained mainly due to the growth of tourists from the United States and Russia, which offset the decline in the demand from Europeans.

In addition, tourists from the USA are actively travelling in Europe. Almost all European countries have noted an increase in tourist traffic from this market. According to forecasts, by the end of 2018, American tourists will “grow” in the Old World by 8%. China also plays a significant role, primarily in the countries of Southern Europe and the Balkans. In particular, in Turkey, there was an increase of 87% of inflow from China. And due to the new flight connections, the number of Chinese tourists in Serbia increased by 104%, in Montenegro by 64% and in Croatia by 41%.

Strong growth was also recorded from Russia, particularly in Malta (+40%), Iceland (+26%), Turkey (+26%) and Romania. **This inflow of Russians to Europe is expected to increase by 5% per year on average by 2022**. 21 countries showed growth of tourism from Canada, mainly Cyprus (+68%) and Greece (+64%).

Inflow from Asian countries in 2018, Japan and India, also resulted in a growth year for EU tourism. 20 out of 30 destinations reported growth from Japan, with, once again, Turkey showing the strongest arrivals (+76%), along with the Baltic countries. Meanwhile, Indian inflow increased in all destinations. Montenegro (+360%), Turkey (+92%), Latvia (+74%) and Spain (+68%) showed the

fastest growth of influx from this source market.

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