

# ESTONIA LOSING FOREIGN TOURISTS WITH FINNS INCREASINGLY 'IRRITATED'



In October of this year, the total number of tourists staying in Estonian hotels increased by 1% compared to the same month last year. At the same time, the number of foreign tourists has decreased, while the number of local tourists has increased.

This data was reported by the Department of Statistics, according to which 274,000 tourists stayed at Estonian accommodation facilities in October. Out of this, 163,000 were foreigners. **This is 2% less than in the same month last year.** Over 60% of foreign tourists came from Finland, Russia and Latvia – 98,600. The number of domestic tourists increased by 6% to 111,000 people.

## Finns travelling less

However, in October the number of Finns travelling to Estonia decreased by 9% compared to the same month last year. Moreover, sanatoriums and spa centers in Pärnu registered a fall of 10% in terms of inflow from Finland in the last two years.

Finnish newspaper Ilta-Sanomat made a survey on the view of Finnish people of Estonia and Estonians as a whole. Unfortunately, it's not clear enough how the survey was provided. Nevertheless, most of the respondents were critical. Today, Estonia is too expensive for them.

The language barrier also contributes to the negative approach, despite both being very close. "No one wants to speak Finnish," one of the readers said, but acknowledged that young Estonians want to speak, but do not know Finnish.

In addition to the "arrogance", the Estonian service was called "arrogant", "repulsive" and "inhospitable". One of the respondents said that "compared to them, even Finns are polite people.". Many felt that such a service culture remained in Estonia from the times of the USSR.

Moreover, Finnish people, according to the paper, consider Latvia as the cheaper and better option for travelling. "Service in restaurants is arrogant, overpriced, it is not surprising that tourists have disappeared", "Estonia has destroyed its tourism market itself. Absurd prices, unfriendly service" some people said.

**Regarding security in the country, it was pointed out that foreign tourists often become victims of thefts, even when they are sober.** According to the respondents, crime flourishes in Estonia and it is a dangerous country with drug dealers walking in the streets and taxi drivers looking to exploit the foreign tourists. However, there were also positive comments and some respondents said that Estonia is a very interesting destination, especially Tallinn.

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