

TURKEY: NUMBER OF FOREIGN TOURISTS WENT UP IN 2018



Nearly 40 million foreign tourists visited Turkey in 2018, an increase of 21.84% compared to 2017, confirming a recovery after a black period for the sector, according to figures published by the Ministry of Tourism.

"Tourism in Turkey continues to rise and break the records of recent years," the ministry said.

Turkey welcomed a total of just over 46 million visitors in 2018, including 39.49 million foreign tourists and 6.62 million Turks living abroad.

This number even exceeds that of 2015, the year in which 42 million visitors came to Turkey, before an overall drop of 24.6% recorded in 2016.

The tourism sector was heavily affected by the country's political and security situation in 2015 and 2016, years marked in particular by a series of bloody attacks linked to jihadists of the Islamic State group and the Kurdish rebellion, in addition to an attempted coup in the summer of 2016. In that year, tourism revenues fell by almost 30%, before recovering by almost 20% in 2017.

In 2018, they increased again by 12.3% compared to 2017, reaching 29.5 billion dollars, announced by the National Statistics Office (Tüik). **The majority of foreign tourists in 2018 came from Russia (5.9 million visitors, an increase of 26.49% compared to 2017), Germany (4.5 million, +25.88) and Bulgaria (2.4 million, +28.82),** according to Ministry figures.

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