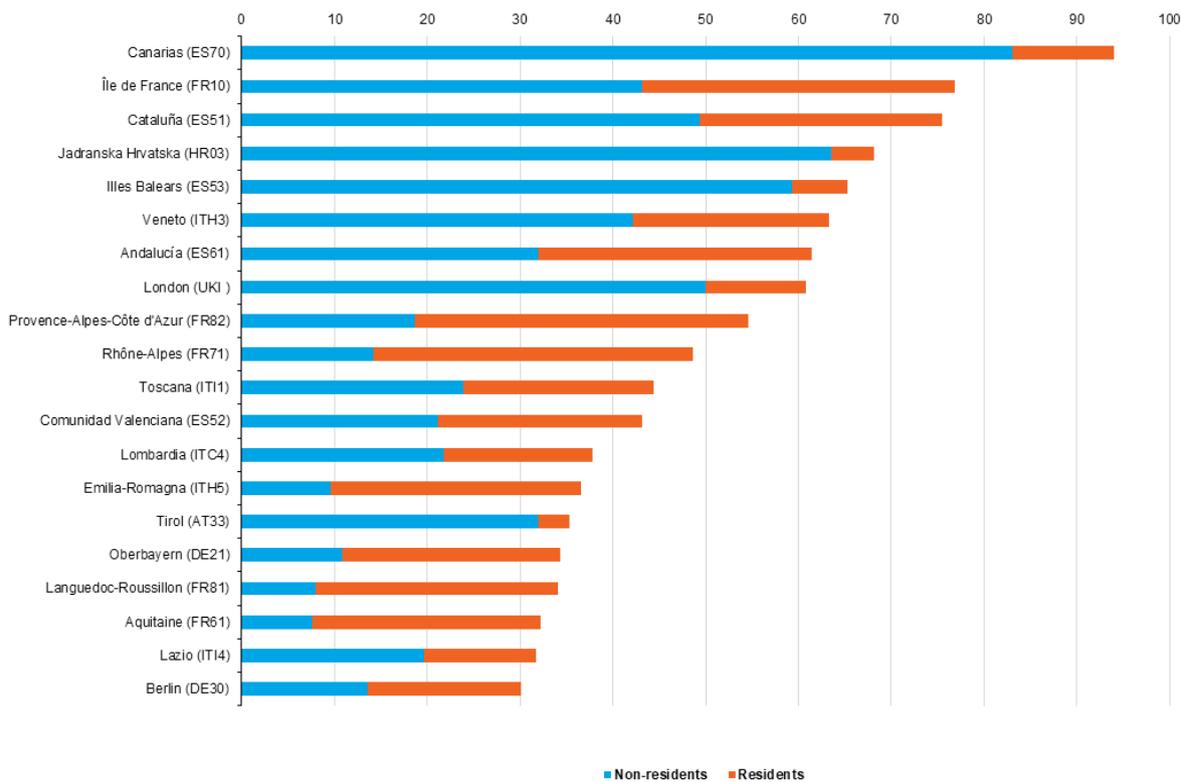


# Tourism: new trends, challenges and solutions



## Introduction

Europe has always been the most popular place to travel to and this attractiveness has made a lot of European cities and regions prosperous and proud of their cultural heritage and beautiful landscapes.

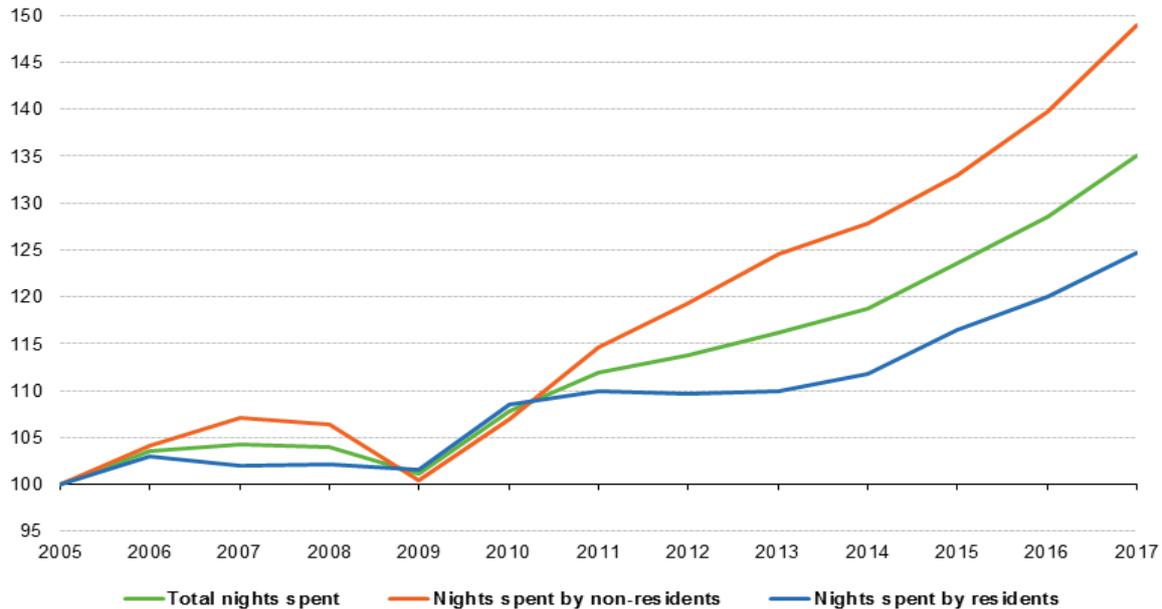


Note: London (UK1): NUTS level 1. Mayotte (FRA5): not available. The United Kingdom: 2012. Ireland and Greece: estimates.  
Source: Eurostat (online data code: tour\_occ\_nin2)

Until very recently, every rise in the number of visitors was celebrated as a confirmation that Europe remains the world's No 1 tourism destination.

**Trends in nights spent at EU-28 tourist accommodation establishments, EU-28, 2005-2017**

(index 2005=100)



Note: EU-28 aggregate estimated for the purpose of this publication, using the latest available data for the EU Member States. Because of methodological improvements for some Member States data from 2012 onwards are not entirely comparable with previous years (this can affect the estimation of the EU-28 aggregate).

Source: Eurostat (online data code: tour\_occ\_ninat)



Today, tourism is one of the fastest growing industries globally. In the EU, it is responsible for about 10% of the GDP and 12 million work places across the Union. Created locally, often by small and medium enterprises, these jobs are vital for the well-being of many families and local communities.

**The EU tourism industry**

Tourism has a wide-ranging impact on growth, employment and social development in the EU

- **12 million** people are employed in the sector
- Inbound tourism contributes **€356 billion** in annual revenue to the European economy

The European Commission supports tourism businesses in the EU by providing:

- Initiatives to improve employee skills
- Guidance on going digital
- Tools to optimise daily management

Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs

Tourism also co-creates European identity, promotes EU values, products and services and contributes to international stability.



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In the recent few years, the new challenges have emerged. Growing affordability of travel – due mainly to a rapid expansion of low-cost carriers – coupled with the emergence of online platforms made travelling more democratic on one hand side and set the destinations under massive strain on another. After all, welcoming over half a billion tourists, most of them over the summer months, exerts significant pressure on local communities' infrastructure, resources and carrying capacity. This has

led some most popular European destinations to take measures to protect their landscapes, monuments and local population.

This debate will explore the issue of sustainability of tourism and its impact on local and regional communities. To set the scene, we invited an external guest coming from an international charity that works in partnership with businesses and governments so that tourism brings greater benefits for people and the environment. The European Commission, the Finnish Presidency, the CoR and the NECSTouR will also share their views. Finally, the regional government representatives will highlight their policy and practice examples inviting the NAT members to share their ideas, discuss problems and propose solutions how to deal with environmental and societal impacts caused by accommodation, activities and transport to and from the destination.



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## APPENDIX 1

### Strain on resources

#### Case of water

Tourism needs and consumes huge quantities of freshwater to assure quality accommodation (toilets and showers, kitchens and laundry; swimming pools, spas and saunas; cooling; and the irrigation of gardens) and activities such as golf and skiing (where snowmaking is involved). Covering one hectare of a slope with artificial snow may require up to 1 million litres of water; similar amounts are needed to maintain an 18-hole golf course in Southern Europe.

On average, a tourist consumes 3-4 times more water than a local resident, using between 100 and 200 litres per day, according to the European Environment Agency. This has implications for water-scarce destinations in the Mediterranean region. Overall 17% of the EU territory and 11% of its population is considered to be affected by water scarcity.



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#### Waste and littering:

The European Environment Agency estimates that tourists produce 2 to 4 times (up to 14 times in Sardinia) more solid waste more than local residents do. This affects disproportionately small touristic islands with limited land mass to locate landfills and insufficient waste treatment infrastructure.



Tourists are also responsible for littering walking trails, monuments and natural landscapes. The Commission estimates the cost across EU for coastal and beach cleaning at almost EUR 630 million per year.

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#### Sewage

European shores are under threat because of the water pollution, affecting fauna and flora and posing a risk to human health. Untreated municipal sewage discharged directly to the sea, as well as sewage released by large cruise ships can severely affect the coast. Under the international law, untreated wastewater can be dumped 12 nautical miles offshore and treated sewage just three nautical miles leading to serious consequences especially in more popular and smaller basins.

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## **Air pollution**

Tourists in Europe travel predominantly using modes of transport that generate a significant amount of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions: by plane and by car. In the past decade, growth was especially high in the low-cost segment and Europe is the region where low-cost airlines are the most active. In the EU, cars remain the main means of transport for 63% of all trips undertaken by EU residents in 2017. Locally, the percentages can be higher, as for instances in the Alps where cars are used for over 84% of holiday travel causing high carbon dioxide emissions and noise pollution.

This summer, it was also revealed that large cruise ships emit 10 times more cancer-causing gases in Europe than all of the continent's passenger vehicles combined. Barcelona, Palma Mallorca and Venice were the worst affected by sulphur dioxide emissions.

## APPENDIX 2

### Strain on destinations: overtourism in practice

#### VENICE



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#### Situation:

- A city of 260 000 inhabitants, built on more than 100 small islands in a lagoon in the Adriatic Sea
- Due to tourism pressure city's population has halved over 30 years
- Of 20 million people who come to Venice each year, only half sleep there

#### Policy solutions tested locally:

- New tax on day-trippers
  - Plans to relocate the city's cruise ship terminal
- 

#### BRUGES



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#### Situation:

- A city of 118 000 inhabitants visited last year by 8.3 million visitors
- 6 million spent an average 3 hours in the city

#### Policy solutions tested locally:

- a cap of 2 ships at a time for cruisers docked in the city's port (down from 5)
  - cruise ship companies asked to dock during weekdays instead of over the weekend
  - advertising campaigns in Brussels and Paris revoked to decrease the number of day-trippers
  - ban on new hotels and prohibition to rent houses in the historic city centre as holiday homes.
-

## DUBROVNIK



### **Situation:**

- Only 1557 people lived in the Old Town in 2017, down from 5000 in 1991
- In the same year, the city was visited by 742 000 passengers (500x the local population) on 538 ships
- These tourists on average spent a few hours in town

### **Policy solutions tested locally:**

- cap on cruisers
- cap on tourists entering the Old Town (4000 a day)
- promotion of the hinterland and encouragement to leave the city