



ASSOCIATION OF FINNISH TRAVEL AGENTS

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TRAVEL PACKAGE SALES SEE CLEAR UPTICK - TOP 10 DESTINATIONS 2018
Greece almost on a par with Spain

Travel package sales have been increasing for two years in a row. Last year 11.8 percent more packages were sold than in 2017, amounting to some 875,000 trips. European countries continue to be the most appealing destinations to travelers from Finland. European destinations accounted for more than 78 percent of package travel flights. Some 685,000 European trips were made, an increase of 8.9 percent from the previous year.

Despite a four-percent drop in popularity, Spain continues to be the number one **European** destination with almost 254,000 trips taken there in 2018 (more than 37 percent of the region's trips). More than 208,000 of these were to the Canary Islands. Another country to climb the charts in Europe is Greece, where people traveled to from Finland 20 percent more often than in 2017. Trips to Greece numbered at almost 233,000 (almost tied with Spain at 34 percent of all European trips). Other significant growth destinations were Italy and Croatia at some 29,000 trips each as well as Portugal, where more than 27,000 trips were made in 2018. The number of passengers to Italy grew by more than 17 percent, Croatia's popularity grew by 10 percent and Portugal saw an eight-percent uptick.

The gradual calming down of the political turmoil in **the Middle East and Northern Africa** is starting to show in customers' travel plans. Countries such as Egypt, Tunisia, and Morocco are once again on the itineraries of travelers from Finland. In 2018 trips to the region grew by some 65 percent from the previous year. Turkey remains the most popular destination in the region; some 67,000 package trips (nearly 70 percent of all packages to the region) were taken there last year, some 79 percent more than in 2017. The second most popular destination in this part of the world was the United Arab Emirates, once again, with more than 16,000 visitors in over 16-percent increase. More than 95,000 travel packages to **Asian regions and beyond** were bought in 2018; 46 percent of these were to Thailand.

Travelers from Finland continue to take long cruises as in previous years, even though flight-based cruises dipped in popularity by just over 22 percent. Cruise destinations are many and varied¹, with locations in the Mediterranean Sea and the Caribbean being the most visited. About 6,500 travelers from Finland took cruises to European destinations last year, and more than 2,200 travelers went on cruises to Asian locations. It is worth noting that these figures have been supplied by the tour operators themselves, and do not include single travelers on self-managed cruises or cruises that lack air travel services. It is still clear from the trend that cruises have become a part of the lives of travelers from Finland.

¹ Europe, the Mediterranean, the Baltic Sea, the Norwegian coast, the North Atlantic (Europe) – 6506 travelers
North America, Alaska, Hawaii, California, and Mexico's Pacific Ocean coast, North Atlantic (America) – 631 travelers
The Caribbean and the Bahamas, South America, Antarctica, the Panama Canal, and Central America – 983 travelers
Africa, Middle East, Indian Ocean, Southeast Asia, East Asia – 546 travelers
Oceania and Pacific Ocean - 82 travelers

Top 10 most visited countries in 2018

	2018	2017	
1.	Spain	(1.)	253,669
2.	Greece	(2.)	232,626
3.	Turkey	(4.)	66,644
4.	Thailand	(3.)	44,319
5.	Italy	(7.)	29,198
6.	Croatia	(5.)	28,719
7.	Portugal	(6.)	27,338
8.	Bulgaria	(8.)	19,178
9.	Cyprus	(9.)	17,763
10.	UAE	(10.)	16,484

Note on statistics

AFTA and its predecessor the Finnish Tourism Association (SMY) have documented travel package statistics since 1965. The travel industry has changed significantly since those days. Travel packages have developed and customers now purchase additional services such as flights with hotels through travel agents or the internet. Travelers also tailor their own trips more often than before. After legislation passed in July, 2018 these trips are also more often classifiable as travel packages. Tracking them can be challenging, however, and the figures do not always appear in these statistics.

Most of the passenger quantities are based on sales of serially produced travel packages. For this reason popular European destination are not represented in proportion.

Additional information:

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Attachments :

- toteutuneet lentäen tehdyt vapaa-ajan matkapaketit vuosina 2017 ja 2018

- matkanjärjestäjien markkinaosuudet matkustajamäärien ja liikevaihdon mukaan vuosina 2017 ja 2018