



PRESS RELEASE

15 Jan, 2020

ASSOCIATION OF FINNISH TRAVEL INDUSTRY

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Package travel sales still climbing

GREECE OVERTAKES SPAIN AS MOST POPULAR DESTINATION

Package trip sales continue to gently grow. In 2019, a total of 882,000 package trips were sold, 0.6 percent more than a year before. For the first time in Association's history, package trips to Greece outsold packages to Spanish destinations. Overall, European countries continue to be the most appealing destinations to travelers from Finland. European destinations accounted for about 78 percent of air based package holidays¹. Some 683,500 European trips were made, a decrease of 0.2 percent from the previous year.

As mentioned, the most dramatic change in the **European region** was the continued rise of Greece as a destination, supplanting Spain as the most popular choice. Almost 240,000 people from Finland traveled to Greece (about 35 percent of the region's trips), while Spain was in second place with 233,000 Finnish trips. The Canary Islands remain the most popular Spanish location, with some 193,000 trips made there. Other significant destinations in the region are Italy (33,000 trips), Croatia (over 25,000 trips), and Portugal (about 24,500 trips). Some easing of political tensions in **the Middle-East and Northern Africa** has been visible in trips to the region, which grew by 17 percent to 112,000 trips. Turkey was the region's favorite once more with almost 70,000 visitors — about 62 percent of all travel to the region. Egypt was the choice of almost 16,000 Finns in 2019; that is three times more than a year previously, making it the fastest growing destination in the area. The third most popular target country was the United Arab Emirates, where some 15,000 people traveled from Finland in 2019. The remainder of the trips, some 86,000 in 2019, were made to **Asian regions and beyond**. Some 44 percent of this, that is 38,000 trips, were to Thailand. More than 10,000 trips were made to Cabo Verde, 14 percent more than in 2018.

Long cruises are still popular among travelers from Finland, with many destinations. The most favored spots in Europe included the Mediterranean and Baltic Seas, and coastal Norway. Long-distance destinations were again topped by the Caribbean islands, followed closely by the US states of Alaska and Hawai'i. Statistics show that some 5,100 people from Finland took European cruises, and over 3,000 visited faraway destinations. It is worth mentioning, however, that the figures above are provided by tour operators and do not count trips booked by travelers independently.

¹ Herein a travel package is defined as a travel plan ensemble abroad coordinated by a tour operator, lasting for at least 2 days and including at least the relevant flights and accommodations. The travel package concept defined by the Package Travel Act is broader than the one used here. The statistics do not, therefore, include all those trip types that are included in the Act. Figures also do not include services for accommodations and transportation alone.



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Top 10 list for 2019

2019 order	2018 order	Trips taken in 2019
1. Greece	(2.)	239,448
2. Spain	(1.)	233,054
3. Turkey	(3.)	69,641
4. Thailand	(4.)	37,700
5. Italy	(5.)	32,744
6. Croatia	(6.)	25,197
7. Portugal	(7.)	24,533
8. Cyprus	(8.)	18,786
9. Egypt	(-)	15,864
10. Bulgaria	(10.)	15,320

On the statistics

SMAL and its predecessor SMY have gathered statistics on package trips since 1965. The travel industry has changed considerably since those times. Package deals have changed their form over the years and traditional travel packs are more and more frequently joined by flight+hotel or similar arrangements that are booked online. These are also considered travel packages. Travelers increasingly also tailor their own trips according to their own desires. These trips are now more often included in the statistics on travel packages as well, since 2018 legislation on travel packages added other travel types to the statistics as well.

A majority of the figures are based on the sales of travel packages that are produced serially. For this reason popular European city destinations, for instance, are not represented in the correct proportion in the statistics.

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Attachments: - leisure holiday package flights in 2018 and 2019
- travel agency market shares according to number of passengers and turnover in 2018 and 2019