



**ASSOCIATION OF FINNISH TRAVEL AGENTS**

Vilhonkatu 4 B  
00100 HELSINKI

**Package holiday sales soar**

**EUROPE GAINS GROUND – TOP 10 DESTINATIONS 2017**

After several years of trading water, travel agents' package holiday sales took an upward turn in 2017. Statistics from the Association of Finnish Travel Agents (SMAL/AFTA) shows that some 783,400 package holidays with flights were bought in Finland last year, 7.7 percent more than in 2016. Europe continues to gain popularity among Finnish travelers, with more than 80 percent of sold air travel packages having European destinations. Overall, some 630,000 trips to European countries were made last year, more than 12 percent more than in 2016.

Enduring favorites among European destinations include Spain (more than 42 percent of Europe's packages) and Greece, sales to both of which improved. A total of some 265,000 trips were made to Spain, an uptick of 12 percent. Most of these – 220,000 trips – were to the Canary Islands. Greece also continued to hold on to its popularity among travelers in 2017, with more than 194,000 travel packages bought to Greek locations – up by 12 percent from the previous year. Croatia and Portugal – at 26,000 and 25,000 trips respectively – improved their sales notably, Croatian trips rising 25 percent and Portuguese ones by more than 32 percent. The total number of journeys made to the Middle East and Northern Africa fell by 25 percent, with no improvement yet in sight even as regional and global politics develop. Turkey held on to its popularity as a holiday destination, representing 64 percent of the region's trips at some 37,000 trips (38 percent fewer than in 2016). The second most popular location in this region was the UAE, which 9 percent more people (at 14,000 travelers) visited. Long-distance locations drew some 96,000 travel packages in 2017, of which upwards of 49 percent were for Thailand.

Boat cruises were also represented as a popular mode of travel in areas such as the Mediterranean Sea and the Caribbean. Cruises in European waters held about 7,400 Finnish travelers and some 4,000 Finns were counted in long-distance locations. It is worth mentioning that these figures come from tour operators, and do not count individual personal trips booked by travelers alone. However, Finns continue to staunchly enjoy cruise ship and boat trips abroad.

**Top 10 list for 2017**

Placement 2017		Placement 2016
1.	Spain	264,983 (1.)
2.	Greece	193,828 (2.)
3.	Thailand	46,615 (4.)
4.	Turkey	37,247 (3.)
5.	Croatia	26,184 (6.)

6.	Portugal	25,281	(7.)
7.	Italy	24,901	(5.)
8.	Bulgaria	15,667	(11.)
9.	Cyprus	14,934	(8.)
10.	UAE	14,213	(9.)

**On the statistics**

SMAL/AFTA and its predecessor SMY have gathered statistics on package trips since as early as 1965. The travel industry has changed considerably since those times. Package deals have changed their form over the years and traditional travel holidays are more and more frequently joined by flight+hotel or similar arrangements that are ordered online. These are also considered travel packages. Travelers increasingly also tailor their own trips according to their own desires. These trips are not included in the statistics on travel packages as yet. This will change by the year 2018 at latest, when new legislation on travel packages will add other travel types to the statistics as well.

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

**Additional information:**

Ms. Heli Mäki-Fränti, Managing Director, SMAL/AFTA, phone +358 9 4133 3550,  
+358 40 575 1303

**Attachments:**

- Package holidays in 2016 and 2017
- Tour operators' market shares according to number of passengers and turnover in 2016 and 2017