



ASSOCIATION OF FINNISH TRAVEL INDUSTRY  
Vilhonkatu 4 B  
00100 HELSINKI

## Number of flight-based packages increased in 2022 - Greece once again the number one destination for Finns

The war that started in Europe in February 2022, the resulting energy and economic crisis and the still lingering Covid-19 pandemic are factors that, even as individual phenomena, would create challenges for the travel industry. However, the sector, which had been surviving the pandemic on the back of domestic tourism, was given a breather in spring 2022, when international travel from Finland to abroad and from abroad to Finland finally took off. Although sales were still lagging behind the pre-pandemic level at the end of the year, the situation in the travel industry was better than could have been expected given the challenges of the operating environment.

The Association of Finnish Travel Industry (SMAL) has compiled the traditional package travel<sup>1</sup> statistics, featuring flight-based packages from Finland to international destinations in 2022 sold by its member companies. Overall, just over 518,000 packages were sold which has an increase of 344 percent compared to 2021. However, there was still a 41 percent drop in package sales compared to the pre-pandemic period. In 2022, the combined turnover of tour operators organizing flight-based travel packages was EUR 494.7 million, an increase of 374 percent compared to the previous year. In 2019, the corresponding figure was EUR 755.6 million, a drop of 34,5 percent in 2022 compared to the pre-pandemic period.

The vast majority of the packages, around 86 percent, were to Europe. Among **European destinations**, Greece was the top destination with well over 184,000 packages, accounting for 41.5 percent of all travel packages to the region. The growth in travel to Greece compared to 2021 was 410 percent, although there was still a 23 percent drop compared to 2019. The second favorite destination for Finns was Spain, with just under 144,000 packages. This was just over 32 percent of all packages to Europe. The Canary Islands accounted for the majority of packages to Spain amounting over 120,000 trips. Compared to 2021, the growth in travel to Spain was 199 percent. However, compared to 2019, the drop in travel to Spain was still 38 percent.

Some 48,000 travel packages were made to destinations in the **Middle East and North Africa**, accounting for more than 9 percent of all statistical packages. Sales to Middle East and North Africa destinations increased by 542 percent compared to 2021, although there was still a decline of around 57 percent compared to the pre-pandemic period. Turkey is a long-standing favorite of Finnish travelers in the region, with around 39,000 package-holiday travelers going there in 2022, accounting for 81 percent of all sales in the region. Around 3,800 travelers went to the United Arab Emirates and around 3,200 to Egypt.

Some 25 000 travel packages were made to **long-haul destinations**, an increase of 432 percent compared to 2021. The drop in long-haul sales was still 71 percent of the 2019 package travel volume. Cabo Verde was the most popular long-haul destination, with around 8,800 trips, or over 35 percent of trips to the region. Travel to Thailand was only freed from all pandemic-related travel restrictions in the end of the year, meaning that only around 7,500 travel packages to the traditional number one destination for Finns could be made during 2022.

The popularity of long international cruises was growing well among Finns before the pandemic. In 2022, around 3 700 cruise packages were sold. The majority of these were European cruises. Cruise sales grew by 313 percent compared to 2021, although there was a drop of more than 53 percent compared to 2019. It is worth mentioning, however, that the figures above are provided by tour operators and do not count trips booked by travelers directly with the cruise companies.

<sup>1</sup> Herein a travel package is defined as a combination of international travel services coordinated by a tour operator, lasting for at least 2 days and including at least 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.



### **Top 10 list of Destinations in 2022**

2022 order		2019 order	Trips taken in 2022
1.	Greece	(1.)	184 476
2.	Spain	(2.)	143 822
3.	Turkey	(3.)	39 243
4.	Cyprus	(8.)	20 533
5.	Portugal	(7.)	19 235
6.	Italy	(5.)	18 242
7.	Croatia	(6.)	11 867
8.	Cabo Verde	(-)	8 825
9.	Austria	(-)	8 065
10.	Thailand	(4.)	7 579

### **On the statistics**

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

A majority of the figures are based on the sales of package travel 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: CEO Heli Mäki-Fränti, SMAL, +358 9 4133 3550

Attachment: - flight-based holiday packages in 2022, 2021 and 2019