

## EUROPEAN TRAVEL COMMISSION REPORTS EXTRAORDINARY RESULTS FOR EUROPEAN TOURISM IN 2017

*Europe welcomed 671 million international tourist arrivals in 2017, an outstanding 8% growth compared to 2016 (+2%)<sup>1</sup>. Europe has consolidated, for the eight consecutive year, its position as the leading destination worldwide.*

**Brussels, 13 February 2018.** According to the latest [European Travel Commission's "European Tourism 2017–Trends & Prospects"](#), regional expansion was supported by the economic growth in major source markets and the recovery of destinations previously affected by security concerns. Almost all monitored destinations saw increases in tourist arrivals with more than a half growing in excess of 10%

*"The upturn in the global economy paves the way to reorient European and national policy to support the drivers of tourism growth, promote long-term sustainable development and be a more effective catalyst for job creation in Europe."* said Eduardo Santander, Executive Director of ETC.

Turkey (+28%) experienced an impressive rebound in visitor arrivals with growth largely driven by Russian outbound flows (+465.2%). Iceland (+24%), the fastest growing destination since 2012, showed robust results while its government considers measures to address "overtourism".

Destinations in Southern/Mediterranean Europe Montenegro (+19%), Serbia (+18%) Malta (+16%), Slovenia and Cyprus (both +15%) also boosted growth and have proved their success in overcoming seasonality. Finland (+14%) enjoyed a solid increase fuelled by Chinese and Indian arrivals. Established summer destinations Croatia (+14%), Portugal (+12%) and Spain (+9%) also saw healthy growth. In Spain political tensions in Catalonia seem not have weighed down tourism demand while improved air connectivity continues to underpin Portugal's strong performance.

### Strengthening Economic Conditions in Key Source Markets Boost European Tourism Demand

Growth from the UK largely continued despite a weakened Pound with several destinations posting double-digit increases. France and Germany continued to be a source of notable arrivals growth for several European destinations aided by encouraging economic conditions that support private consumption.

Russian outbound travel has picked up following years of declines. All but one reporting destinations enjoyed a strong rebound in arrivals from this market. Despite some recent softening, a stronger US dollar and competitive air fares contributed to growth in tourist arrivals from the US, up +12% in 2017 compared to 2016. In China improved air connectivity and its expanding middle class continue to drive travel demand. In 2017, Europe saw a remarkable 16% increase from China, compared to the flat growth in 2016.

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<sup>1</sup> UN World Tourism Organization

*The full report can be downloaded from ETC's corporate website under the following link: [www.etc-corporate.org](http://www.etc-corporate.org) under the category "Trends Watch in Research".*

#### **Note to editors**

#### **About the European Travel Commission**

The European Travel Commission is an association of National Tourism Organisations (NTOs). It was created in 1948 to promote Europe as a tourist destination to the long-haul markets outside of Europe, originally in the USA and later in Canada, Latin America and Asia. It currently has 33 member NTOs, including 8 from outside the European Union. Europe is the world's no. 1 tourist destination with 671 million international arrivals in 2017 and more than 50% of the market share of worldwide tourism.

For further information: ETC's corporate website <http://www.etc-corporate.org> is aimed at industry, government and educational personnel interested in tourism to Europe. Tourists seeking travel-specific information and ideas are directed to ETC's consumer portal <http://www.visiteurope.com>.