

EUROPEAN TRAVEL COMMISSION REPORTS SUSTAINED EXPANSION IN EUROPE OVER THE SUMMER MONTHS

European destinations reported healthy growth this summer despite rising political risks and less relaxed financial conditions posing a threat to the global economic outlook. Growth momentum was boosted by robust intra-European demand and improved air connectivity, notably from China.

Brussels, November 7, 2018. According to the European Travel Commission's latest report, "[European Tourism - Trends & Prospects 2018](#)", 32 out of 34 reporting destinations registered some form of growth over the summer period, with 1 in 4 enjoying double-digit expansion in arrivals. Europe saw a +7%¹ increase in international tourist arrivals the first half of 2018 compared to the same period in 2017 with growth led by Southern/Mediterranean destinations.

Turkey (+23%) saw double-digit increases from all reported source markets. Fading security concerns and the depreciation of the lira added to Turkey's attractiveness to foreign holidaymakers. Sizeable increases were also recorded in Greece (+19%) thanks to its seasonal appeal and diversified offering whereas in Serbia (+15%) a visa-free policy for Chinese travellers and better air connectivity boosted arrivals growth. Malta (+16%) benefitted from its capital being a designated *European Capital of Culture in 2018*. In Iceland (+6%) robust travel demand from the US and Russia was able to offset declines from a wide range of source markets while "borrowed" market share now returning to Northern Africa and Turkey may explain Spain's slowdown (-0.1%).

Amidst escalating trade wars and volatile economic conditions, travel demand from Europe's key long-haul source markets remains solid. In the US, economic expansion and a stronger dollar underpin sustained income and consumption growth. Virtually all reporting destinations posted growth from this market which is expected to increase by +8% in 2018. Chinese travellers were a source of extensive arrivals growth in several Balkan destinations based on year-to-date data. *The Turkey Tourism Year in China* supported the upsurge in visitor numbers in Turkey (+87%) while improved air connectivity drove growth in Serbia (+104%), Montenegro (+64%) and Croatia (+41%).

"To avoid further slowdown and capitalise on the potential of tourism to create jobs and to facilitate economic growth, the European Travel Commission calls for better coordination of the instruments steering the European tourism industry. Tourism stakeholders and decision-makers, at all levels, should coordinate to invest wisely in more sustainable and innovative tourism products and services to improve the European visitors' experience" said Eduardo Santander, Executive Director of ETC.

The full report, an executive summary and an infographic can be downloaded from ETC's corporate website under the following link: <http://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 34 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

¹ UNWTO World Tourism Barometer (Volume 16. Issue 4. October 2018)

portal <http://www.visiteurope.com>.