

27 September 2015: World Tourism Day

US and Russia account for a third of all non-EU tourism nights in the EU

US and Turkey, top extra-EU destinations of EU tourists

In the **European Union** (EU), tourism is above all an internal affair. Nearly 90% of tourism nights in the **EU** are spent by EU residents, meaning that tourists from outside the EU account for only around 10% of the total. And when travelling, EU residents spent almost 85% of their tourism nights within the **EU**, with only just over 15% in extra-EU destinations.

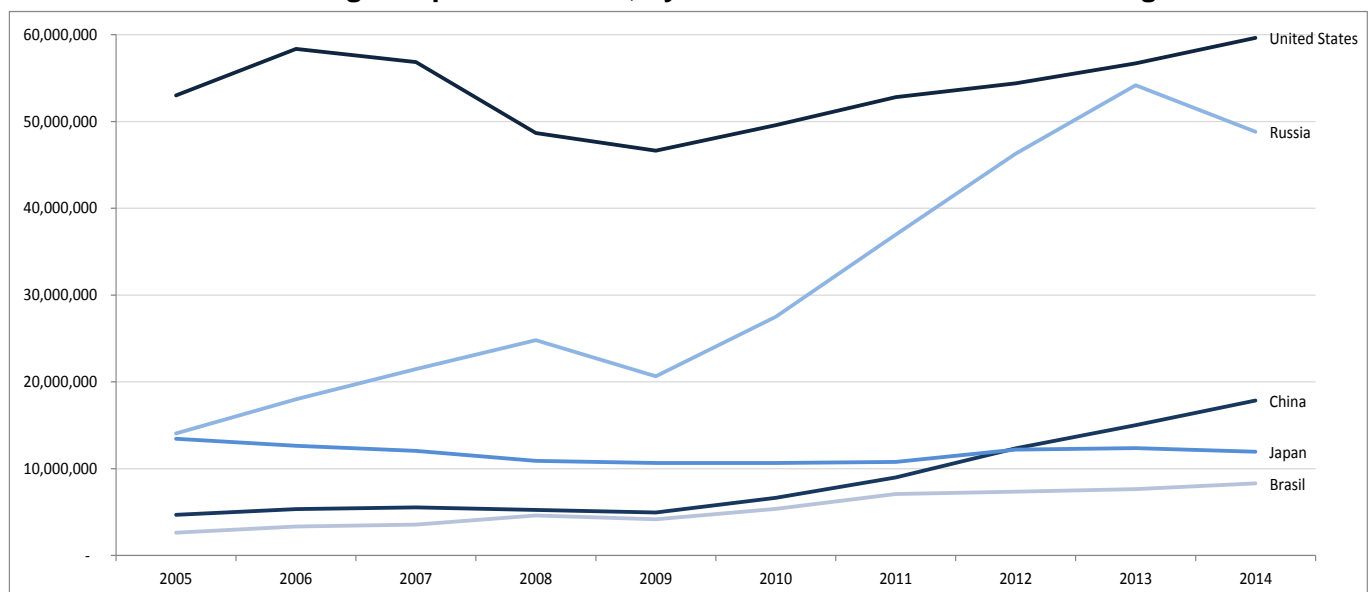
Nevertheless, more than 300 million nights were spent in the EU by non-EU visitors in tourist accommodation in 2014. With 17.8% and 14.9% respectively of all nights spent by non-EU tourists in the EU in 2014, tourists from the **United States** and **Russia** were the main visitors from outside the EU, while those from **China** (5.0%), **Japan** (3.7%) and **Brazil** (2.5%) each represented less than 5% of nights spent by non-EU tourists. Over the past decade, the EU has grown as a tourist destination. Compared with 2005, extra-EU tourism in the **EU** increased by 75% in 2014, particularly driven by a boom in the number of nights spent by tourists from **China** (+282%), **Russia** (+248%) and **Brazil** (+215%), while the growth has been more moderate for tourists from the **United States** (+13%) and a decrease was registered for those from **Japan** (-11%).

In the opposite direction, the **United States** (14.1% of all tourism nights spent outside the EU), **Turkey** (11.6%) and **Switzerland** (4.9%) were the top 3 extra-EU tourism destinations of **EU** residents in 2014.

At Member State level, tourism patterns, both for incoming and outgoing tourists, are clearly shaped by geographical, historical, cultural and linguistic factors.

On the occasion of the World Tourism Day, celebrated each year on 27 September, **Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union**, publishes a selection of data on tourism between the EU and the rest of the world. An [infographic](#) on this topic is also available on the Eurostat website.

Tourism nights spent in the EU, by selected non-EU countries of origin



NON-EU TOURISTS IN THE EU

Italy, top destination for non-EU tourists

Accounting for 17.5% of all nights spent, **Italy** was in 2014 the main destination of non-EU visitors coming to the EU, followed by the **United Kingdom** (13.9%), **Spain** (13.5%), and **France** (12.2%).

US tourists mainly visited three Member States: the **United Kingdom** (23.6% of all nights spent by US tourists), **Italy** (20.6%) and **France** (14.8%). A similar pattern can be observed for visitors from China who spent most of their nights in **Italy** (21.4%), the **United Kingdom** (21.0%) and **France** (17.6%). For Russian visitors, the top EU tourist destinations were **Spain** (18.4%), **Greece** (15.2%) and **Italy** (13.9%), while Japanese tourists mainly visited **Italy** (21.5%) and **France** (21.2%). Brazilian visitors spent their tourism nights in the EU mainly in **Italy** (23.2%), **Portugal** (17.9%), the **United Kingdom** (16.4%) and **Spain** (15.4%).

Tourism nights spent by non-EU tourists in the EU, 2014

	Total nights spent by non-EU tourists (in 1 000)	Share in EU total (%)					
		Total	Of which:				
			United States	Russia	China	Japan	Brazil
EU	327 220	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Belgium	3 079	0.9	1.2	0.4	1.3	1.8	1.3
Bulgaria	5 846	1.8	0.2	4.9	0.2	0.3	0.1
Czech Republic	9 113	2.8	1.8	7.0	2.1	2.1	2.1
Denmark	3 847	1.2	0.8	0.2	1.0	0.7	0.5
Germany	29 870	9.1	8.8	4.8	12.3	10.4	9.4
Estonia	1 067	0.3	0.1	1.3	0.1	0.2	0.1
Ireland	4 191	1.3	4.0	:	:	:	1.2
Greece	18 124	5.5	2.5	15.2	2.4	1.3	1.8
Spain	44 239	13.5	9.1	18.4	6.5	10.3	15.4
France	39 966	12.2	14.8	5.6	17.6	21.2	0.1
Croatia	7 323	2.2	1.1	2.1	0.7	2.0	1.4
Italy	57 355	17.5	20.6	13.9	21.4	21.5	23.2
Cyprus	5 532	1.7	0.1	8.3	0.1	0.1	0.0
Latvia	1 297	0.4	0.1	1.3	0.2	0.2	0.0
Lithuania	1 567	0.5	0.1	1.2	0.1	0.2	0.0
Luxembourg	346	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.3	0.1	0.1
Hungary	3 760	1.1	1.0	1.6	1.0	1.2	1.0
Malta	1 332	0.4	0.1	0.5	0.1	0.4	0.3
Netherlands	6 752	2.1	3.0	0.8	2.5	2.1	3.7
Austria	13 655	4.2	2.5	3.2	4.1	4.0	2.2
Poland	3 782	1.2	0.9	1.2	0.5	0.8	0.5
Portugal	6 448	2.0	1.5	1.1	1.5	1.4	17.9
Romania	1 358	0.4	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.1
Slovenia	1 583	0.5	0.2	0.6	0.2	0.5	0.2
Slovakia	922	0.3	0.1	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.1
Finland	2 927	0.9	0.4	2.7	0.9	1.6	0.3
Sweden	6 292	1.9	0.9	0.4	1.2	0.7	0.5
United Kingdom	45 646	13.9	23.6	2.6	21.0	14.3	16.4

Figures may not add up due to rounding.

: Data missing or not published due to small sample size.

0.0 = less than 0.1%.

Belgium: 2013 data.

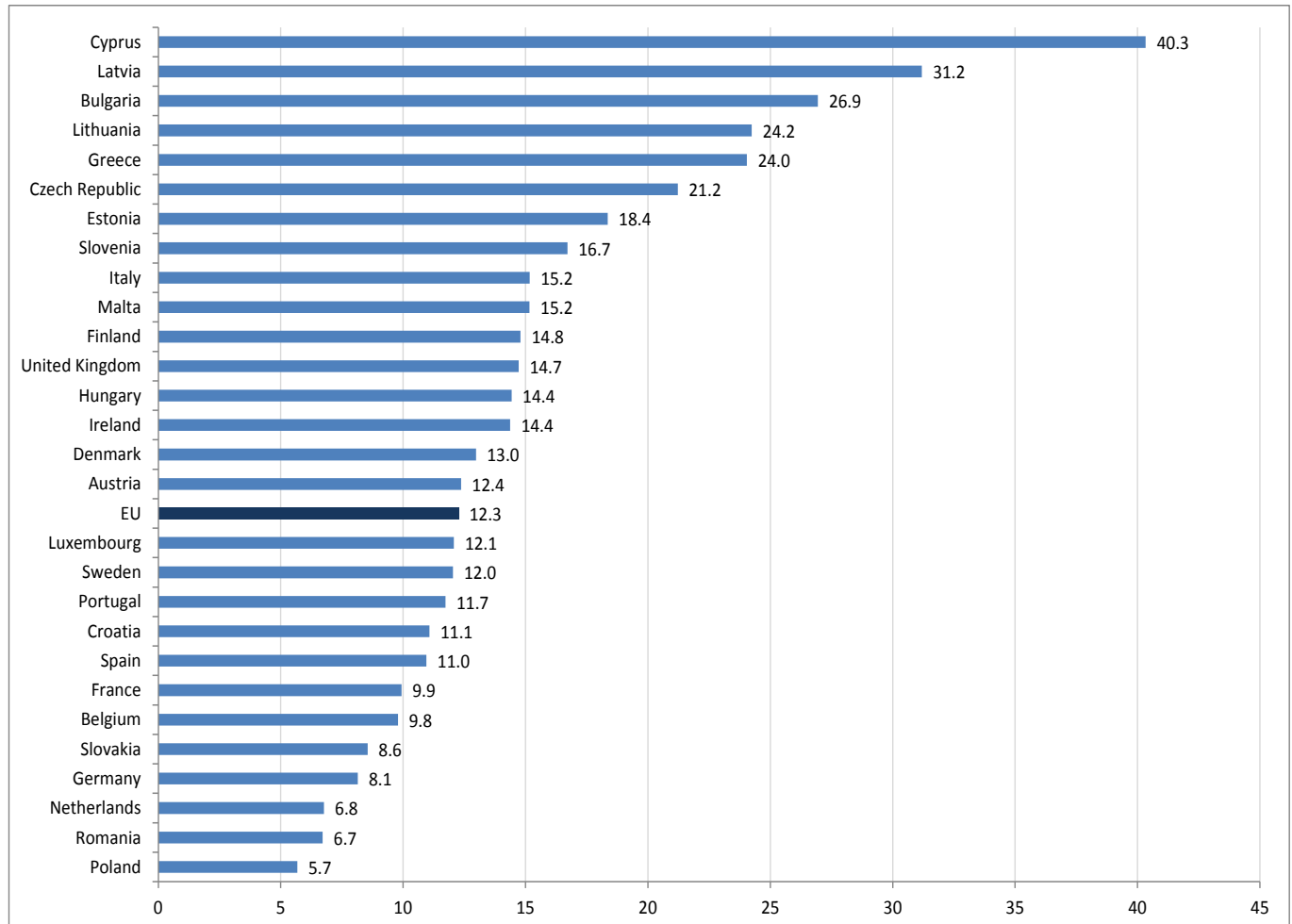
United Kingdom: 2012 data.

Greece: hotels and campsites only.

Share of tourism nights spent by non-EU tourists highest in Cyprus, lowest in Poland

Tourists from outside the EU were particularly important for **Cyprus** (40.3% of all nights spent in tourist accommodation), **Latvia** (31.2%), **Bulgaria** (26.9%), **Lithuania** (24.2%), **Greece** (24.0%) and the **Czech Republic** (21.2%). In contrast, this share was below 10% in **Poland** (5.7%), **Romania** (6.7%), the **Netherlands** (6.8%), **Germany** (8.1%), **Slovakia** (8.6%), **Belgium** (9.8%) and **France** (9.9%).

Share of non-EU visitors in total tourism nights spent in EU Member States, 2014
(in %)



Belgium: 2013 data.

United Kingdom: 2012 data.

Greece: hotels and campsites only

Over half of non-EU tourism activity in Ireland by US visitors, in Cyprus and Estonia by Russian

The respective shares of US, Russian, Chinese, Japanese and Brazilian visitors in EU tourism activity are very different from one Member State to another. US tourists accounted for more than half of all tourism nights spent by non-EU visitors in **Ireland** (56.0%), followed at a distance by the **United Kingdom** (30.2%) and the **Netherlands** (25.5%). Russian tourists represented a very significant share of non-EU tourism activity in **Cyprus** (72.8%), **Estonia** (57.6%), **Latvia** (48.4%) and **Finland** (45.8%), while for Chinese tourists the highest shares were recorded in **Luxembourg** (13.8%), the **United Kingdom** (7.5%), **France** (7.2%), **Belgium** (6.9%) and **Germany** (6.7%). The highest shares for Japanese visitors in tourism nights spent by non-EU residents were recorded in **Belgium** (7.0%), **Finland** (6.6%) and **France** (6.4%), while Brazilian tourists were particularly prominent amongst non-EU tourists in **Portugal** (22.6%).

Tourism nights spent by non-EU tourists in the EU, 2014

	Share of non-EU tourists in total tourism nights (%)	Share in all nights spent by non-EU tourists (%)				
		United States	Russia	China	Japan	Brazil
EU	12.3	17.8	14.9	5.0	3.7	2.5
Belgium	9.8	23.1	7.1	6.9	7.0	3.4
Bulgaria	26.9	1.8	41.0	0.5	0.6	0.2
Czech Republic	21.2	11.8	37.4	3.8	2.8	1.9
Denmark	13.0	12.5	2.7	4.2	2.2	1.0
Germany	8.1	17.2	7.9	6.7	4.2	2.6
Estonia	18.4	7.0	57.6	1.8	2.8	0.5
Ireland	14.4	56.0	:	:	:	2.3
Greece	24.0	8.0	40.9	2.1	0.9	0.8
Spain	11.0	12.0	20.3	2.4	2.8	2.8
France	9.9	21.6	6.9	7.2	6.4	0.0
Croatia	11.1	8.5	14.2	1.5	3.3	1.6
Italy	15.2	21.0	11.9	6.1	4.5	3.3
Cyprus	40.3	0.9	72.8	0.4	0.1	0.0
Latvia	31.2	5.0	48.4	2.0	1.9	0.3
Lithuania	24.2	5.2	38.2	0.7	1.4	0.2
Luxembourg	12.1	18.2	6.0	13.8	3.3	2.7
Hungary	14.4	15.2	20.3	4.3	3.9	2.2
Malta	15.2	6.3	19.0	1.3	3.2	1.9
Netherlands	6.8	25.5	5.8	6.0	3.7	4.4
Austria	12.4	10.5	11.3	4.9	3.5	1.3
Poland	5.7	13.8	15.0	2.3	2.6	1.1
Portugal	11.7	13.6	8.5	3.7	2.6	22.6
Romania	6.7	14.9	4.1	2.8	2.3	0.7
Slovenia	16.7	9.1	20.0	2.2	3.8	1.2
Slovakia	8.6	7.0	17.9	2.5	1.0	0.9
Finland	14.8	7.0	45.8	5.1	6.6	0.7
Sweden	12.0	7.9	3.0	3.2	1.4	0.6
United Kingdom	14.7	30.2	2.8	7.5	3.8	2.9

Figures may not add up due to rounding.

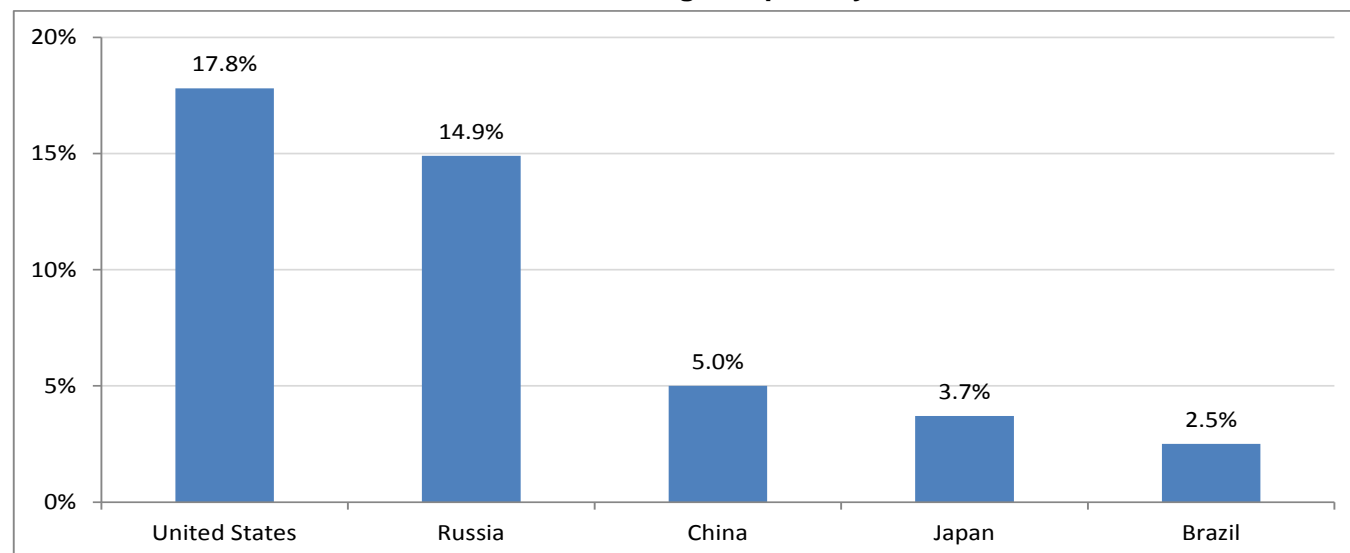
: Data missing or not published due to small sample size.

0.0 = less than 0.1%.

Belgium: 2013 data. United Kingdom: 2012 data.

Greece: hotels and campsites only.

Share of selected non-EU countries in all nights spent by non-EU tourists in the EU, 2014



These selected countries do not necessarily represent the non-EU countries with the largest shares of nights spent in the EU.

EU TOURISTS OUTSIDE THE EU

Extra-EU tourism more common for British and Estonian residents

In 2014, more than 1 out of every 5 tourism nights was spent outside the EU by residents of the **United Kingdom** (28.4%), **Estonia** (27.4%), **Belgium** (23.0%), **Latvia** (21.9%), **Germany** and **Luxembourg** (both 21.1%) and **Malta** (20.5%). In contrast extra-EU tourism represented less than 7% of all tourism nights spent by residents of **Romania** (1.1%), the **Czech Republic** and **Greece** (both 6.1%). On average, 15.4% of all tourism nights of **EU** residents were spent in non-EU countries.

The US and Turkey account for a quarter of extra-EU tourism nights

At **EU** level, the United States was the main destination of EU tourists travelling outside the EU, accounting for 14.1% of all nights spent by EU residents in the rest of the world. In particular, the United States was the top extra-EU destination for residents of **Denmark**, **Ireland**, **France**, **Luxembourg**, **Hungary** and the **United Kingdom**. The second most common extra-EU destination for EU residents was Turkey (11.6% of all tourism nights spent outside the EU), the top destination for residents of **Belgium**, **Bulgaria**, **Germany**, the **Netherlands**, **Austria** and **Poland**.

Top extra-EU destinations of EU tourists, 2014
(nights spent by EU residents outside the EU)

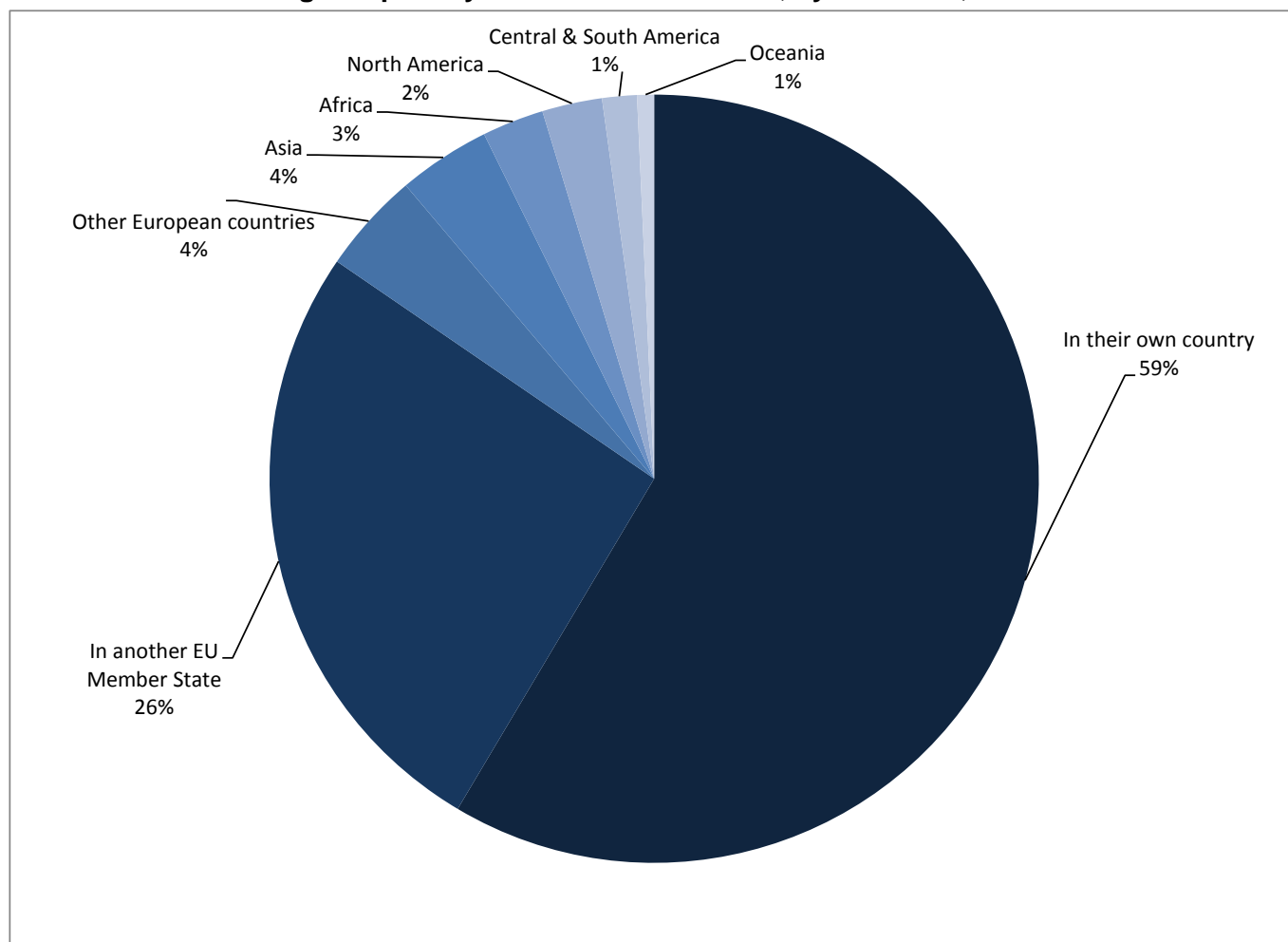
	Share of extra-EU tourism (%)	Main destination		Second destination		Third destination	
		Country	Share in all nights spent outside the EU (%)	Country	Share in all nights spent outside the EU (%)	Country	Share in all nights spent outside the EU (%)
EU	15.4	United States	14.1	Turkey	11.6	Switzerland	4.9
Belgium	23.0	Turkey	15.8	Morocco	12.5	United States	9.3
Bulgaria	8.7	Turkey	50.6	:	:	:	:
Czech Rep.	6.1	Egypt	18.0	Turkey	18.0	:	:
Denmark	15.8	United States	17.3	Turkey	15.0	Norway	11.9
Germany	21.1	Turkey	21.0	United States	12.9	Switzerland	7.4
Estonia	27.4	Russia	24.9	Norway	(9.3)	:	:
Ireland	19.0	United States	41.9	Australia	(11.5)	Canada	(4.5)
Greece	6.1	Albania	56.1	United States	(9.9)	Turkey	8.1
Spain	7.0	Morocco	21.2	United States	10.2	Ecuador	(4.7)
France	7.7	United States	13.8	Morocco	9.0	Canada	6.5
Croatia	18.3	Bosnia and Herzegovina	28.6	:	:	:	:
Italy	13.6	:	:	:	:	:	:
Cyprus	17.6	Russia	(31.5)	:	:	:	:
Latvia	21.9	Russia	25.9	Turkey	(12.8)	Belarus	(12.0)
Lithuania	18.0	Norway	22.7	Belarus	16.1	Turkey	14.8
Luxembourg	21.1	United States	14.3	Switzerland	12.6	Turkey	7.7
Hungary	11.8	United States	23.0	Turkey	10.1	Switzerland	8.8
Malta	20.5	:	:	:	:	:	:
Netherlands	18.5	Turkey	16.1	United States	13.7	Switzerland	6.2
Austria	18.8	Turkey	17.4	United States	10.7	Egypt	7.2
Poland	8.2	Turkey	15.5	United States	15.5	Norway	13.6
Portugal	7.3	Switzerland	(23.5)	Brazil	(12.3)	:	:
Romania	1.1	:	:	:	:	:	:
Slovenia	15.0	Bosnia and Herzegovina	28.6	Serbia	7.4	Turkey	(5.5)
Slovakia	8.8	:	:	:	:	:	:
Finland	13.8	Thailand	(16.6)	United States	15.5	Turkey	10.2
Sweden	17.5	Thailand	19.3	United States	18.0	Turkey	10.2
United Kingdom	28.4	United States	16.6	India	8.3	Australia	6.4

: Data missing or not published due to small sample size.

The reliability of data shown in brackets may be affected by small sample sizes.

Denmark, Croatia, Portugal, Slovakia and the United Kingdom: 2013 data.

Nights spent by EU tourists worldwide, by continent, 2014



Methods and definitions

Tourism activity of non-EU residents in the EU refer to nights spent by non-EU residents during their tourism trips in the EU in tourist accommodation establishments only (such as hotels or campsites), regardless of the purpose of these trips (personal or business).

Tourism activity of EU residents outside the EU refer to nights spent during tourism trips, regardless of the purpose of these trips (personal or business) and regardless of whether these nights were spent in tourist accommodation (such as hotels or campsites) or in less formal types of accommodation (owned dwellings or accommodation provided for free by friends or relatives).

For more information

Eurostat, Statistics Explained articles "[Tourism statistics - annual results for the accommodation sector](#)" and "[Tourism statistics - Top destinations](#)", available on the Eurostat website.

An [interactive infographic](#) on tourism demand in the EU is also available on the Eurostat website.

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