

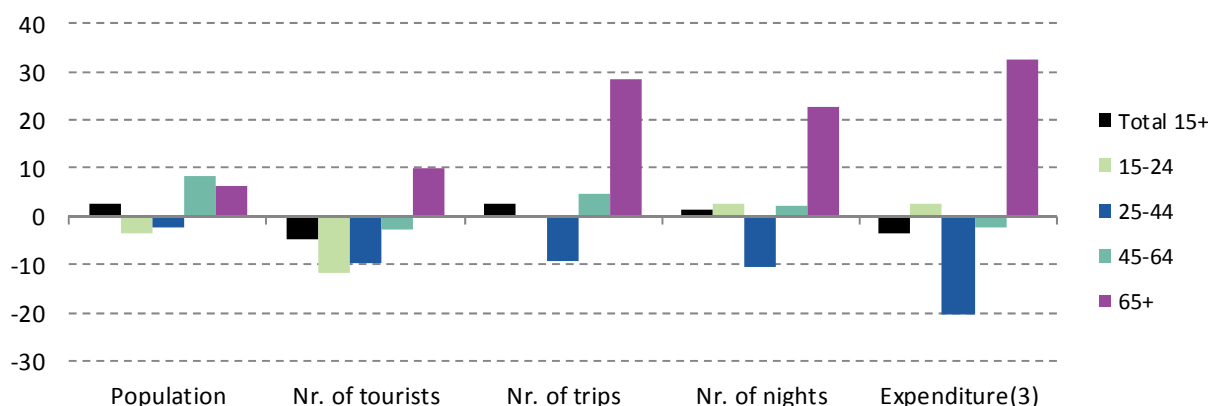
Europeans aged 65+ spent a third more on tourism in 2011 compared with 2006

Ageing and tourism in the European Union

The most recent Commission Communication on tourism, ‘Europe, the world’s No 1 tourist destination — a new political framework for tourism in Europe’ — [COM\(2010\)352](#), highlighted the challenges generated by the demographic trends in Europe and the need for the tourism sector to adapt quickly if it is to remain competitive. The Communication underlines that people aged 65 or over (hereafter: ‘65+’) have both purchasing power and leisure time. This represents significant market potential, but means that the sector needs to change to meet those people’s needs. This issue of Statistics in Focus takes a closer look at tourism trends and preferences in the European Union, with particular emphasis on the 65+ group.

Figure 1 shows that between 2006 and 2011, a period during which the tourism sector was affected by the crisis, the 65+ age group contributed significantly to the sector’s survival. In that period, the number of tourists dropped in all age groups except for the 65+, where 10 % more persons participated in tourism in 2011 than in 2006. Admittedly, this age group increased by 6 % over the period, but there is still a clear net effect. In 2011, the 65+ made 29 % more trips and 23 % more overnight stays than five years earlier. Their tourism expenditure grew by 33 % and accounted for 20 % of all tourism spending of Europeans, compared with just 15 % in 2006 (see also Figure 5).

Figure 1: Population and tourism indicators⁽¹⁾ by age, EU-27⁽²⁾, 2011/2006 percentage change



(1) All tourism indicators relate to trips of at least four nights.

(2) EU-27 aggregate estimated for the purpose of this publication. Based on the 18 Member States for which data are available for 2006 and 2011, representing 85.9 % of the EU-27 population aged 15 years and over. Not including BG, CZ, DK, EE, IE, EL, MT, AT and RO. Includes estimates for BE (2006) and PL (2011).

(3) Aggregate based on 15 Member States, representing 82.0 % of the total EU-27 population aged 15 years and over. Not including the above Member States plus BE, LT and FI. Includes estimates for FR (2006) and UK (2006 and 2011).

Source: Eurostat (online data codes: [demo_pjangroup](#), [tour_dem_toage](#), [tour_dem_ttage](#))

46 % of people aged 65 or over made at least one holiday trip of four nights or more

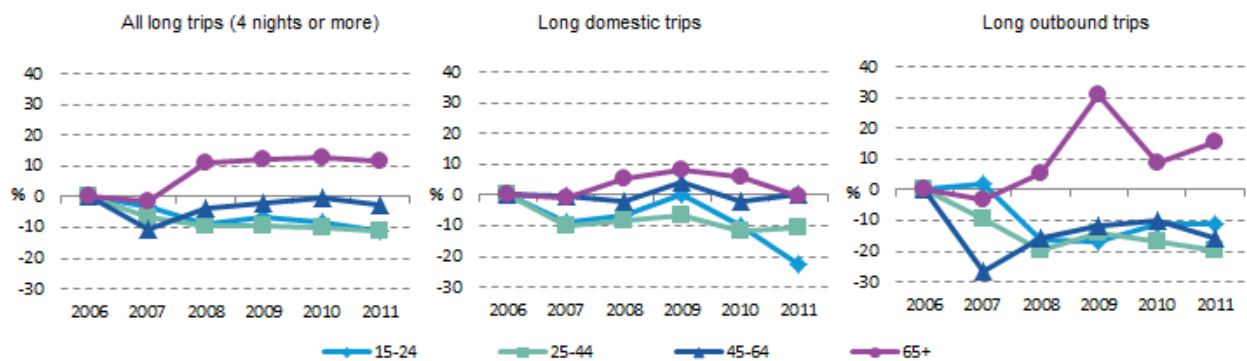
Looking at the number of people who made at least one trip of four nights or more during the reference year, Figure 2 indicates that only in the age group 65+ were more people making tourism trips in 2011 than in 2006. For all other age groups, the figure was down. This was particularly true for outbound trips, with 15 % more people aged 65 or over making trips outside their country of residence, compared with 10 % — 20 % fewer in the other age groups.

Figure 3 corrects for variations in the population figures by looking at the proportion of active tourists in each age group. Again, the oldest age group is the only one with a positive trend in 2006-2011.

The graphs indicate a relatively low level of participation (46 %, compared with 52 % for the population in general) among persons aged 65+ — which might point to important growth potential.

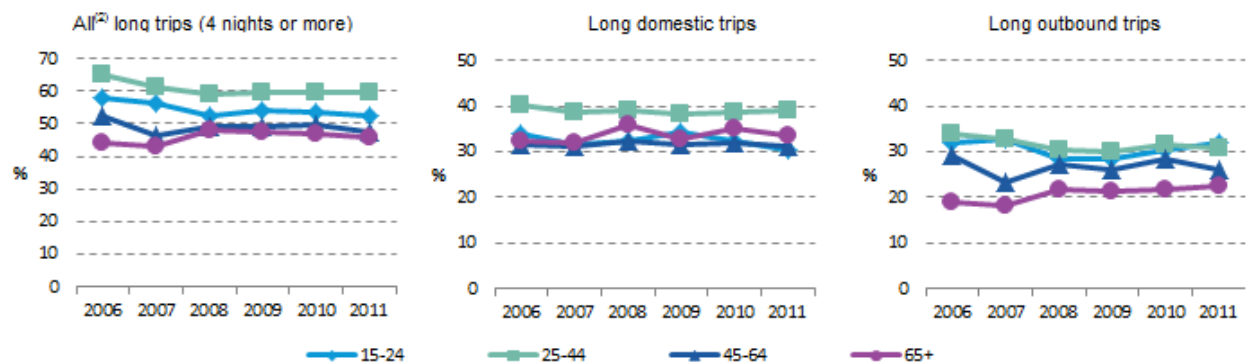
It is interesting here to look at information we can extract from European statistics on income and living conditions (EU-SILC). In 2010, households with at least one member aged 65 years or over found it harder than average to afford a one-week annual holiday away from home (see Figure 4). However, the percentage of deprived households was down slightly compared with four years earlier.

Figure 2: Trends in participation in tourism, by destination and age group, EU-27⁽¹⁾ population (aged 15 or over), 2006 to 2011, percentage change compared with the base year 2006.



(1) EU-27 aggregate estimated for the purpose of this publication. Based on the 20 Member States for which data is available for 2006 to 2011, representing 82.3 % of the EU-27 population aged 15 years and over. Not including BG, IE, EL, MT, PL, RO and SK. Source: Eurostat (online data codes: [demo_pjangroup](#), [tour_dem_toage](#))

Figure 3: Share of the people taking holiday trips in the age group, EU-27⁽¹⁾, 2006 to 2011

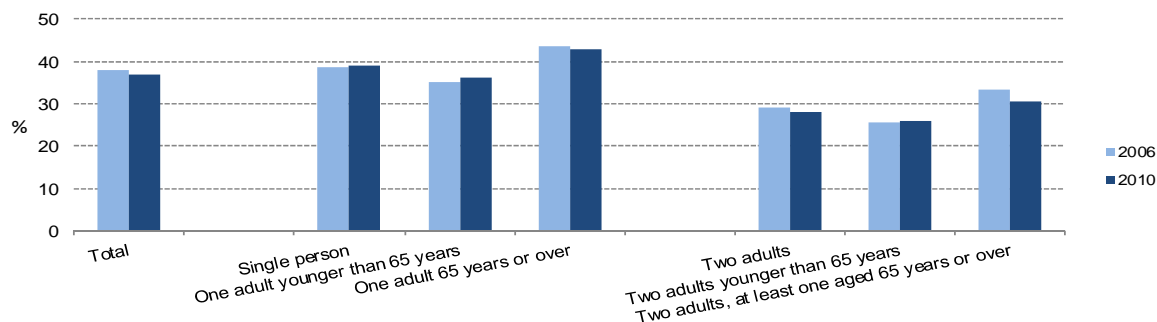


(1) EU-27 aggregate estimated for the purpose of this publication. Based on the 20 Member States for which data are available for 2006 to 2011, representing 82.3 % of the EU-27 population aged 15 years and over. Not including BG, IE, EL, MT, PL, RO and SK.

(2) 'All long trips' data do not tally with the total of the subgroups 'long domestic trips' and 'long outbound trips'. Tourists who made both domestic and outbound long trips are included in both subgroups but are not counted twice for 'all long trips'.

Source: Eurostat (online data codes: [demo_pjangroup](#), [tour_dem_toage](#))

Figure 4: Share of the population unable to afford a one-week annual holiday away from home, EU-27⁽¹⁾



(1) EU-27 aggregate for 2006 includes estimates by Eurostat.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: [ilc_mdcs02](#))

Tourists aged 65+ made more and longer trips and spent more

Figure 5 shows what contribution the different age groups made to a range of tourism indicators. Of those who made at least one trip of four nights or more during the reference year, the 65+ age group accounted for 17 % in 2011 (against 15 % in 2006).

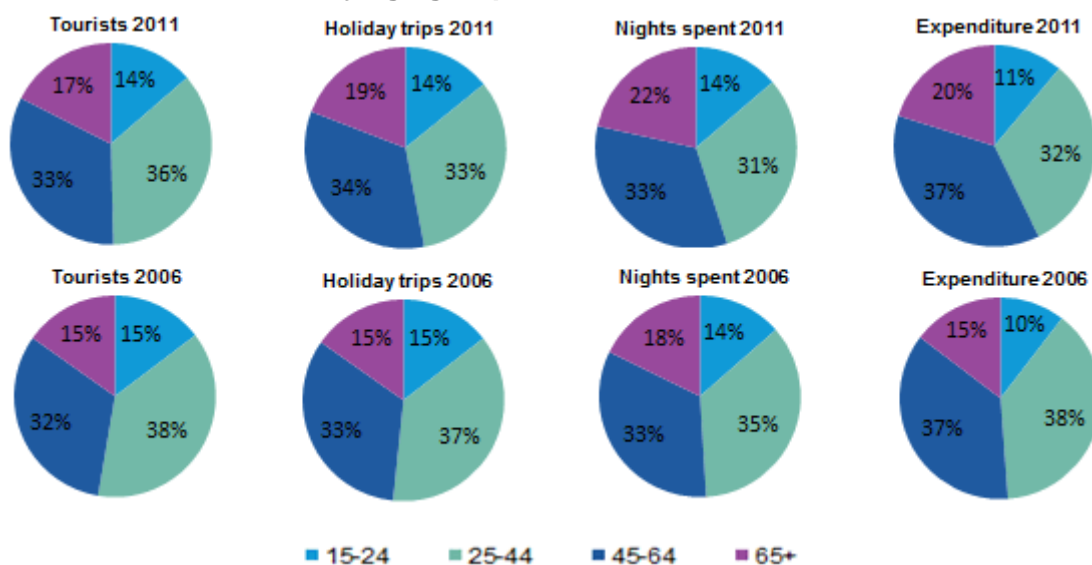
The 65+ made on average more such trips — and longer trips — than the other three age groups. Accounting for 17 % of all tourists, the most senior age group made 19 % of all holiday trips and spent 22 % of the nights away on long tourism trips in 2011. Tourists aged 65+ spent on average 26.1 nights away from home on long trips in 2011, compared with a general population average of 21.2 days (see Table 1). The average duration of their trips was 11.0 nights, compared to a general

average of 9.8 nights. These observations hold true for most of the countries for which data are available.

Older tourists also spent more during their trips. They accounted for 20 % of all tourism expenditure by European residents (aged 15+) in 2011, boosting their share by 5 percentage points compared with 2006. The average tourist aged 65 or over spent €1 344 on long tourism trips in 2011, or 11 % above the general population average of €1 203.

The group aged 65+ was the only group with growth for all four indicators. The contribution of the 45-64 age group remained stable, while the importance of those aged 25-44 dropped for all indicators.

Figure 5: Tourism indicators by age groups, EU-27⁽¹⁾



(1) EU-27 aggregate estimated for the purpose of this publication. Based on the 18 Member States for which data are available for 2006 and 2011, representing 85.9 % of the EU-27 population aged 15 years and over. Not including BG, CZ, DK, EE, IE, EL, MT, AT and RO. Includes estimates for BE (2006) and PL (2011). Aggregate for expenditure is based on 15 Member States, representing 82.0 % of the population. Not including the above Member States and BE, LT and FI. Includes estimates for FR (2006) and UK (2006 and 2011).

Source: Eurostat (online data codes: [tour_dem_toage](#), [tour_dem_ttage](#), [tour_dem_tnage](#), [tour_dem_exg](#))

Table 1: Average number of nights spent and expenditure of EU-27 residents aged 15 and over for holiday trips of at least four nights, 2011

	Average number of nights spent per tourist					Average number of nights spent per trip					Average expenditure (in euro) per tourist				
	Total	15-24	25-44	45-64	65+	Total	15-24	25-44	45-64	65+	Total	15-24	25-44	45-64	65+
EU-27⁽¹⁾	21.2	21.4	18.9	21.6	26.1	9.8	9.5	9.3	9.7	11.0	1 203	976	1 088	1 364	1 344
BE	18.0	14.9	16.4	18.5	24.8	10.5	10.3	10.2	10.3	11.7	1 174	:	:	:	:
BG	:	:	:	:	:	8.6	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
CZ	17.3	:	:	:	:	7.9	:	:	:	:	529	:	:	:	:
DK	:	:	:	:	:	8.7	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
DE	20.4	19.1	17.0	21.3	24.5	9.1	8.6	8.7	9.2	9.7	1 445	1 070	1 099	1 717	1 738
EE	8.3	:	:	:	:	8.1	:	:	:	:	344	:	:	:	:
IE⁽²⁾	:	:	:	:	:	10.0	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
EL	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
ES	27.6	41.1	23.0	24.2	34.8	10.7	8.7	10.2	10.9	14.0	1 093	1 425	981	1 102	1 089
FR	29.3	29.5	24.0	30.2	37.6	10.1	9.6	9.3	9.9	11.7	1 742	1 660	1 730	1 767	1 771
IT⁽²⁾	16.7	16.0	16.5	15.4	20.7	10.9	10.4	10.2	10.2	15.7	735	:	:	:	:
CY	17.2	23.2	14.5	15.0	54.9	11.3	10.7	10.4	11.3	17.6	1 290	1 773	1 198	1 106	2 573
LV	19.8	14.4	19.4	21.3	26.8	10.1	9.5	9.3	10.5	13.0	800	731	938	795	339
LT	11.1	9.6	11.2	10.7	18.2	8.9	8.6	8.6	9.5	8.8	521	:	:	:	:
LU	27.7	29.3	26.2	27.6	30.6	10.1	11.0	9.7	9.6	11.5	6 493	5 757	6 005	7 213	6 881
HU	11.2	12.1	10.4	10.9	13.5	8.0	10.7	7.4	7.5	8.5	290	243	322	298	237
MT	12.3	9.4	11.3	12.4	19.9	8.6	6.9	7.8	8.6	13.9	1 362	1 133	1 382	1 387	1 541
NL	21.4	17.3	19.2	22.7	25.7	10.8	10.3	10.4	10.8	11.5	1 235	901	1 186	1 403	1 265
AT	16.4	:	:	:	:	7.9	:	:	:	:	1 797	:	:	:	:
PL⁽²⁾	14.8	17.1	12.3	15.0	20.0	9.7	9.9	8.5	10.2	12.6	303	223	355	298	286
PT	18.4	15.7	15.0	19.9	24.2	10.4	9.8	9.3	10.5	12.5	460	304	403	548	540
RO	7.8	:	:	:	:	7.6	:	:	:	:	162	:	:	:	:
SI	13.9	15.2	12.7	14.5	14.5	8.0	7.7	7.6	8.6	8.7	641	739	618	644	545
SK	14.0	13.7	13.9	13.6	17.2	8.0	7.9	8.0	7.8	8.5	719	603	709	848	580
FI	23.8	26.2	21.2	23.1	29.8	7.6	7.9	6.9	7.6	8.5	1 727	:	:	:	:
SE	21.0	23.7	19.4	26.8	15.0	8.7	9.8	8.2	8.3	9.2	1 529	1 480	1 314	2 376	964
UK⁽³⁾	21.3	20.5	22.1	21.1	20.0	10.5	12.7	10.2	10.1	10.6	1 129	756	1 136	1 302	987
NO	23.3	:	:	:	:	9.5	:	:	:	:	2 553	:	:	:	:
CH⁽²⁾	20.2	:	19.8	20.1	:	10.6	:	10.6	10.2	:	1 716	:	1 515	1 995	1 906
HR	28.2	33.3	23.1	27.2	39.6	10.3	11.4	8.9	10.1	12.9	921	1 087	864	862	928

(1) EU-27 aggregate estimated for the purpose of this publication.

(2) 2010 data.

(3) 2010 data for expenditure.

Source: Eurostat (online data codes: [tour_dem_toage](#), [tour_dem_tnage](#), [tour_dem_ttage](#))

In 2011, residents of the European Union made an estimated 473 million holiday trips of four nights or more (see Table 2). 91 million of these were made by tourists aged 65 or over — 59 million of them in their own Member State and 32 million abroad. In other words, 65 % of their long holiday trips were domestic trips, which is slightly above the population average of 59 %.

The number of nights spent by tourists in the 65+ age group was almost a billion; on average their (long) trips took in 11 nights away. 12.0 nights

were spent on average on outbound trips and 10.4 nights on domestic trips. The difference in duration between the two types of destinations tended to be smaller than for the other age groups.

More than €53 billion was spent on long holiday trips by tourists aged 65 or over (or 20 % of the total spending of EU residents on such trips) — €23.7 billion on domestic trips (45 %) and €29.5 billion on outbound trips (55 %).

In terms of average expenditure per trip, the oldest age group spent a little less than the age group '45-64': €586 and €613 respectively (see also Figure 6). However, this is mainly because the younger of the two groups made relatively more trips abroad (44 % of their trips, compared to 35 % for those aged 65 or over). Looking at domestic trips and outbound trips separately, the 65+ recorded the

highest average spending per trip: €401 on a domestic trip and €934 on an outbound trip. Expenditure per night was lower for the most senior tourists, but this can be explained by the fact that their trips were longer, meaning that flat-rate costs such as transport were spread over more nights.

Table 2: Characteristics of long holiday trips (four or more nights) of EU-27⁽¹⁾ residents, aged 15 and over, by age group, 2011

	All long trips					Long domestic trips					Long outbound trips				
	Total 15+	15-24	25-44	45-64	65+	Total 15+	15-24	25-44	45-64	65+	Total 15+	15-24	25-44	45-64	65+
Number of trips (millions)	473	66	155	161	91	278	39	91	89	59	195	27	65	71	32
Number of nights (millions)	4 620	630	1 441	1 553	996	2 466	310	747	793	616	2 154	320	695	759	380
Average length of trips (nights)	9.8	9.5	9.3	9.7	11.0	8.9	7.9	8.3	8.9	10.4	11.0	11.8	10.7	10.6	12.0
Tourism expenditure (billion euro)	265.4	29.4	84.3	98.5	53.2	102.3	10.8	32.7	35.1	23.7	163.1	18.6	51.6	63.4	29.5
Average expenditure per trip (euro)	561	443	543	613	586	368	275	362	393	401	837	685	796	888	934
Average expenditure per night (euro)	57	47	58	63	53	41	35	44	44	38	76	58	74	84	78

(1) EU-27 aggregate estimated for the purpose of this publication by extrapolating data of 20 Member States (17 Member States for expenditure). These data represent 86.8 % (82.9 % for expenditure) of the EU-27 population aged 15 years and over.

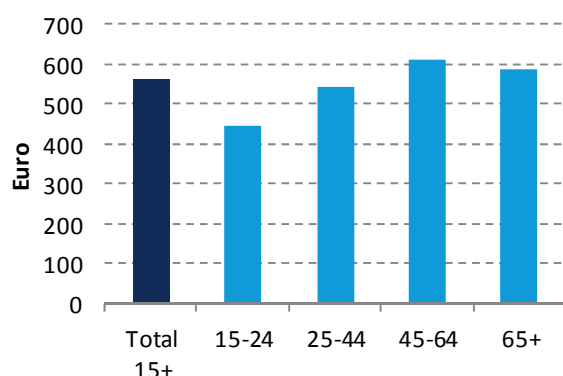
Source: Eurostat (online data codes: [tour_dem_toage](#), [tour_dem_ttage](#), [tour_dem_tnage](#), [tour_dem_exg](#))

Only 16 % of the holiday budget of the 65+ is spent on short breaks

Figure 7 looks at the distribution of tourism expenditure of each age group per type of trip. The analysis includes long trips of four nights and more, as well as short trips of 1 to 3 overnight stays. Short trips evidently feature less in the older tourists' household budget for tourism. Only 16 %

of their tourism expenditure was on short holiday trips, compared with 23 % on average for all tourists regardless of age. They did, though record the highest share of spending on long domestic trips (37 %).

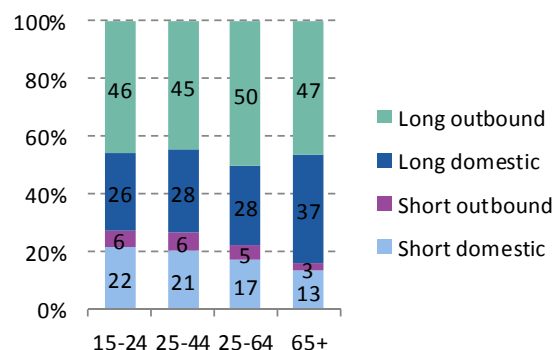
Figure 6: Average expenditure per long trip (4+ nights) by age group, EU-27⁽¹⁾, 2011



(1) EU-27 aggregate estimated for the purpose of this publication. Based on 17 Member States for which expenditure data are available, representing 82.9 % of the EU-27 population aged 15 years and over. Not including BE, BG, CZ, DK, EE, EL, LT, AT, RO and FI.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: [tour_dem_exg](#))

Figure 7: Tourism expenditure of EU-27⁽¹⁾ residents aged 15 and over by age group, by length of holiday and by destination



(1) EU-27 aggregate estimated for the purpose of this publication. Based on 17 Member States for which expenditure data are available, representing 82.9 % of the EU-27 population aged 15 years and over. Not including BE, BG, CZ, DK, EE, EL, LT, AT, RO and FI.

Source: Eurostat (online data codes: [tour_dem_exhol](#), [tour_dem_exg](#))

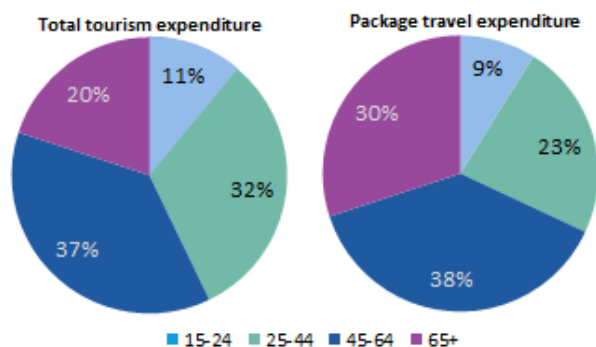
Senior travellers are an important market for package travel

The previous sections revealed age differences in tourism preferences. In terms of the way the trip is organised too, there are significant differences. Figure 8 indicates a relatively large share of expenditure on package trips among the tourists aged 65 or over, who accounted for 20 % of overall

tourism expenditure, but for 30 % of all expenditure on package trips.

In 2011, package travel absorbed 38 % of the spending by older tourists on long holiday trips, compared with 25 % for the full age range (see Figure 9).

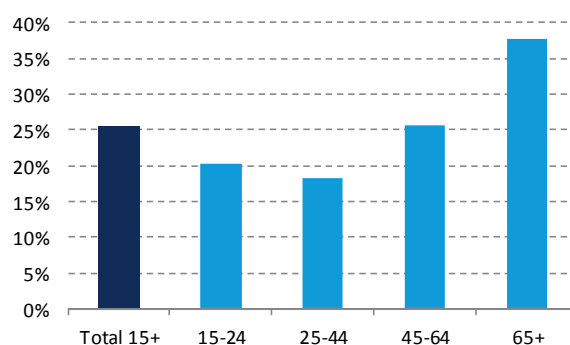
Figure 8: Total tourism expenditure and package travel expenditure by age group, EU-27⁽¹⁾, 2011



(1) EU-27 aggregate estimated for the purpose of this publication. Based on 16 Member States for which expenditure data are available, representing 82.8 % of the EU-27 population aged 15 years and over. Not including BE, BG, CZ, DK, EE, EL, CY, LT, AT, RO and FI.

Source: Eurostat (online data codes: [tour_dem_exhol](#), [tour_dem_expkt](#))

Figure 9: Package travel expenditure as a percentage of tourism expenditure for long holiday trips (four nights and over) of EU-27⁽¹⁾ residents, 2011



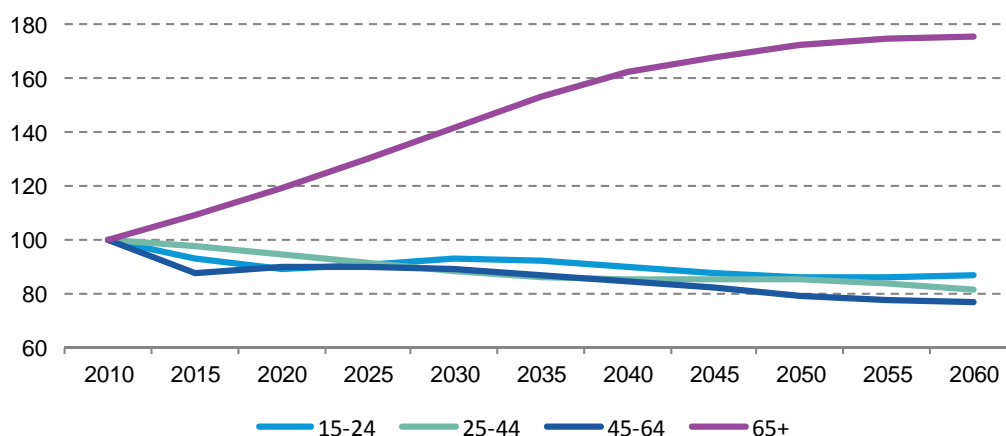
Source: Eurostat (online data codes: [tour_dem_exhol](#), [tour_dem_expkt](#))

Nearly 30 % of the population will be 65 years or older by 2060

This *Statistics in Focus* took a closer look at tourists aged 65 or more. This group of tourists is expected to grow fast, spend relatively well and could bring visitors to destinations during the off season (though this point is not explored further in this paper). It is clear that this group will play a vital role for the tourism sector in the coming decades. On the one hand, the current seniors tend

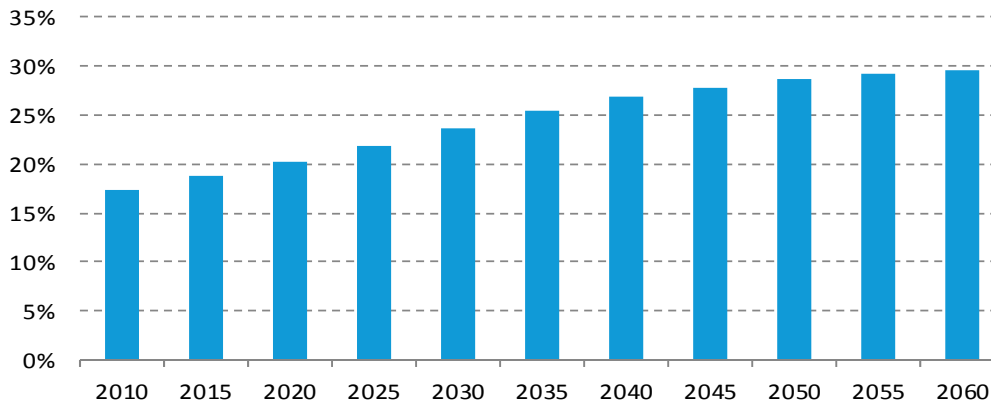
to travel more than previous generations, a process that will most probably continue as health conditions improve. On the other, according to Eurostat 2010 population projections the growth in the number of persons aged 65 or over will be more than 60% by 2040 as compared with 2010 (see Figure 10).

Figure 10: Trends in EU-27 population by age group, 2010-2060 (index: 2010=100)



Source: Eurostat (online data codes: [demo_pianguop](#), [proj_10c2150p](#))

Figure 11: Trends in the 65+ as a share of the total EU-27 population, 2010-2060



Source: Eurostat (online data codes: [demo_pjangroup_proj_10c2150p](#))

This enormous growth in absolute numbers is reflected in the increase of the share of the 65+ (see Figure 11). In 2010, 17 % of the population was 65 years old or more. By 2060, this figure is expected to be close to 30 %.

METHODOLOGICAL NOTES

Tourism means the activity of visitors taking a trip to a main destination outside their usual environment, for less than a year, for any main purpose, including business, leisure or other personal purpose, other than to be employed by a resident entity in the place visited. This publication focuses on holiday trips of four or more nights.

Trips, average length of stay

Long trips are trips with at least four overnight stays, *short trips* are trips with one to three overnight stays.

Average length of stay is calculated by dividing the total number of nights spent by the total number of tourism trips.

Country codes

EU-27: European Union	IE: Ireland	LT: Lithuania	PT: Portugal	NO: Norway
BG: Bulgaria	EL: Greece	LU: Luxembourg	RO: Romania	CH: Switzerland
BE: Belgium	ES: Spain	HU: Hungary	SI: Slovenia	HR: Croatia
CZ: Czech Republic	FR: France	MT: Malta	SK: Slovakia	
DK: Denmark	IT: Italy	NL: Netherlands	FI: Finland	
DE: Germany	CY: Cyprus	AT: Austria	SE: Sweden	
EE: Estonia	LV: Latvia	PL: Poland	UK: United Kingdom	

Symbols

‘.’ data unavailable or unreliable

Further methodological information :

For methodological information on Tourism statistics, please consult:
http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_SDDS/EN/tour_dem_esms.htm

For methodological information on EU-SILC (Figure 4), please consult:
http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_SDDS/en/ilc_esms.htm

For methodological information on EU population statistics and population projections (Figure 10 and Figure 11), please consult:
http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_SDDS/en/proj_10c_esms.htm

Further information

Eurostat website: <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat>

Data on Tourism statistics:

<http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/tourism/data/database>

Further information about Tourism statistics:

<http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/tourism/introduction>

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