

Data extracted in March 2021

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" Tourists aged 65 or over accounted for nearly 1 in 4 tourism nights for private purposes spent by EU residents in 2019, while people aged 55+ accounted for 41 %. "

" More than half of European residents aged 65+ did not participate in tourism in 2019, compared with 30 % of people aged 15-64. "

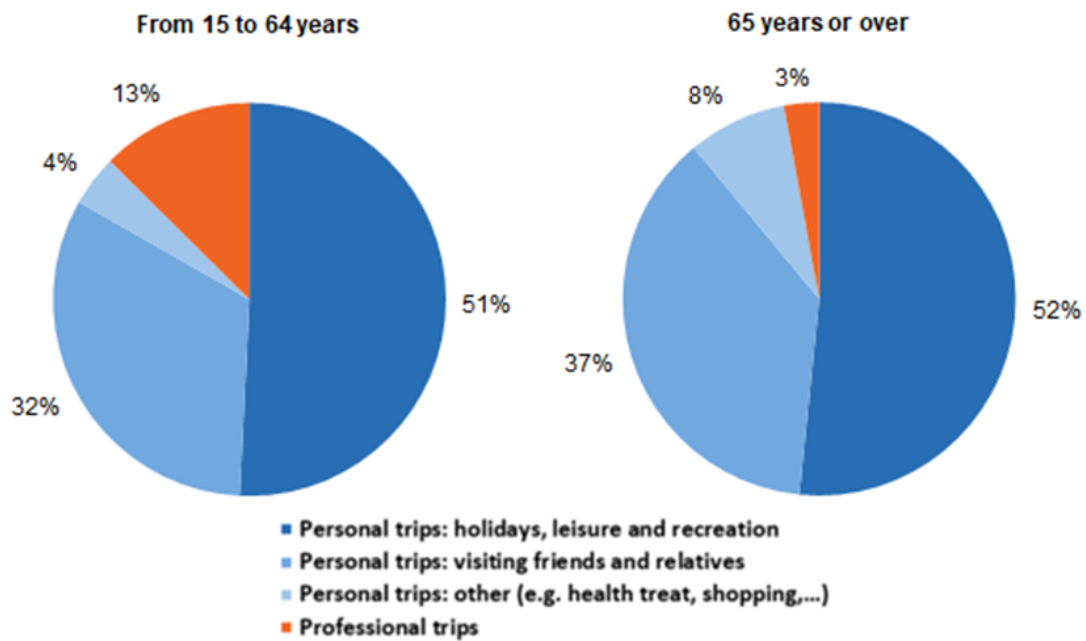
" Senior tourists make longer trips, preferably in their country of residence and staying at non-rented accommodation. "

This article looks at the relationship between age and [tourism](#) behaviour, focusing on senior citizens. It compares the participation in tourism of EU residents aged 65 or over with younger age groups and analyses tourism preferences in terms of destination, period of travel, length of stay, type of accommodation used and expenditure habits during trips. This article was based on earlier analyses performed for the workshop of the Directorate General Growth of the European Commission ' [Towards an age-friendly tourism: Opportunities for low and medium season](#) ' which took place in Brussels in September 2016. The data in this revised version refers to the year 2019, unless footnoted differently.

Senior tourists visit more often relatives and friends

European statistics on [trips](#) of EU [residents](#) cover both those for personal and professional reasons. Since this article focuses on comparing senior citizens with the rest of the population, only trips for personal purposes are considered for this publication. Figure 1 justifies this limitation of the scope in terms of purpose of the trip. It shows that only 3 % of trips made by EU residents aged 65 or over were for professional purposes, while in the other age groups business trips accounted for 13 % of all tourism trips made.

Share of different purposes in the total number of trips made by EU residents, 2019 (%)



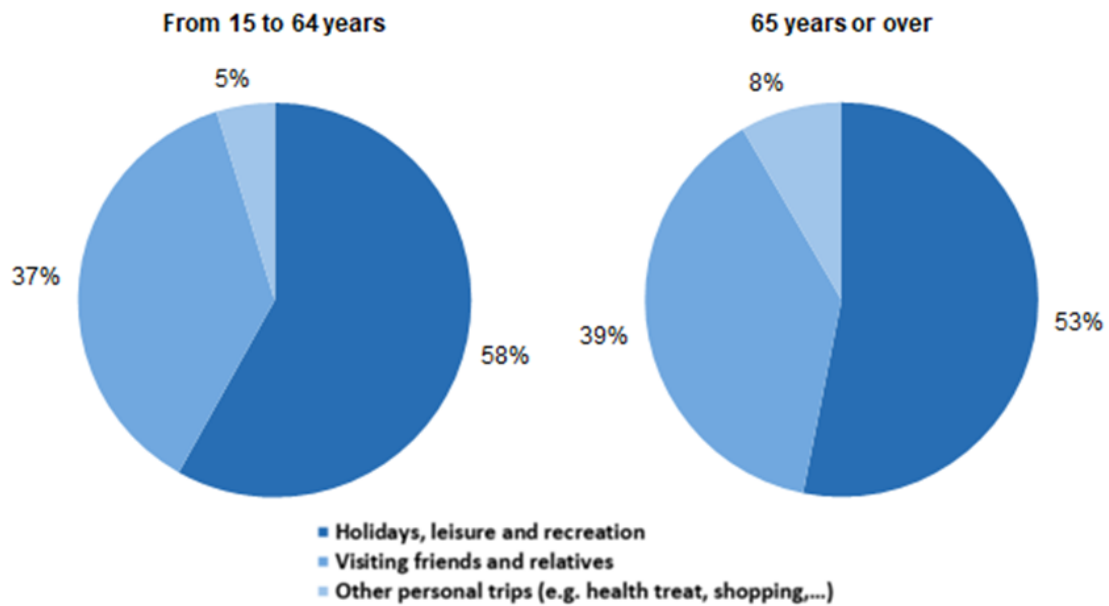
Source: Eurostat (online data code: tour_dem_ttpur)



Figure 1: Share of different purposes in the total number of trips made by EU residents, 2019 (%) Source: Eurostat (tour_dem_ttpur)

Within the trips for personal purposes, the share of trips for leisure, holidays and recreation was lower for senior travellers, while the other two categories "visiting friends and relatives" and "other private/personal purposes" (including trips relating to health treatment) were higher (see Figure 2).

Share of different purposes in the total number of personal trips made by EU residents, 2019 (%)



Source: Eurostat (online data code: tour_dem_ttpur)

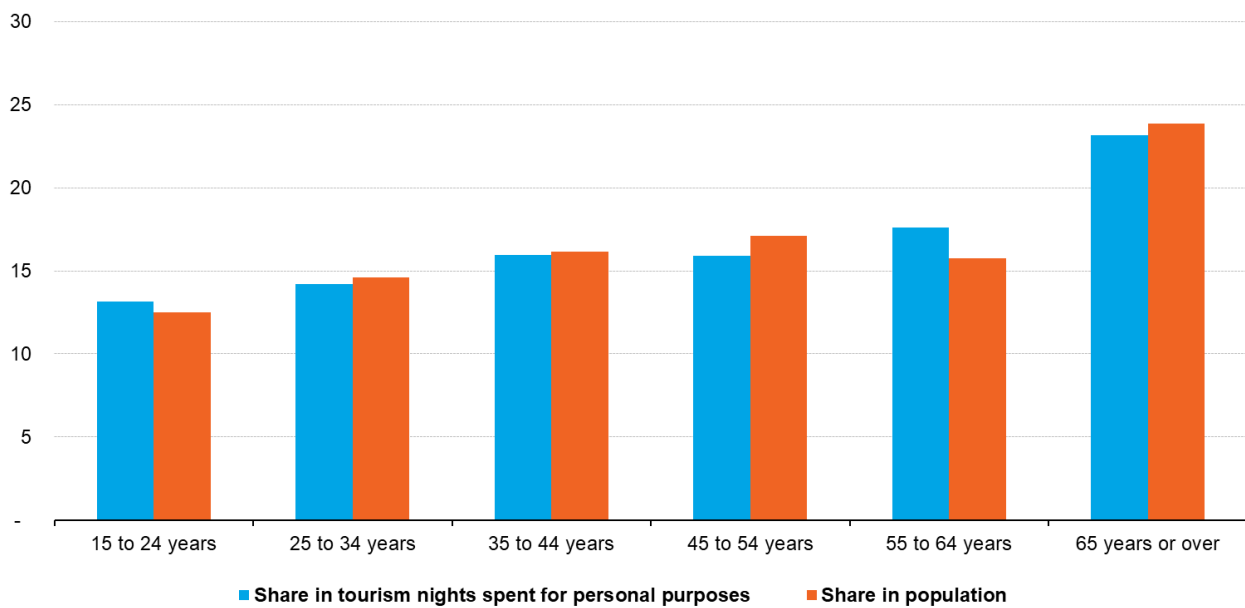
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Figure 2: Share of different purposes in the total number of personal trips made by EU residents, 2019 (%)
Source: Eurostat (tour_dem_ttpur)

Does retirement boost travel?

Tourists aged 65 or over accounted for nearly 1 in 4 (23 %) [tourism nights](#) for private purposes spent by EU residents aged 15 or over (see Figure 3). This figure was close to this age group's share in the population aged 15+ (24 %).

Share of age groups in the nights spent during personal trips of EU residents and in the EU population aged 15 years or over, 2019 (%)



Source: Eurostat (online data codes: demo_pjangroup, tour_dem_tnage)

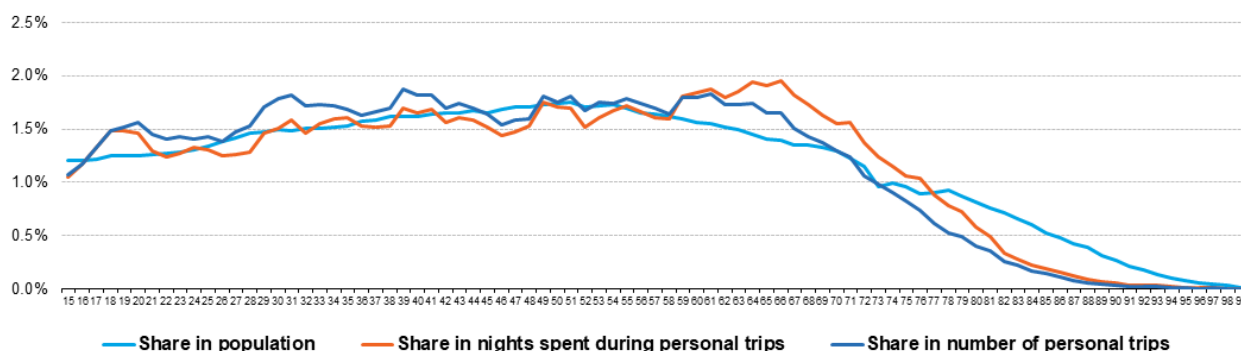
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Figure 3: Share of age groups in the nights spent during personal trips of EU residents and in the EU population aged 15 years or over, 2019 (%) Source: Eurostat (tour_dem_tnage) (demo_pjangroup)

Figure 4 shows the share of each age category in the total number of tourism trips and nights and in the total population 15+. With the exception of young Europeans, aged between 18 and 20 years old who travelled more intensively, differences between the share of tourism and of the population until the age of 60 were relatively small. In other words tourism behaviour was not affected significantly by age. However, people between the ages of 60 and 74 travelled more intensively, making longer trips — probably because of the available time following retirement.

Looking at the population groups in greater detail, we see that people aged 60-74 generated 22 % of trips and 25 % of tourism nights for private purposes but represented 20 % of the population aged 15+. On the other hand people aged 75+ generated 5 % of trips and 7 % of tourism nights for private purposes although this group represented 11 % of the population aged 15+. People over 75 tended to travel less (in relation to their share of the population) — possibly due to a decreasing motivation to travel or to health issues.

Share by age in personal tourism trips and nights of EU residents (smoothed series) and in the EU population aged 15 years or over, 2019 (%)



Source: Eurostat (online data code: demo_pjan, tour_dem_tnage)



Figure 4: Share by age in personal tourism trips and nights of EU residents (smoothed series) and in the EU population aged 15 years or over, 2019 (%) Source: Eurostat (tour_dem_tnage) (demo_pjan)

Older people participate less in tourism

Table 1 shows that 18 % of the total number of EU residents who participated in tourism in 2019 were aged 65 years or over while this age group represents 24 % of the total population aged 15+. The share of each of the other age groups in the tourist population was at least equal or higher to the share of the respective group in the total population.

However, there were major differences between countries. In Sweden the share of the age group 65+ in the tourist population was equal to the share of this age group in the total population (24 %). On the other hand, in Bulgaria and Lithuania this age group amounted to less than 10 % of that country’s tourist population, while people aged 65+ made up respectively 25 % and 23 % of the total 15+ population.

Shares of different age groups in the tourist population and in the total population, 15 years and over, 2019 (%)

	15 to 24 years		25 to 34 years		35 to 44 years		45 to 54 years		55 to 64 years		65 years or over	
	Share in tourist population	Share in population	Share in tourist population	Share in population	Share in tourist population	Share in population	Share in tourist population	Share in population	Share in tourist population	Share in population	Share in tourist population	Share in population
EU	14.2	12.5	16.1	14.6	17.9	16.2	17.5	17.1	16.2	15.8	18.1	23.9
Belgium	13.9	13.7	17.8	15.6	19.2	15.6	18.7	16.6	15.9	15.8	14.6	22.8
Bulgaria	14.4	10.4	21.5	15.0	23.1	17.3	17.7	16.5	15.3	16.0	8.0	24.9
Czechia	11.8	10.8	17.2	15.6	20.8	19.3	17.4	16.5	14.8	14.6	18.0	23.3
Denmark ⁽¹⁾	15.7	15.1	16.3	15.3	15.3	14.5	17.9	16.7	14.6	14.8	20.2	23.4
Germany	12.3	12.0	16.5	14.8	15.1	14.1	17.0	17.4	18.9	16.9	20.2	24.9
Estonia ⁽¹⁾	12.8	11.4	20.1	17.0	19.7	16.6	16.9	15.8	15.0	15.7	15.5	23.6
Ireland	15.9	15.8	15.7	16.0	21.5	19.9	18.4	16.9	14.2	13.7	14.4	17.7
Greece	13.2	12.0	13.7	12.8	21.3	17.1	20.4	17.3	15.9	15.1	15.5	25.7
Spain	15.5	11.5	15.2	13.3	20.4	18.5	19.3	18.6	14.7	15.2	14.9	22.8
France	14.6	14.4	14.3	14.3	16.1	15.2	16.3	16.4	15.4	15.3	23.3	24.4
Croatia	19.2	12.8	15.4	14.4	21.1	16.0	17.1	15.8	14.3	17.0	12.9	24.0
Italy	13.2	11.2	14.4	12.5	18.9	15.5	20.3	18.6	16.6	15.8	16.6	26.4
Cyprus	18.8	15.3	23.1	20.1	19.4	16.7	14.7	14.7	12.2	14.0	11.8	19.2
Latvia	13.5	10.9	19.4	16.3	19.2	15.7	17.7	16.2	16.1	16.8	14.2	24.1
Lithuania	18.6	12.4	21.1	15.7	16.8	14.4	21.1	16.9	13.1	17.3	9.2	23.3
Luxembourg	15.0	13.8	17.3	18.2	21.3	18.3	17.2	18.0	14.9	14.5	14.4	17.1
Hungary	13.2	12.6	14.4	14.9	20.8	18.4	18.7	16.3	15.0	15.3	17.8	22.6
Malta	15.3	12.8	25.4	20.1	18.2	17.5	16.4	13.6	11.9	14.5	12.7	21.6
Netherlands	15.3	14.7	16.2	15.1	14.7	14.1	17.6	17.3	16.2	16.0	20.0	22.8
Austria	14.0	12.8	17.2	15.9	16.4	15.4	18.9	17.9	16.6	16.0	16.9	22.0
Poland	17.4	12.2	19.4	17.3	21.8	18.7	14.3	14.7	14.2	16.3	12.9	20.9
Portugal	13.5	12.3	10.5	12.7	22.6	16.8	18.3	17.2	15.3	15.8	19.7	25.3
Romania	15.2	12.5	23.5	15.2	21.9	17.8	16.4	17.5	12.5	15.0	10.5	22.0
Slovenia	13.4	11.0	18.6	14.3	20.8	17.6	19.5	17.0	15.1	16.7	12.6	23.4
Slovakia	13.8	12.3	17.8	17.4	22.8	19.5	19.4	16.0	11.8	15.7	14.4	19.0
Finland	14.4	13.3	16.8	15.2	16.9	15.1	15.7	14.7	15.8	15.8	20.4	26.0
Sweden ⁽¹⁾	12.9	13.8	12.7	17.0	12.5	15.2	16.2	16.0	21.4	13.8	24.3	24.2
Norway	14.3	15.1	18.2	16.8	18.0	16.0	19.1	16.9	15.3	14.3	15.1	20.9
Switzerland	13.3	12.5	16.6	16.2	18.3	16.4	18.6	17.8	15.4	15.3	17.9	21.7
North Macedonia	16.0	14.8	23.5	18.4	20.2	18.1	17.2	16.7	12.9	15.3	10.2	16.8
Albania	18.5	18.7	22.7	18.4	14.9	14.0	16.0	15.6	16.2	16		

⁽¹⁾ 2018 data.

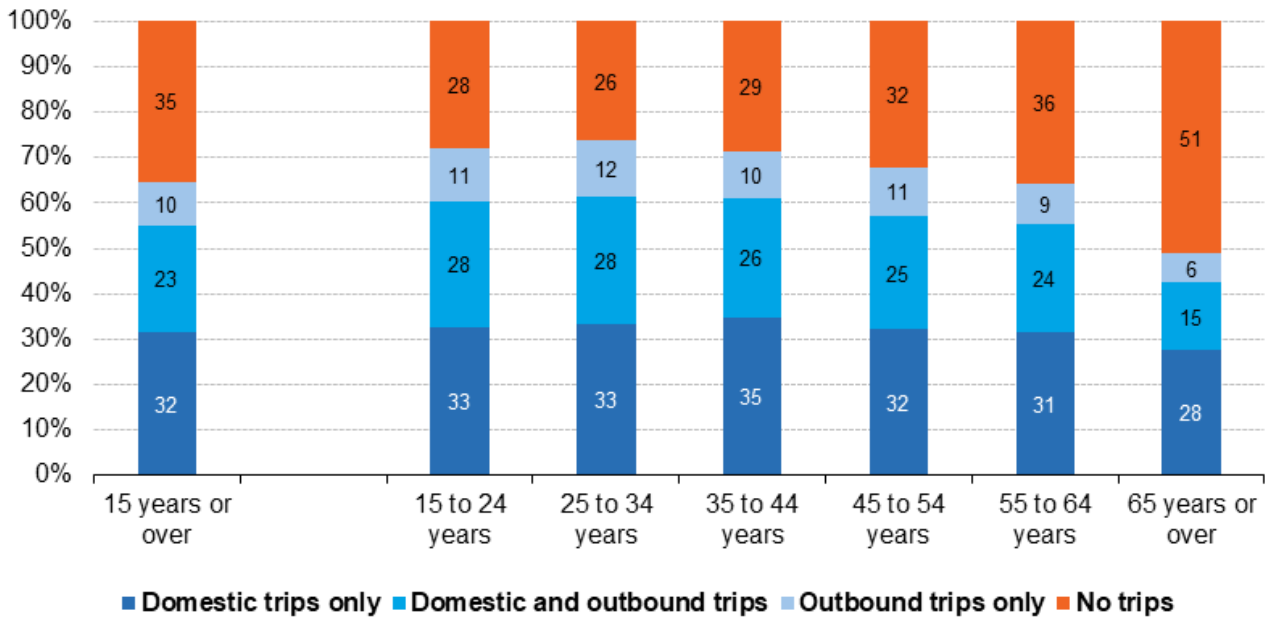
Source: Eurostat (online data codes: tour_dem_toage, demo_pjangroup)

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Table 1: Shares of different age groups in the tourist population and in the total population, 15 years and over, 2019 (%) Source: Eurostat (tour_dem_toage) (tps00010)

In 2019, 35 % of the EU residents aged 15 and over did not participate in tourism, which means that they did not make any trip for personal purposes with at least one night away from home. Looking at age groups, more than half (51 %) of people aged 65+ did not undertake any trip (see Figure 5); this is by far the highest proportion of people not participating in tourism in any age group. Among the rest of the population (people aged 15-64), only 30 % on average did not make any trips.

Share of the EU population participating in tourism, by age group and destination, 2019 (%)



Source: Eurostat (online data codes: tour_dem_toage)



Figure 5: Share of the EU population participating in tourism, by age group and destination, 2019 (%) Source: Eurostat (tour_dem_toage)

Share of population not participating in tourism, by age group, 2019 (%)

	Non-tourist share of respective age groups within the respective age groups						
	15 years or over	15 to 24 years	25 to 34 years	35 to 44 years	45 to 54 years	55 to 64 years	65 years or over
EU	35.3	28.1	26.3	28.5	32.2	35.6	51.1
Belgium	31.9	27.4	23.6	23.7	27.1	35.2	50.1
Bulgaria	62.8	47.0	47.2	49.3	58.5	62.8	88.9
Czechia	21.7	13.9	12.1	14.0	19.1	20.4	40.4
Denmark ^(*)	30.1	29.0	25.2	26.5	25.1	30.5	39.5
Germany	23.5	21.9	14.8	18.4	16.4	21.0	38.5
Estonia ^(*)	20.5	11.4	7.5	4.7	14.5	24.1	47.3
Ireland	26.9	27.0	26.7	20.3	20.5	25.1	41.5
Greece	59.2	52.3	54.2	49.4	53.4	58.1	75.7
Spain	30.3	16.6	20.5	22.9	28.5	33.8	50.7
France	25.7	22.9	24.2	22.8	22.6	25.7	31.7
Croatia	46.0	24.0	27.3	33.4	47.4	55.0	69.7
Italy	55.1	49.9	44.9	45.4	51.0	53.5	71.7
Cyprus	27.5	13.4	18.6	18.3	26.1	37.1	52.4
Latvia	42.5	29.2	32.7	29.9	37.5	44.7	65.8
Lithuania	42.7	14.2	22.8	33.2	28.5	56.6	77.4
Luxembourg	17.0	10.2	12.1	12.8	16.3	19.9	30.5
Hungary	41.2	37.7	40.0	32.1	35.4	39.0	56.3
Malta	33.1	20.3	16.1	26.0	26.5	35.1	63.2
Netherlands	15.0	11.1	9.7	12.5	13.8	14.8	23.7
Austria	22.2	12.6	16.1	18.2	17.4	21.8	39.4
Poland	35.9	21.8	23.8	25.6	37.0	41.8	59.5
Portugal	50.7	44.8	50.5	39.2	45.5	54.9	62.3
Romania	71.4	65.8	55.4	64.7	73.5	75.8	86.4
Slovenia	34.1	17.5	13.1	22.2	24.5	40.6	65.3
Slovakia	24.7	13.0	18.0	15.0	18.6	35.7	45.2
Finland	17.0	11.7	11.4	11.0	12.0	18.9	29.4
Sweden ^(*)	15.1	17.1	7.1	5.9	9.9	13.4	25.3
Norway	9.7	11.3	8.6	5.0	5.2	9.9	19.0
Switzerland	12.7	7.9	6.6	7.6	8.3	12.8	27.5
North Macedonia	60.0	53.4	44.5	55.6	57.6	68.8	77.8
Albania	46.9	47.6	34.5	43.4	45.5		

(*) 2018 data.

Source: Eurostat (online data codes: tour_dem_toage)

eurostat 

Table 2: Share of population not participating in tourism, by age group, 2019 (%) Source: Eurostat (tour_dem_toage)

Table 2 shows that in all Member States the share of older people not participating in tourism was higher than the share of the general population aged 15+ not participating in tourism.

There were still major discrepancies between countries. The Netherlands and Sweden had the lowest general non-participation rates (only 15 % of the population aged 15+ did not engage in tourism), followed by Luxembourg and Finland (both with 17 %). These four countries also recorded the lowest rates of older people aged 65 or over not participating in tourism, with 24 % in the Netherlands, followed by Sweden (25 %), Finland (29 %) and Luxembourg (31 %). It should be mentioned here that Norway had even lower shares, with only 10 % of the population 15+ and 19% of people aged 65+ not participating in tourism.

On the other hand, Romania had the highest general non-participation rate (71 % of the population aged 15+), followed by Bulgaria (63 %), while the share of people aged 65+ not making any trips was respectively 86 % and 89 %.

Nearly half of the Europeans aged 65+ who did not make tourism trips mentioned health reasons

Europeans aged 65+ had very different reasons not to travel compared with other age groups. 47 % gave health as one of the main reasons, and this was the most frequently cited reason (see Figure 6). Among the rest of the population (aged 15 to 64), only 12 % cited health.

Furthermore, 35 % of persons aged 65+ showed no interest in travelling, while in the 15-64 age group, this figure was 20 %.

More than half (52 %) of the Europeans aged 15-64 who did not make tourism trips mentioned financial reasons, while only one out of three (33 %) persons aged 65+ cited financial considerations as a reason for not travelling.

Main reasons reported by EU residents for not participating in tourism by age group, 2019 (%)



Source: Eurostat (online data codes: tour_dem_npage)

eurostat

Figure 6: Main reasons reported by EU residents for not participating in tourism by age group, 2019 (%)
Source: Eurostat (tour_dem_npage)

This disparity was mirrored at national level. In Table 3, the most frequently cited reason for not travelling is highlighted for each country and for each age group (15-64 and 65+). Looking at the 15-64 age group, in 23 of the 27 EU Member States, financial reasons were mentioned most frequently. Among people aged 65+, health reasons were the most commonly stated reason in 17 out of the 27 Member States, followed by no interest to travel in six

Member States and financial reasons in the remaining four Member States.

Main reasons reported for not participating in tourism by age group, 2019 (%)

	Aged 15 to 64 years						Aged 65 or over					
	Share of population not participating in tourism	Share of main reasons reported within the non participating population					Share of population not participating in tourism	Share of main reasons reported within the non participating population				
		Financial	Health	No interest	Family	Work or study		Financial	Health	No interest	Family	Work or study
EU	30.3	51.6	11.8	20.4	17.3	29.2	51.1	32.6	47.0	35.1	11.2	3.4
Belgium	27.4	52.4	12.8	24.0	11.8	15.2	50.1	30.3	33.4	37.4	6.3	1.2 (u)
Bulgaria	53.4	48.5	6.0	1.0	15.4	28.5	88.9	48.3	44.5	0.6	5.0	0.9
Czechia	15.9	37.1	23.9	15.5	21.7	16.1	40.4	15.0	70.5	26.3	3.8	: (u)
Denmark(*)	15.2	32.6	7.7	1.1	1.5	18.1	39.5	5.5	58.4	4.8	0.6	0.5
Germany	18.5	30.9	19.6	31.3	28.3	34.4	38.5	17.3 (u)	53.2	39.9	16.1 (u)	: (u)
Estonia(*)	23.8	37.8	21.0	26.9	17.8	19.3	47.3	38.6 (u)	53.4 (u)	29.4 (u)	: (u)	: (u)
Ireland	23.6	48.1	11.1	25.0	16.8	23.6	41.5	26.8	50.6	38.7	7.7	2.1
Greece	53.4	68.0	5.1	12.2	12.4	20.2	75.7	46.2	53.3	33.0	6.4	1.6
Spain	24.9	55.7	11.1	22.0	18.4	27.3	50.7	26.9	51.3	37.5	11.1	: (u)
France	23.6	68.4	22.6	37.3	19.3	33.8	31.7	45.8	48.2	53.0	15.5	3.3 (u)
Croatia	38.9	48.3	12.3	20.3	29.1	19.8	69.7	36.3	70.2	17.9	: (u)	4.0 (u)
Italy	49.2	50.6	4.5	11.5	13.5	27.7	71.7	23.6	33.4	34.3	13.7	1.8
Cyprus	22.0	51.6	7.1	10.6	16.3	20.9	52.4	28.1	50.4	16.1	7.8	1.3 (u)
Latvia	35.3	56.5	7.8	20.3	28.9	24.0	65.8	39.8	52.3	22.7	11.7 (u)	: (u)
Lithuania	32.2	17.4	6.2	9.5	2.2	11.8	77.4	30.5	10.8	16.7	3.9	20.7
Luxembourg	14.3	40.5	13.4	17.0	16.0	14.8	30.5	20.3 (u)	38.9 (u)	33.5 (u)	: (u)	: (u)
Hungary	36.5	25.0	23.1	5.2	5.2	18.8	56.3	25.0	23.1	5.2	5.2	18.8
Malta	24.0	30.9	10.7	22.4	15.1	19.1	63.2	13.1 (u)	50.2	30.7	: (u)	: (u)
Netherlands	12.5	42.9	16.2	26.9	7.0	13.2	23.7	20.1	45.6	35.5	4.5	1.0
Austria	17.5	27.0	13.0	43.1	34.3	37.2	39.4	17.7	55.8	49.4	:	: (u)
Poland	29.8	62.5	13.3	16.2	16.4	40.3	59.5	59.3	57.2	36.5	6.5	9.5
Portugal	46.7	63.2	13.5	55.7	19.6	48.8	62.3	58.9	55.6	70.8	18.1	5.8
Romania	67.2	54.8	4.7	7.0	13.9	25.2	86.4	41.4	51.4	14.7	6.1	2.7
Slovenia	24.4	34.1	16.5	26.3	7.7	29.5	65.3	26.5	60.4	20.1	3.6	2.4
Slovakia	19.7	39.7	21.2	28.6	35.7	13.5	45.2	34.1	67.9	50.6	13.0	: (u)
Finland	13.1	25.5	10.5	26.0	9.3	11.9	29.4	8.6 (u)	32.2	33.9	6.2 (u)	1.6 (u)
Sweden(*)	21.8	49.2	14.7	58.3	5.9	13.1	25.3	36.5	34.8	67.8	2.9	2.0
Norway	7.8	22.0	14.7	22.7	11.1	16.1	19.0	10.2	37.5	25.0	0.0	9.9
Switzerland	8.6	43.4	19.5	14.1	11.5	22.2	27.5	11.6 (u)	53.3 (u)	23.1 (u)	6.5 (u)	2.2 (u)
North Macedonia	56.0	55.5	3.7	7.3	12.6	25.9	77.8	23.5	51.7	21.7	8.9	0.3
Albania	43.5	69.8	3.2	3.7	6.1	16.8	63.5	50.0	38.1	7.9	2.2 (u)	1.6 (u)

(*) 2016 data.

":=" not available or very unreliable.

"u"= unreliable.

Note: Percentages do not add up to 100 % due to multiple answers possibility.

Source: Eurostat (online data codes: tour_dem_npage, demo_pjgroup)

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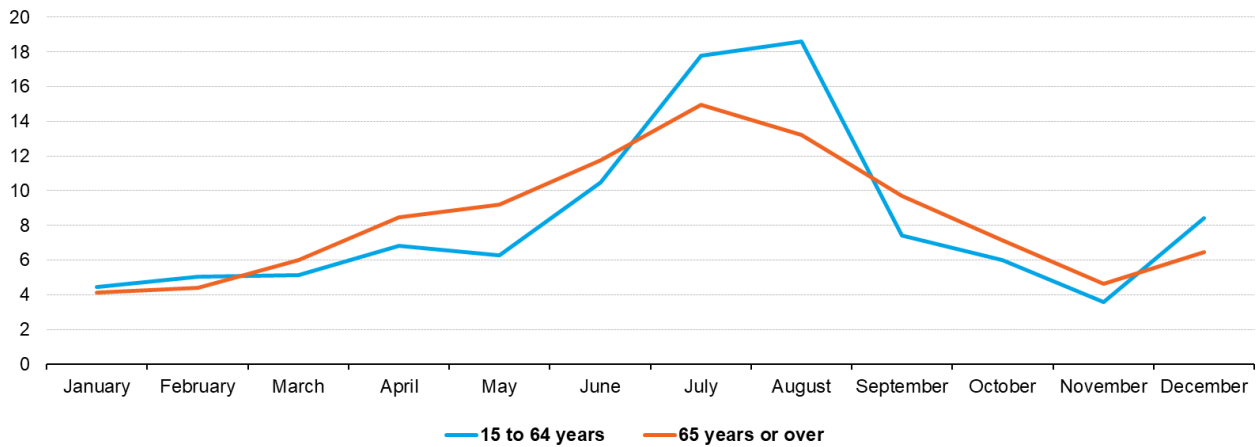
Table 3: Main reasons reported for not participating in tourism by age group, 2019 (%) Source: Eurostat (tour_dem_npage) (demo_pjgroup)

Seasonal patterns

In order to observe how the seasonal patterns of travel habits change with age, this chapter compares the distribution of nights spent by the two age groups 15-64 and 65+ over the year.

Figure 7 shows that younger people tend to travel during school holidays and were therefore over represented in the summer season, while older people travelled more in the 'shoulder season', i.e. the travel period between peak and off-peak seasons, with a less pronounced summer peak. The difference between 65+ and the younger age groups was most pronounced just before summer (April, May, June) or early autumn (September, October), meaning older tourists are extending the peak tourism season.

Distribution of tourism nights spent by EU residents per month, for two age groups, 2019 (%)



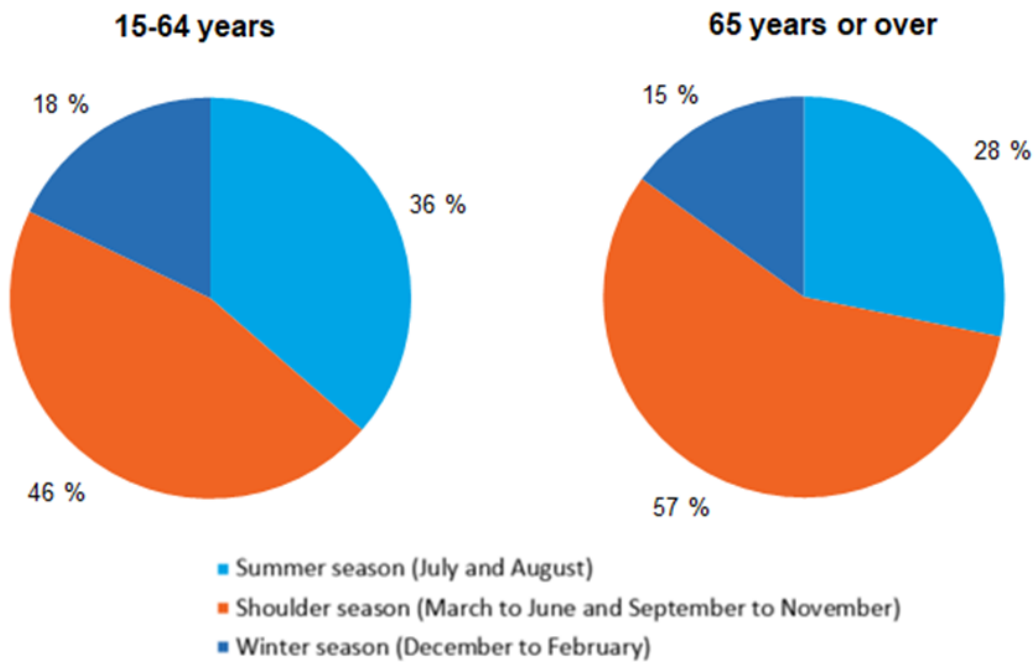
Source: Eurostat (online data code: tour_dem_tnmd)



Figure 7: Distribution of tourism nights spent by EU residents per month, for two age groups, 2019 (%)
Source: Eurostat (tour_dem_tnmd)

The peak season, the shoulder season and the winter season for the two age groups are now analysed using pie charts. As shown before, for people aged 65+, the shoulder season was much more pronounced (more than half of all nights were spent during this time) than the typical peak season (28 % of their tourism nights were spent in July or August). Furthermore Figure 8 shows that for people aged 15-64, over half (54 %) of the nights were spent in the summer or winter season.

Distribution of tourism nights spent by EU residents per season, for two age groups, 2019 (%)



Source: Eurostat (online data code: tour_dem_tnmd)

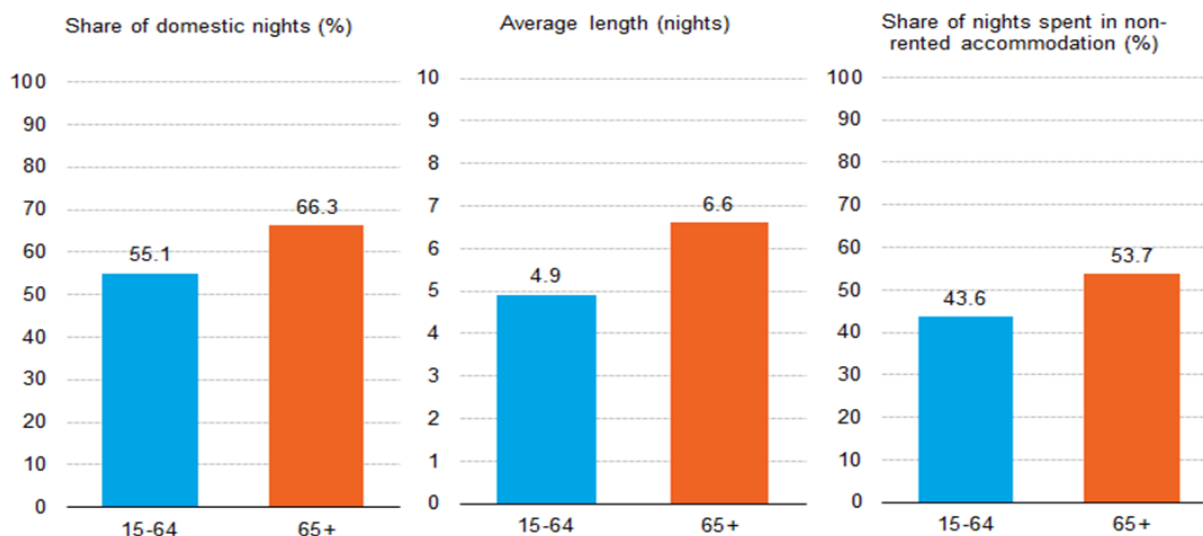
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Figure 8: Distribution of tourism nights spent by EU residents per season, for two age groups, 2019 (%)
Source: Eurostat (tour_dem_tnmd)

Travel preferences and expenditure of tourists aged 65 years or over

Tourists aged 65+ were more likely to make longer tourism trips, trips within their country of residence (domestic trips) and trips spent at [non-rented accommodation](#), for instance at holiday homes they owned (see Figure 9).

Travel preferences of EU residents, with respect to different age groups, 2019



Source: Eurostat (online data codes: tour_dem_tnac, tour_dem_tnhd, tour_dem_tntot, tour_dem_tttot)

eurostat

Figure 9: Travel preferences of EU residents, with respect to different age groups, 2019 Source: Eurostat (tour_dem_tntot) (tour_dem_tttot) (tour_dem_tnhd) (tour_dem_tnac)

These findings were mirrored at national level as can be seen in Table 4. The overall conclusions at EU level are the same for most Member States.

The share of domestic nights was higher for people aged 65+ than for people aged 15-64 in most EU countries. Only in Belgium, Bulgaria and Malta the share of domestic nights was equal or lower for senior tourists compared with the other age groups.

EU residents aged 65+ made on average longer trips than people aged 15-64, with the exception of Cyprus and Lithuania. Furthermore, the older age group spent more nights in non-rented accommodation when compared to the younger age groups except for Germany and Austria.

Travel preferences with respect to different age groups, 2019

	Domestic nights (%)		Average Length (nights)		Nights spent in non-rented accommodation (%)	
	15-64	65+	15-64	65+	15-64	65+
EU	55.1	66.3	4.9	6.6	43.6	53.7
Belgium	11.2	11.2	6.5	8.7	33.0	36.6
Bulgaria	70.6	57.9	4.3	6.3	35.4	68.1
Czechia	63.1	87.6	4.0	5.8	49.9	78.3
Denmark	43.0	48.3	4.7	5.5	35.4	38.4
Germany	36.8	43.0	5.7	7.2	31.0	27.9
Estonia	41.6	42.5	3.2	4.2	40.4	67.2
Ireland	28.4	32.7	4.6	5.2	30.8	44.8
Greece	85.8	92.5	9.2	18.3	72.7	89.3
Spain	79.1	91.6	3.8	5.9	59.6	73.2
France	77.0	83.6	4.8	6.8	51.3	63.0
Croatia	66.4	71.0	4.9	10.0	60.6	83.2
Italy	65.6	82.3	5.6	7.4	44.0	55.3
Cyprus	19.9	38.3	5.6	5.3	47.8	69.1
Latvia	42.3	49.4	3.3	5.1	52.7	79.3
Lithuania	33.6	49.5	4.5	4.0	48.2	55.9
Luxembourg	0.5	:(u)	6.5	9.2	40.6	44.7
Hungary	44.0	76.7	3.9	4.0	43.7	65.9
Malta	15.6	13.7	4.8	6.5	17.2	39.8
Netherlands	31.6	41.6	6.3	8.6	37.4	53.6
Austria	33.6	43.9	4.8	5.3	27.5	24.4
Poland	62.4	72.9	5.5	7.1	43.0	58.3
Portugal	77.1	84.9	3.8	5.2	60.0	79.7
Romania	84.1	85.2	3.8	4.0	55.2	88.3
Slovenia	21.3	33.6	4.3	5.6	26.8	49.9
Slovakia	48.8	57.7	4.4	5.7	33.2	50.5
Finland	56.2	64.2	3.6	5.2	51.5	63.3
Sweden	47.0	51.5	4.9	5.3	50.8	54.0
Norway	43.2	32.8	4.8	6.6	51.9	49.9
Switzerland	18.2	19.0	7.1	8.7	35.9	31.9
North Macedonia	21.2	34.2	5.9	7.4	45.9	68.8

":" = not available or very unreliable.

"u"= unreliable.

Source: Eurostat (online data codes: tour_dem_tnac, tour_dem_tnhd, tour_dem_tntot, tour_d

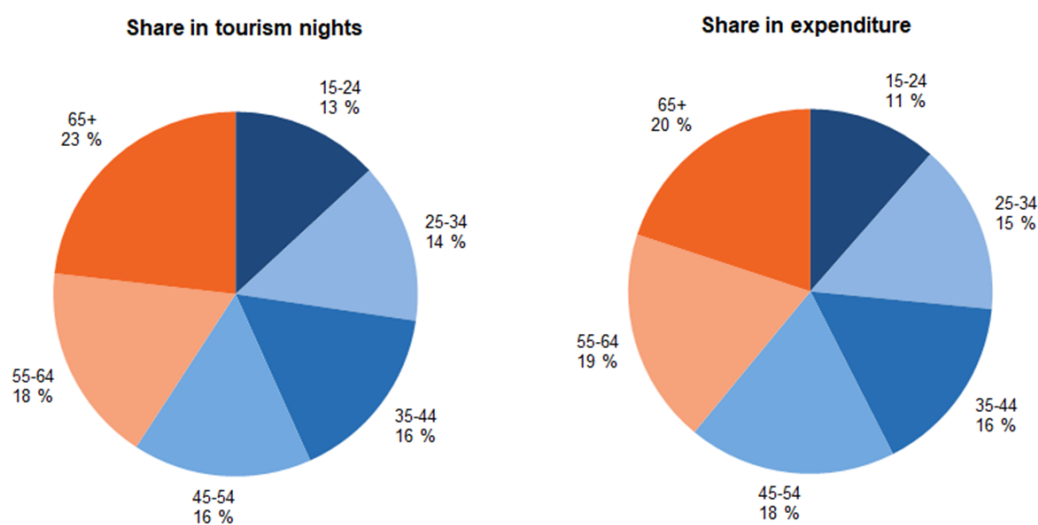
eurostat 

Table 4: Travel preferences with respect to different age groups, 2019 Source: Eurostat (tour_dem_tntot) (tour_dem_tttot) (tour_dem_tnhd) (tour_dem_tnac)

The above findings are significant when you consider the expenditure per night of people aged 65+, since older tourists spent less on transport and on accommodation as domestic holidays and non-rented accommodation are generally cheaper.

On average, i.e. regardless of the type of the trip, tourists aged 65+ spent less. Figure 10 shows that people aged 65+ accounted for 23 % of all nights spent by Europeans, but their share of tourism expenditure was 20 %. This can partially be explained by the travel habits of older tourists outlined in the previous paragraph.

Share of different age groups in the total number of tourism nights and expenditure of EU residents, 2019 (%)



Source: Eurostat (online data code: tour_dem_tnage, tour_dem_exage)

eurostat 

Figure 10: Share of different age groups in the total number of tourism nights and expenditure of EU residents, 2019 (%) Source: Eurostat (tour_dem_tnage) (tour_dem_exage)

Figures 11a to 11d look at groups of trips that are similar in nature in order to reduce the structural effects of the trip's characteristics. In other words: do senior tourists show different expenditure habits when considering comparable types of trips?

Figure 11a shows the overall difference regardless of the type of trip: on average older residents spent less all year round (-17%). However, when taking into account the observations on the travel preferences highlighted above (see Figure 8) and looking at the differences in spending between age groups for similar types of trips, the effect is far less pronounced.

Average daily tourism expenditure of EU residents, by month, for different types of trips and two age groups, 2019

Figure 11a: Expenditure per night for any trip done for private purposes

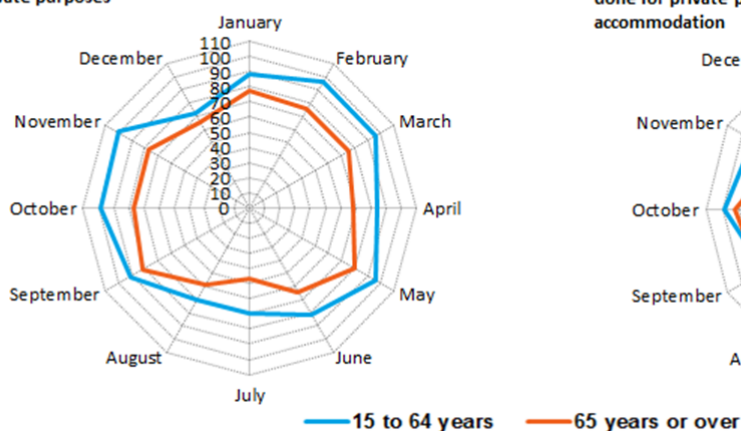


Figure 11b: Expenditure per night for long domestic trips done for private purposes, spent at rented accommodation

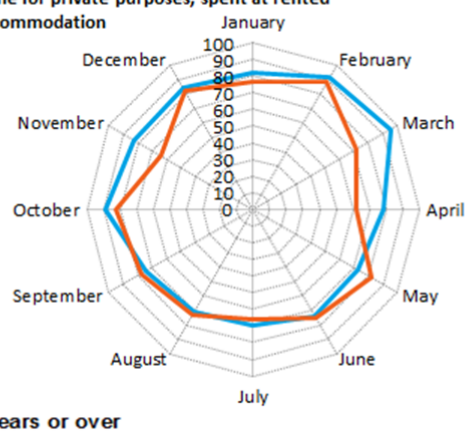


Figure 11c: Expenditure per night for long, outbound trips done for private purposes, spent at rented accommodation

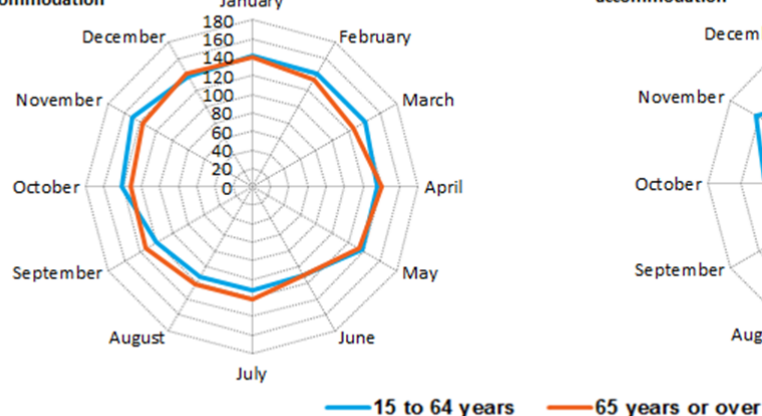
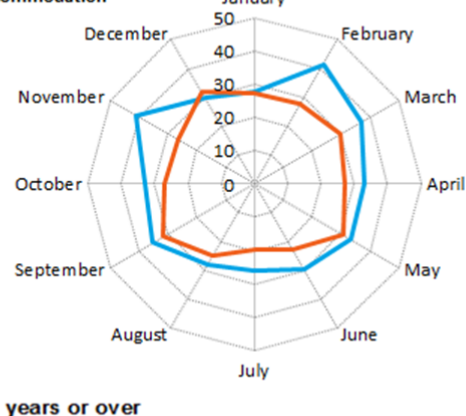


Figure 11d: Expenditure per night for long, domestic trips done for private purposes, spent at non-rented accommodation



Source: Eurostat (online data codes: tnage, exage)

eurostat 

Figures 11a-11d: Average daily tourism expenditure of EU residents, by month, for different types of trips and two age groups, 2019 (EUR) Source: Eurostat (tour_dem_tnage) (tour_dem_exage)

Figures 11b to 11d show the difference in expenditure for the three most popular types of trips that accounted for more than two thirds of all nights spent by EU residents. During long domestic trips spent at rented accommodation, the average daily expenditure of persons aged 65+ was nearly equal to the expenditure of people aged 15-64 (Figure 11b), while for similar outbound trips (Figure 11c) the average expenditure was higher for senior tourists (+4%).

However, when looking at long domestic trips spent in non-rented accommodation, Figure 11d shows that the average daily expenditure of people aged 65+ was 15 % lower than that of people aged 15-64.

Source data for tables and graphs

- [Download Excel file](#)

Data sources

Collection of annual data on trips of EU residents

The collection consists of harmonised data collected by the Member States in the frame of the [Regulation 692/2011](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning European statistics on [tourism](#) .

The data come from household surveys carried out by the national statistics authorities in the Member States. Data are collected partly using questionnaires to gather information on trips made, the purpose of the trip, the destination, the main means of transport, the type of accommodation and expenditure. Information is also collected on the month of departure and the age of the traveller.

Around 500 000 individual trips made by EU residents are recorded for each reference year.

Context

The EU is a major tourist destination, with four Member States among the world's top ten destinations for holidaymakers, according to UNWTO¹ data. Tourism is an important activity in the EU which has the potential to contribute towards employment and economic growth, as well as to development in rural, peripheral or less-developed areas. These characteristics drive the demand for reliable and harmonised statistics within this field, as well as within the wider context of regional policy and sustainable development policy areas.

Other articles

- [News release on ageing and tourism](#) at the occasion of the 2016 World Tourism Day
- [Tourism trips of Europeans](#) (online publication)
- [All articles on tourism statistics](#)

Main tables

- [Tourism \(t_tour\)](#) , see:

Annual data on trips of EU residents (t_tour_dem)

Database

- [Tourism \(tour\)](#) , see:

Annual data on trips of EU residents (tour_dem)

Dedicated section

- [Tourism statistics](#)

¹ [UNWTO Tourism Highlights](#)

Publications

- [Recent Eurostat publications on tourism](#)

Methodology

- [Annual data on trips of EU residents](#) (ESMS metadata file — tour_dem_esms)

Other information

- With 2012 as reference year:
- [Regulation \(EU\) No 692/2011](#) of 6 July 2011 concerning European statistics on tourism and repealing Council Directive 95/57/EC.
 - [Summaries of EU Legislation: Tourism statistics](#)
 - [Regulation \(EU\) No 1051/2011](#) of 20 October 2011 implementing Regulation (EU) No 692/2011 concerning European statistics on tourism, as regards the structure of the quality reports and the transmission of the data.

External links

- [Agenda for a sustainable and competitive European tourism](#) (Communication from the European Commission, October 2007)
- [European Commission - Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs - Tourism](#)
- [Virtual Tourism Observatory](#)