

HOW EUROPEANS GO ON HOLIDAY

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Statistics in focus

INDUSTRY, TRADE
AND SERVICES

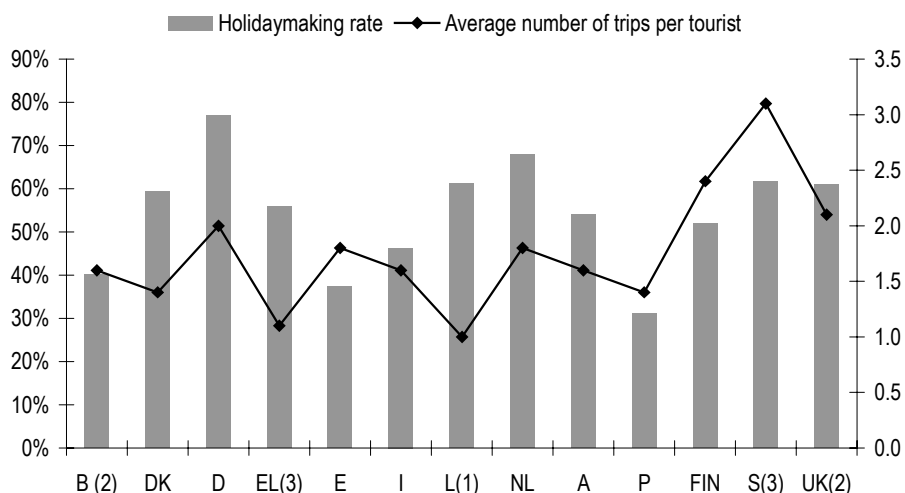
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Note: (1)=2001, (2)=1999, (3)=1997

Figure 1: Holidaymaking rate (% of the population spending within the year at least one trip of four nights or more away from the usual residence) and the average number of trips per tourist, 2000

If we look only at data on holidays comprising four or more overnight stays, several major trends emerge in European holidaymaking. The percentage of the population going on holiday differs from one Member State to the next: from 31.2% of Portuguese to 76.9% of Germans. The frequency of trips also varies according to the country of origin of the tourist. Sweden, for example, shows the highest average number of trips per tourist, at 3.1; tourists from Finland and the United Kingdom each took, on average, more than two trips of four or more overnight stays. Out of 14 countries, seven (Greece, Spain, Italy, Portugal, Finland, Sweden and the United Kingdom) recorded more domestic trips (holidays spent in the country of origin) than outbound trips (holidays abroad), and the remaining seven (Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Austria) the opposite. Although the destinations of European holidaymakers are extremely diverse, the European Union still heads the list.

European holidaymakers show some other general trends. Tourists aged between 25-44 travel the most, followed by the 45-64 age bracket. This predominance is explained by economic factors and to some extent also by the demographic size of these two age classes. The vast majority of European tourists go on holiday in August or July, and the fewest in November. Over half of the trips recorded in Denmark, Ireland, Austria, Finland, Sweden and the United Kingdom involve stays of 4 to 7 nights. Private accommodation tends to be preferred, with hotels and similar establishments the second choice.

Private or hired vehicles are the mode of transport used most frequently by European tourists. Air transport is popular with British and Luxemburgish tourists. The importance of rail travel to French holidaymakers is worth noting.

VOLUME: NUMBERS OF HOLIDAYMAKERS AND NUMBERS OF TRIPS PER TOURIST

If we exclude tourists aged under 15, we can get a global picture of the percentage of the population of each EU Member State going away on holiday. German and Dutch residents show the highest propensity for taking holidays of four-nights plus, with 76.9% and 67.9% of the population respectively. Portugal, at 31.2%, has the lowest holidaymaking rate in the European Union. Spain comes next at 37.3%, followed by Belgium (40.2%), while Luxembourg, Sweden and the United Kingdom all have a holidaymaking propensity rate exceeding 60%.

Trip frequency, defined as the relationship between the number of trips and the number of tourists, is the second statistic used to assess the volume of tourism demand. Sweden has the highest average number of trips per tourist (3.1) in the European Union. Finland, Germany and the United Kingdom record relatively high figures of two trips per tourist. In most countries (Belgium, Denmark, Spain, Italy, Austria and Portugal), trip frequency lies between 1.2 and 1.8.

HOLIDAY DESTINATIONS

Table 1: Holidaymaking rate and breakdown of trips by destination, 2000

Holiday tourists*		Trips by destination			
%	Departure rate	Domestic	Outbound		
		Total	Total	of which in the EU	of which outside the EU
B	⁽²⁾ 40.2	17.9	82.1	73.9	26.1
DK	59.3	30.9	69.1	68.2	31.8
D	76.9	34.0	66.0	66.2	33.8
EL ⁽³⁾	⁽⁴⁾ 56.0	95.5	4.5	43.4	56.6
E	37.3	89.7	10.3	59.4	40.6
F	:	:	:	:	:
IRL	:	39.9	60.1	79.4	20.6
I	46.3	77.2	22.8	55.3	44.7
L	⁽¹⁾ 61.1	0.4	99.6	79.8	20.2
NL	67.9	37.0	63.0	74.7	25.3
A	54.0	31.8	68.2	54.0	46.0
P	31.2	82.0	18.0	74.2	25.8
FIN	51.9	71.4	28.6	61.0	39.0
S ⁽⁴⁾	61.8	69.9	30.1	67.3	32.7
UK ⁽²⁾	60.9	55.0	45.0	65.8	34.2

Note: (1)=2001, (2)=1999, (3)=1998, (4)=1997

* : % of population aged over 14 spending in the year at least one trip of 4 nights or more away from the usual residence

European Union holidaymakers differ in their destination preferences. Tourists from Greece, Spain, Italy, Portugal, Finland, Sweden and the United Kingdom tend to spend their holidays in their own country. More than 95% of holidays taken by Greeks are in Greece itself, and the equivalent for Spain is around 90%. Holidaymakers in a second group of countries (Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Austria) tend to venture abroad on

holiday, with 99.6% of Luxemburgish holidaymakers and over 60% of holidaymakers in the other six countries spending their holidays elsewhere.

The European Union remains the favourite destination of those going abroad. 79.8% of the holidays of Luxemburgers venturing abroad are spent in the EU. Belgium, the Netherlands, Ireland and Portugal also exceed the threshold of 70% of foreign holidays spent in

the EU. Only Greeks prefer holiday destinations outside the EU.

It comes as no surprise that the Mediterranean countries are the leading destinations for European Union tourists. If we look at those taking holidays abroad but inside the EU, 20.1% of Belgian, 29% of

German, 44.3% of Irish, 23.5% of Italian and 37% of Finnish holidaymakers all head for Spain. France is the EU foreign holiday destination for 44.7% of Belgian, 19.3% of Danish, 26.5% of Italian, 24.9% of Luxemburgish, 23.5% of Netherlands and 18.4% of British holidaymakers.

AGE GROUPS OF HOLIDAYMAKERS

With respect to the total number of tourists (excluding holidaymakers aged under 15), the majority of European Union tourists are aged between 25 and 44. The highest proportion (44%) of this age group is found amongst Italian holidaymakers, and relatively high shares (above 40%) amongst those from Belgium, Spain, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Austria, Portugal and Sweden.

In terms of numbers, tourists aged between 45 and 64 are next in line. Finland and Sweden stand out with over 35% of tourists in this age group. Of the remaining two classes, the 15-24 market supplies more tourists than the 65-plus group. The United Kingdom is the exception to this rule, with 17% of all British tourists aged 65 or over and only 15% aged between 15 and 24.

The destination preferences of the various age

groups (domestic, outbound or both) reflect or accentuate the general trends in the countries concerned. At least 70% of Greeks, Spaniards, Italians and Portuguese in all age groups prefer to take their holidays in their home country, while Belgians, Danes, Luxemburgers, Dutch and Austrians tend to travel abroad, as pointed out earlier. In Belgium, the 45-64 age bracket boosts this trend with a rate of 77.2%, and Danes in this age group show a similar preference for trips abroad (63.9%).

Domestic destinations are the choice of 95% of the 15-24 age class in Greece and 89.1% of over-65s in Spain. Except in Finland (and, where over-65s are concerned, the Netherlands), fewer than 20% of tourists take holidays in both their own country and abroad.

Table 2: Breakdown of tourists by age group and destination, 2000

%	15-24 years				25-44 years				45-64 years				65 years and +			
	Total	Domestic	Outbound	Both	Total	Domestic	Outbound	Both	Total	Domestic	Outbound	Both	Total	Domestic	Outbound	Both
B ⁽¹⁾	16.7	14.4	69.0	16.5	43.5	15.4	73.7	10.9	31.4	11.9	77.2	10.9	8.4	22.3	64.5	13.2
DK	16.6	13.8	67.8	18.4	39.9	25.6	59.1	15.3	34.0	20.8	63.9	15.3	9.5	29.7	54.3	16.0
D	13.7	25.4	69.5	5.1	40.0	26.1	67.3	6.6	31.8	35.4	54.7	10.0	14.6	47.8	45.1	7.1
EL ⁽²⁾	17.8	95.0	4.4	0.6	37.9	93.3	6.0	0.7	29.6	93.7	5.5	0.8	14.7	94.5	5.1	0.3
E	16.3	82.1	7.0	10.8	41.3	82.0	5.8	12.2	27.3	83.1	4.7	12.2	15.1	89.1	4.7	6.2
F	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
IRL	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
I	15.7	72.2	15.0	12.9	44.0	70.2	16.3	13.5	28.5	74.2	11.5	14.4	11.8	85.5	7.7	6.8
L	13.6	0.0	100.0	:	42.7	0.1	99.9	:	31.6	0.4	99.6	:	12.1	0.5	98.9	:
NL	14.1	22.2	64.9	13.0	42.1	25.4	58.1	16.5	32.0	23.8	57.2	19.0	11.6	35.7	38.9	25.5
A	14.5	15.4	70.3	14.3	42.9	17.7	66.3	16.0	30.1	19.3	61.5	19.2	12.5	30.9	50.4	18.7
P	22.1	76.9	14.7	8.4	40.7	80.4	12.4	7.2	24.9	72.5	18.4	9.2	12.4	75.2	16.9	7.9
FIN	18.1	52.0	25.0	23.0	37.4	56.8	19.5	23.5	35.8	50.4	21.4	28.2	8.7	60.0	15.0	25.0
S ⁽²⁾	15.5	:	:	:	40.5	:	:	:	36.8	:	:	:	7.2	:	:	:
UK ⁽¹⁾	15.3	34.8	54.8	10.1	37.5	43.4	44.0	12.7	30.2	34.4	50.3	15.2	16.9	60.7	25.1	14.3

Note: (1)=1999, (2)=1997

PERIOD AND LENGTH OF TRIPS

July and August are the months in which holidays are most highly concentrated. Greece records the highest July and August departure rate (62.2%) with respect to the total number of trips within a year, followed by Italy (54.9%) and Portugal (47.7%), with the remaining rates ranging from 29.2% for Germany to 46.7% for Spain.

The rate for Germany may seem low for the peak holiday season, but this figure should be viewed in the light of Germany's low-season departure rate of 9.5% - one of the highest of all. Tourist flows in Germany appear to be more evenly distributed over time, as is confirmed by the average number of trips per German tourist.

Luxembourg and Finland have profiles similar to that of Germany.

The period with the lowest departure rate varies according to the country: it lasts from October to February, and even March for Spain. Greece shows the lowest low-season departure rate. Portugal and Austria also have very low departure rates out of season.

Holidaymakers in all countries prefer trips involving fewer than 15 overnight stays. 90% of holidays taken by people from the United Kingdom, Finland and Sweden,

and over 80% for Germany, Denmark, Luxembourg and Austria are of this type. Over half of the trips taken by British, Swedish, Finnish, Austrian, Irish and Danish holidaymakers involve stays of 4 to 7 nights. Germany stands out with the highest proportion (42.7%) of stays of 8-14 nights. Although it should be noted that the statistical breakdown of classes has certainly influenced this proportion, it is interesting that the statistic does not contradict the seasonal distribution of German tourist flows. Trips with 8-14 overnight stays are also popular with people from Belgium, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Austria, Portugal and the United Kingdom.

Table 3: Breakdown of trips by month of departure and length of stay (with respect to the total number of trips within a year), 2000

	High Season		Low season		Average length of stay (4 to 14 nights)			
	%	Month	%	Month	4 to 7 nights	8 to 14 nights	Total	
B		July-August	42.6	January-February	6.5	41.5	36.0	77.5
DK		June-July	40.0	November-December	8.1	64.0	25.6	89.6
D		July-August	29.2	November-December	9.5	41.1	42.7	83.8
EL ⁽²⁾		July-August	62.2	October-November	1.4	44.2	26.8	71.0
E		August-Sept.	46.7	February-March	5.9	48.3	25.9	74.2
F		:	:	:	:	:	:	:
IRL ⁽²⁾		July-August	41.1	January-February	5.1	53.2	16.5	69.7
I		July-August	54.9	October-November	5.1	49.6	28.5	78.1
L		July-August	32.6	October-November	9.1	48.2	33.3	81.5
NL		July-August	39.7	November-December	5.6	44.4	30.5	74.9
A		July-August	43.6	November-December	4.6	56.2	31.2	87.4
P		July-August	47.7	January-February	3.3	47.6	31.1	78.7
FIN		June-July	33.0	October-November	10.8	76.1	17.2	93.3
S ⁽³⁾		July-August	41.2	October-November	7.4	70.6	21.1	91.7
UK ⁽¹⁾		July-August	35.7	January-February	5.8	60.8	31.2	92.0

Note: (1)=1999, (2)=1998, (3)=1997

HOLIDAY TRAVEL

Depending on the profile of tourists and destinations, transport is a very important aspect in holiday organisation. Most European holidaymakers prefer to use their own cars. French tourists appear to rely most heavily on private or hired vehicles (69.6%), and over 60% of Spaniards, Dutch, Italians, Portuguese and Swedes use this mode of transport for their holidays. Danes appear to make the least use of private cars for holiday purposes (45%) and have a correspondingly high figure for air transport (35.7%). Luxembourg has a profile similar to that of Denmark.

In general, private vehicles are used predominantly for holidays spent within the country of residence. Only in Belgium and the Netherlands do more than 50% of

holidaymakers travel abroad in private vehicles; the figures for the remaining Member States are below this level, and only 13.4% of British holidaymakers, for example, use this mode of transport outside the UK.

Air travel is the second mode of transport for European holidaymakers. British (37.7%) and Luxemburgish (40%) travellers record the highest overall rates of use of air transport. The geography of the United Kingdom probably explains its heavy use of air transport. Moreover, everywhere other than in Spain, holidays abroad are the source of the boom in air travel. The Irish (85.3%) are the Europeans who make the heaviest use of air transport for overseas trips, and more than 70% of British and Finnish holidaymakers travel by air

when holidaying abroad.

Coach/bus and rail travel tie for third place as the mode of transport for European tourists. French, Italian, Finnish and Swedish holidaymakers use rail more often than coaches or buses; the opposite is true of the other

countries. Waterway use is of subsidiary importance in most Member States. Greece, with its many holiday islands, stands out with 23.1% of holidaymakers using this mode of transport. Italy and Finland, which also have island tourist venues, also have relatively well-developed water transport.

Table 4: Breakdown of trips by mode of transport used, 2000

%	Private vehicle	Air	Rail	Coach	Waterway
B	58.5	29.6	4.5	6.2	1.1
DK	45.0	35.7	5.6	10.3	3.2
D	50.3	31.7	7.0	9.8	:
EL ⁽²⁾	56.9	6.8	1.3	11.7	23.1
E	68.3	12.7	5.5	11.3	1.9
F ⁽²⁾	69.6	10.9	13.4	4.3	0.9
IRL	:	:	:	:	:
I	61.8	16.9	10.5	5.3	5.4
L	46.3	40.0	5.1	6.1	0.9
NL	65.9	22.8	3.4	6.4	1.4
A	50.1	32.8	5.4	9.9	0.4
P	69.0	15.8	3.4	10.0	1.5
FIN	53.5	23.9	11.1	5.6	5.2
S ⁽³⁾	61.1	22.2	7.6	6.5	2.4
UK ⁽¹⁾	48.1	37.7	4.7	7.6	1.6

Note: (1)=1999, (2)=1998, (3)=1997

HOLIDAY ACCOMMODATION

Holiday accommodation tends to be provided by three major categories: hotels and similar establishments, other collective accommodation establishments and private accommodation. The respective shares of these three types of accommodation differ depending on whether they are calculated according to the number of trips or the number of nights spent in them.

In terms of the number of trips, private accommodation is the choice of most holidaymakers, above all those from Greece, Spain, Italy, Portugal, Finland, Sweden and the United Kingdom. 80% of holiday trips made by Greeks and over 60% made by Portuguese, Spaniards, Finns and Swedes involve staying in private accommodation.

Danish, German, Irish, Luxemburgish and Austrian holidaymakers prefer hotels and similar establishments; over 50% of trips of German, Luxemburgish and Austrian holidaymakers involve staying in hotels and similar establishments. A comparison of hotel holidays in the country of residence and abroad reveals that, with

the exception of Spanish, Italian, Portuguese and Greek holidaymakers, it is when travelling abroad that the vast majority stay in hotels. Over 90% of Belgian, Danish, Luxemburgish and Dutch holidaymakers who stay in hotels do so outside their own countries.

Dutch holidaymakers are the only ones who favour other types of collective accommodation (57.4%), which includes holiday dwellings, campsites, marinas and youth hostels. We have added specialised establishments to this list. Over 25% of Belgian and Irish holidaymakers stay in other types of collective establishment.

In terms of the number of nights, Greek (84.8%), Portuguese (77.6%) and Spanish (76.4%) holidaymakers largely prefer private accommodation. The volume of nights spent in this type of accommodation also dominates in Belgium, Italy, Luxembourg, Finland and Sweden. For German and Danish holidaymakers, however, hotels and similar record the highest volume of nights. As with the number

of trips, Dutch holidaymakers spend most nights (57.8%) in other types of collective accommodation, reflecting their strong preference for staying overnight in

holiday homes or campsites. Belgian holidaymakers also spend many nights in other types of collective accommodation (26.9%).

Table 5: Breakdown of trips and nights by type of accommodation used, 2000

%	Hotels		Other collective establishments ^(*)		Private accommodation	
	Trips	Nights	Trips	Nights	Trips	Nights
B ⁽⁴⁾	36.1	24.9	26.0	26.9	37.8	48.2
DK	42.0	39.4	21.2	24.0	36.8	36.6
D	51.9	47.1	10.5	12.9	37.5	40.0
EL ⁽²⁾	16.9	11.9	3.0	3.3	80.0	84.8
E	25.3	16.0	9.1	7.7	65.6	76.4
F	:	:	:	:	:	:
IRL ⁽¹⁾	40.6	:	25.7	:	33.7	:
I	34.6	24.2	11.4	9.8	54.0	66.0
L	51.8	42.3	8.5	8.5	39.8	49.1
NL	26.2	22.1	57.4	57.8	16.4	20.1
A	54.3	:	20.0	:	25.8	:
P	22.5	17.5	5.3	4.9	72.2	77.6
FIN	26.1	26.1	9.6	10.9	64.4	63.0
S ⁽³⁾	18.3	19.3	18.4	17.1	63.3	63.6
UK ⁽²⁾	33.3	:	17.9	:	48.8	:

Note: (1)=1999, (2)=1998, (3)=1997, (4) 1996

(*) including specialised establishments

TRAVEL ORGANISATION

When organising their holidays, Belgian, Danish, German, Greek and Austrian holidaymakers prefer to book both accommodation and transport directly, with 81.9% of Greek tourists using direct reservation. While most Spanish, Italian, Danish, Dutch and Finnish holidaymakers use this mode of organisation when staying in their own country, most Belgians, Germans and Luxemburgers prefer to book directly when travelling abroad.

The majority of Swedish (66.5%) and Luxemburgish (44.7%) holidaymakers tend to use intermediaries such as travel agents and tour operators; 45.8% of Danes and 43.4% of Germans also do so. In most countries, package holidays are the reason for using travel

intermediaries: 84.5% of German and over 70% of Belgian, Austrian, Finnish and Swedish holidaymakers using intermediaries do so to book package trips, while Spanish, Luxemburgish and Portuguese holidaymakers tend to consult agencies for services other than package holidays.

Only Spanish holidaymakers tend to use travel intermediaries for domestic trips. Most other holidaymakers do so for booking holidays abroad. Trips not organised in advance appear to be particularly popular with Spanish and Italian holidaymakers (56.7% and 46% respectively). The organisational mode of as many as 53.5% of Finnish holidays is unspecified.

Table 6: Breakdown of trips by organisational mode, 2000

%	Direct reservation	Travel agent/Tour operator			No type of organisation	Unspecified
		Total	of which:			
			Package	Other		
B	62.8	31.9	73.8	26.2	:	5.3
DK	54.2	45.8	67.7	32.3	:	:
D	56.6	43.4	84.5	15.5	:	:
EL⁽¹⁾	81.9	2.2	56.2	43.8	14.5	1.4
E	18.2	22.5	45.6	54.4	56.7	2.6
F	:	:	:	:	:	:
IRL	:	:	:	:	:	:
I	30.8	22.7	59.5	40.5	46.0	0.5
L	30.8	44.7	46.6	53.4	24.4	0.1
NL	37.9	37.5	62.1	37.9	24.2	0.4
A	64.8	35.2	77.6	22.4	:	:
P	45.2	14.8	34.9	65.1	39.9	0.1
FIN	17.4	24.1	70.9	29.1	5.0	53.5
S⁽²⁾	33.5	66.5	72.6	27.4	:	:
UK	:	:	:	:	:	:

Note: (1)=1998, (2)=1997

➤ ESSENTIAL INFORMATION – METHODOLOGICAL NOTES

DEFINITIONS:

Tourism is a subset of travel. Tourism comprises the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes.

The data on tourism demand collected under Directive 95/57/EC cover **national tourism**, which comprises "domestic tourism" and "outbound tourism":

Domestic tourism: the activities of residents of a given country travelling to and staying in places only within that country but outside their usual environment.

Outbound tourism: the activities of residents of a given country travelling to and staying in places outside that country and outside their usual environment.

Information on tourism demand covers trips motivated primarily by holidays, recreation and leisure purposes and which involve stays of at least four consecutive nights outside the usual place of residence.

Tourist

A visitor who stays at least one night in a collective or private accommodation in the place/country visited.

Further details of the definitions can be found in Commission Decision 1999/35/EC of 9 December 1998 (OJ L9, 15 January 1999).

Further information:

➤ Reference publications

Title Tourism in Europe
 Catalogue No CA-23-99-031-EN-C Price EUR 7

➤ Databases

New Cronos, Domain Tourism

To obtain information or to order publications, databases and special sets of data, please contact the **Data Shop** network:

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