

Tourism trends: Where to next?

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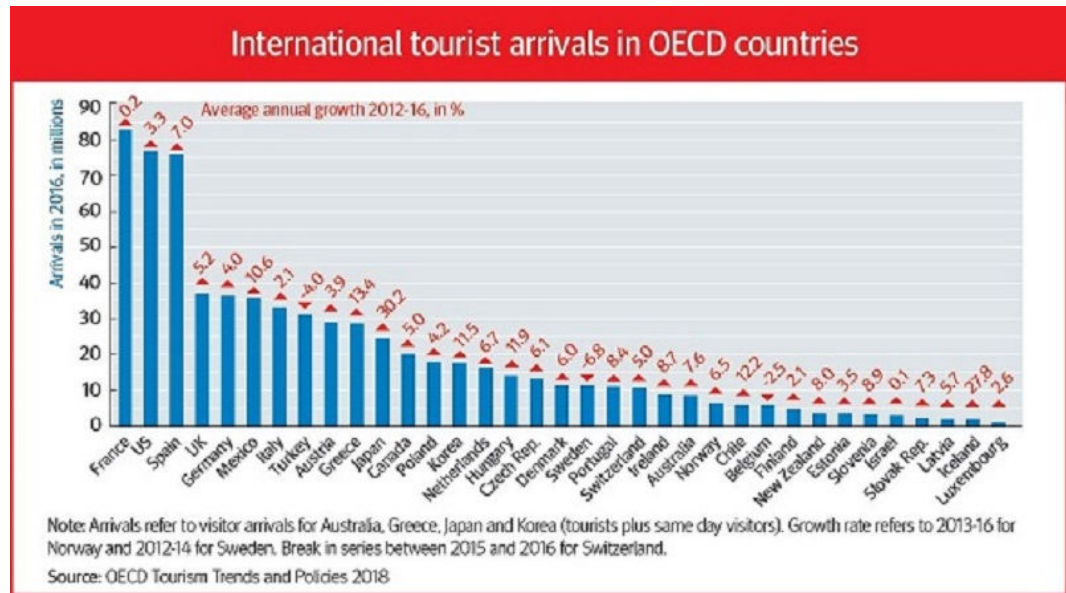
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“Summertime and the living is easy”–at least for the lucky ones planning a holiday right now. France drew the most tourists in OECD countries in 2016 with over 82.5 million people among les bons vivants.

Yet, all is not rosy for the land of Voltaire: though it welcomed nearly 7 million more tourists than the US, ranked number 2, France’s tourist numbers went up a mere 0.2% between 2012 and 2016, no doubt held down by terrorist attacks in 2015-16. Spain comes in third place with just a half million fewer tourists than the US. However, Spain has boosted its tourism by an average annual growth of 7% between 2012 and 2016, handily topping the US’s 3.3%. Provisional data suggest the strong performance continued in 2017.

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Still, Spain’s tourism statistics are not the biggest jump on the chart. That honour goes to Japan and Iceland. Japan, which is in 11th place, enjoyed an average annual increase of over 30% over the same period, while Iceland is second to last, but with an average annual increase of 27%.



If you are looking to spend your holiday money where it's most needed, consider Turkey, Sweden and Belgium. They suffered a tourist decline with Sweden hardest hit, dropping 6.8% between 2012 and 2016.

And even more off the beaten tourist track is Luxembourg. Luxembourg has the fewest tourists, at just over a million for 2016. Yet this is already an average annual increase of 2.6%.

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References

OECD Tourism Trends and Policies 2018 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/tour-2018-en>