

Gay tourism matters

Report shows \$65 billion annual spend by gay European tourists. Although 'out' gay people only represent 2.6% of the European population, the \$62 billion spend represents 8% of the \$823 billion (632 billion euros) that the European Union estimates is spent on tourism in Europe each year.

A new report shows that gay Europeans spend up to \$65 billion (50 billion euros or £41 billion) each year on tourism, roughly the same as the USA although Europe's population is nearly three times as large. The study comes as the Gay European Tourism Association (GETA) launches Gay Welcome, its new website to help people find gay and gay-friendly hotels, events and destinations throughout Europe.

GETA's report, Gay Tourism Matters, estimates for the first time the number of people who live open gay lifestyles in western, central and eastern Europe at nearly 26 million, or 2.6% of the total population. This figure ranges from 5% in Western European countries down to just 0.25% in Turkey and the former Soviet states in Eastern Europe.

Drawing on existing research into the tourism spending of gay people from outside Europe, including the USA, Canada, Brazil, Japan and Australia, the report estimates that there is an additional market of \$112 billion (€86 billion or £70 billion), much of which is spent in Europe. Community Marketing, the San Francisco based market research agency, reported in its 2011-2012 Annual Gay and Lesbian Tourism Report that London and Paris are the third and fourth favourite destinations for gay Americans, after New York and San Francisco.

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