

The role of Hungary in international tourism

CHANGES IN WORLD TOURISM BETWEEN 1990 AND 2002

International tourist arrivals

According to the World Tourism Organisation (WTO), between 1990 and 2002 the number of international tourist arrivals grew by one and a half times, from 457.3 million to 714.6 million people. This is equivalent to an average annual growth of 3.1%. In 2002 the most important destination was Europe, with 411.0 million tourist arrivals (an increase of 2.4% on 2001), accounting for 57.5% of all tourist arrivals. This represents a fall compared to the 61.8% market share of 1990, and is due to the fact that in the period under examination the number of international tourist arrivals in Europe showed more moderate growth (an annual average of 3.2%) than did the world average.

With respect to tourist arrivals, America, which stood in second place in the nineties (120.2 million people) has been overtaken by East Asia and Oceania, previously in third place (124.7 million people), due to the fact that between 1990 and 2002 the number of international tourist arrivals in America grew at a less than average rate (an annual average of 2.2%), while in the region of East Asia and Oceania the number of tourist arrivals increased more than the average (an annual average of 7.0%) (figure 1).

Number of international tourist arrivals, 1990 (million tourists)

Number of international tourist arrivals, 2002 (million tourists)

Southern Asia 3.2 Africa 15.0 America 9.0 America 92.9 Asia and the Pacific 54.6

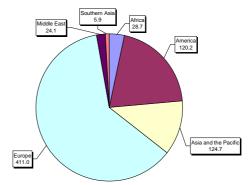


Figure 1

Source: WTO



International Tourism Receipts

According to WTO data, in the period under survey international tourism receipt increased more than twice as fast as the number of tourist arrivals, by an annual average of 8.7%, growing from 206.8 billion USD registered in 1990 to 516.1 billion USD in 2001. Again, Europe is in the lead in respect of income from international tourism, realising an income of around 257.0 billion USD in 2001. However, Europe's share (49.8%) is lower than for its tourist arrivals, and the annual average growth between 1990 and 2001 was the lowest in Europe, at around 7.8% (figure 2).

International Tourism Receipts, 1990 (billion euro)

Southern Asia
1.6

Africa
4.2

America
54.3

Asia and the Pacific 30.8

International Tourism Receipts, 2001 (billion euro)

Southern Asia 5.2

Africa 13.1

America 136.7

Asia and the Pacific 91.6

Figure 2

Source: WTO

As a result of tourism receipts from tourism increasing faster than tourist arrivals, the sum spent per capita increased from 452.2 USD registered in 1990 to 745 USD in 2001. The sum spent per capita in Europe is lower than average, at around 642 USD in 2001, which represents an annual average increase of 4.4% since 1990 (398 USD per capita).

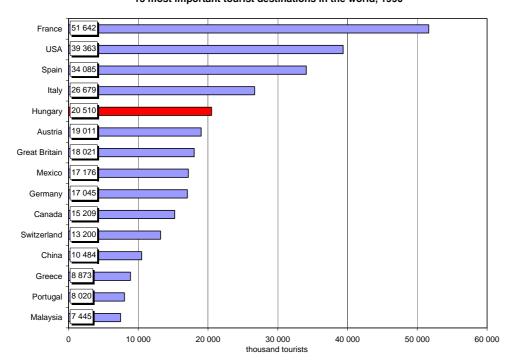
MOST IMPORTANT WORLD TOURIST DESTINATIONS BETWEEN 1990 AND 2002

On the basis of the WTO statistics the ranking of the fifteen most favoured tourist destinations in the world (on the basis of international tourist arrivals) has undergone some changes during the thirteen years under survey. Three countries which cannot be found in the list for 1990 – Russia, Poland and Hong Kong – feature in the top fifteen for 2002.



A spreading of the geographical concentration of tourism is shown by the fact that in 1990 68.1% of all tourists chose the fifteen most popular destinations, while in 2002 this figure was only 59.9%. Of the twelve countries which can be found in both rankings, only China increased its market share between 1990 and 2002; all other destinations saw their market share drop or remain stable (figure 3).

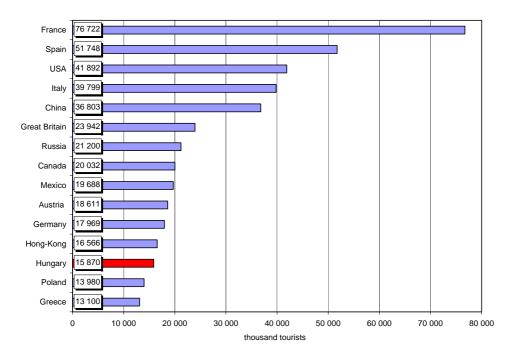
 $Figure \ 3$ 15 most important tourist destinations in the world, 1990



Source: WTO







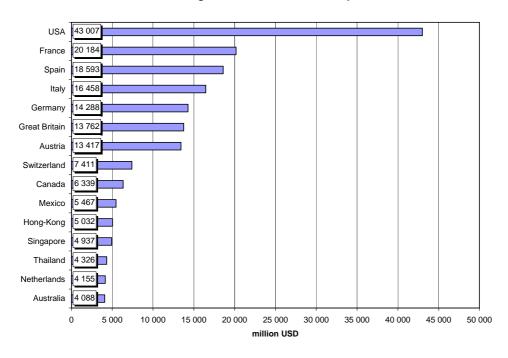
Source: WTO

On the basis of the WTO statistics the USA realised the highest income from tourism in both 1990 (43.0 bn USD) and 2001 (72.3 bn USD), gaining a significant lead on the countries following it. In 2001 only two new countries, China and Turkey, appeared in the ranking for the 15 countries registering the highest income from tourism, compared to the 1990 ranking (figure 4). The income from tourism also shows the decrease in geographical concentration in the period under examination: while in 1990 the fifteen countries with the highest income from tourism accounted for 68.9% of the total income from tourism, by 2001 this figure had dropped to 63.2%.

Figure 4

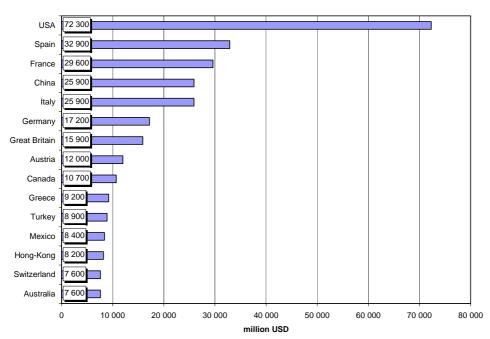


The 15 countries with the hingest international tourism receipts in the world, 1990



Source: WTO

The 15 countries with the hihgest international tourism receipts in the world, 2001



Source: WTO



THE ROLE OF HUNGARY IN WORLD TOURISM

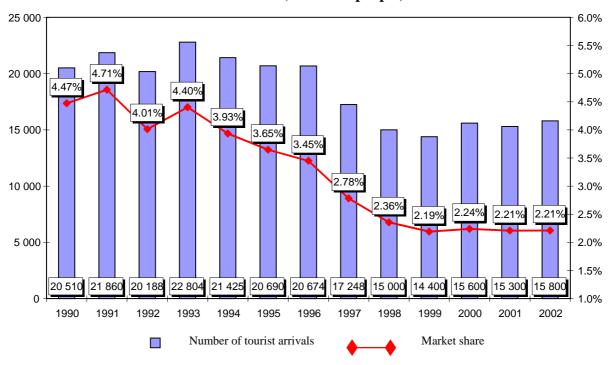
Due to its favourable geographical position and its good features for tourists, with respect to the number of international tourist arrivals Hungary is among the most important tourist destinations in the world: in 2002 it was the 13th largest tourist destination in the world, and the 8th in Europe. In the ranking based on tourist arrivals according to WTO data Hungary has a lead on Greece, Portugal and Switzerland, amongst others.

The foundations for the privileged position Hungary enjoys today were laid in the 1980's, thanks to an increase from 9.7 million to 20.5 million people between 1980 and 1990, representing an annual growth of 11.8%, well over the average growth for world tourism (4.9%).

Figure 5

Number of international tourist arrivals in Hungary, and world market share

1990-2002 (thousand people)



Source: WTO

In contrast with the quantitative increase of the 1980's, the 1990's saw a drop in the volume of inbound tourism to Hungary. Following the fall of the iron curtain, the number of foreign tourist arrivals to Hungary increased with respect to the previous year in 1991 and



1993. However, due to the interest in the countries of Eastern Europe which characterised the beginning of the decade, the end of a search for a "curiosity", the rise in popularity of the other formerly socialist countries, the breaking out of the war in the Balkans and the economic difficulties of the Eastern European source markets, the number of tourist arrivals in Hungary steadily fell from 1994 to 1999: in 1999 14.4 million foreign tourists came to Hungary. In 2000-2002 the number of tourists coming to Hungary rose once more, and estimates put the number of tourists arriving in Hungary in 2002 at 15.8 million, a figure which represented 2.21% of international tourist arrivals in the world (figure 5). In parallel with the fall in the number of tourist arrivals in Hungary, the total number of international tourist arrivals in the world rose, so by 2002 Hungary's market share (2.21%) had fallen to half of its 1993 value, while Hungary finished at a respectable 13th place in the ranking of destination countries.