



**European Committee
of the Regions**

Sustainable tourism: CoR perspective

European Greenways Association 2025

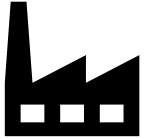


Why is tourism so important for local and regional authorities?

- 10% GDP at EU level...
- ... but significantly more at regional level:
 - 63% in the South Aegean
 - 40% for the Balearics
 - 30% in Malta
 - nearly 15% in Tirol and in Western Pomerania
- Same goes for the jobs: 12% EU-wide



And beyond growth and jobs?



- Reconversion and diversification



- Regional development



- Culture and nature preservation



- Empowerment of local communities



- Fostering change



A fragile sector?



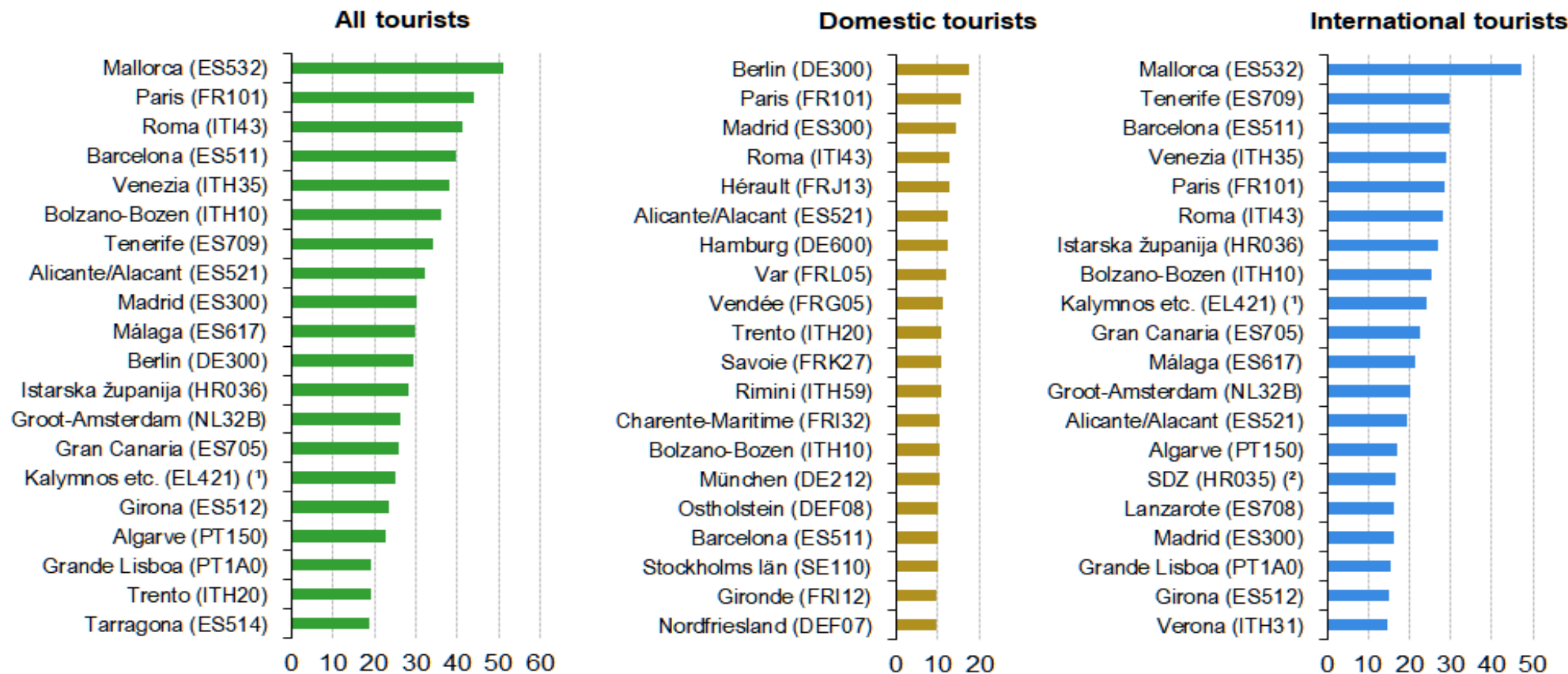
- 2019: 2.88 billion nights spent in tourism accommodation
- 2020: domestic tourism down by 33.4% and international by 70%
- 2023: 2.94 billion
- 2024 data: *expected next week*
- 2025: 1.3 billion nights in first 6 months - the highest figure ever observed for the first 2 quarters of a year
- Six out of ten nights spent in Spain, Italy, France and Germany



How popular are our regions?

Top tourist regions in the EU

(million nights spent in tourist accommodation, by NUTS 3 regions, 2023)



Note: the scales on the numeric axes are different.

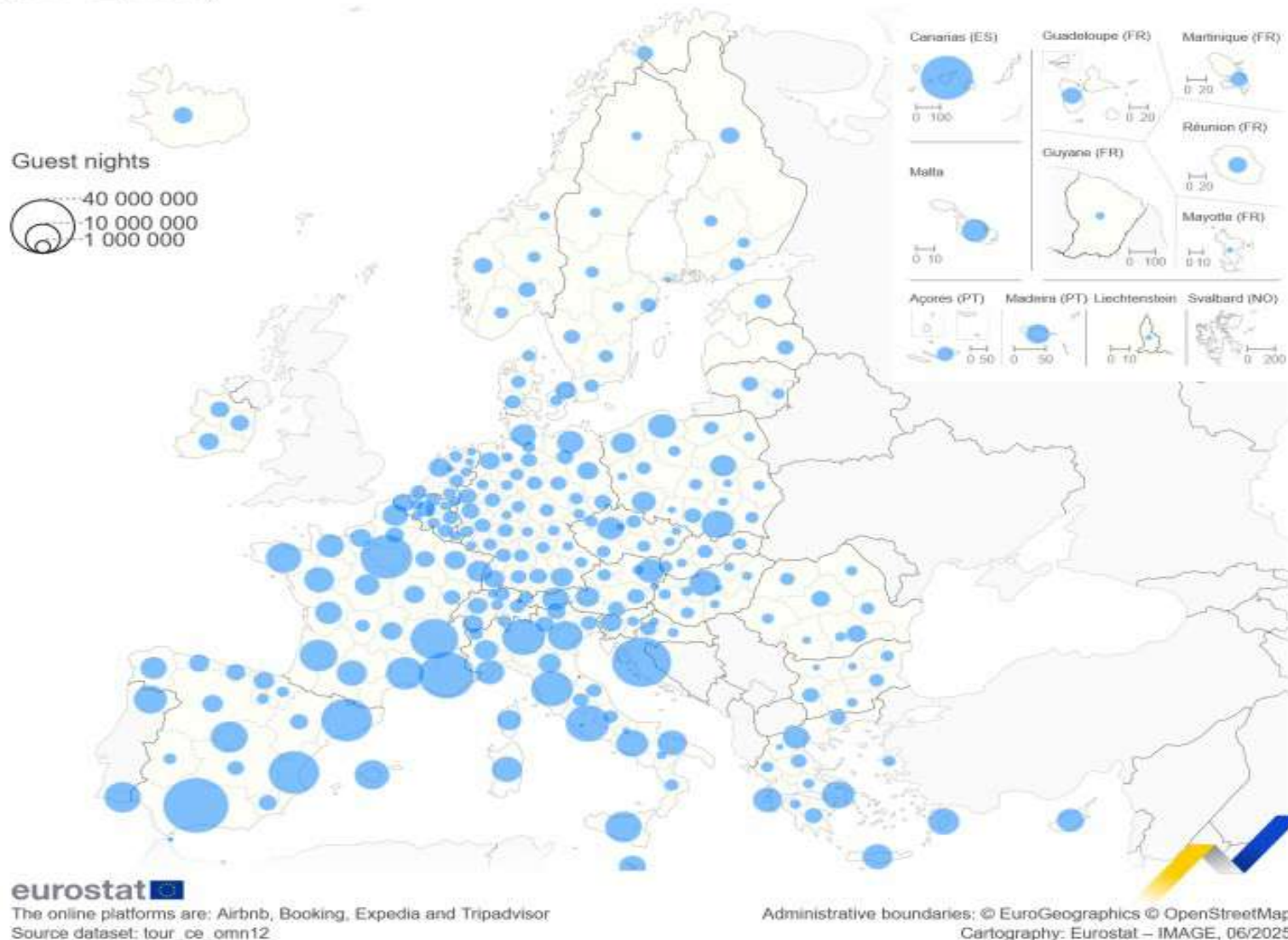
⁽¹⁾ Includes also Karpathos – Iroiki Nisos Kasos, Kos, Rodos.

⁽²⁾ Splitsko-dalmatinska županija.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: tour_occ_nin3)

Short term rentals

Guest nights spent at short-stay accommodations booked via online platforms
(NUTS2, 2024)



- 2024 - 854 million nights were booked via collaborative economy platforms
- 19% more than in 2023.
- on average 2.34 million guests per night

Short term rentals (2)

Top 20 cities in terms of guest nights spent at short-stay accommodation offered via online booking platforms, 2024

City	Number of guest nights
Paris	23 499 910
Roma	15 662 954
Barcelona	12 481 279
Madrid	11 789 929
Lisboa	11 312 571
Milano	8 891 724
Budapest	8 207 665
Athina	7 994 998
Nice	7 891 018
Porto	7 008 606
Wien	6 626 016
Málaga	6 580 562
Sevilla	6 203 366
Valencia	5 756 736
Firenze	5 744 867
Praha	5 697 090
Warszawa	4 959 184
Kraków	4 463 295
Napoli	4 342 113
Venezia	4 251 283

Source: Eurostat (online data code: tour_ce_oarc)

- Paris - nearly 65 000 guests per night
- city tourism rebounded sharply with all major cities surpassing their pre-pandemic records
- the strongest year-on-year growth in 2024: Milan (+27%), Rome (+24.9%) and Madrid (+24.4%)

Is this a good thing?



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Sustainability: there is no alternative



➤ Societal tensions



➤ Climate change

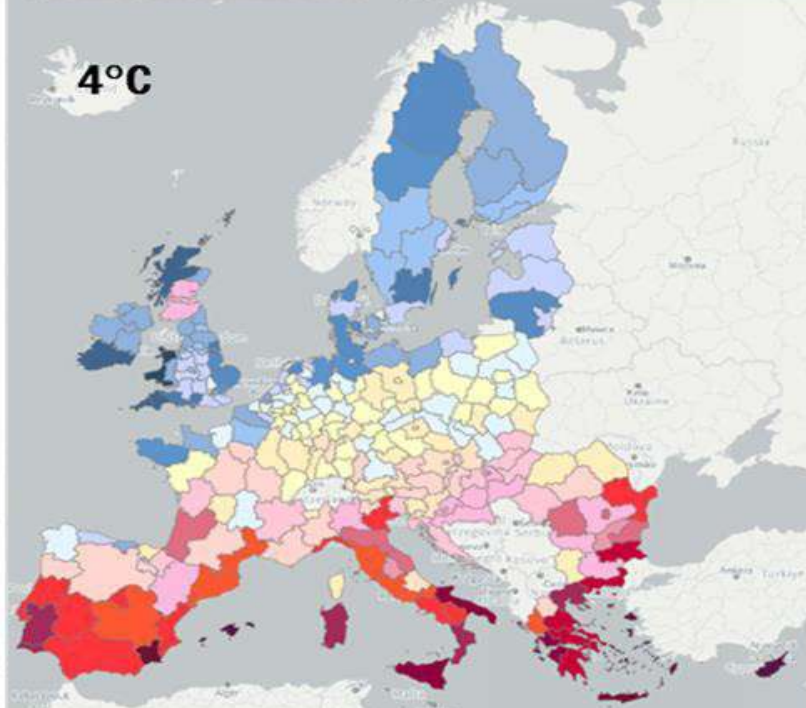
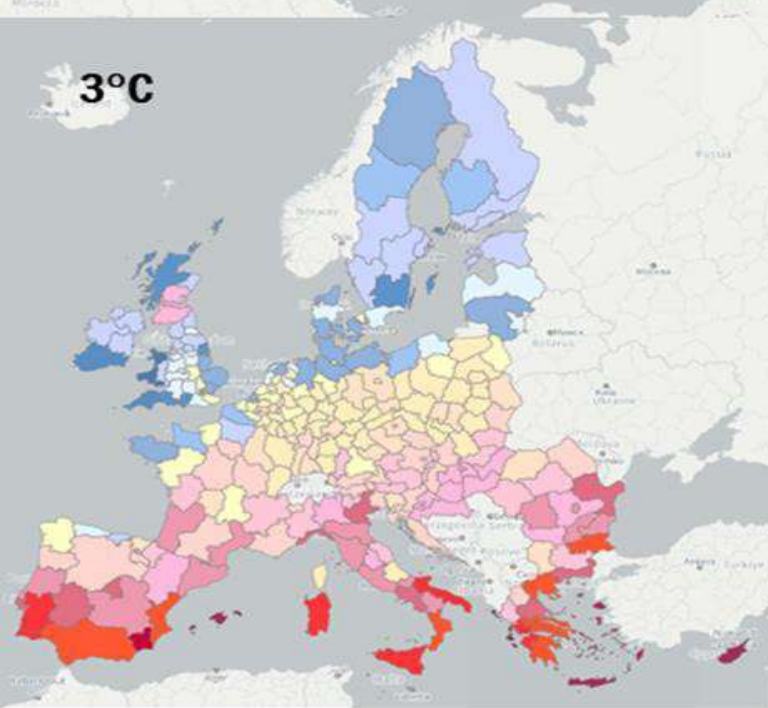
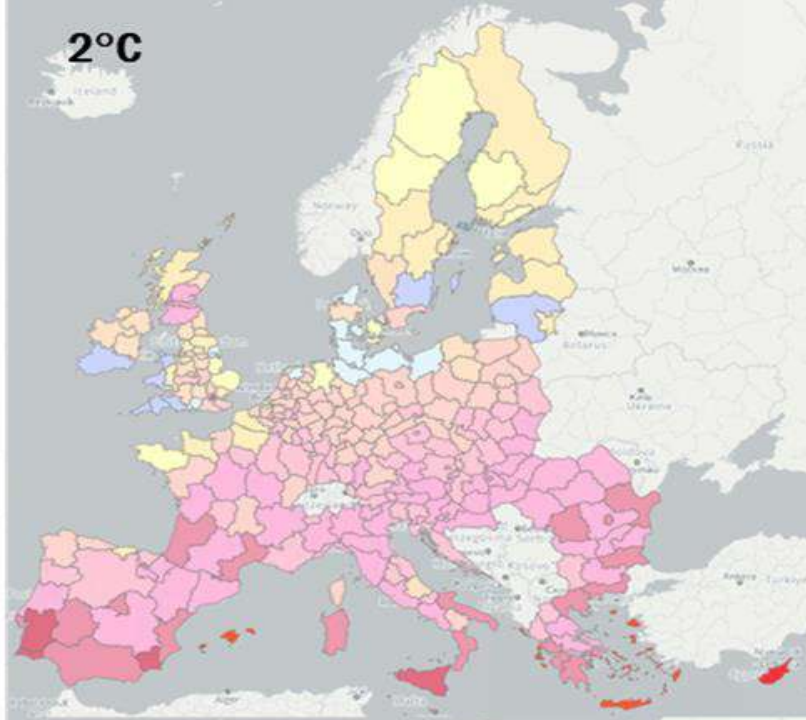
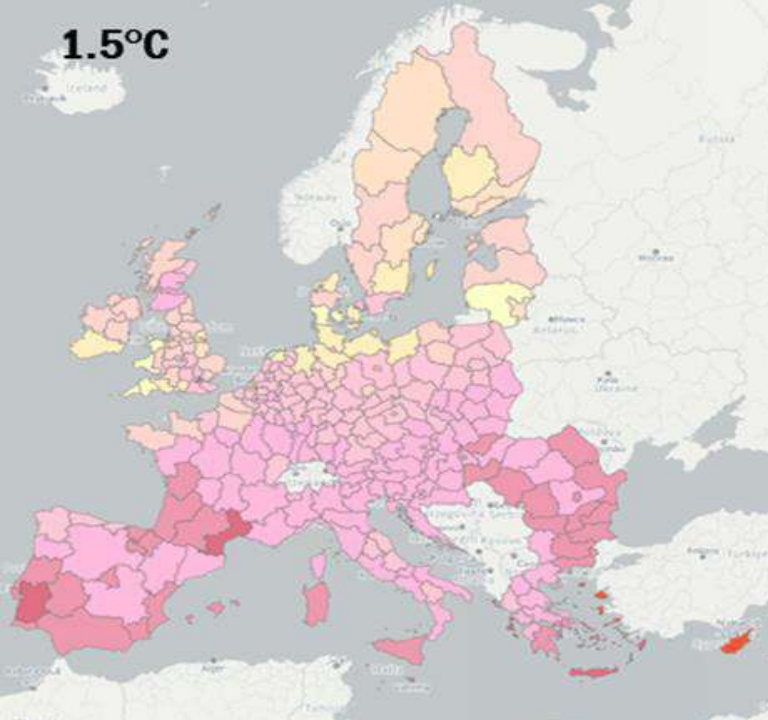


➤ Water scarcity



➤ Wildfires





Getting hotter

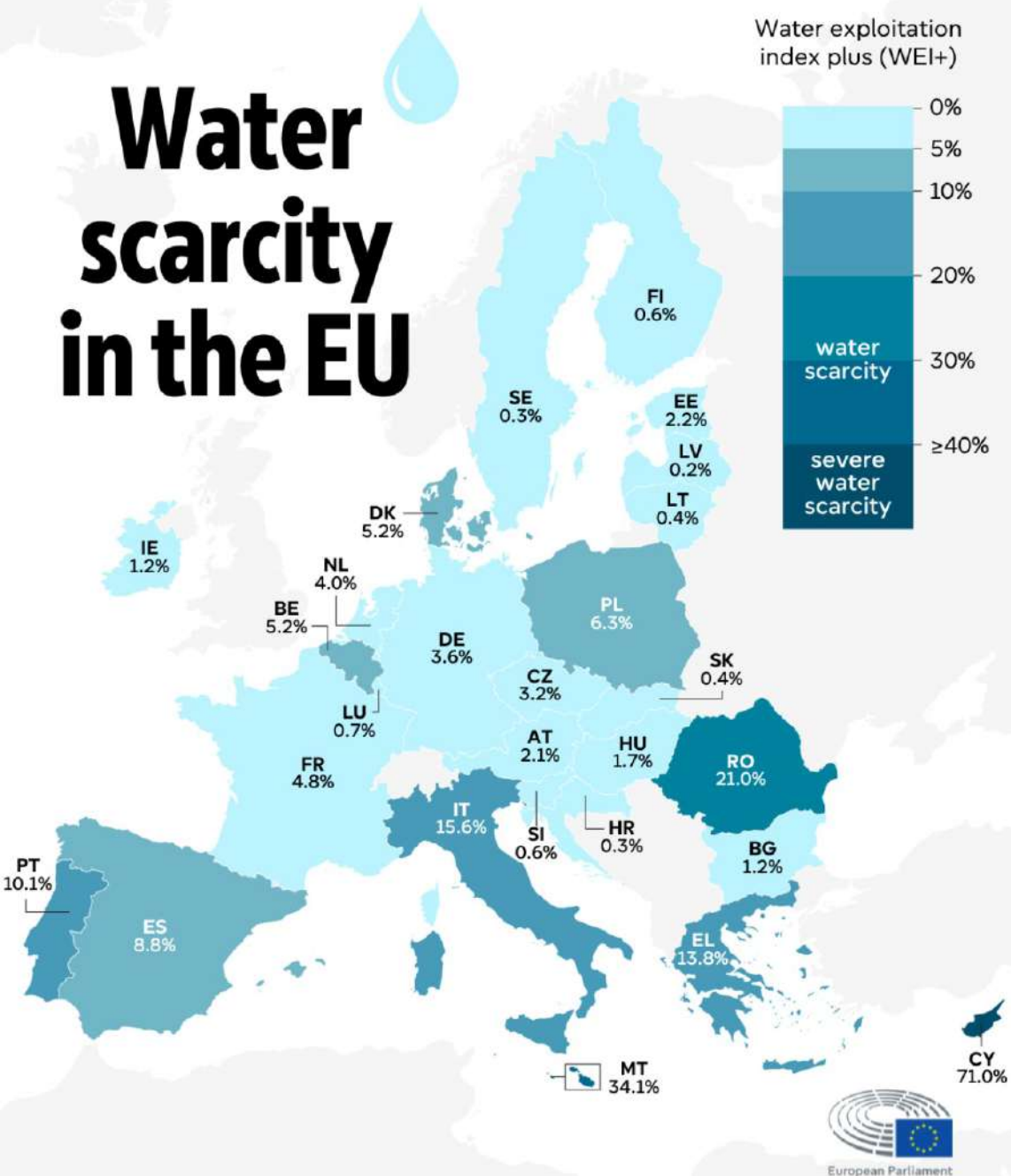
- Europe is the fastest warming continent on Earth
- Cities like Rome or Madrid: twice as many days over 35 C
- Heat related deaths: 68 000 in summer 2024
- Coolcation here to stay

Source: JRC report Regional impact of climate change on European tourism demand



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Water scarcity in the EU



Getting drier

- Water scarcity in the Mediterranean: up to 70% of the population
- 41% of the EU population experience water stress
- A tourist consumes 300-2,000 litres per person per day, up to 8 times more than a resident

Source: EP briefing *Europe's waters: key challenges and EU solutions*



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Getting smoked



- Summer 2025: warmest on record
- Over 1 million hectare burnt
 - Castilla y Leon – 32 wildfires
 - Vila Real – 10 days
 - Zakynthos – evacuated
- UN WMO: likely increase by 50% by 2010



CoR sustainable tourism agenda (1)

➤ Working with EU institutions



- EC: Together4Tourism expert and stakeholders' groups
- EP: Tourism Task Force
- Council: working party on tourism

➤ Engaging with tourism community:



- European Greenways Association
- European Cultural Tourism Network
- Rural Tourism steering group under the Rural Pact
- European Cycling Federation
- NECSTouR



CoR sustainable tourism agenda (2)

➤ Forthcoming opinion “*Towards sustainable and resilient tourism in the European Union: Strategy for balanced and adaptive management*”



- Limit permits in areas with overtourism or housing pressure, as part of data-driven adaptive management
- specific funds to support the transition to sustainable tourism in regions affected by seasonality, permanent and significant pressure from tourism, a high degree of specialisation, and asset degradation
- strict EU-wide water-efficiency standards for tourist accommodations and incentives for wastewater reuse in the sector;
- alignment with the transition to a circular economy, fostering responsible production and consumption, waste reduction, energy efficiency, resource reuse and ecosystem protection
- specific training programmes for tourism managers to improve their skills in sustainability, innovation and participatory governance



EU funding for tourism

➤ EU guide on funding for tourism 2021-2027



- ERDF - [European Regional Development and Cohesion Funds](#)
- EAFRD - [European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development](#)
- EMFAF - [European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund](#)
- ESF - [European Social Fund Plus](#)
- [Erasmus+ Programme](#)
- [Recovery and Resilience Facility](#)
- [Horizon Europe](#)
- [InvestEU](#)
- SMP - [Single Market Programme](#)
- [LIFE](#)
- [European Globalisation Adjustment Fund for Displaced Workers](#) (EGF)
- [Just Transition Fund](#) (JTF)



Merci **Obrigado** **Vă mulțumim**
Děkujeme! **Hartelijk dank** **Gracias** **Tak**
Hvala **Благодарим Ви** **Paldies!** **Ačiū**
Kiitos **Thank you** **Grazzi** **Tack**
Σας ευχαριστούμε **Hvala** **Ďakujem**
Köszönöm! **Aitäh** **Vielen Dank**
Grazie **Go raibh maith agaibh** **Dziękujemy!**

