



International trips, Quarter 4 2018

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Summary

In the last quarter of 2018, foreigners made more than 12 million trips to Hungary. The number of foreign arrivals rose year-on-year by 1.6% including a 3.1% growth in same day trips and a 1.5% drop in overnight trips. The spending of foreign visitors grew by 14% at current prices to HUF 485 billion. The number of Hungarian trips abroad increased by 9.8% and travel-related expenses grew by 16%.

In 2018, the number of inbound and outbound trips increased by 4.9% and 12%, respectively. Travel-related tourism revenues and spending abroad by Hungarians were 13% and 8.7% higher respectively than in the previous year. The number of inbound trips has been rising for years. In 2018, the number of longer stays increased significantly again.

Arrivals at border crossings, Quarter 4 2018

In quarter 4 2018, the number of people crossing the Schengen borders further increased to about 12.3 million, of whom 9.2 million were foreign nationals and 3.1 million Hungarians. The number of foreigners increased by 4.4% and that of Hungarians by 3.8%, thus, the number of people crossing the borders increased by 4.3% in total compared to the same period of the previous year.

In terms of total visitor traffic, except for the Romanian border section, all border sections saw a rise in border crossings, especially the Liszt Ferenc International Airport, where the number of border crossings increased year-on-year by 17%.

The number of border crossings of foreigners also increased on most border sections, by about one tenth on the Croatian, Serbian and Ukrainian borders. The number of border crossings has also increased in case of airports, by 13% at the Liszt Ferenc International Airport and by 50% in Debrecen.

For Hungarian travellers, the increase in cross border air traffic was the most significant. Passenger traffic increased by more than a quarter at the Budapest Airport. The number of passengers was higher on the Croatian, Romanian and Serbian border sections, while on the Ukrainian side fewer Hungarians were registered compared to the same quarter of the previous year.

Arrivals at border crossings, 2018

In 2018, the number of arrivals at Schengen external border stations increased compared to 2017, 58 million border crossings were registered including 44 million foreign and 14 million Hungarian border crossings. The number of foreigners increased by 7.4% and that of Hungarians by 8.9%, thus the total number of border crossings increased by 7.8% compared to the previous year.

¹ See Methodology.

Taking into account total visitor traffic, passenger traffic at airports increased by about one fifth, the most by 29% in Debrecen and by 22% in Budapest. Improvements in passenger traffic at Debrecen Airport are due to summer charter flights and the expansion of Wizz Air flights. In addition, the number of passengers at Liszt Ferenc International Airport has reached a record, mainly due to the entry of new airlines into the market.

Passenger traffic on the Croatian-Serbian border increased by 17% and 11% respectively. Border stations to Ukraine and Romania registered 5.6% and 1.4% more border crossings. The Romanian border saw the heaviest traffic, where 24 million people crossed the border, 66% of whom were Romanian, 14% Hungarian and 5.8% Bulgarian citizens. 13 million arrivals were registered at the Serbian border, the share of Hungarians was close to a quarter in these arrivals, Hungarians accounted for one fourth and Croatians for one fifth of all arrivals at the Croatian border. 7.7 million border crossings were registered at the Ukrainian border, Hungarians accounted for half and Ukrainians for nearly half of these border crossings. 5.5 million arrivals were registered from non-Schengen countries at the Budapest Airport, of whom more than one fourth were Hungarian and one fifth UK travellers. Smaller airports were mainly visited by Hungarian, Romanian and Russian travellers (the combined share of Romanian and Russian travellers was one third).

Foreign visits to Hungary, Quarter 4 2018

In the fourth quarter of 2018, the number of foreigners visiting Hungary was slightly higher than in the same period last year. The number of inbound trips increased by 1.6% to 12 million: a slight increase in same day trips (3.1%) offset a 1.5% drop in overnight trips. The number of trips for private¹ purposes was 1.5% lower than in the same period last year including a drop in the number of leisure, shopping and VFR (visiting friends and relatives) trips and a greater demand for cruising and sightseeing trips as well as cultural programmes. The number of trips for business and trading purposes (business trips, conferences, cross border trading) significantly increased (by 26%), not only as a result of a boom in cross border trading that generates frequent and significant spending.

Figure 1

Share of overnight foreign inbound visits to Hungary by length of trip

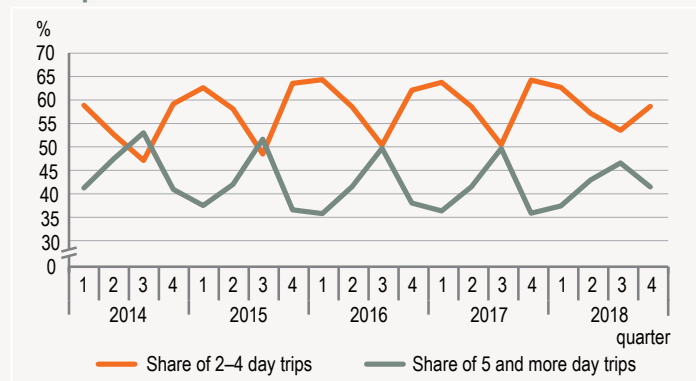
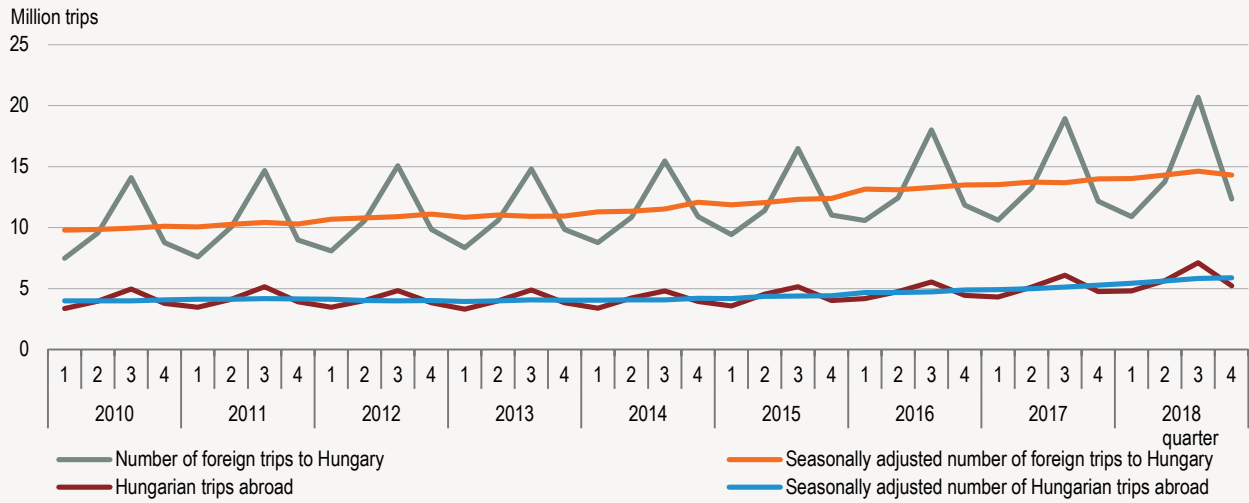


Figure 2

Changes in foreign trips to Hungary and Hungarian trips abroad



Foreigners made 8.6 million same day trips to Hungary in which one tenth was for leisure, slightly more than one fourth for shopping, and another one tenth for working, business and cross border trading purposes. The number of trips increased year-on-year by 3.4% for transit purposes and fell by 2.0%, 7.1% and 3.9% respectively for leisure, VFR and shopping purposes.

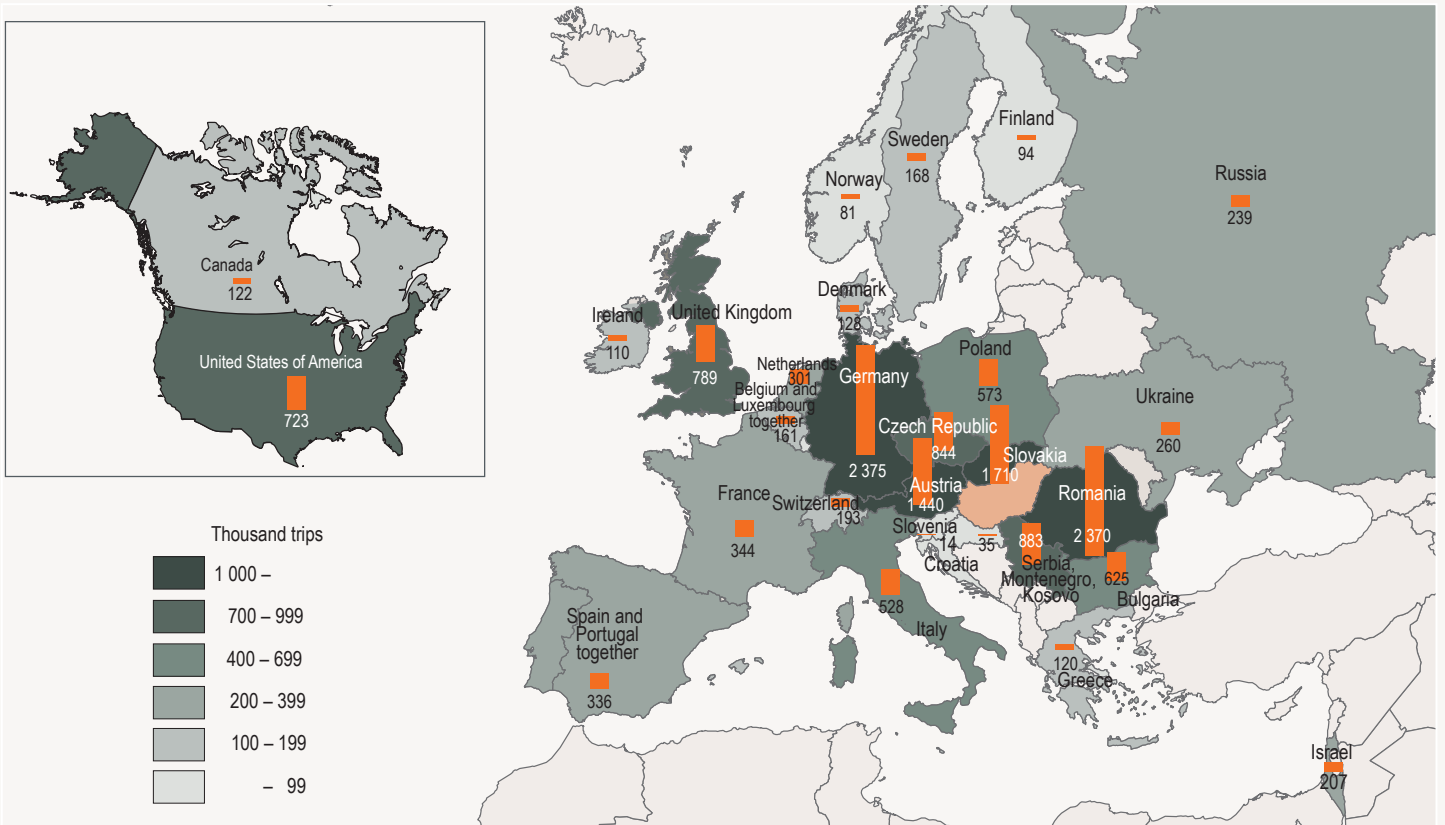
In the fourth quarter of 2018, foreigners made **3.8 million overnight visits to Hungary**. 57% of the visits were leisure trips, the number of which fell by 2.7% compared to the fourth quarter of 2017. In contrast to a decline in private trips, the number of business, cross border trading and working trips significantly increased. Most visitors came from Germany (483,000), Romania (464,000), Slovakia (374,000) and Austria

(306,000). Of these nations, only the number of German travellers increased (by 3.9%) compared to the same period last year.

In the fourth quarter of 2018, the average length of stay of foreigners traveling to Hungary was 2.3 days, almost unchanged compared to the same period last year. Longest trips (12.2 days per trip) were made by those arriving for learning purposes. By length of stay, trips made for recreational and entertainment purposes were ranked second (5.2 days per trip). Foreigners traveling in Hungary spent a total of 29 million days in the country, 2.2% more than in the fourth quarter of 2017. **Those arriving for several days stayed for a total of 20 million days in Hungary**, their average stay per trip (along with a 3.3% increase) was 5.3 days.

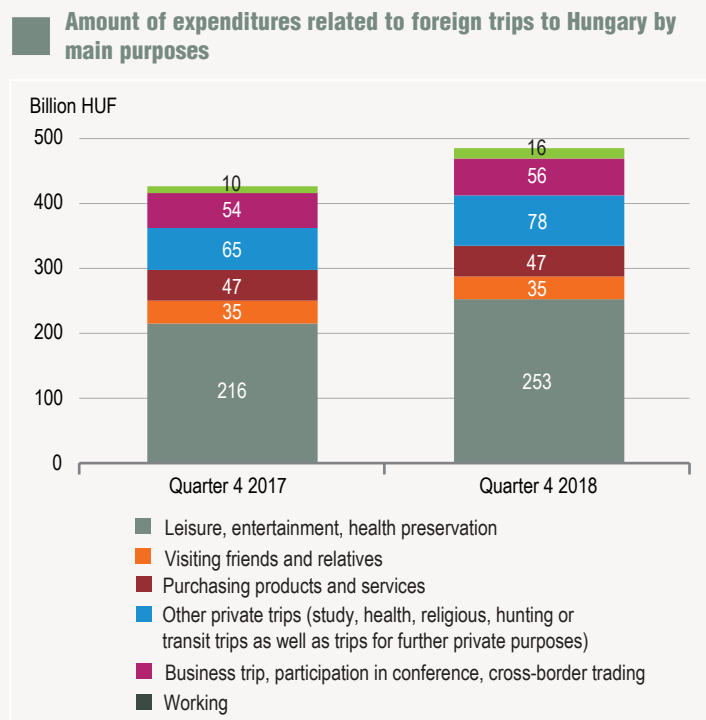
Figure 3

Number of overnight tourist trips to Hungary by main sending countries, thousand trips, fourth quarter of 2018



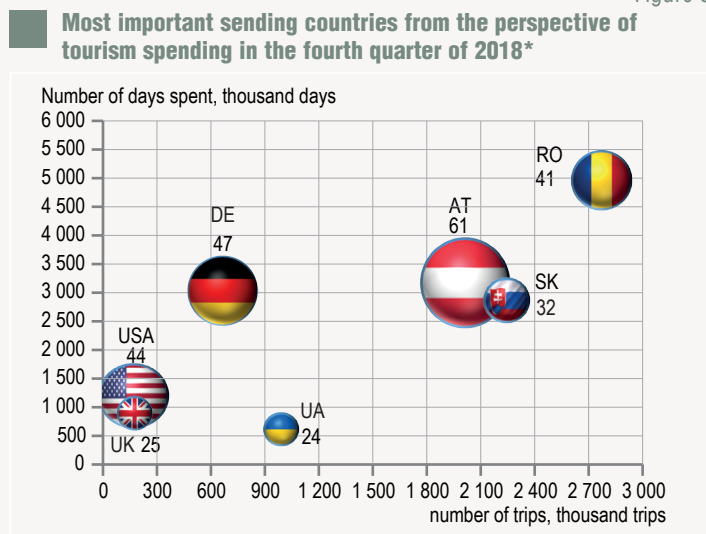
Foreigners visiting Hungary spent HUF 485 billion on their trips in the last quarter of the year, 14% more than in the same quarter of the previous year. European visitors spent 9.8% more than in the same period last year. Spending grew by 24% for visitors from Asia and by 42% for visitors from America. The largest amount, HUF 61 billion (23% higher than a year earlier) was spent by visitors from Austria, mainly on products and services, dental and medical treatments. During their stay Germans spent HUF 47 billion, US visitors HUF 44 billion, Romanians HUF 41 billion, Slovaks HUF 32 billion and UK visitors HUF 25 billion.

Figure 4



Expenditure by foreigners visiting Hungary for one day (same day visitors) amounted to HUF 131 billion, 19% higher than in the fourth quarter of 2017. This increase was mainly due to an increase in private trip related expenses. Spending significantly increased (by 30%) for transit travellers and grew by 1.8% for shopping visitors. Spending on business and cross border trips grew by 7.2% and reached 16% of all spending made on same day trips.

Figure 5

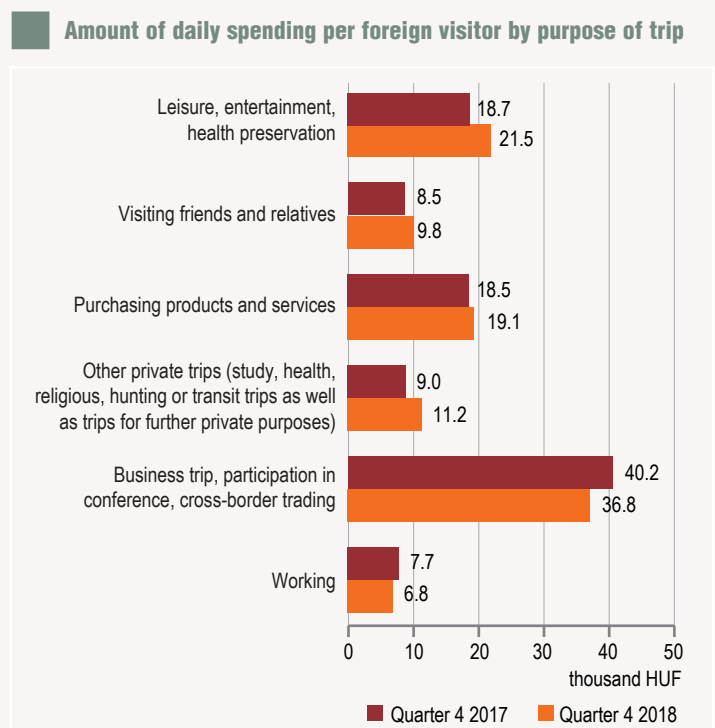


* The size of the bubbles (billions of HUF) is proportional to spending. Country Codes: AT – Austria, DE – Germany, RO – Romania, SK – Slovakia, UA – Ukraine, UK – United Kingdom, USA – United States.

Inbound overnight visitors spent a total of 354 billion forints, 12% more than in the same period last year. Nearly seven-tenths of spending was related to holiday (leisure, entertainment, health preservation) trips, the amount of these expenses increased by 17% compared to the last quarter of the previous year. Spending fell by 3.8% on VFR and by 8.1% on other private purposes.

People arriving in Hungary spent an average of 17,000 HUF per person per day, 11.4% more than in the fourth quarter of 2017. The value of daily spending per capita grew by 15% to HUF 15,300 for same day trips and rose by 10.1% to HUF 17,700 for overnight trips.

Figure 6



Almost half (47%) of foreigners arriving for several days spent at least one night in Budapest. Compared to the fourth quarter of the previous year, the number of visitors arriving in Budapest and the surrounding region (Central Danube region) reached a record, and their share in the country increased by 7.4 percentage points to 51%. Budapest also increased its share in short (1–3 nights) and longer (4 or more nights) trips, while the surrounding region became more popular for short stays. Western Transdanubia was the second most popular tourist region, the share of overnight trips to this area fell by 3.2 percentage points, mainly due to a decline in the share of shorter (1–3 nights) stays.

Foreign visits to Hungary, 2018

In 2018, foreigners visited Hungary 58 million times, 4.9% more than in 2017. The share of same day trips (70%) remains significant, but decreasing compared to the last five years. Foreigners spent a total of 130 million days in our country, their length of stay increased by 4.5% compared to 2017. The number of same day visits increased by 2.4%. The duration of stay grew by 5.5% for overnight visitors.

In 2018, foreign visitors spent HUF 2,067 billion in Hungary. One quarter of spending (519 billion forints) came from same day trips accounting for seven-tenths of visitor traffic. Those arriving for several days spent a total of HUF 1,548 billion during the year.

Average daily spending per capita of visitors to Hungary increased by 7.9%, to HUF 15,900, and by 7.4% for those arriving for several days, to HUF 17,200. The number of same day trips has increased, despite their decreasing proportion. Most same day trips were registered again in the

third quarter, and while in the first two quarters of the year their number decreased compared to the same period of the previous year, they increased in the third and fourth quarters (by 6.8% and 3.1%, respectively).

One-quarter of same day visitors (10 million people) arrived to shop, another 17 million travelled across the country and 5.0 million came to have leisure, 2.4 million to visit relatives and friends, 1.4 million to work and 1.3 million to do business.

The number of overnight trips increased by 11% to 18 million. This year, too, the most common travel purposes were the following: recreation, entertainment, cruising, sightseeing and visiting friends and relatives.

Hungarian trips abroad, Quarter 4 2018

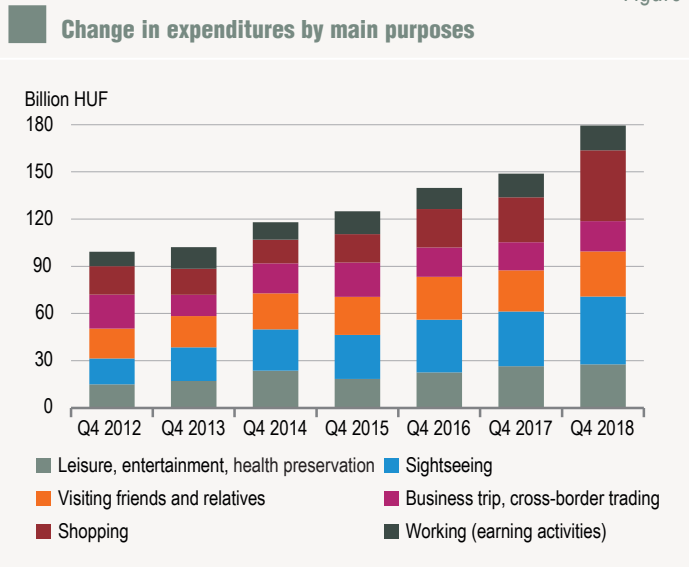
The number of Hungarian trips abroad was 5.2 million, an increase of one tenth over the fourth quarter of 2017. Same day trips gave nearly two-thirds of all trips. 27% of trips were for leisure and 26% for shopping, their number increased by 16% and 14% respectively compared to the same quarter of the previous year.

Same day trips are usually to visit neighbouring countries, mainly Austria, Slovakia or the Ukraine.

HUF 195 billion was spent on travel abroad, 16% more than in the fourth quarter of 2017. Expenditure on leisure tourism, which represents a large proportion (40%), decreased by 11%, while spending on VFR trips increased by 10%, while business, cross border trading and working trips related expenses fell. Nearly a quarter of spending abroad was made up of purchases, the amount of which increased significantly by more than one and a half times.

Daily average spending abroad grew significantly by one third to HUF 17,900 on same day trips and fell by 1.7% to HUF 14,300 on overnight trips.

Figure 7



Hungarian trips abroad, 2018

In 2018, Hungarians made 22.8 million - 14.2 million same day and 8.6 million overnight - visits abroad. During the year, the number of same day trips increased by 11% and of overnight trips by 15%. The number of same day outbound trips increased the most by 17% in the first quarter, most of them were related to recreation. The number of longer trips increased the most by 24% in the fourth quarter, with a significant share of VFR trips.

Figure 8

Number of trips abroad in the fourth quarter of 2018, thousand trips



Hungarians spent 62 million days and 8.7% more time abroad than in 2017. The number of days spent increased in each quarter compared to the same period last year. Same day Hungarian travellers spent 11%, and overnight Hungarian travellers 8.1% more time abroad.

The average time spent is constantly decreasing, in 2018, it was 2.7 days. Overnight visitors stayed abroad for an average of 5.6 days. In 2018, Hungarian travellers spent HUF 888 billion on products and services related to their foreign trips. Half of this was spent on leisure trips, mostly on overnight trips. About a quarter of spending, HUF 205 billion, came from same day outbound visitors, who accounted for 62% of total visitor traffic. The spending of Hungarians travelling abroad significantly grew year-on-year by more than one third during shopping and by 29% during VFR trips.

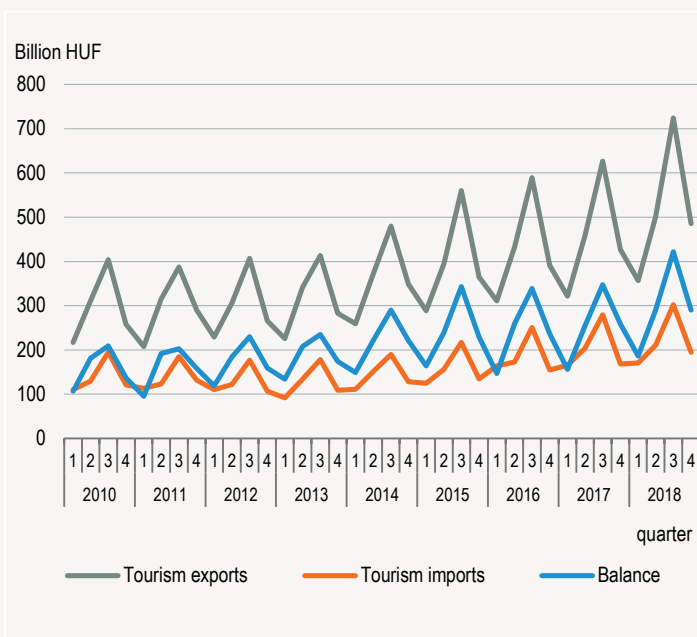
Balance of passenger traffic

In the fourth quarter of 2018, surplus in passenger traffic was HUF 290 billion (EUR 899 million). As a result of growing exports (114%) and even more expanding imports (116%), **the balance of travel services increased by 12% year-on-year at current prices.** In the observed period, the forint-euro exchange rate was 3.8% higher than in the fourth quarter of 2017.

In 2018, **surplus in passenger traffic was HUF 1,179 billion (EUR 3,684 million).** As a result of exports (113%) and imports (108.7%), **the balance of travel services increased by 16% at current prices compared to the same period of the previous year.** The forint-euro exchange rate was 3.1% higher in the observed period than in 2017.

Figure 9

Changes in the turnover of passenger services at current prices



Further information, data (links):

[Tables](#)

[Tables \(STADAT\)](#)

[Methodology](#)

[Dissemination database](#)

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