



VisitKarelia

North Karelia



Dark Sky tourism compatibility with North Karelia tourism
strategy – challenges and opportunities

25.3.2025

Pleased to meet you!

We at Visit Karelia, North Karelia's Destination Marketing Organisation are responsible for county's tourism marketing internationally and domestically.

Welcome to the Soul of Finland!



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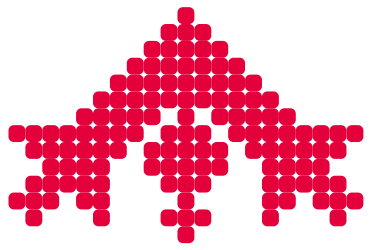
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Strategy 2024-26 in brief

Key responsibilities

- To increase awareness of North Karelia as a tourism destination internationally and domestically
- To attract tourists to North Karelia
- To increase tourism revenue through marketing activities

Key actions

- International, domestic and digital visibility
- Co-operation and joint marketing activities
- Communication
- Data led approach

Overall objective: 1 M overnights by 2030

- VisitKarelia has marketing related objectives:
 - Brand mentions, leads, media coverage, website visitors



Key figures of North Karelia



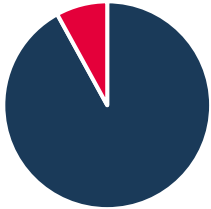
532,000
overnights in 2024



**Our key
source markets**
DACH, Benelux
UK, France, Spain and Italy

2,7 nights

Average stay of
International Client (2021)



Source market
92 % domestic
8 % international

109 €

Average room rate per
room per night in 2024
(vs Lapland 160 € per room per night)



7000
total bed capacity

TOP 10

International Markets
Germany, Sweden, Poland
France, Estonia, The Netherlands
Lithuania, Austria, Switzerland, Italy

32,5 M €

Accommodation
Income in 2024

53% of Europeans stay
between **May-Sep**



Global dark sky tourism

Value of global astrotourism is valued at approx. 250 M\$ in 2023*

The Nordics are underrepresented in international dark sky places**



*source: [Equentis](#)

** source: [Darksky.org](#)



North Karelia as a dark sky destination?

89% of area is covered by forests

North Karelia biosphere reserve

Utilisation rate of hotel accommodation in 'dark' months Oct-Feb: 45%
vs. Apr-Jul average 54%

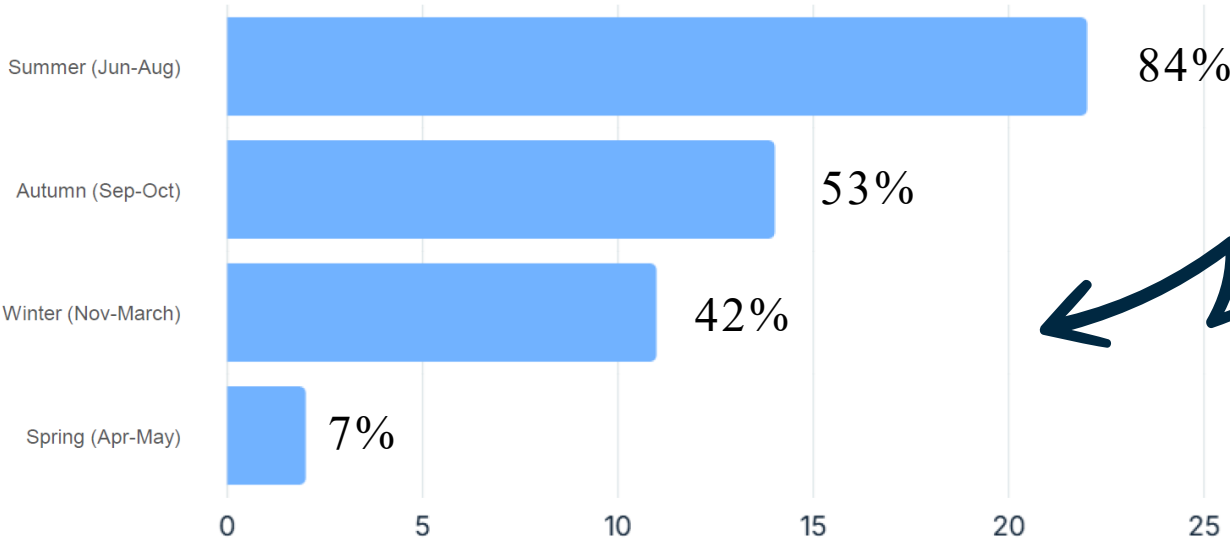


Insights from VisitKarelia tour operator survey

Survey was conducted in co-operation with Lieke and Pikes in Oct-Nov 2024
70 responses of which majority from German and Dutch tour operators

43% of respondents have production in North Karelia:

When do your customers generally travel to North Karelia? Please choose all that apply.



Potential for winter development!



Insights from VisitKarelia tour operator survey

The most common customer segments of the 43% of tour operators that have production in North Karelia:

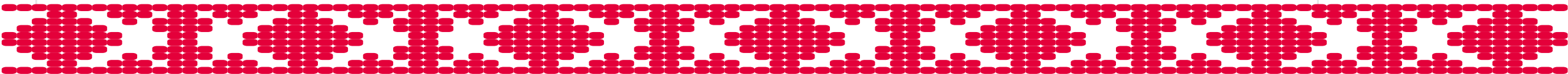
Customer segments: please choose top 3 customer segments that your customers or client base fall into.



Insights from VisitKarelia tour operator survey

Below you will find a list of different aspects of a tourism destination. Please choose all that come to mind when you think about North Karelia. (for all respondents)

Nature	Vastaukset	%
Clean nature	42	70.0%
National parks	48	80.0%
Space (i.e. not crowded, plenty of natural space)	32	53.3%
National landscape of Finland	34	56.7%
Lakes	41	68.3%
Lakeland	30	50.0%
Lake Saimaa	20	33.3%
Rivers	15	25.0%
Wilderness	41	68.3%
Fishing lakes and rivers	15	25.0%
Dark skies	13	21.7%
Ridges and hills	6	10.0%
Vast forests	25	41.7%
Swamps	9	15.0%
Beaches	6	10.0%
Wildlife	31	51.7%



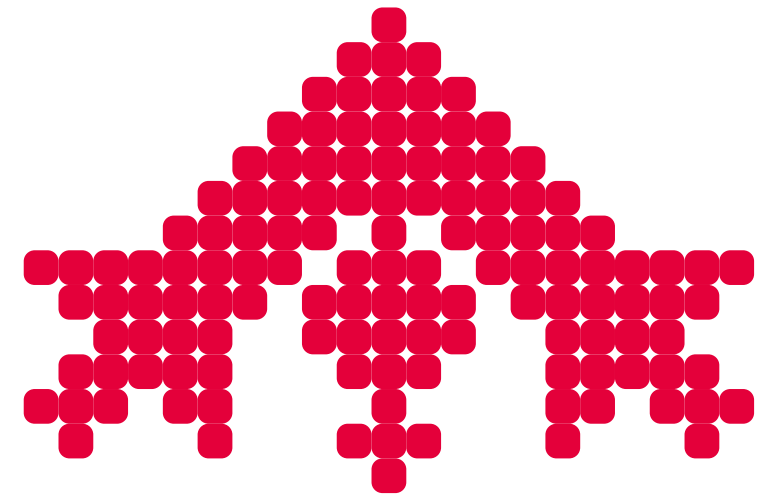
The potential is there, however...

...we must

Build awareness of North Karelia as a dark sky tourism destination

Develop product, develop product, develop product

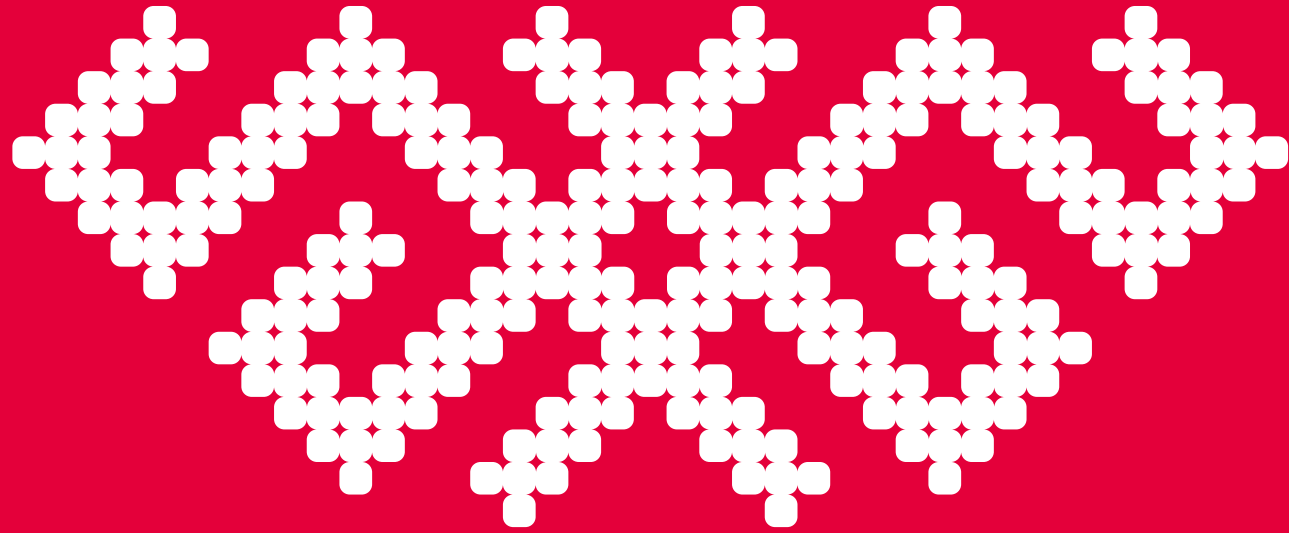




How does dark sky tourism fit in with North Karelia?

- Promotes all year round travel as per strategy
- Could potentially balance visitor flows and seasons creating more balanced business opportunities for local companies
- Increases attractiveness of North Karelia as a tourism destination
- Offers a sustainable 'product range' to customers

Thank you!



VisitKarelia