

## The Best European Countries For Nature Tourism, Revealed by Data

[SaveOnEnergy.com/uk](https://www.saveonenergy.com/uk) analysed almost 80,000 nationally protected terrestrial areas in Europe, calculating the percentage of protected space per country, to discover who makes the biggest attempt to preserve their natural terrene.

### The countries with the largest percent of protected nature:

	Country	Total National Designated Protected Area (km)	Number of Designated Protected Areas	% of National Land Protected
#1	Luxembourg	1,963	134	75.9%
#2	Slovenia	14,611	1,891	72.1%
#3	Malta	206	250	65.1%
#4	Cyprus	5,141	57	55.6%
#5	Liechtenstein	73	44	45.5%
#6	Netherlands	18,368	182	44.2%
#7	United Kingdom	88,135	9,032	36.3%
#8	Austria	27,821	1,222	33.2%
#9	Poland	102,841	2,043	32.9%
#10	Germany	111,356	17,654	31.2%

[SaveOnEnergy.com/uk](https://www.saveonenergy.com/uk) can reveal that **Luxembourg** is the European country with the highest percentage of protected land at **75.9%**. Luxembourg is one of the smallest countries in Europe (2,586 km<sup>2</sup>), and is home to just 134 designated areas, but with these areas covering 1,963 km<sup>2</sup> they take first place.

In second place is **Slovenia**, with **72.1%** of their country's nature being protected, the country has a whopping 1,891 designated areas.

**Malta** has the third-highest percentage of protected terrestrial land in Europe.

Covering **65.1%** of their land, there are 250 sites for locals to enjoy such as Għar Dalam cave, Maqluba and Mdina.

**Cyprus** comes fourth with 57 designated areas and **55.6%** of land protected, followed by **Liechtenstein** with 44 designated areas and **45.5%** of the country protected by legislation.

### The countries with the smallest percent of protected nature:

	Country	Total National Designated Protected Area (km)	Number of Designated Protected Areas	% of National Land Protected
#1	Bosnia and Herzegovina	1,922	40	3.8%
#2	Romania	13,980	943	5.9%
#3	Serbia	6,490	377	7.3%
#4	Belgium	2,596	1,494	8.5%
#4	Portugal	7,855	170	8.5%
#6	North Macedonia	2,297	74	8.9%
#7	Hungary	8,485	311	9.1%
#8	Italy	31,485	836	10.4%
#9	Sweden	50,813	15,254	11.3%
#10	Latvia	7,690	671	11.9%

With just **3.8%** of its land protected, [SaveOnEnergy](#) found that **Bosnia and Herzegovina** is the country with the smallest percentage of protected nature in Europe. Although there are 40 designated sites, they only cover 1,922 km<sup>2</sup> of the country's 192,232 km<sup>2</sup> land.

Just behind, with **5.9%** of their terrestrial land protected, **Romania** places second to last. Despite having many designated areas (934), such as Dealul Zackel and Cindrel, they aren't widely spread across the country.

Completing the bottom five are **Serbia** (7.3%), **Belgium** (8.5%) and **Portugal** (8.5%).

**For more information, please see SaveOnEnergy's blog**

here: <https://www.saveonenergy.com/uk/protected-land-in-european-countries/>

**Please find full data, graphics, and images for editorial use**

here: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/sb2vxw15a1gopbm/AADWbK7WMoUE7kpP2Pd76COWa?dl=0>

#### **Methodology & Notes:**

1. [SaveOnEnergy.com/uk](#) analysed the [European Environment Agency's list](#) of nationally designated areas to discover the total number of designated and respective protected areas in each European country, as of 2020.
2. They then found the total area of each country to calculate the percentage of protected space per country.
3. SaveOnEnergy only considered the protected terrestrial areas of each country for this research - 'marine', 'marine and terrestrial' and 'heritage' sites were not included. The sites that spill over into other countries were also removed.

\*A 'nationally designated protected area' is an area protected by national legislation.

\*Terrestrial protected areas are totally or partially protected areas that are designated by national authorities as scientific reserves with limited public access, national parks, natural monuments, nature reserves or wildlife sanctuaries, protected landscapes, and areas managed mainly for sustainable use.

\*Estonia, Finland, Ireland and Turkey were removed from the data as EEA does not have permission to distribute some or all sites by the countries.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Best wishes,

Georgina

Tel: 0113 880 0948 Email: [georgina@journalistic.org](mailto:georgina@journalistic.org)

Previous articles published: [The best European countries for hiking](#) - Irish Times

**We really hope you find this release useful. If you do end up using it, we would very much appreciate a link to <https://www.saveonenergy.com/uk/protected-land-in-european-countries/> who commissioned the data. A link credit allows us to keep supplying you with future content that you may find useful.**