



International tourist arrivals up 4% in 2025 reflecting strong travel demand around the world

Madrid, Spain, 20 January 2026 - International tourist arrivals (overnight visitors) grew by 4% in 2025, as most destinations worldwide posted solid results. According to the first World Tourism Barometer of the year, an estimated 1.52 billion international tourists were recorded globally in 2025, almost 60 million more than in 2024.

These numbers reflect a return to pre-pandemic growth trends, closer to the 5% average increase per year between 2009 and 2019. Results were driven by strong demand, robust performance from large source markets and the ongoing recovery of destinations in Asia and the Pacific. Increased air connectivity and enhanced visa facilitation also supported international travel in 2025.

UN Tourism Secretary-General Shaikha Alnuwais said: "Demand for travel remained high throughout 2025, despite high inflation in tourism services and uncertainty from geopolitical tensions. We expect this positive trend to continue into 2026 as global economy is expected to remain steady and destinations still lagging behind pre pandemic levels fully recover."

Africa sees strongest results in 2025; Asia and the Pacific rebounds

The World Tourism Barometer by UN Tourism provides comprehensive data for the sector by region, sub-region and destination. Key takeaways from this edition show:

- **Europe**, the world's largest destination region, recorded 793 million international tourists in 2025, a 4% increase from 2024 and 6% more than in 2019. Western Europe (+5%) and Southern Mediterranean Europe (+3%) saw robust performance. Central and Eastern Europe rebounded strongly (+6%) though arrivals remained 9% below 2019 levels.
- The **Americas** (218 million) recorded 1% growth last year, with mixed results across subregions. After a strong first half of 2025, the region saw small declines in Q3 and Q4, partly due to weak results in the United States. South America (+7%) and Central America (+5%) led results by subregion. Some destinations in the Caribbean (+0%) were affected by Hurricane Melissa in the last quarter of the year.
- **Africa** (81 million) saw an 8% increase in arrivals in 2025, with particularly strong results in North Africa (+11%).

- The **Middle East** recorded 3% growth in 2025, equivalent to 39% above pre-pandemic levels, the strongest results relative to 2019. The region virtually reached the mark of 100 million international visitors in 2025.
- Arrivals in **Asia and the Pacific** (331 million) grew 6% last year but are still 9% below 2019 levels as the region continued to rebound. North-East Asia led performance with 13% growth over 2024, while South Asia recovered pre-pandemic levels.

Most destinations report positive results for 2025

- After solid growth in 2024, most destinations continued to enjoy strong results in 2025.
- Among destination with available data for the twelve months of 2025 several show double-digit growth in international arrivals, among which Brazil (+37%), Egypt (+20%), Morocco (+14%) and Seychelles (+13%). Destinations reporting data through November also saw strong growth, including Bhutan (+30%), Iceland (+29%), Guyana (+24%), South Africa (+19%) and Japan (+17%).
- The positive results in international arrivals last year are also reflected in other industry indicators. As shown in the [UN Tourism Data Dashboard](#), both international air capacity and air passenger traffic grew 7% through October 2025 (IATA). Global occupancy in accommodation establishments reached 66% in November 2025, matching the levels of November 2024 (based on STR data).

Export revenues from tourism reached a record USD 2.2 trillion in 2025

Monthly data show strong visitor spending throughout 2025, with preliminary estimates pointing at USD 1.9 trillion in international tourism receipts globally, a 5% increase from 2024.

Total export revenues from tourism (including receipts and passenger transport) are estimated at USD 2.2 trillion in 2025 based on available data. Other key takeaways include:

- International tourism receipts saw extraordinary growth in 2025 following an already strong 2024, with many destinations posting a higher increase in receipts than arrivals.
- Destinations reporting solid growth in receipts during the first ten to twelve months of 2025 were Morocco (+19%), the Republic of Korea (+18%), Egypt (+17%), Mongolia (+15%), Japan (+14%), Latvia (+11%) and Mauritius (+10%), all calculated in local currencies.
- Among the world's top tourism earners, the United Kingdom and France (both +9%), as well as Spain (+7%) and Türkiye (+6%), saw solid growth in the first ten to twelve months of 2025 compared to the same months of 2024.
- Data on international tourism expenditure reflects the same trend of strong demand, especially among large source markets such as the United States (+8%), France (+4%), as

well as Spain (+16%) and the Republic of Korea (+10%).

Outlook for 2026: continued growth amid a challenging environment

International tourism is expected to grow 3% to 4% in 2026 compared to 2025, assuming that Asia and the Pacific continues to recover, global economic conditions remain favorable and geopolitical conflicts do not escalate. Uncertainty from current geopolitical tensions and conflicts pose an increasing risk for tourism in 2026.

- UN Tourism's prospects for 2026 reflect a normalization of growth rates after a strong rebound in international arrivals in 2023 (+34%) and 2024 (+11%) and a 4% increase in 2025.
- This positive outlook is confirmed by the latest UN Tourism Confidence Index and survey among the Panel of Experts. 58% of experts foresee better or much better performance in 2026 than in 2025, while 31% expect similar results and 11% worse.
- Survey respondents pointed to economic factors, high travel costs, and geopolitical risks as the main challenges international tourism could face in 2026. These factors were viewed as the most relevant by about half of all experts.
- While headline inflation has receded globally in 2025, inflation in tourism-related services remains elevated by historical standards. Against this backdrop, tourists are expected to continue to seek value for money according to the Panel of Experts.
- While positive prospects for the global economy and lower oil prices could favour tourism performance in 2026, uncertainty derived from geopolitical risks and ongoing conflicts, trade tensions and extreme weather events could weigh on traveller confidence.
- International tourism in 2026 will be driven by solid consumer demand, enhanced air connectivity and growing outbound travel from emerging markets. Major international events such as the Milano Cortina 2026 Winter Olympics (Italy) and the FIFA World Cup 2026 (Canada, United States and Mexico) will also contribute to international travel.

Related links:

[International tourist arrivals up 4% in 2025 reflecting strong travel demand around the world](#)
[UN Tourism Barometer - EXCERPT - Volume 24 • Issue 1 • January 2026](#)
[World Tourism Barometer PPT version](#)
[International Tourism Highlights, 2024 edition](#)
[The Economic Contribution of Tourism and the Impact of COVID-19](#)
[UN Tourism Data Dashboard](#)