

World Tourism:

Where Tourists are Going, and Which Countries Depend on Them

Tourism is a vast and surging industry throughout the world. According to the UN World Tourism Organization, international tourist arrivals increased to 1.235 billion people in 2016, a 3.9% increase from the previous year. This marked the 7th straight year of sustained growth in the tourism industry. Along with growth in the overall number of tourists, the UNWTO reported that total expenditure by these tourists showed a 2.6% increase from 2015. This continued growth has led tourism into ranking as the 3rd largest worldwide export category, with it being the top export category in many developing nations.

In total, the travel and tourism industry accounted for over 10% of global GDP (through direct and indirect contribution), according to the World Travel & Tourism Council. Travel and Tourism also accounted for 292 million jobs, or 1 in 10 jobs in the global economy. Tourism contributes to environmental protection and awareness through ecotourism, and it encourages diversification and cultural preservation. In some regions, travel and tourism have a significant impact on developing and island nations which heavily rely on the revenue associated with it.

