

Monthly Tourist Arrivals Report:

September 2023

Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority

Introduction

The following document provides a synthesis of the most recent September, 2023 international visitor arrivals data sourced from the Department of Immigration & Emigration. The data is current as of 30th September 2023, and subject to change. The data provides an overview of month-on-month and annual changes in visitor arrivals to Sri Lanka from international source markets. The data is meant to provide an overview of how travel and tourism is performing to Sri Lanka.

This report is developed by the Research & International Relations Division at Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority (SLTDA). Questions, comments and feedback are welcome and will support the future amendment and enhancement of the report to ensure it meets the data and insights needs of Sri Lanka's Government and industry stakeholders.



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Summary

In September 2023, Sri Lanka witnessed an upswing in the number of international tourist arrivals compared to the same period in 2022. The influx of foreign tourists surged by an impressive 275.6% year-on-year, totaling 111,938 visitors.

However, the month of September traditionally experiences lower tourism numbers, and the decrease in arrivals compared to August reflects this pattern. This underscores the importance of promoting Sri Lanka as an attractive year-round destination for future growth and development in the tourism sector.

From January to September 2023, Sri Lanka's cumulative tourist arrivals reached an outstanding milestone of 1,016,256, surpassing the previous year's figure of 526,232 arrivals, and

surpassing the significant one million tourist arrivals mark.

During September 2023, the tourism sector in Sri Lanka experienced a substantial influx of visitors, with India, China, the United Kingdom, Germany, and Russia emerging as the top five source markets. These nations played a pivotal role in driving the surge in tourist arrivals, significantly contributing to the overall recovery of Sri Lanka's tourism sector.

It is noteworthy that September 2023 recorded the highest percentage change in arrivals compared to the same month in the previous year, highlighting the impressive growth in Sri Lanka's tourism industry during that period.

Table 1. Monthly tourist arrivals, September 2023

| Month | 2022 | 2023 | % change 2023/22 |
|--------------|----------------|------------------|---------------------|
| January | 82,327 | 102,545 | 24.5 |
| February | 96,507 | 107,639 | 11.5 |
| March | 106,500 | 125,495 | 17.8 |
| April | 62,980 | 105,498 | 67.5 |
| May | 30,207 | 83,309 | 175.8 |
| June | 32,856 | 100,388 | 205.5 |
| July | 47,293 | 143,039 | 202.4 |
| August | 37,760 | 136,405 | 261.2 |
| September | 29,802 | 111,938 | 275.6 |
| October | 42,026 | - | - |
| November | 59,759 | - | - |
| December | 91,961 | - | - |
| TOTAL | 719,978 | 1,016,256 | - |



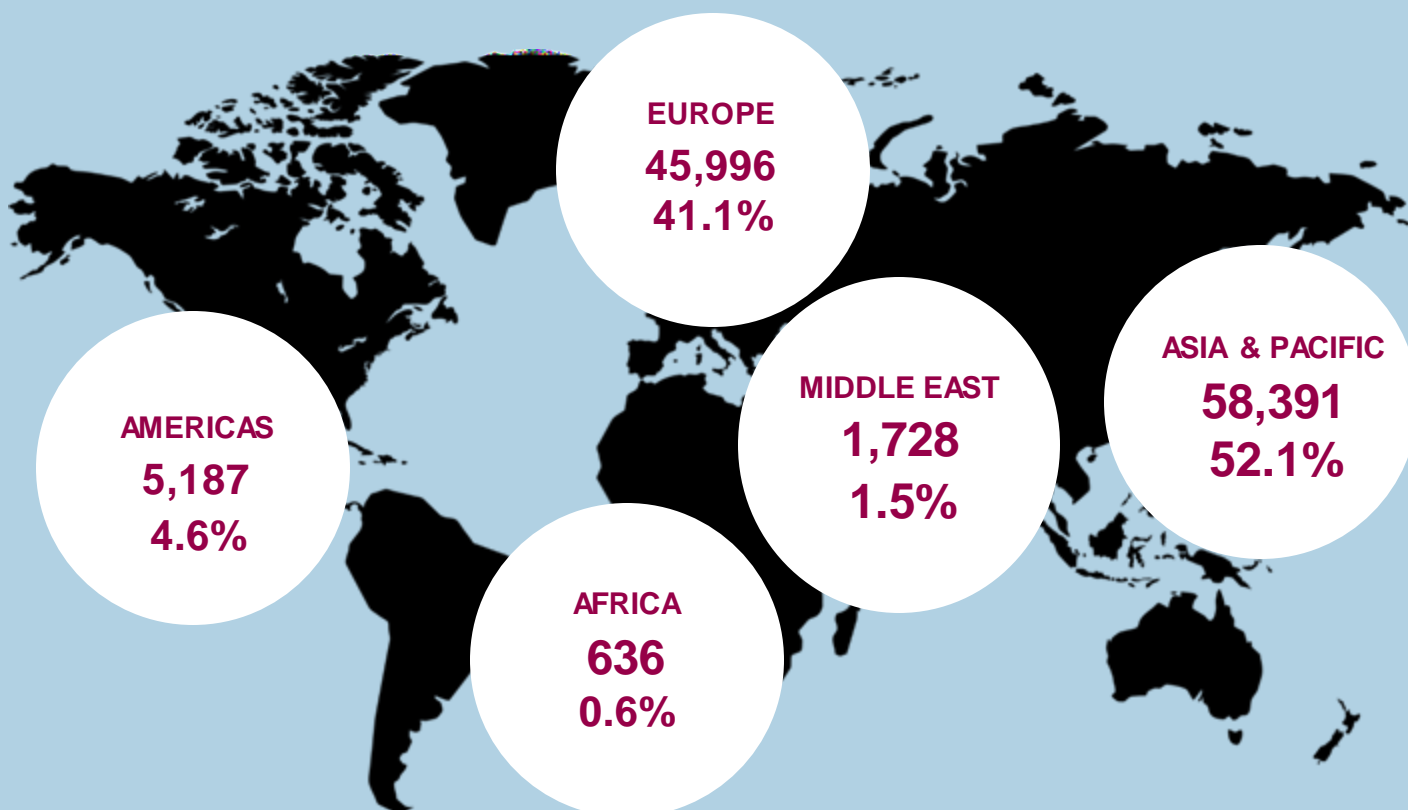
Tourist Arrivals | September 2023

111,938



Tourist arrivals by region and percentage share September 2023

Map 1. Tourist arrivals by region and percentage share



The tourism landscape in Sri Lanka saw a notable influence from Asia and the Pacific, making up a substantial portion of tourists, comprising 52.1% of the total arrivals. Concurrently, Europe took the forefront as the primary source market for tourists visiting Sri Lanka, accounting for 41.1% of the overall influx. This transformation in the origins of tourists underscores the changing dynamics within Sri Lanka's tourism industry, with Asia and the Pacific being a significant contributor and Europe emerging as a vital source of tourists.

The rise in tourism can be credited to increasing demand from nations such as India, China, the United Kingdom, Germany, and Russia, all of which have

significantly bolstered Sri Lanka's tourism industry.

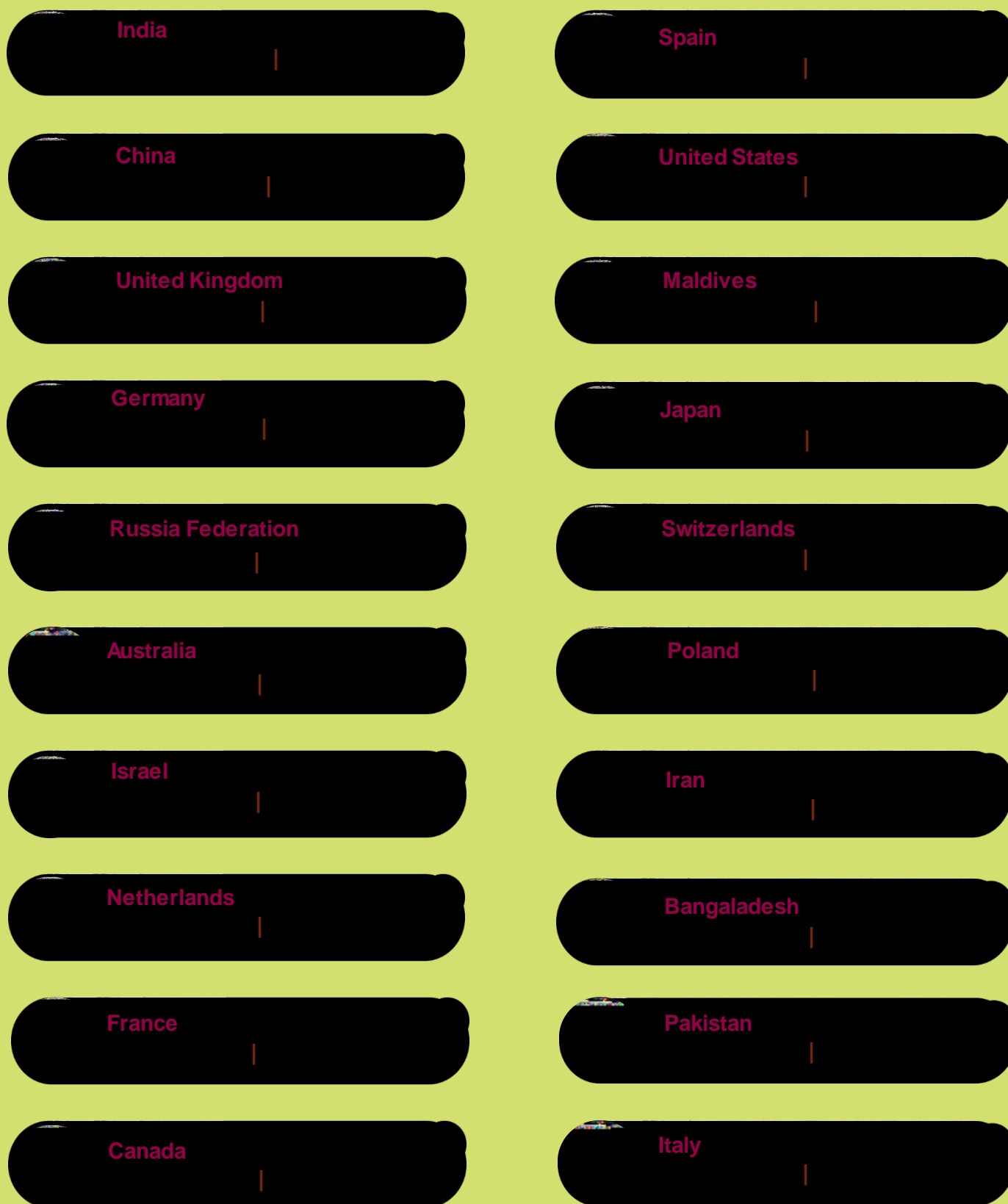
To delve deeper into these contributions, the Americas have made up 4.6% of the total tourist arrivals, while the Middle East has contributed 1.5%. These regions have each played distinctive roles in influencing the dynamics of Sri Lanka's tourism landscape.

The latest UNWTO Confidence Index suggests that the period from September to December 2023 indicates ongoing recovery in the tourism sector. However, this recovery is expected to occur at a more gradual pace compared to the peak travel season of June to August.



Top primary markets and top potential markets

Top primary markets, September 2023



Note: The top primary markets for Sri Lanka have been identified using visitor arrivals. The previous methodology used to identify the markets was altered due to the current arrival trends in the source markets and the socio economic factors in Sri Lanka. The intention is to track these source markets on a go-forward basis to understand future performance of Sri Lanka's tourism economy, including during the projected international tourism recovery period, 2022-2025.



Top potential markets, September 2023



Note: The top potential markets for Sri Lanka have been identified using visitor arrivals data. The previous methodology used to identify the markets was altered due to the current arrival trends in the source markets and the socio economic factors in Sri Lanka. The intention is to track these source markets on a go-forward basis to understand future performance of Sri Lanka's tourism economy, including during the projected international tourism recovery period, 2022-2025.





Top ten source markets

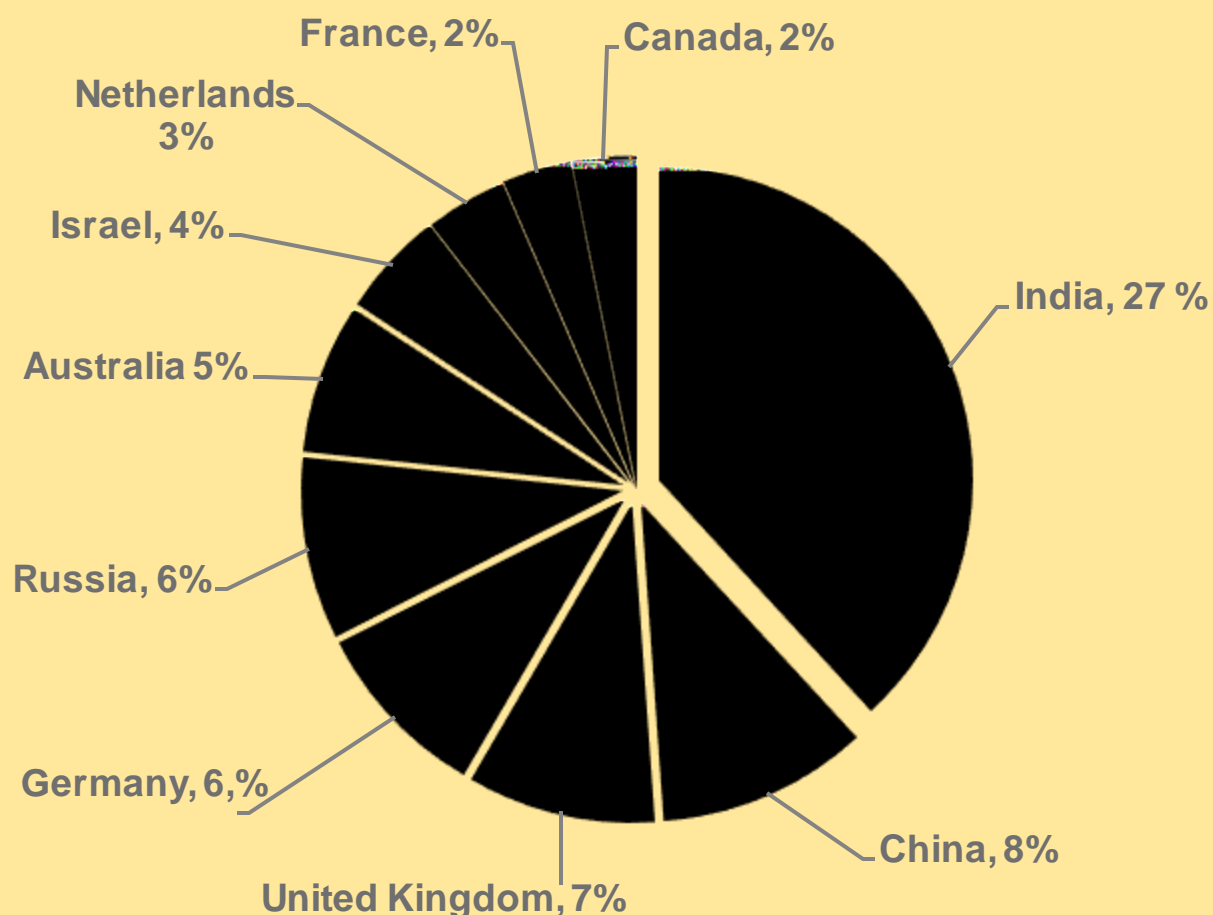
September 2023

In September, India emerged as the leading source of tourism for Sri Lanka, contributing to 27% of total arrivals. China, the United Kingdom, Germany, and Russia followed with 8%, 7%, and 6% each, signifying changing travel preferences and patterns. Notably, there has been a rise in arrivals from China, Israel, and the Netherlands, indicating a shift towards emerging destinations.

Several factors, including improved air connectivity, favorable local conditions, geographical proximity, and geopolitical considerations, have collectively established these countries as Sri Lanka's primary tourism contributors.

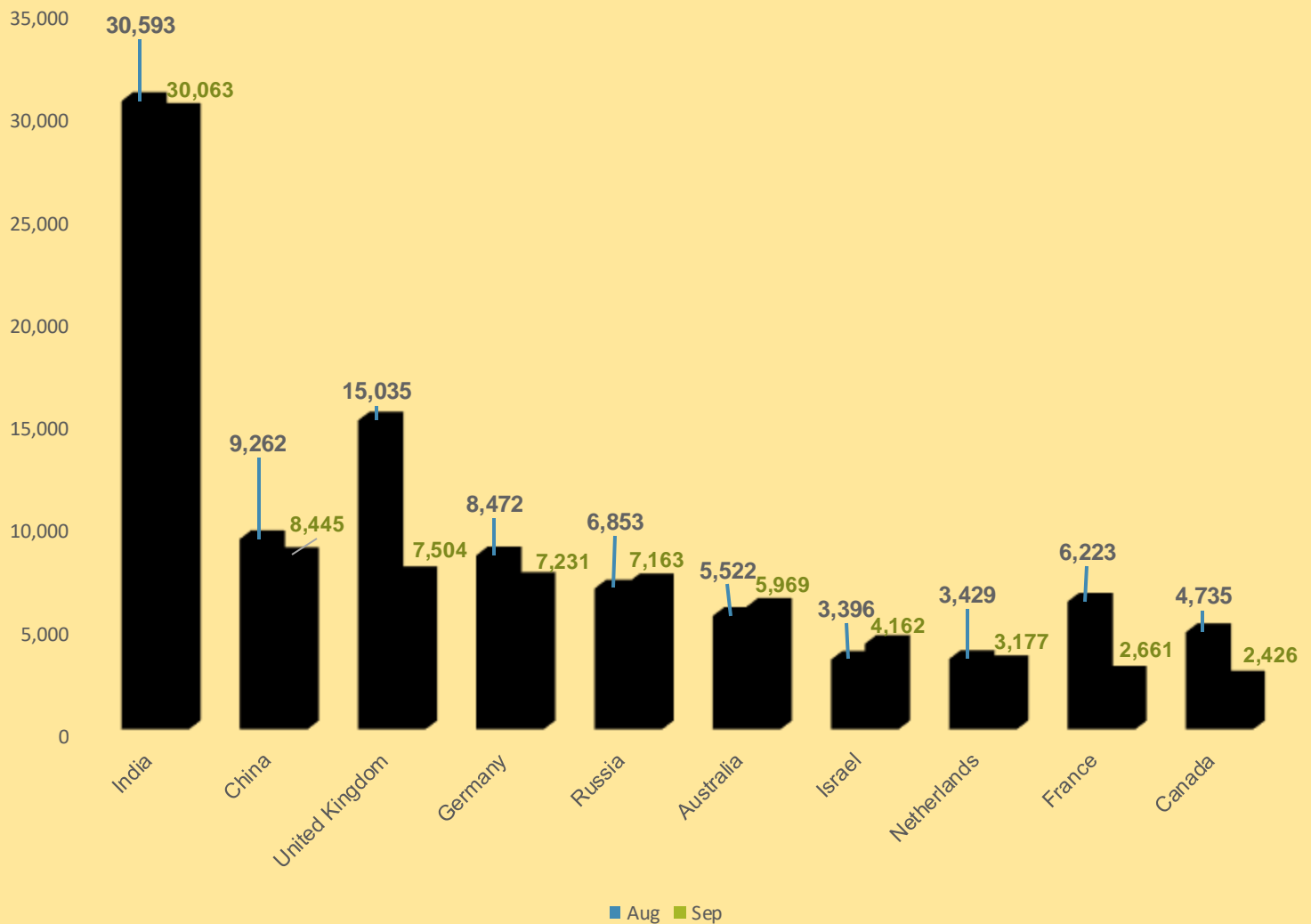
The growth rates of tourist arrivals from various countries have been influenced by global and local dynamics. Netherlands, Israel, India, and Russia have witnessed substantial growth in arrivals, while Canada, the United Kingdom, and Australia have shown the slowest growth rates compared to September 2022. This variation in growth rates can be attributed to evolving trends and responses to the prevailing global and local circumstances.

Chart 1. Top ten source markets to Sri Lanka, September 2023



**Table 2. Top ten source markets to Sri Lanka, September 2023**

| Rank | Country of Residence | Tourist Arrivals (September 2023) | | | Tourist Arrivals (September 2022) |
|------|----------------------|-----------------------------------|--------|--------|-----------------------------------|
| | | By Air | By Sea | Total | |
| 1 | India | 27,816 | 2,247 | 30,063 | 6,493 |
| 2 | China | 8,445 | 0 | 8,445 | 637 |
| 3 | United Kingdom | 7,501 | 3 | 7,504 | 2,872 |
| 4 | Germany | 7,231 | 0 | 7,231 | 2,149 |
| 5 | Russian Federation | 7,163 | 0 | 7,163 | 1,553 |
| 6 | Australia | 5,968 | 1 | 5,969 | 2,309 |
| 7 | Israel | 4,162 | 0 | 4,162 | 826 |
| 8 | Netherlands | 3,177 | 0 | 3,177 | 473 |
| 9 | France | 2,661 | 0 | 2,661 | 1,201 |
| 10 | Canada | 2,426 | 0 | 2,426 | 1,552 |

Chart 2. Comparison of arrivals from top ten markets to Sri Lanka, Aug. / Sep. – 2023



Top ten source markets

January to September 2023

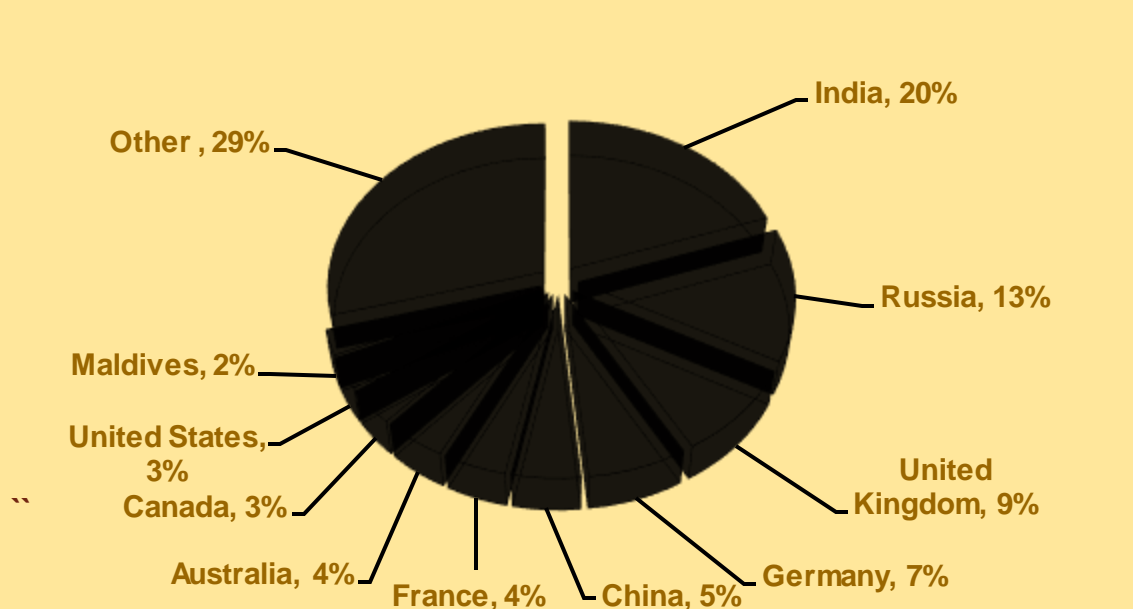
Compared to the same period in 2022, Sri Lanka saw a rise in its major sources of international tourists from January to September 2023, including India, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, Germany, and China. Notably, there was an upsurge in tourist arrivals from countries such as Russia, India, the Maldives, the United States, and Australia during this timeframe, contributing significantly to the overall growth in tourist arrivals in Sri Lanka for the first nine months of 2023.

However, it's worth mentioning that tourist arrivals from the United Kingdom and France exhibited a decline when compared to the same period last year. This indicates fluctuations in travel preferences and patterns for these particular regions.

Table 3. Top ten markets to Sri Lanka, January to September 2023

| Rank | Country of Residence | Tourist Arrivals (Jan. – Sep. 2023) | Tourist Arrivals (Jan. – Sep. 2022) |
|--------------|----------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1 | India | 200,310 | 86,625 |
| 2 | Russian Federation | 132,300 | 51,300 |
| 3 | United Kingdom | 90,843 | 68,527 |
| 4 | Germany | 68,913 | 42,508 |
| 5 | China | 47,631 | 3,021 |
| 6 | France | 43,904 | 29,436 |
| 7 | Australia | 43,712 | 20,721 |
| 8 | Canada | 35,324 | 20,608 |
| 9 | United States | 31,350 | 15,250 |
| 10 | Maldives | 25,078 | 11,867 |
| 11 | Others | 296,891 | 176,369 |
| Total | | 1,016,256 | 526,232 |

Chart 3. Top ten source markets to Sri Lanka, January to September 2023





Tourist arrivals by purpose of visit

September 2023

An examination of the motivations behind tourists' visits to Sri Lanka reveals distinct trends in their purposes. The majority, comprising 60% of all visits, selected Sri Lanka as a destination for leisure and vacation, highlighting its appeal as a top choice for those seeking relaxation and enjoyable experiences. Additionally, 13% of tourists visited to reconnect with friends and relatives, underscoring Sri Lanka's ability to attract individuals with personal connections or a desire to foster relationships with loved ones residing there.

Conversely, business-related reasons accounted for only 6% of tourist visits, indicating a relatively small segment of visitors arriving for professional engagements. Furthermore, 6% of tourists arrived in Sri Lanka for MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions) purposes, showcasing the country's growing presence as a venue for such events. Moreover, niche interests were represented, with 0.37% and 0.036% visiting for health/Ayurvedic and educational purposes, respectively. These findings underscore Sri Lanka's multifaceted appeal and highlight its attractiveness as a destination catering to a wide range of traveler preferences and objectives.

Among the primary source markets, including India, China, the United Kingdom, Germany, France, Russia, Israel, and the Netherlands, leisure and vacation were the dominant motives for visiting Sri Lanka. Specifically, Indian tourists accounted for 68%, Chinese tourists 89%, British tourists 51%, German tourists 70%, French tourists 60%, Russian tourists 37%, Israeli tourists 63%, and Dutch tourists 85% who visited for leisure purposes. This data indicates that the majority of tourists from these key source markets selected Sri Lanka as a destination for recreational purposes, emphasizing the country's allure as a place for relaxation and enjoyable experiences.

Canadian tourists (71%) and Australian tourists (44%) primarily visited Sri Lanka to reconnect with friends and relatives, likely due to the presence of a Sri Lankan diaspora in these countries. Only 19% of Canadian tourists and 43% of Australian tourists came for leisure or vacation purposes. This data suggests that a significant portion of tourists from these countries had a strong motivation to visit Sri Lanka based on personal connections and family ties, highlighting the importance of Sri Lanka's diaspora communities in attracting visitors from these nations.

Additionally, 15% of Indian tourists and 6% of Indian visitors came to Sri Lanka for business-related reasons and MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions) purposes, respectively. Furthermore, 4% of German tourists traveled to Sri Lanka with the intent of seeking health-related services. Notably, 27% of Israeli tourists visited Sri Lanka for MICE purposes.

Chart 4: Purpose of visit

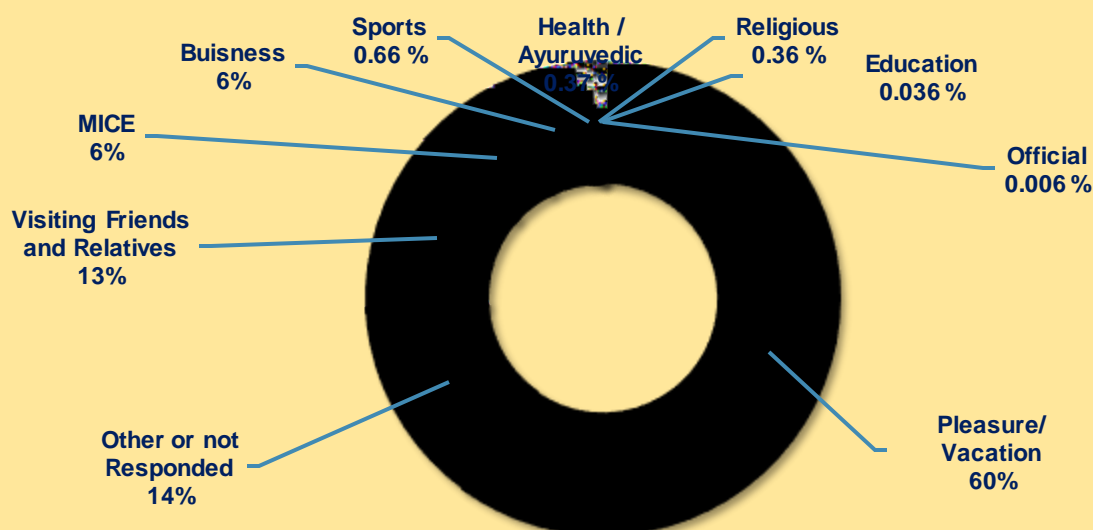
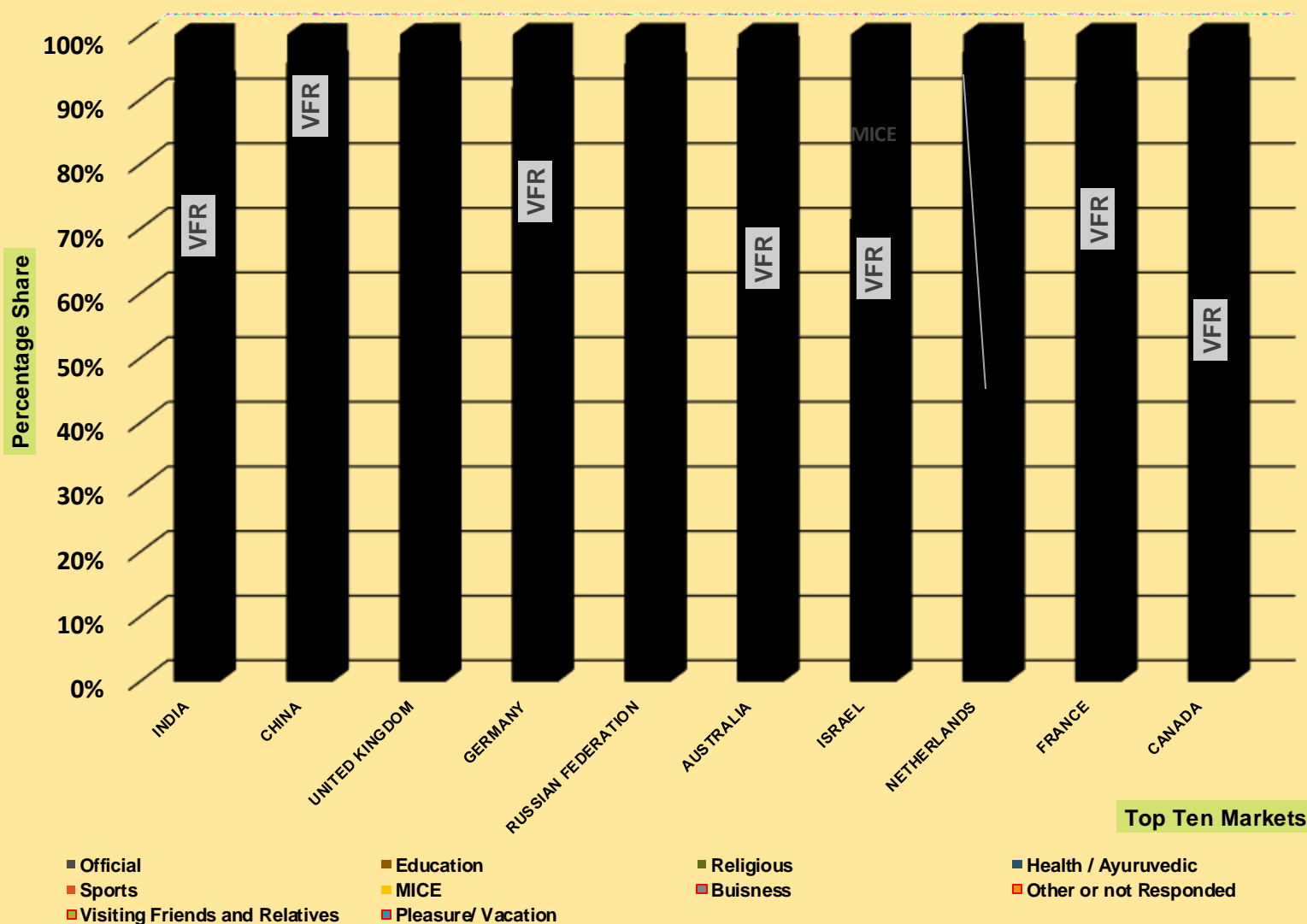




Chart 5 : Purpose of visit vs main source markets





Tourism tale: Sri Lanka's path to a million tourists

In 2023, Sri Lanka is set to achieve an ambitious target of welcoming 1.55 million tourists, representing substantial growth compared to the 719,978 tourists it received in 2022. By September 2023, the country had already greeted 111,938 tourists, signifying a notable upswing in tourism. However, it's essential to acknowledge that these figures remain below the levels observed in 2018.

Monthly forecasts for 2023 paint a positive picture, with actual tourist arrivals consistently exceeding the predicted numbers, especially from February to July. This trend suggests a promising trajectory for tourism as Sri Lanka steadily recovers from various challenges.

September 2023 stands out with the highest percentage increase compared to 2022, marking an extraordinary 275.6% rise. Additionally, July recorded the highest number of arrivals for the year, reaching an impressive 143,039 tourists. Monthly variations in arrivals reflect seasonal changes influenced by holidays, weather patterns, and other factors, underlining the dynamic nature of tourism in the country.

Noteworthy is Sri Lanka's achievement of surpassing one million tourists in September, marking a significant milestone. After 2019, this is the first time that Sri Lanka has experienced such a substantial increase in tourist arrivals, exceeding the one-million mark. During the initial eight months of the year, India, Russia, the United Kingdom, Germany, and France dominated as the top source markets for Sri Lankan tourism, contributing significantly to the influx of tourists. Furthermore, China has emerged as a prominent market among these top source countries.

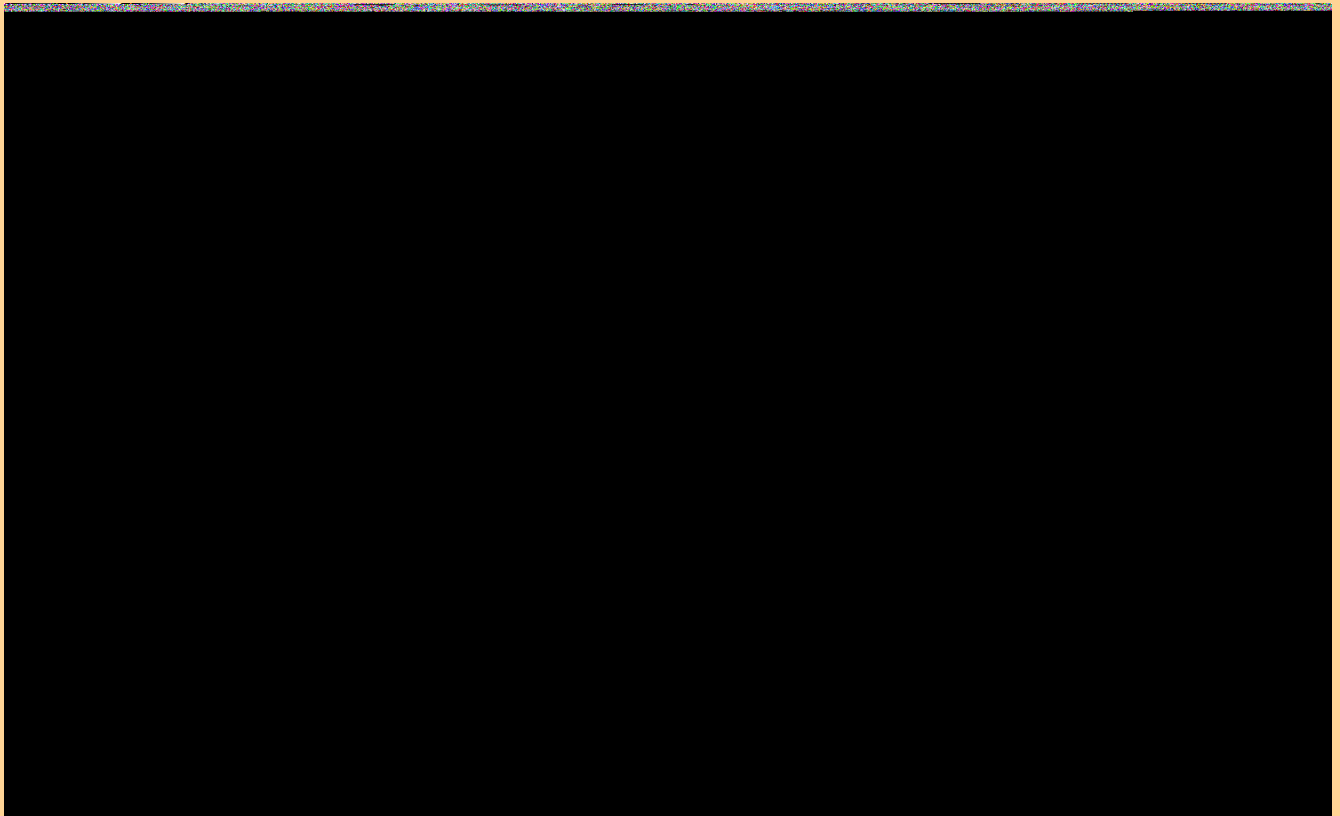
Sri Lanka's tourism sector is poised for a notable resurgence, attributed to several factors such as improved accessibility, recent prestigious accolades, and other advancements. Nevertheless, as per the UNWTO, the challenging economic environment may influence spending patterns in the remaining part of the year. Travelers are increasingly emphasizing value for their money, favoring nearby destinations, and opting for shorter vacations.

Table 4 : Actual tourist arrivals vs forecasted arrivals

| Month | Tourist Arrivals 2018 | Tourist Arrivals 2019 | Tourist Arrivals 2022 | Tourist Arrivals 2023 | Forecasted arrivals for 2023 | % change 23/22 |
|-----------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|----------------|
| January | 238,924 | 244,239 | 82,327 | 102,545 | 105,689 | 24.6 |
| February | 235,618 | 252,033 | 96,507 | 107,639 | 101,493 | 11.5 |
| March | 233,382 | 244,328 | 106,500 | 125,495 | 92,400 | 17.8 |
| April | 180,429 | 166,975 | 62,980 | 105,498 | 86,000 | 67.5 |
| May | 129,466 | 37,802 | 30,207 | 83,309 | 75,989 | 175.8 |
| June | 146,828 | 63,072 | 32,856 | 100,388 | 87,521 | 205.5 |
| July | 217,829 | 115,701 | 47,293 | 143,039 | 137,594 | 202.5 |
| August | 200,359 | 143,587 | 37,760 | 136,405 | 149,075 | 261.2 |
| September | 149,087 | 108,575 | 29,802 | 111,938 | 120,201 | 275.6 |
| October | 153,123 | 118,743 | 42,026 | - | 147,789 | |
| November | 195,582 | 176,984 | 59,759 | - | 204,114 | |
| December | 253,169 | 241,663 | 91,961 | - | 242,135 | |
| | 2,333,796 | 1,913,702 | 719,978 | 1,016,256 | 1,550,000 | |



Chart 6 : Actual arrivals vs forecasted arrivals





International tourist arrivals by country of residence

| | September 2023 | | | Tourist Arrivals Sep 2022 | % Change Sep (23/22) 2023 | Total Tourist Arrivals up to September 2023 | Total Tourist Arrivals up to Sep 2022 | % Change up to Sep (23/22) |
|-----------------------------|------------------|--------|-------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| | Tourist Arrivals | | | | | | | |
| | By Air | By Sea | Total | | | | | |
| AMERICAS | 5,182 | 5 | 5,187 | 2,642 | 96.3 | 70,102 | 37,508 | 86.90 |
| North America | 4,897 | 5 | 4,902 | 2,556 | 91.8 | 67,183 | 36,066 | 86.28 |
| Canada | 2,426 | 0 | 2,426 | 1,552 | 56.3 | 35,324 | 20,608 | 71.41 |
| Mexico | 119 | 0 | 119 | 13 | 815.4 | 509 | 208 | 144.71 |
| United States | 2,352 | 5 | 2,357 | 991 | 137.8 | 31,350 | 15,250 | 105.57 |
| Carribean & Central America | 57 | 0 | 57 | 11 | 418.2 | 476 | 223 | 113.45 |
| Costa Rica | 5 | 0 | 5 | 0 | - | 38 | 31 | 22.58 |
| Jamaica | 3 | 0 | 3 | 1 | 200.0 | 35 | 11 | 218.18 |
| Others | 49 | 0 | 49 | 10 | 390.0 | 403 | 181 | 122.65 |
| South America | 228 | 0 | 228 | 75 | 204.0 | 2,443 | 1,219 | 100.41 |
| Argentina | 42 | 0 | 42 | 4 | 950.0 | 515 | 156 | 230.13 |
| Brazil | 82 | 0 | 82 | 40 | 105.0 | 890 | 494 | 80.16 |
| Chile | 19 | 0 | 19 | 7 | 171.4 | 292 | 124 | 135.48 |
| Colombia | 49 | 0 | 49 | 11 | 345.5 | 374 | 237 | 57.81 |
| Others | 36 | 0 | 36 | 13 | 176.9 | 372 | 208 | 78.85 |
| AFRICA | 636 | 0 | 636 | 167 | 280.8 | 6,282 | 3,319 | 89.27 |
| North Africa | 161 | 0 | 161 | 65 | 147.7 | 1,837 | 1,398 | 31.40 |
| Morocco | 49 | 0 | 49 | 10 | 390.0 | 546 | 324 | 68.52 |
| Sudan | 33 | 0 | 33 | 36 | (8.3) | 585 | 675 | (13.33) |
| Others | 79 | 0 | 79 | 19 | 315.8 | 706 | 399 | 76.94 |
| Sub-Saharan Africa | 475 | 0 | 475 | 102 | 365.7 | 4,445 | 1,921 | 131.39 |
| Kenya | 40 | 0 | 40 | 6 | 566.7 | 415 | 144 | 188.19 |
| Mauritius | 29 | 0 | 29 | 7 | 314.3 | 215 | 68 | 216.18 |
| Nigeria | 6 | 0 | 6 | 1 | 500.0 | 59 | 19 | 210.53 |
| South Africa | 185 | 0 | 185 | 34 | 444.1 | 2,037 | 1,061 | 91.99 |
| Others | 215 | 0 | 215 | 54 | 298.1 | 1,719 | 629 | 173.29 |



| | September 2023 | | | Tourist Arrivals Sep 2022 | % Change Sep (23/22) | Total Tourist Arrivals up to Sep 2023 | Total Tourist Arrivals up to Sep 2022 | % Change up to Sep (23/22) |
|-----------------|------------------|--------|--------|---------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | Tourist Arrivals | | | | | | | |
| | By Air | By Sea | Total | | | | | |
| ASIA & PACIFIC | 56,133 | 2,258 | 58,391 | 13,202 | 342.3 | 397,013 | 145,275 | 173.28 |
| North East Asia | 11,562 | 0 | 11,562 | 1,027 | - | 68,755 | 6,029 | - |
| China | 8,445 | 0 | 8,445 | 637 | - | 47,631 | 3,021 | - |
| Japan | 1,830 | 0 | 1,830 | 226 | - | 12,859 | 1,684 | 663.60 |
| South Korea | 656 | 0 | 656 | 138 | 375.4 | 4,870 | 1,073 | 353.87 |
| Taiwan | 616 | 0 | 616 | 22 | - | 3,311 | 203 | - |
| Others | 15 | 0 | 15 | 4 | 275.0 | 84 | 48 | 75.00 |
| South East Asia | 2,774 | 2 | 2,776 | 834 | 232.9 | 24,706 | 7,552 | 227.15 |
| Cambodia | 26 | 0 | 26 | 8 | 225.0 | 379 | 82 | 362.20 |
| Indonesia | 184 | 0 | 184 | 71 | 159.2 | 1,602 | 578 | 177.16 |
| Malaysia | 924 | 0 | 924 | 207 | 346.4 | 7,284 | 1,646 | 342.53 |
| Myanmar | 47 | 0 | 47 | 33 | 42.4 | 826 | 186 | 344.09 |
| Philippines | 327 | 1 | 328 | 115 | 185.2 | 3,102 | 1,414 | 119.38 |
| Singapore | 759 | 0 | 759 | 262 | 189.7 | 6,210 | 2,321 | 167.56 |
| Thailand | 325 | 1 | 326 | 89 | 266.3 | 3,511 | 922 | 280.80 |
| Vietnam | 154 | 0 | 154 | 41 | 275.6 | 1,657 | 372 | 345.43 |
| Others | 28 | 0 | 28 | 8 | 250.0 | 135 | 31 | 335.48 |
| Oceania | 6,631 | 1 | 6,632 | 2,506 | 164.6 | 49,146 | 22,513 | 118.30 |
| Australia | 5,968 | 1 | 5,969 | 2,309 | 158.5 | 43,712 | 20,721 | 110.96 |
| New Zealand | 648 | 0 | 648 | 186 | 248.4 | 5,260 | 1,743 | 201.78 |
| Others | 15 | 0 | 15 | 11 | 36.4 | 174 | 49 | 255.10 |
| South Asia | 35,166 | 2,255 | 37,421 | 8,835 | 323.6 | 254,406 | 109,181 | 133.01 |
| Afghanistan | 21 | 0 | 21 | 0 | - | 135 | 21 | 542.86 |
| Bangladesh | 1,441 | 0 | 1,441 | 338 | 326.3 | 9,531 | 2,227 | 327.97 |
| Bhutan | 32 | 0 | 32 | 8 | 300.0 | 293 | 94 | 211.70 |
| India | 27,816 | 2,247 | 30,063 | 6,493 | 363.0 | 200,310 | 86,625 | 131.24 |
| Iran | 1,593 | 0 | 1,593 | 214 | 644.4 | 8,109 | 3,543 | 128.87 |
| Maldives | 2,287 | 0 | 2,287 | 1,314 | 74.0 | 25,078 | 11,867 | 111.33 |
| Nepal | 585 | 8 | 593 | 47 | - | 3,239 | 668 | 384.88 |
| Pakistan | 1,391 | 0 | 1,391 | 421 | 230.4 | 7,711 | 4,136 | 86.44 |
| EUROPE | 45,991 | 5 | 45,996 | 13,218 | 248.0 | 521,223 | 326,269 | 59.75 |
| Northern Europe | 9,286 | 5 | 9,291 | 3,513 | 164.5 | 114,796 | 87,121 | 31.77 |
| Denmark | 472 | 0 | 472 | 164 | 187.8 | 7,586 | 6,150 | 23.35 |
| Finland | 132 | 0 | 132 | 28 | 371.4 | 1,265 | 1,186 | 6.66 |
| Norway | 547 | 0 | 547 | 250 | 118.8 | 6,696 | 4,986 | 34.30 |
| Sweden | 327 | 0 | 327 | 145 | 125.5 | 4,960 | 3,576 | 38.70 |
| United Kingdom | 7,501 | 3 | 7,504 | 2,872 | 161.3 | 90,843 | 68,527 | 32.57 |
| Others | 307 | 2 | 309 | 54 | 472.2 | 3,446 | 2,696 | 27.82 |



| | September 2023 | | | Tourist Arrivals Sep 2022 | % Change Sep (23/22) | Total Tourist Arrivals up to Sep 2023 | Total Tourist Arrivals up to Sep 2022 | % Change up to Sep (23/22) |
|--------------------------------|------------------|--------|---------|---------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| | Tourist Arrivals | | | | | | | |
| | By Air | By Sea | Total | | | | | |
| Western Europe | 16,534 | 0 | 16,534 | 4,882 | 238.7 | 167,492 | 101,625 | 64.81 |
| Austria | 726 | 0 | 726 | 152 | 377.6 | 6,721 | 4,259 | 57.81 |
| Belgium | 1,061 | 0 | 1,061 | 316 | 235.8 | 8,237 | 5,099 | 61.54 |
| France | 2,661 | 0 | 2,661 | 1,201 | 121.6 | 43,904 | 29,436 | 49.15 |
| Germany | 7,231 | 0 | 7,231 | 2,149 | 236.5 | 68,913 | 42,508 | 62.12 |
| Netherlands | 3,177 | 0 | 3,177 | 473 | 571.7 | 21,897 | 9,823 | 122.92 |
| Switzerland | 1,638 | 0 | 1,638 | 583 | 181.0 | 17,324 | 10,291 | 68.34 |
| Others | 40 | 0 | 40 | 8 | 400.0 | 496 | 209 | 137.32 |
| Central/ Eastern Europe | 11,364 | 0 | 11,364 | 2,300 | 394.1 | 177,869 | 109,993 | 61.71 |
| Belarus | 778 | 0 | 778 | 54 | - | 7,071 | 2,440 | 189.80 |
| Czech Republic | 413 | 0 | 413 | 53 | 679.2 | 6,536 | 6,316 | 3.48 |
| Estonia | 47 | 0 | 47 | 10 | 370.0 | 774 | 781 | (0.90) |
| Hungary | 97 | 0 | 97 | 31 | 212.9 | 2,030 | 1,822 | 11.42 |
| Kazakhstan | 91 | 0 | 91 | 27 | 237.0 | 2,372 | 7,684 | (69.13) |
| Lithuania | 113 | 0 | 113 | 21 | 438.1 | 1,610 | 1,703 | (5.46) |
| Poland | 1,599 | 0 | 1,599 | 228 | 601.3 | 9,968 | 13,562 | (26.50) |
| Romania | 166 | 0 | 166 | 77 | 115.6 | 2,322 | 2,650 | (12.38) |
| Russia | 7,163 | 0 | 7,163 | 1,553 | 361.2 | 132,300 | 51,300 | 157.89 |
| Slovakia | 258 | 0 | 258 | 38 | 578.9 | 2,991 | 1,940 | 54.18 |
| Ukraine | 233 | 0 | 233 | 69 | 237.7 | 3,256 | 13,977 | (76.70) |
| Others | 406 | 0 | 406 | 139 | 192.1 | 6,639 | 5,818 | 14.11 |
| Southern/ Mediterranean Europe | 8,807 | 0 | 8,807 | 2,523 | 249.1 | 61,066 | 27,530 | 121.82 |
| Greece | 51 | 0 | 51 | 27 | 88.9 | 1,150 | 632 | 81.96 |
| Italy | 1,257 | 0 | 1,257 | 352 | 257.1 | 16,224 | 5,144 | 215.40 |
| Portugal | 286 | 0 | 286 | 95 | 201.1 | 2,555 | 1,485 | 72.05 |
| Spain | 2,414 | 0 | 2,414 | 1,091 | 121.3 | 16,077 | 10,357 | 55.23 |
| Turkey | 256 | 0 | 256 | 47 | 444.7 | 2,309 | 1,075 | 114.79 |
| Israel | 4,162 | 0 | 4,162 | 826 | 403.9 | 18,449 | 6,764 | 172.75 |
| Others | 381 | 0 | 381 | 85 | 348.2 | 4,302 | 2,073 | 107.53 |
| MIDDLE EAST | 1,728 | 0 | 1,728 | 573 | 201.6 | 21,636 | 13,861 | 56.09 |
| Bahrain | 52 | 0 | 52 | 14 | 271.4 | 992 | 375 | 164.53 |
| Egypt | 189 | 0 | 189 | 53 | 256.6 | 2,006 | 1,810 | 10.83 |
| Iraq | 73 | 0 | 73 | 18 | 305.6 | 722 | 885 | (18.42) |
| Jordan | 242 | 0 | 242 | 145 | 66.9 | 2,930 | 1,779 | 64.70 |
| Kuwait | 147 | 0 | 147 | 43 | 241.9 | 1,654 | 757 | 118.49 |
| Lebanon | 292 | 0 | 292 | 58 | 403.4 | 2,424 | 1,163 | 108.43 |
| Oman | 74 | 0 | 74 | 26 | 184.6 | 1,731 | 577 | 200.00 |
| Qatar | 23 | 0 | 23 | 21 | 9.5 | 715 | 211 | 238.86 |
| Saudi Arabia | 331 | 0 | 331 | 118 | 180.5 | 5,342 | 4,945 | 8.03 |
| United Arab Emirates | 228 | 0 | 228 | 53 | 330.2 | 2,265 | 943 | 140.19 |
| Others | 77 | 0 | 77 | 24 | 220.8 | 855 | 416 | 105.53 |
| TOTAL | 109,670 | 2,268 | 111,938 | 29,802 | 275.6 | 1,016,256 | 526,232 | 93.12 |



Main last departure airports and airlines to Sri Lanka, September 2023

Analyzing the departure airports and airlines preferred by tourists visiting Sri Lanka highlights the vital role of air travel in the country's tourism industry. Based on the information from Chart 7, around 39% of tourists selected airports in Dubai, Doha, and Chennai as their last departure points for their Sri Lankan journeys. Additionally, the top airlines favoured by tourists arriving in Sri Lanka were Sri Lankan Airlines, Qatar Airways, and Emirates, collectively responsible for serving 54% of the total tourist arrivals. This emphasizes the crucial role of air transportation in facilitating tourism in Sri Lanka, with specific departure airports and airlines playing a significant role in catering to a substantial portion of visitors.

Chart 7. Main last departure airports to Sri Lanka, September 2023

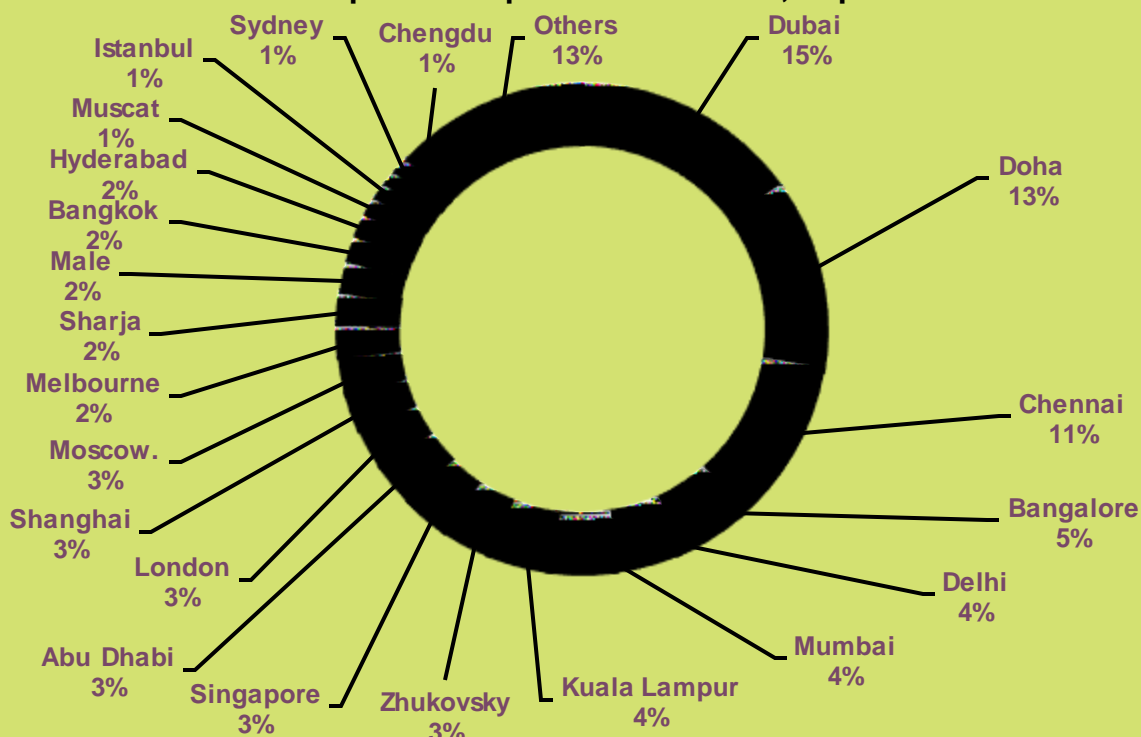
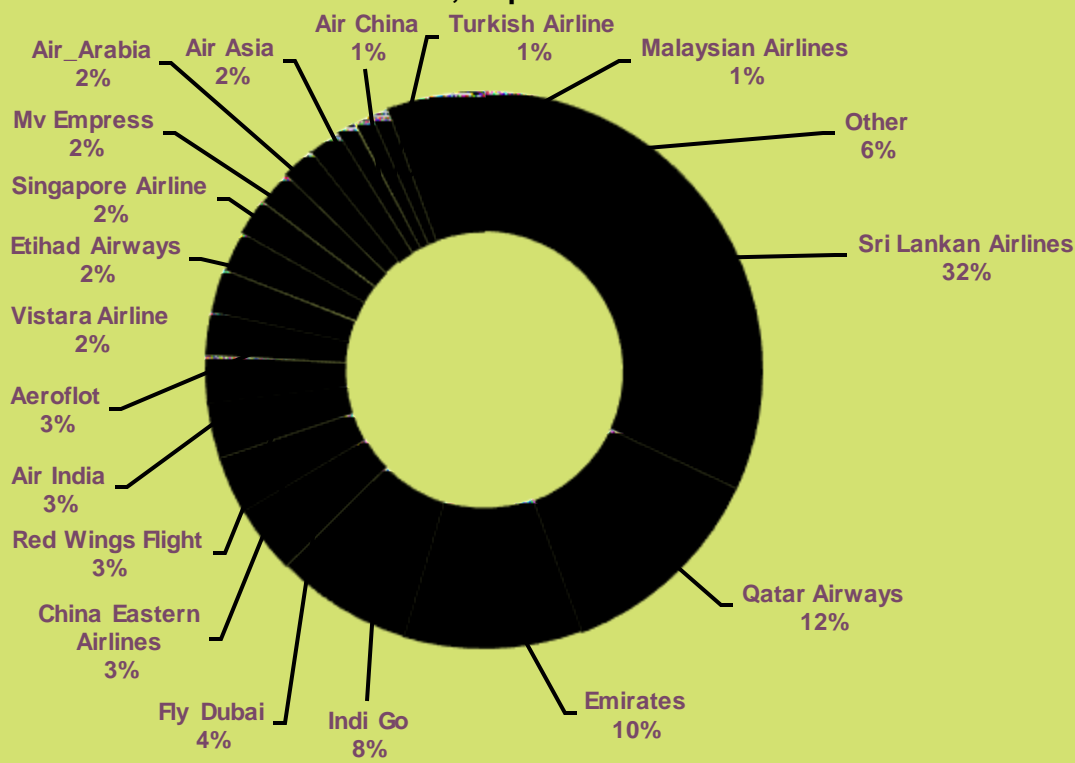


Chart 8. Main airlines to Sri Lanka, September 2023





Top ten markets versus main last departure airports and main airlines to Sri Lanka

September 2023

The choices tourists make regarding their preferred airlines and departure airports are strongly shaped by their primary markets. For example, Indian visitors often opt for Sri Lankan Airlines and IndiGo, while Russian tourists tend to favor Aeroflot. On the flip side, Sri Lankan Airlines is a preferred choice among tourists from the United Kingdom, and Australia. Interestingly, German, Dutch, and French tourists frequently choose Qatar Airways and utilize Doha as their main departure point. Canadian tourists have shown a preference for Emirates as their airline of choice, with Dubai being their last departure airport.

This underscores the crucial role of accessibility in promoting tourism in Sri Lanka. It further highlights how tourists' preferences for airlines and departure airports are heavily influenced by their home countries, emphasizing the significance of convenient connections in attracting tourists to Sri Lanka.

Table 5. Top ten markets vs. main last departure airports to Sri Lanka, September 2023

Table 6. Top ten markets vs. main airlines to Sri Lanka, September 2023



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