

Monthly Tourist Arrivals Report:

A Monthly Snapshot of International Arrivals to
Sri Lanka from Immigration Statistics

December 2022

Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority



Introduction

The following document provides a synthesis of the most recent December, 2022 international visitor arrivals data sourced from the Department of Immigration & Emigration. The data is current as of 31st December 2022, 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), with the technical support from the Australian Government funded Market Development Facility (MDF Sri Lanka) and Twenty31 Consulting Inc. 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

The total number of international tourist arrivals to Sri Lanka during December 2022 was 91,961. This is an increase of 53.8% compared to November 2022. This trend can be attributed to the peak travel season in Sri Lanka, as well as the resumed cruise tourism to the country. As of December 31,

2022, a total of 719,978 international tourists had visited Sri Lanka during the year. The top countries of origin for tourists in December were Russian Federation, India, the United Kingdom, Australia, and Germany.

Table 1. Monthly tourist arrivals, December 2022

Month	2018	2021	2022	% change 2022/21	% change 2022/18
January	238,924	1,682	82,327	4,794.6	(65.5)
February	235,618	3,366	96,507	2,767.1	(59.0)
March	233,282	4,581	106,500	2,224.8	(54.3)
April	180,429	4,168	62,980	1,411.4	(65.1)
May	129,466	1,497	30,207	1,917.8	(76.7)
June	146,828	1,614	32,856	1,935.7	(77.6)
July	217,829	2,429	47,293	1,847.1	(78.3)
August	200,359	5,040	37,760	649.2	(81.5)
September	149,087	13,547	29,802	119.9	(80.1)
October	153,123	22,771	42,026	84.5	(72.5)
November	195,582	44,294	59,759	34.9	(69.4)
December	253,169	89,506	91,961	2.7	(63.6)
TOTAL	2,333,796	194,495	719,978	270.2	(69.1)



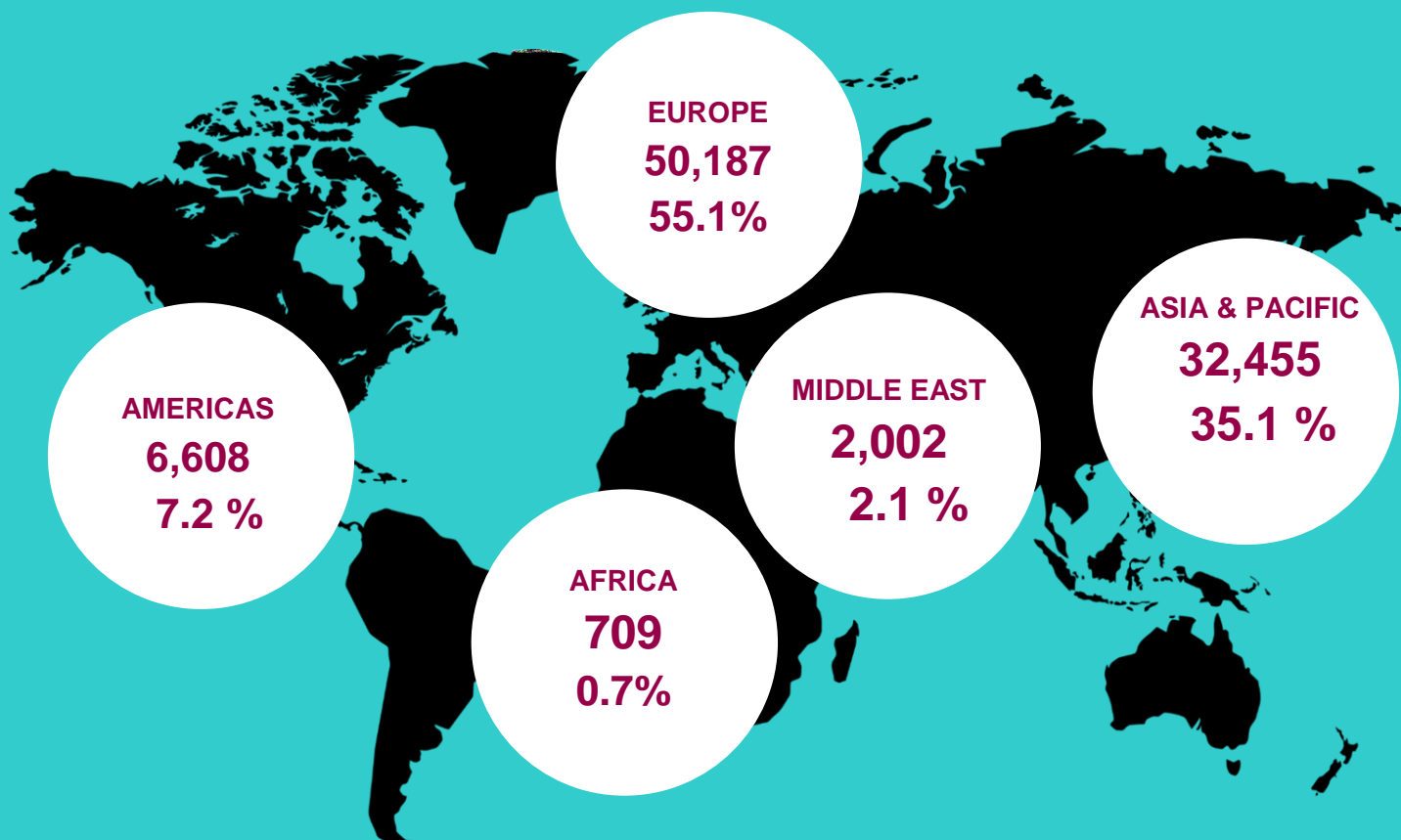
Tourist Arrivals | December 2022

91,961



Tourist arrivals by region and percentage share December 2022

Map 1. Tourist arrivals by region and percentage share

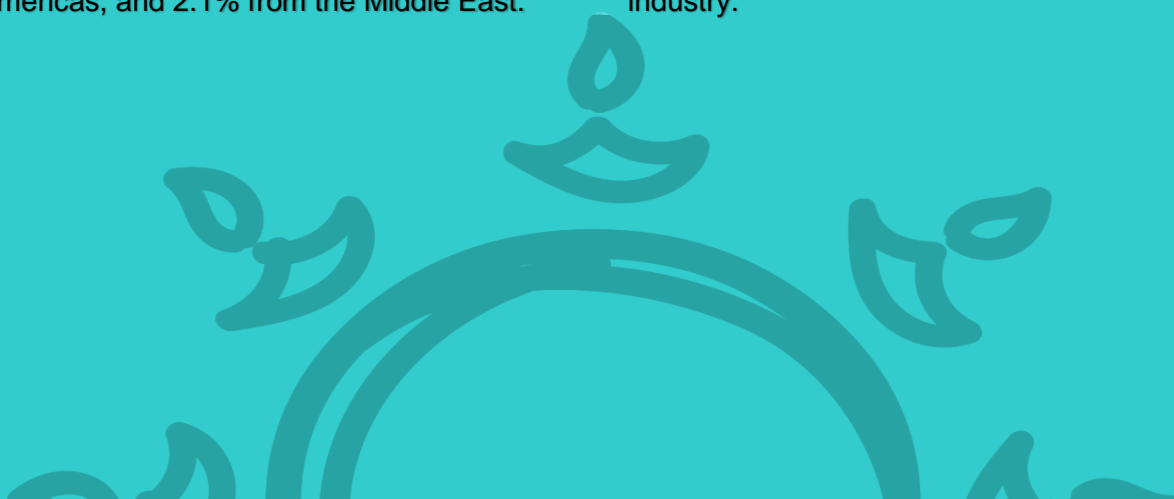


Europe emerged as the primary source of tourists visiting Sri Lanka, accounting for 55.1% of total arrivals. It is believed that pent-up demand from countries such as the Russian Federation, UK, Germany, and France contributed to this increase in tourism.

Meanwhile, 35.1% of tourists came from Asia and the Pacific region, 7.2% from the Americas, and 2.1% from the Middle East.

Factors such as the lifting of travel restrictions and improved air accessibility in Sri Lanka could be the factors that contributed to the growth in tourism.

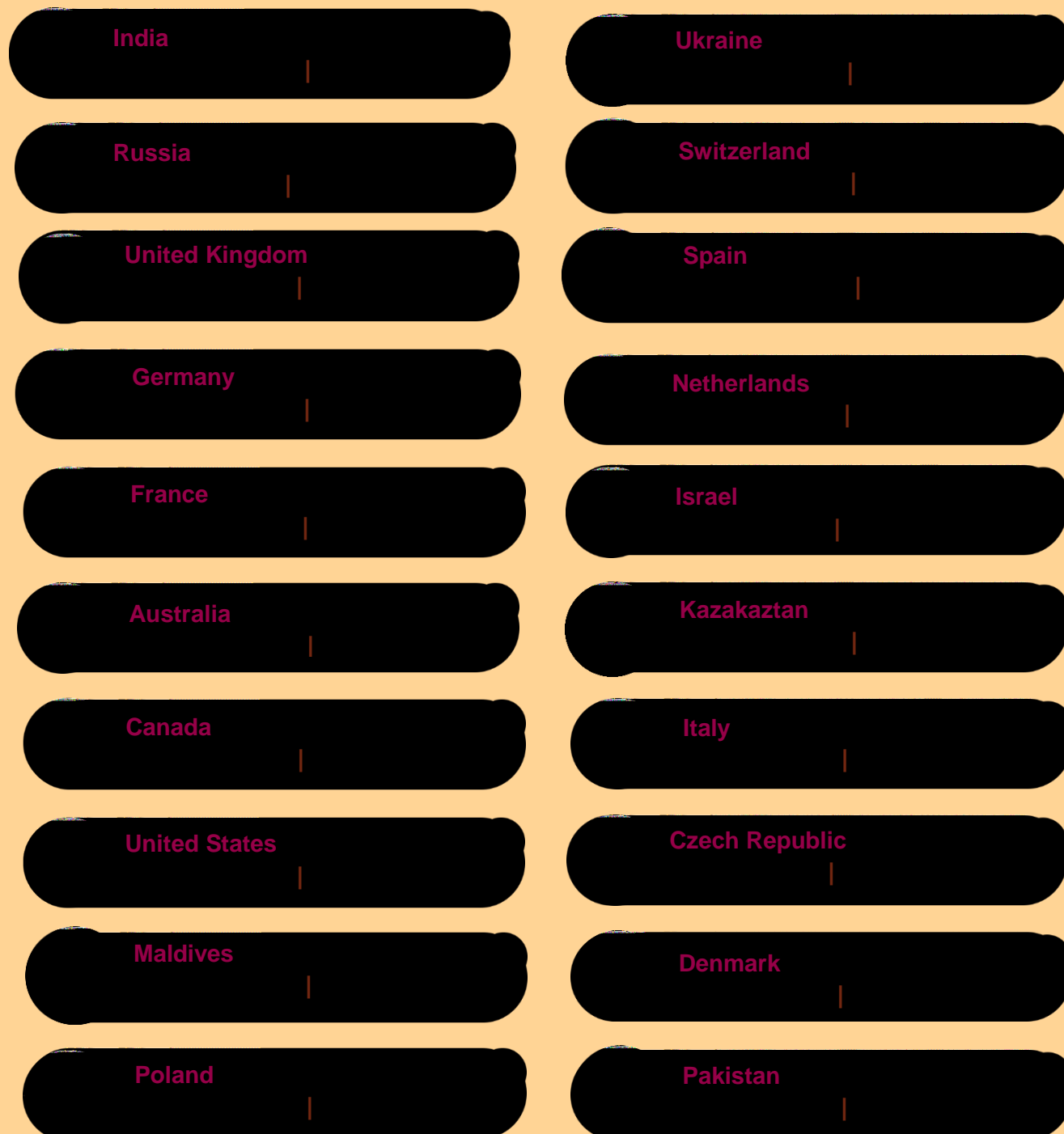
Despite this growth, the economic challenges such as high inflation and rising oil prices resulting from the war in Ukraine may impede the recovery of the tourism industry.





Top primary markets and top potential markets

Top primary markets - January ~ December 2022



Note: The top primary markets for Sri Lanka have been identified using visitor arrivals data during the last six months. The previous methodology used to identify the markets was altered due to the current arrival trends in the source markets and the economic crisis 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 - January ~ December 2022



Note: The top primary markets for Sri Lanka have been identified using visitor arrivals data during the last six months. The previous methodology used to identify the markets was altered due to the current arrival trends in the source markets and the economic crisis 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.



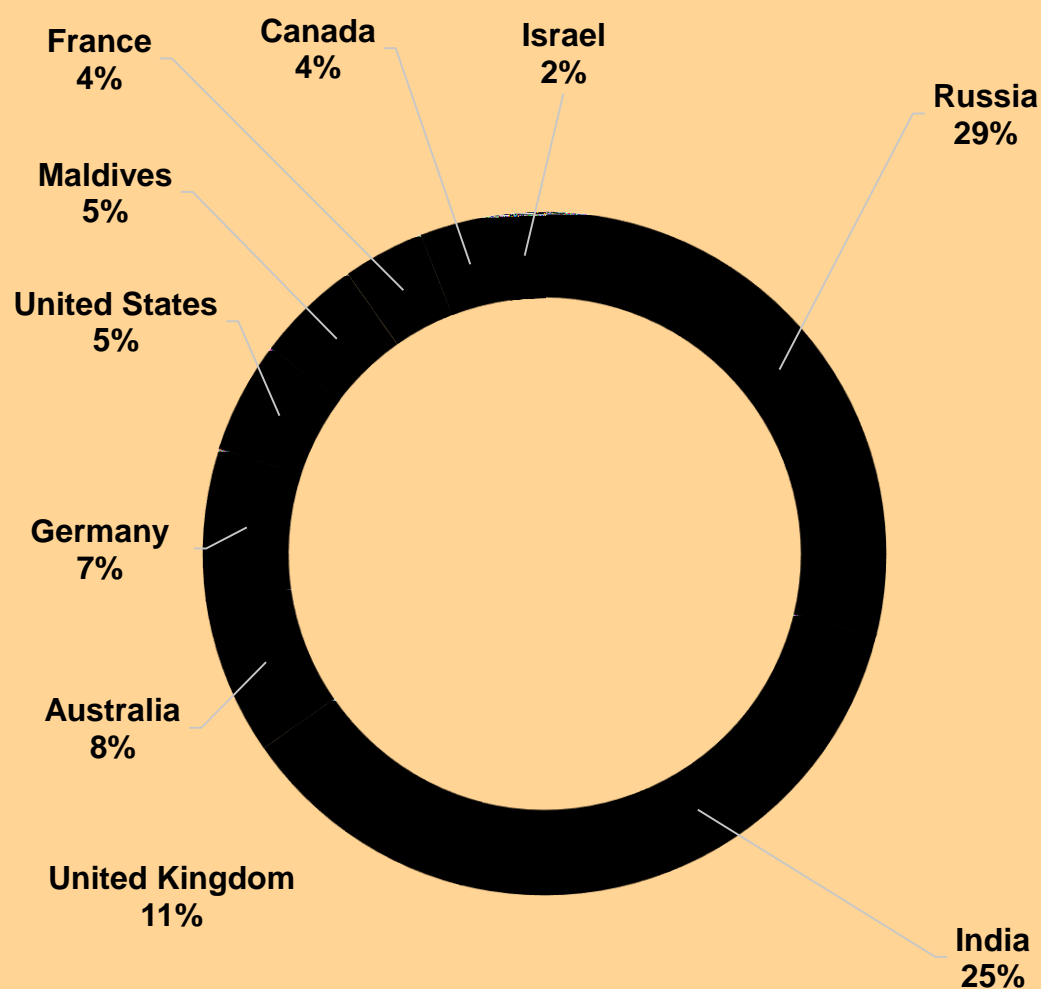
Top ten source markets

December 2022

In December, the top five countries that generated the most international tourism to Sri Lanka were the Russian Federation, India, the United Kingdom, Australia, and Germany. The Russian Federation was the leading source of tourists, accounting for 29% of total arrivals. India accounted for 25%, the United Kingdom for 11%, Australia for 8%, and Germany for 7%. The Russian Federation remained the top source of tourism to Sri Lanka, owing to increased air accessibility via direct and charter flights from Russia and favorable conditions within Sri Lanka.

The influx of 735 tourists from three cruise ships too had a notable impact on the rise in the number of visitors.

Chart 1. Top ten source markets to Sri Lanka, December 2022



**Table 2. Top ten source markets to Sri Lanka, December 2022**

Rank	Country of Residence	Tourist Arrivals (December 2022)			Tourist Arrivals (December 2021)
		By Air	By Sea	Total	
1	Russian Federation	19,958	5	19,963	10,793
2	India	17,339	11	17,350	23,566
3	United Kingdom	7,568	311	7,879	8,493
4	Australia	5,093	65	5,158	3,129
5	Germany	4,935	49	4,984	5,875
6	United States	3,375	263	3,638	2,884
7	Maldives	3,444	-	3,444	2,896
8	France	2,660	5	2,665	3,021
9	Canada	2,593	25	2,618	1,705
10	Israel	1,456	1	1,457	684

Top ten source markets, January to December 2022

India, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, Germany and France were Sri Lanka's top five international tourist-generating markets from January to December this year.

Table 3. Top ten markets to Sri Lanka, January to December 2021 & 2022

Rank	Country of Residence	Tourist Arrivals (Jan ~ December 2022)	Tourist Arrivals (Jan ~ December 2021)
1	India	123,004	56,268
2	Russian Federation	91,272	16,894
3	United Kingdom	85,187	16,646
4	Germany	55,542	12,442
5	France	35,482	6,549
6	Australia	30,924	4,421
7	Canada	26,845	5,079
8	United States	22,230	6,124
9	Maldives	18,880	6,272
10	Poland	18,107	15,195
11	Others	212,505	48,605
Total		719,978	194,495



Chart 2. Top ten source markets to Sri Lanka, January to December 2022

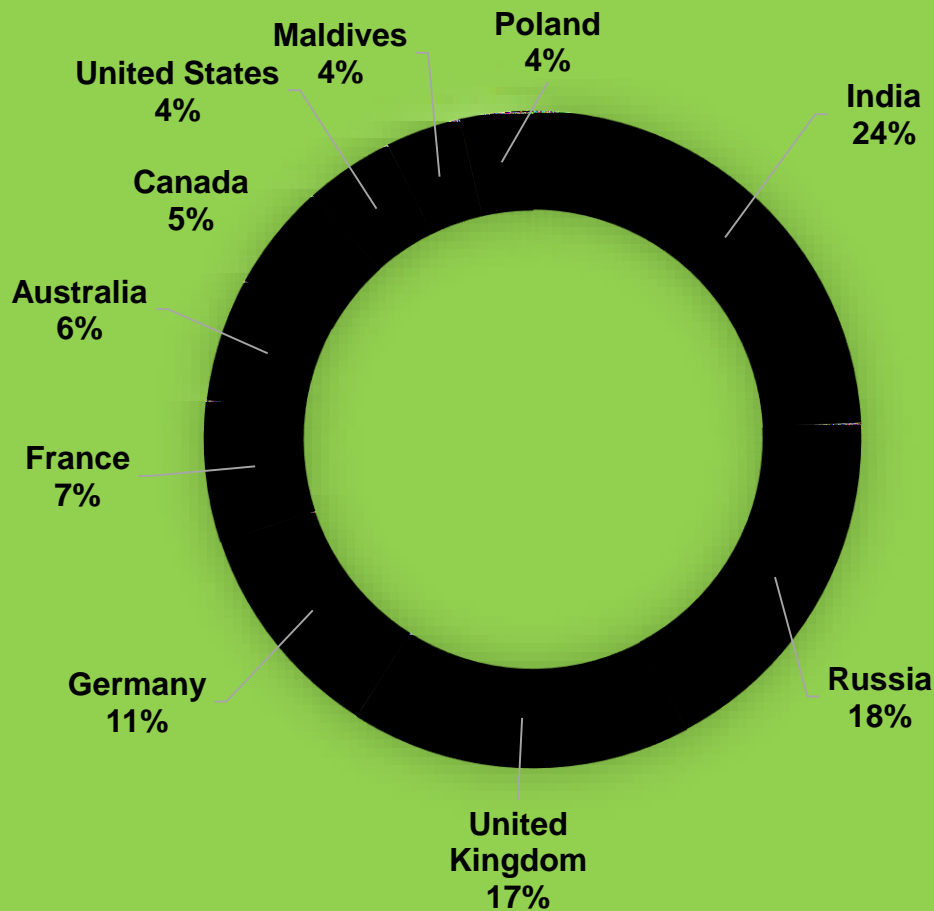
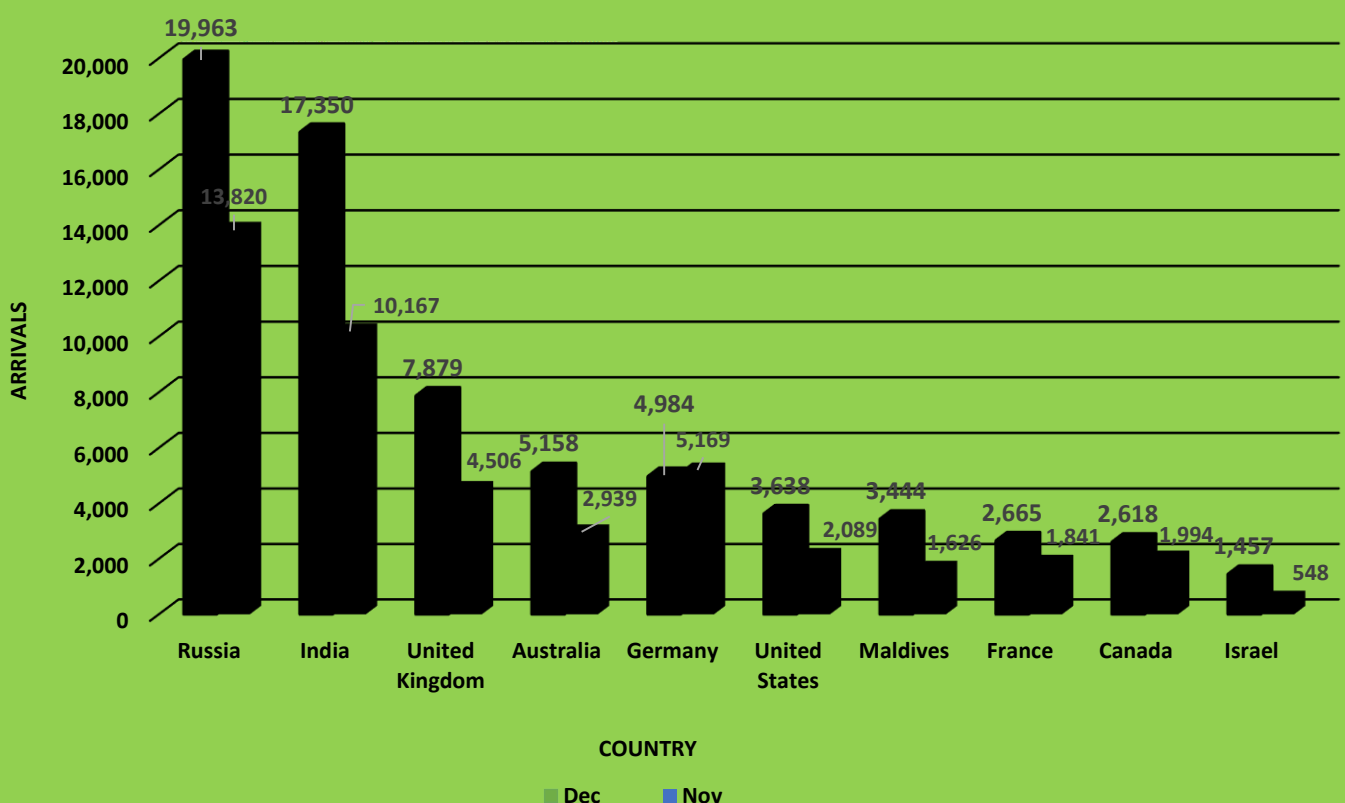


Chart 3. Comparison of arrivals from top ten markets to Sri Lanka, Oct / Dec - 2022



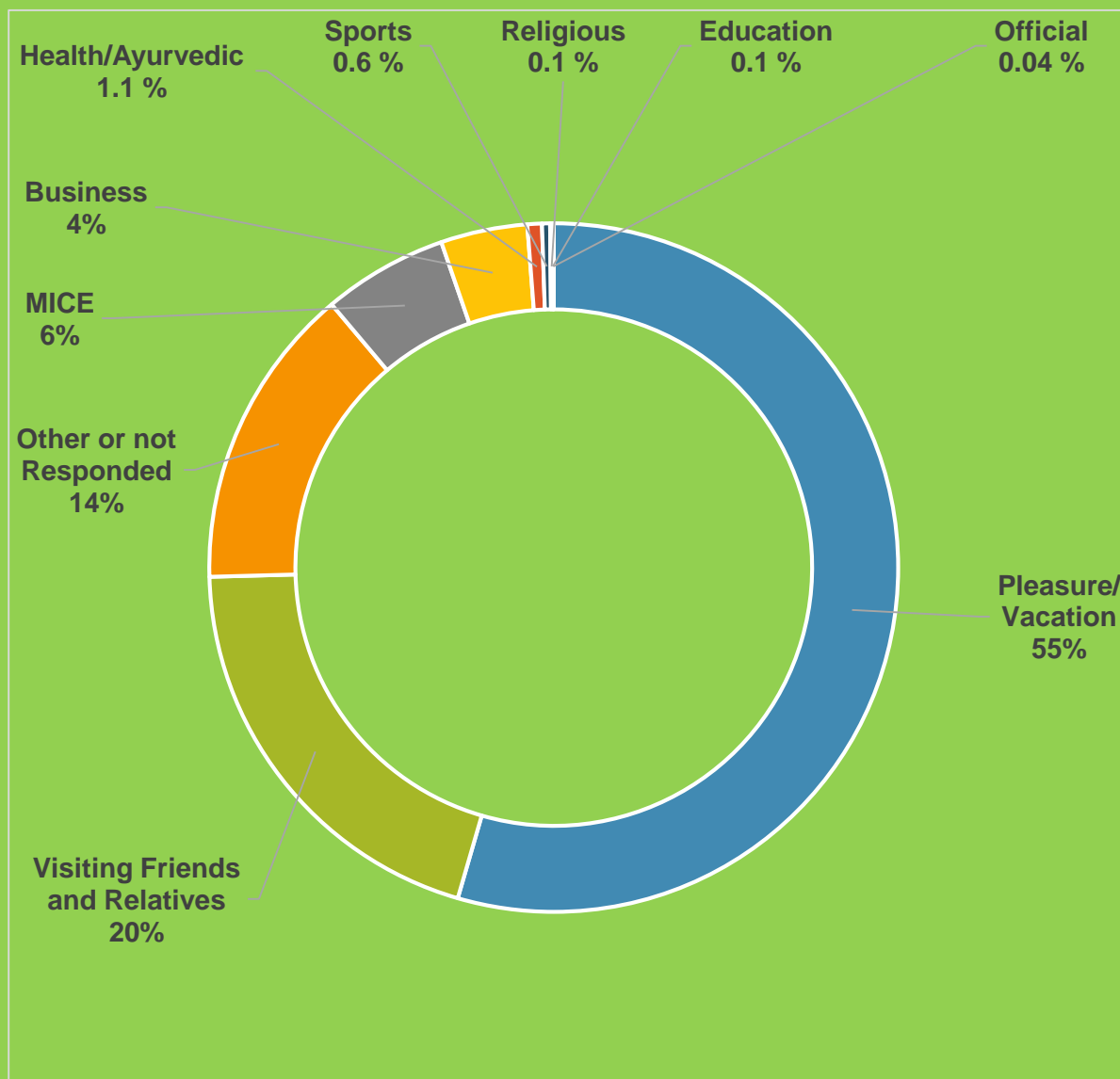


Tourist arrivals by purpose of visit

December 2022

An analysis of tourist arrivals by purpose of visit reveals that a majority 55% of tourists had visited Sri Lanka for pleasure/vacation, while for 20% of tourists the main purpose was visiting friends and relatives. Only 4% of tourists had visited for business related purposes. 6% had visited for MICE purposes, while 1.1% and 0.6% had visited for purposes such as health / ayurvedic and sports.

Chart 4. Tourist arrivals by purpose of visit, December 2022





International tourist arrivals by country of residence

	December 2022			Tourist Arrivals Dec. 2021	% Change Dec. (22/21)	Total Tourist Arrivals up to Dec. 2022	Total Tourist Arrivals up to Dec. 2021	% Change up to Dec. (20/21)
	Tourist Arrivals							
	By Air	By Sea	Total					
AMERICAS	6,288	321	6,608	4,870	35.69	51,429	11,759	-
North America	6,006	315	6,320	4,630	36.50	49,409	11,281	-
Canada	2,593	25	2,618	1,705	53.55	26,845	5,079	-
Mexico	38	26	64	41	56.10	334	78	-
United States	3,375	263	3,638	2,884	26.14	22,230	6,124	-
Antarctica	1	0	1	0	100	1	0	
Antarctica	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	-
Carribean & Central America	49	1	50	37	35.14	306	104	-
Costa Rica	6	-	6	7	(14.29)	40	8	-
Jamaica	2	-	2	5	(60.00)	13	9	-
Others	41	1	42	25	68.00	253	87	-
South America	231	6	237	203	16.75	1,713	374	-
Argentina	55	-	55	26	111.54	268	50	-
Brazil	93	4	97	98	(1.02)	669	159	-
Chile	23	-	23	15	53.33	182	23	-
Colombia	27	-	27	37	(27.03)	304	74	-
Others	33	2	35	27	29.63	290	68	-
AFRICA	685	24	709	409	73.35	4,679	862	-
North Africa	187		187	196	(4.59)	1,818	293	-
Morocco	56	-	56	51	9.80	446	85	-
Sudan	45	-	45	69	(34.78)	819	97	-
Others	86	-	86	76	13.16	553	111	-
Sub-Saharan Africa	498	24	522	213	145.07	2,861	569	-
Kenya	42	-	42	21	100.00	230	39	-
Mauritius	41	-	41	13	215.38	130	23	-
Nigeria	06	-	06	7	(14.29)	27	11	-
South Africa	234	24	258	109	136.70	1,502	272	-
Others	175	-	175	63	177.78	972	224	-



	December 2022			Tourist Arrivals Dec. 2021	% Change Dec. (22/21)	Total Tourist Arrivals up to Dec. 2022	Total Tourist Arrivals up to Dec. 2021	% Change up to Dec. (20/21)
	By Air	By Sea	Total					
ASIA & PACIFIC	32,367	88	32,455	33,268	(2.44)	213,537	83,926	-
North East Asia	1,743	-	1,743	560	211.25	10,061	3,244	-
China	635	-	635	258	146.12	4,715	2,417	-
Japan	708	-	708	159	345.28	3,087	392	-
South Korea	322	-	322	120	168.33	1,843	389	-
Taiwan	77	-	77	19	305.26	363	42	-
Others	01	-	01	4	(75.00)	53	4	-
South East Asia	2,029	5	2,034	999	103.60	12,095	3,617	-
Cambodia	20	-	20	7	185.71	157	14	-
Indonesia	134	-	134	188	(28.72)	885	1,856	-
Malaysia	519	-	519	158	228.48	2,779	323	-
Myanmar	27	-	27	9	200.00	252	39	-
Philippines	236	-	236	178	32.58	1,961	529	-
Singapore	715	5	720	306	135.29	3,770	557	-
Thailand	311	-	311	129	141.09	1,725	247	-
Vietnam	58	-	58	24	141.67	519	52	-
Others	09	-	09	0	100.00	47	0	-
Oceania	5,689	72	5,761	3,303	74.42	33,876	4,767	-
Australia	5,093	65	5,158	3,129	64.84	30,924	4,421	-
New Zealand	565	7	572	167	242.51	2,866	325	-
Others	31	-	31	7	342.86	86	21	-
South Asia	22,906	11	22,917	28,406	(19.32)	157,505	72,298	-
Afghanistan	11	-	11	5	120.00	39	15	-
Bangladesh	662	-	662	544	21.69	3,817	1,496	-
Bhutan	09	-	09	1	800.00	139	5	-
India	17,339	11	17,350	23,566	(26.38)	123,004	56,268	-
Iran	362	-	362	181	100.00	4,301	397	-
Maldives	3,444	-	3,444	2,896	18.92	18,880	6,272	-
Nepal	181	-	181	209	(13.40)	1,065	325	-
Pakistan	898	-	898	1,004	(10.56)	6,260	7,520	-
EUROPE	49,713	474	50,187	48,704	3.04	432,226	93,495	-
Northern Europe	9,814	347	10,161	11,210	(9.36)	108,264	21,632	-
Denmark	544	7	551	656	(16.01)	7,278	1,302	-
Finland	157	2	159	195	(18.46)	1,500	341	-
Norway	398	10	408	447	(8.72)	5,983	1,141	-
Sweden	886	6	892	1,070	(16.64)	5,097	1,601	-
United Kingdom	7,568	311	7,879	8,493	(7.23)	85,187	16,646	-
Others	261	11	272	349	(22.06)	3,219	601	-



	December 2022 Tourist Arrivals			Tourist Arrivals Dec. 2021	% Change Dec. (22/21)	Total Tourist Arrivals up to Dec. 2022	Total Tourist Arrivals up to Dec. 2021	% Change up to Dec. (20/21)
	By Air	By Sea	Total					
Western Europe	10,966	84	11,050	12,783	(13.56)	128,279	27,269	-
Austria	619	-	619	827	(25.15)	5,541	1,502	-
Belgium	500	12	512	639	(19.87)	6,164	1,283	-
France	2,660	5	2,665	3,021	(11.78)	35,482	6,549	-
Germany	4,935	49	4,984	5,875	(15.17)	55,542	12,442	-
Netherlands	947	9	956	1,144	(16.43)	11,987	2,422	-
Switzerland	1,240	8	1,248	1,225	1.88	13,260	2,974	-
Others	65	1	66	52	26.92	303	97	-
Central/ Eastern Europe	24,407	15	24,422	21,915	11.44	159,062	38,129	-
Belarus	582	-	582	359	62.12	3,621	616	-
Czech Republic	529	-	529	1,087	(51.33)	7,350	1,864	-
Estonia	111	-	111	260	(57.31)	978	376	-
Hungary	300	-	300	322	(6.83)	2,324	445	-
Kazakhstan	262	-	262	2,462	(89.36)	8,068	5,754	-
Lithuania	158	-	158	155	1.94	2,115	383	-
Poland	523	1	524	1,379	(62.00)	15,195	2,110	-
Romania	406	1	407	581	(29.95)	3,313	820	-
Russia	19,958	5	19,963	10,793	84.96	91,272	16,894	-
Slovakia	205	1	206	311	(33.76)	2,432	664	-
Ukraine	539	5	544	3,562	(84.73)	14,917	7,037	-
Others	834	2	836	644	29.81	7,477	1,166	-
Southern/ Mediterranean Europe	4,526	28	4,554	2,796	62.88	36,621	6,466	-
Greece	172	2	174	159	9.43	899	249	-
Italy	1,202	4	1,206	556	116.91	7,449	1,309	-
Portugal	156	-	156	134	16.42	1,906	372	-
Spain	973	18	991	894	10.85	12,895	2,015	-
Turkey	224	-	224	141	58.87	1,514	309	-
Israel	1,456	1	1,457	684	113.01	9,326	1,724	-
Others	343	3	346	228	51.75	2,632	488	-
MIDDLE EAST	2,002	0	2,002	2,255	(11.22)	18,107	4,452	-
Bahrain	88	-	88	81	8.64	510	128	-
Egypt	220	-	220	268	(17.91)	2,340	400	-
Iraq	145	-	145	115	26.09	1,113	262	-
Jordan	335	-	335	323	3.72	2,472	682	-
Kuwait	96	-	96	98	(2.04)	952	166	-
Lebanon	267	-	267	252	5.95	1,606	547	-
Oman	157	-	157	132	18.94	876	246	-
Qatar	57	-	57	12	375.00	301	34	-
Saudi Arabia	324	-	324	741	(56.28)	5,952	1,596	-
United Arab Emirates	207	-	207	169	22.49	1,347	254	-
Others	106	-	106	64	65.63	638	137	-
TOTAL	91,055	907	91,961	89,506	2.74	719,978	194,495	-



Main last departure airports and airlines to Sri Lanka, December 2022

Air connectivity is critical to the tourism industry in Sri Lanka, as shown by the analysis of departure airports. Chart 5 reveals that 39% of tourists had last departed from airports in Dubai, Chennai and Doha. Sri Lankan Airlines, Emirates and Qatar Airways were the most popular airlines, handling 60% of the tourists to Sri Lanka. Dubai stood out as the main last departure airport (19%), and Emirates as the top main airline (13%), after Sri Lankan Airlines. Azur Air was also a notable airline, being the fourth main airline to Sri Lanka.

Chart 5. Main last departure airports to Sri Lanka, December 2022

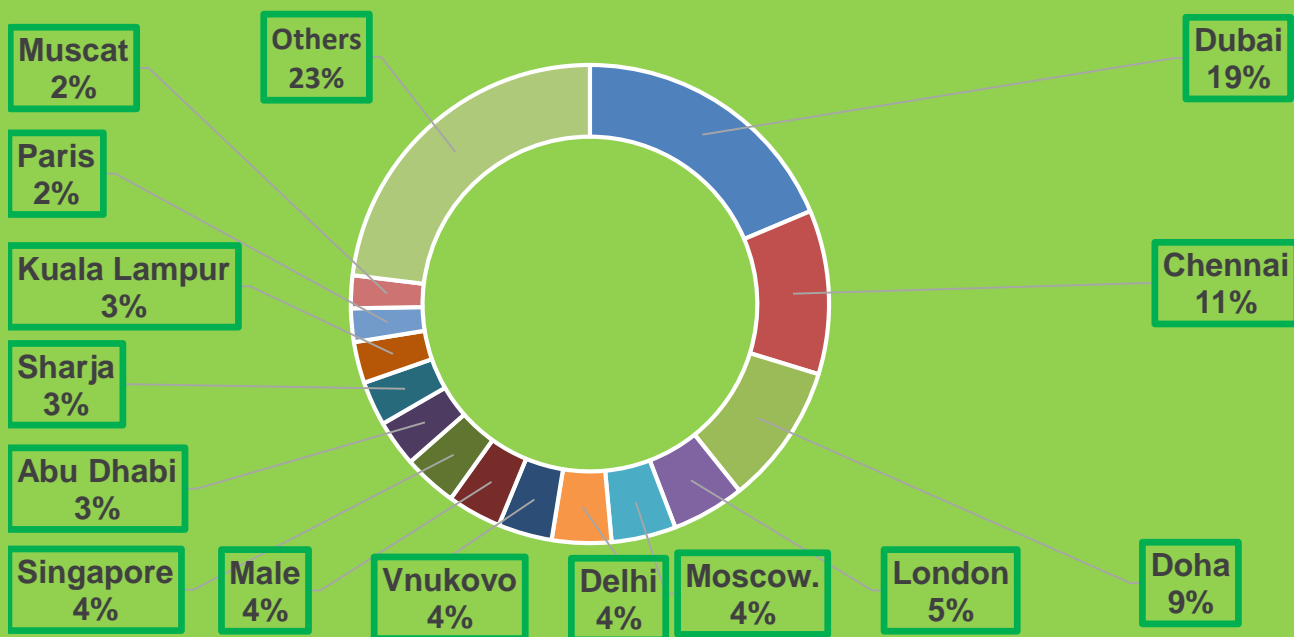
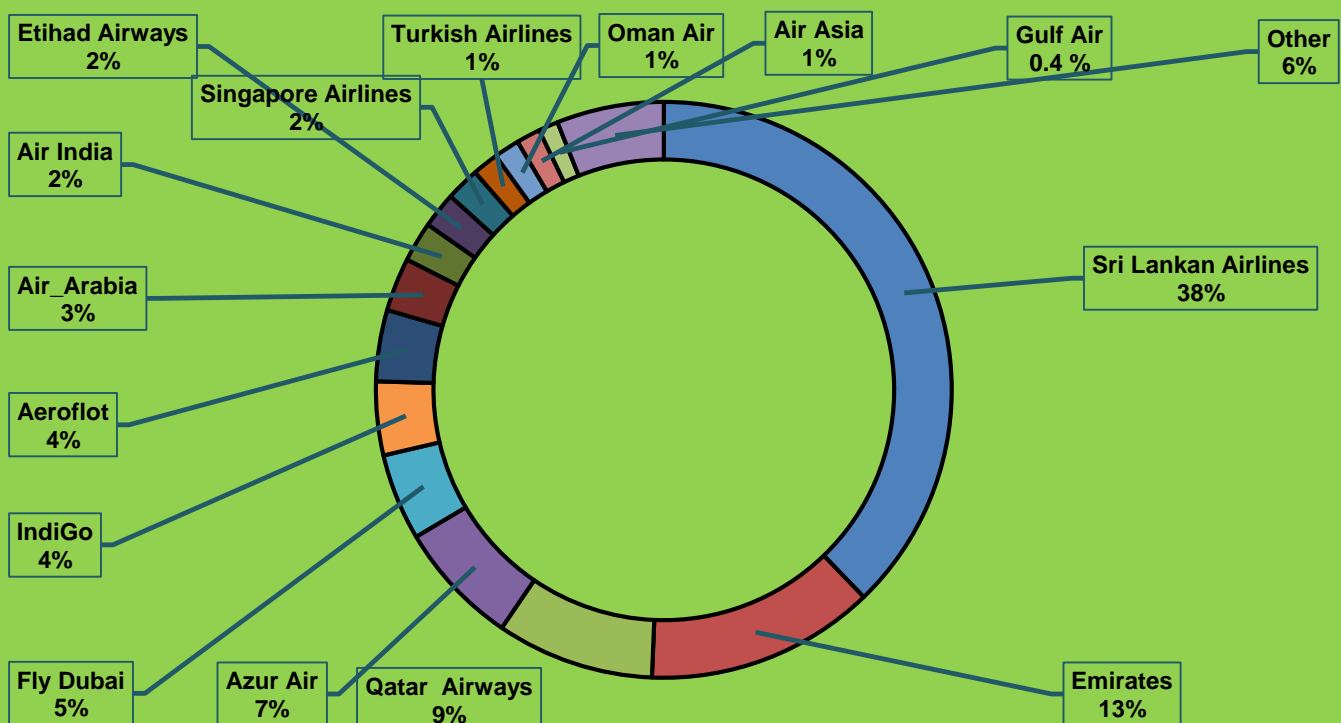


Chart 6. Main airlines to Sri Lanka, December 2022





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

December 2022

As seen in the below tables, the main last departure airports and airlines for tourists visiting Sri Lanka vary by their top markets. Indian tourists prefer Sri Lankan Airlines and IndiGo, Russian tourists prefer Azur Air and Aeroflot, and Sri Lankan Airlines is the most popular for tourists from the United Kingdom, Australia, United States, Maldives, Germany, and Canada. The data indicates that tourists from Israel prefer Emirates and Dubai is the main last departure airport. This highlights the significance of destination accessibility in driving tourism.

Table 4. Top ten markets vs. main last departure airports to Sri Lanka, December 2022

Top ten markets	Main last departure airports
India	Sri Lanka
Russia	Azur Air
United Kingdom	Sri Lanka
Australia	Sri Lanka
United States	Sri Lanka
Maldives	Sri Lanka
Germany	Sri Lanka
Canada	Sri Lanka
Israel	Emirates
France	Sri Lanka

Table 5. Top ten markets vs. main airlines to Sri Lanka, December 2022

Top ten markets	Main airlines
India	IndiGo
Russia	Aeroflot
United Kingdom	Sri Lankan Airlines
Australia	Sri Lankan Airlines
United States	Sri Lankan Airlines
Maldives	Sri Lankan Airlines
Germany	Sri Lankan Airlines
Canada	Sri Lankan Airlines
Israel	Emirates
France	Sri Lankan Airlines