

SUMMARY ANALYSIS OF SOUTH AFRICA’S TOURIST ARRIVALS FOR

AUGUST 2024

Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) has published data on the number of tourists for August 2024 and this report provides further analysis of the tourists that travelled to South Africa during this period as compared to the same month in 2023. This report also includes the analysis of tourist arrivals for the first eight months of 2024 compared to the same period in 2023.

TREND ANALYSIS: AUGUST 2019 – AUGUST 2024

A total of 718 508 tourist arrivals was recorded in August 2024 which was an increase of +1,5% (+10 349) compared to the same month in 2023. Figure 1 below indicates tourist arrivals for the period August 2019 to August 2024. In August 2020, due to the closure of country borders and travel restrictions, there were no tourist arrivals recorded for the month. However, in August 2021, with the opening of country borders and travel permissions, there were 185 637 tourist arrivals recorded. Tourist arrivals then increased from 185 637 in 2021 to 555 832 in 2022 which was an increase of +199,4% (+370 195). Tourist arrivals increased by +27,4% (+152 327) in 2023 compared to 2022. The tourist arrivals in August 2024 were at a level of -19,9% compared to August 2019, before the COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure 1: Total Tourist Arrivals August 2019 to August 2024



Source: Stats SA International Tourism Report. August 2024 and tourist arrivals data cuts

AUGUST 2024 COMPARED TO AUGUST 2023 BY REGION

Table 1 below indicates tourist arrivals by region for August 2024 compared to the same month in 2023. With regards to percentage growth, Central and South America recorded the highest increase of +91,4% (+2 465) followed by Australasia (+12,3%; +1 067) and North America (+4,1%; +1 352) during this month compared to the same month of the previous year. However, for the same period under review, Middle East recorded the highest decline of (-28,9%; -2 588) followed by Europe (-13,1%; -12 300) and Asia (-9,5%; -1 788). Africa also recorded an increase of +4,1% (+22 191) and this region remains the main source of tourist arrivals to the country accounting for 78,5% (+563 758) of total tourist arrivals recorded during August 2024.

Table 1: Total Tourist Arrivals by Region: August 2024 vs. August 2023

| | August 2023 | August 2024 | Diff | % Diff |
|-------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|
| EUROPE | 93,602 | 81,302 | -12,300 | -13.1% |
| NORTH AMERICA | 32,933 | 34,285 | 1,352 | 4.1% |
| CENTRAL & SOUTH AMERICA | 2,697 | 5,162 | 2,465 | 91.4% |
| AUSTRALASIA | 8,702 | 9,769 | 1,067 | 12.3% |
| MIDDLE EAST | 8,941 | 6,353 | -2,588 | -28.9% |
| ASIA | 18,830 | 17,042 | -1,788 | -9.5% |
| TOTAL OVERSEAS | 165,705 | 153,913 | -11,792 | -7.1% |
| TOTAL AFRICA | 541,567 | 563,758 | 22,191 | 4.1% |
| Unspecified | 887 | 837 | -50 | -5.6% |
| GRAND TOTAL | 708,159 | 718,508 | 10,349 | 1.5% |

Source: Stats SA International Tourism Report. August 2024 and tourist arrivals data cuts

JANUARY-AUGUST BY REGION FOR THE PERIOD 2019 TO 2024

Tourist arrivals for the period January-August 2019-2024 are indicated in figure 2 below. Total tourist arrivals went up by +7,0% (+385 394) for the period January-August 2024 compared to the same period in 2023. However, the tourist arrivals during January to August 2024 were at a level of -13,6% compared to the tourist arrivals recorded in the pre-COVID period of 2019 (Jan-August).

Figure 2: Total Tourist Arrivals January-August 2019 to January-August 2024



Source: Stats SA International Tourism Report. August 2024 and tourist arrivals data cuts

Table 2 further indicates that total tourist arrivals from overseas markets increased by +4,5% (+59 163). Central & South America (+93,9%) recorded the highest increase followed by Australasia (+8,8%), North America (+6,6%), Asia (+6,6%) and Europe with 1,1%. Middle East recorded a decline of -13,6% for the same period under review and this could be related to the conflict between Israel and Palestine.

In Central and South America, Brazil recorded the highest increase in volume (+20 206; +164,3%) for the same period under review. In Asia, China recorded the highest increase in volume (+3 902; +16,5%). In North America, United States of America has recorded the highest increase in volume (+16 272; +6,9%). France had recorded the highest increase in volume (+4 608; +5,9%) in the Europe region.

In the Middle East region, Israel recorded the largest drop in tourist numbers during January-August 2024, experiencing a decline of -9 878 (-66,0%) compared to the same period in 2023 and this could be related to the ongoing conflict between Israel and Palestine.

Tourist arrivals from Africa increased by +7,5% (+304 918) during the same period under review and this region remains the main source of tourist arrivals to the country accounting for 76,5% (4 481 760) of total tourist arrivals during January-August 2024.

In terms of volume, the increase recorded from the African continent was driven by an increase of (+185 046; +21,1%) from Mozambique followed by Zimbabwe (+143 697; +10,5%) and Eswatini (+80 771; +17,5%) as indicated in Table 3 below.

TABLE 2: JANUARY-AUGUST 2024 COMPARED TO JANUARY-AUGUST 2023/2019

| | January-August 2023 | January-August 2024 | Diff: 2024 compared to 2023 | % Diff: 2024 compared to 2023 | January-August 2019 | Diff: 2024 compared to 2019 | % Diff: 2024 compared to 2019 |
|-------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| EUROPE | 776,430 | 785,026 | 8,596 | 1.1% | 964,208 | -179,182 | -18.6% |
| NORTH AMERICA | 269,348 | 287,029 | 17,681 | 6.6% | 293,449 | -6,420 | -2.2% |
| CENTRAL & SOUTH AMERICA | 25,363 | 49,170 | 23,807 | 93.9% | 76,310 | -27,140 | -35.6% |
| AUSTRALASIA | 67,724 | 73,684 | 5,960 | 8.8% | 80,670 | -6,986 | -8.7% |
| MIDDLE EAST | 40,957 | 35,407 | -5,550 | -13.6% | 36,006 | -599 | -1.7% |
| ASIA | 131,073 | 139,742 | 8,669 | 6.6% | 208,340 | -68,598 | -32.9% |
| TOTAL OVERSEAS | 1,310,895 | 1,370,058 | 59,163 | 4.5% | 1,658,983 | -288,925 | -17.4% |
| TOTAL AFRICA | 4,154,862 | 4,481,760 | 326,898 | 7.9% | 5,113,652 | -631,892 | -12.4% |
| Unspecified | 8,170 | 7,503 | -667 | -8.2% | 9,727 | -2,224 | -22.9% |
| GRAND TOTAL | 5,473,927 | 5,859,321 | 385,394 | 7.0% | 6,782,362 | -923,041 | -13.6% |

Source: Stats SA International Tourism Report. August 2024 and tourist arrivals data cuts

Table 3 below gives the rankings of the top ten African source markets for the period January-August 2024 compared to January-August 2023. Most of the top ten African source markets remained in the same position. Kenya moved up from 10th position in 2023 to 9th position in 2024, and Angola dropped from 9th position in 2023 to 10th position in 2024. Mozambique recorded the highest increase of +21,1% followed by Eswatini (+17,5%) and Botswana (+14,6%). Lesotho and Angola recorded a negative growth rate of -20,7% and -5,1% respectively for the period under review.

Table 3: South Africa's Top 10 African Source Markets: January-August 2024 vs. January-August 2023

| Country | Rank: January-August 2024 | Tourist Arrivals January-August 2024 | Rank: January-August 2023 | Tourist Arrivals January-August 2023 | % Change |
|------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------|
| Zimbabwe | 1 | 1 516 979 | 1 | 1 373 282 | 10,5% |
| Mozambique | 2 | 1 063 355 | 2 | 878 309 | 21,1% |
| Lesotho | 3 | 632 116 | 3 | 797 011 | -20,7% |
| Eswatini | 4 | 542 842 | 4 | 462 071 | 17,5% |
| Botswana | 5 | 241 320 | 5 | 210 625 | 14,6% |
| Namibia | 6 | 102 121 | 6 | 100 876 | 1,2% |
| Zambia | 7 | 100 914 | 7 | 90 580 | 11,4% |
| Malawi | 8 | 95 508 | 8 | 84 656 | 12,8% |
| Kenya | 9 | 28 572 | 10 | 25 002 | 14,3% |
| Angola | 10 | 25 261 | 9 | 26 615 | -5,1% |

Source: Stats SA International Tourism Report. August 2024 and tourist arrivals data cuts

Table 4 shows the rankings of the top ten overseas source markets. Comparing January-August 2024 with January-August 2023, most of the top 10 overseas markets recorded an increase in tourist arrivals. Half of the top ten overseas source markets remained in the same position for the period January-August 2024 compared to January-August 2023 namely; United States of America, United Kingdom, Germany, Australia and India. As indicated in table 2, the number of tourists coming to Brazil increased by 164,3%, leading the country to climb from the 20th position in 2023 to the 10th position in 2024. Brazil also replaced Belgium out of the top 10 for the period under review. Furthermore, Brazil recorded the highest increase of +164,3%. The rise in Brazilian tourists since January 2024 might be linked to the resumption of direct flights between Brazil and South Africa. With regards to volume, USA was the main source market from overseas recording a growth of +6,9%.

Table 4: South Africa's Top 10 Overseas Source Markets: January-August 2024 vs. January-August 2023

| Country | Rank: January-August 2024 | Tourist Arrivals January-August 2024 | Rank: January-August 2023 | Tourist Arrivals January-August 2023 | % Change |
|-----------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------|
| USA | 1 | 251 587 | 1 | 235 315 | 6,9% |
| UK | 2 | 223 946 | 2 | 228 689 | -2,1% |
| Germany | 3 | 147 411 | 3 | 144 660 | 1,9% |
| France | 4 | 82 106 | 5 | 77 498 | 5,9% |
| The Netherlands | 5 | 82 058 | 4 | 79 876 | 2,7% |
| Australia | 6 | 61 093 | 6 | 55 455 | 10,2% |
| India | 7 | 52 472 | 7 | 54 867 | -4,4% |
| Canada | 8 | 35 442 | 9 | 34 033 | 4,1% |
| Italy | 9 | 34 689 | 8 | 35 528 | -2,4% |
| Brazil | 10 | 32 506 | 20 | 12 300 | 164,3% |

Source: Stats SA International Tourism Report. August 2024 and tourist arrivals data cuts

REFERENCES

1. Statistics South Africa 26 September 2024, August 2024 International Tourism report.