

SUMMARY ANALYSIS OF SOUTH AFRICA’S TOURIST ARRIVALS FOR JULY 2024

Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) has published data on the number of tourists for July 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 seven months of 2024 compared to the same period in 2023.

TREND ANALYSIS: JULY 2019 – JULY 2024

A total of 699 566 tourist arrivals was recorded in July 2024 which was an increase of 1,1% (7 498) compared to the same month in 2023. Figure 1 below indicates tourist arrivals for the period July 2019 to July 2024. In July 2020, due to the closure of country borders and travel restrictions, there were no tourist arrivals recorded for the month. However, in July 2021, with the opening of country borders and travel permissions, there were 151 264 tourist arrivals recorded. Tourist arrivals then increased from 151 264 in 2021 to 507 824 in 2022 which was an increase of +235,7% (+356 560). Tourist arrivals increased by +36,3% (+184 244) in 2023 compared to 2022. The tourist arrivals in July 2024 were at a level of -11,5% compared to July 2019, before the COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure 1: Total Tourist Arrivals July 2019 to July 2024



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

JULY 2024 COMPARED TO JULY 2023 BY REGION

Table 1 below indicates tourist arrivals by region for July 2024 compared to the same month in 2023. With regards to percentage growth, Central and South America recorded the highest increase of +103,0% (+3 708) followed by Australasia (+11,6%; +944) and North America (+3,3%; +1 160) during this month compared to the same month of the previous year. However, for the same period under review, Europe recorded the highest decline of (-14,1%; -12 450) followed by Middle East (-12,1%; -1 152) and Asia (-9,0%; -1 504). Africa recorded an increase of +3,2% (+16 911) and this region remains the main source of tourist arrivals to the country accounting for 78,1% (+546 623) of total tourist arrivals recorded during July 2024.

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

	July 2023	July 2024	Diff	% Diff
EUROPE	88 440	75 990	-12 450	-14,1%
NORTH AMERICA	35 029	36 189	1 160	3,3%
CENTRAL & SOUTH AMERICA	3 601	7 309	3 708	103,0%
AUSTRALASIA	8 140	9 084	944	11,6%
MIDDLE EAST	9 519	8 367	-1 152	-12,1%
ASIA	16 647	15 143	-1 504	-9,0%
TOTAL OVERSEAS	161 376	152 082	-9 294	-5,8%
TOTAL AFRICA	529 712	546 623	16 911	3,2%
Unspecified	980	861	-119	-12,1%
GRAND TOTAL	692 068	699 566	7 498	1,1%

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

JANUARY-JULY BY REGION FOR THE PERIOD 2019 TO 2024

Tourist arrivals for the period January-July 2019-2024 are indicated in figure 2 below. Total tourist arrivals went up by + 7,9% (+375 045) for the period January-July 2024 compared to the same period in 2023. However, the tourist arrivals during January to July 2024 were at a level of -12,7% compared to the tourist arrivals recorded in the pre-COVID period of 2019 (Jan-July).

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



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

Table 2 further indicates that total tourist arrivals from overseas markets increased by +6,2% (+70 955). Central & South America (+94,2%) recorded the highest increase followed by Asia (+9,3%), Australasia (+8,3%), North America (+6,9%) and Europe with 3,1%. Middle East recorded a decline of -9,3% 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 (+18 284; +168,1%) for the same period under review. In Asia, China recorded the highest increase in volume (+4 196; +21,3%). In North America, United States of America has recorded the highest increase in volume (+14 975; +7,3%). France had recorded the highest increase in volume (+5 850; +8,7%) in the Europe region.

In the Middle East region, Israel recorded the largest drop in tourist numbers during January-July 2024, experiencing a decline of -7 727 (-63,9%) 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 +8,4% (+304 707) during the same period under review and this region remains the main source of tourist arrivals to the country accounting for 76,2% (3 918 002) of total tourist arrivals during January-July 2024.

In terms of volume, the increase recorded from the African continent was driven by an increase of (+156 930; +20,5%) from Mozambique followed by Zimbabwe (+144 646; +12,2%) and Eswatini (+67 409; +17,1%) as indicated in Table 3 below.

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

	January-July 2023	January-July 2024	Diff: 2024 compared to 2023	% Diff: 2024 compared to 2023	January-July 2019	Diff: 2024 compared to 2019	% Diff: 2024 compared to 2019
EUROPE	682 828	703 724	20 896	3,1%	845 551	-141 827	-16,8%
NORTH AMERICA	236 415	252 744	16 329	6,9%	254 001	-1 257	-0,5%
CENTRAL & SOUTH AMERICA	22 666	44 008	21 342	94,2%	66 504	-22 496	-33,8%
AUSTRALASIA	59 022	63 915	4 893	8,3%	69 302	-5 387	-7,8%
MIDDLE EAST	32 016	29 054	-2 962	-9,3%	28 476	578	2,0%
ASIA	112 243	122 700	10 457	9,3%	182 075	-59 375	-32,6%
TOTAL OVERSEAS	1 145 190	1 216 145	70 955	6,2%	1 445 909	-229 764	-15,9%
TOTAL AFRICA	3 613 295	3 918 002	304 707	8,4%	4 431 066	-513 064	-11,6%
Unspecified	7 283	6 666	-617	-8,5%	8 409	-1 743	-20,7%
GRAND TOTAL	4 765 768	5 140 813	375 045	7,9%	5 885 384	-744 571	-12,7%

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

Table 3 below gives the rankings of the top ten African source markets for the period January-July 2024 compared to January-July 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 +20,5% followed by Eswatini (+17,1%) and Malawi (+14,6%). Lesotho and Angola recorded a negative growth rate of -18,8% and -6,1% respectively for the period under review.

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

Country	Rank: January-July 2024	Tourist Arrivals January-July 2024	Rank: January-July 2023	Tourist Arrivals January-July 2023	% Change
Zimbabwe	1	1 329 000	1	1 184 354	12,2%
Mozambique	2	922 078	2	765 148	20,5%
Lesotho	3	577 082	3	710 573	-18,8%
Eswatini	4	462 529	4	395 120	17,1%
Botswana	5	207 104	5	184 458	12,3%
Namibia	6	90 025	6	89 118	1,0%
Zambia	7	87 746	7	77 590	13,1%
Malawi	8	81 189	8	70 876	14,6%
Kenya	9	24 580	10	21 851	12,5%
Angola	10	21 600	9	22 999	-6,1%

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

Table 4 shows the rankings of the top ten overseas source markets. Comparing January-July 2024 with January-July 2023, most of the top 10 overseas markets recorded an increase in tourist arrivals. Six of the top 10 countries maintained their positions during the period January-July 2024 compared to January-July 2023 namely; United States of America, United Kingdom, Germany, Australia, India and Canada. As indicated in table 2, the number of tourists coming to Brazil increased by 168,1%, leading the country to climb from the 21st position in 2023 to the 9th position in 2024. The table below also indicates that France moved up from 5th position in 2023 to 4th position in 2024. Brazil replaced Switzerland out of the top 10 for the period under review. Brazil recorded the highest increase of +168,1%. 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 +7,3%.

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

Country	Rank: January-July 2024	Tourist Arrivals January-July 2024	Rank: January-July 2023	Tourist Arrivals January-July 2023	% Change
USA	1	220 990	1	206 015	7,3%
UK	2	203 491	2	204 885	-0,7%
Germany	3	137 122	3	132 302	3,6%
France	4	72 850	5	67 000	8,7%
The Netherlands	5	72 456	4	68 421	5,9%
Australia	6	53 195	6	48 229	10,3%
India	7	47 066	7	47 905	-1,8%
Canada	8	31 754	8	30 400	4,5%
Brazil	9	29 161	21	10 877	168,1%
Belgium	10	25 178	9	25 178	1,2%

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

REFERENCES

1. Statistics South Africa 30 July 2024, July 2024 International Tourism report.