



MINISTRY  
TOURISM  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

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### **South Africa's Tourism sector continues a positive trajectory**

The latest official release of international arrival figures by Statistics South Africa for January to March 2024 points to a robust and growing South African tourism sector.

International tourist arrivals from January to March 2024 totalled 2.4 million, representing a remarkable 15.4% increase when compared with the same period in 2023.

#### **Africa leads the way**

- South Africa welcomed 1.8 million tourist arrivals from the rest of the African continent between January and March 2024, marking a significant 74.5% of all arrivals.
- Zimbabwe and Ghana stood out for their remarkable growth, with Zimbabwe experiencing a 21.8% increase in tourist arrivals to South Africa when compared to the first three months of 2023, totalling 613 675 arrivals, while Ghana recorded a 249,4% increase when compared to the same period in 2023, reaching 7,904 arrivals for January to March 2024.

Minister de Lille expressed further appreciation of the continued remarkable growth in arrival numbers from the African continent, especially Ghana.

She adds “Ghana’s immense performance can be attributed the fact South Africa and Ghana announced a visa-waiver scheme on 1 November 2023. The visa-waiver allows for travel for periods of up to 90 days within a calendar year, for purposes of business or tourism. This coupled, with targeted integrated marketing initiatives executed by South African Tourism to attract visitors from this market makes for a winning formula for the growth of our sector.”

Travellers from other parts of the world also continued to show their appreciation and love for South Africa.

#### **Strong Momentum from the Americas (North and South America)**

- Tourist arrivals from the Americas registered at 118,194 from January to March 2024, reflecting a 12.4% growth compared to the same period in 2023.

## **Strength in European Markets**

- From January to March 2024, South Africa saw 420,727 tourist arrivals from Europe, a 8.6% increase compared to the same period in 2023.
- The United Kingdom remains the top European source market, with 125,420 tourists choosing South Africa, marking a 5.3% growth compared to 2023.
- Germany experienced a 9.9% increase in arrivals compared to same period in 2023, amounting to 98,954 tourists.
- This was followed by the Netherlands, which saw an increase of 9.9% when compared to 2023, amounting to 37,548 tourist arrivals between January and March 2024.
- Russia exhibited a dramatic growth of 9.6% when compared to 2023, contributing 9 329 arrivals in 2024.

## **Noteworthy growth from the Asia markets**

- Asian markets also showed significant growth with a total 49,741 arrivals from the region, representing an astounding 25.4% when compared to the same period in 2023.
- We welcomed 16,209 tourists from India, a 0.9% lower compared to 2023.
- Notably, South Africa received 11 017 visitors from China registering, a massive 82% increase in the first three months of 2024 when compared to the same period in 2023.

## **Middle East arrivals**

- South Africa received 2,387 arrivals from Saudi Arabia in 2024, marking an increase of 31.7% when compared to 2023.
- The United Arab Emirates saw 321 arrivals to South Africa in January - March 2024.

“The tourism sector is a significant contributor to the economy and job creation. We are determined to continue with this momentum. South Africa remains attractive and accessible for all travellers to enjoy,” concludes Minister de Lille.

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