

International Tourism Projected To Grow By 5.7% in 2007

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International tourist arrivals for the first eight months of 2007 point to a continuation of the sustained growth rate experienced over the past years.

International tourist arrivals continue sustained growth rate reaching 5.6%

610 million international tourist arrivals from January to August

32 million more arrivals already counted for 2007

International tourist arrivals for the first eight months of 2007 point to a continuation of the sustained growth rate experienced over the past years. According to the latest UNWTO World Tourism Barometer, this trend is likely to continue through the remainder of 2007, with year-end growth estimated at 5.7%, which would put international arrivals to 880-900 million.

2007 is set to be the fourth year of growth above the long-term average of 4.1% and is well on track to become the third consecutive year with a differential of about 1.5% above this long-term rate.

On a month-by-month basis, growth was fairly constant:

March showed the best growth overall (+9%) - no doubt boosted by the fact that Easter fell in that month rather than in April as in 2006.

Strength was maintained during the Northern Hemisphere high season months of July and August, both showing growth over 5% and for the first time ever, both July and August topped over 100 million arrivals each.

Regional trends

Emerging destinations in Asia and the Pacific, Africa and the Middle East have been the main growth drivers. Although well above their respective long-term averages, the more mature regions of Europe and the Americas showed a more moderate pace.

While regional trends may vary as new data becomes available, Asia and the Pacific is currently the star regional performer, recording an increase through August of 10%, ahead of the Middle East and Africa, both with +8%.

Growth for both Europe and the Americas currently stands at +4% - one percentage point down on 2006's level in the case of Europe, but twice the rate of growth of last year for the Americas.

Outbound tourism - emerging markets stand out in international tourism expenditure

Travel expenditure figures continue on the rise, in line with the increase in international arrivals, with strong growth coming again from emerging markets: Brazil (+33%), Argentina (+24%), the Republic of Korea (+18%) and the Russian Federation (+16%) have recorded strong double-digit growth in spending.

Of the top five outbound markets, Germany (+6%), the USA (+4%) and the UK (+4%) have recorded reasonable rises during the first six to eight months of 2007, while available data for France and Japan point to stagnation. Among the more mature source markets, Italy and Spain (7th and 12th largest spenders, respectively) report the fastest growth so far this year at +9% each.

Global context

The continued growth in international tourism has been supported by a strong global economy expanding at around 5% for the fourth consecutive year. The world's emerging market and developing economies registered particularly strong GDP growth. The recent turbulence in the financial markets has not had any notable impact in tourism results so far.

The preliminary 2007 results confirm the resilience of tourism demand regarding external factors, ranging from the turbulence in financial markets to security and health issues, rising fuel prices and increased taxation of air transport, inflationary risks and higher interest rates.

However, these factors already started to weaken consumer confidence in some markets. This might spread wider and affect, at some point, the overall demand for international travel.

Click [here](#) for a summary of the latest UNWTO World Tourism Barometer.

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