

Tourism regions

A **tourism region** is a geographical [region](#) that has been designated by a governmental organization or [tourism bureau](#) as having common cultural or environmental characteristics.

These regions are often named after historical or current administrative and geographical regions. Others have names created specifically for [tourism](#) purposes. The names often evoke certain positive qualities of the area and suggest a coherent tourism experience to visitors.

[Countries](#), [states](#), [provinces](#), and other administrative regions are often carved up into tourism regions. In addition to drawing the attention of potential tourists, these tourism regions often provide tourists who are otherwise unfamiliar with an area with a manageable number of attractive options.

Development

Most tourism regions belong to a larger economic and administrative unit which takes on the role of developing the discourse of the tourism region into a marketable product. According to Saarinen, once the discourse of a tourism region has been established, the parent region helps shape further development of the area as a tourism region.

This earlier period is characterized by rapid development, construction, investment in greater advertising, and increasing tourism. Eventually, if the region becomes successful as a tourism region, a mature stage in the development of a tourism region is reached where the "meaning and history of the destination are continually produced anew" in cycles of decline, reinvention, growth, and stability.^[6]

History

18th and 19th centuries

Historically, tourism regions often developed in areas widely considered to be of historical, cultural, or natural importance such as the [Niagara Falls](#) region of [New York](#) and Canada, the [Lake District](#) of England, the [French Riviera](#) and the [Italian Riviera](#).

Others developed around specific attractions such as a major city, i.e. Paris, or a monument such as the [Pyramids of Giza](#).

Tourist regions have existed for thousands of years for relaxation and leisure as well as for religious expression. The [ancient Romans](#) visited the [hot springs](#) of [Bath](#) in [Roman Britain](#) while [Santiago de Compostela](#) was a site of mass [Christian pilgrimage](#) supported by a major [medieval](#) tourism industry that provided travelers with accommodations along their pilgrimage route.

The modern tourism region emerged from the [Industrial Revolution](#) as cities grew in size, pollution increased, and an expanding [middle class](#) possessed greater amounts of disposable income.

From the [Enlightenment](#) through the nineteenth century, the fashionable [Grand Tour](#) of continental Europe for wealthy young men popularized the idea of leisure travel. The popularity of the Grand Tour, combined with the stresses and benefits of the Industrial Revolution, encouraged wealthy and middle-class European and American families to explore leisure travel, though on a more local scale. These families began frequenting seaside resorts known for their health benefits such as the Roman resort town of [Bath](#), particularly during hotter months that left industrializing cities extremely unpleasant.

The development of faster methods of transportation during the nineteenth century allowed tourists to travel greater distances in smaller periods of time. This period also

saw the "seaside" developed as a "spatial area for 'mass tourism,'" a phenomenon that resulted in the development of specific coastal areas as tourist regions.^[7]

Among elite groups in the nineteenth century, "the mountains" also became increasingly popular in the winter months; the most popular of these regions was [Tyrol](#) in Austria.^[8]

Tourism regions were often subject to downward mobility as areas frequented by the upper class such as the [Catskill Mountains](#) of New York and Bath in England were abandoned by wealthier visitors when they became too popular with the middle class.^[9]

The [romantic movement](#) of the 19th century encouraged the appreciation of the natural world, leading to the explosion in popularity of scenic tourism regions such as the English Lake District and the Niagara Falls region.

According to Peter Murphy, "increased competition" encouraged private development of hotels, resorts, and entertainment facilities as well as "municipal investment in parades, parks, piers, and baths." These trends marked an important intervention of the state into the evolution of tourism regions.^[10]

20th century[[edit](#)]

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, governments increasingly took a role in encouraging the development of tourism regions. Federal and state governments in the United States, with the encouragement of [conservation groups](#), and European countries and their colonies began setting aside areas as parks, monuments, and trails for preservation and future enjoyment. Some of these, such as Niagara Falls, were existing tourism regions while parks such as [Yellowstone National Park](#) were areas selected by these organizations as future tourism regions.

At the same time, regions became an increasingly important aspects of nationalism. It is also during this period that the English phrase "tourist region" came into use.

Eric Storm has argued that in the later decades of the nineteenth century "the stress was put on the region in order to underline the intimate bond between everyone's own community and the nation".

According to Strom, many people believed that "only by being faithful to its own character could the region contribute to the welfare of the whole". The idea of the region as part of a whole nation gained further ground in the first years of the twentieth century, particularly after World War I, as an argument was advanced that "every region had its own 'soul'...an organic part of the nation".^[11]

During this period, regional officials and businesses began promoting regions as tourist destination. Through this process, "tourism promoters strove to balance the demands of multiple identities: local, regional, state, national...They instructed their audiences that the regions' political, social, and economic fates were inextricably bound to their landscapes and geography". Tourists were portrayed "as important historical actors whose engagement...played a vital role in shaping the outcome of that bond".^[12]

Although local and regional governments took the larger role in promoting regional tourism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, during the [Great Depression](#) of the 1930s, national governments in Europe and the United States began aggressively promoting travel within their own borders. In doing so, they drew upon nationalist sentiment to imbue tourism regions within the state with greater cultural and historical meaning. Travel became a patriotic gesture as citizens and subjects were encouraged to explore their nation's tourism regions. One of the major projects of the program included "assert[ing] that Germans everywhere should be interested in the various regions" of Germany and that "part of preserving German culture...was to get to know it in all its variants".^[13] In Italy, one piece of tourism literature argued that "'every region of Italy represents a page in the great book of shining national glories from which each one of us could learn to be proud of being Italian'".^[14]

In the United States, "regional diversity" gave strength to a national whole in the United States' tourist guidebooks produced by the [New Deal's Federal Writers' Project](#).

The guidebooks "transform[ed] local culture into a tourist attraction, and the tourist attraction into a symbol of national loyalty, in order to reproduce patriotism as a form of brand-name identification".

The region became an object of nostalgia, a victim of the national identity that flourished through celebration of the regionalism it was helping to weaken.^[15]

Recent developments

Continuing earlier trends, governments have attempted to maximize tourism potential by reverse engineering tourism regions. This process consists of dividing their territories into discrete tourism regions in such a way that every inch of that country, state, or region is given an attractive name, provided with advertising, and basic tourism infrastructure such as signage.

Some traditionally heavily touristic countries such as France have implemented this strategy to encourage tourists who would normally only spend time in more famous areas such as Paris and the French Riviera to venture out into designated tourism regions such as the [Western Loire Valley](#) and [Franche-Comté](#). The first of these is a more recently constructed region, while Franche-Comté has been a distinct political and cultural region since the [Middle Ages](#).

Other governments, such as that of the American state of [Nebraska](#), have attempted to use the creation of tourism regions to help produce a tourism industry in a state not frequently considered by potential tourists.^[16] The state's "Lewis and Clark" region in northeast Nebraska and the "Frontier Trails" region of south-central Nebraska attempt to deemphasize the state's reputation as a place people cross on their way somewhere else by capitalizing the role the state's territory played in the United States' often romanticized project of [westward expansion](#).

Specialty regions^[edit]

Non-government regions and eco-museums^[edit]

Main article: [Ecomuseum](#)

A counter-trend to the establishment of government-designated tourism regions is that of local voluntary associations which cooperate to market a specific area. One popular type is an [eco-museum](#) which promotes natural and cultural tourism in rural areas.

Ecomuseums originated in France in the 1970s and have spread across Europe and to North America as well.

For example, the Canadian province of Alberta rationalized its tourism regions during in 1998 to six, down from nearly twenty.^[17] Despite this, local initiatives continue to promote much smaller areas than the six massive official regions, which are larger than many European countries. For example, the "Might Peace Tourism Association" is a grouping of local municipalities in the [Peace Country](#) which has existed since 1963.^[18] Likewise, the [Kalyna Country](#) eco-museum serves a similar role in East-Central Alberta.

Future trends

As [globalization](#) and [supranationalist](#) organizations such as the [European Union](#) encourage the renewal of interest in cross-border regions, tourism regions may increasingly assume a more transnational form. For example, the [Euroregions](#) of the European Union allow areas that have been separated by the borders of nation-states to reassert some cultural and political [sovereignty](#).

Some of the many Euroregions that have positioned themselves as tourist regions include the [Adriatic Euroregion](#), which has a Commission for Tourism and Culture,^[21] and the [Silesian Euroregion](#), comprising parts of Poland, [Slovakia](#), and the [Czech Republic](#), and which also has an official tourism initiative.^[22]

Regional Tourism

The topic in this unit is related to regional and rural tourism. Regional tourism is tourism concentrated in a region. A region is an area that can be distinguished of other area's by its own culture and structure. A regional tourist is a tourist visiting a region or province other than in which she/he has a normal residence but with a defined geographic region as a modification of the Wiki.com definition. So if you are living in the Dutch province Utrecht, you are a regional inland tourist in Limburg.

In a region Tourist is in movement from L. to S. in a certain area just for fun. It can be with all kind of transportation, but also on foot.

Regional tourism is not only movement, it is also imagination and expectation: what shall I see on the route, which challenges are there, what can I do, whom shall I meet. What is nature like and what about the villages I am walking or riding through, the castles on the top, the regional meals to eat, etc.

Access to that attractive region must be more or less comfortable and fast, be it by plane, train or car to reach. Inside the region the infrastructure of all kind of routes has to be good and safe as far as necessary, taking into account the target group you are aiming for.

IATA region codes

IATA region codes [trigram](#) letters codes used to specify large territories, consisting of several countries.

Following codes are used:

- AFR - [Africa](#)
- CAR - [Caribbean sea](#) countries
- CEM - [Central America](#)
- EUR - [Europe](#)
- TC1 - IATA American Traffic Conference (includes NOA, CEM, SOA and CAR)
- TC3 - IATA Asian Traffic Conference (includes JAK, SAS, SEA, SWP)
- TC2 - IATA European and African Traffic Conference (includes AFR, EUR, MDE)
- JAK - [Japan](#) and [Korea](#)
- MDE - [Middle East](#)
- NOA - [North America](#)
- SCH - [Schengen agreement](#) countries
- SOA - [South America](#)
- SAS - [South Asia](#)
- SEA - [South-Eastern Asia](#)
- SWP - South-West [Pacific](#)

IATA by Region

IATA has 54 offices in 53 countries, It represents some 275 airlines from 117 countries. Flights by IATA members represents 83% of total traffic (RTK: Revenue Tonne Kilometers). The IATA regional pages are your access to regional information, such as industry issues, safety and security, agency programs and regional planning, regulatory public policies, and more.

- [Africa & Middle East \(AME\)](#)
- [Europe](#)
- [China and North Asia](#)
- [Asia Pacific](#)
- [The Americas](#)

Africa and the Middle East (AME)

IATA's regional office for the Africa and Middle East (AME) is based in Amman and, along with its country offices, sustain the extraordinary dynamism of region by

responding to the needs of [member airlines](#), member airlines, accredited travel and cargo agents as well as industry partners.

We maintain close relations with governments, their agencies, the International Civil Aviation Organization Middle East ([ICAO-MID](#)), the African Airlines Association ([AFRAA](#)), the African Civil Aviation Commission ([AFCAC](#)), the [African Union](#), airports, air navigation service providers and regional airline associations.

Europe

We represent, lead and serve the European airline industry, and focus on catering to the needs of our [member airlines](#), accredited travel agents and industry partners.

IATA's regional office for Europe is based in Madrid, Spain and has a network of over 15 offices in both European Union and non-EU countries comprising, among others, Russia, Turkey, Israel, Ukraine and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

We maintain close relations with governments, agencies, the International Civil Aviation Organization ([ICAO](#)), European Union Institutions, [EUROCONTROL](#), [EASA](#), European Civil Aviation Conference ([ECAC](#)), regional airlines associations such as Airlines For Europe ([A4E](#)), European Business Aviation Association ([EBAA](#)), European Regions Airline Association ([ERAA](#)), International Air Carrier Association ([IACA](#)), as well as airports, and air navigation service providers.

IATA advocates for smarter regulation -minimizing the impact of tariff and non-tariff barriers and unnecessary and counter-productive taxation-, safety, security and connectivity. We also support our global operations and environment-related issues such as the Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation ([CORSA](#)).

- [Contact us](#) for more information about IATA's Europe office
- See the latest information on IATA's activities in [Russia](#)

China and North Asia

China and North Asia's regional headquarters is based in Beijing and serves as a central point for IATA's member airlines in the region. The regional office also conducts government and industry affairs, promotes IATA's business products and services, prepares analysis and forecasting of developments in response to local policies.

The regional office provides essential support services for the Northern Asia area which includes People's Republic of China (PRC); Hong Kong (SAR), China; Macao (SAR) China; Chinese Taipei; State of Mongolia; and Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK).

China and North Asia Regional Priorities

- [Safety](#): Safety is our number one priority. IATA is cooperating with aviation authorities, airport authorities and member airlines in the region to implement a Runway Safety Toolkit, to promote IATA Safety Audit for Ground Operation (ISAGO) and to continue the [IOSA](#) programme.
- [Environment](#): Promote and support the Green Team visits to the carriers in the region from the fuel efficiency gap analysis, to reduce carbon dioxide emissions and enhance operation efficiency. Promote the Carbon Offset Program among the carriers in the region.
- [Operations and Infrastructure](#): Implement route savings initiatives and ATM enhancements in the region, especially focusing on the Pearl River Delta region

region airspace improvements, flexible entry exit points implementation and ATS route restructuring.

- Settlement Systems: Working towards greater operational efficiency throughout the region in BSP's and CASS's. Specifically setting up a BSP in Mongolia and growing China CASS volume (UTP) by at least 50%.

Please go to the [Customer Portal](#) for information related to agent accreditation as well as [Billing and Settlement Plan \(BSP\)](#) and [Cargo Account Settlement Systems \(CASS\)](#).

You can also log enquiries online.

Asia Pacific

IATA's Asia Pacific regional office is based in Singapore and serves as the central point of contact for [IATA's member airlines in the region](#). The regional office also maintains close ties with governments, airports, air navigation service providers and regional industry organizations.

IATA in the Americas

IATA's regional office for the Americas, based in Miami, along with its 10 country offices support the organization's mission to represent, lead and serve the airline industry. We seek to improve the understanding of the aviation industry and increase awareness of the benefits the industry brings to regional and local economies.

We champion the global and regional interests of our members, challenging unreasonable rules and charges, holding regulators and governments accountable.

IATA promotes the value aviation brings by increasing connectivity, improving infrastructure, helping airlines in the region become more competitive by advocating for a smarter regulatory environment and improving the passenger experience through the use of technology.

The regional office maintains close relations with governments, their agencies, the International Civil Aviation Organization ([ICAO](#)), the Federal Aviation Administration ([FAA](#)), Latin American Civil Aviation Commission ([LACAC](#)), Latin American and Caribbean Air Transport Association (ALTA), Airlines for America ([A4A](#)), airports, air navigation service providers and regional airline associations.

IATA: All regions report growth in international travel in Jun-2017

IATA reported (03-Aug-2017) the following global and regional traffic highlights for international travel for Jun-2017:

- Global: Demand rose 7.5% year-on-year, and all regions recorded growth, led by airlines in [Africa](#). Capacity climbed 6.2%, and load factor climbed 1.0 percentage point to 80.6%;
- [Asia Pacific](#): Traffic up 9.1%, with capacity growth of 7.9% and load factor up 0.9 ppts to 79.3%. Overall upward trend in seasonally-adjusted traffic remains strong, although volumes have slipped in recent months. Traffic on [Asia-Europe](#) routes continues to trend upwards following terrorism related disruptions in early 2016. However, solid demand growth on international routes within Asia "has paused";
- Europe: Traffic up 8.8%, building from 7.5% in May-2017. Capacity climbed 6.5% and load factor rose 1.8 ppts to 85.9%, the highest among the regions.

The stronger growth reflects both a favourable comparison with Jun-2016, as well as increased momentum in the regional economic backdrop;

- **Middle East:** Up 2.5%, a slowdown from the already subdued 3.7% growth seen in May-2017. Capacity rose 3.1%, and load factor slipped down 0.4 ppts to 68.9%. While most markets have seen demand slowing, it is most visible on the **Middle East-North America** market, which has been affected by a combination of factors including the (recently-lifted) ban on personal electronic devices, as well as a wider negative stimulation from the travel ban that has now been implemented for certain countries. However, passenger traffic between the Middle East and **North America** was already slowing in early 2017, in line with a moderation in the pace of growth of the largest carriers in the region;
- **North America:** Demand rose 4.4%, while capacity climbed 4.1%, with load factor up 0.3 ppts to 84.5%. The comparatively robust economic backdrop in North America is expected to continue to support outbound passenger demand. Anecdotal evidence suggests that inbound tourism is being deterred by the additional security measures in place for travel to the **US**;
- **Latin America:** Growth of 9.7%, supported by strong travel within the region, while travel to North America is flat to down slightly. Capacity increased by 9.1% and load factor rose 0.4 ppts to 82.1%;
- **Africa:** Traffic growth of 9.9%, with capacity up 7.1%, and load factor gaining 1.7 ppts to 64.3%, although this still was the lowest among regions. Conditions in the region's two largest economies continued to diverge, with business confidence in **Nigeria** rising sharply in recent months, while **South Africa's** economy fell into recession in 1Q2017.

IATA / WORLD TRAVEL GEOGRAPHY

- All the airlines of the world operate their services to hundreds of destinations in different countries for the travelers to visit for varieties of purposes. Airlines focus upon their network of destinations in their advertisements as each of those is a valuable product for marketing and selling.
 - Geography is one of the key aspects in planning and pricing of a travel. Importantly, IATA has divided the world in its Traffic conference areas and further sub areas with some exceptions to the general political geography which is particularly applied to various international air tariff construction rules.
 - Each traveler (customer) may need to travel to a different destination or a set of destinations. He contacts a travel consultant in expectation of an expert advice regarding the features of the destinations he likes to visit and the best way his travel plan is routed through. Therefore, it is extremely essential for a travel consultant to have substantial knowledge of world destination geography.
 - Let us begin with the continents and the oceans of our earth. It is amazing to know that 71% of the earth is composed of the water of oceans and just about 29% the land. The earth's land is divided into seven major parts called continents. Listed below are the seven continents according to the ranks of their sizes.
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- **1. ASIA 44,485,900 sq. km. 30.0% of earth's land**
 - **2. AFRICA 30,269,680 sq. km. 20.4%**
 - **3. NORTH AMERICA 24,235,280 sq. km. 16.3%**
 - **4. SOUTH AMERICA 17,820,770 sq. km 12.0%**

- **5. ANTARCTICA 13,209,000 sq. km. 8.9%**
- **6. EUROPE 10,530,750 sq. km. 7.1%**
- **7. AUSTRALIA 7,682,300 sq. km. 5.2%**

The four major oceans of the world are listed below according to their sizes.

- **1. PACIFIC 166,241,000 sq. km. 46.0% of earth's water area**
- **2. ATLANTIC 86,557,000 sq. km. 23.9%**
- **3. INDIAN 73,427,000 sq. km 20.3%**
- **4. ARCTIC 9,485,000 sq. km. 2.6%**

IATA has divided the world into three areas called IATA Traffic Conference Areas for the purpose of regulations. Each of the Traffic conference area has also been divided into sub areas. You will find the description of them in the following pages with a map and further detailed in the list of the countries, their capitals and major cities along with the three letter IATA city and airport codes. This workbook also contains some blank maps for you to practice memorizing the locations of the major travel destinations of the world.

- **3.1 IATA AREAS OF THE WORLD**
For your easier reference, although the following locations are listed alphabetically in the PAT General Rules Book, this section gives you a copy of the list of countries arranged by sub-areas and Traffic Conference Areas.
- **3.1.1 Traffic Conference Area 1 (TC1)**
In its entirety, Area 1 or TC1 is composed of the Western Hemisphere but has several classifications of sub-areas for fare construction purposes, two of which are listed below.

The first classification divides TC1 into the following sub-areas:

- **1. North America**
 - Canada (CA)
 - USA (US)
 - Mexico (MX)
 - St. Pierre & Miquelon (PM)
- **2. Central America**
 - Belize (BZ)
 - Costa Rica (CR)
 - El Salvador (SV),
 - Guatemala (GT)-
 - Honduras (HN)
 - Nicaragua (NI)
 - Guyana (GY)
 - French Guiana (GF)
 - Suriname (SR)
- **3. Caribbean Area,**
 - Bahamas (BS) -
 - Bermuda (BM)-

- Caribbean Islands*
 - * **Caribbean Islands** include Anguilla (AI), Antigua and Barbuda (AG), Aruba (AW), Barbados (BB), Cayman Islands (KY), Cuba (CU), Dominica (DM), Dominican Republic (DO), Grenada (GD), Guadeloupe (GP), Haiti (HT), Jamaica (JN), Martinique (MQ), Montserrat (MS), Netherlands Antilles (AN), St. Kitts and Nevis (KN), St. Lucia (LC), St. Vincent and the Grenadines (VC), Trinidad and Tobago (TT), Turks and Caicos Islands (TC), Virgin Islands- British (VG).
- **4. South America**
- For travel wholly within the South American sub-area, the following countries shall also be considered as part of South America:
- Argentina (AR) Bolivia (BO) Brazil (BR) Chile (CL), Colombia (CO)
- Ecuador (EC) French Guiana (GF) Guyana (GY) Panamá (PA) Paraguay (PY)-
- Peru (PE) Suriname (SR) Uruguay (UY) Venezuela (YE)

IATA Geography and Global Indicators

The second classification of TC1 sub-areas include the following:

- **1. North Atlantic sub-area covers** Canada, Greenland (GL), Mexico, and the USA which includes Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico and US Virgin Islands.
- **2. Mid Atlantic sub-area** includes all of the Caribbean Area sub-area, Central America, South America plus Panama Canal zone except Argentina, Brasil, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay.
- **3. South Atlantic sub-area** includes only Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay (ABCPU).
Important: You will sometimes find fare rules that may specify variations in the composition of the sub-areas. In such cases for the purpose of reference in those rules, you have to take note of certain exceptions to the sub-area definitions.
- Area 2 is subdivided into only three main sub-areas. You will find the countries for each sub-area below.
- **3.1.2 Traffic Conference Area**
- 1. Europe
 Albania (AL)- Algeria (DZ) Andorra (AD) Armenia (AM) Austria (AT) Azerbaijan (AZ) Belarus (BY) Belgium (BE) Bosnia Herzegovina (BA) Bulgaria (BG) Croatia (HR) Cyprus (CY) Czech Republic (CZ) Denmark (DK) Estonia (EE) Faroe Islands (FO) Finland (FI). France (FR) Georgia (GE) Germany (DE) (TC2) Gibraltar (GI) Greece (GR) Hungary (HU) Iceland (IS)/ Ireland, Rep. of (IE)---A. Italy (IT) Latvia (LV) Liechtenstein (LI) Lithuania (LT) Luxembourg (LU) Macedonia (MK) Malta (MT)

Moldova, Rep. of (MD) Monaco (MC) Morocco (MA) Netherlands (NL)
Norway (NO) Poland (PL). Portugal (PT) including Azores & Madeira
Romania (RO) IATA

- Russia in Europe (RU) San Marino (SM) Serbia and Montenegro (CS)
Slovakia (SK) Slovenia (SI) Spain, including Balearic & Canary Islands
(ES) Sweden (SE) Switzerland (CH) Tunisia (TN) Turkey (TR) Ukraine
(UA) United Kingdom (GB)
- Within Europe, you will also find other commonly used sub-groups such
as:
 - **European Common Aviation Area (ECAA) and related**
states (28): Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia,
Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Republic of Ireland,
Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands,
Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, United
Kingdom
 - **Economic & Monetary Union (EMU) (21):** Albania, Austria, Belgium,
Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Finland, France and its
territories including Monaco, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy,
Luxembourg, Macedonia, Moldova, Netherlands, Portugal, Romania,
Serbia and Montenegro, Slovenia, Spain.
 - **Scandinavia:** Denmark, Norway & Sweden
- **2. Africa:**
 - Africa is subdivided further into regions such as:
 - **Central Africa** composed of Malawi (MW), Zambia (ZM), Zimbabwe
(ZW)
 - **Eastern Africa** composed of Burundi (BI), Djibouti (DJ), Eritrea (ER),
Ethiopia (ET), Kenya (KE), Rwanda (RW), Somalia (SO), Tanzania (TZ)
and Uganda (UG)
 - **Southern Africa** composed of Botswana (BW), Lesotho (LS),
Mozambique (MZ), South Africa (ZA), Namibia (NA), Swaziland (SZ)
 - **Libya** or Libyan Arab Jamahiriya (LY)
 - **Indian Ocean Islands** consisting of the Comoros (KM), Madagascar
(MG), Mauritius (MU), Mayotte (YT), Reunion (RE), Seychelles (SC)
 - **Western Africa** consisting of Angola (AO), Benin (BY), Burkina Faso
(BF), Cameroon (CM), Cape Verde (CV), Central African Republic (CF),
Chad (TD), Congo (CG), Cote d'Ivoire (CI), Democratic Republic of Congo
(CD), Equatorial Guinea (GQ), Gabon (GA), Gambia (GM), Ghana (GH),
Guinea (GN), Guinea

3. Middle East

- Bahrain (BH). Egypt (EG) Iran (IR) • Iraq (IQ) • Israel (IL) Jordan (JO) Kuwait (KW)
- Lebanon (LB) Oman, Sultanate of (OM) Qatar (QA) Saudi Arabia (SA) Sudan (SD) United Arab Emirates (AE) Syrian Arab Republic (SY)- Yemen, Republic of (YE)

- **3.1.3 Traffic Conference Area 3 (TC3)**

- Area 3 is composed of the whole of Asia and the adjacent islands except the part included already in Area 2; the East Indies, Australia, New Zealand the neighbouring islands in the Pacific Ocean except those in TC1

1. South East Asia Sub-area (SEA)

- Brunei Darussalam (BN) • Cambodia (KH) China excluding Hong Kong SAP. and Macau SAP. (CN) Chinese Taipei (formerly Taiwan) (TW) Christmas Island (CX) • Cocos (Keeling) Islands (CC) Guam (GU) Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, China (HK) Indonesia (ID) ' Kazakhstan (KZ) Kyrgyzstan (KG) Laos (LA) Macao Special Administrative Region, China (MO) Malaysia (MY) - Marshall Islands (MH) Micronesia (FM) Mongolia (MN) Myanmar (KM) • Northern Mariana Islands (MP) Palau (PW) Philippines (PH) Russia in Asia (XU) Singapore (SG) Tajikistan (TJ) • Thailand (TH) • Timor Leste (TL) Turkmenistan (TM)° Uzbekistan (UZ) Viet Nam (VN)

2. South Asian Subcontinent Sub-area (SASC)

- Afghanistan (AF). Maldives (MV) Bangladesh (BD) Nepal (NP) Bhutan (BT) Pakistan (PK) India (IN) Sri Lanka (LK)

3.. Japan, Korea Sub-area

- Japan (JP) Korea, Democratic Republic of (ICP) Korea, Republic of (KR)

4. South West Pacific Sub-area

- American Samoa (AS) Australia (AU)' Cook Islands (CK)- Fiji (FJ) " French Polynesia (PF) Kiribati (KI) Nauru (NR) New Caledonia including Loyalty Islands (NC) New Zealand (NZ)- Niue (NU) Papua New Guinea (PG) Samoa (WS) Solomon Islands (SB) Tonga (TO)' Tuvalu (TV) Vanuatu (VU) Willis & Futuna Islands (WF) and intermediate islands

- (IATA's Traffic Conference Areas and sub-areas are not the same as continents. There are countries that are geographically located in one continent but are classified in another area for IATA fare construction purposes)

IATA Tariff Conference (Area)

Area-1 (Tariff Conference - 1(TC1))

Continent	Sub-area	Counties
North America	North America	Canada, Greenland, Mexico, St. Pierre & Miquelon, USA including Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico and US Virgin Islands.
	US Territories	American Samoa, Johnston Atoll, Swains Is., Baker Is., Kingman Reef, Palmyra Is., Guam, Midway Is., Wake Is., Howland Is., Northern Mariana Is., Jarvis, Saipan.
	Caribbean	Anguilla, Dominican Republic, Netherlands Antilles, Antigua and Bermuda, Grenada, St. Kitts and Nevis, Barbados, Haiti, St. Vincent and The Grenadines, Cayman Islands, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Cuba, Martinique, Turks and Caicos Is., Dominica, Montserrat, British Virgin Islands.
	Central America	Belize, El Salvador, Honduras, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Nicaragua.
South America	South America	Argentina, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, French Guiana, Suriname, Brazil, Guyana, Uruguay, Chile, Panama, Venezuela, Colombia, Paraguay.

Area 2 (Tariff Conference - 2(TC2))

Continent	Sub-area	Counties
Antarctica		Antarctica
Europe	Europe	Albania, Germany, Norway, Algeria, Gibraltar, Poland, Andorra, Greece, Portugal, Armenia, Hungary, Romania, Austria, Iceland, Russia (in Europe), Azerbaijan, Ireland, San Marino, Belarus, Italy, Serbia, Belgium, Latvia, Slovakia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Liechtenstein, Slovenia, Bulgaria, Lithuania, Spain, Croatia, Luxembourg, Sweden, Cyprus, Macedonia, Switzerland, Czech Republic, Malta, Tunisia, Denmark, Moldova, Turkey, Estonia, Monaco, Ukraine, Finland, Montenegro, United Kingdom, France, Morocco, Georgia, Netherlands.
	Middle East	Bahrain, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Kuwait, Sudan, Iran, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Oman, United Arab Emirates, Israel, Qatar,

Yemen.

Africa	Central Africa	Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe.
	Eastern Africa	Burundi, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, Tanzania, Uganda.
	South Western Africa	Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland.
	Western Africa	Angola, Benin, Burkina, Faso, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Brazzaville, Congo Kinshasa, Côte D'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea – Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo.
	Indian Ocean Islands	Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mayotte, Reunion, Seychelles, Libya.

Area 3 (Tariff Conference - 3(TC3))

Continent	Sub-area	Counties
Asia	South Asian	Afghanistan, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Maldives, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, Nepal.
	South East Asia	Brunei, Darussalam, Kyrgyzstan, Palau, Cambodia, Laos, Philippines, China (excluding Hong Kong SAR and Macao SAR), Macao SAR, Russia (in Asia), Chinese Taipei (Taiwan), Malaysia, Singapore, Guam, Micronesia, Thailand, Hong Kong SAR, Mongolia, Turkmenistan, Indonesia, Myanmar, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Northern Mariana Is., Viet Nam(Saipan, Rota).
	Japan/Korea	Japan, Korea
Oceania	South West Pacific	American Samoa, Nauru, Solomon Is, Australia, New Caledonia, Tonga, Cook Islands, New Zealand, Tuvalu, Fiji, Niue, Vanuatu French Polynesia, Papua New Guinea, Wallis and Futuna Is., Kiribati, Samoa.

ICAO Regions and regional offices

ICAO World Headquarters, [Montreal](#), [Quebec](#), [Canada](#)

ICAO has a headquarters, seven regional offices, and one regional sub-office:^[26]

- Headquarters – [Montreal](#), [Quebec](#), [Canada](#)
- Asia and Pacific (APAC) – [Bangkok](#), [Thailand](#); Sub-office – [Beijing](#), [China](#)
- Eastern and Southern African (ESAF) – [Nairobi](#), [Kenya](#)
- Europe and North Atlantic (EUR/NAT) – [Paris](#), [France](#)
- Middle East (MID) – [Cairo](#), [Egypt](#)
- North American, Central American and Caribbean (NACC) – [Mexico City](#), [Mexico](#)
- South American (SAM) – [Lima](#), [Peru](#)
- Western and Central African (WACAF) – [Dakar](#), [Senegal](#)

Present Regional Structure

The advent of jet aircraft in 1957-1958 led to the introduction of considerably longer route stage lengths, many of which traverse the full extent of two or more regions. Moreover, as the number of jet aircraft increased, the operational and technical problems encountered throughout the world progressively lost much of their regional character.

This, in turn, pointed to the need for a further revision of the regional structure, and the 14th Session of the ICAO Assembly directed the Council to undertake a study of the regional structure in the light of existing and future developments, and to overcome certain problems such as those posed by the overlapping of the regions and by the non-inclusion of certain areas.

The results of the Council's study confirmed that planning on an area basis should continue and that the concept of dividing the world into air navigation regions should be retained, but mainly to provide a starting point in

establishing the geographical area to be considered by a particular regional air navigation (RAN) meeting, and to serve as a basis for the distribution over a series of air navigation plan publications of all planned facilities and services resulting from the regional planning processes.

Thus, with these objectives in mind, the Council redefined the air navigation regions in 1964 on the understanding that the area to be considered by a regional air navigation meeting could embrace one or more air navigation regions, or parts thereof, depending upon the coverage of the international air route network established by the Air Navigation Commission for consideration by that meeting.

At the same time, the Council eliminated any overlapping between regions, included the associated polar areas in the regions, changed the name of the European-Mediterranean Region to the European Region, and established a North American Region to encompass Canada, the United States and the associated polar area. In 1980, the Council also renamed the South East Asian Region as the Asia Region.

The present regional structure, as defined in Appendix 1 to the *Directives to Regional Air Navigation Meetings and Rules of Procedure for their Conduct* (Doc 8144-AN/874), comprises the following regions:

- | | |
|----|-----------------------------------|
| 1. | AFRICA-INDIAN OCEAN (AFI) REGION; |
| 2. | ASIA (ASIA) REGION; |
| 3. | CARIBBEAN (CAR) REGION; |
| 4. | EUROPEAN (EUR) REGION; |
| 5. | MIDDLE EAST (MID) REGION; |
| 6. | NORTH AMERICAN (NAM) REGION; |
| 7. | NORTH ATLANTIC (NAT) REGION; |
| 8. | PACIFIC (PAC) REGION; and |
| 9. | SOUTH AMERICAN (SAM) REGION. |

Tourism by World Region

In 2013, international tourist arrivals (overnight visitors) grew by 5% in 2013, reaching a record 1087 million arrivals worldwide, up from 1035 million in 2012, when the 1 billion mark was exceeded for the first time ever.

Slightly over half of all travellers arrived at their destination by air (53%) in 2013, while the remainder travelled by surface transport (47%) - whether by road (40%), rail (2%) or over water (5%).

Region	2013 market share
Europe	51.8%
Northern Europe	6.3
Western Europe	16.0
Central/Eastern Europe	10.9
Southern/Mediterranean Europe	18.5
Asia and the Pacific	22.8
Northeast Asia	11.7%
Southeast Asia	8.6
Oceania	1.1
South Asia	1.4
Americas	15.5
North America	10.1

Caribbean	2.0
Central America	0.8%
South America	2.5
Africa	5.1
North Africa	1.8
Subsaharan Africa	3.3
Middle East	4.7

Source: [World Tourism Organization](#) (UNWTO).








World Tourism rankings

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

The **World Tourism rankings** are compiled by the [United Nations World Tourism Organization](#) as part of their *World Tourism Barometer* publication, which is released three times throughout the year. In the publication, [UN regions and subregions](#) are ranked by the number of international visitor arrivals, by the [revenue](#) generated by inbound [tourism](#), and by the [expenditures](#) of outbound travelers.

Most visited destinations by international tourist arrivals

In 2016, there were 1.235 billion international tourist arrivals worldwide, with a growth of 4% as compared to 1.186 billion in 2015. The top 10 international tourism destinations in 2016 were:^[1]




Rank	Destination	International tourist arrivals (2016) ^[1]	International tourist arrivals (2015) ^[1]	Change (2015 to 2016) (%)	Change (2014 to 2015) (%)
1	 France	82.6 million	84.5 million	▼ 2.2	▲ 0.9
2	 United States	75.6 million	77.5 million	▼ 2.4	▲ 3.3
3	 Spain	75.6 million	68.5 million	▲ 10.3	▲ 5.5
4	 China	59.3 million	56.9 million	▲ 4.2	▲ 2.3
5	 Italy	52.4 million	50.7 million	▲ 3.2	▲ 4.4
6	 United Kingdom	35.8 million	34.4 million	▲ 4.0	▲ 5.6
7	 Germany	35.6 million	35.0 million	▲ 1.7	▲ 6.0

Rank	Destination	International tourist arrivals (2016) ^[1]	International tourist arrivals (2015) ^[1]	Change (2015 to 2016) (%)	Change (2014 to 2015) (%)
8	 Mexico	35.0 million	32.1 million	▲ 8.9	▲ 9.4
9	 Thailand	32.6 million	29.9 million	▲ 8.9	▲ 20.6
10	 Turkey	31.3 million ^[citation needed]	39.5 million	▼ 24.6	▼ 0.8

Africa

In 2015, there were over 53 million international tourist arrivals to [Africa](#), a decrease of 3% from 2014. In 2015, the top ten African destinations were:



Rank	Destination	International tourist arrivals (2015) ^[1]	International tourist arrivals (2014) ^[1]	Change (2014 to 2015) (%)	Change (2013 to 2014) (%)
1	 Morocco	10.2 million	10.3 million	▼ 1.0	▲ 2.4
2	 Egypt	9.1 million	9.6 million	▼ 5.1	▲ 5.0
3	 South Africa	8.9 million	9.5 million	▼ 6.8	▲ 0.1

Rank	Destination	International tourist arrivals (2015) ^[1]	International tourist arrivals (2014) ^[1]	Change (2014 to 2015) (%)	Change (2013 to 2014) (%)
4	 Tunisia	5.4 million	7.2 million	▼ 25.2	▼ 2.6
5	 Zimbabwe	2.1 million	1.9 million	▲ 9.4	▲ 2.6
6	 Algeria	1.7 million	2.3 million	▼ 25.7	▼ 15.8
7	 Mozambique	1.6 million	1.7 million	▼ 6.6	▼ 11.9
8	 Botswana	1.5 million	2.0 million	▼ 22.3	▲ 27.3
9	 Ivory Coast	1.4 million	0.5 million	▲ 205.9	▲ 23.9
10	 Namibia	1.4 million	1.3 million	▲ 5.1	▲ 12.2

Note: [Egypt](#) is classified under "Middle East" in the UNWTO.^[2]

Americas





In 2015, there were over 199 million international tourist arrivals to the [Americas](#). In 2015, the top ten destinations were:^[1]






Rank	Destination	International tourist arrivals (2015) ^[1]	International tourist arrivals (2014) ^[1]	Change (2014 to 2015) (%)	Change (2013 to 2014) (%)
1	 United States	77.5 million	75.0 million	▲ 3.3	▲ 7.2
2	 Mexico	32.1 million	29.3 million	▲ 9.4	▲ 21.5
3	 Canada	18.0 million	16.5 million	▲ 8.7	▲ 3.0
4	 Brazil	6.3 million	6.4 million	▼ 1.9	▲ 10.6
5	 Argentina	5.7 million	5.9 million	▼ 3.3	▲ 13.1
6	 Dominican Republic	5.6 million	5.1 million	▲ 8.9	▲ 9.6
7	 Chile	4.5 million	3.7 million	▲ 21.9	▲ 2.7
8	 Puerto Rico	3.5 million	3.2 million	▲ 9.1	▲ 2.3
9	 Cuba	3.5 million	3.0 million	▲ 17.5	▲ 5.0

Rank	Destination	International tourist arrivals (2015) ^[1]	International tourist arrivals (2014) ^[1]	Change (2014 to 2015) (%)	Change (2013 to 2014) (%)
10	 Peru	3.5 million	3.2 million	▲ 7.5	▲ 1.6

Asia-Pacific

In 2016, there were over 308 million international tourist arrivals to [Asia-Pacific](#), an increase of 9.0% over 2015. In 2016, the top ten destinations were:^[1]









Rank	Destination	International tourist arrivals (2016) ^[1]	International tourist arrivals (2015) ^[1]	Change (2015 to 2016) (%)	Change (2014 to 2015) (%)
1	 China	59.3 million	56.9 million	▲ 4.2	▲ 2.3
2	 Thailand	32.6 million	29.9 million	▲ 8.9	▲ 20.6
3	Template:PHIL	26.8 million	25.7 million	▲ 4.0	▼ 6.3
4	 Hong Kong	26.6 million	26.7 million	▼ 0.5	▼ 3.9
5	 Japan	24.0 million	19.7 million	▲ 21.8	▲ 47.1

Rank	Destination	International tourist arrivals (2016) ^[1]	International tourist arrivals (2015) ^[1]	Change (2015 to 2016) (%)	Change (2014 to 2015) (%)
6	 South Korea	17.2 million	13.2 million	▲ 30.3	▼ 6.8
7	 Macau	15.7 million	14.3 million	▲ 9.8	▼ 1.8
8	 India	14.6 million	13.3 million	▲ 9.7	▲ 1.4
9	 Singapore	12.9 million	12.1 million	▲ 7.1	▲ 1.6
10	 Indonesia	12.0 million ^[3]	10.0 million	▲ 15.5	▲ 5.6

Europe

In 2016, there were over 616 million international tourist arrivals to [Europe](#), an increase of 1.0% over 2015. In 2016, the top ten destinations were:^[1]











Rank	Destination	International tourist arrivals (2016) ^[1]	International tourist arrivals (2015) ^[1]	Change (2015 to 2016) (%)	Change (2014 to 2015) (%)
1	 France	82.6 million	84.5 million	▼ 2.2	▲ 0.9
2	 Spain	75.6 million	68.5 million	▲ 10.3	▲ 5.5

Rank	Destination	International tourist arrivals (2016) ^[1]	International tourist arrivals (2015) ^[1]	Change (2015 to 2016) (%)	Change (2014 to 2015) (%)
3	 Italy	52.4 million	50.7 million	▲ 3.2	▲ 4.4
4	 United Kingdom	35.8 million	34.4 million	▲ 4.0	▲ 5.6
5	 Germany	35.6 million	35.0 million	▲ 1.7	▲ 6.0
6	 Turkey	31.3 million	39.5 million	▼ 24.6	▼ 0.8
7	 Austria	28.1 million	26.7 million	▲ 5.2	▲ 5.7
8	 Greece	24.8 million	23.6 million	▲ 5.1	▲ 7.1
9	 Russia	24.6 million	26.9 million	▼ 8.6	▲ 5.6
10	 Poland	17.5 million	16.7 million	▲ 4.4	▲ 4.6

Middle East

In 2015, there were over 53 million international tourist arrivals to the [Middle East](#), an increase of 2.0% over 2014. In 2015, the top ten destinations were:

Rank	Destination	International tourist arrivals (2015) ^[1]	International tourist arrivals (2014) ^[1]	Change (2014 to 2015) (%)	Change (2013 to 2014) (%)
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Rank	Destination	International tourist arrivals (2015) ^[1]	International tourist arrivals (2014) ^[1]	Change (2014 to 2015) (%)	Change (2013 to 2014) (%)
1	 Turkey	39.5 million	39.8 million	▼ 0.8	▲ 5.3
2	 Saudi Arabia	18.0 million	18.3 million	▼ 1.5	▲ 15.8
3	 United Arab Emirates	14.2 million	13.2 million	▲ 7.6	▲ 32.1
4	 Egypt	9.1 million	9.6 million	▼ 5.1	▲ 5.0
5	 Iran	5.2 million	5.0 million	▲ 5.4	▲ 4.2
6	 Jordan	3.8 million	4.0 million	▼ 5.7	▲ 1.1
7	 Qatar	2.9 million	2.8 million	▲ 3.7	▲ 8.2
8	 Israel	2.8 million	2.9 million	▼ 4.4	▼ 1.2
9	 Oman	1.9 million	1.6 million	▲ 17.8	▲ 15.7
10	 Lebanon	1.5 million	1.4 million	▲ 12.1	▲ 6.3





Note: [Iran](#) is classified as part of "South Asia" in the UNWTO.^[2]

Rank	Destination	International tourist arrivals (2015) ^[1]	International tourist arrivals (2014) ^[1]	Change (2014 to 2015) (%)	Change (2013 to 2014) (%)
Turkey and Israel are classified as part of "Southern/Medit.Europe" in the UNWTO. ^[2]					

International tourism receipts

International tourism receipts grew to US\$1,260 billion in 2015, corresponding to an increase in real terms of 4.4% from 2014.^[1] The [World Tourism Organization](#) reports the following destinations as the top twelve tourism earners for the year 2015, with the [United States](#) by far the top earner.

Rank	Region	International tourism receipts (2016) ^[1]	International tourism receipts (2015) ^[1]	Change (2015 to 2016) (%)	Change (2014 to 2015) (%)
1	 United States	\$205.9 billion	\$205.4 billion	▲ 0.3%	▲ 7.0%
2	 Spain	\$60.3 billion	\$56.5 billion	▲ 6.9%	▼ 13.3%
3	 Thailand	\$49.9 billion	\$44.9 billion	▲ 11.0%	▲ 16.9%
4	 China	\$44.4 billion	\$45.0 billion	▼ 1.2%	▲ 2.1%
5	 France	\$42.5 billion	\$44.9 billion	▼ 5.3%	▼ 22.9%
6	 Italy	\$40.2 billion	\$39.4 billion	▲ 2.0%	▼ 13.3%

Rank	Region	International tourism receipts (2016) ^[1]	International tourism receipts (2015) ^[1]	Change (2015 to 2016) (%)	Change (2014 to 2015) (%)
7	 United Kingdom	\$39.6 billion	\$45.5 billion	▼ 12.9%	▼ 2.3%
8	 Germany	\$37.4 billion	\$36.9 billion	▲ 1.4%	▼ 14.8%
9	 Hong Kong	\$32.9 billion	\$36.2 billion	▼ 9.1%	▼ 5.8%
10	 Australia	\$32.4 billion	\$28.9 billion	▲ 12.3%	▼ 8.2%

Africa

Rank	Region	International tourism receipts (US\$ million) (2016) ^[1]
1	 South Africa	\$7,910
2	 Morocco	\$6,548
3	 Egypt	\$5,258
4	 Tanzania	\$2,135

Rank	Region	International tourism receipts (US\$ million) (2016) ^[1]
5	 Mauritius	\$1,572
6	 Tunisia	\$1,239
7	 Botswana	\$1,101
8	 Nigeria	\$1,070
9	 Sudan	\$1,009
10	 Zimbabwe	\$824

Americas

Rank	Region	International tourism receipts (US\$ million) (2016) ^[1]
1	 United States	\$205,940
2	 Mexico	\$19,571
3	 Canada	\$18,213

Rank	Region	International tourism receipts (US\$ million) (2016) ^[1]
4	 Dominican Republic	\$6,723
5	 Brazil	\$6,024
6	 Colombia	\$4,773
7	 Argentina	\$4,687
8	 Panama	\$4,258
9	 Puerto Rico	\$3,985
10	 Costa Rica	\$3,879

Asia-Pacific

Rank	Region	International tourism receipts (US\$ million) (2016) ^[1]
1	 Thailand	\$49,871
2	 China	\$44,432

Rank	Region	International tourism receipts (US\$ million) (2016) ^[1]
3	 Hong Kong	\$32,860
4	 Australia	\$32,423
5	 Japan	\$30,678
6	 Macau	\$29,881
7	 India	\$22,427
8	 Singapore	\$18,386
9	 Malaysia	\$18,074
10	 South Korea	\$17,210

Europe

Rank	Region	International tourism receipts (US\$ million) (2016) ^[1]
1	 Spain	\$60,346

Rank	Region	International tourism receipts (US\$ million) (2016) ^[1]
2	 France	\$42,481
3	 Italy	\$40,246
4	 United Kingdom	\$39,615
5	 Germany	\$37,433
6	 Austria	\$19,300
7	 Switzerland	\$15,937
8	 Greece	\$14,618
9	 Netherlands	\$14,054
9	 Portugal	\$14,036

Middle East

Rank	Region	International tourism receipts (US\$ million) (2015) ^[1]
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Rank	Region	International tourism receipts (US\$ million) (2015) ^[1]
1	 Turkey	\$26,616
2	 United Arab Emirates	\$17,481
3	 Saudi Arabia	\$10,130
4	 Lebanon	\$6,857
5	 Egypt	\$6,065
6	 Israel	\$5,794
7	 Qatar	\$5,035
8	 Jordan	\$4,065
9	 Iraq	\$4,060
10	 Oman	\$1,540

International tourism expenditure in 2015 and 2016

The [World Tourism Organization](#) reports the following destinations as the top ten biggest spenders on international tourism for the year 2015 and 2016.^[1]

Rank	Region	International tourism expenditure (2016) ^[1]	International tourism expenditure (2015) ^[1]
1	 China	\$261.1 billion	\$249.8 billion
2	 United States	\$123.6 billion	\$114.7 billion
3	 Germany	\$79.8 billion	\$77.5 billion
4	 United Kingdom	\$63.6 billion	\$63.3 billion
5	 France	\$40.5 billion	\$39.3 billion
6	 Canada	\$29.1 billion	\$30.1 billion
7	 South Korea	\$26.6 billion	\$25.3 billion
8	 Italy	\$25.0 billion	\$24.4 billion
9	 Australia	\$24.9 billion	\$23.8 billion
10	 Hong Kong	\$24.2 billion	\$23.1 billion

Which country leads your region in attracting tourists?

Travel and tourism accounts for one in eleven jobs around the world, and is an engine of economic growth in countries at all stages of development. But which nations are best set up to take advantage? Every two years the [World Economic Forum](#) sets out to answer that question, and has recently ranked the [travel and tourism competitiveness of 141 economies](#) around the world.

Within each of the five regions surveyed – Europe and Caucasus, Asia, the Middle East and North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, and the Americas – there are differing strengths and challenges, and some countries performing better than others. And with 90 individual indicators making up the overall rankings, even the top performers in each region have something to improve.

Europe and Caucasus

Spain leads the overall global rankings for the first time, scoring highly on a wide range of factors from its beautiful heritage sites to conferences for business travelers, infrastructure for tourists and the extent to which the government prioritizes the industry. It is one of the most online-searched countries for tourism and the third most visited country in the world, with over 60 million international arrivals – an increasing proportion of whom are coming from emerging markets such as China, Brazil and Mexico.

Just as Spain leads the national rankings, Europe leads the regional ones, with six countries in the top ten – the others being France, Germany, the United Kingdom, Switzerland and Italy – and with more international arrivals per year than any other region.

Nonetheless, three main divides in Europe remain. First, not all countries make as much use as they could of their cultural attractions and monuments. While the continent's long history had left some of its countries better endowed than others with such attractions, this does not explain all of the variation in performance on this aspect of the Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index.

Second, and relatedly, not all countries give the same kind of priority to developing the sector as does Spain. Italy, for example, also has outstanding attractions for tourists, but exhibits a less strategic approach to building on them, and ranks only 8th in the global list. Iceland is one example of a European country successfully investing significant resources in building a stronger tourism brand and leveraging specific niches.

Finally, the business environment varies tremendously—it is generally lean and effective in northern and Central Europe, but less sound in southern and Eastern Europe. Despite leading the global rankings, Spain scores low on areas such as red tape related to construction permits, an inefficient legal framework and rigid labour market.

A strong business environment is essential for enabling a lively tourism sector as several companies active are small companies that are particularly harmed by burdensome regulations. Challenges in building a conducive business environment are often related to a country's institutional set up and the process of change is long, but success is key to competitiveness and prosperity well beyond the travel and tourism sector.

The Americas

The **United States (U.S.)** is the highest ranked country in the Americas and 4th globally. It welcomed a record 74 million international visitors in 2014. Collectively, the Americas received almost 170 million visitors in 2013. On average, the region performs quite well in terms of prioritizing the industry, with most countries aware of its potential as a vehicle for development—especially considering the region's enormous endowment of natural resources.

Factors that explain the regional leadership of the United States include its array of natural, cultural, entertainment and sport attractions, a highly competitive business environment and excellent air transport infrastructure. However, a deeper look into the rankings spotlights some warning signs for the U.S. tourism industry. The sustainability of the country's natural attractions is being eroded, including through damage to coastal ecosystems and a high proportion of species being endangered. Meanwhile, visa requirements to visit the U.S. rank among the world's most restrictive, dissuading travellers, although a more open policy towards China recently is a step in the right direction.

Two further areas on which the United States also scores relatively low – ground transportation infrastructure, and safety and security – are among three priority areas across the Latin America region. While several countries in Latin America share difficulties in controlling crime and violence, different root causes require country-specific solutions; as a first step, more accurate indicators are needed to understand the local peculiarities of crime, create information management information systems and evaluate the impact of reform programmes.

On infrastructure, it is understandable given their geography that most countries in Latin America have prioritized air transport, but underdeveloped ground transport still limits people's ability to move across and within countries. Considering the limited availability of public funds, public-private partnerships could be an effective way to improve infrastructure, but this will

be possible only if the third big challenge in the region is met – improving business environment issues such as red tape, corruption and insufficient protection of property rights.

Asia-Pacific

The Asia-Pacific region is extensive and very heterogeneous, though in general its countries share a high level of commitment to travel and tourism. The region's most developed areas—including Oceania, the Asian Tigers and Japan—all have world-class transport infrastructure, high degrees of ICT readiness and openness and outstanding human resources.

Australia tops the regional rankings, and comes in 7th place globally, having identified tourism as one of four national investment priorities. The country's natural attractions range from the Great Barrier Reef to Kangaroo Island, and it also ranks highly for leisure and entertainment tourism and due to its air travel infrastructure.

Elsewhere in the region, it's countries in South-East Asia which have seen the highest growth in international arrivals recently. This is thanks in part to being highly price competitive and surrounded by other countries where the middle class is expanding rapidly, creating a new class of tourist: surveys show that taking a family holiday is the second highest priority for the emerging middle classes, after a new car and before a flat screen television.

There are encouraging signs that policymakers in South-East Asia have understood the potential multiplier effect of offering a larger, cross-border set of itinerary options, including through cooperation on visa policy: [ASEAN countries have already started to work on pilots to implement visa facilitation.](#)

According to estimates of the UN's World Tourism Organization, if holders of a visa for one ASEAN country could travel freely in all the others, it could lead to 10 million more visitors.

The main priority in the region is to restrain environmental degradation, as rapid urbanization and industrialization are significantly impacting air quality and forest and ocean ecosystems.

The leader in the Asia region, Australia, has scope for improvement, too – reforms and investments are particularly needed in areas including ground and sea transportation infrastructure, price competitiveness and the rigidity of labour market practices.

Middle East and North Africa

While most countries in the Middle East and North Africa are price-competitive destinations, they can be divided into three groups. Some are not leveraging their travel and tourism capacity at all. Some – such as Egypt, Tunisia, Jordan and Lebanon – have great tourism attractiveness but their international arrivals are being directly or indirectly hit by concerns about terrorism and political instability. And some have created a strong business environment, developed sound infrastructure, grown specific niches and remained relatively safe as destinations.

Leading the latter group, and the region as a whole, is the **United Arab Emirates (UAE)**, which places 24th globally and welcomed over 10 million tourists in 2013. While the UAE is not rich in natural resources, it has built a unique environment to attract both business and leisure travelers. From Expo 2020 Dubai to the construction of the Louvre and Guggenheim, the UAE is investing heavily in the development of its travel and tourism industry. Alongside the enabling environment it has created for business and the extremely effective campaigns to brand itself as a destination, the UAE's advantages include its world-renowned air transport infrastructure, positioning it as a gateway for Europeans to Africa, the Middle East and Asia.

There is still scope for improvement, notably in health and hygiene services and – unlike in most of the rest of the region – there are growing concerns about price competitiveness. Among other regional concerns, unlike in the UAE – which has liberalized its visa policies – low international openness remains a problem in many of the region's countries, and almost all of them perform poorly on measures of environmental sustainability.

Sub-Saharan Africa

Travel and tourism has significant potential in Africa, which is rich in both natural and cultural resources, but the industry is still mostly in the early stages of development –and the challenges of attracting more international tourists are connected to the continent's more general and longstanding development challenges, including infrastructure and health and hygiene. As the region's average GDP per capita is less than 4,000 PPP USD, the industry's growth depends heavily on attracting tourists from other continents.

Most countries in the region are aware of tourism's potential role as an economic opportunity and development catalyst, and have drafted strategic plans. However, the extent to which the actual implementation of those plans is a national priority varies significantly. Leading the way is **South Africa**, which ranks 48th globally, and tops the African region thanks in part to its relatively good infrastructure compared to neighboring countries. South Africa is still reaping the benefits of the 2010 World Cup, with several sports stadiums that can host significant entertainment events.

South Africa also wins high marks for its efforts to reduce red tape and encourage the development of businesses in the tourism industry. The quality of the business environment varies widely across the region, with Botswana, Rwanda and Mauritius also among the top performers and Angola, Zimbabwe and Chad among those performing less well. There is still scope for South Africa to improve on labour market issues, however, as well as on health and security.

Regionally, two areas in particular require more international cooperation. For example, while in general the region's countries score relatively well on environmental sustainability, one specific issues that requires attention is poaching. African governments are already working collaboratively to pool resources and information, deploy rangers across cross-border areas and collaborate with customs and law enforcement in destination markets for products derived from poaching, notably in Asia.

The second issue is international openness. Most countries in the region still have significant travel restrictions in place, and there are even discussions of tightening visa policies in countries such as South Africa. However, some recent policy changes show a will to make progress – for example, the 15 members of Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) have introduced a visa policy that enables free movement of people across member states. Such moves to facilitate travel itineraries that take in more than one country will prove an attraction to international tourists.