

Developing Countries Lead Dynamic World Tourism Growth

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International tourist arrivals exceeded 6% growth in 2007 on the back of strong global economic growth. Developing countries grew by 8%.

These figures again underscore UNWTO's long held view that sustainable tourism can play a major role in helping to achieve the UN Millennium Development Goals, in two way world services trade and in responding positively to climate change imperatives.

2000-2007

The market share of developing countries has grown to 40% of worldwide international arrivals - up from 34% in 2000:

Worldwide international tourist arrivals increased to 898 million - an overall 32% increase. An average 4% growth a year.

Developing countries international tourist arrivals increased to 360 million. - an overall 54% increase. An average 6% growth a year.

The 50 least developed countries international tourist arrivals increased to 13 million - an overall 110% increase. An average 11% growth a year.

Governments have become increasingly aware of the possibilities opened by tourism for social and economic development and for job creation.

It has encouraged investment in tourism infrastructure in countries from Asia and the Pacific, the Middle East, Africa, Central and South America.

It has at the same time boosted intra regional travel with strong demand from emerging middle classes - with increasing long term potential in all world markets.

2008 Outlook

UNWTO expects international tourist arrivals to continue its positive growth trends this year, but at a moderated rate.

After four consecutive years of strong growth, less favourable global economic prospects, continuing high oil prices and greater uncertainty are key factors. Estimates stay close to the long-term yearly growth rate of 4.1% through 2020, estimated by UNWTO.

Again, developing countries will be among the frontrunners and continue their strength of the past years. Most regions are expected to sustain their current growth trend in 2008, but at a somewhat slower rate.

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