

World tourism

The most respected source of world tourism statistics is the World Tourism Organisation (WTO) – recently renamed the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO). The ‘home page’ for travel and tourism facts and figures can be found at <http://unwto.org/facts/menu.html>

The organisation produces an annual summary of world tourism statistics known as *Tourism Highlights*. The most recent edition (2008 – based on results for the year 2007) is available to download at:

http://unwto.org/facts/eng/pdf/highlights/UNWTO_Highlights08_en_LR.pdf

The following are some of the most useful statistics on international tourism included in *Tourism Highlights 2008*.

Overview of international tourism in 2007

In 2007, international tourist arrivals grew by 6.6% to reach a new record figure of over 900 million – an extraordinary achievement given that the 800 million mark was only reached two years earlier. This represented 56 million more arrivals than in 2006, well over the total count for either the Middle East or Africa. In fact, world tourism enjoyed its fourth consecutive year of growth in 2007, above the long-term forecast of 4.1% and, surprisingly, it even exceeded the 5.5% increases recorded in 2005 and 2006. All regions registered increases above their long-term average, with the Middle East leading the growth ranking, with an estimated 16% rise to nearly 48 million international tourist arrivals.

	International Tourist Arrivals (million)					
	1990	1995	2000	2005	2006	2007*
World	436	536	683	803	847	903
Europe	262.6	311.3	393.5	440.3	462.2	484.4
Northern Europe	28.6	35.8	43.7	52.8	56.4	57.6
Western Europe	108.6	112.2	139.7	142.4	149.5	154.9
Central/Eastern Europe	31.5	60.6	69.4	87.8	91.5	95.6
Southern/Mediterr. Eu.	93.9	102.7	140.8	157.3	164.8	176.2
Asia and the Pacific	55.8	81.8	109.3	154.6	167.0	184.3
North-East Asia	26.4	41.3	58.3	87.5	94.3	104.2
South-East Asia	21.1	28.2	35.6	48.5	53.1	59.6
Oceania	5.2	8.1	9.2	10.5	10.5	10.7
South Asia	3.2	4.2	6.1	8.1	9.1	9.8
Americas	92.8	109.0	128.2	133.4	135.8	142.5
North America	71.7	80.7	91.5	89.9	90.6	95.3
Caribbean	11.4	14.0	17.1	18.8	19.4	19.5
Central America	1.9	2.6	4.3	6.4	7.1	7.7
South America	7.7	11.7	15.3	18.2	18.7	19.9
Africa	15.2	20.1	27.9	37.3	41.4	44.4
North Africa	8.4	7.3	10.2	13.9	15.1	16.3
Subsaharan Africa	6.8	12.8	17.7	23.3	26.3	28.2
Middle East	9.6	13.7	24.4	37.8	40.9	47.6

Source: World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) ©