

EGYPT PLANS TO ATTRACT EVEN MORE TOURISTS IN FUTURE



The Arab Republic of Egypt is a world wide known tourist destination. The country offers unique ancient sites, the Pyramids and the Valley of the Kings, and no wonder it attracts tourists from all over the world. The travel trade is one of the vital parts of Egypt's economy. In 2006 the tourism industry generated revenues of \$7.6 billion. The number of tourists coming to this African country steadily rises and the local authorities strongly support further development. The plan is to boost tourist numbers to 16 million by 2014. According to Amr El-Azaby, the new head of the Egyptian Tourist Authority (ETA), the ultimate aim is to attract 25 million tourists by 2020. This will require significant development in the sector as 130,000 new hotel rooms will be needed. The country also runs several marketing campaigns to bring more visitors to Egypt. ETA wants to reduce the seasonal nature of tourism to Egypt and promotes the new integrated resorts on the Red Sea and Mediterranean coasts. Amr El-Azaby explains the focus on the Red Sea and Sinai by the fact that these areas currently account for most of Egypt's hotel rooms. Egyptian authorities spend much more money on promoting the country as a tourism destination in European countries than in Arab countries. It is caused by the fact that Arab countries are the second largest source of tourists coming to Egypt but they account for only 20 per cent of the total, whereas Europe furnishes 70 percent of all tourists to Egypt. Most tourists come from the United Kingdom, Germany and Russia. Despite the fact that Egypt is considered a cheaper tourism destination, it is still too expensive for average Egyptians to afford such vacation. Therefore, domestic tourism is not much developed.

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