

CULTURE - CURRENT FOCUS OF THE SEYCHELLES TOURISM

The first African country ranked by the World Bank among high-income countries and one of the few that stand out in economic freedom rankings, Seychelles is an archipelago of 115 islands and less than 97,000 people.

Before Covid, the sovereign island nation received four times its population equivalent or 428,000 tourists for more than 552 million euros in 2019. In the midst of the health crisis, these numbers have dropped **to 124,500 tourists and nearly 200 million euros in revenue in 2020.**

In an effort to recover from the recent crises, the archipelago has eased its travel restrictions, although it still requires PCR testing for unvaccinated travelers.

Although better off in terms of recent performance than other African islands, Seychelles tourism is seeking to diversify its industry by developing a cultural niche. The country received more than \$70,000 in funding from UNESCO for this purpose last year.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs and Tourism, Louis Sylvestre Radegonde, said: "I am determined to support the revival of tourism in Seychelles. More than ever, the industry will evolve in a competitive environment".

According to industry data, **the Seychelles hotel operators in particular are not hesitating to bet on the EU market, even when it comes to luxury.** Next year in particular, the East African archipelago should welcome new hotel investments.

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