

World Tourism Analysis



The World Economic Forum has conducted a survey targeting Travel & Tourism Competitiveness and produced The Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Report based on the survey. This report should help understand why some countries capitalize on tourism, while others are left behind.

The importance of Travel & Tourism (T&T) for national economies steadily grows. As the report says, there was an increase in the number of international tourism receipts from US\$2.1 billion to US\$622.7 billion between 1950 and 2004. By 2006, the T&T sector accounted for 10.3 percent of world GDP. It is an important source of economic growth and development in many countries. In 2006 there were 234 million jobs in the industry, making up 8.2 percent of total employment worldwide.

The main reason for growth in the industry was the growing number of international travelers. The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) claims that the number of international arrivals grew from 25 million in 1950 to approximately 763 million in 2004. The sector is vital in developing countries where it helps reduce poverty through the provision of jobs. It also encourages governments to make infrastructure improvements; in roads, and in electricity, telephone, and public transport networks. The industry is very important in the preservation of the natural environment, since this often serves as a tourist attraction.

The Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Report has generated the Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Index (TTCI). The index measures the factors and policies that make it attractive to develop the T&T sector in different countries. Highest ranked in the TTCI is Switzerland, which has attained top positions in all the criteria covered by the Index. It is a very safe country, with excellent health and hygiene indices and efficient environmental regulations. Switzerland is closely followed by Austria and Germany.

France, even though it is the most-traveled-to destination in the world, is ranked just outside the top 10, in 12th place. It is very attractive to travellers as it has thirty World Heritage sites. The quality of the air is very high and the standards of ground transport infrastructure is also marked as top quality. The main weakness is the general attitude of the French toward visitors (ranked very low at 122nd overall).

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