

DESPITE CHALLENGES TURKEY REPORTS AN INCREASE IN TOURISM REVENUE



Despite challenges presented by the recent plummet in tourist arrivals from Russia, and by the violence that permeates many parts of the region, the tourism industry in Turkey is fighting to hold onto growth.

Turkey achieved a year-on-year increase in tourism revenue of 1.3 percent, rising all the way up to about USD 4.87 billion, in this year's first quarter. **Tourist arrivals grew by 2.37 percent, reaching 1.9 million foreign arrivals, according to the Turkish government.**

Last year, Turkey welcomed roughly 34.3 million travelers from other nations, who brought with them USD 41.4 billion into the nation's economy. Roughly 8 million Turkish people visited another country last year, which represents an increase of almost 7 percent from the previous year, 2013.

The Turkish Statistics Institute has revealed that, in addition to this, domestic tourism has experienced quite a bit in the way of growth. In 2014, the Turkish people made over 70 million trips within the country's borders.

In response to recent developments, the tourism industry in Turkey dropped their growth forecast significantly, from the original forecast of 4 to 5 percent growth all the way to 1.5 to 2 percent growth, according to the chairman of Turkey's association of travel agents, Basaran Ulusoy.

Turkish tourism will experience another huge blow with the anticipated major decline in Russian visitors throughout the rest of this year, with Russia being the leading source of Turkey's tourist arrivals. This is due to Russia's recent economic downturn, which has been blamed on many factors, including plummeting oil prices. In 2015's first four months, according to the owner of the Unser Tourism Agency, Aziz Gunyeli, the number of Russian tourist arrivals in Turkey dropped by a whopping 40 percent. Tourism and its related industries in areas frequented by tourists from Russia have suffered.

Ulusoy says that he is optimistic, predicting that Turkey will exceed 42 million tourist arrivals this year.

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