

African tourism sector booming – second-fastest growth rate in the world

Travel & Tourism in Africa is booming, growing 5.6% in 2018 compared to the global average of 3.9% and the broader African economy rate of 3.2%. This places Africa as the second-fastest growing tourism region behind only Asia-Pacific.

Such growth is partly explained by North Africa's rebound from security crises as well as the development and implementation of policies that promote travel facilitation.

For over 25 years, the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC), which represents the global private sector of Travel & Tourism, has produced the authoritative research on the economic contribution of the sector. Our research also shows that in 2018:

- Travel & Tourism contributed \$194.2 billion to the region's economy, representing 8.5% of the continent's GDP
- The sector contributed 24.3 million African jobs, or 6.7% of total employment.
- 71% of tourism spending across Africa was leisure-driven and 29% business
- Domestic spending accounted for 56% of the tourism economy versus 44% for international
- International tourism spending comprised 9.6% of the region's total exports, worth \$58.5bn

Ethiopia stands out not only as Africa's fastest growing travel economy but indeed the world's, growing by 48.6% last year to be worth \$7.4bn. Notably, international Travel & Tourism spending made up a massive 61.0% of exports in the country. This stunning growth can be attributed, in part, to Ethiopia's improved connectivity as a regional transport hub and to recent visa relaxation policies.

Then, Egypt's tourism sector has demonstrated considerable resilience, growing by 16.5% last year with international visitor spending accounting for 27.3% of exports. This follows huge safety improvements in the country and in key destinations such as Sharm El-Sheikh, helping to entice international tourists back to the northern coast.

WTTC President & CEO Gloria Guevara commented, "In 2018, the World Travel & Tourism Council hosted its first ever Africa Leaders Forum in Stellenbosch, South Africa, recognising the increasing significance and power of this great region's travel economy.

"We commend the tourism leaders in Africa who are helping to boost connectivity, promote travel facilitation and ensure traveller safety – all of these measures make for supreme growth; the kind of growth that we are now witnessing across the continent and that provides millions of good jobs."

About the World Travel & Tourism Council

WTTC is the body which represents the Travel & Tourism private sector globally. Members consist of CEOs of the world's Travel & Tourism companies, destinations, and industry organisations engaging with Travel & Tourism.

WTTC has a history of 25 years of research to quantify the economic impact of the sector in 185 countries. Travel & Tourism is a key driver for investment and economic growth globally. The sector contributes US\$8.8 trillion or 10.4% of global GDP, and accounts for 319 million jobs or one in ten of all jobs on the planet.

For over 25 years, WTTC has been the voice of this industry globally. Members are the Chairs, Presidents and Chief Executives of the world's leading, private sector Travel & Tourism businesses, who bring specialist knowledge to guide government policy and decision-making and raise awareness of the importance of the sector.