



# THE ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION OF TOURISM AND THE IMPACT OF COVID-19

*November 2021*



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### Acknowledgements

This report was prepared by the UNWTO Tourism Market Intelligence and Competitiveness Department under the supervision of Sandra Carvão, Chief of the Department. Statistical modelling of tourism direct gross domestic product (TDGDP) was conducted by Javier Ruescas, Senior Specialist, and Hernan Epstein, former Chief of Statistics at UNWTO. Michel Julian, Senior Officer, and Javier Ruescas provided analysis and drafting. TDGDP country data was collected by the UNWTO Statistics Department.



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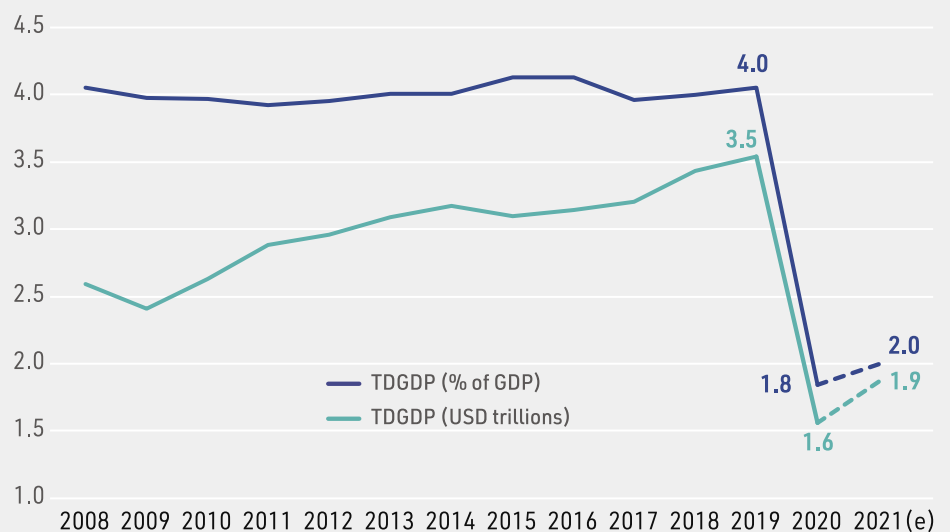
An aerial photograph of a village nestled in a mountain valley. The village consists of numerous small, rectangular buildings with reddish-brown roofs, clustered together. The surrounding landscape is characterized by steep, terraced hillsides covered in green vegetation, likely agricultural fields. In the background, more rugged mountains rise under a clear sky. The overall scene depicts a rural, mountainous environment.

# 01 KEY FINDINGS

## KEY FINDINGS

- The **contribution of tourism to the world economy** amounted to **USD 3.5 trillion in 2019, or 4% of world GDP**, measured in tourism direct gross domestic product (TDGDP).
- **The COVID-19 pandemic cut tourism direct GDP by more than half in 2020**, reducing it by USD 2.0 trillion, to **1.8% of world GDP**.
- This plunge represents **about 70% of the overall decline in world GDP in 2020**.<sup>1</sup>
- **International tourist arrivals dropped by 73% in 2020**, while **export revenues from tourism** (international tourism receipts and passenger transport) **declined by 63% in real terms**.
- The **loss in export revenues from international tourism is estimated at USD 1.1 trillion** and represents **42% of the total loss in international trade in 2020**.<sup>2</sup>
- **TDGDP is expected to edge up to 2% of world GDP in 2021**, following a rebound in domestic tourism and higher spending on both domestic and international travel.
- TDGDP estimates contained in this study are based on a **limited sample of 75 countries and territories** for which TDGDP data is available.
- Future efforts by policymakers **to compile TDGDP data** according to the Tourism Satellite Account (TSA) are essential for a full understanding of the contribution of tourism to the global and national economies.



Tourism direct gross domestic product (TDGDP)



Notes:  
Data as of October 2021.  
e) Preliminary estimates.

Source:  
World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).

## Tourism direct gross domestic product (TDGDP)



	2019	2020	2021 (e)
	USD 3.5 trillion	USD 1.6 trillion	USD 1.9 trillion
		▼ USD 2.0 trillion	▲ USD 0.3 trillion
	4.0% of world GDP	1.8% of world GDP	2.0% of world GDP
		▼ 2.2% points	▲ 0.2% points

Notes: Data as of October 2021.

(e) Preliminary estimates.

Source: World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).

## Export revenues from international tourism

	2019	2020	2021 (e)
	USD 1.7 trillion	USD 0.6 trillion	USD 0.7–0.8 trillion
		▼ USD 1.1 trillion	
	6.8% of world exports	2.8% of world exports	3.0% of world exports
		▼ 4.0% points	

Notes: Data as of October 2021.

(e) Preliminary estimates.

Source: World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).





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## 02 INTRODUCTION



## INTRODUCTION

- Tourism represents a major source of export revenues for many countries, and an important part of their GDP. The sector supports millions of direct and indirect jobs all over the world, particularly for women and young people.
- In 2020-21, the COVID-19 pandemic caused an unprecedented disruption to tourism, resulting in a massive drop in international travel following a global lockdown and plunge in demand amid widespread travel restrictions put in place to contain the spread of the coronavirus.
- Tourism was the most affected sector by the COVID-19 pandemic, with businesses, employment and livelihoods around the world severely impacted by the crisis.
- This report presents UNWTO estimates on the direct contribution of tourism to gross domestic product (GDP) before and after the pandemic at a global and regional level. In particular, it quantifies the economic impact of the pandemic in terms of tourism direct gross domestic product (TDGDP) and export revenues from tourism.
- The report also provides preliminary estimates on TDGDP for 2021 based on the latest international tourism data published in the November 2021 issue of the *UNWTO World Tourism Barometer*.



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# 03 THE ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION OF TOURISM BEFORE THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC



### Tourism direct GDP amounted to USD 3.5 trillion in 2019, or 4% of world GDP

In the decades leading up to 2019, tourism saw continued expansion and diversification to become one of the largest and fastest-growing economic sectors in the world.

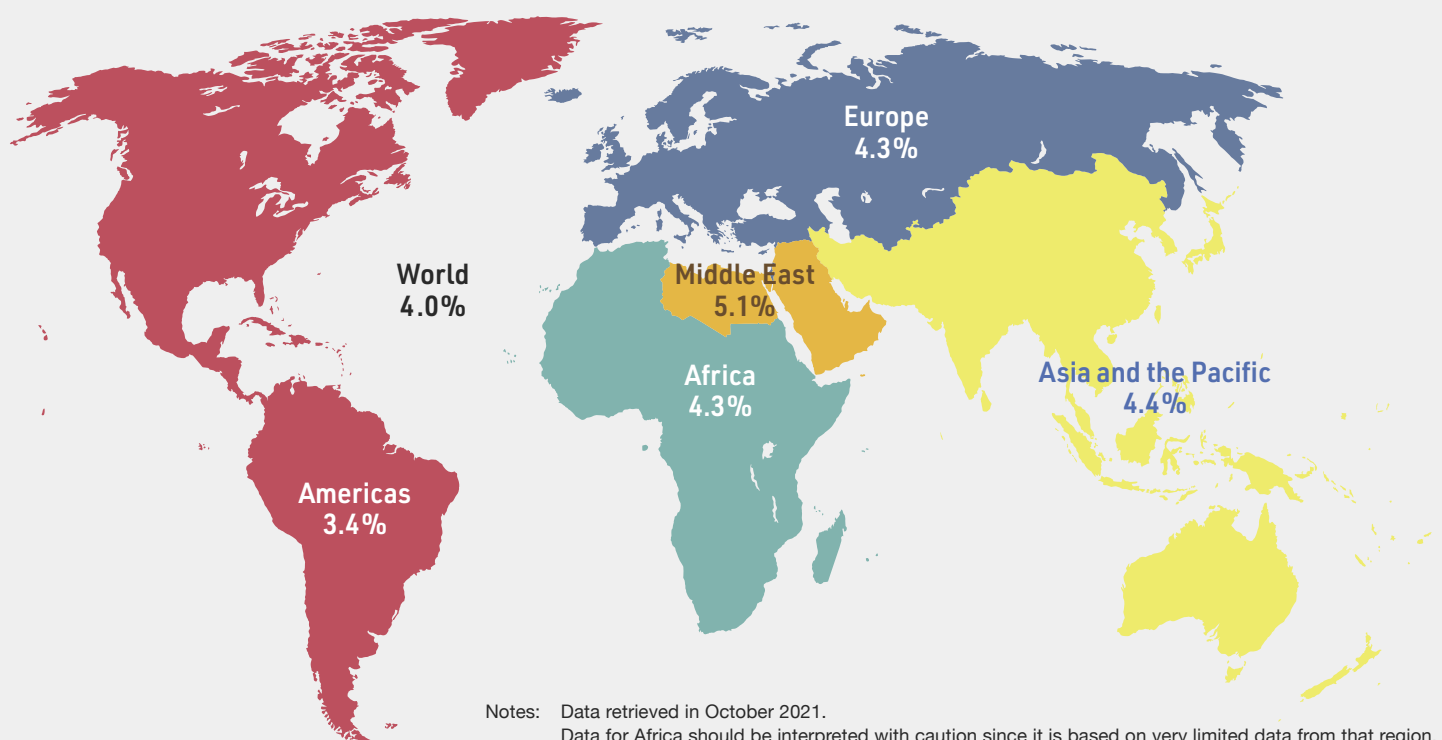
Growth was driven by a relatively strong global economy, expanding middle classes, increased market openness and rapid urbanization in emerging economies, as well as affordable air travel and visa facilitation. Technological advances and new business models, particularly through Internet and mobile devices also contributed to this expansion in travel.

In 2019, international tourist arrivals (overnight visitors) reached 1.5 billion worldwide, following a decade of uninterrupted growth. Arrivals increased an average 5% per year between 2009 and 2019, or as much as 63% on aggregate.

Tourism also became one of the world's major trade categories, with **export revenues from tourism reaching USD 1.7 trillion in 2019**, equivalent to **28% of the world's trade in services and 7% of overall exports of goods and services**.

For many developing countries, especially small island developing states (SIDS),<sup>3</sup> tourism is a major source of foreign revenues and often the main export category, creating much needed employment and opportunities for development.

Figure 1.1 Tourism direct GDP by regions, 2019 (%)



Notes: Data retrieved in October 2021.

Data for Africa should be interpreted with caution since it is based on very limited data from that region.

Source: World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).

**In 13 out of the 38 SIDS, tourism accounted for 50% or more of total exports in 2019.** In

Saint Lucia, Palau, Bahamas and the Maldives it generated over 80% of all export revenues.

The economic contribution of tourism, resulting from both international and domestic tourism, represents a major part of the GDP of many economies around the world.

**Tourism is estimated to directly represent 4.0% of world GDP in 2019** based on tourism direct gross domestic product (TDGDP) reported by countries.<sup>4</sup>

It also has an important indirect impact<sup>5</sup> on other economic sectors with a multiplier effect on the supply of other goods and services, investments and public spending. Tourism has proven to be a tool for economic diversification and an engine for employment.<sup>6</sup>

**In advanced economies, TDGDP ranges from approximately 2% of GDP for countries where tourism is a comparatively small sector, to over 10% for countries where tourism is a pillar of the economy. For some small island states and developing countries, tourism accounts for over 20% of their GDP.**

**The Middle East had the highest tourism direct GDP of all regions in 2019**

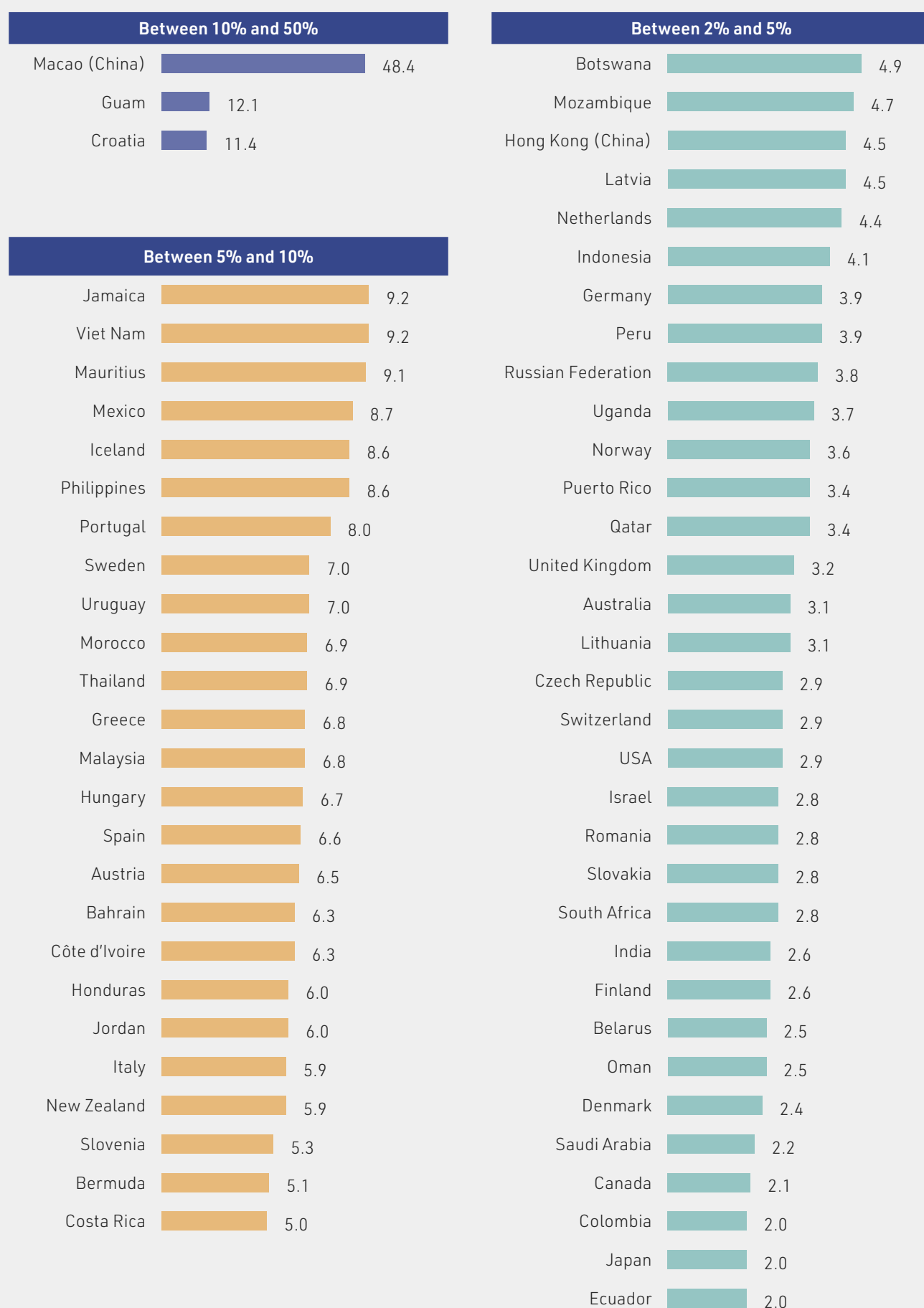
By regions, the **Middle East had the largest relative TDGDP in 2019 with 5.1% of GDP, followed by Asia and the Pacific (4.4%) and Europe (4.3%). In the Americas tourism accounted for 3.4% of the region's GDP.** Estimates for **Africa point to a 4.3%** tourism contribution to GDP, though this figure is not entirely reliable given the limited availability of data from that region (see Methodology).

Of economies for which data is available, Macao (China) has the highest relative TDGDP, with tourism contributing directly to 48% of its GDP. The weight of tourism is also large in small island developing states such as Guam (12%), Jamaica (9%), Mauritius (9%) and others for which recent data is unavailable.

While tourism is a key source of foreign revenues and jobs for these destinations, their high dependence on tourism revenues also makes them more vulnerable to external shocks.

In Croatia, tourism directly accounts for 11% of the country's GDP. In France and Spain, the world's largest tourism destinations as of 2019, tourism contributes directly to 7% of their GDP.<sup>7</sup>

Figure 1.1: Tourism direct gross domestic product (TDGDP), percentage of GDP



Notes: List based on limited sample of 75 countries of which TDGDP is 2% or higher.  
 Data corresponds to different years from 2015 to 2019, depending on availability.  
 Source: World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).

Table 1.1: **Destinations with highest TDGDP<sup>a</sup> among countries with available data (USD billion)**

	USD billion	year		USD billion	year
1. USA	597.7	2018	11. Indonesia	41.6	2017
2. Germany	131.0	2015	12. Netherlands	40.2	2018
3. Italy	108.4	2015	13. Sweden	38.9	2018
4. Mexico	106.3	2018	14. Canada	36.2	2018
5. Japan	98.6	2017	15. Thailand	34.9	2018
6. Spain	93.9	2018	16. Viet Nam	30.3	2019
7. United Kingdom	85.3	2017	17. Austria	29.6	2018
8. India	71.3	2018	18. Philippines	27.4	2016
9. Russian Federation	59.9	2017	19. Malaysia	24.8	2019
10. Australia	42.9	2017	20. Macao (China)	24.4	2017

Notes: Data as of October 2021. List based on limited sample of 75 countries.

a) TDGDP: tourism direct gross domestic product.

Source: World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).

### The United States of America, Germany, Italy and Mexico boast some of the largest tourism economies

**Among countries reporting TDGDP data, the United States of America (USA) had the largest tourism economy by far, amounting to USD 598 billion in 2019**, which reflects both its huge domestic market and large revenues from international tourism. The USA also recorded the largest increase in TDGDP between 2008 and 2018 (+USD 186 billion).

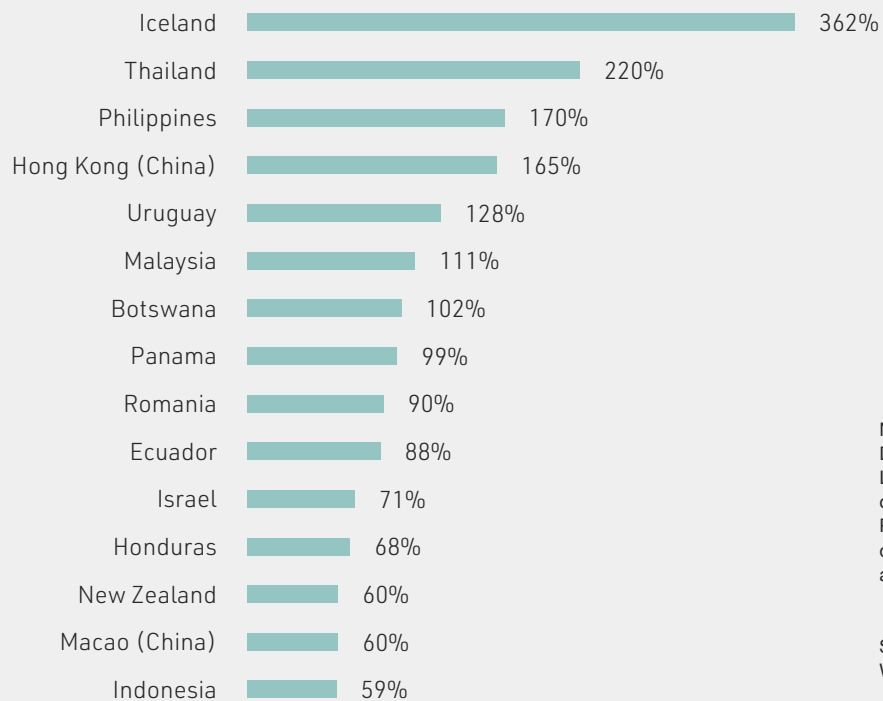
The countries with the next largest TDGDP in US dollar terms are Germany (USD 131 billion), Italy (USD 108 billion), and Mexico (USD 106 billion), all exceeding USD 100 billion.

The 20 destinations with highest percentage TDGDP include seven advanced economies, mostly in Europe, and thirteen emerging economies, mostly in Asia and the Americas. The economic importance of tourism is considerable in Asia Pacific economies like Guam, Viet Nam, the Philippines, Thailand and Malaysia, some of which have enjoyed the largest increase in TDGDP during the last ten years or so.

Several comparatively smaller economies have achieved extraordinary growth in TDGDP in the last decade or so. Iceland recorded the largest increase with +362% in nominal terms over the period 2009–2017. Thailand (+220%) saw its TDGDP increase more than three times between 2010 and 2018. The economic contribution of tourism more than doubled in the Philippines, Hong Kong (China), Uruguay, Malaysia and Botswana during similar time periods (see note in figure 1.2).



Figure 1.2: **Destinations with largest nominal increase in TDGDP, from 2008 to 2019<sup>a</sup> or available years (%)**



**Notes:**

Data as of October 2021.

List based on limited sample of 75 countries with available TDGDP data. Percentage change calculated in US dollars.

a) Time periods range from 5 to 11 years depending on available data.

**Source:**

World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).



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# 04 THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON TOURISM

## Tourism direct gross domestic product (TDGDP) cut by more than half in 2020

Tourism suffered the greatest crisis on record in 2020 following an unprecedented health, social and economic emergency with the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

**International tourist arrivals (overnight visitors) plunged by 73% in 2020** due to a global lockdown, widespread travel restrictions and a massive drop in demand. About **1 billion fewer international arrivals were recorded** that year, compared to 2019.

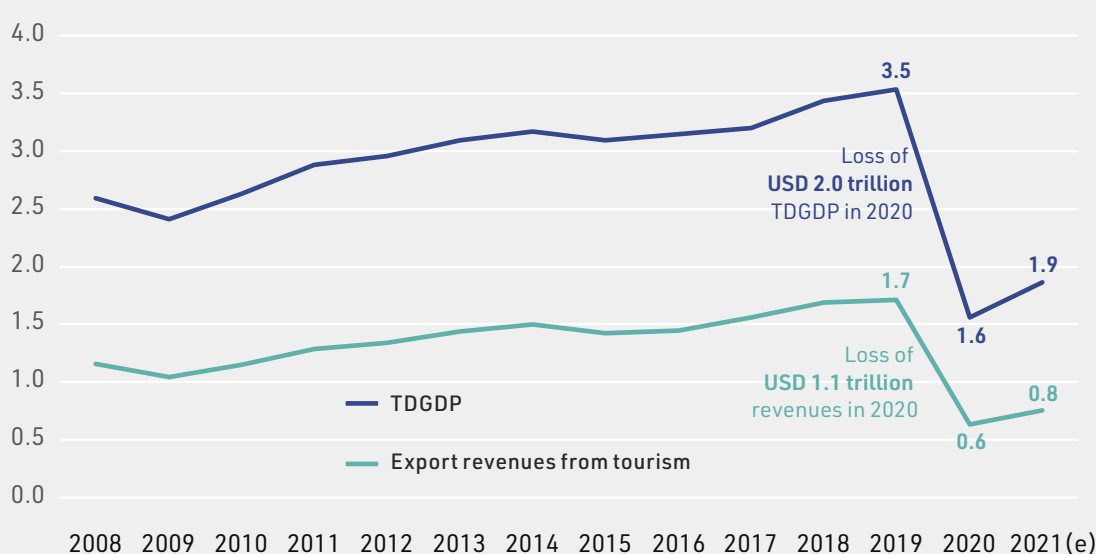
By regions, Asia and the Pacific saw the largest drop with an 84% decrease in arrivals, about 300 million less than in 2019. Arrivals in both Europe and the Americas declined by 68%, representing about 510 and 150 million fewer international tourists respectively. In the Middle East and Africa arrivals fell by 73% and 74% respectively.

The collapse in international travel resulted in a **loss of USD 1.1 trillion in export revenues from tourism, a 63% decline in real terms** compared to pre-crisis year 2019.

**The drop represents 42% of the total decline in international trade recorded in 2020.**<sup>8</sup> This is more than 11 times the loss recorded during the 2009 global economic and financial crisis (in US dollars).

**The COVID-19 pandemic caused an economic loss of some USD 2.0 trillion measured in tourism direct gross domestic product (TDGDP), a decline of over 50% in nominal terms, from 2019.**

Figure 2.1: Tourism direct gross domestic product (TDGDP) and export revenues from tourism (USD trillion)



Notes:  
Data as of October 2021.  
e) Preliminary estimates.

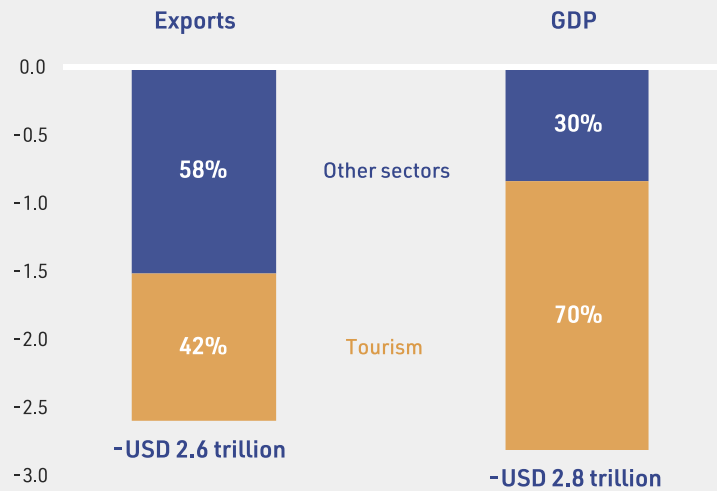
Source:  
World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).

This means that **the COVID-19 pandemic was responsible for about 70% of the world’s loss of GDP in 2020**, which amounted to USD 2.8 trillion.<sup>9</sup>

As a result, **TDGDP as a percentage of world GDP fell from 4.0% in 2019 to 1.8% in 2020**. This 2.2 percentage point (pp) drop is by far the largest ever recorded. During the 2009 economic and financial crisis the drop was limited to 0.1 pp.

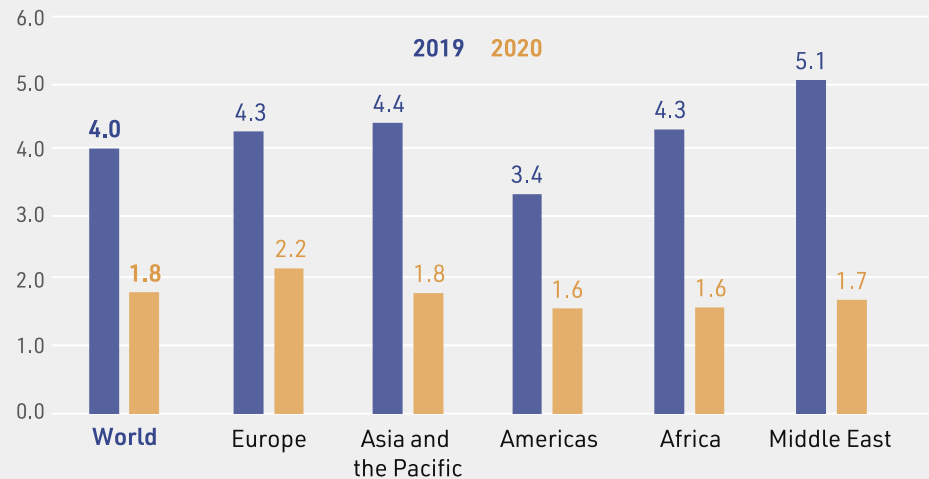
By regions, **the Middle East suffered the largest drop in TDGDP, from 5.1% in 2019 to 1.7% in 2020**, a 3.4 percentage point decline. Africa saw a 2.7 pp loss and Asia and the Pacific a decline of 2.6 pp. Europe and the Americas recorded comparatively smaller decreases.

Figure 2.2:  
**Decline in global exports and GDP, 2020 (USD trillion)**



Sources:  
World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), World Trade Organization (WTO) and International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Figure 2.3:  
**Tourism direct gross domestic product (TDGDP), percentage of GDP**



Note:  
Data as of October 2021

Source:  
World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).



## In 2021, tourism direct GDP expected to rebound moderately to 2% of world GDP

Tourism direct gross domestic product (TDGDP) is expected to climb to 2.0% of global GDP in 2021 according to preliminary estimates, up from 1.8% in 2020.

In US dollar terms, TDGDP could reach USD 1.9 trillion in 2021, up from USD 1.6 trillion in 2020, though far below the USD 3.5 trillion recorded in 2019.

The recovery of domestic tourism in some markets and a moderate rebound in international travel during the northern hemisphere summer season explain this modest improvement, as well as higher average spending per trip.

Domestic travel contributed to a greater extent, given its size and faster recovery. In number of trips, domestic tourism is over six times the size of international tourism and spending by domestic travellers exceeds the earnings generated by inbound travel in many markets.<sup>10</sup>

Growth in domestic travel during 2021 was driven by large pent-up demand and a preference for shorter trips and destinations closer to home, often in rural and coastal settings, as well as the restrictions still in place for international travel.

Table 2.3: **Tourism direct gross domestic product (TDGDP), percentage of GDP**

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021(e)
<b>World</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>2.0</b>
Europe	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.3	2.2	2.6
Asia and the Pacific	5.0	4.9	4.3	4.3	4.4	1.8	1.3
Americas	3.3	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	1.6	2.3
Africa <sup>a</sup>	4.6	4.9	4.1	4.3	4.3	1.6	2.0
Middle East	3.9	3.8	4.5	4.6	5.1	1.7	2.0
<b>EU-27</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>..</b>
<b>G20</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>..</b>

Notes: Data as of October 2021.

a) Data for Africa is considered unreliable due to limited TDGDP data (see Methodology).

e) Preliminary estimates.

Source: World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).

Higher spending per trip on both domestic and international travel contributed to this nominal increase in TDGDP, partly due to large pent-up savings and longer periods of stay, as well as higher transport and accommodation prices.

A small improvement in international travel also helped, underpinned by growing vaccination rates and the lifting of restrictions in many destinations, mostly in Europe and the Americas.

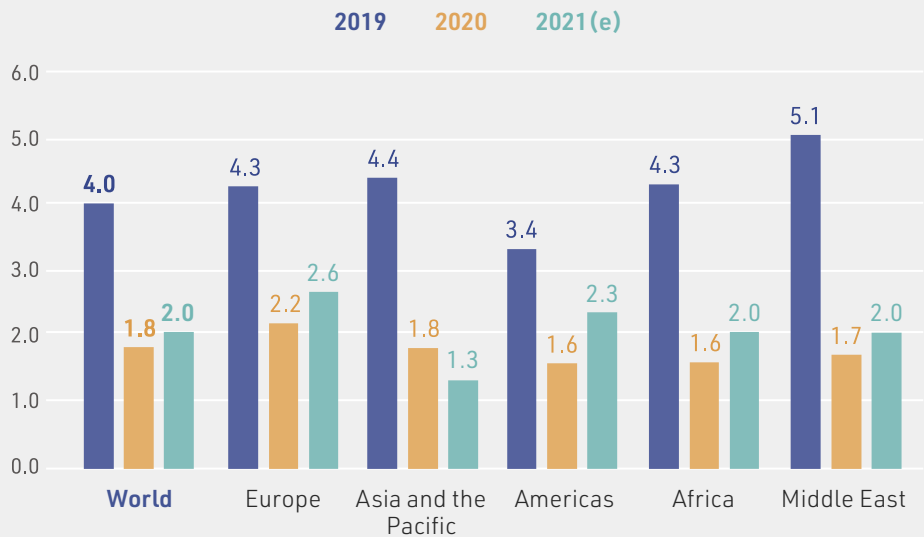
International tourism receipts grew moderately in the third quarter of 2021, with a handful of destinations coming close to, or even exceeding the earnings of 2019.

However, the road to recovery is still long and uncertain. Many challenges remain such as the relatively high infection rates in some countries, the spread of the delta or other coronavirus variants, uneven vaccination rates and the economic strain caused by the pandemic, aggravated in some cases by the recent spike in oil prices.

Between January and September 2021 international arrivals were still 76% below the same period in 2019 and 20% below 2020 levels.

International arrivals are expected to remain 70% to 75% below 2019 levels in 2021, while tourism revenues (including international receipts and passenger transport) could be 55% to 60% lower (in nominal terms).

Figure 2.3: Tourism direct gross domestic product (TDGDP), percentage of GDP



Note: Data as of October 2021.  
e) Preliminary estimates.

Source: World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)

## MOVING FORWARD

The COVID-19 pandemic has had an unprecedented social and economic impact on the tourism sector. It has also underlined the socioeconomic dimension of tourism as a generator of wealth through consumption, export revenues and jobs.

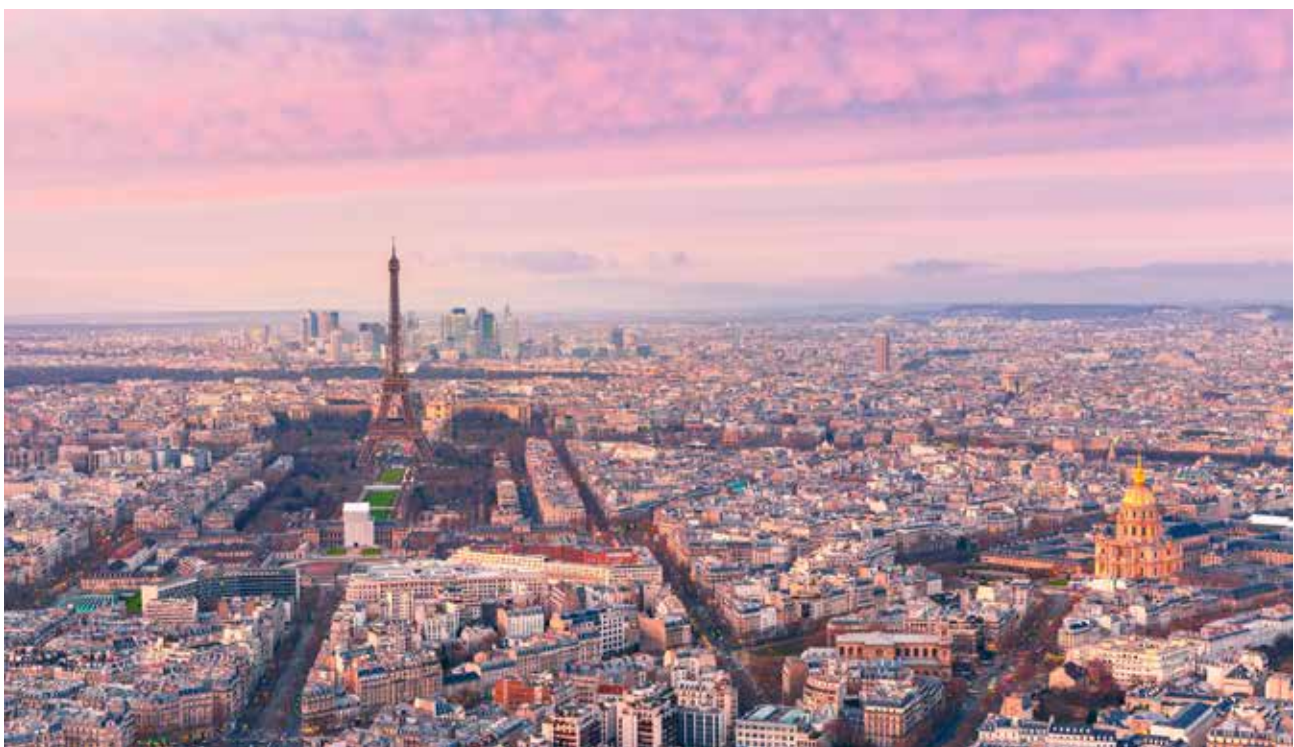
The pandemic has also highlighted the importance of tracking and measuring tourism performance through reliable data, to understand the impact of the crisis, measure the sector's resilience and evaluate its prospects for recovery.

The Tourism Satellite Account (TSA) is the main tool for measuring the economic contribution of tourism. However, the current sample of 75 countries reporting TSA-based tourism direct gross domestic product (TDGDP) is limited. There are still numerous gaps in the historical series of TDGDP reported by countries and data coverage by region remains highly uneven.

Although statistical models can help bridge these gaps and compensate for insufficient data, a more comprehensive understanding of the economic contribution of tourism can be achieved through the implementation of the TSA statistical framework in more countries and territories.

Increased efforts should be made for the collection, compilation and delivery of reliable, comparable and timely TSA data. The use of digital tools can enhance this compilation work, as well as its visibility and understanding.

Reliable data enables policy makers and tourism stakeholders to formulate adequate policies, manage better and plan ahead. Enhanced measurement and collection of data are critical as tourism slowly restarts and becomes a stronger, more innovative, inclusive and sustainable sector.



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A photograph of a traditional Chinese garden. In the foreground, there are lush green bushes. In the middle ground, there are several trees, including a large, well-manicured tree with a rounded top. In the background, there is a traditional Chinese pavilion with a tiled roof and ornate decorations. The sky is a clear blue.

# 05 STATISTICAL ANNEX



Table 2.2: **Tourism direct gross domestic product (TDGDP), percentage of GDP**

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Australia	2.9	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.8	2.9	2.9	3.1	3.0	3.1		
Austria	6.1	6.1	6.5	6.5	6.4	6.4	6.4	6.3	6.3	6.4	6.5	
Bahrain										7.6	6.3	
Belarus							1.8		2.2		2.5	
Bermuda		4.3	5.2	5.7	5.2	5.0	4.6	4.2	4.7	4.8	5.3	5.1
Botswana		3.7							4.9			
Brunei			0.8	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.8	0.8			
Canada	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	1.9	1.9	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.1	
Chile	3.6	3.4	3.2	3.1	3.2							
Colombia	2.6	2.5	2.4	2.2	2.1	2.1	2.1	1.9	2.0	2.0	2.0	
Costa Rica					4.4	4.7	4.6	4.7	5.0			
Côte d'Ivoire					2.4	3.6	4.8	5.2	5.5	5.9	6.3	
Croatia				10.3					11.4			
Czech Republic	2.6	2.7	2.5	2.5	2.7	2.9	2.7	2.8	2.9	2.9		
Denmark	1.7		2.0	1.5	1.5	1.7	1.9	1.9	1.9	2.4		
Ecuador	1.8	1.7	1.7	1.9	1.9	1.9	2.0	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	2.0
Egypt		5.6	6.3		4.8	3.9	4.3					
Estonia	4.2	4.7	4.5	4.4	4.3	4.7	5.4					
Eswatini						0.5						
Fiji	13.0	10.2	11.3	11.5	11.7	12.1	13.0					
Finland				2.4	2.5	2.5	2.4	2.5	2.5	2.6		
France <sup>a</sup>			7.3	7.5	7.6	7.5	7.5	7.3	7.1	7.2	7.4	
Germany			4.2					3.9				
Greece	5.5	4.7	4.9	4.7	4.9	5.9	6.3	6.4	6.3	6.8		
Guam			12.0					11.2	12.1			
Honduras	6.0	6.2	6.1	6.1	6.4	6.5	6.4	6.4	6.4	6.0		
Hong Kong (China)	2.8	3.2	4.3	4.5	4.7	5.0	5.1	5.0	4.7	4.5	4.5	
Hungary	5.3	5.3	5.3	5.5	5.8	6.1	6.3	6.4	6.7	6.7		
Iceland		3.5	3.4	3.6	4.1	4.6	5.1	6.1	8.0	8.6		
India		3.8	3.7	3.7	3.8							
Indonesia	4.7	4.2	4.1	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.1	4.3	4.1	4.1		
Israel	2.8	2.6	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.5	2.6	2.4	2.7	2.8	
Italy			5.7					5.9				
Jamaica	7.1	7.2	6.9	6.5	6.4	6.9	7.5	7.8	8.4	9.1	9.2	
Japan	1.9	1.9	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.8	1.7	1.8	2.0	2.0		
Jordan	6.7		7.0		6.5				6.0			
Kazakhstan	1.5	1.4	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.0	0.9	1.0	1.3	1.4		
Latvia	4.2	3.1	3.1	3.4	4.4	4.2	4.3	4.2	4.5			

(Continues on next page.)

Notes: Data as of October 2020.

Data for some countries corresponds to tourism direct gross value added (TDGVA).

a) Data for France corresponds to internal tourism consumption.

Source: World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).

Table 2.2: **Tourism direct gross domestic product (TDGDP), percentage of GDP** (cont.)

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Lithuania		2.8	2.7	2.8	3.0	3.0	3.1	3.0	3.0	3.1		
Macao (China)			53.9	57.6	57.6	58.6	55.0	46.7	45.8	48.4		
Malaysia	4.9	5.4	5.6	5.6	5.7	6.0	6.3	6.4	6.6	6.4	6.5	6.8
Malta			6.1									
Mauritius			9.6	10.0	9.9	9.0	9.1	9.2	9.2	9.1	9.1	
Mexico	8.3	8.5	8.4	8.2	8.2	8.5	8.5	8.8	8.7	8.7	8.7	
Montenegro		10.0										
Morocco		6.9	7.1	6.9	6.9	6.6	6.7	6.4	6.6	6.8	6.9	
Mozambique								5.2	4.4	4.3	4.7	4.7
Netherlands			3.2	3.2	3.3	3.4	3.7	4.0	4.2	4.3	4.4	
New Zealand	5.7	5.2	5.3	5.2	5.1	5.2	5.1	5.7	6.2	5.8	5.9	
Norway	3.0	3.3	3.2	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.5	3.8	3.6		
Oman	2.4	2.7	2.3	1.9	2.1	2.2	2.2	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.2	2.5
Panama	8.3	9.1	8.9	9.2	9.3	9.1						
Peru				3.6	3.6	3.7	3.8	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	
Philippines	5.6	5.8	6.2	6.8	7.0	7.2	7.5	8.2	8.6			
Poland	2.2	1.6	1.6	1.8	2.1	1.3		1.2				
Portugal							6.5	6.7	6.9	7.7	8.0	
Puerto Rico									3.8	3.6	3.2	3.4
Qatar						1.8	2.1	3.3	4.1	3.8	3.4	
Reunion		2.4	2.3									
Romania				1.7	1.7	1.8	1.9	2.3	2.7	2.8		
Russian Federation				2.9	3.0	3.2	3.3	3.3	3.4	3.8		
Saudi Arabia	2.7	3.3	3.0	2.4	2.2	2.3	2.3	2.7	2.8	2.4	2.2	
Slovakia	2.9	2.6	2.4	2.6	2.7	2.6	2.3	2.7	2.8			
Slovenia		4.8			4.8		4.8	4.9		5.3		
South Africa	3.0	2.9	2.9	2.8	2.9	2.9	3.0	2.7	2.9	2.8		
Spain									6.5	6.6	6.6	
Sweden	6.9	7.1	6.5	6.6	6.8	6.6	6.6	6.5	6.7	6.9	7.0	
Switzerland	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.9	2.9	
Thailand			3.2	3.9	4.4	5.0	4.9	6.1	6.7	7.0	6.9	
Timor-Leste	0.4	1.0	1.1	1.5	1.8	1.7	0.7	1.0	0.5	0.1	0.2	
Uganda									3.7			
United Kingdom	3.4	3.5	3.4	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.6	4.0	3.8	3.2		
USA	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.8	2.8	2.9	2.9	3.0	3.0	3.0	2.9	
Uruguay	5.8	5.6	6.2	7.4	6.8	6.4	6.3	6.5	7.3	8.5	8.1	7.0
Viet Nam						6.1	6.1	6.3	7.0	7.9	8.4	9.2

Notes: Data as of October 2020.

Data for some countries corresponds to tourism direct gross value added (TDGVA).

a) Data for France corresponds to internal tourism consumption.

Source: World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).

Table 2.3: Tourism direct gross domestic product (TDGDP), percentage of GDP

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021 <sup>(e)</sup>
<b>World</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>2.0</b>
Europe	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.3	2.2	2.6
Asia Pacific	5.8	5.4	5.4	5.1	5.1	5.1	4.9	5.0	4.9	4.3	4.3	4.4	1.8	1.3
Americas	2.9	2.9	2.8	2.9	2.9	3.0	3.1	3.3	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	1.6	2.3
Africa <sup>1</sup>	5.2	5.0	4.8	4.5	4.6	4.6	4.8	4.6	4.9	4.1	4.3	4.3	1.6	2.0
Middle East	2.9	3.5	3.5	3.0	3.1	3.1	3.4	3.9	3.8	4.5	4.6	5.1	1.7	2.0
<b>EU-27</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>..</b>
<b>G20</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>..</b>

Notes: Data as of October 2021. || 1) Data for Africa is considered unreliable due to limited TDGDP data (see Methodology). || e) Preliminary estimates.  
Source: World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).

Table 2.4: Tourism direct gross domestic product (TDGDP) (USD billion)

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021 <sup>(e)</sup>
<b>World</b>	<b>2,594</b>	<b>2,409</b>	<b>2,632</b>	<b>2,884</b>	<b>2,961</b>	<b>3,092</b>	<b>3,171</b>	<b>3,096</b>	<b>3,146</b>	<b>3,205</b>	<b>3,437</b>	<b>3,540</b>	<b>1,562</b>	<b>1,868</b>
Europe	924	813	822	915	898	944	966	857	857	916	994	998	495	659
Asia Pacific	938	910	1,061	1,159	1,207	1,231	1,239	1,247	1,277	1,214	1,312	1,385	575	462
Americas	614	576	619	672	703	757	794	832	856	908	945	959	433	666
Africa <sup>1</sup>	80	72	81	86	93	98	107	89	91	81	90	91	32	44
Middle East	49	50	60	60	70	72	79	80	77	93	104	118	35	45
<b>EU-27</b>	<b>682</b>	<b>601</b>	<b>603</b>	<b>657</b>	<b>625</b>	<b>653</b>	<b>674</b>	<b>588</b>	<b>608</b>	<b>658</b>	<b>712</b>	<b>710</b>	<b>386</b>	<b>..</b>
<b>G20</b>	<b>2,296</b>	<b>2,129</b>	<b>2,297</b>	<b>2,498</b>	<b>2,538</b>	<b>2,638</b>	<b>2,700</b>	<b>2,643</b>	<b>2,679</b>	<b>2,690</b>	<b>2,872</b>	<b>2,946</b>	<b>1,349</b>	<b>..</b>

Notes: Data as of October 2021. || 1) Data for Africa is considered unreliable due to limited TDGDP data (see Methodology). || e) Preliminary estimates.  
Source: World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).

Table 2.5: Various tourism indicators (world)

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
TDGDP (USD trillion)	2.59	2.41	2.63	2.88	2.96	3.09	3.17	3.10	3.15	3.20	3.44	3.54	1.56
Int. tourism revenues (USD trillion) <sup>1</sup>	1.16	1.05	1.15	1.29	1.34	1.44	1.50	1.42	1.45	1.56	1.69	1.72	0.64
Int. tourism receipts (USD trillion)	0.97	0.89	0.98	1.09	1.13	1.22	1.27	1.21	1.24	1.33	1.44	1.47	0.53
Int. tourist arrivals (billion)	0.93	0.90	0.96	1.00	1.05	1.10	1.15	1.21	1.25	1.34	1.41	1.47	0.40

Notes: Data as of October 2021. || 1) International tourism revenues consist of international tourism receipts and passenger transport receipts.  
Source: World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).

A photograph of a family of three—a father, a mother, and a young child—playing on a sandy beach. The father is on the left, smiling and holding the child. The mother is on the right, also smiling and holding a small toy. The child is in the center, looking down at the toys on the sand. The background shows a calm sea and a clear sky. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent dark blue rectangle containing the chapter title.

## 06 METHODOLOGY



## Definition of tourism direct gross domestic product (TDGDP)

Tourism direct gross domestic product (TDGDP) is a macroeconomic aggregate that measures the direct contribution of tourism to the economy. It is one of the key indicators used for monitoring progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs),<sup>11</sup> specifically on the economic dimension. TDGDP is the sum of the part of gross value added (at basic prices) generated by all industries in response to internal tourism consumption, plus the amount of net taxes on products and imports included within the value of this expenditure at purchaser prices.

TDGDP is measured using the conceptual framework of Tourism Satellite Accounts (TSA) developed by UNWTO, the UN Statistical Commission and other international organizations, and described in *Tourism Satellite Account: Recommended Methodological Framework, 2008* (TSA: RMF 2008).<sup>12</sup>

TSA: RMF 2008 provides the common conceptual framework for constructing a TSA. With this instrument, it is possible to estimate tourism GDP, to establish the direct contribution of tourism to the economy and to develop more complex and elaborate schemes, building on the intrinsic relationship of the Tourism Satellite Account with the System of National Accounts and the balance of payments.

## Estimates of Global and Regional TDGDP

This Report provides UNWTO estimates on the direct contribution of tourism to global and regional gross domestic product (i.e., impacts that are directly generated by expenditure on accommodation, food and beverage, transport and other tourism-related activities) before and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Estimates of **global and regional TDGDP** are based on:

1. Official data reported by individual countries and territories;
2. Estimates resulting from a multiple regression model for countries with no data; and
3. Estimates for specific years with no data based on estimated nominal change in USD.

The source data used for TDGDP estimates are explained in more detail below:

### 1. For economies reporting TDGDP data:

Official data on TDGDP or tourism direct gross value added (TDGVA), expressed as a percentage of GDP) based on the Tourism Satellite Account (TSA) reported by 75 economies for one or more years between 2008 and 2019.

### 2. For economies with no available TDGDP data:

TDGDP estimates (in US dollar terms) for 2008 to 2020 based on a multiple linear regression model using international tourism revenues (international tourism receipts plus passenger transport receipts) and number of hotel rooms as explanatory variables in order to gauge the economic activity of international (inbound) and domestic tourism respectively.

### 3. For economies with reported data for years other than the year of reference:

Estimated nominal change in TDGDP based on a simple linear model using international tourism revenues as the explanatory variable. This change was used to retro- and extrapolate the values reported by each economy. For reference years between years with reported data, a linear trend was used to estimate the TDGDP.

### 4. Special cases:

Some data reported by countries that do not correspond to tourism direct gross domestic product (TDGDP) or tourism direct gross value added (TDGVA) were excluded or were published with a note. For some countries such as France, data correspond to internal tourism consumption and were not used for the computation of global and regional TDGDP.

**TDGDP aggregates** (estimates) were computed for the world, UNWTO regions and other country groups for the period 2008 to 2020 based on the above. Yearly data for which this method yields negative estimates or for which there is no data to feed the linear models, were discarded. TDGDP was estimated for 2021 based on the most recent tourism data published in the November 2021 issue of the *UNWTO World Tourism Barometer*.<sup>13</sup>

Regional and global aggregates were obtained by adding the reported or estimated TDGDP (in US dollars) for countries within each region. The TDGDP as a percentage of GDP was calculated by dividing the sum per region (or country group) by the total GDP of each region according to data from the October 2021 edition of the World Economic Outlook by IMF.

## Regional data coverage

The availability of data in each geographical group (world, regions, EU-27 and G20) was calculated to serve as an indication of reliability of TDGDP estimates, since these are based on individual country data. This “data coverage” is calculated by adding the GDP of countries for which TDGDP data is available in each group, whether official or estimated, then dividing the sum by the total GDP of each group and multiplying it by 100. The resulting percentage reflects the proportion of countries for which data is available per region and year and is therefore a partial measure of reliability.

For example, 97% data coverage for the world in 2018 means that the global TDGDP estimate for that year is very reliable (from a data coverage point of view) because countries for which TDGDP values are available (official or estimated) represent 97% of world GDP in 2018. A coverage of 80% to 90% indicates good reliability, and 70% to 80% moderate reliability from the point of view of coverage. For percentages below 70%, estimates are considered to be insufficiently reliable. Data coverage for Africa is the lowest (30% – 38%) and therefore considered unreliable.



**Data coverage for tourism direct gross domestic product (TDGDP) estimates**

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
<b>World</b>	<b>97%</b>	<b>97%</b>	<b>97%</b>	<b>97%</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>97%</b>	<b>97%</b>	<b>97%</b>	<b>97%</b>	<b>85%</b>
Africa	34%	37%	36%	35%	33%	31%	30%	31%	31%	38%	38%	38%	29%
Americas	99%	99%	99%	99%	99%	99%	99%	99%	99%	99%	99%	99%	92%
Asia – Pacific	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	89%
Europe	99%	99%	99%	99%	99%	99%	99%	99%	99%	99%	99%	99%	78%
Middle East	74%	76%	80%	80%	78%	78%	80%	83%	84%	82%	81%	82%	66%
<b>EU-27</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>76%</b>
<b>G20</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>89%</b>

Note: Data coverage refers to the GDP of countries for which TDGDP data is available (official or estimated), as a % of total GDP in each group.  
Source: World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).







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## Endnotes:

- 1 Loss in global GDP was USD 2.8 trillion in 2020 according to data from World Economic Outlook, October 2021, International Monetary Fund (retrieved October 2021): [www.imf.org/en/Publications/WEO/weo-database/2021/October](https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/WEO/weo-database/2021/October).
- 2 Decline in world trade amounted to USD 2.6 trillion in 2020, based on merchandise and commercial service exports, according to World Trade Organization data (retrieved October 2021): <https://timeseries.wto.org/>.
- 3 World Tourism Organization (2020), *UNWTO Briefing Note – Tourism and COVID-19, Issue 3. Understanding Domestic Tourism and Seizing its Opportunities*, UNWTO, Madrid, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18111/9789284422111>.  
  
List of 38 SIDS according to UN Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS).
- 4 TDGDP follows the *Tourism Satellite Account (TSA) Recommended Methodological Framework* (2008) developed by UNWTO and the UN Statistics Commission.
- 5 Indirect impacts can represent an important share of the total tourism GDP. A relatively small number of countries reports total tourism GDP (direct and indirect GDP). Among those, the total tourism GDP in Spain represented 12% in 2018.
- 6 While the TSA allows the direct impact of tourism to be estimated, it is also possible to apply economic modelling techniques (like Input–Output analysis) to TSA data to estimate the indirect and induced effects of tourism in an economy. Indirect impacts can be defined as the impacts generated by the intermediate consumption of the producers who are directly in contact with the visitors. Induced impacts are the impacts generated by the production factors (mainly manpower through its demand for goods and services) implemented by these producers who are in contact with the visitors. See: *International Recommendations for Tourism Statistics 2008*, Annex 6, online available at: <https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/book/10.18111/9789211615210>, and *OECD Tourism Trends and Policies 2010, Tourism Satellite Accounts Data for Business and Policy Development*, chapter 3, [https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/industry-and-services/oecd-tourism-trends-and-policies-2010\\_tour-2010-en](https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/industry-and-services/oecd-tourism-trends-and-policies-2010_tour-2010-en)
- 7 In the case of France, the economic contribution of tourism is measured in internal consumption, instead of TDGDP.
- 8 Decline in world trade amounted to USD 2.6 trillion in 2020, based on merchandise and commercial service exports, according to World Trade Organization data (retrieved October 2021): <https://timeseries.wto.org/>.
- 9 Loss in global GDP was USD 2.8 trillion in 2020 according to data from World Economic Outlook, October 2021, International Monetary Fund (retrieved October 2021): [www.imf.org/en/Publications/WEO/weo-database/2021/October](https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/WEO/weo-database/2021/October).
- 10 World Tourism Organization (2020), *UNWTO Briefing Note – Tourism and COVID-19, Issue 3. Understanding Domestic Tourism and Seizing its Opportunities*, UNWTO, Madrid, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18111/9789284422111>
- 11 As the custodian to Sustainable Development Goals indicators 8.9.1 and 12.b.1, UNWTO collects annual data on Tourism Direct GDP (indicator 8.9.1) and on the implementation of international standards for the measurement of the sustainability of tourism (indicator 12.b.1), such as Tourism Satellite Accounts (TSA) and the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA)
- 12 United Nations Statistics Commission, World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), Statistical Office of the European Communities (Eurostat) and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (2010), *Tourism Satellite Account: Recommended Methodological Framework 2008*, Luxembourg, Madrid, New York, Paris (online) available at: <https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/book/10.18111/9789211615203>
- 13 World Tourism Organization (2021), *UNWTO World Tourism Barometer*, volume 19, issue 6, November 2021, UNWTO, Madrid, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18111/wtobarometereng>.





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