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Preface

The release is compiled and published by Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) according to a framework of International Recommendations for Tourism Statistics 2008 (IRTS 2008) developed by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). The IRTS is one element of a System of Tourism Statistics (STS) that provides information for understanding and monitoring the impact of tourism over time and the other element of the STS for South Africa include use of border statistics from National Department of Home Affairs.

This monthly statistical release provides information on South African residents and foreign travellers who entered or left South Africa in January 2023. Specific focus is on foreign tourists who entered the country in the month of January 2023. Tourists are classified by region and country of residence. Details of their mode of travel; purpose of visit; age and sex distribution are also provided.

This release comes at the backdrop of nearly three unprecedented and challenging years for the tourism economy. The tourism sector is hit hard by the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Though the recovery of the sector has begun, it is highly uncertain. The shock has been a reminder of tourism's vital role as an economic and social force for change in the country. Tourism is a key part of a growing services economy, and an important source of job creation, export revenue and domestic value added. Before the pandemic in 2019, on average, tourism directly contributed 7,7% of GDP and 4,7% of direct employment in South Africa.

The March, June, September and December releases include summaries of number of tourists for the current quarter and comparisons with previous periods.



Risenga Maluleke
Statistician-General

1. Highlights of the results

There were 2 746 648 (arrivals, departures and transits) travellers that entered and exited South Africa in January 2023. They were made up of 817 117 South African residents and 1 929 531 foreign travellers. Foreign arrivals, 1 112 677 were made up of 46 272 non-visitors and 1 066 405 visitors. The visitors consisted of 216 730 same-day visitors and 849 675 overnight visitors (tourists).

Tourists

Overseas tourists were 187 189 or 22,0% of all tourists. UK (40 044), Germany (29 363) and USA (26 178) contributed 51,1% to overseas tourists. SADC tourists were 652 392 or 76,8% of all tourists. Zimbabwe (228 634), Lesotho (155 187) and Mozambique (153 476) contributed 82,4% to SADC tourists. 'Other' African countries (non-SADC) tourists were 9 214 or 1,1% of all tourists. Kenya (2 943), Nigeria (1 473) and Uganda (1 032) contributed 59,1% to 'other' African tourists. The country of residence of 880 (0,1%) tourists was classified as unspecified.

Purpose of visit

'Holiday 1' continues to be the main purpose of visit. About 96,8% of all the tourists were in South Africa for holiday purposes.

¹ The holiday category includes tourists who came for vacation, visiting friends and relatives, shopping and other personal reasons.

2. Key findings

2.1 Travellers

2.1.1 Number of travellers

The routine data collected by the Department of Home Affairs’ (DHA) immigration officers at the ports of entry into and out of South Africa shows that a total of 2 746 648 travellers (arrivals, departures and transits) passed through South African ports of entry/exit in January 2023. As presented in Table 1 below, these travellers were made up of 817 117 South African residents and 1 929 531 foreign travellers. A further breakdown of the figures for South African residents indicates that there were 484 945 arrivals, 331 830 departures and 342 travellers in transit. The corresponding volume for foreign arrivals, departures and travellers in transit was 1 112 677, 792 116 and 24 738 respectively.

A comparison between the movements in December 2022 and January 2023 indicates that the volume of arrivals increased for South African residents and foreign travellers. The volume of departures and travellers in transit decreased for both groups of travellers. For South African residents, the volume of arrivals increased by 18,9% (from 407 837 in December 2022 to 484 945 in January 2023). Departures decreased by 40,5% (from 557 365 in December 2022 to 331 830 in January 2023) and transits decreased by 13,9% (from 397 in December 2022 to 342 in January 2023). For foreign travellers, arrivals increased by 14,5% (from 971 425 in December 2022 to 1 112 677 in January 2023), departures decreased by 13,7% (from 918 272 in December 2022 to 792 116 in January 2023), and transits decreased by 7,0% (from 26 591 in December 2022 to 24 738 in January 2023).

A comparison between the movements in January 2022 and January 2023 indicates that the volume of arrivals, departures and travellers in transit increased for both South African residents and foreign travellers. For South African residents, the volume of arrivals increased by 118,6% (from 221 890 in January 2022 to 484 945 in January 2023), departures increased by 86,5% (from 177 890 in January 2022 to 331 830 in January 2023) and transits increased by 119,2% (from 156 in January 2022 to 342 in January 2023). For foreign travellers, arrivals increased by 131,8% (from 480 117 in January 2022 to 1 112 677 in January 2023), departures increased by 155,4% (from 310 131 in January 2022 to 792 116 in January 2023) and transits increased by 115,8% (from 11 463 in January 2022 to 24 738 in January 2023).

Table 1 – Number of South African residents and foreign travellers by travel direction

Travel Direction	January 2022	December 2022	January 2023	% Change Dec 2022 – Jan 2023	% Change Jan 2022 – Jan 2023
Total	1 201 647	2 881 887	2 746 648	-4,7%	128,6%
South African residents	399 936	965 599	817 117	-15,4%	104,3%
Arrivals	221 890	407 837	484 945	18,9%	118,6%
Departures	177 890	557 365	331 830	-40,5%	86,5%
Transits	156	397	342	-13,9%	119,2%
Foreign travellers	801 711	1 916 288	1 929 531	0,7%	140,7%
Arrivals	480 117	971 425	1 112 677	14,5%	131,8%
Departures	310 131	918 272	792 116	-13,7%	155,4%
Transits	11 463	26 591	24 738	-7,0%	115,8%

2.1.2 Mode of travel of travellers

Information presented in Table 2 below shows the number of South African residents and foreign travellers by travel direction and mode of travel. In January 2023, road was the most common mode of travel used by 1 823 360 (66,4%) of the 2 746 648 travellers. Total number of travellers who used air was 868 177 (31,6%). Compared to air and land, a smaller number of travellers, 55 111 (2,0%) used sea into and out of South Africa. Information on arrivals of South African residents shows that 196 397 (40,5%) came by air, 270 957 (55,9%) came by road and 17 591 (3,6%) arrived by sea. For departures, 150 060 (45,2%) used air, 166 476 (50,2%) used road and 15 294 (4,6%) left by sea. All travellers in transit, 342 (100,0%) used air.

In the case of foreign travellers, 236 820 (21,3%) arrived by air, 861 609 (77,4%) came by road and 14 248 (1,3%) arrived by sea. When departing South Africa, 259 820 (32,8%) foreign travellers left by air, 524 318 (66,2%) left by road and 7 978 (1,0%) left by sea. All travellers in transit, 24 738 (100,0%) used air.

Table 2 – Number of South African residents and foreign travellers by travel direction and mode of travel

Travel direction	Total	Air					Road	Sea
		Cape Town	King Shaka	OR Tambo	Other	Total		
Total	2 746 648	280 116	26 463	557 941	3 657	868 177	1 823 360	55 111
South African residents	817 117	73 018	19 306	252 858	1 617	346 799	437 433	32 885
Arrivals	484 945	39 783	11 125	144 640	849	196 397	270 957	17 591
Departures	331 830	33 235	8 181	107 876	768	150 060	166 476	15 294
Transit	342	-	-	342	-	342	-	-
Foreign travellers	1 929 531	207 098	7 157	305 083	2 040	521 378	1 385 927	22 226
Arrivals	1 112 677	102 144	2 639	131 116	921	236 820	861 609	14 248
Departures	792 116	104 793	4 518	149 390	1 119	259 820	524 318	7 978
Transit	24 738	161	-	24 577	-	24 738	-	-
Visitors	1 066 405	99 005	1 969	124 563	650	226 187	833 100	7 118
Same-day	216 730	745	53	12 144	62	13 004	202 739	987
Overnight (Tourists)	849 675	98 260	1 916	112 419	588	213 183	630 361	6 131

2.2 Visitors

Detailed information on the departure of travellers is not available in the movement control system. Data on the purpose of travel and the number of days South African residents intend to spend or spent abroad are not collected by the DHA. It is therefore not possible to categorise South African residents as tourists or non-tourists. However, some data are available on foreign arrivals for this categorisation.

As presented in Table 3 on page 5, in January 2023, 46 272 (4,2%) of foreign arrivals were classified as non-visitors, while 1 066 405 (95,8%) were classified as visitors. Visitors were categorised into three groups:

- i. Arrivals only – comprising visitors who entered the country in January 2023 but did not depart in January 2023 [501 753 (47,1%)];
- ii. Single trips – visitors who came to South Africa once in January 2023 and left in January 2023 [272 074 (25,5%)]; and
- iii. Multiple trips – visitors who came to and left South Africa more than once in January 2023 [292 578 (27,4%)].

Visitors were further grouped as same-day visitors and overnight visitors (tourists). In January 2023, there were 216 730 (20,3%) same-day visitors and 849 675 (79,7%) tourists. Between December 2022 and January 2023, the volume of same-day visitors decreased by 0,6% (from 218 094 in December 2022 to 216 730 in January 2023) and that of tourists increased by 25,4% (from 677 838 in December 2022 to 849 675 in January 2023). Between January 2022 and January 2023, the volume of same-day visitors increased by 312,4% (from 52 551 in January 2022 to 216 730 in January 2023) and that of tourists increased by 125,0% (from 377 651 in January 2022 to 849 675 in January 2023).

Table 2 on page 4 further shows that of the 216 730 same-day visitors, a majority, 202 739 (93,5%) arrived in the country by road, 13 004 (6,0%) flew into the country and 987 (0,5%) arrived by sea. Information on tourists shows that 630 361 (74,2%) used road transport, 213 183 (25,1%) came by air transport and 6 131 (0,7%) arrived by sea transport.

Table 3 – Number of visitors by type of visitor

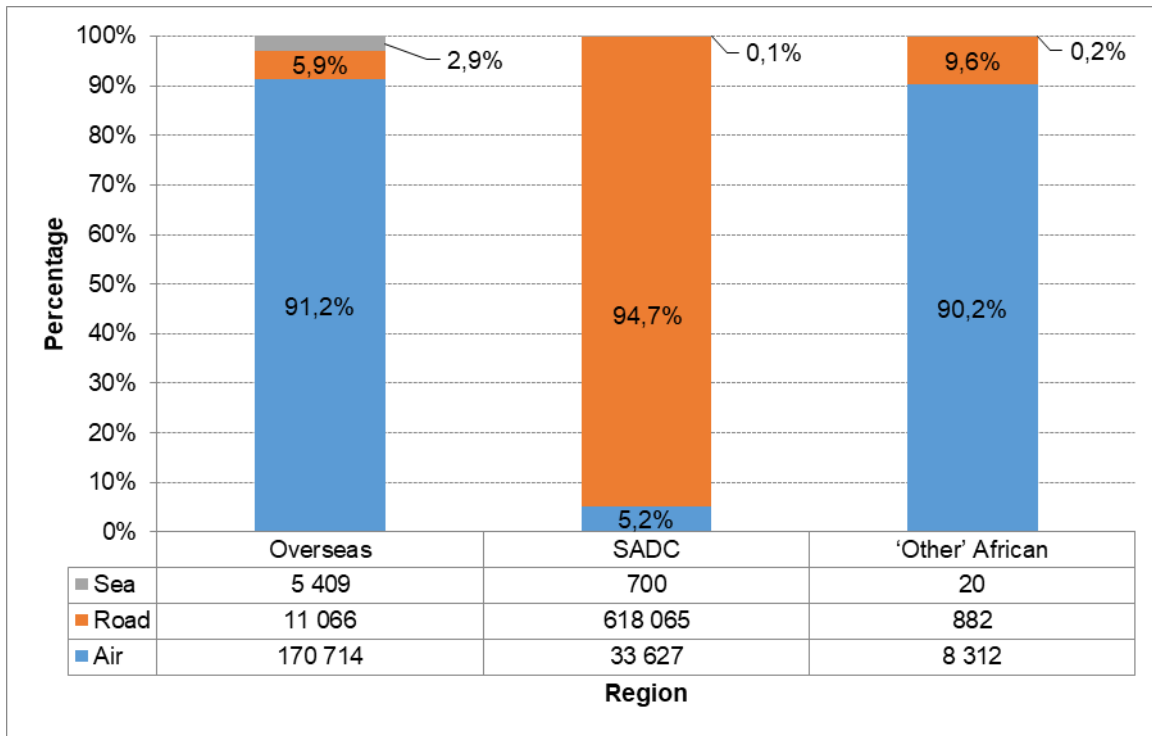
Travel Direction	January 2022	December 2022	January 2023	% Change Dec 2022 – Jan 2023	% Change Jan 2022 – Jan 2023
Foreign arrivals	480 117	971 425	1 112 677	14,5%	131,8%
Non-visitors	49 915	75 493	46 272	-38,7%	-7,3%
Visitors	430 202	895 932	1 066 405	19,0%	147,9%
Visitors	430 202	895 932	1 066 405	19,0%	147,9%
Arrivals only	220 130	301 124	501 753	66,6%	127,9%
Single trips	103 519	312 576	272 074	-13,0%	162,8%
Multiple trips	106 553	282 232	292 578	3,7%	174,6%
Visitors	430 202	895 932	1 066 405	19,0%	147,9%
Same-day	52 551	218 094	216 730	-0,6%	312,4%
Overnight (Tourists)	377 651	677 838	849 675	25,4%	125,0%

2.3 Tourists

2.3.1 Mode of travel of tourists

Tourists are categorised by their countries of residence and regions. Information on the specific region and country of residence of tourists and the mode of travel used to enter South Africa is provided in Annexure A on pages 12 to 15. As shown in Figure 1 on page 6, 170 714 (91,2%) overseas tourists arrived in the country by air, whilst 11 066 (5,9%) came in by road and 5 409 (2,9%) arrived by sea. Tourists from the Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries, on the other hand, came predominantly by road, 618 065 (94,7%), whilst 33 627 (5,2%) came by air and 700 (0,1%) arrived by sea. The number of tourists who came into South Africa by air from 'other' African countries was 8 312 (90,2%); while 882 (9,6%) used road transport and 20 (0,2%) used sea.

Figure 1 – Percentage distribution of tourists by region of residence and mode of travel, January 2023

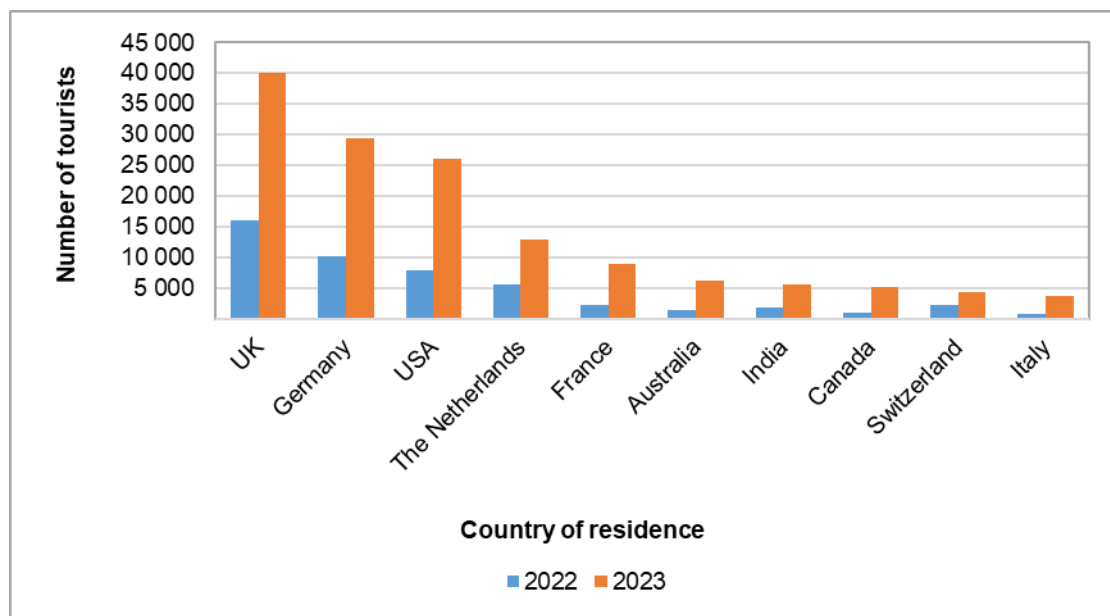


2.3.2 Regional and national distribution

In January 2023, the distribution of overseas tourists was as follows: Europe, 128 898 (68,9%); North America, 31 421 (16,8%); Asia, 12 467 (6,7%); Australasia, 7 452 (4,0%); Central and South America, 3 689 (2,0%) and The Middle East, 3 262 (1,7%).

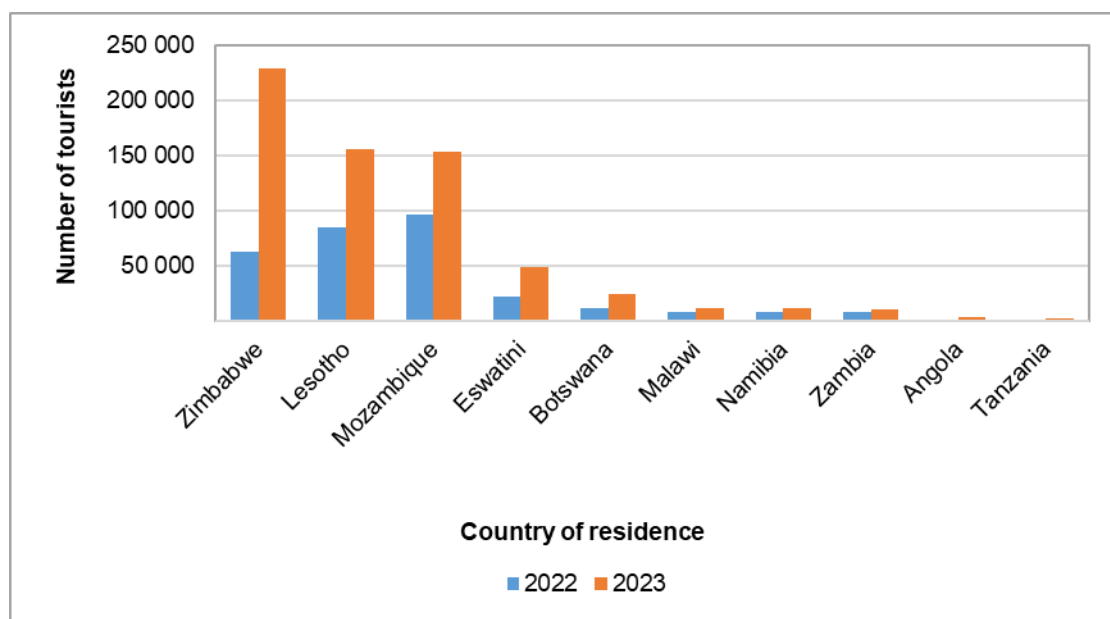
Figure 2 on page 7 indicates that the ten leading overseas countries in terms of the number of tourists visiting South Africa in January 2023 were: United Kingdom (UK), 40 044 (21,4%); Germany, 29 363 (15,7%); United States of America (USA), 26 178 (14,0%); The Netherlands, 12 930 (6,9%); France, 9 016 (4,8%); Australia, 6 145 (3,3%); India, 5 565 (3,0%); Canada, 5 243 (2,8%); Switzerland, 4 386 (2,3%) and Italy, 3 677 (2,0%). Tourists from these ten countries constituted 76,2% of all tourists from overseas countries. A comparison of movements in the ten leading countries between January 2022 and January 2023 shows that the number of tourists increased for all ten leading countries. Canada had the highest increase of 386,4% (from 1 078 tourists in January 2022 to 5 243 tourists in January 2023).

Figure 2 – Number of tourists from the ten leading overseas countries in January 2022 and January 2023



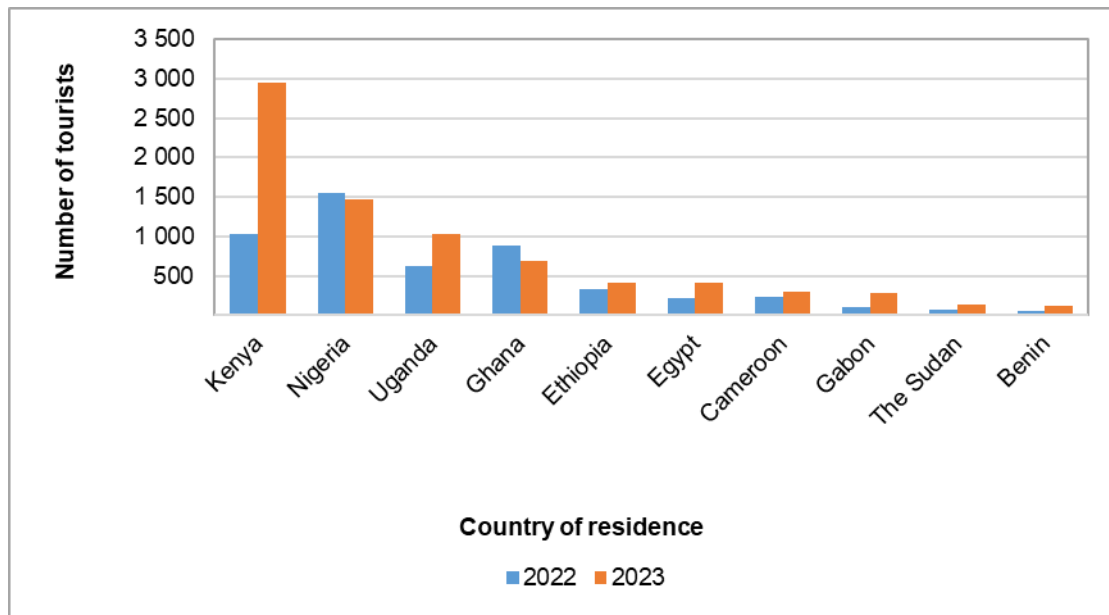
Virtually, most tourists from Africa, 652 392 (98,6%), came from SADC countries. The distribution of the remaining tourists from Africa was as follows: East and Central Africa, 5 469 (0,8%); West Africa, 2 869 (0,4%) and North Africa 876 (0,1%). Ten leading SADC countries in terms of the number of tourists visiting South Africa in January 2023 were: Zimbabwe, 228 634 (35,0%); Lesotho, 155 187 (23,8%); Mozambique, 153 476 (23,5%); Eswatini, 48 766 (7,5%); Botswana, 24 273 (3,7%); Malawi, 11 671 (1,8%); Namibia, 11 482 (1,8%); Zambia, 10 300 (1,6%); Angola, 3 151 (0,5%) and Tanzania, 2 446 (0,4%) (see Figure 3 below). Tourists from these ten countries constituted 99,5% of all tourists from the SADC countries. A comparison of movements in the ten leading countries between January 2022 and January 2023 shows that the number of tourists increased for all ten leading countries. Zimbabwe showed the highest increase of 264,0% (from 62 809 tourists in January 2022 to 228 634 in January 2023).

Figure 3 – Number of tourists from the ten leading Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries in January 2022 and January 2023



The ten leading countries in terms of the number of tourists visiting South Africa in January 2023 from 'other' African countries, as shown in Figure 4 below, were: Kenya, 2 943 (31,9%); Nigeria, 1 473 (16,0%); Uganda, 1 032 (11,2%); Ghana, 691 (7,5%); Ethiopia, 417 (4,5%); Egypt, 407 (4,4%); Cameroon, 297 (3,2%); Gabon, 279 (3,0%); The Sudan, 129 (1,4%) and Benin, 122 (1,3%). Tourists from these ten countries constituted 84,5% of all tourists from 'other' African countries. A comparison between movements in January 2022 and January 2023 shows that the number of tourists increased for eight of ten leading countries. Kenya showed the highest increase of 185,5% (from 1 031 tourists in January 2022 to 2 943 in January 2023).

Figure 4 – Number of tourists from the ten leading 'other' African countries in January 2022 and January 2023



2.3.3 Purpose of visit

Table 4 on page 9, shows the number of tourists by region and sub-region. Detailed data on country of residence and purpose of visit is presented in Annexure B on pages 16 to 19. It is observed that in January 2023, the majority of tourists, 822 470 (96,8%), were in South Africa for holiday compared to 19 642 (2,3%); 7 220 (0,8%) and 343 (less than 0,1%) who were in South Africa for business, study and medical treatment respectively.

Within the overseas regions, Australasia, 99,1% (7 388) had the highest proportion of tourists who came for holiday followed by Europe, 98,1% (126 415); North America, 98,0% (30 802); Central and South America, 95,9% (3 539); The Middle East, 95,9% (3 127) and Asia, 92,6% (11 549).

Asia, 3,8% (468) had the highest proportion of tourists who came to South Africa for business, followed by The Middle East, 2,0% (65); Central and South America, 2,0% (73); North America, 1,3% (399); Europe, 1,3% (1 618) and Australasia, 0,6% (41).

Asia, 3,5% (441) had the highest proportion of tourists who came to study, followed by The Middle East, 2,1% (70); Central and South America, 2,1% (76); North America, 0,7% (207); Europe, 0,6% (836) and Australasia, 0,3% (23).

Asia, 0,1% (9) had a higher proportion of tourists who came for medical treatment. North America (13), Central and South America (1) and Europe (29) had less than 0,1% of medical treatment tourists, whereas The Middle East and Australasia had none.

Majority of African tourists, 638 828 (96,6%) came to South Africa for holiday. However, the following differences in terms of reasons for travel were observed between tourists from the SADC countries and 'other' African countries, namely:

- Holiday makers constituted 96,7% (630 867) of tourists from SADC countries compared to 86,4% (7 961) from 'other' African countries. Information on the regions of 'other' African countries shows that 87,1% (4 766) of tourists from East and Central Africa were on holiday, followed by tourists from West Africa, 86,9% (2 492) and those from North Africa, 80,3% (703).
- Business persons constituted 2,5% (16 593) of tourists from SADC countries compared to 3,6% (331) from 'other' African countries. North Africa, 5,7% (50) had the highest proportion of tourists who came to South Africa for business purposes, followed by West Africa, 3,5% (99) and East and Central Africa, 3,3% (182).
- Students constituted 0,7% (4 681) of tourists from SADC countries compared with 9,6% (885) from 'other' African countries. North Africa, 13,9% (122) had the highest proportion of tourists who came to South Africa for study purposes, followed by West Africa, 9,4% (271) and East and Central Africa, 9,0% (492).
- Tourists who came for medical treatment constituted less than 0,1% (251) of tourists from SADC countries, while those from 'other' African countries constituted 0,4% (37). East and Central Africa, 0,5% (29) had the highest proportion of tourists who came for medical treatment, followed by West Africa, 0,2% (7) and North Africa, 0,1% (1).

Table 4 – Number of tourists by region of residence and purpose of visit

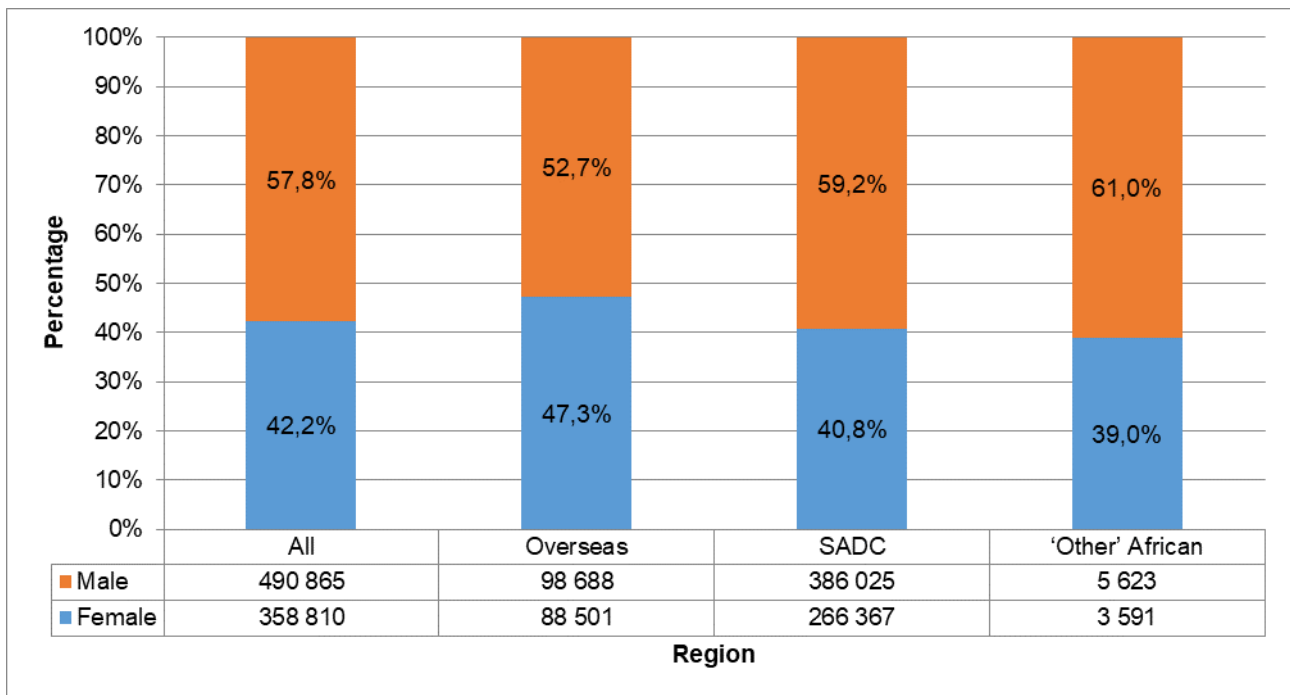
Region of residence	January 2023	Business	Holiday	Study	Medical treatment
Total	849 675	19 642	822 470	7 220	343
Overseas	187 189	2 664	182 820	1 653	52
Europe	128 898	1 618	126 415	836	29
North America	31 421	399	30 802	207	13
Central and South America	3 689	73	3 539	76	1
Australasia	7 452	41	7 388	23	-
Middle East	3 262	65	3 127	70	-
Asia	12 467	468	11 549	441	9
Africa	661 606	16 924	638 828	5 566	288
SADC	652 392	16 593	630 867	4 681	251
'Other' African	9 214	331	7 961	885	37
East and Central Africa	5 469	182	4 766	492	29
West Africa	2 869	99	2 492	271	7
North Africa	876	50	703	122	1

2.3.4 Sex and age distribution

Sex

Figure 5 below, shows that there were more male [490 865 (57,8%)] than female [358 810 (42,2%)] tourists. Male tourists constituted the majority of tourists for all three regions, 'other' African countries [5 623 (61,0%)], SADC [386 025 (59,2%)] and overseas countries [98 688 (52,7%)]. Similarly, the largest portion of female tourists was from overseas [88 501 (47,3%)], followed by SADC [266 367 (40,8%)] and the lowest from 'other' African countries [3 591 (39,0%)].

Figure 5 – Percentage distribution of tourists by region of residence and sex, January 2023

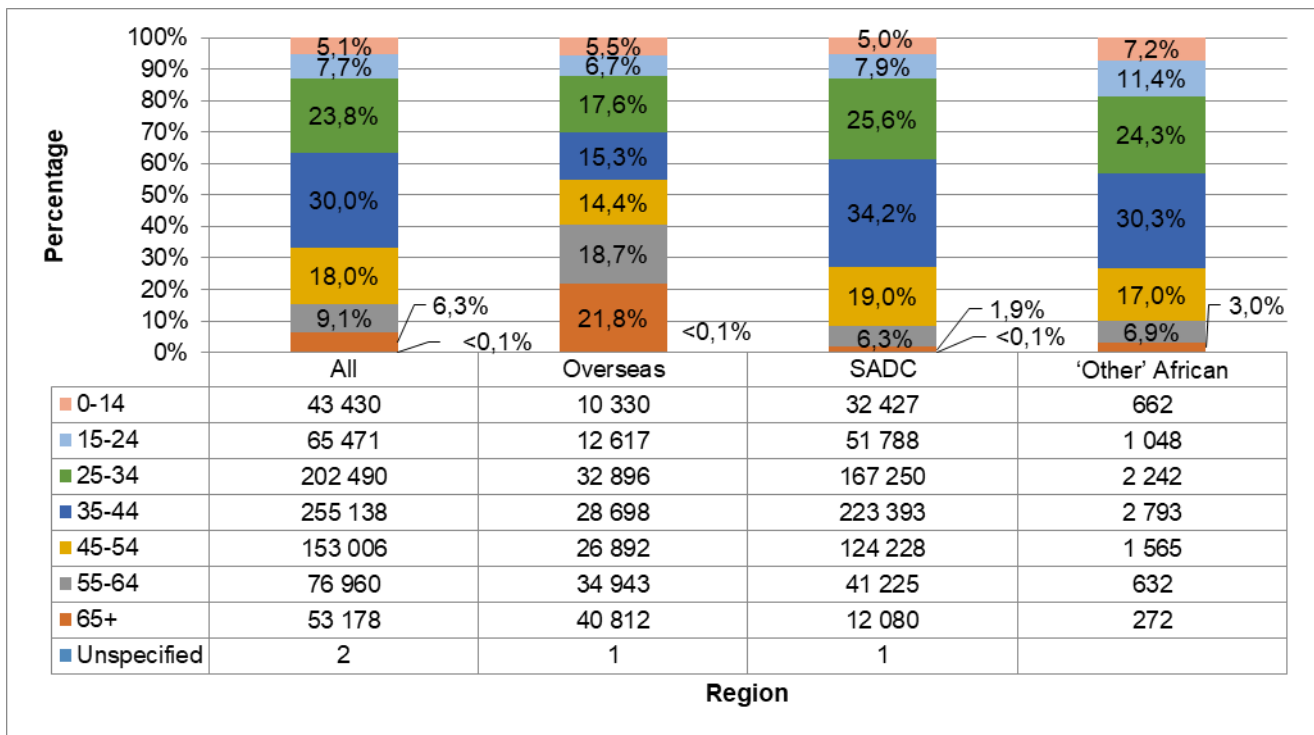


Age

The age distribution indicates that out of all tourists, [43 430 (5,1%)] were aged less than 15 years; [65 471 (7,7%)] were aged between 15 and 24 years; [202 490 (23,8%)] were aged between 25 and 34 years; [255 138 (30,0%)] were aged between 35 and 44 years; [153 006 (18,0%)] were aged between 45 and 54 years; [76 960 (9,1%)] were aged between 55 and 64 years; [53 178 (6,3%)] were aged 65 years and above and [2 (less than 0,1%)] did not specify age. (see Figure 6 below).

Taking the region of residence into consideration, the results show that the highest proportion of tourists from SADC countries [223 393 (34,2%)] and those from 'other' African countries [2 793 (30,3%)] were aged between 35 and 44 years, whereas overseas countries [40 812 (21,8%)] were aged 65 years and older. The second highest proportion of tourists from SADC countries [167 250 (25,6%)] and those from 'other' African countries [2 242 (24,3%)] were aged between 25 and 34 years, whereas those from overseas countries [34 943 (18,7%)] were aged between 55 and 64 years. The median ages of tourists from overseas, SADC and 'other' African countries were 48, 38 and 37 years respectively. The proportion of tourists aged less than 15 years was higher among tourists from 'other' African countries, 7,2% (662) compared to those from overseas countries, 5,5% (10 330) and to those from SADC countries, 5,0% (32 427).

Figure 6 – Percentage distribution of tourists by region of residence and age, January 2023



3. Annexures

3.1 Annexure A – Number of tourists by country of residence and mode of travel, January 2023

Country of residence	January		January 2023						
	2022	2023	Air					Road	Sea
			Cape town	King Shaka	OR Tambo	Other	Total		
Total	377 651	849 675	98 260	1 916	112 419	588	213 183	630 361	6 131
Overseas	64 714	187 189	91 563	1 696	76 978	477	170 714	11 066	5 409
Europe	47 528	128 898	70 515	1 012	47 225	279	119 031	6 912	2 955
Austria	799	2 572	1 686	42	663	-	2 391	102	79
Belgium	1 393	3 418	1 741	8	1 393	6	3 148	257	13
Denmark	774	2 242	802	16	1 308	12	2 138	95	9
France	2 314	9 016	3 540	24	4 668	13	8 245	722	49
Germany	10 136	29 363	18 415	192	7 786	90	26 483	1 273	1 607
Ireland	1 080	2 667	1 526	36	980	1	2 543	99	25
Italy	821	3 677	2 030	35	1 349	12	3 426	230	21
Portugal	843	1 771	383	10	683	3	1 079	690	2
Russian Federation	1 026	2 947	1 395	27	1 255	58	2 735	196	16
Spain	615	1 804	752	10	823	4	1 589	199	16
Sweden	968	3 445	2 066	21	1 212	3	3 302	140	3
Switzerland	2 289	4 386	2 526	22	1 538	9	4 095	250	41
The Netherlands	5 608	12 930	8 012	45	3 794	3	11 854	1 032	44
UK	16 086	40 044	21 435	390	16 107	40	37 972	1 194	878
Other	2 776	8 616	4 206	134	3 666	25	8 031	433	152
North America	8 939	31 421	14 352	103	13 508	142	28 105	1 271	2 045
Canada	1 078	5 243	2 294	21	2 383	26	4 724	254	265
USA	7 861	26 178	12 058	82	11 125	116	23 381	1 017	1 780
Central and South America	1 065	3 689	1 505	19	1 816	5	3 345	265	79
Argentina	100	536	272	8	234	-	514	21	1
Brazil	584	1 847	843	5	815	3	1 666	158	23
Mexico	73	310	86	-	174	-	260	18	32
Other	308	996	304	6	593	2	905	68	23

Annexure A – Number of tourists by country of residence and mode of travel, January 2023 (continued)

Country of residence	January		January 2023						
	2022	2023	Air					Road	Sea
			Cape town	King Shaka	OR Tambo	Other	Total		
Australasia	1 621	7 452	1 335	153	5 402	25	6 915	424	113
Australia	1 459	6 145	1 064	108	4 535	21	5 728	332	85
New Zealand	161	1 301	269	45	865	4	1 183	90	28
Other	1	6	2	-	2	-	4	2	-
Middle East	823	3 262	1 242	45	1 733	2	3 022	105	135
Israel	391	1 862	502	14	1 157	2	1 675	72	115
Jordan	44	168	52	4	98	-	154	14	-
Saudi Arabia	153	652	452	17	180	-	649	-	3
Other	235	580	236	10	298	-	544	19	17
Asia	4 738	12 467	2 614	364	7 294	24	10 296	2 089	82
Bangladesh	612	703	128	63	378	-	569	132	2
China	410	1 174	279	15	669	-	963	203	8
India	1 863	5 565	895	116	3 597	18	4 626	923	16
Japan	144	653	127	40	443	1	611	41	1
Malaysia	51	259	69	14	156	-	239	18	2
Pakistan	769	1 024	94	51	505	1	651	372	1
Philippines	127	418	90	11	230	1	332	59	27
Singapore	21	275	129	1	136	-	266	3	6
South Korea	255	987	391	5	459	2	857	127	3
Taiwan	71	363	86	26	193	-	305	58	-
Other	415	1 046	326	22	528	1	877	153	16
Africa	312 440	661 606	6 605	218	35 006	110	41 939	618 947	720
SADC	306 645	652 392	5 038	194	28 292	103	33 627	618 065	700
Angola	1 315	3 151	1 189	-	1 496	2	2 687	464	-
Botswana	11 834	24 273	249	1	1 773	22	2 045	22 198	30
DRC	1 188	1 340	36	-	1 132	1	1 169	171	-
Eswatini	21 854	48 766	8	-	502	4	514	48 227	25

Annexure A – Number of tourists by country of residence and mode of travel, January 2023 (continued)

Country of residence	January		January 2023						
	2022	2023	Air					Road	Sea
			Cape town	King Shaka	OR Tambo	Other	Total		
Lesotho	84 960	155 187	14	3	377	1	395	154 749	43
Madagascar	17	197	23	-	156	2	181	14	2
Malawi	8 216	11 671	40	1	1 410	3	1 454	10 208	9
Mauritius	335	1 108	141	2	869	-	1 012	87	9
Mozambique	96 511	153 476	411	6	2 979	3	3 399	149 588	489
Namibia	8 376	11 482	1 237	-	1 495	13	2 745	8 732	5
Seychelles	36	361	3	-	338	-	341	20	-
Tanzania	1 556	2 446	186	-	1 324	-	1 510	928	8
Zambia	7 638	10 300	32	1	3 098	42	3 173	7 119	8
Zimbabwe	62 809	228 634	1 469	180	11 343	10	13 002	215 560	72
'Other' African	5 795	9 214	1 567	24	6 714	7	8 312	882	20
East and Central Africa	2 601	5 469	1 104	6	3 853	3	4 966	491	12
Burundi	45	84	29	-	51	-	80	4	-
Cameroon	226	297	53	-	228	2	283	14	-
Central African Republic	3	16	-	-	16	-	16	-	-
Chad	21	24	1	-	23	-	24	-	-
Comoros	9	24	2	-	22	-	24	-	-
Congo	102	120	16	-	97	-	113	7	-
Djibouti	3	10	2	-	8	-	10	-	-
Equatorial Guinea	8	19	3	-	15	-	18	1	-
Eritrea	14	40	1	-	34	-	35	5	-
Ethiopia	335	417	46	1	303	-	350	67	-
Gabon	102	279	31	-	246	-	277	2	-
Kenya	1 031	2 943	753	4	1 886	-	2 643	290	10
Réunion	-	6	6	-	-	-	6	-	-
Rwanda	41	88	8	-	71	1	80	8	-
São Tomé and Príncipe	2	11	1	-	9	-	10	1	-
Somalia	38	59	10	-	43	-	53	6	-
Uganda	621	1 032	142	1	801	-	944	86	2

Annexure A – Number of tourists by country of residence and mode of travel, January 2023 (concluded)

Country of residence	January		January 2023						
	2022	2023	Air					Road	Sea
			Cape town	King Shaka	OR Tambo	Other	Total		
West Africa	2 772	2 869	254	1	2 237	1	2 493	369	7
Benin	55	122	14	-	102	-	116	6	-
Burkina Faso	16	41	5	-	34	-	39	1	1
Cape Verde Island	4	31	5	-	20	-	25	6	-
Côte d'Ivoire	51	117	7	-	106	1	114	2	1
Gambia	10	30	1	-	26	-	27	3	-
Ghana	886	691	53	-	575	-	628	62	1
Guinea	49	114	8	-	30	-	38	76	-
Guinea-Bissau	2	10	-	-	8	-	8	2	-
Liberia	24	24	2	-	21	-	23	1	-
Mali	32	45	3	-	19	-	22	23	-
Mauritania	1	7	3	-	4	-	7	-	-
Niger	10	17	4	-	13	-	17	-	-
Nigeria	1 548	1 473	133	1	1 157	-	1 291	179	3
Saint Helena	-	1	-	-	1	-	1	-	-
Senegal	46	89	12	-	75	-	87	2	-
Sierra Leone	31	35	1	-	30	-	31	4	-
Togo	7	22	3	-	16	-	19	2	1
North Africa	422	876	209	17	624	3	853	22	1
Algeria	30	61	6	-	52	-	58	3	-
Egypt	209	407	74	11	308	3	396	11	-
Libya	23	53	10	1	38	-	49	4	-
Morocco	17	87	35	1	51	-	87	-	-
South Sudan	25	55	13	-	42	-	55	-	-
The Sudan	67	129	47	2	76	-	125	4	-
Tunisia	51	84	24	2	57	-	83	-	1
Unspecified	497	880	92	2	435	1	530	348	2

3.2 Annexure B – Number of tourists by country of residence and purpose of visit, January 2023

Country of residence	January			Purpose of visit (January 2023)			
	2022	2023	% change 2022–2023	Business	Holiday	Study	Medical treatment
Total	377 651	849 675	125,0%	19 642	822 470	7 220	343
Overseas	64 714	187 189	189,3%	2 664	182 820	1 653	52
Europe	47 528	128 898	171,2%	1 618	126 415	836	29
Austria	799	2 572	221,9%	13	2 548	11	-
Belgium	1 393	3 418	145,4%	41	3 345	31	1
Denmark	774	2 242	189,7%	35	2 200	6	1
France	2 314	9 016	289,6%	146	8 630	238	2
Germany	10 136	29 363	189,7%	250	28 956	157	-
Ireland	1 080	2 667	146,9%	41	2 601	25	-
Italy	821	3 677	347,9%	70	3 561	46	-
Portugal	843	1 771	110,1%	28	1 727	14	2
Russian Federation	1 026	2 947	187,2%	24	2 918	5	-
Spain	615	1 804	193,3%	65	1 713	25	1
Sweden	968	3 445	255,9%	55	3 376	14	-
Switzerland	2 289	4 386	91,6%	30	4 322	34	-
The Netherlands	5 608	12 930	130,6%	127	12 749	49	5
UK	16 086	40 044	148,9%	530	39 390	112	12
Other	2 776	8 616	210,4%	163	8 379	69	5
North America	8 939	31 421	251,5%	399	30 802	207	13
Canada	1 078	5 243	386,4%	67	5 153	19	4
USA	7 861	26 178	233,0%	332	25 649	188	9
Central and South America	1 065	3 689	246,4%	73	3 539	76	1
Argentina	100	536	436,0%	8	519	9	-
Brazil	584	1 847	216,3%	35	1 777	35	-
Mexico	73	310	324,7%	6	295	9	-
Other	308	996	223,4%	24	948	23	1

Annexure B – Number of tourists by country of residence and purpose of visit, January 2023 (continued)

Country of residence	January			Purpose of visit (January 2023)			
	2022	2023	% change 2022–2023	Business	Holiday	Study	Medical treatment
Australasia	1 621	7 452	359,7%	41	7 388	23	-
Australia	1 459	6 145	321,2%	34	6 091	20	-
New Zealand	161	1 301	708,1%	7	1 291	3	-
Other	1	6	500,0%	-	6	-	-
Middle East	823	3 262	296,4%	65	3 127	70	-
Israel	391	1 862	376,2%	31	1 823	8	-
Jordan	44	168	281,8%	6	161	1	-
Saudi Arabia	153	652	326,1%	5	625	22	-
Other	235	580	146,8%	23	518	39	-
Asia	4 738	12 467	163,1%	468	11 549	441	9
Bangladesh	612	703	14,9%	12	681	10	-
China	410	1 174	186,3%	69	1 081	24	-
India	1 863	5 565	198,7%	261	5 089	211	4
Japan	144	653	353,5%	28	606	19	-
Malaysia	51	259	407,8%	14	232	13	-
Pakistan	769	1 024	33,2%	20	977	26	1
Philippines	127	418	229,1%	8	393	16	1
Singapore	21	275	1209,5%	7	266	2	-
South Korea	255	987	287,1%	14	924	49	-
Taiwan	71	363	411,3%	3	345	15	-
Other	415	1 046	152,0%	32	955	56	3
Africa	312 440	661 606	111,8%	16 924	638 828	5 566	288
SADC	306 645	652 392	112,8%	16 593	630 867	4 681	251
Angola	1 315	3 151	139,6%	41	2 880	210	20
Botswana	11 834	24 273	105,1%	741	23 012	413	107
DRC	1 188	1 340	12,8%	23	1 182	132	3
Eswatini	21 854	48 766	123,1%	2 380	46 147	224	15

Annexure B – Number of tourists by country of residence and purpose of visit, January 2023 (continued)

Country of residence	January			Purpose of visit (January 2023)			
	2022	2023	% change 2022–2023	Business	Holiday	Study	Medical treatment
Lesotho	84 960	155 187	82,7%	1 057	152 782	1 337	11
Madagascar	17	197	1058,8%	4	183	8	2
Malawi	8 216	11 671	42,1%	191	11 327	152	1
Mauritius	335	1 108	230,7%	5	1 076	27	-
Mozambique	96 511	153 476	59,0%	4 314	149 008	136	18
Namibia	8 376	11 482	37,1%	3 109	7 683	672	18
Seychelles	36	361	902,8%	-	359	2	-
Tanzania	1 556	2 446	57,2%	54	2 234	147	11
Zambia	7 638	10 300	34,9%	2 264	7 840	188	8
Zimbabwe	62 809	228 634	264,0%	2 410	225 154	1 033	37
'Other' African	5 795	9 214	59,0%	331	7 961	885	37
East and Central Africa	2 601	5 469	110,3%	182	4 766	492	29
Burundi	45	84	86,7%	6	60	18	-
Cameroon	226	297	31,4%	27	229	31	10
Central African Republic	3	16	433,3%	-	15	-	1
Chad	21	24	14,3%	1	20	2	1
Comoros	9	24	166,7%	-	13	11	-
Congo	102	120	17,6%	4	89	24	3
Djibouti	3	10	233,3%	2	7	1	-
Equatorial Guinea	8	19	137,5%	-	14	5	-
Eritrea	14	40	185,7%	-	40	-	-
Ethiopia	335	417	24,5%	12	378	25	2
Gabon	102	279	173,5%	-	242	36	1
Kenya	1 031	2 943	185,5%	85	2 660	193	5
Réunion	-	6	-	-	6	-	-
Rwanda	41	88	114,6%	1	79	8	-
São Tomé and Príncipe	2	11	450,0%	1	10	-	-
Somalia	38	59	55,3%	1	50	7	1
Uganda	621	1 032	66,2%	42	854	131	5

Annexure B – Number of tourists by country of residence and purpose of visit, January 2023 (concluded)

Country of residence	January			Purpose of visit (January 2023)			
	2022	2023	% change 2022–2023	Business	Holiday	Study	Medical treatment
West Africa	2 772	2 869	3,5%	99	2 492	271	7
Benin	55	122	121,8%	5	110	4	3
Burkina Faso	16	41	156,3%	2	29	10	-
Cape Verde Island	4	31	675,0%	2	29	-	-
Côte d'Ivoire	51	117	129,4%	7	97	12	1
Gambia	10	30	200,0%	2	27	1	-
Ghana	886	691	-22,0%	33	606	52	-
Guinea	49	114	132,7%	-	108	6	-
Guinea-Bissau	2	10	400,0%	-	10	-	-
Liberia	24	24	0,0%	1	17	6	-
Mali	32	45	40,6%	2	42	1	-
Mauritania	1	7	600,0%	2	5	-	-
Niger	10	17	70,0%	3	8	6	-
Nigeria	1 548	1 473	-4,8%	30	1 288	153	2
Saint Helena	-	1	-	-	1	-	-
Senegal	46	89	93,5%	8	73	8	-
Sierra Leone	31	35	12,9%	-	28	7	-
Togo	7	22	214,3%	2	14	5	1
North Africa	422	876	107,6%	50	703	122	1
Algeria	30	61	103,3%	2	52	7	-
Egypt	209	407	94,7%	19	351	37	-
Libya	23	53	130,4%	8	31	14	-
Morocco	17	87	411,8%	8	78	1	-
South Sudan	25	55	120,0%	2	39	13	1
The Sudan	67	129	92,5%	7	83	39	-
Tunisia	51	84	64,7%	4	69	11	-
Unspecified	497	880	77,1%	54	822	1	3

3.3 Annexure C – Number of tourists' difference between January 2022 and January 2023 by country of residence

Country of residence	January 2022	January 2023	Difference between January 2022 and January 2023	% change between January 2022 and January 2023
Total	377 651	849 675	472 024	152,6%
Overseas	64 714	187 189	122 475	284,0%
Europe	47 528	128 898	81 370	314,6%
Austria	799	2 572	1 773	258,8%
Belgium	1 393	3 418	2 025	282,5%
Denmark	774	2 242	1 468	315,9%
France	2 314	9 016	6 702	285,0%
Germany	10 136	29 363	19 227	290,1%
Ireland	1 080	2 667	1 587	431,0%
Italy	821	3 677	2 856	392,0%
Portugal	843	1 771	928	172,1%
Russian Federation	1 026	2 947	1 921	52,8%
Spain	615	1 804	1 189	252,6%
Sweden	968	3 445	2 477	256,8%
Switzerland	2 289	4 386	2 097	192,4%
The Netherlands	5 608	12 930	7 322	315,0%
UK	16 086	40 044	23 958	518,3%
Other	2 776	8 616	5 840	189,3%
North America	8 939	31 421	22 482	232,6%
Canada	1 078	5 243	4 165	373,7%
USA	7 861	26 178	18 317	219,7%
Central and South America	1 065	3 689	2 624	188,4%
Argentina	100	536	436	305,6%
Brazil	584	1 847	1 263	174,5%
Mexico	73	310	237	161,8%
Other	308	996	688	204,8%

Annexure C – Number of tourists' difference between January 2022 and January 2023 by country of residence (continued)

Country of residence	January 2022	January 2023	Difference between January 2022 and January 2023	% change between January 2022 and January 2023
Australasia	1 621	7 452	5 831	359,7%
Australia	1 459	6 145	4 686	321,2%
New Zealand	161	1 301	1 140	708,1%
Other	1	6	5	500,0%
Middle East	823	3 262	2 439	296,4%
Israel	391	1 862	1 471	376,2%
Lebanon	80	124	44	55,0%
Saudi Arabia	153	652	499	326,1%
Other	199	624	425	213,6%
Asia	4 738	12 467	7 729	163,1%
Bangladesh	612	703	91	14,9%
China	410	1 174	764	186,3%
India	1 863	5 565	3 702	198,7%
Japan	144	653	509	353,5%
Nepal	76	36	-40	-52,6%
Pakistan	769	1 024	255	33,2%
Philippines	127	418	291	229,1%
South Korea	255	987	732	287,1%
Taiwan	71	363	292	411,3%
Thailand	143	250	107	74,8%
Other	268	1 294	1 026	382,8%
Africa	312 440	661 606	349 166	111,8%
SADC	306 645	652 392	345 747	112,8%
Angola	1 315	3 151	1 836	139,6%
Botswana	11 834	24 273	12 439	105,1%
DRC	1 188	1 340	152	12,8%
Eswatini	21 854	48 766	26 912	123,1%

Annexure C – Number of tourists' difference between January 2022 and January 2023 by country of residence (continued)

Country of residence	January 2022	January 2023	Difference between January 2022 and January 2023	% change between January 2022 and January 2023
Lesotho	84 960	155 187	70 227	82,7%
Madagascar	17	197	180	1058,8%
Malawi	8 216	11 671	3 455	42,1%
Mauritius	335	1 108	773	230,7%
Mozambique	96 511	153 476	56 965	59,0%
Namibia	8 376	11 482	3 106	37,1%
Seychelles	36	361	325	902,8%
Tanzania	1 556	2 446	890	57,2%
Zambia	7 638	10 300	2 662	34,9%
Zimbabwe	62 809	228 634	165 825	264,0%
'Other' African	5 795	9 214	3 419	59,0%
East and Central Africa	2 601	5 469	2 868	110,3%
Burundi	45	84	39	86,7%
Cameroon	226	297	71	31,4%
Central African Republic	3	16	13	433,3%
Chad	21	24	3	14,3%
Comoros	9	24	15	166,7%
Congo	102	120	18	17,6%
Djibouti	3	10	7	233,3%
Equatorial Guinea	8	19	11	137,5%
Eritrea	14	40	26	185,7%
Ethiopia	335	417	82	24,5%
Gabon	102	279	177	173,5%
Kenya	1 031	2 943	1 912	185,5%
Réunion	-	6	6	-
Rwanda	41	88	47	114,6%
São Tomé and Príncipe	2	11	9	450,0%
Somalia	38	59	21	55,3%
Uganda	621	1 032	411	66,2%

Annexure C – Number of tourists' difference between January 2022 and January 2023 by country of residence (concluded)

Country of residence	January 2022	January 2023	Difference between January 2022 and January 2023	% change between January 2022 and January 2023
West Africa	2 772	2 869	97	3,5%
Benin	55	122	67	121,8%
Burkina Faso	16	41	25	156,3%
Cape Verde Island	4	31	27	675,0%
Côte d'Ivoire	51	117	66	129,4%
Gambia	10	30	20	200,0%
Ghana	886	691	-195	-22,0%
Guinea	49	114	65	132,7%
Guinea-Bissau	2	10	8	400,0%
Liberia	24	24		0,0%
Mali	32	45	13	40,6%
Mauritania	1	7	6	600,0%
Niger	10	17	7	70,0%
Nigeria	1 548	1 473	-75	-4,8%
Saint Helena		1	1	
Senegal	46	89	43	93,5%
Sierra Leone	31	35	4	12,9%
Togo	7	22	15	214,3%
North Africa	422	876	454	107,6%
Algeria	30	61	31	103,3%
Egypt	209	407	198	94,7%
Libya	23	53	30	130,4%
Morocco	17	87	70	411,8%
South Sudan	25	55	30	120,0%
The Sudan	67	129	62	92,5%
Tunisia	51	84	33	64,7%
Unspecified	497	880	383	77,1%

4. Explanatory notes

4.1 Introduction

Legal movements across South African borders, as well as legal immigration into South Africa, fall under the jurisdiction of the Department of Home Affairs (DHA). Stats SA then processes, analyses and publishes this information.

Administrative data sources from the DHA, that is, information from all the country's ports of entry and applications for permanent residence, constitute the only comprehensive source of information on foreign arrivals and departures, documented immigrants and emigrants. The information from this source of data provides the best national coverage (in terms of both space and time) of the population movements of South African residents and foreign travellers. The data can be used for the following:

- To estimate, monitor and understand salient characteristics of foreign travellers and volumes of South African residents travelling outside South Africa.
- To provide information that can be used to (a) assess the extent of government's progress in strengthening bilateral political and economic relations by assessing the number of international tourist arrivals, and (b) benchmark surveys focusing on the demand for local tourism services by foreign travellers.

4.2 Purpose of the statistical release

This release reports on arrivals, departures and transit travellers of South African residents and foreign travellers. Detailed information on the age and sex distribution; mode of travel; national and regional distribution; and purpose of travel of overnight visitors or tourists are also provided.

4.3 Scope and coverage

The release covers data collected by DHA officials on travellers who departed from or entered the Republic of South Africa (RSA).

4.4 Data

Information published in this release is based on data obtained from the following data sources within the DHA:

- Data routinely collected by immigration officers at all road, air and sea entry ports on all travellers (South African residents and foreign travellers) arriving into or departing from South Africa are captured into the DHA's population Movement Control System (MCS). The counts/statistics relate to the number of individual movements, rather than to the number of people. Hence, the multiple movements of individual people during the calendar month are each counted separately. Generally, the data are collected directly from travel documents either by scanning or capturing onto the ports' electronic database. No forms or cards are used (except on rare occasions when the capturing system is down) to collect information from travellers. Individual ports regularly transmit data onto the national database at the head office of the DHA.
- Stats SA receives downloaded data covering a particular calendar month from the DHA.
- As part of data interrogation, data from O.R. Tambo International Airport, which has the highest volume of travellers, are compared with passenger statistics from the Airports Company of South Africa (ACSA). As expected, in any specific month, an increase in the volume of passengers reported by ACSA is also reflected in an increase in the volume of travellers recorded by DHA. A similar pattern has also been observed when the volume of travellers decreased. In January 2023, the DHA data was 0,3% lower than that of ACSA.

4.5 Limitations

4.5.1 Outbound tourists

The information on the total number of arrivals and departures of South African residents is collected from the scanning of passports. However, data on the country visited are not collected from passengers; country of final destination; intended duration of stay and purpose of visit. With this limitation, it is impossible to identify the number of tourists from the data on South African residents.

4.5.2 Purpose of visit

The holiday category includes tourists who came for vacation, visiting friends and relatives, shopping and other personal reasons such as attending weddings. While it's possible to separate 'visiting friends and relatives' from the broad category of holiday, shopping and other reasons for visiting South Africa are all combined with vacation in the DHA's Movement Control System. Discussions are in progress with the Department of Home Affairs to capture vacation and shopping as separate categories for a clearer breakdown of tourists by purpose of visit.

4.6 Definition of terms

4.6.1 Definitions used by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)

Traveller is someone who moves between different geographical locations for any purpose and any duration.

Visitor refers to any person travelling to a place other than that of his/her usual environment for less than 12 months and whose main purpose of the trip is other than the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited.

Same-Day visitor is a visitor who visits a place for less than one night.

Tourist (overnight visitor) is a visitor who stays at least one night in collective or private accommodation in the place visited.

Tourism comprises the activities of persons travelling to, and staying in places outside their usual environment, for not more than one consecutive year, for leisure, business and other purposes. The usual environment of a person consists of a certain area around his/her place of residence, plus all the other places he/she frequently visits.

4.6.2 Definitions used specifically in this release

South African resident refers to either a South African citizen or a non-South African citizen with a South African permanent residence permit.

Foreign traveller refers to a traveller who is not a South African citizen or permanent resident.

Region refers to the following country classification:

- Overseas: Europe, North America, Central and South America, Australasia, the Middle East and Asia.
- Africa: SADC and 'other' Africa (East and Central Africa, West Africa and North Africa).

Country refers to individual countries within a region. The country of residence is used. The country of residence should not be confused with the country from which the visitor travelled.

Africa refers to all the countries in Africa (both mainland and island countries).

SADC refers to the fourteen countries, excluding South Africa, which belong to the Southern African Development Community.

'Other' African refers to all non-SADC African countries.

Overseas refers to all countries outside Africa.

Trip refers to the arrival and departure of a visitor in a specified month.

4.7 Symbols used

- = nil

< = less than

4.8 Rounding off

Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

5. General information

Stats SA publishes approximately 300 different statistical releases each year. It is not economically viable to produce them in more than one of South Africa's eleven official languages, since the releases are used extensively, not only locally but also by international economic and social-scientific communities. Stats SA releases are published in English.

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