

Tourism becomes the world's third-largest export sector, generating \$1.6tn in 2017



By [Josephine Wawira](#)

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The international tourism sector has seen uninterrupted growth in arrivals for eight straight years, with 2017's growth being the highest since 2010; with a record performance of US\$ 1.6 trillion. This represents an increase of 7%, according to the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO). Additionally, tourism generated another US\$ 240 billion from international passenger transport taken by non-residents. Europe and Africa led the growth, with increases in arrivals of 8% and 9%, respectively.



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The UN body, in its latest collection of tourism highlights, further notes that the strong results were driven by sustained travel demand for destinations across all world regions, including a firm recovery by those that have suffered from security challenges in recent years.

In 2017, China remained the leader in global outbound travel, with an expenditure of \$258bn on international tourism. This translates to approximately one-fifth of the world's total tourism spending in 2017, which stood at \$ 1.3tn, some \$94bn more than in 2016. 2018 is seen to continue with the robust growth, with available data showing that international tourism recorded a year-on-year increase of 6% in arrivals between January and April.

ABOUT JOSEPHINE WAWIRA

Josephine Wawira is a consultant in communication and public relations with over six years of progressive writing and broadcast experience. She is currently a writer for Africa's online hotel booking portal, Jumia Travel, focusing in the areas of travel, tourism, and hospitality as it relates to Africa.

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