

Annual average growth in international tourist arrivals since 2005 is highest in Sub-Saharan Africa

Data from the UN’s World Tourism Organization shows that the number of International Tourist Arrivals (ITAs) in Africa has grown by 62% since 2005 to reach 56 million in 2014. Sub-Saharan Africa’s (SSA’s) ITA average annual growth rate of 6.2% between 2005 and 2014 is the highest among the world’s major regions. According to data from the AfDB, the Travel & Tourism (T&T) sector contributed US\$199 billion to Africa’s GDP in 2014 of which US\$84 billion was a direct contribution. South Africa (US\$44 billion), Egypt (US\$43 billion) and Morocco (US\$21 billion) lead Africa in Tourism contribution to GDP.

The T&T industry directly employs over 8.6 million people in Africa. Including related industries such as leisure and hospitality, the T&T ecosystem employs over 20 million people in Africa. Egypt, Ethiopia, Morocco, Nigeria and South Africa are Africa’s top 5 direct employers in T&T and together they provide 58% (5 million jobs) of all direct employment. Growth in direct employment in the T&T sector between 2013 and 2014 was highest in Namibia at 11%. Regionally, 5.3% of the workforce in North Africa and 2.4% of the workforce in SSA is employed in the T&T ecosystem.

