Namaste INDIA

Unleashing its Travel & Tourism Potential

Working Paper No.: 148

EXPORT-IMPORT BANK OF INDIA

WORKING PAPER NO. 148

Namaste, India!
Unleashing its Travel and Tourism Potential

India Exim Bank's Working Paper Series is an attempt to disseminate the findings of research studies carried out in the Bank. The results of research studies can interest exporters, policy makers, industrialists, export promotion agencies as well as researchers. However, views expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the Bank. While reasonable care has been taken to ensure authenticity of information and data, India Exim Bank accepts no responsibility for authenticity, accuracy, or completeness of such items.

CONTENTS

Project Team: Research and Analysis Group

Mr. Rahul Mazumdar, Deputy General Manager

Ms. Srejita Nandy, Manager

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF CHARTS

LIST OF EXHIBITS

LIST OF BOXES

Executive Summary

Background

According to the World Trade Organisation (WTO), tourism and travel includes services provided by hotels and restaurants (including food and beverages), travel agencies and tour operator services, tourist guide services, amongst others.

Travel and tourism services trade involves cross-border movement of consumers (Mode 2 – Consumption Abroad) thereby allowing individuals and firms in an economy, to become services exporters by providing tourism related infrastructure, including accommodation and connectivity, and other tourism related services.

Tourism and Sustainable Development Goals

Tourism has the potential to contribute both directly and indirectly to all the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It is explicitly referenced in Goals 8, 12, and 14, which focus on inclusive and sustainable economic growth, sustainable consumption and production, and the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and marine resources, respectively.

Tourism and Sustainable Development Goals

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

SDG 8.9 : Sustainable Tourism Policy

"devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products"

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

SDG 12.b : Sustainable Tourism

"developing and implementing tools to monitor the impact of sustainable development on sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products"

14 LIFE BELOW WATER

SDG 14.7 : Sustainale use of Marine Resources

"by 2030, increase the economic benefits to small island developing states and least developed countries from the sustainable use of marine resources, including through sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism"

Source: UN Tourism; India Exim Bank Research

Sustainable tourism holds a central role in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. As a key socioeconomic sector, tourism can drive job creation and sustainable economic development.

The climate or natural and cultural resources which often define the type and attraction of a destination are also considered as assets for tourism. Tourism can play a vital role in promoting inclusiveness, particularly for women, youth, and micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), by opening new opportunities for employment and entrepreneurship. However, realizing this vision requires a robust implementation framework, sufficient financing, and investment in technology, infrastructure, and human capital.

Global Travel Services Trade

According to the WTO, global travel services exports reached US$ 1.7 trillion in 2024, exceeding pre-pandemic levels. Travel services accounted for 19.8% of total global services exports in 2024. The sector recorded a robust year-on-year growth of 13.4%, outpacing the overall global services exports growth of 9%. This strong recovery was primarily fuelled by the easing of global inflation, following a multidecade high in 2022, and the implementation of visa-free policies by several countries aiming to revive their tourism sectors post-pandemic.

In 2024, Europe's travel services exports rose by 9.2%, reaching US$ 699.2 billion, building on an already high base. The region continued to dominate global travel exports, accounting for the largest share at 40.2%, owing to its appeal as a top international destination. Spain, the United Kingdom, and France were the region's leading travel services exporters.

While all regions contributed to the global growth in travel services, Asia emerged as the primary driver, led notably by China. The region recorded a strong 26.6% growth, securing a 24% share of global travel exports. China's travel services exports more than doubled to US$ 37 billion, exceeding pre-pandemic levels by 7%.

The Middle East accounted for 9% of global travel services exports, with Saudi Arabia driving most of the regional growth. North America registered a 12.1% growth, contributing 17.1% to global travel exports, primarily led by the United States and Canada.

Africa's travel services exports grew by 8.7%, with Egypt, Morocco, and South Africa emerging as key contributors. However, the region held the smallest global share at 3.3%. Meanwhile, Latin America and the Caribbean recorded a 10.4% growth, contributing 10.4% share to global travel services exports, with Mexico and Brazil leading the region's performance.

US was the largest travel services exporter accounting for a global share of 12.4% while China was the largest travel services importer accounting for a global share of 15.1% in 2024.

India's Travel Services Trade

In 2024, India accounted for 4.3% global share and ranked 8th among the largest services exporting countries globally. India features among the global leaders in information technology and business services and has maintained a consistent services trade surplus in the last decade.

However, considerable untapped potential remains in travel and tourism services where India holds a relatively smaller share in global exports at 2.0%, ranking 15th, as it faces competition from other worldwide travel and tourism hubs. At the same time India ranked 9th accounting for 2.1% share in global travel services imports.

India's travel services exports stood at US$ 35.1 billion in 2024 growing at an AAGR of 15.2% during 2014-2024, surpassing the total services exports AAGR of 9.1% during the same period. Travel services imports stood at US$ 34.9 billion in 2024. Travel services exports accounted for a share of 9.3% in India's total services exports. The post-pandemic surge in overseas travel and tourism in the country has led to a shift from a travel services exports surplus to a deficit in recent years.

Global Landscape of Travel and Tourism Services

Tourism influences economies through direct, indirect, and induced effects ranging from tourist spending and sectoral employment to broader economic activity generated through inter-industry linkages and household consumption and investments.

According to the World Travel and Tourism Council's Economic Impact Research 2025, the global travel and tourism industry is expected to contribute US$ 11.7 trillion to the world economy in 2025 (10.3% of global GDP), up from US$ 10.9 trillion in 2024.

By 2035, this contribution is expected to rise to US$ 16.5 trillion (11.5% of global GDP). Employment supported by the sector is also set to increase from 357 million in 2024 to over 460 million by 2035, underscoring tourism's growing significance in the global economic and labour landscape.

International Tourist Arrivals

An estimated 1.4 billion international tourists were recorded around the world in 2024, an increase of 10.7% over 2023 driven by strong post-pandemic demand and robust performance from large source markets globally. Increased air connectivity and enhanced visa facilitation also supported international travel. In 2023 in terms of numbers, France maintained the top position in terms of international tourist arrivals in 2023, followed by Spain, United States, Italy, Turkey, Mexico, United Kingdom, Germany, Greece and Austria. India's share in international tourist arrivals has witnessed a modest increase from 1.2% in 2019 to 1.4% in 2023. However, unlike other major destinations like US, Italy, Mexico, Germany, and Thailand, India's international tourist arrivals have surpassed 2019 levels by 5.6% showcasing India's resilience.

International Tourism Receipts

International tourism receipts witnessed robust growth in 2024 reaching US$ 1.6 trillion in 2024, registering 3% growth in 2023 and 6.7% over the pre-pandemic levels. The US was the global travel destination with the highest international tourism receipts in 2023 at US$ 189 billion. Meanwhile, Spain and the United Kingdom followed USA in the ranking in 2023, with receipts of around US$ 92 billion and US$ 73 billion, respectively. India's share in the world tourism receipts had reached 2.1% during 2023 (US$ 32.2 billion).

Outbound Tourism Expenditure

In 2023, China led global outbound tourism expenditure, spending US$ 196.5 billion, followed by the United States and Germany. India emerged as the fastest-growing source market, driven by its young population and rising disposable incomes. India's outbound tourism spending grew by 45.4% over pre-pandemic levels, reaching US$ 33.3 billion, making it the 10th largest outbound tourism market globally. The Asia-Pacific region is expected to be the primary driver of global outbound tourism growth in 2025 and 2026, followed by Africa and Europe.

Trends and Aspects of India's Tourism Industry

India's tourism sector plays a key role in enhancing economic growth, employment generation and regional development with a multiplier effect on the activity of related sectors. According to the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC), the tourism sector is estimated to contribute over 6.8% of India's GDP, equivalent to US$ 256.1 billion and generate more than 45 million jobs in 2024. This is further projected to increase to a contribution of US$ 523.6 billion (7.6% of GDP) to GDP and 63 million jobs.

India's tourism sector has witnessed substantial growth in recent years, drawing increasing numbers of both domestic and international visitors. In 2023, domestic spending contributed about 85% to India's travel and tourism GDP whereas foreign visitor spending contributed around 15%. Foreign exchange earnings by India from tourism have registered robust growth over the past decade peaking at US$ 33.2 billion in 2024 surpassing the pre-pandemic earnings.

Foreign Tourist Arrivals in India

After the easing of pandemic related travel restrictions in 2022, foreign tourism into India has shown increasing signs of revival. In the year 2023, India registered 9.5 million foreign tourist arrivals (FTAs) i.e. achieving around 87% recovery of pre-pandemic level with a growth of 47.9% over 2022 numbers.

Overall, the top five countries for FTAs to India in 2023, were Bangladesh, the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia. Bangladesh replaced the USA as the largest source country in recent years whereas UK, Australia and Canada have emerged among the top five in 2023, replacing Sri Lanka and Russia. China's position has declined as compared to pre-pandemic years. Foreign tourist arrivals from China may pick up in coming years as India has resumed issuing tourist visas to Chinese nationals from July 24, 2025, after a five-year hiatus.

Notably, among the top 15 countries with the highest outbound tourism expenditure in 2023, nine were already major source markets for India. However, key high-spending countries such as China, Spain, South Korea, the UAE, and the Netherlands were absent from India's list of major foreign tourist arrival (FTA) markets.

In 2023, Bangladesh, the USA, and the UK emerged as the top three source countries, collectively accounting for nearly 50% of India's total FTAs. This concentration highlights the urgent need to diversify India's tourism source markets to enhance revenue generation and build greater sectoral resilience.

Countries like China, Spain, South Korea, the UAE, and the Netherlands, despite their substantial outbound tourism expenditure, remain underrepresented in India's inbound tourism profile. To address this gap, the study further identifies high-growth travel services importers and major contributors to global tourism flows that India could strategically target. These include the US, Germany, the UK, Australia, Canada, Russia, and Italy, among others, offering considerable potential to expand India's foreign tourist base and increase foreign exchange earnings.

Most foreign tourists (46.2%) visited for leisure, holiday, and recreation, reflecting India's standing as a prominent global destination for vacation and cultural exploration. Visits by members of the Indian diaspora (OCI cardholders) accounted for the second-largest share (26.9%), indicating familial and personal ties between overseas Indians and their country of origin. Business and professional travel comprised 10.3% of FTAs, highlighting India's increasing attractiveness as a hub for international commerce and professional engagement. Medical tourism, contributing 6.9% of total arrivals, was particularly notable from South Asia, Africa, and the Middle East, underscoring India's growing reputation for providing accessible, high-quality healthcare services.

FTAs in leisure, holiday and recreation category stood at 4.4 million in 2023, 87% higher when compared to 2022, but remained below pre-pandemic levels by 29.5%. Bangladesh accounted for the largest share in 2023 at 33.3%, followed by the US (13%), the UK (7%), Malaysia (3.7%) and Australia (3.5%), among others.

Foreign tourist arrivals in India for business and professional purposes stood at 980.7 thousand in 2023, which was a 49.3% increase as compared to 2022 levels, but continued to remain below the pre-pandemic levels by 38.9%. The US accounted for the largest share among countries with foreign tourist arrivals for business and professional purposes (10.9% in 2023), followed by Sri Lanka (9.6%), Japan (8.7%), Bangladesh (7.6%) and UK (7.1%), among other countries.

Foreign tourist arrivals in India for medical treatment increased by 37.9% to 656.9 thousand in 2023, as compared to 2022 but remained below pre-pandemic levels by 5.8%. The countries which accounted for the major share of foreign nationals visiting India for medical treatment in 2023 included Bangladesh (76.2% share) followed by Iraq (4.4%), Yemen (2.3%), Oman (2%), and Kenya (1.1%), among others.

Domestic Tourism

Strong growth in domestic visitor spending has led the tourism sector's path toward post-pandemic recovery. The domestic visitor spending across India is estimated to be US$ 194 billion in 2024 and is further expected to grow up to US$ 410 billion by 2030. India is expected to emerge as the fourth-largest spender on tourism, as India's per capita income is expected to grow by 164.8% from US$ 2711 in 2024 to US$ 4469 in 2030.

Maharashtra accounted for the largest share of 17.6% with 3.4 million foreign tourist visits in 2023, followed by West Bengal (14.1%), Rajasthan (8.8%) and Uttar Pradesh (8.3%). On the other hand, in terms of domestic tourist visits, Uttar Pradesh accounted for the largest share of 19.1% share and 478.5 million tourist visits, followed by Tamil Nadu (11.4%), Karnataka (11.3%), Andhra Pradesh (10.2%) and Rajasthan (7.1%), among others.

Conducive government policies have contributed to tourism related infrastructure development, enhanced connectivity and ease of doing business in the tourism sector. However, considerable scope remains to elevate India's position as a global tourism destination. India currently has a draft National Tourism Policy in place. The Ministry of Tourism, under the niche tourism segment has further issued National Strategy and Roadmap for Medical and Wellness Tourism (January 27, 2022), National Strategy for MICE Industry (April 29, 2022), National Strategy for Eco Tourism (April 29, 2022), National Strategy for Sustainable Tourism (April 29, 2022), and National Strategy for Adventure Tourism (April 29, 2022).

Comparison of India with APAC

The Travel and Tourism Development Index (TTDI) report by the World Economic Forum (WEF) published in May 2024, ranked India 39th among 119 countries. India ranked lower compared to many of the APAC countries like Japan (3), Australia (5), China (8), Singapore (13), Republic of Korea (14), Indonesia (22), New Zealand (25) and Malaysia (35). Besides these, even though Thailand, Vietnam and Sri Lanka rank lower than India, they pose significant competition for India in different segments.

The Indian tourism sector faces significant competition from Asia-Pacific countries (APAC), particularly in attracting international tourists as many of these offer similar attractions in terms of natural or cultural as well as medical and wellness tourism and are well established Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions (MICE) destinations.

These APAC countries have well-established tourism industries with better infrastructure, higher marketing budgets, and more accessible visa processes. These countries have invested heavily in tourism infrastructure, including transportation, accommodation, and attractions. Many of these countries have significant marketing budgets dedicated to promoting their destinations, leading to greater global awareness and appeal. Recently, Vietnam and China have also been increasingly emerging as competition for India as they are implementing visa-free policies to attract foreign tourists. In this context, the Study undertook a comparison of India along with select Asia-Pacific countries which are reasonably placed to be India's aspirational countries in terms of developing the tourism sector, based on the scores obtained across various pillars of the TTDI.

Data shows that, India scored lower compared to many of the APAC countries in parameters like business environment, tourism infrastructure quality and services, ICT readiness, environmental sustainability and human resources engaged in tourism sector. On the other hand, India scored higher in natural, cultural and business travel resources, and price competitiveness, and air and ground transport infrastructure. Building on these insights, the Study identifies the key challenges facing India's tourism sector.

Need for Skilled Manpower

According to the Periodic Labour Force Survey (July 2023–June 2024), only 1% of individuals aged 15–59 years in India had received formal vocational or technical training in the tourism industry. The Tourism and Hospitality Skill Council highlights a substantial skill gap of more than 5 million within India's tourism and hospitality sector. Despite the growing usage of technology in the tourism industry, the extent of adoption remains limited, especially among MSMEs, across the sector.

Gap in Adoption of Technology

Despite rising demand from tech-savvy domestic and international travellers, the sector struggles to offer personalised, tech-enabled experiences at scale. This is compounded by limited investment in research to identify areas where technology can enhance operational efficiency, elevate guest experience, and improve brand loyalty through targeted communication and marketing strategies. The hospitality industry also faces significant vulnerabilities in data management and cybersecurity. Furthermore, there exists a misalignment between skill supply and technological demand within the sector. The absence of an agile and responsive Labour Market Information System (LMIS) impedes the ability to accurately map existing skill gaps and forecast future needs.

Investment in Sustainable Tourism Infrastructure

Sustainable tourism has gained momentum in India's hospitality sector, driven by growing consumer awareness and environmental concerns. A major barrier to scaling sustainability lies in the underdevelopment of critical infrastructure particularly in waste management and renewable energy infrastructure.

Investments in sustainable waste management systems such as decentralized composting units, waste-to-energy plants, and plastic recycling hubs are essential to managing tourism-related waste sustainably. Further, high upfront costs, limited access to green financing, and uncertain returns deter investment in solar, wind, and bioenergy solutions by the tourism industry. These are particularly financially burdensome for MSMEs, limiting their ability to participate in sustainable tourism initiatives.

Select Strategies for further Improvement

India has set an ambitious target of achieving a US$ 3 trillion tourism economy and attracting 100 million international tourists by 2047 as a part of its Viksit Bharat vision. This Study identifies and focuses on the strategies and recommendations in this chapter to increase India's competitiveness in the global tourism landscape.

A. Developing Niche Sectors

The geographic and thematic diversity of India has the potential to make it a year-round destination for foreign tourists. However, to increase foreign exchange earnings, India needs to strengthen the niche offerings like adventure tourism, eco-friendly or rural tourism, medical and wellness tourism and Meetings Incentives Conferences & Exhibitions (MICE) segments, aligning with global consumer preferences.

A1. Adventure Tourism

India is witnessing a growing interest in adventure tourism fuelled by its diverse landscapes. Tourists are increasingly exploring remote and exotic destinations through activities such as paragliding, skiing, trekking, and scuba diving. However, progress is often hindered by inadequate infrastructure, particularly in terms of accommodations, last mile connectivity, safety provisions and adherence to global standards. Also, unregulated expansion of adventure tourism poses environmental challenges, including ecological degradation and poor waste management in high-traffic areas. To promote sustainable adventure tourism and attract foreign tourists, India must adopt a multi-pronged strategy focused on infrastructure, safety, branding, and sustainability. This also includes training adventure service providers to meet international safety and operational standards and certifying members of local communities in adventure sports to enable inclusive participation.

A2. Community Based Tourism

Community-based tourism is a model of travel that prioritizes the well-being and empowerment of local communities. Further, geographical indication (GI) tags identify products linked to specific geographic origins, showcasing their unique qualities and cultural significance. India's diverse range of GI-tagged products spanning handicrafts, textiles, food, and agro-products offers strong potential to promote experiential and cultural tourism. Further, the One District One Product (ODOP) initiative provides support to local artisans and producers, enhancing their livelihoods and can emerge as a facilitator of rural and eco-tourism. Promoting them through GI tourism circuits, festivals, artisan villages, and farm stays can enhance local economies, preserve heritage, and create distinct brand identities for destinations.

A3. Developing India as a Global MICE Destination

India's growing MICE sector presents a strategic opportunity to position the country as a premier global tourism destination. With the experience of hosting the G20, India has demonstrated its ability to deliver international events. Integrating MICE into India's tourism strategy, especially amongst Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities, offers multifaceted benefits. It drives year-round tourism by filling hotel occupancy during off-peak periods, enhances destination branding through high-profile global events, and stimulates regional development by boosting demand for local hospitality, transport, and cultural experiences.

A4. Medical and Wellness Tourism

India has emerged as a prominent destination owing to its outstanding medical facilities, cost-effective treatments, and skilled healthcare professionals. At the same time, the country's rich heritage in traditional healing systems like traditional medicine systems like AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, and Homeopathy) has made it a hub for holistic wellness.

India's medical value travel inflows remain concentrated from neighbouring countries like Bangladesh (76.2%), exposing India's vulnerability to geopolitical disruptions and underscoring the need to diversify its source markets. To enhance resilience and global competitiveness, India must strengthen its "Heal in India" brand through digital outreach, diaspora-focused campaigns, and government-to-government tie-ups, especially with Africa, the Middle East, and Central Asia.

Greater international recognition of India's NABH accreditation system and awareness about AYUSH are essential to building trust, alongside encouraging dual accreditations. The limited availability of JCI-accredited hospitals in eastern and northeastern regions hinders accessibility for nearby countries, necessitating investment in healthcare infrastructure. Moreover, upskilling the medical and wellness workforce in technical and cross-cultural competencies, inspired by models like Thailand's integrated health-tourism offerings, can further enhance India's positioning as a global medical value travel hub.

A5. Spiritual Tourism

Pilgrimage travel in India is witnessing significant growth, with religious tourism accounting for over 60% of domestic travel. India's vast spiritual landscape encompassing sacred sites and diverse religious traditions offers immense potential through the Buddhist, Ramayana, and Krishna Circuits, which attract global faith-based tourists.

The APAC region, particularly countries like China, Japan, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Myanmar, Vietnam, and Cambodia, presents strong prospects for Buddhist Circuit tourism due to shared religious heritage and rising outbound travel. Tailored pilgrimage packages, multilingual support, regional travel partnerships, and cultural diplomacy through ASEAN and BIMSTEC can enhance India's appeal. The Maha Kumbh 2025 showcased India's ability to integrate tradition with cutting-edge technology, using Artificial Intelligence (AI), drones, IoT, and immersive experiences to manage crowds and enrich pilgrim engagement.

B. Need for Technology Intervention

Digital innovation is rapidly transforming the tourism industry, enhancing experiences for travellers, businesses, and destinations. Artificial intelligence and data analytics are reshaping hotel operations, enabling personalised recommendations, targeted marketing, mobile check-ins, digital room keys, and AI-based concierge services.

However, India's travel and tourism sector has a long journey ahead in fully leveraging these digital opportunities. Many tourism operators, particularly MSMEs, face challenges such as limited access to digital infrastructure, funding, and technical skills. As the sector becomes increasingly tech-driven, there is a growing need for a workforce equipped with both technical capabilities and advanced soft skills. To remain competitive with regional leaders like Singapore, Thailand, the UAE, China, and Malaysia which are known for their robust infrastructure and skilled ecosystems, India must invest in tech-based capacity building and professional development.

C. Integrating Sustainability into Tourism

Promoting sustainable tourism in India requires adoption of green infrastructure and technology such as use of solar power, electric vehicles, and energy-efficient buildings supported by state policies, and public-private partnerships (PPPs). The Certification Scheme for Sustainable Tourism, guided by the Sustainable Tourism Criteria of India (STCI), aims to set digital, standardized benchmarks for destinations, accommodations, and operators, though implementation of the same remains pending.

Strengthening community involvement also remains key to sustainable development with awareness and capacity-building programs ensuring local participation, ownership, and ecological responsibility. Incentivising eco-certification of tour operators and accommodations further promotes sustainable practices across the tourism sector.

D. Need for Targeted Marketing and Promotion

India's global tourism potential, especially in niche segments like adventure, medical, spiritual, and eco-tourism, is hindered by inadequate international marketing and visibility. Since tourism development is largely state-driven, targeted campaigns are essential to showcase India's diverse offerings to demography-specific traveller groups.

As per the India State Ranking Survey by Hotelivate and WTTC, states like Kerala, Karnataka, Uttarakhand, Rajasthan, and Gujarat lead in digital outreach through effective social media and tourism websites. While India's national tourism website ranks 4th among nine countries behind Thailand, Indonesia, and Singapore, there remains room for improvement.

E. Benchmarking States and Mapping their potential for Niche Segments of Tourism

A national-level ranking framework is needed to assess Indian states and union territories on their tourism performance across parameters such as business environment, sustainability, policy initiatives, ecosystem readiness, and marketing outreach.

While Hotelivate and the World Travel and Tourism Council currently publish the "India State Ranking Survey," evaluating states on 14 tourism-related parameters, a similar initiative led by the Ministry of Tourism could establish official benchmarks for both public and private tourism entities. With the rising role of technology, the framework should also account for tech-driven initiatives that enhance customer experience and sustainability.

Additionally, states can be mapped according to their strengths in niche tourism segments like medical, adventure, and eco-tourism. Such competitive assessments would promote innovation, accountability, and focused development across the tourism sector.

In Conclusion

India's share in international tourist arrivals and tourism receipts have been extremely modest at 1.4% and 2.1% of global tourist arrivals and tourism receipts, respectively, indicating significant growth potential for inbound tourism. This despite the fact that India has lots to offer to the world in this sector. It may however be observed that, India has also emerged as a fastest growing source country for outbound tourism driven by its rising economic prosperity and young population.

Adopting global best practices in sustainability, and digital innovation, as well as building local capacity and improving tourism infrastructure remains important. Additionally, enhancing India's international visibility through targeted marketing, strengthening the certification framework for sustainable and adventure tourism, and addressing regional disparities in tourism readiness remain crucial.

As tourism becomes increasingly experience-driven and technology-enabled, India must invest in digital transformation, skill development, and inclusive community engagement to remain competitive. These strategies provide a comprehensive roadmap for transforming India into a sustainable, and resilient tourism destination.

Chapter 1

Travel and Tourism Services as a Driver of Economic Growth

Introduction

Structural shifts in the global economy have led to the emergence of the services sector as one of the most dynamic components of international trade. Increasingly the sector has become a focus area for achieving economic growth and development. This is reflected by the share of the services sector in global GDP remaining on average over 60% during the last decade (2014-2024). Furthermore, export of services also remains a critical source of foreign exchange earnings for some of the countries globally, while contributing positively to current account balance.

According to the World Trade Organisation (WTO), tourism and travel includes services provided by hotels and restaurants (including food and beverage), travel agencies and tour operator services, tourist guide services and other related services.

A crucial aspect of trade in travel and tourism services is the cross-border movement of consumers (Mode 2 – Consumption Abroad)[1]. Tourism and travel related services allow individuals and firms in an economy, to become services exporters by providing tourism related infrastructure, including accommodation and connectivity, and other tourism related services.

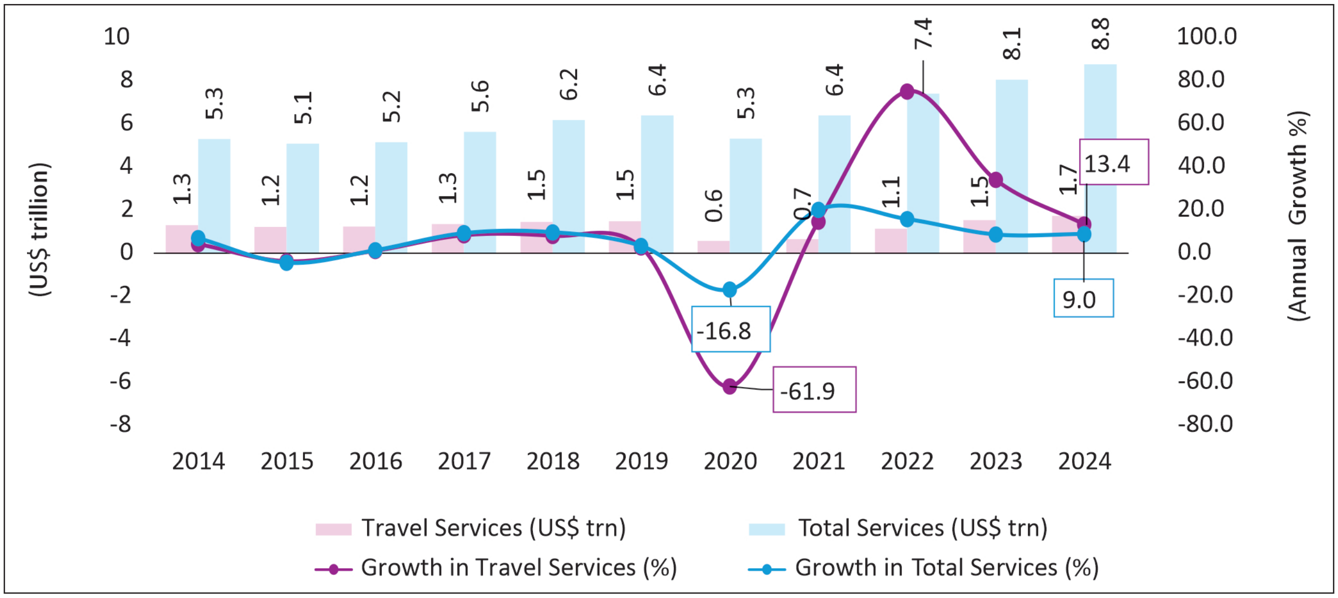
Global Travel Services

As the travel and tourism sector involves the cross-border movement of consumers (non-residents), it remains strongly dependent on transport and connectivity. Travel services across all regions were severely impacted by the pandemic owing to social distancing measures and restrictions on cross-border mobility. Consequently, services exports in the travel sector contracted by 61.9% in 2020 as compared to contraction in overall services exports by 16.8% reflecting the vulnerability of the sector to adverse shocks to global mobility. However, the travel services exports recovered at a higher growth rate in value terms and has sustained the growth trajectory since the pandemic, growing at 13.4% in 2024 as compared to the overall services exports

[1] Trade Topics, World Trade Organisation.

growth of 9% **(Chart 1.1)**. According to the World Trade Organisation, global travel services[2] stood at US$ 1.7 trillion in 2024, surpassing the pre-pandemic levels. Global travel services accounted for a share of 19.8% in total services exports in 2024.

Chart 1.1: Global Travel Services Exports Vis-à-vis Total Services Exports



Source: WTO; India Exim Bank Research

The recovery of tourism after the pandemic was driven by easing global inflation rates in 2023 (6.6%) and 2024 (5.7%) after reaching a multidecade high of 8.6% in 2022 owing to supply chain disruptions and increase in commodity prices due to the Russia-Ukraine conflict. Another major driver of global travel and tourism services exports were the visa-free schemes adopted by many countries. Major events such as the UEFA European Football Championship in Germany and the Olympics in France supported Europe's travel exports in 2024, which grew by 9.2% from an already high base, to reach US$ 699.2 billion, due to its status as an internationally preferred destination accounting for the largest share in global travel exports at 40.2%. Spain, UK and France were the largest exporters from the region.

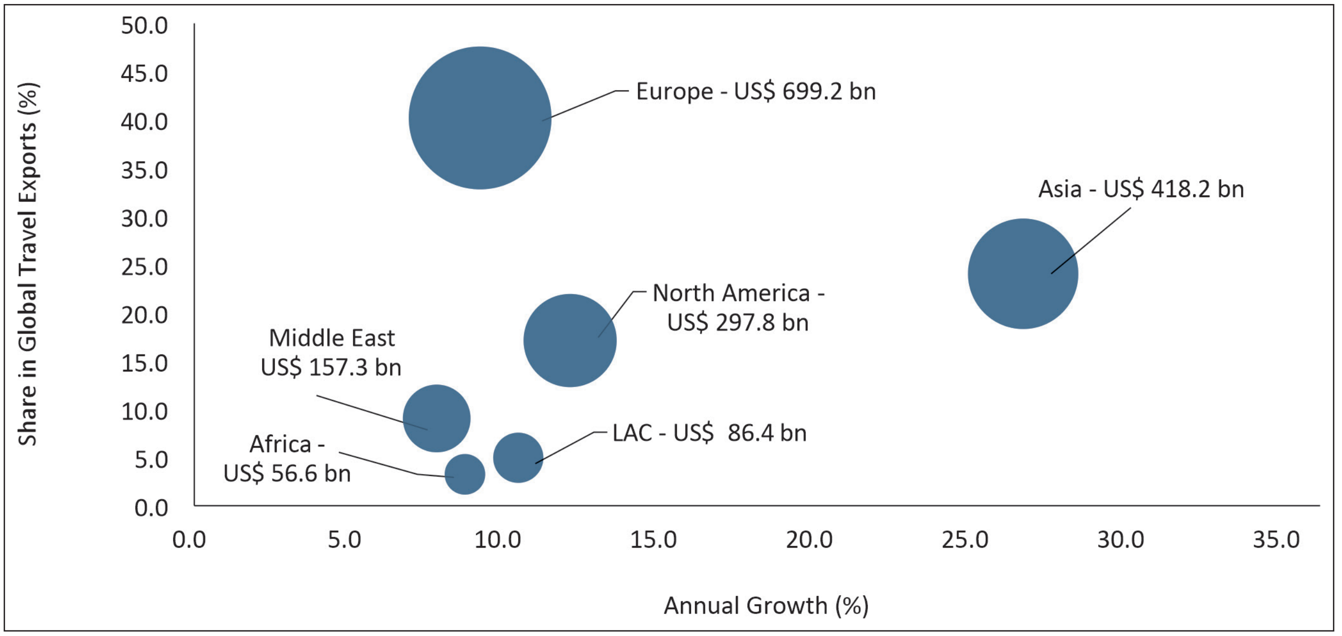
Although all regions contributed to travel services exports growth in 2024, Asia was the main growth driver, (particularly China) registering 26.6% growth over 2023 and accounting for global share of 24%. China's travel services exports have more than doubled in 2024 (as compared to 2023) to US$ 37 billion and exceeded pre-pandemic levels by 7% for the first time. Travel services exports from the Middle East accounted for a global share of 9% and were mainly driven by Saudi Arabia.

Growth momentum in travel exports was also maintained in North America with 12.1% growth and 17.1% contribution to global travel services exports, driven by US and Canada. Africa's travel exports were up 8.7%

[2] The International Monetary Fund's Balance of Payments and International Investment Position Manual, Sixth Edition (BPM6) classifies services into twelve main categories. These include manufacturing services, maintenance and repair, transport, travel, construction, insurance and pension services, financial services, intellectual property charges, telecommunications, computer and information services, other business services, personal, cultural and recreational services, and government goods and services. Travel services cover expenditure by residents of one economy that are traveling in another. These expenditures are further classified as business and personal travel.

with Egypt, Morocco and South Africa emerging as the largest travel services exports contributors. Africa accounted for the lowest global share of 3.3%. Latin America and the Caribbean witnessed a 10.4% increase in travel services exports in 2024 and accounted for a global share of 10.4% **(Chart 1.2)**. Mexico and Brazil were the largest travel services exporters from the Latin America and Caribbean region.

Chart 1.2: Region–wise Global Travel Services Exports in 2024



Source: WTO; India Exim Bank Research

India's Travel Services

India features among the global leaders in information technology and business services[3] accounting for total services exports of US$ 374.9 billion in 2024 registering a robust annual average growth rate (AAGR) of 9.1% during 2014-2024. India has maintained a services trade surplus consistently which peaked at US$ 105.6 billion in 2024. In 2024, India accounted for 4.3% global share and ranked 8th among the largest services exporting countries globally. However, considerable untapped potential remains in travel and tourism services where India holds a relatively smaller share in global exports at 2.0%, as it faces competition from other worldwide travel and tourism hubs **(Table 1.1)**.

Table 1.1 shows the major global exporter and importers of travel services in 2024 and their corresponding global shares and growth over the previous year. US was the largest travel services exporter while China was the largest travel services importer in 2024. India ranked 15th in terms of global travel services exports whereas it ranked 9th in terms of global travel services imports in 2024.

[3] Business services include research & development services, professional & management consulting services and technical & trade related services.

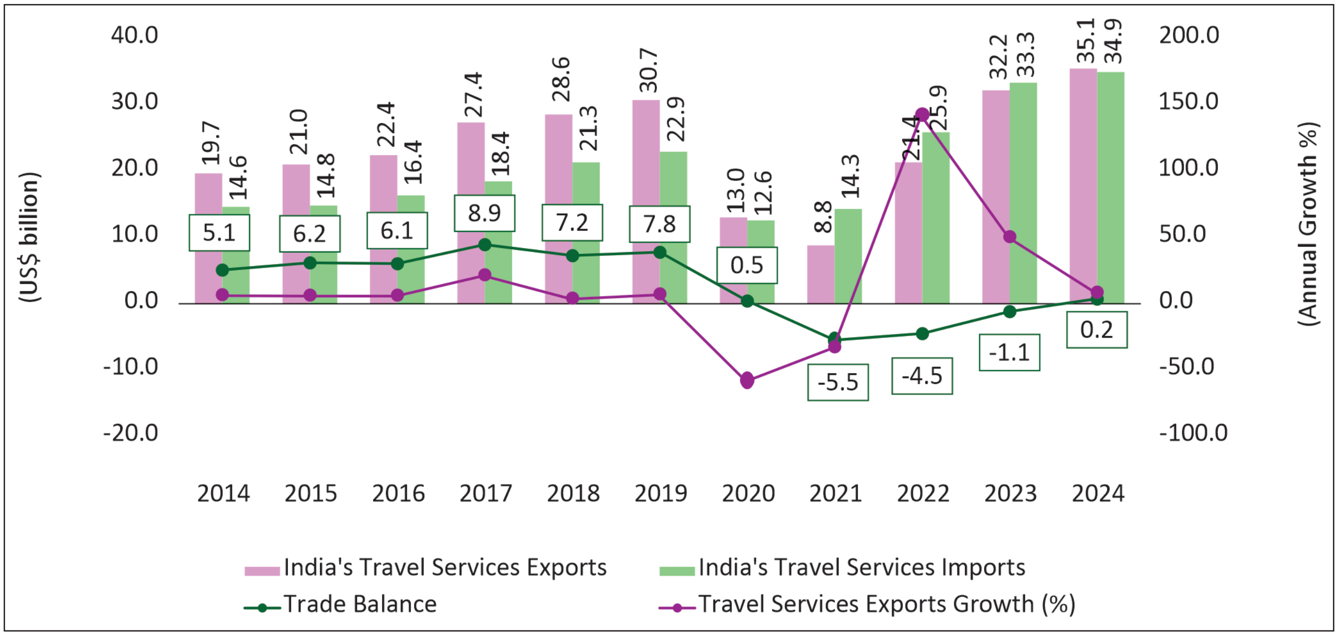
Table 1.1: Major Global Exporters and Importers of Travel Services in 2024

Rank	Exporter	Travel Services Exports (US$ billion)	Share in Global Travel Services Exports (%)	Growth in Exports over (Y-O-Y %)		Rank	Importer	Travel Services Imports (US$ billion)	Share in Global Travel Services Imports (%)	Growth in Imports (Y-O-Y %)
1	USA	215.0	12.4	13.7		1	China	251.0	15.1	27.9
2	Spain	106.7	6.1	15.8		2	Germany	120.6	7.3	4.5
3	UK	84.5	4.9	15.0		3	UK	119.4	7.2	19.1
4	France	77.2	4.4	8.2		4	France	60.1	3.6	7.3
5	Italy	58.8	3.4	5.0		5	Australia	45.6	2.8	8.1
6	Türkiye	56.3	3.2	12.5		6	Canada	43.6	2.6	11.1
7	Japan	53.3	3.1	38.8		7	Russia	38.8	2.3	11.6
8	Australia	51.8	3.0	12.4		8	Italy	35.8	2.2	4.7
9	Canada	49.4	2.8	8.9		**9**	**India**	**34.9**	**2.1**	**4.9**
10	Thailand	42.7	2.5	43.9		10	Spain	32.6	2.0	14.5
11	Saudi Arabia	41.0	2.4	13.8		11	Singapore	31.3	1.9	20.9
12	Germany	40.1	2.3	5.9		12	Republic of Korea	29.2	1.8	5.7
13	China	37.0	2.1	154.2		13	Hong Kong	28.9	1.7	27.2
14	Macao (China)	35.3	2.0	12.3		14	Saudi Arabia	27.7	1.7	16.9
15	**India**	**35.1**	**2.0**	**8.8**		15	Belgium	26.4	1.6	14.2
	World	**1739.7**	**100.0**	**13.4**			**World**	**1659.1**	**100.0**	**12.7**

Source: WTO; India Exim Bank Research

India’s travel services exports stood at US$ 35.1 billion in 2024 growing at an AAGR of 15.2% during 2014-2024, surpassing the total services exports AAGR of 9.1% during the same period. Travel services exports accounted for a share of 9.3% in India’s total services exports. Post-pandemic rise in India’s travel services imports has resulted in a change from a trade surplus in travel services to a trade deficit, as observed in **Chart 1.3**.

Chart 1.3: India’s Travel Services Trade



Source: WTO; India Exim Bank Research

The largest segment of India’s travel services exports was leisure travel accounting for a share of 91.6% followed by business (7.1%), education (0.8%) and health (0.5%) in 2024.

Tourism as an Engine of Economic Growth and Development

Tourism, as a major global economic sector, holds strong potential to foster inclusive development, especially in developing economies like India. By driving sustainable economic growth, reducing inequality, supporting environmental conservation, and strengthening global partnerships, tourism can contribute meaningfully to the achievement of multiple Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) defines the tourism value chain as “the sequence of primary and support activities which are strategically fundamental for the performance of the tourism sector. Linked processes such as policy making and integrated planning, product development and packaging, promotion and marketing, distribution and sales, and destination operations and services are the key primary activities of the tourism value chain. Support activities involve transport and infrastructure, human resources development, technology and systems development and other complementary goods and services which may not be related to core tourism businesses but have a high impact on the value of tourism”[4]. The **Exhibit 1.1** represents the tourism value chain from the place of origin to the destination.

[4] Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals through Tourism – Toolkit of Indicators for Projects (TIPs), UN Tourism, July 2023.

Exhibit 1.1: Tourism Value Chain

Planning and booking from place of origin
- Tour operators,travel agencies, onlinebooking platforms

Travel
- Airlines, car rental, train, bus and ferry companies, any other mode of transportation

Accomodation
- Hotels, guest houses, apartments, homestays, campings

Food and Beverage
- Restaurants and take aways

Leisure Activities
- Guides, shows, shopping, sports and adventure, health and wellness

Source: UNWTO; India Exim Bank Research

Consumption activities by tourists require other sectors to produce goods and services like food industries, handicrafts, cultural goods, sport activities, among others, thereby creating indirect demand for ancillary industries and services **(Exhibit 1.2)**. The infrastructure dimension includes the essential physical infrastructure required for offering tourism services. The availability of efficient and accessible transportation services and infrastructure is of utmost importance for a country to receive international tourists.

Natural and cultural resources offer significant potential for tourism-driven economic growth in many developing countries. The presence of natural and cultural heritage creates opportunities for developing countries to build vibrant and sustainable tourism sectors. However, fully leveraging this potential requires investment in site management, promotion, and infrastructure, along with building expertise and institutional capacity to maintain heritage sites.

Exhibit 1.2: Activities Supporting Tourism

Natural / Cultural Resources	• Flora and fauna, archaeological sites, non leisure resources (healthcare facilities and international universities)
Infrastructure	• Energy, water supply, transport connectivity, information and communication technology (ICT) and related systems
Ancilliary Industries	• Textile, furniture, handicrafts, consumer durables, agriculture and food processing
Ancilliary Services	• Education, banking, insurance, legal, health, human resource development

Source: UNWTO; India Exim Bank Research

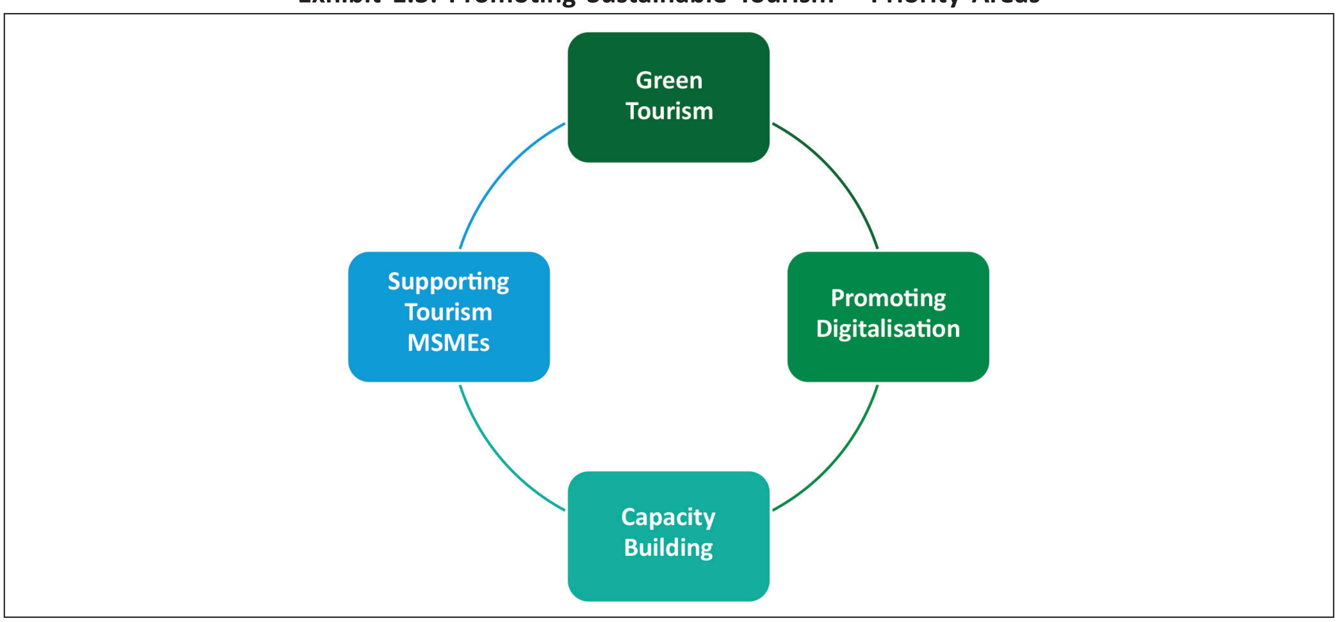
Tourism and Sustainable Development Goals

Tourism has the potential to contribute both directly and indirectly to all the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It is explicitly referenced in Goals 8, 12, and 14, which focus on inclusive and sustainable economic growth, sustainable consumption and production, and the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and marine resources, respectively.

As a key socioeconomic sector, tourism can drive job creation and sustainable economic development. Tourism can play a vital role in promoting inclusiveness, particularly for women, youth, and micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), by opening new opportunities for employment and entrepreneurship. The climate or natural and cultural resources which often define the type and attraction of a destination are also considered as assets for tourism. Sustainable tourism holds a central role in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. However, realizing this vision requires a robust implementation framework, sufficient financing, and investment in technology, infrastructure, and human capital.

Sustainability is an increasingly important element of sector development. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and UN Tourism define sustainable tourism as "tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities". A tourism destination can maximize its long-term competitiveness and sustainable development potential by effectively managing the following priority areas shown in **Exhibit 1.3**.

Exhibit 1.3: Promoting Sustainable Tourism – Priority Areas



Source: UNWTO; India Exim Bank Research

Scope of the Study

The Travel and Tourism Development Index (TTDI) report by the World Economic Forum (WEF) published in May 2024, ranked India 39th among 119 countries. The top ten performers in the index are the United States, Spain, Japan, France, Australia, Germany, the United Kingdom, China, Italy, and Switzerland. These leading countries typically benefit from favourable business environments, skilled labour force, open travel policies, high levels of ICT readiness. They also boast well-developed transport and tourism infrastructure, as well as natural, cultural, and non-leisure resources and attractions.

Robust and consistent growth in India’s services exports have managed to cushion the impact of widening merchandise trade deficit on India’s current account balance. The Reserve Bank of India Bulletin of April 2024 in its article on “What Drives India’s Services Exports?” highlighted that India has displayed significant recovery in travel services exports after the pandemic, and has the potential for further growth.

There is significant scope for India to further expand the travel and tourism sector, particularly through the improvement of tourism infrastructure. Many state governments have identified tourism and hospitality as priority sectors. In recognition of the sector’s capacity to drive employment-led growth, the Union Budget 2025–26 has earmarked ₹2,541.1 crores to support infrastructure development, skill enhancement, and improved travel facilitation. A flagship initiative under this allocation is the development of 50 leading tourist destinations in collaboration with states. Hotels in these destinations would be classified under infrastructure Harmonized Master List (HML) to facilitate investment. Connectivity to tourist sites is also aimed to be improved.

Additionally, the Union Budget 2025-26 also emphasizes medical tourism as a key engine of growth. The “Heal in India” initiative, which is to be promoted in partnership with the private sector, seeks to elevate India’s status as a leading global healthcare destination. By capitalizing on its advanced medical capabilities, modern infrastructure, and time-tested wellness traditions such as Ayurveda and Yoga, India aims to attract a growing number of international patients seeking high-quality, affordable healthcare.

In light of the above, India Exim Bank’s Study assesses the trends in India’s international travel and tourism exports and India’s position in the context of global hospitality and tourism industry. The Union Budget 2025-26 allocated 88% of the total allocations made to the tourism sector to tourism infrastructure. This Study therefore aims to focus on tourism infrastructure including the hospitality segment for business, leisure and healthcare.

The allocation to the tourism sector increased by 2.5% to ₹ 2541.1 crores in the Union Budget of 2025-26 as compared to the allocations in Union Budget of 2024-25. However, it was a hike of 198.8% as compared to the Revised Estimates of 2024-25 (₹ 850.4 crores) implying a gap in funding uptake. In this context, the study aims to identify the existing challenges, derive learnings from international best practises and suggest suitable recommendations to position India as a sustainable, high-value international tourist destination capable of maximizing foreign-exchange earnings. In the process, it would also help in reducing India’s travel and tourism imports which have increased in recent years with rising purchasing power and demand for other competitive international tourist destinations.

Chapter 2

Global Landscape of Travel and Tourism Services

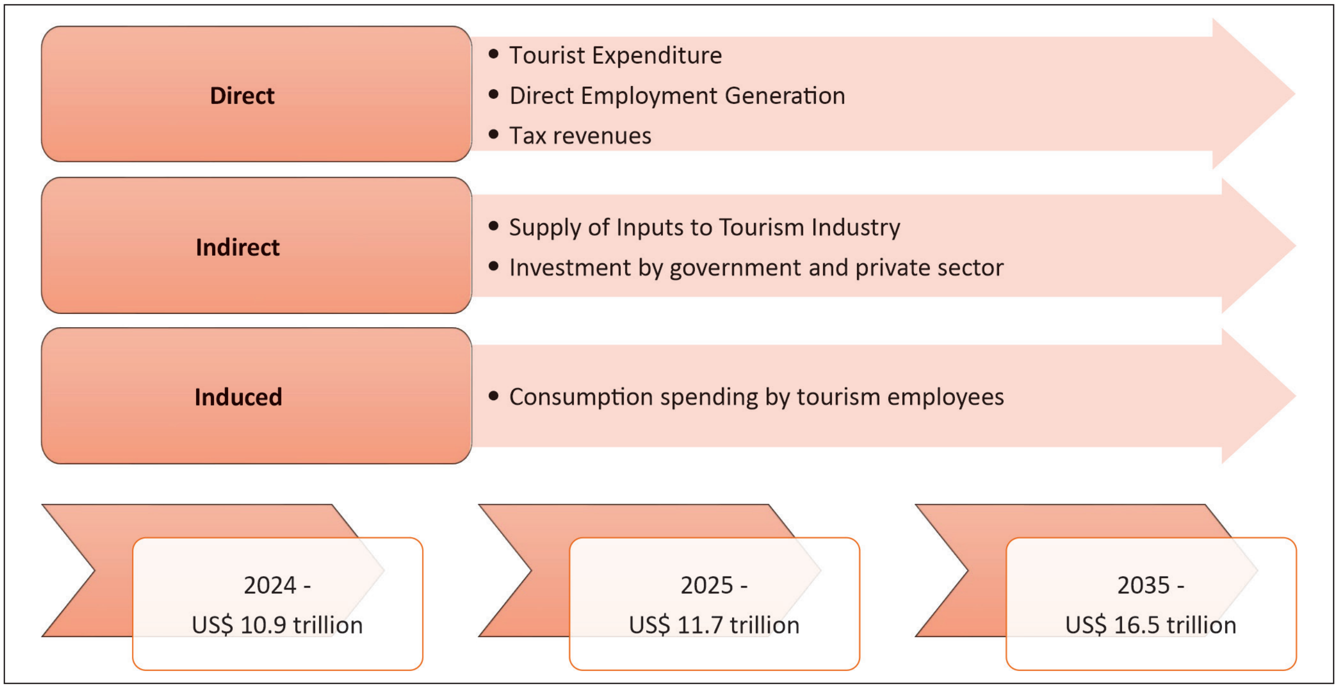
Tourism is widely recognized globally as a major engine of economic growth for playing a vital role in generating income, creating employment opportunities, attracting investment, and contributing to foreign exchange earnings. It can stimulate growth across various sectors such as transportation, hospitality, retail, and cultural services thereby amplifying its overall economic impact and positioning it as a critical component of national development strategies.

Tourism affects economies through three interrelated channels: direct, indirect, and induced effects. Direct effects refer to the immediate economic contributions resulting from tourism-related activities, including tourist expenditures, employment within the tourism sector, and tax revenues derived from tourism operations. Indirect effects arise from the sector's linkages with other industries, such as hotels sourcing inputs from suppliers or restaurants purchasing food from local producers. Induced effects encompass the broader economic activity stimulated by the spending of incomes earned in the tourism sector, such as when tourism employees consume goods and services or pay taxes. The overall economic impact of tourism is therefore shaped by the magnitude of these effects in conjunction with the structural characteristics of the tourism sector.

According to the World Travel and Tourism Council's Economic Impact Research 2025 report, the global travel and tourism industry is expected to contribute US$ 11.7 trillion to the world economy in 2025, up from US$ 10.9 trillion in 2024 **(Exhibit 2.1)**. This would represent 10.3% of global GDP, taking into account direct, indirect, and induced impacts. Looking further ahead, the sector's contribution is expected to reach US$ 16.5 trillion by 2035, or 11.5% of global GDP.

International tourism spending is anticipated to reach US$ 2.9 trillion in 2025, growing by a CAGR of 3.4% over 2019 and accounting for 26.2% of total travel and tourism spending. Leisure travel accounted for 79.3% of travel and tourism spending in 2024 while business travel spending accounted for the remaining 20.1% share.

Exhibit 2.1: Impact of Tourism on Economic Growth

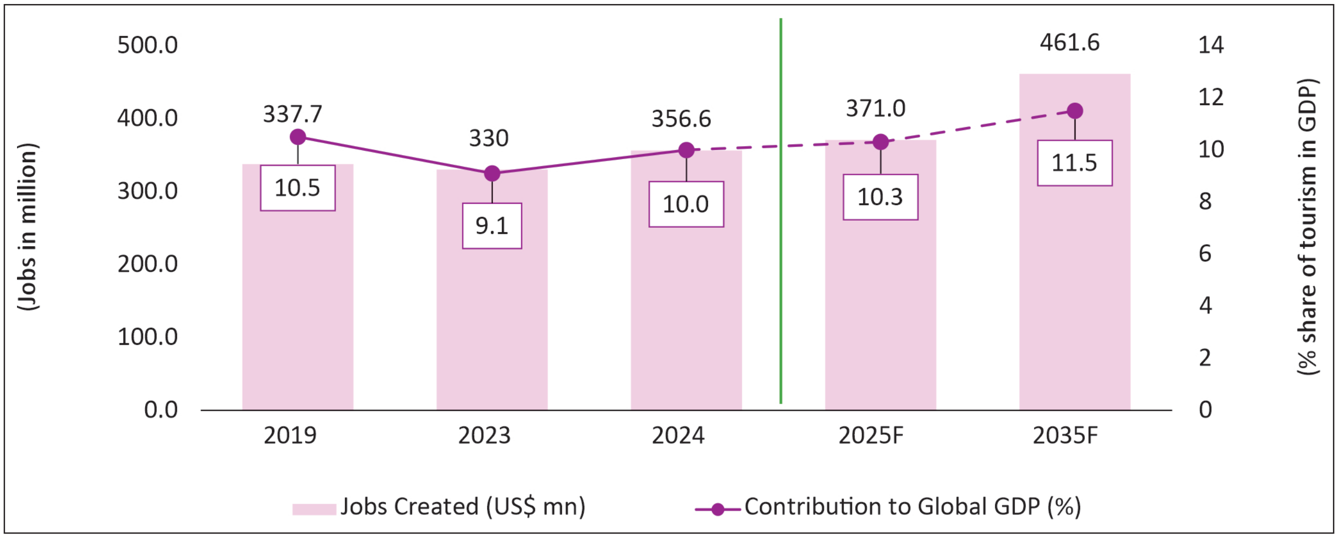


Note: Figures represent total contribution of tourism in global GDP in the respective years.

Source: Oxford Economics; India Exim Bank Research

After declining sharply due to the impact of COVID-19, the number of travel and tourism jobs worldwide bounced back in 2023, reaching around 330 million, nearly catching up with pre-pandemic levels. China and India recorded the highest travel and tourism employment worldwide. Tourism supported 357 million jobs globally in 2024 and the figure is projected to rise by another 14 million in 2025, reaching 371 million jobs, and further to more than 460 million jobs by 2035 **(Chart 2.1)**. These figures highlight tourism's expanding role in shaping the global economic and employment landscapes.

Chart 2.1: Contribution of Travel and Tourism to Global GDP and Employment



Source: World Travel and Tourism Council; India Exim Bank Research

International tourist arrivals recovered close to the pre-pandemic levels in 2024, with most destinations exceeding 2019 numbers **(Table 2.1 and Table 2.2)**. An estimated 1.4 billion international tourists were recorded around the world in 2024, an increase of 10.7% over 2023 driven by strong post-pandemic demand and robust performance from large source markets globally. However, when compared to 2019 levels, the above figure was lower by 1.3%. Increased air connectivity and enhanced visa facilitation also supported international travel. International tourism receipts on the other hand witnessed robust growth in 2024 after already having surpassed pre-pandemic levels in 2023. The receipts reached US$ 1.6 trillion in 2024, about 3% more than in 2023 and 6.7% over 2019 levels.

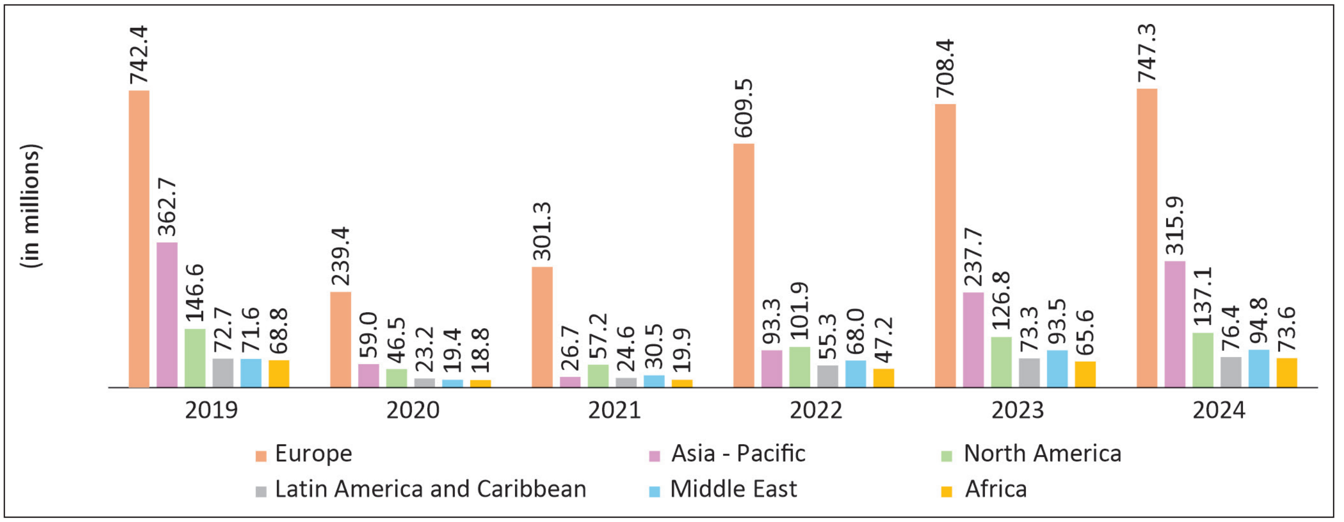
Table 2.1: International Tourist Arrival and Tourism Receipts

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
International tourist arrivals (number in millions)	1465	406	460	975	1305	1445
Growth (y-o-y %)	-	-72.3	13.3	112.0	33.8	10.7
International tourism receipts (USD billions)	1490	561	641	1140	1536	1590
Growth (y-o-y %)	-	-62.3	14.3	77.8	34.7	3.5

Source: UN Tourism Barometer January 2025; India Exim Bank Research

Overall, Europe reported the highest volume of inbound travellers across all regions, with around 747.3 million arrivals in 2024 **(Chart 2.2)**. Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean region, the Middle East and Africa all surpassed pre-pandemic number of tourist arrival in 2024, while North America and Asia-Pacific lagged the 2019 levels by 6.5%, 5.1% and 13%, respectively.

Chart 2.2: Number of International Tourist Arrivals Globally in 2024



Source: UN Tourism Barometer January 2025; India Exim Bank Research

In 2023 in terms of numbers, France maintained the top position in terms of international tourist arrivals in 2023, followed by Spain, United States, Italy, Turkey, Mexico, United Kingdom, Germany, Greece and Austria. India's share in international tourist arrivals has witnessed a modest increase from 1.2% in 2019 to 1.4% in 2023. However, unlike other major destinations like US, Italy, Mexico, Germany, and Thailand, India's international tourist arrivals have surpassed 2019 levels by 5.6% showcasing India's resilience.

Table 2.2: Countries with the Highest Number of International Tourist Arrivals (in millions)

Countries	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Share in Global Tourist Arrivals (%)	Growth in 2023 over 2019 (%)
France	90.9	41.7	48.4	93.2	100.0	7.7	10.0
Spain	83.5	18.9	31.2	71.7	85.2	6.5	2.0
United States	79.4	19.2	22.3	50.9	66.5	5.1	-16.2
Italy	64.5	25.2	26.9	49.8	57.3	4.4	-11.2
Turkey	51.2	15.9	29.9	50.5	55.2	4.2	7.8
Mexico	45.0	24.8	31.9	38.3	42.0	3.2	-6.7
United Kingdom	39.4	10.7	6.3	30.7	37.2	2.9	-5.6
Germany	39.6	12.5	11.7	28.5	34.8	2.7	-12.1
Greece	31.4	7.4	14.7	27.8	32.7	2.5	4.1
Austria	31.9	15.1	12.7	26.2	30.9	2.4	-3.1
Thailand	39.9	6.7	0.5	11.1	28.2	2.2	-29.3
United Arab Emirates	21.6	7.2	11.5	22.7	28.2	2.2	30.6
Saudi Arabia	17.5	4.1	3.5	16.6	27.4	2.1	56.6
Portugal	24.6	6.5	9.6	22.3	26.5	2.0	7.7
Japan	31.9	4.1	0.3	3.8	25.1	1.9	-21.3
India	**17.9**	**6.3**	**7.0**	**14.3**	**18.9**	**1.4**	**5.6**
World	1465	406	460	975	1305	100.0	-10.9

Source: UN Tourism; India Exim Bank Research

The United States was the global travel destination with the highest international tourism receipts in 2023 at US$ 189 billion. While this figure denoted a sharp annual increase, the figure remained below pre-pandemic levels. Meanwhile, Spain and the United Kingdom followed USA in the ranking in 2023, with receipts of around US$ 92 billion and US$ 73 billion, respectively. The share of India in the world tourism receipts had remained between 0.7% and 0.6% during 2001-2002. However, it has been increasing steadily since 2002 and has reached 2.1% during 2023 (US$ 32.2 billion). China's international tourism receipts stood at US$ 25 billion in 2023 as compared to US$ 35.8 billion in 2019.

Table 2.3: Destinations with Highest Inbound Tourism Receipts (in US$ billion)

Countries	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Share in Global Tourism Receipts 2023 (%)	Growth in 2023 over 2019 (%)
United States	199.0	72.5	71.7	142.9	189.1	12.3	-5.0
Spain	79.7	18.5	34.5	72.9	92.0	6.0	15.4
United Kingdom	58.4	26.7	33.0	67.6	73.4	4.8	25.7
France	63.5	32.6	40.8	59.7	71.2	4.6	12.1
Italy	49.5	19.9	25.0	43.7	55.9	3.6	12.9
United Arab Emirates	38.4	24.6	34.4	49.3	51.9	3.4	35.2
Turkey	34.3	13.3	26.6	41.2	49.5	3.2	44.3
Australia	45.5	25.8	17.0	24.6	46.1	3.0	1.3

Countries	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Share in Global Tourism Receipts 2023 (%)	Growth in 2023 over 2019 (%)
Japan	46.1	10.7	4.9	9.2	38.6	2.5	-16.3
Canada	29.8	13.9	15.3	28.1	38.5	2.5	29.2
Germany	41.8	22.1	22.3	31.9	37.4	2.4	-10.5
Saudi Arabia	16.4	4.0	3.8	25.2	36.0	2.3	119.5
India	**30.7**	**13.0**	**8.7**	**21.4**	**32.2**	**2.1**	**4.9**
Mexico	24.6	11.0	19.8	28.0	30.7	2.0	24.8
Thailand	59.8	13.4	5.1	14.9	29.7	1.9	-50.3
World	1490	561	641	1140	1536	100.0	3.1

Source: UN Tourism; India Exim Bank Research

China accounted for the highest outbound tourism expenditure worldwide in 2023, with Chinese travellers spending US$ 196.5 billion on outbound travel **(Table 2.4)**. However, it remained below the outbound travel expenditure recorded in 2019, the year before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Meanwhile, the United States and Germany followed China in the ranking in 2023. India's outbound tourism expenditure has been growing fuelled by its growing young population and rising disposable incomes reaching US$ 33.3 billion.

Table 2.4: Countries with the Highest Outbound Tourism Expenditure (in US$ billion)

Countries	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Growth in 2023 over 2019 (%)
China	254.6	131.1	109.4	114.8	196.5	-22.8
United States	132.0	33.7	56.7	115.3	158.7	20.2
Germany	93.2	38.9	51.0	89.7	115.4	23.8
United Kingdom	86.0	24.5	30.0	81.7	100.9	17.3
France	50.5	28.7	36.0	41.3	56.0	10.9
Australia	35.3	7.6	1.2	16.3	42.7	21.0
Canada	35.4	12.1	8.1	28.6	39.1	10.5
Russia	36.2	9.1	11.4	20.8	34.4	-5.0
Italy	30.3	10.9	15.0	26.9	34.2	12.9
India	**22.9**	**12.6**	**14.3**	**25.9**	**33.3**	**45.4**
Spain	27.8	8.7	12.6	21.9	28.5	2.5
South Korea	32.7	16.1	17.8	20.8	27.8	-15.0
Singapore	27.3	7.0	4.4	15.0	25.2	-7.7
United Arab Emirates	33.4	15.9	21.8	25.5	25.1	-24.9
Netherlands	20.5	7.4	10.6	18.7	24.8	21.0

Note: Data for outbound tourism expenditure is not available at a global level

Source: UN Tourism; India Exim Bank Research

Tourism has rebounded strongly following sharp declines in 2020-21 triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic with uneven growth observed across regions. Full recovery to pre-pandemic levels has been attained by the end of 2024, with continued growth expected over the long term. Asia-Pacific region is expected to be the major driver of growth in global outbound tourism in 2025 and 2026 followed by Africa and Europe **(Table 2.5)**.

Table 2.5: Outlook for Global Outbound Visitor Growth

	2022	2023	2024	2025[F]	2026[F]
Asia-Pacific	200.1%	177.6%	34.8%	20.2%	14.7%
North-East	89.5%	372.0%	46.3%	23.8%	15.9%
South-East	426.0%	105.9%	22.1%	16.9%	14.1%
South	174.6%	48.9%	19.2%	12.5%	12.6%
Africa	100.5%	42.8%	15.1%	13.8%	10.7%
Middle East	126.9%	25.9%	9.1%	8.6%	9.4%
Europe	101.0%	19.6%	9.9%	8.0%	6.4%
EU 27	109.6%	18.5%	9.6%	7.2%	5.7%
Americas	95.9%	32.6%	9.3%	2.6%	6.0%
North America	84.3%	31.7%	9.7%	1.4%	5.5%
Central and South America	171.9%	37.8%	8.1%	7.6%	8.0%
Caribbean	94.1%	20.8%	7.0%	6.4%	7.2%
World	**107.2%**	**37.7%**	**14.5%**	**9.8%**	**8.6%**

Source: Tourism Economics; India Exim Bank Research

In conclusion

Tourism affects economies through three interrelated channels: directly through immediate economic contributions by the tourists; indirectly through the sector's linkages with other ancillary industries; and induces broader economic activity as a consumption multiplier by supporting employment generation in the sector. Given the same, the tourism industry is expected to contribute US$ 11.5 trillion or 10.2% of global GDP in 2025.

Even as international tourist arrival (in numbers) in 2024 stood at 98.6% of the pre-pandemic levels, international tourism receipts have recovered by 6.7% indicating a rise in tourism spending and positive revenue generation by the sector. Global tourism recovery was driven by countries like Spain, UK, France, Italy, UAE, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Mexico and India in 2023. In terms of outbound tourism expenditure, that is an indicator of the major global markets for international tourism, China accounted for the highest expenditure followed by the US and Germany.

India has emerged as a fastest growing source country for outbound tourism driven by its rising economic prosperity and young population. However, India's share in international tourist arrivals and tourism receipts have been modest at 1.4% and 2.1% of global tourist arrivals and tourism receipts, respectively.

Chapter

3

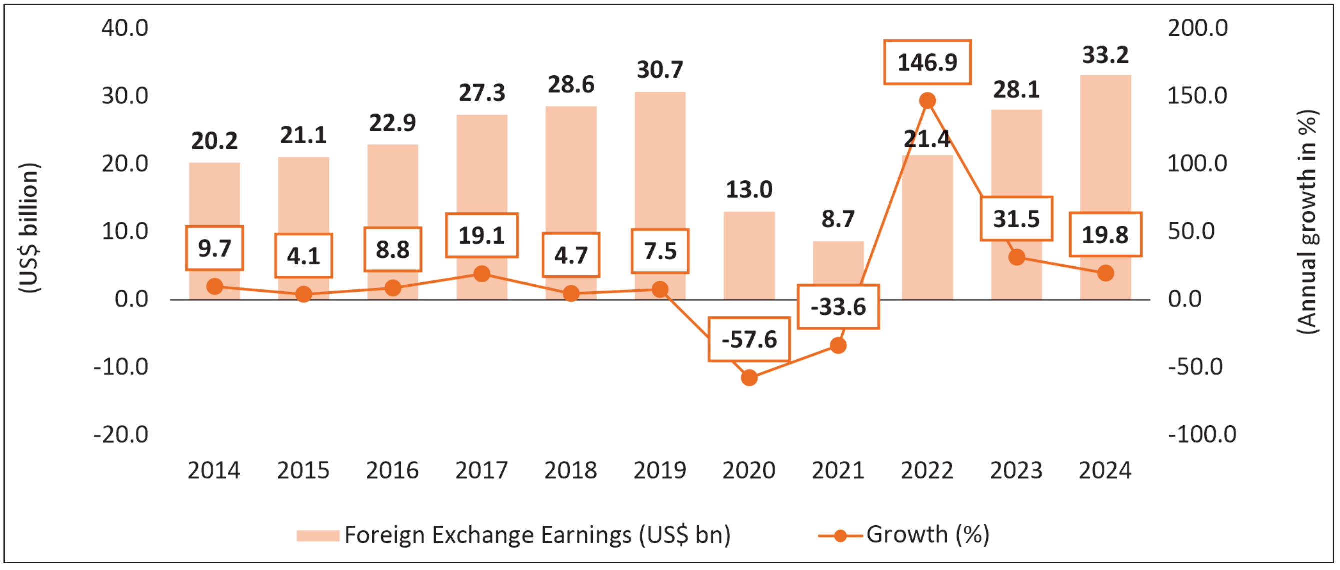
Trends and Aspects of India's Tourism Industry

The global tourism outlook by the World Economic Forum[5] emphasizes the sector's pivotal role in fostering economic diversification, particularly for emerging economies.

India accounts for 1.4% of international tourist arrivals and 2.1% of global tourism receipts, indicating significant growth potential for inbound tourism. India's outbound tourism expenditure has increased by 45.4% over the pre-pandemic period and stood at US$ 33.3 billion in 2023, globally as the 10th largest market.

With the implementation of targeted and strategic policy initiatives, India is well-positioned to emerge as a leading global tourism destination. Foreign exchange earnings from tourism have registered robust growth over the past decade peaking at US$ 33.2 billion in 2024 **(Chart 3.1)** surpassing the pre-pandemic earnings.

Chart 3.1: Foreign Exchange Earnings from India's Foreign Tourist Arrivals



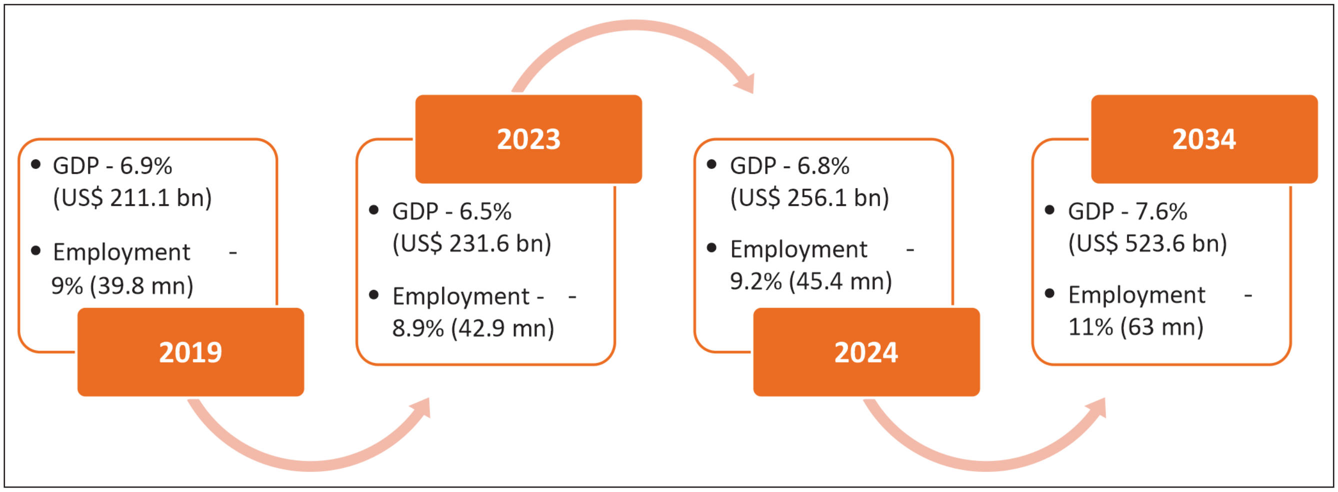
Source: India Tourism Data Compendium 2024; India Exim Bank Research

5 Future of Travel and Tourism: Embracing Sustainable and Inclusive Growth, World Economic Forum, January 2025.

India's tourism sector plays a key role in enhancing economic growth, employment generation and regional development with a multiplier effect on the activity of related sectors. According to the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, estimated share of tourism jobs in India during 2022-23 stood at 12.6%. The tourism sector contribute 5% to India's GDP during the same period, further highlighting its significant role in the country's economic growth. However, this captures only the direct and indirect impacts of tourism on the economy.

To further understand the multiplier effect that tourism has on GDP and employment, direct, indirect and induced effects need to be considered (as defined in Chapter 2). According to the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC), the tourism sector is estimated to contribute over 6.8% of India's GDP, equivalent to US$ 256.1 billion and generate more than 45 million jobs (9.2% of total jobs created in the economy) in 2024 **(Exhibit 3.1)**.

Exhibit 3.1: Contribution of Tourism in India's GDP



Note: Data for 2024 are estimated and data pertaining to 2034 are projections.

Source: World Travel and Tourism Council; India Exim Bank Research

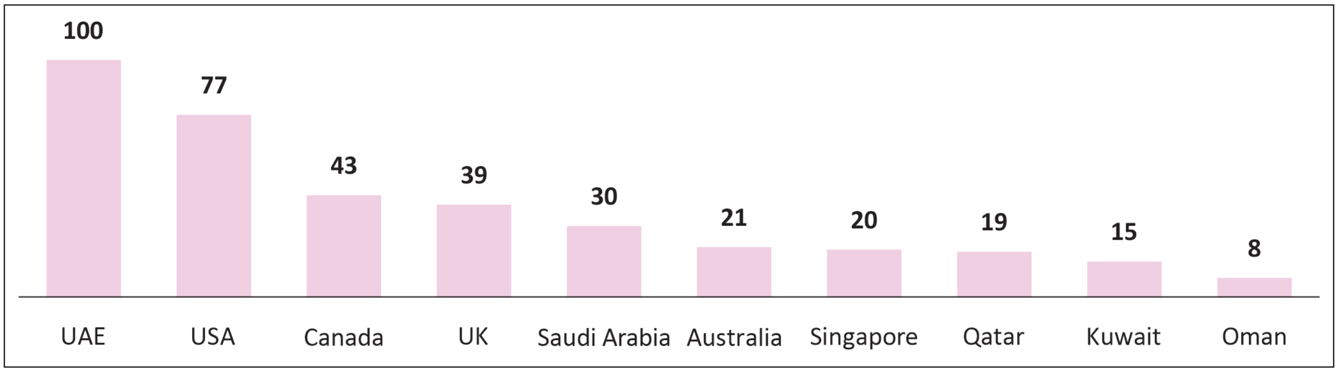
Besides contributing in terms of foreign exchange earnings and domestic consumption spending and investment, tourism also holds significant potential to create large-scale employment opportunities. In fact, data shows that there has been a linear increase in employment in the sector, from pre-pandemic levels. India's tourism sector has witnessed substantial growth in recent years, drawing increasing numbers of both domestic and international visitors. In 2023, domestic spending contributed about 85% to India's travel and tourism GDP whereas foreign visitor spending contributed around 15%.

A notable shift in consumer behaviour highlights a growing interest in unique and authentic experiences, with travellers increasingly exploring lesser-known destinations and seeking deeper cultural engagement. There is also a rising emphasis on sustainable and eco-friendly travel choices, reflecting greater environmental awareness among Indian tourists. Additionally, adventure tourism and wellness retreats are gaining traction among contemporary travellers. India's rich cultural heritage, historical significance, and diverse natural landscapes continue to position it as a compelling destination, while its lively festivals, vibrant marketplaces, and distinctive culinary offerings further enhance its tourism appeal.

The rising middle-class population supported by growing disposable incomes, has accelerated the demand for travel and tourism services in India. Government policy initiatives to develop tourism related infrastructure, promotion and marketing, and simplified visa processes have also played a crucial role in driving the growth of the industry. Further, the increasing connectivity through air, road, and rail networks has made travel within India easier and affordable for travellers. The Government of India has set a target of attracting 100 million inbound tourists by 2047, to significantly boost the Indian economy and elevate the country's standing in the global travel landscape.

The proliferation of digital platforms and online booking services has further enhanced accessibility and convenience, reshaping the travel experience. The Destination Insights with Google (DIG), an online platform designed to track tourism industry across the world, provides indices based on searches made by the potential tourists related to travel destinations. The Google Search Volume Index (GSVI) of DIG provides an estimate of interest of international and domestic travellers to visit various destinations in a country. The index (GSVI-DIG) ranges between 0 and 100, where 100 indicates the highest relative search interest for travel to a particular destination during a specific period. The GSVI-DIG index has been observed to have remained above 50 for India since February 2022, and its rising trend indicates increasing foreign tourist interest in India. In terms of most searched destinations in India, the major cities were New Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Hyderabad, Bengaluru and Kochi[6]. **Chart 3.2** shows the countries from which the largest volume of searches was generated during 2024 for India. UAE, USA, Canada, UK were among the top countries with the most volume of searches by international tourists.

Chart 3.2: Origin Country Index by Volume of Consumer Search Interest in 2024



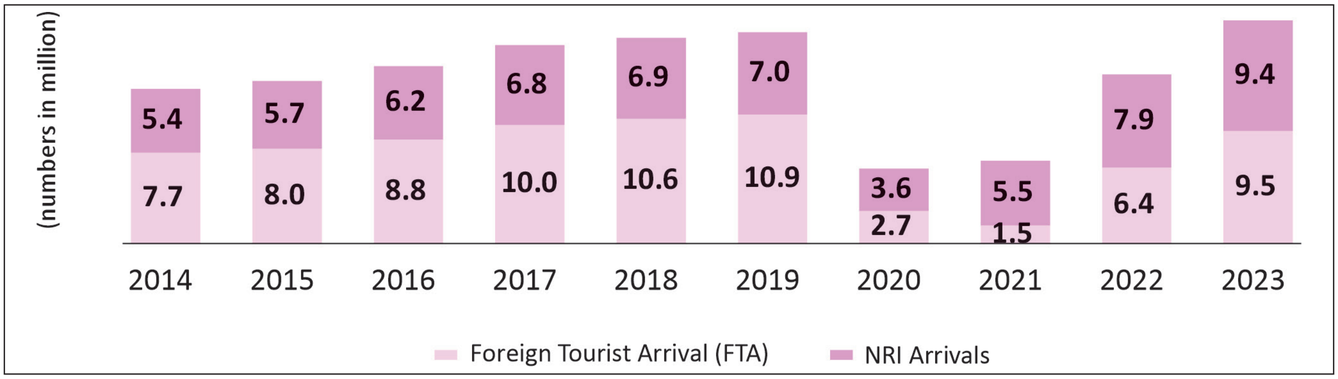
Source: Destination Insights by Google; India Exim Bank Research

Foreign Tourism Arrival Trends in India

After the easing of pandemic related travel restrictions in 2022, foreign tourism into India has shown increasing signs of revival. In the year 2023, India registered 9.5 million Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) i.e. achieving around 87% recovery of pre-pandemic level with a growth of 47.9% over 2022. International Tourist Arrivals (ITAs) have reached 18.9 million, surpassing the previous peak of 17.9 million in 2019 and exceeding pre-pandemic levels **(Chart 3.3**).

6 Digital Footprints: Decoding India's Inbound Tourism through Internet Searches, Lokesh and A R Jayaraman, RBI Bulletin May 2025.

Chart 3.3: Trend of International Tourist Arrivals in India

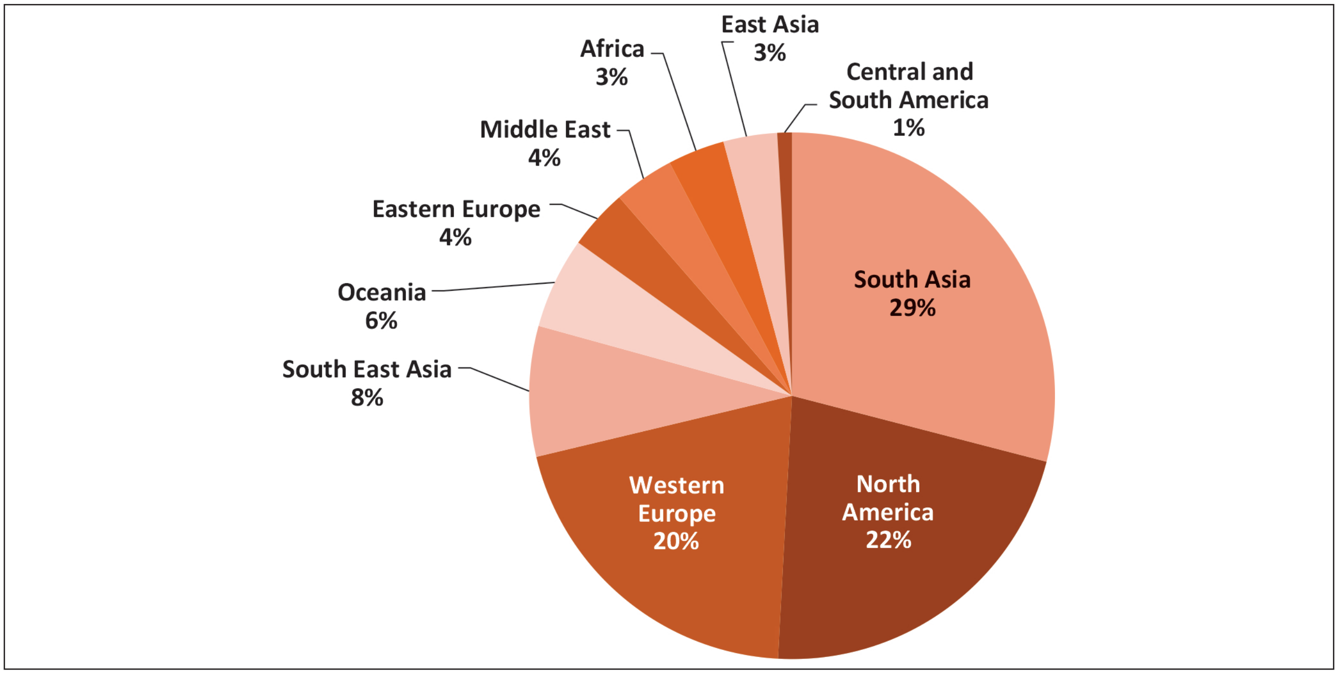


Note: From 2014 onwards, Ministry of Tourism has started to compile the arrivals of NRIs on annual basis. In concordance with UNWTO, ITAs include both FTAs and arrivals of NRIs.

Source: India Tourism Data Compendium 2024; India Exim Bank Research

According to the India Tourism Data Compendium 2024, Asia was the leading source region for foreign tourist arrivals (FTAs) to India, with South Asian countries like Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Nepal contributing significantly, Bangladesh being the top source overall. From East and Southeast Asia, China, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, Thailand, and Singapore were key source markets. Europe followed as a major region, particularly Western Europe, with the United Kingdom, Germany, and France among the top source countries, while Russia leading from Eastern Europe. The US and Canada, contributed significantly to long-haul tourism, from North America, supported by business ties and a large Indian diaspora. The Middle East, notably the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Oman, and Qatar, is a growing market, largely driven by medical tourism and family visits. From Africa, countries such as South Africa, Kenya, and Nigeria were the major source markets while Australia and New Zealand led from Oceania. Central and South America account for the least share, with visitors from mainly Mexico, Brazil and Argentina. **Chart 3.4** shows the regional share of foreign tourist arrivals in India in 2023.

Chart 3.4: Region-wise Foreign Tourist Arrival in India in 2023



Source: India Tourism Data Compendium 2024; India Exim Bank Research

Overall, the top five countries for FTAs to India in 2023, were Bangladesh, the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia. The following table shows the country-wise foreign tourist arrivals in India between 2014 and 2023. Bangladesh has replaced the US as the largest source country in recent years whereas UK, Australia and Canada have emerged among the top 5 in 2023, replacing Sri Lanka and Russia. China's position has declined as compared to pre-pandemic years. Foreign tourist arrivals from China may pick up in coming years as India has resumed issuing tourist visas to Chinese nationals from July 24, 2025, after a five-year hiatus. Table 2.3 in Chapter 2 listed the top 15 countries with highest outbound tourism expenditure in 2023 - India's major source countries featured 9 of them as highlighted in the **Table 3.1**. The other countries which do not appear among the major source countries for India's FTA in 2023 are China, Spain, South Korea, UAE, and Netherlands.

Table 3.1: Country-wise Foreign Tourist Arrival in India

2014				2019				2023			
Rank	Country	FTA ('000)	Share (%)	Rank	Country	FTA ('000)	Share (%)	Rank	FTA ('000)	2023	Share (%)
	Total	**7,679.1**	**100.0**		**Total**	**10,930.4**	**100.0**		**Total**	**9,520.9**	**100.0**
1	USA	1,119.0	14.6	1	Bangladesh	2,577.7	23.6	1	Bangladesh	2,119.8	22.3
2	Bangladesh	942.6	12.3	2	USA	1,512.0	13.8	2	USA	1,691.5	17.8
3	UK	838.9	10.9	3	UK	1,000.3	9.2	3	UK	920.6	9.7
4	Sri Lanka	301.6	3.9	4	Australia	367.2	3.4	4	Australia	456.2	4.8
5	Russia	269.8	3.5	5	Canada	351.9	3.2	5	Canada	385.9	4.1
6	Canada	268.5	3.5	6	China	339.4	3.1	6	Sri Lanka	280.3	2.9
7	Malaysia	262.0	3.4	7	Malaysia	334.6	3.1	7	Malaysia	262.5	2.8
8	France	246.1	3.2	8	Sri Lanka	330.9	3.0	8	Germany	223.6	2.3
9	Australia	239.8	3.1	9	Germany	265.0	2.4	9	Nepal	195.4	2.1
10	Germany	239.1	3.1	10	Russia	251.3	2.3	10	France	189.0	2.0
11	Japan	219.5	2.9	11	France	247.2	2.3	11	Singapore	183.8	1.9
12	China	181.0	2.4	12	Japan	238.9	2.2	12	Russia	164.1	1.7
13	Singapore	150.7	2.0	13	Singapore	190.1	1.7	13	Japan	150.5	1.6
14	Nepal	126.4	1.6	14	Thailand	170.0	1.6	14	Thailand	116.1	1.2
15	Thailand	121.4	1.6	15	Nepal	164.0	1.5	15	Italy	116.0	1.2

Note: The countries highlighted in orange are among the top 15 countries with highest outbound tourism expenditure recorded in 2023.

Source: India Tourism Data Compendium 2024; India Exim Bank Research

Table 3.2 shows the major global travel services importers in 2024 with a global share of at least 1% and have recorded positive AAGR during 2019 to 2024. India needs to target these potential countries, especially the ones where import growth (AAGR) of travel services imports has been greater than the world AAGR of 11.8% between 2019 to 2024, indicating significant demand in these countries, to enhance its foreign tourist arrival footfalls and increase foreign exchange earnings.

Table 3.2: Potential Countries for Increasing India's Foreign Tourist Arrival

Country	Share in Global Imports of Travel Services (%)	Import of Travel Services AAGR % (2019-2024)	Share in India's FTA (%)
China	15.1	4.7	0.3
USA	10.7	24.9	17.8
Germany	7.3	13.3	2.3
United Kingdom	7.2	24.2	9.7
France	3.6	5.4	2.0
Australia	2.8	250.8	4.8
Canada	2.6	34.0	4.1
Russia	2.3	19.4	1.7
Italy	2.2	14.5	1.2
Spain	2.0	16.9	0.8
Singapore	1.9	39.2	1.9
Republic of Korea	1.8	1.4	1.0
Hong Kong	1.7	47.8	0.5
Saudi Arabia	1.7	13.9	0.4
Belgium	1.6	7.9	0.4
Netherlands	1.5	13.0	0.9
Switzerland	1.5	9.6	0.4
Taiwan	1.2	84.5	-
Brazil	1.2	20.6	0.2
Norway	1.1	33.0	0.2
Austria	1.0	17.1	0.3
World	**100.0**	**11.8**	**100.0**

Note: Countries highlighted in orange have registered higher growth in travel services imports than the global travel services import growth.

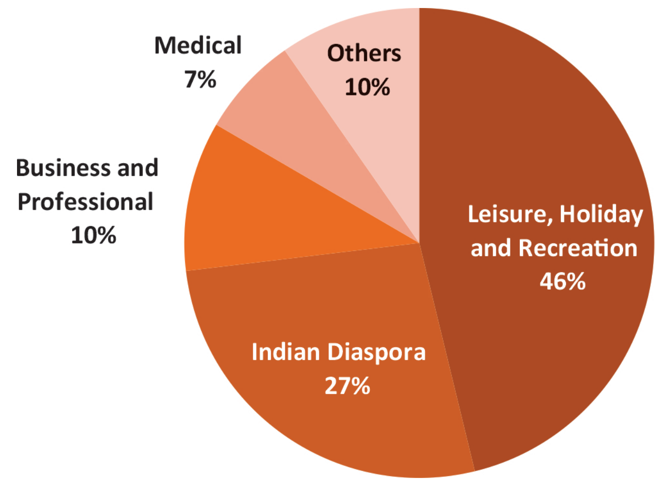
Source: WTO; India Exim Bank Research

An analysis of Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) to India in 2023 by purpose of visit reveals distinct patterns, reflective of the country's diverse tourism appeal. The majority of foreign tourists (46.2%) visited for leisure, holiday, and recreation **(Chart 3.5)**, reflecting India's standing as a prominent global destination for vacation and cultural exploration. Visits by members of the Indian Diaspora (OCI cardholders) accounted for the second-largest share (26.9%), indicating familial and personal ties between overseas Indians and their country of origin. Business and professional travel comprised 10.3% of FTAs, highlighting India's increasing attractiveness as a hub for international commerce and professional engagement. Medical tourism, contributing 6.9% of total arrivals, was particularly notable from Africa (18.9%), South Asia (18.3%), and the Middle East (17.4%), underscoring India's growing reputation for providing accessible, high-quality healthcare services. In contrast, education-related travel constituted a minimal share of 0.5%, suggesting limited international student inflow relative to other travel purposes. East Asia reported the highest proportion of business-related arrivals (49.3%), whereas Central and South America recorded the highest share of leisure-focused travellers (62.3%).

In 2023, air travel remained the dominant mode of transportation for Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) in India, accounting for 79.4% of all arrivals, followed by land (20.1%) and sea (0.5%). In 2023, Delhi Airport recorded the highest share of FTAs by air in India, accounting for 38.2% of total air arrivals. It was followed by Mumbai

Airport (19.0%), Chennai Airport (10.5%), Bengaluru Airport (7.6%), and Hyderabad Airport (4.7%). The share of arrivals through land check-post has increased from 13.5% in 2014 to 20.1% in 2023. This is mainly driven by South Asia, with arrivals through Haridaspur land check post especially from Bangladesh. During 2023, Mumbai was the major port of entry for the tourists from Africa (45.9% of the total FTAs from this region). For rest of the regions, Delhi was the major port of entry for FTAs.

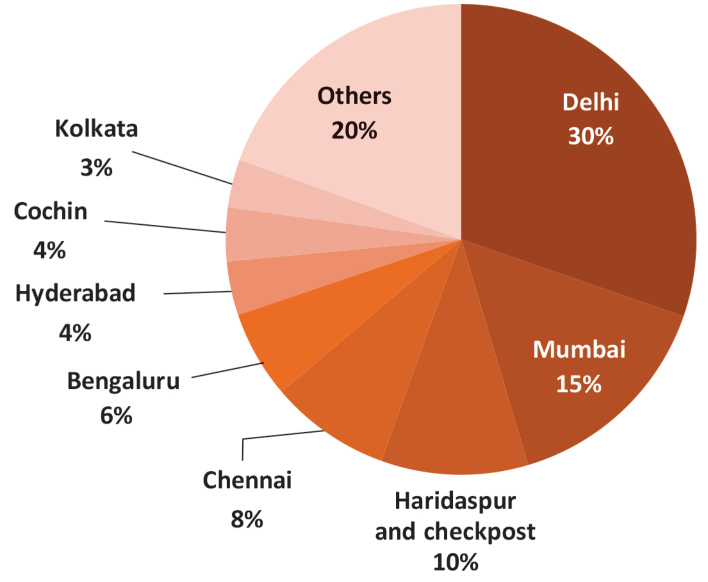
Chart 3.5: Purpose of Visit by Foreign Tourists



Source: India Tourism Data Compendium 2024; India Exim Bank Research

As shown in **Chart 3.6**, in 2023, the Delhi Airport had registered the maximum number of FTAs in India accounting for 30.3% of total FTAs from all modes, followed by Mumbai airport (15.1%), Haridaspur land check post (10.1%), Chennai airport (8.3%), Bengaluru (6.0%), Hyderabad (3.7%), Cochin (3.7%), and Kolkata airport (3.3%).

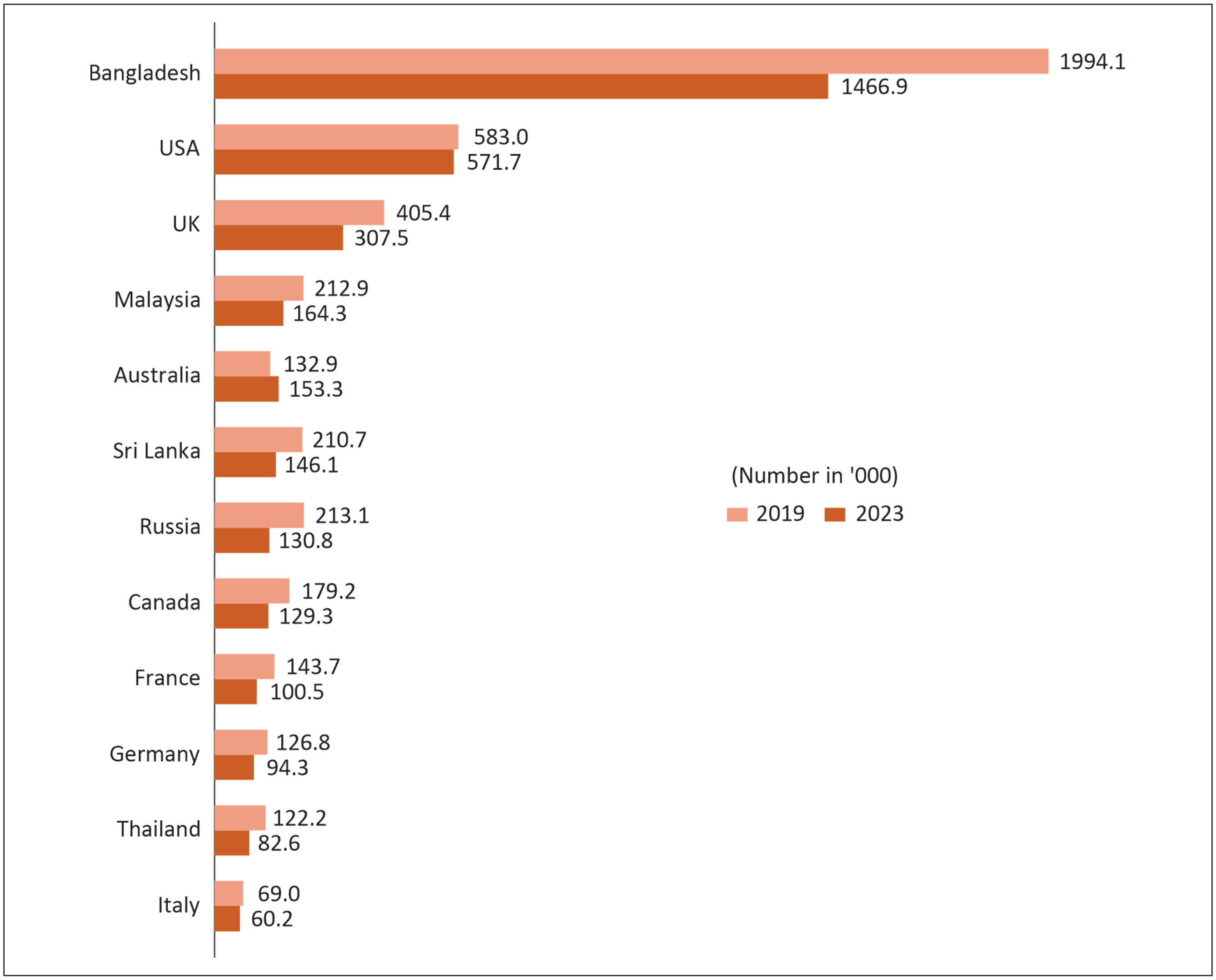
Chart 3.6: FTAs in India through Major Ports of Entry in 2023



Source: India Tourism Data Compendium 2024; India Exim Bank Research

FTAs in leisure, holiday and recreation category stood at 4.4 million in 2023, 87% higher when compared to 2022, but remained below pre-pandemic levels by 29.5%. **Chart 3.7** shows the major source countries which contributed to the highest number of foreign tourist arrivals in India in 2023, for leisure, holiday and recreation. As observed in the chart, it is a mix of advanced economies as well as neighbouring developing economies. The top 5 economies accounted for 60% share of India's FTA arrival in leisure tourism, indicating the need for rebalancing and diversifying foreign tourist sources. Bangladesh accounted for the largest share in 2023 at 33.3%, followed by USA (13%), UK (7%), Malaysia (3.7%) and Australia (3.5%), among others.

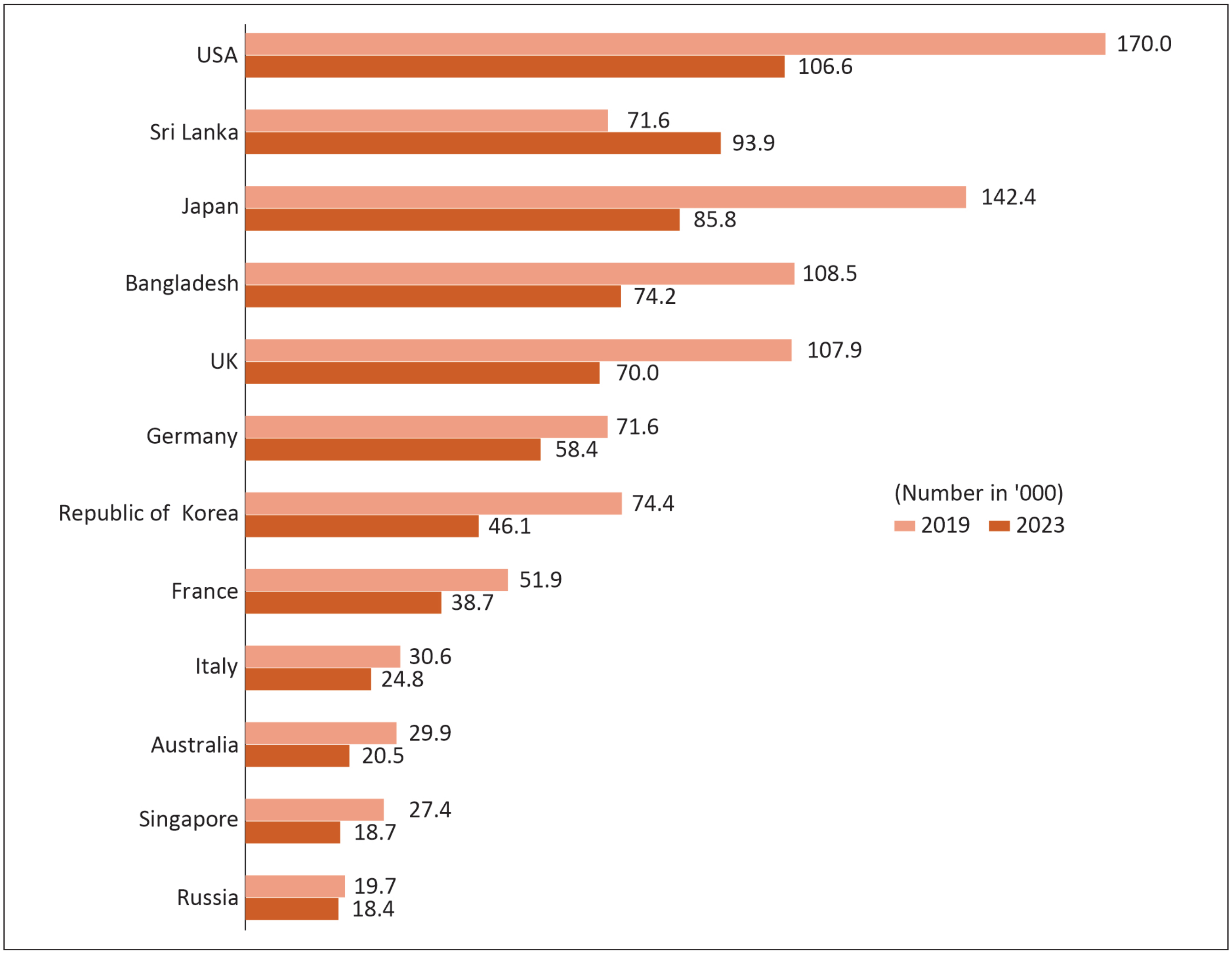
Chart 3.7: Major Source Countries for Foreign Tourist Arrival - Leisure, Holiday and Recreation



Source: India Tourism Data Compendium 2024; India Exim Bank Research

Foreign tourist arrivals in India for business and professional purposes stood at 980.7 thousand in 2023, which was a 49.3% increase as compared to 2022 levels, but continued to remain below the pre-pandemic levels by 38.9%. **Chart 3.8** shows the source countries for highest number of foreign tourist arrivals for business and professional purposes with USA accounting for the largest share (10.9% in 2023), followed by Sri Lanka (9.6%), Japan (8.7%), Bangladesh (7.6%) and UK (7.1%), among other countries.

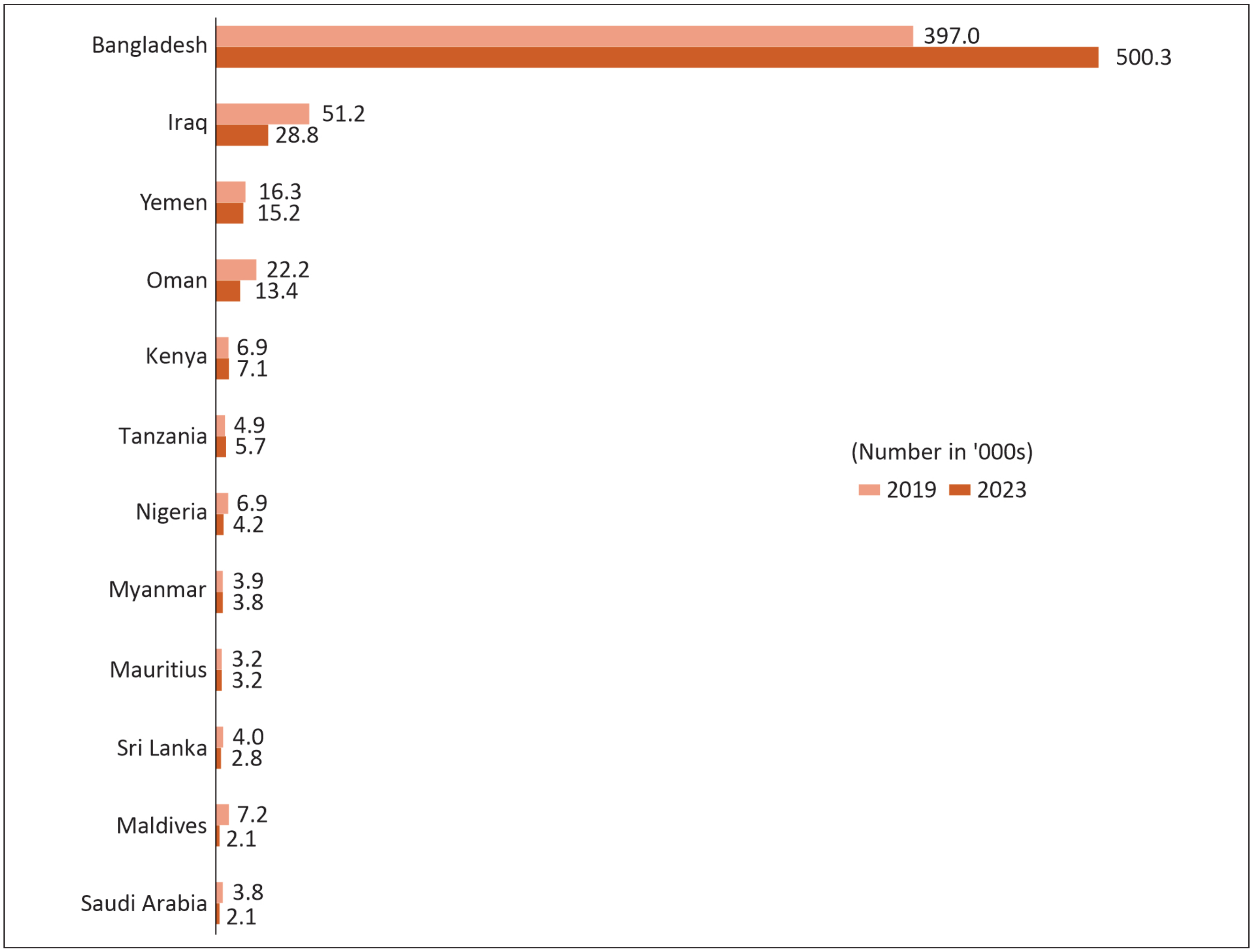
Chart 3.8: Major Source Countries for Foreign Tourist Arrival - Business and Professional Purposes



Source: India Tourism Data Compendium 2024; India Exim Bank Research

Foreign tourist arrivals in India for medical treatment increased by 37.9% to 656.9 thousand in 2023, as compared to 2022 but remained below pre-pandemic levels by 5.8%. The countries which accounted for the major share of foreign nationals visiting India for medical treatment in 2023 included Bangladesh (76.2% share) followed by Iraq (4.4%), Yemen (2.3%), Oman (2%), and Kenya (1.1%) as shown in **Chart 3.9**.

Chart 3.9: Major Source Countries for Foreign Tourist Arrivals – Medical Treatment

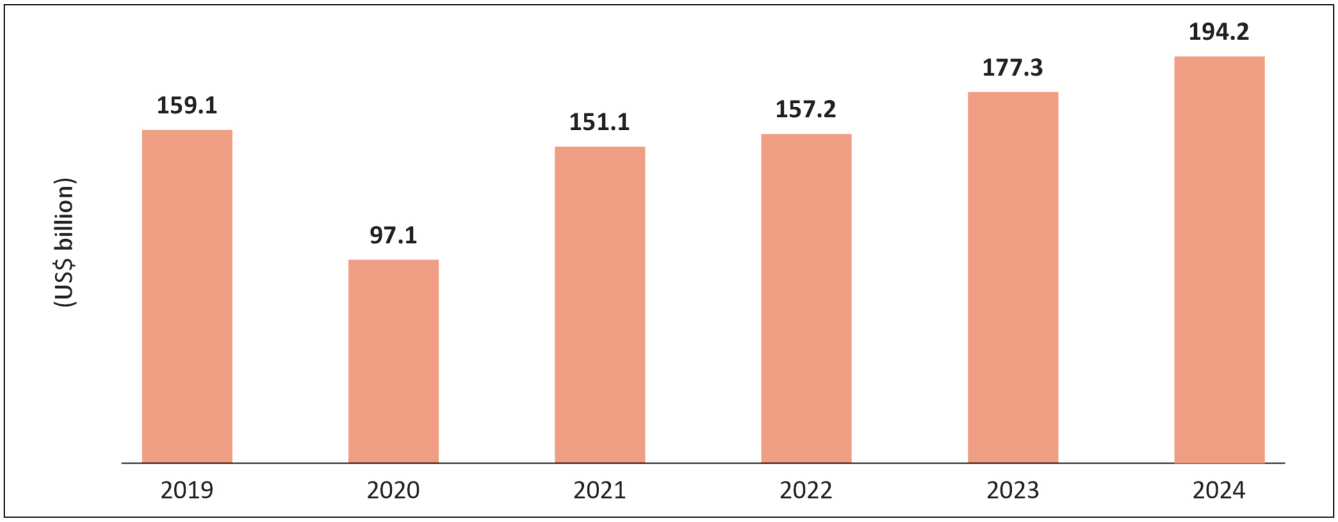


Source: India Tourism Data Compendium 2024; India Exim Bank Research

Domestic Tourism

Strong growth in domestic visitor spending has led the tourism sector's path toward post-pandemic recovery. The domestic visitor spending across India in 2023 amounted to about US$ 177 billion and is estimated to grow to US$ 194 billion in 2024. It is further projected to grow up to US$ 410 billion by 2030, with India emerging as the fourth-largest spender on tourism, as India's per capita income is expected to grow by 164.8% from US$ 2711 in 2024 to US$ 4469 in 2030 **(Chart 3.10)**.

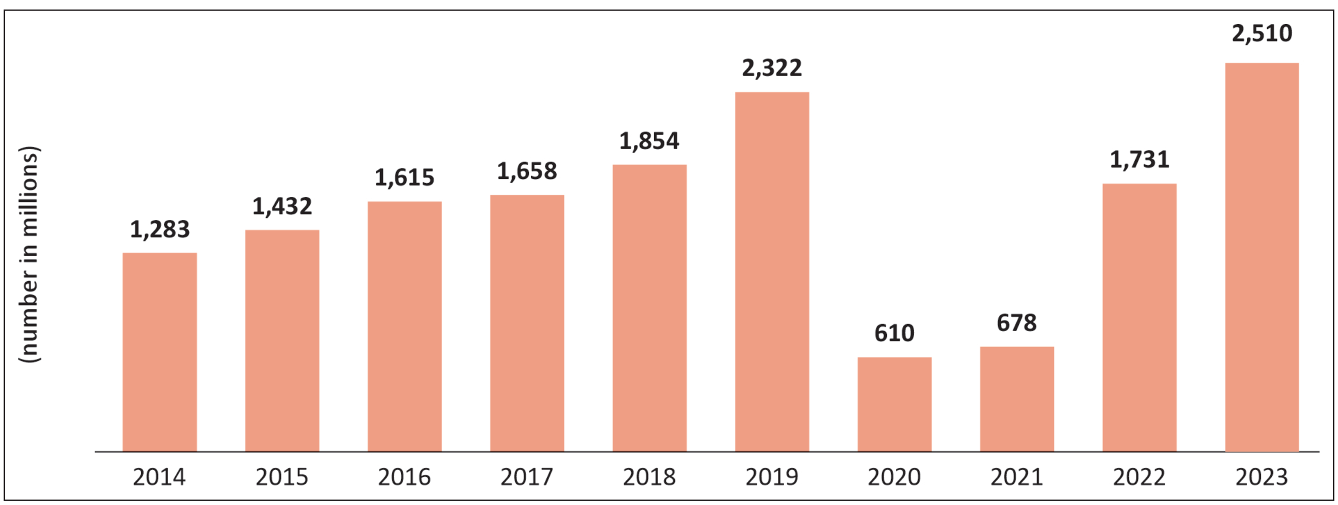
Chart 3.10: Domestic Expenditure on Tourism in India



Source: Statista; India Exim Bank Research

As is evident from **Chart 3.11** below, the numbers of domestic tourist visits to states and union territories during 2011 to 2019, has grown steadily. However, due to the pandemic there was a sudden decrease in domestic tourist visitors in the year 2020. Following this, in the years 2021, 2022 and 2023 domestic tourist visits have revived registering positive annual growth of 11.1%, 155.5% and 45.0% respectively.

Chart 3.11: Domestic Tourist Visits to All States and Union Territories



Source: India Tourism Data Compendium 2024; India Exim Bank Research

The following table shows state and union territory wise domestic and foreign tourist visits in 2023. Maharashtra accounted for the largest share of foreign tourist visits in 2023, followed by West Bengal, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. On the other hand, in terms of domestic tourist visits, Uttar Pradesh accounted for the largest share, followed by Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan.

Table 3.3: State / UT-wise Domestic and Foreign Tourist Visits in 2023

Rank	State/UT	Domestic Tourists		Foreign Tourists	
		Numbers (in million)	Share (%)	Numbers (in million)	Share (%)
1	Uttar Pradesh	478.53	19.07	1.60	8.32
2	Tamil Nadu	286.01	11.40	1.18	6.10
3	Karnataka	284.12	11.32	0.41	2.13
4	Andhra Pradesh	254.71	10.15	0.06	0.31
5	Gujarat	178.07	7.10	2.81	14.58
6	Rajasthan	179.05	7.13	1.70	8.83
7	Maharashtra	161.36	6.43	3.39	17.60
8	West Bengal	145.67	5.80	2.71	14.06
9	Madhya Pradesh	111.95	4.46	0.18	0.95
10	Bihar	81.59	3.25	0.55	2.84
11	Telangana	58.45	2.33	0.16	0.84
12	Uttarakhand	58.14	2.32	0.14	0.74
13	Delhi	39.42	1.57	1.83	9.50
14	Punjab	35.71	1.42	0.74	3.86
15	Jharkhand	35.78	1.43	0.19	0.98
16	Chhattisgarh	26.02	1.04	0.00	0.01
17	Kerala	21.87	0.87	0.65	3.37
18	Jammu & Kashmir	20.68	0.82	0.06	0.29
19	Himachal Pradesh	15.94	0.64	0.06	0.33
20	Odisha	9.73	0.39	0.05	0.23
21	Goa	8.18	0.33	0.45	2.35
22	Assam	7.61	0.30	0.02	0.12
23	Puducherry	2.09	0.08	0.03	0.16
24	Haryana	2.01	0.08	0.00	0.01
25	Sikkim	1.32	0.05	0.09	0.49
26	Meghalaya	1.37	0.05	0.02	0.10
27	Arunachal Pradesh	1.04	0.04	0.00	0.02
28	Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu	1.00	0.04	0.00	0.02
29	Ladakh	0.76	0.03	0.04	0.21
30	Tripura	0.37	0.01	0.07	0.35
31	Chandigarh	0.37	0.01	0.03	0.16
32	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	0.32	0.01	0.01	0.05
33	Mizoram	0.21	0.01	0.00	0.02
34	Nagaland	0.10	0.00	0.01	0.03
35	Manipur	0.06	0.00	0.00	0.02
36	Lakshadweep	0.05	0.00	0.00	0.01
	Total	**2509.63**	**100.00**	**19.25**	**100.00**

Source: India Tourism Data Compendium 2024; India Exim Bank Research

Policy Initiatives Undertaken to Promote Tourism in India

The ‘Swadesh Darshan’ scheme was launched by the Ministry of Tourism in 2014-15 to compliment the efforts of respective State Governments and UT administrations’ for building tourism infrastructure and facilities across the country. The Ministry of Tourism has revamped its Swadesh Darshan scheme in the form of Swadesh Darshan 2.0 in 2022, with the objective of creating Sustainable and Responsible tourism destinations7.

The Ministry of Tourism has invited proposals for ‘Challenge Based Destination Development’, a sub-scheme under Swadesh Darshan 2.0 in November 2023. This sub-scheme aims for the holistic development of destinations to enhance tourist experience across the tourism value chain to transform tourist destinations as sustainable and responsible destinations. Under this sub-scheme, the Ministry of Tourism has identified 42 destinations across the country under 4 categories viz. (a) Culture and Heritage Destinations, (b) Spiritual Tourism, (c) Eco-tourism and Amrit Dharohar destinations and (d) Vibrant Villages Program destinations.

The “PRASHAD - Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Heritage Augmentation Drive” scheme was launched for development of spiritual tourism infrastructure in the country, including historical places and heritage cities, in October 2017.

The Ministry of Tourism has set up a National Integrated Database of the Hospitality Industry, (NIDHI), a technology driven system, to facilitate digitalization and promote ease of doing business for the hospitality and tourism sector, inter-alia, through classification and approval of accommodation units. Further the above initiative has been upgraded as NIDHI+ to also include approval, classification and registration of travel agents, tour operators, tourist transport operators, food & beverage units (air catering and standalone restaurants), online travel aggregators and convention centres.

Facilitative visa regime is a prerequisite for increasing inbound tourism. This initiative is undertaken by the Ministry of Tourism along with the Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of External Affairs. As of December, 2024, e-visa facility has been extended to the nationals of 167 Countries under 9 sub-categories i.e. ‘e-Tourist Visa’, ‘e-Business Visa’, ‘e-Medical Visa’, ‘e-Medical Attendant Visa’, ‘e-Conference Visa’, ‘e-Ayush Visa’, ‘e-Ayush Attendant Visa’, ‘e-Student Visa’ and ‘e-Student X Visa’. The e-Visa is valid for entry through 31 designated Airports and 6 designated seaports. The e-Tourists Visa fee has been reduced to US$ 80 for 5 years, US$ 40 for 1 year and one-month e-tourist Visa fee has been reduced to US$ 10 for lean season, and US$ 25 for peak season. In line with e-conference visa facility for government or public sector unit conferences, similar e-visa facility for private conferences organized by private persons, companies or organizations would be granted. Triple entry is permitted for e-Medical Visa and for e-Medical Attendant Visa, and extension may be granted up to 6 months on case-to-case basis. Medical Attendant Visa will hold the same term as that of the validity of the principal e-visa holder.

The Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS) – UDAN (“Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik”) has been introduced with the main objective of facilitating regional air connectivity by making it affordable. This is done through (i) concessions by the central government, state governments and airport operators, to reduce the cost of airline operations, and (ii) financial support to meet the gap, if any, between the cost of airline

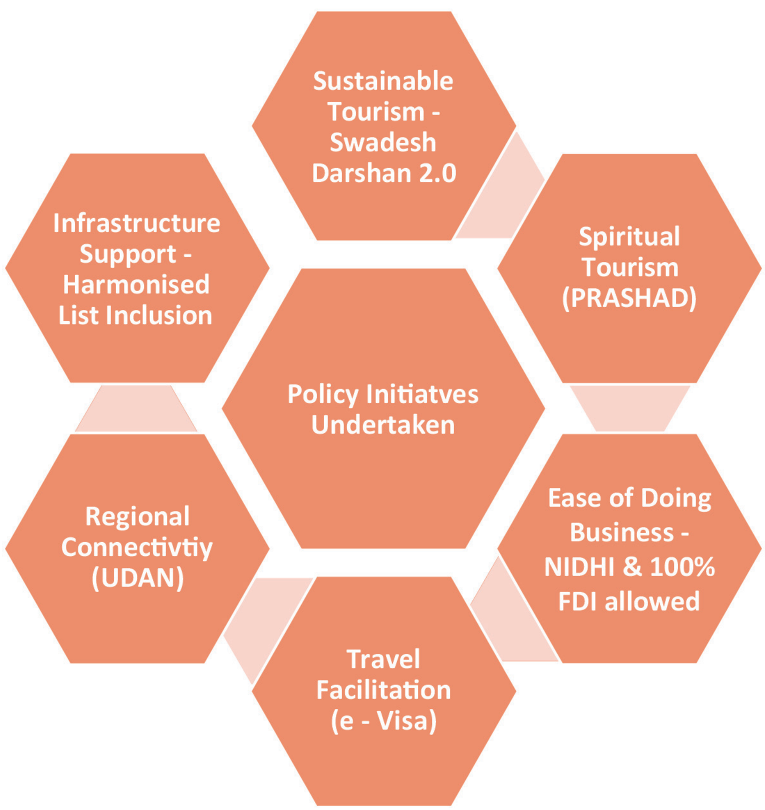
[7] Annual Report 2024-25, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India.

operations and expected revenues on such routes. Under RCS UDAN Tourism, 53 tourism routes have been made operational for better connectivity of important tourist places including iconic sites.

Further, the Government has taken steps to provide impetus to private investment, through declaration of status of tourism infrastructure for (i) three-star or higher category classified hotels located outside cities with population of more than 1 million, (ii) ropeways and cable cars which are included in the Harmonized Master List. In addition, Exhibition-cum-Convention Centre Projects with minimum built-up floor area of 100,000 square meters of exclusively exhibition space or convention space or both combined, have also been included in the Harmonized Master List of Infrastructure sub-sectors.

The Union Budget 2025-26 announced the initiative to develop 50 top tourist destinations in partnership with states. This initiative aims to elevate tourism infrastructure, improve ease of travel, and strengthen connectivity to key sites. As part of this framework, states will be required to provide land for critical infrastructure, including hotels, which will be classified under the Harmonized Master List (HML) of Infrastructure, to attract investments and boost hospitality services. **Exhibit 3.2** highlights the major policy initiatives undertaken to support tourism infrastructure and marketing in India.

Exhibit 3.2: Policy Initiatives Undertaken for Supporting Tourism Sector



Source: Ministry of Tourism, Government of India; India Exim Bank Research

In order to attract foreign investment in the tourism sector, 100% Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) is allowed under the automatic route in the tourism construction projects, including the development of hotels, resorts and recreational facilities, subject to applicable regulations and laws. The hotel and tourism industry has received foreign direct equity inflows of US$ 18.5 billion between April 2000 to December 2024, a share of 2.6% in total FDI equity inflows into all sectors. Over 1,300 startups have come up in the tourism sector, providing partnership opportunities with innovative companies and leveraging new technologies.

India currently has a Draft National Tourism Policy in place[8]. The Ministry of Tourism, under the niche tourism segment has further issued National Strategy and Roadmap for Medical and Wellness Tourism (January 27, 2022), National Strategy for MICE Industry (April 29, 2022), National Strategy for Eco Tourism (April 29, 2022), National Strategy for Sustainable Tourism (April 29, 2022), and National Strategy for Adventure Tourism (April 29, 2022).

In conclusion

The foreign tourist arrivals in India have emerged as a significant source of foreign exchange earnings for India, at US$ 33.2 billion in 2024. The tourism sector is estimated to have contributed over 6.8% of GDP and generate 9.2% of total jobs created in the economy in 2024, thus emphasizing its importance in driving India’s economic growth through consumption, investment and employment.

India’s foreign tourist arrivals stood at 9.5 million in 2023, remaining below pre-pandemic levels. In 2023, Bangladesh, USA, and UK were the top source countries, collectively accounting for nearly 50% of India’s total foreign tourist arrivals. This concentration underscores the need to diversify source markets to enhance revenue generation and resilience of the tourism sector. Countries like China, Spain, South Korea, UAE, and Netherlands, which account for some of the highest outbound tourism expenditures, do not appear among the major markets hosted by India in 2023. In order to address the same, the Study identifies the global high import growth markets in terms of travel services, as well as those which account for significant share in global tourism, which India could further target.

Further, sustained engagement of domestic travellers highlights the resilience and growth potential of India’s domestic tourism sector. In 2023, domestic spending contributed about 85% to India’s travel and tourism GDP whereas foreign visitor spending contributed around 15%. The domestic visitor spending is projected to grow to US$ 410 billion by 2030 from US$ 194 billion in 2024, with India emerging as the fourth-largest spender on tourism globally, supported by India’s rising per capita income.

Conducive government policies have contributed to tourism related infrastructure development, enhanced connectivity and ease of doing business in the tourism sector. However, considerable scope remains to elevate India's position as a global tourism destination.

[8] Ministry of Tourism, Lok Sabha, Unstarred Question No. 2639, March 17, 2025.

Chapter 4

A Comparison of the Travel and Tourism Sector of India with APAC

India's tourism sector holds significant potential, underpinned by its cultural diversity, historical heritage, varied geography, and growing global appeal. The country offers a wide spectrum of tourism experiences ranging from heritage and wellness tourism to adventure, ecotourism, and business travel.

Amidst these aforesaid strengths, the tourism and travel industry face several structural and operational challenges that constrain its growth and overall performance. This chapter outlines the key challenges impacting India's tourism industry and the implications for sustainable and inclusive sectoral development.

Competition from Select Asia-Pacific (APAC) Countries

The Indian tourism sector faces significant competition from APAC countries, particularly in attracting international tourists as many of these offer similar attractions in terms of natural or cultural as well as medical and wellness tourism and are well established MICE destinations. India ranked 39th among 119 countries in the Travel & Tourism Development Index (TTDI) 2024, lower than APAC countries like Japan, China, Australia, Singapore, Republic of Korea, Indonesia, New Zealand and Indonesia. Also as highlighted in Chapter 2, Thailand and Japan received higher number of international tourist arrivals in 2023 as compared to India.

These APAC countries have well-established tourism industries with better infrastructure, higher marketing budgets, and more accessible visa processes. These countries have invested heavily in tourism infrastructure, including transportation, accommodation, and attractions. These factors contribute to a perception of ease and safety in traveling to these destinations, which can be a challenge for India to overcome. These countries also have significantly larger marketing budgets dedicated to promoting their destinations, leading to greater global awareness and appeal. In recent years, Vietnam and China are also increasingly emerging as competition for India.

Vietnam has liberalised its tourism policy in 2025 to strengthen its global tourism competitiveness. With an aim to attract 22–23 million international visitors in 2025, the Vietnamese government has introduced significant visa policy reforms. Citizens of 12 countries, Germany, France, Italy, Spain, the United Kingdom, Russia, Japan, South Korea, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and Finland are granted visa-free entry for stays of up to 45 days, regardless of the purpose of visit[9]. This policy is effective from March 15, 2025 to March 14, 2028 and is aimed at enhancing travel facilitation, people-to-people exchange, and bilateral cooperation. Additionally, as part of the Tourism Development Stimulus Program[10], it extends visa exemptions to citizens

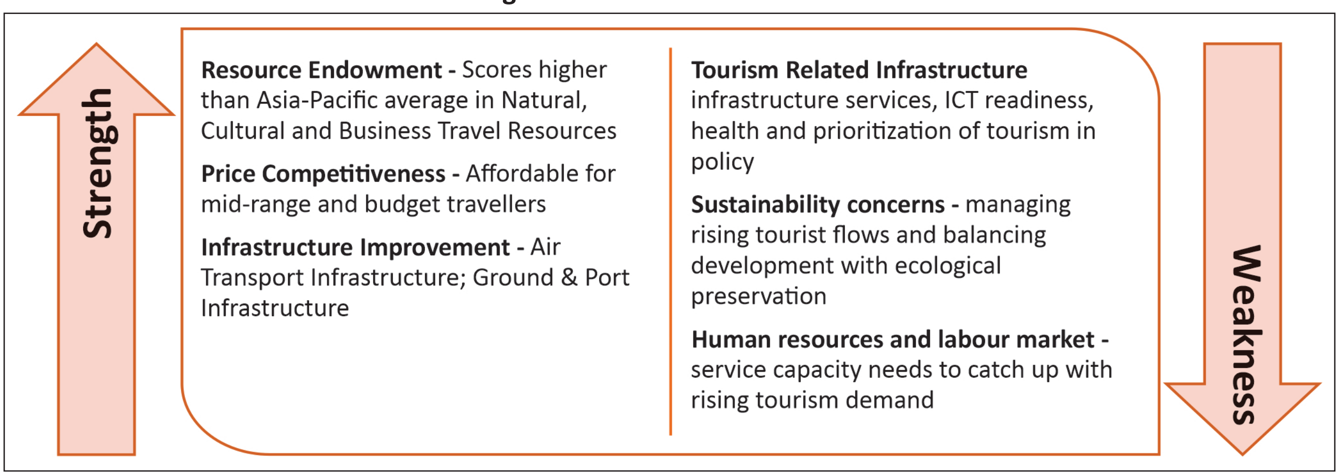
[9] Under Resolution No. 44/NQ-CP, issued on 7 March 2025
[10] Decree No. 11/NQ-CP, dated 15 January 2025

of Poland, the Czech Republic, and Switzerland. This exemption is valid from March 1 to December 31, 2025, and allows a 45-day stay, applicable to all types of passports. The policy is specifically targeted at tourists participating in programs organized by Vietnamese international travel service providers[11].

Although presently dominated by domestic tourism, China has started promoting international tourism to recover inbound travel volumes in the post-pandemic era. In December 2024, China had relaxed its visa-free transit policy allowing foreign tourists from 54 countries[12] to stay up to 10 days increasing from a duration of 72-144 hours. Among these countries many European, Latin American and Middle Eastern countries also have access to 30 days Visa-free travel to China[13]. This was further expanded in July 2025 offering 30 days visa-free entry to 75 countries. These include most countries in Europe, South America, Middle East and Asia-Pacific and Central Asia. However, US, UK, Canada, Mexico, Sweden, Russia, among others continue to remain beneficiary of the 10 days visa-free transit policy.

Data shows that, India scored lower compared to majority of Asia-Pacific countries in overall tourism infrastructure like quality and services, ICT readiness, international openness, and policy prioritization of tourism sustainability and human resources engaged in tourism sector. On the other hand, India's strength lies in natural, cultural and business travel resources, where it scored higher compared to many APAC countries. Besides these, India also scored higher in terms of price competitiveness, air and ground transport infrastructure. The **Exhibit 4.1** summarises the strengths and weaknesses of India's tourism sector based on India's positioning among the Asia-Pacific countries in terms of the scores achieved by all.

Exhibit 4.1: Strength and Weakness of India's Tourism Sector



Source: Travel & Tourism Development Index 2024 and World Economic Forum; India Exim Bank Research

This Study uses the various pillars of the Travel and Tourism Development Index (TTDI) 2024 to understand India's positioning and identifying the bottlenecks. India's latent potential as a tourism industry , further solidifies the need for the Study to understand the present challenges facing the sector and develop suitable strategies.

[11] KPMG Vietnam Alert on Immigration, March 2025

[12] These countries include Albania, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Brunei, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, Montenegro, the Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, the Republic of Korea, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

[13] National Immigration Administration, State Council, People's Republic of China, December 17, 2024.

The following section undertakes a comparison of India along with select Asia-Pacific countries which are reasonably placed to be India's aspirational countries in terms of developing the tourism sector.

Comparing India with APAC Countries

I. Tourism Enabling Environment

The business environment sub-pillar captures the extent to which a country's policy environment is conducive to companies doing business and investing in the sector. India scored lower across the sub-pillars not only as compared to the advanced economies but also other developing economies and emerging markets of the region.

As evident from **Table 4.1**, India scored lower in business environment compared to most other countries like China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam and Philippines. In terms of healthcare infrastructure and accessibility, India scored lower compared to Thailand, Vietnam, Philippines and Sri Lanka.

Both the above highlights India's challenges in key parameters like business and healthcare when compared with other APAC countries.

The human resource and labour market pillar measures the availability of quality employees and the dynamism, resilience and equality of the labour market, as well as the level of protection for workers. It also includes qualification of the labour force, labour market dynamics and labour market resilience and equality sub pillars. The Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) readiness measures the availability and use of information and communication technology infrastructure and digital services.

Unfortunately, in terms of human resources and labour market and ICT readiness, India scored the lowest across all economies highlighted in **Table 4.1**.

Table 4.1: India's Position in terms of Tourism Enabling Environment

Economy	Travel & Tourism Development Index (TTDI) Global Rank	Business Environment	Health & Hygiene	Human Resource and Labour Market	ICT Readiness
Japan	3	5.38	6.23	4.90	6.03
Australia	5	5.62	5.98	5.23	6.19
China	8	4.73	5.27	4.51	6.10
Singapore	13	6.15	5.14	5.36	6.41
Republic of Korea	14	4.84	6.21	4.58	6.55
Indonesia	22	4.67	3.78	4.13	4.81
New Zealand	25	5.55	5.47	5.29	5.95
Malaysia	35	4.91	4.51	3.88	5.64
India	39	3.79	3.47	2.85	3.84
Thailand	47	4.15	4.31	4.06	5.68
Vietnam	59	4.06	4.30	4.35	5.18
Philippines	69	4.09	3.66	4.03	4.38
Sri Lanka	76	3.34	4.66	3.42	4.43
Cambodia	86	3.62	3.19	3.64	4.28

Note: Colour-coded based on performance of the countries in each of the pillars. Overall scores by TTDI range from 1 to 7 where 1 = worst and 7 = best.

Source: Travel & Tourism Development Index (TTDI) 2024 and World Economic Forum; India Exim Bank Research

II. Policy Level Support and Affordability

Prioritisation of travel and tourism pillar measures the extent to which the government actively promotes, tracks and invests in the development of the sector. In this case, India scored higher than China and Vietnam but lower compared to most countries countries like Thailand, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Cambodia.

The openness pillar measures how open a country is to visitors and facilitating cross-border travel. India scored higher than Japan, China, Korea, Indonesia. On the other hand, Thailand scored higher in this parameter than India, reflecting its visa-free entry policies for major markets for business and tourists.

The price competitiveness pillar measures the cost of travel or cost of running tourism operations in a country. India scored higher compared to Japan, China, South Korea, and Indonesia but lower than Malaysia, Vietnam and Sri Lanka.

In terms of visa processes, Southeast Asian nations across the region are now easing visa rules, launching promotional campaigns, and rolling out competitive travel packages to lure Indian travellers. Liberal visa regimes like free electronic visas exists in Thailand and Malaysia and visa-on-arrival in Indonesia and the Philippines. These countries also score high in price competitiveness emerging as competition for India.

Table 4.2: India's Position in terms of Tourism Related Policy and Enabling Conditions

Economy	TTDI Rank	Prioritisation of Travel and Tourism	Openness	Price Competitiveness
Japan	3	4.78	4.06	4.34
Australia	5	4.90	4.85	2.75
China	8	3.84	3.89	5.17
Singapore	13	5.71	5.70	2.67
Republic of Korea	14	4.56	3.87	4.55
Indonesia	22	6.03	3.83	5.44
New Zealand	25	4.25	5.07	3.02
Malaysia	35	4.22	4.99	6.20
India	39	4.11	4.13	5.66
Thailand	47	4.14	4.34	4.96
Vietnam	59	3.63	3.61	5.68
Philippines	69	4.72	4.01	5.59
Sri Lanka	76	4.78	3.69	5.69
Cambodia	86	5.74	3.75	5.58

Note: Colour-coded based on performance of the countries in each of the pillars. Overall scores by TTDI range from 1 to 7 where 1 = worst and 7 = best.

Source: Travel & Tourism Development Index (TTDI) 2024 and World Economic Forum; India Exim Bank Research

III. Tourism Related Infrastructure and Services

Among the tourism related infrastructure and services – the sub-pillars include air-transport infrastructure, ground and port infrastructure and tourist service and related infrastructure. The air-transport pillar measures the extent to which a country's infrastructure offers sufficient air connectivity and access for travellers domestically and internationally. In terms of air-transport infrastructure facilitating tourism, India scored higher than countries like Indonesia, New Zealand and Malaysia.

The ground and port infrastructure measures the availability of efficient and accessible ground and port transportation services and infrastructure. India scored higher compared to Indonesia, New Zealand, Malaysia, and Australia in terms of port and ground infrastructure.

The tourism services and infrastructure pillar measures investment in, and the availability and productivity of, tourist services and infrastructure. India ranks among the lowest in Asia-Pacific selected countries, and only higher than Philippines and Sri Lanka. This reflects that even as India offers connectivity to tourism destinations, the infrastructure facility and services at those destinations continue to hold back India's appeal when compared to other economies.

Table 4.3: India's Position in terms of Tourism Related Infrastructure and Services

Economy	TTDI Rank	Air Transport Infrastructure	Ground & Port Infrastructure	Tourism Services & Infrastructure
Japan	3	5.34	6.08	2.93
Australia	5	5.23	3.68	4.62
China	8	5.26	4.57	1.95
Singapore	13	5.94	6.54	4.41
Republic of Korea	14	4.69	5.4	2.82
Indonesia	22	4.34	3.97	1.9
New Zealand	25	3.99	3.73	4.93
Malaysia	35	4.18	4.05	2.79
India	39	4.59	4.43	1.60
Thailand	47	4.89	3.76	2.18
Vietnam	59	4.04	3.65	2.2
Philippines	69	3.62	3.12	1.55
Sri Lanka	76	3.07	3.92	1.58
Cambodia	86	2.76	2.85	1.97

Note: Colour-coded based on performance of the countries in each of the pillars. Overall scores by TTDI range from 1 to 7 where 1 = worst and 7 = best.

Source: Travel & Tourism Development Index (TTDI) 2024, World Economic Forum; India Exim Bank Research

IV. Tourism Related Resources

Tourism-related resources including natural, cultural or non-leisure (business) related resources potentially serve as a key driver for travelling to a particular country. Performance of India's travel and tourism sector has scored the highest in this category when compared against APAC economies, except for Japan, Australia and China.

The natural resources pillar measures the available natural capital as well as the development of outdoor tourism activities. Natural capital is defined in terms of landscape, natural parks and the richness of the fauna. This pillar captures how natural resources are promoted rather than the actual existing natural heritage of a country. India's score in terms of natural resources remains high compared to all APAC economies, only lower than Australia and China.

Likewise in terms of cultural resources, India's score was considerably high compared to the other APAC economies and only lower than Japan and China. The cultural resources pillar measures the availability of cultural resources such as archaeological sites and entertainment facilities. This pillar captures how cultural resources are promoted and developed rather than the actual existing cultural heritage of a country.

The non-leisure resources pillar measures the extent and attractiveness of factors that drive business and other non-leisure travel, including the presence of global cities, major corporations and leading universities. India's score remains lower than Japan, Australia and China but higher compared to other APAC countries as shown in **Table 4.4**.

Table 4.4: India's Position in terms of Travel and Tourism Resources

Economy	TTDI Rank	Natural Resources	Cultural Resources	Non-Leisure Resources
Japan	3	5.11	6.71	5.93
Australia	5	6.42	3.78	5.09
China	8	6.20	6.59	5.79
Singapore	13	1.57	1.75	3.80
Republic of Korea	14	2.36	5.59	4.72
Indonesia	22	5.43	3.98	3.06
New Zealand	25	3.64	2.02	2.58
Malaysia	35	3.96	2.45	3.88
India	39	5.80	5.62	5.05
Thailand	47	4.55	2.86	4.17
Vietnam	59	3.78	2.8	3.09
Philippines	69	3.93	2.01	2.89
Sri Lanka	76	2.7	1.44	1.61
Cambodia	86	2.5	1.6	1.41

Note: Colour-coded based on performance of the countries in each of the pillars. Overall scores by TTDI range from 1 to 7 where 1 = worst and 7 = best.

Source: Travel & Tourism Development Index (TTDI) 2024, World Economic Forum; India Exim Bank Research

V. Travel and Tourism Sustainability

The Environmental Sustainability pillar measures the travel and tourism sector's energy sustainability and the general sustainability of an economy's natural environment and the protection of natural resources. It consists of Energy Sustainability, Pollution and Environmental Conditions, and Preservation of Nature sub pillars related to the travel and tourism sector. India's score is the lowest among all the select countries in the environmental sustainability domain as shown in **Table 4.5**.

In terms of the socio-economic impact of travel and tourism, India scored higher than Malaysia but lower than all the top-ranking countries in APAC region including Sri Lanka. The economic and social impact of travel and tourism includes induced economic contribution, the provision of high-wage jobs and workforce gender equality.

The demand sustainability of the travel and tourism sector comprises factors that may indicate the existence of, or risk related to, overcrowding, demand volatility and other potentially unsustainable demand trends.

India scored higher compared to Japan, Australia, China, Singapore, Republic of Korea, New Zealand, Malaysia. Cambodia on the other hand scored higher than India in terms of tourism demand sustainability.

Table 4.5: India's Position in terms of Travel and Tourism Sustainability

Economy	TTDI Rank	Environmental Sustainability	Socioeconomic Impact	Demand Sustainability
Japan	3	5.20	4.57	3.02
Australia	5	5.18	5.00	4.46
China	8	4.46	5.36	3.79
Singapore	13	4.37	4.38	4.14
Republic of Korea	14	4.70	5.25	3.67
Indonesia	22	4.34	5.41	4.84
New Zealand	25	5.35	4.36	4.17
Malaysia	35	4.31	2.80	4.09
India	39	3.64	4.01	4.55
Thailand	47	4.13	3.30	3.67
Vietnam	59	3.89	2.85	3.96
Philippines	69	4.52	3.42	4.52
Sri Lanka	76	3.70	5.84	3.70
Cambodia	86	3.99	3.03	4.65

Note: Colour-coded based on performance of the countries in each of the pillars. Overall scores by TTDI range from 1 to 7 where 1 = worst and 7 = best.

Source: Travel & Tourism Development Index (TTDI) 2024, World Economic Forum; India Exim Bank Research

Inadequate Tourism Infrastructure

Notwithstanding India's rich cultural diversity and geographical appeal, India's appeal as an international tourism destination when compared to the APAC countries remains hindered by several factors as highlighted in the analysis above.

There is significant scope for India to further expand the travel and tourism sector, particularly through the improvement of tourism infrastructure. Many state governments have identified tourism and hospitality as priority sectors including Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Gujarat, among others.

In recognition of the sector's capacity to drive employment-led growth, the Union Budget 2025–26 has earmarked ₹2,541.1 crores to support infrastructure development, skill enhancement, and improved travel facilitation. Out of the same, the allocation to the tourism infrastructure increased by 7.2% to ₹ 2230 crores in the Union Budget of 2025-26 as compared to the allocations in Union Budget of 2024-25.

However, it was a hike of 313% when compared to the Revised Estimates of 2024-25 (₹ 540 crores) implying a substantial gap in terms of budget allocation and utilisation. The Department-Related Parliamentary Standing

Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture in its report submitted in the Rajya Sabha report highlighted that utilisation remains constrained owing to operational challenges and procedural bottlenecks.

Table 4.6: Government Expenditure on Tourism Infrastructure

Allocations to Tourism Infrastructure (In ₹ Crores)	2023-24	2024-25		2025-26	Growth C/A (%)	Growth C/B (%)
	Actual	Budget Estimate (A)	Revised Estimate (B)	Budget Estimate (C)		
Integrated development of tourist circuits around specific themes (Swadesh Darshan)	350	1750	350	1900	8.6	442.9
Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual, Heritage Augmentation Drive (PRASHAD)	126	240	100	240	0.0	140.0
Assistance to central agencies for tourism infrastructure development	51	90	90	90	0.0	0.0
Champion services sector scheme	3	0	0	0	-	-
Total - Tourism Infrastructure	**529**	**2080**	**540**	**2230**	**7.2%**	**313%**

Note: BE – Budget estimates; RE – Revised estimates

Source: Union Budget 2025-26, Government of India.

Need for Skilled Manpower

According to the Periodic Labour Force Survey (July 2023–June 2024), only 1% of individuals aged 15–59 years had received formal vocational or technical training in the tourism industry. The Tourism and Hospitality Skill Council (THSC) in its report has highlighted a substantial skill gap of more than 5 million within India's tourism and hospitality sector. THSC further projects the need for an additional 3 million workers between 2025 and 2028 to support anticipated sectoral growth.

The THSC report estimates that employed approximately 11.1 million individuals in 2023 and is expected to expand to 14.8 million by 2028, reflecting a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 16.5%. Accommodation and food services constitute the largest share of employment, accounting for around 93% of the total workforce, with employment expected to grow from 11 million in 2024 to 13.8 million by 2028. The administrative and support services subsector is projected to grow by 33.3 percent from 0.6 million to 0.8 million over the same period[14].

Despite the growing usage of technology in the tourism industry, the extent of adoption remains limited across the sector. Approximately 69% of employers in the tourism sector reported low automation (i.e., 0–25% of job tasks). This trend is particularly evident among micro and medium enterprises, where 73% and 70%, respectively, reported minimal technological integration. In contrast, large enterprises demonstrated comparatively higher levels of adoption, with 35 % indicating medium levels of automation (25–50% of tasks).

[14] Demand and Skill Gap Study, The Tourism and Hospitality Skill Council, Skill India, March 2024.

Technological Gaps in India's Tourism Industry[15]

To remain competitive and harness opportunities for innovation, productivity, and value creation, India's tourism industry must fully integrate with emerging technologies. While digital penetration is accelerating driven by rising incomes, widespread smartphone adoption, affordable high-speed internet enabled by 5G, and the growing use of artificial intelligence and machine learning, several challenges hinder effective technological transformation within the sector.

Innovation: One of the critical gaps lies in the scarcity of innovative products and models tailored to address the needs of a rapidly evolving tourism landscape. Despite rising demand from tech-savvy and hygiene-conscious domestic and international travellers, the sector struggles to offer personalised, tech-enabled experiences at scale. This is compounded by limited investment in research to identify areas where technology can enhance operational efficiency, elevate guest experience through personalisation, and improve brand loyalty via targeted communication and marketing strategies.

Hospitality: The hospitality industry also faces significant vulnerabilities in data management and cybersecurity. With the exponential increase in customer data collection, hotels are increasingly susceptible to data breaches. Key concerns include the centralisation of hotel databases, insufficient network security protocols, and inadequate access control mechanisms. These weaknesses pose serious risks to consumer trust and regulatory compliance.

Labour Market Information System: Furthermore, there exists a misalignment between skill supply and technological demand within the sector. The absence of an agile and responsive Labour Market Information System (LMIS) impedes the ability to accurately map existing skill gaps and forecast future needs. Without robust data to guide workforce development, the sector remains ill-prepared to adapt to the digital shift or to train professionals in advanced technological applications such as AI-driven guest interfaces, automated compliance systems, and data analytics.

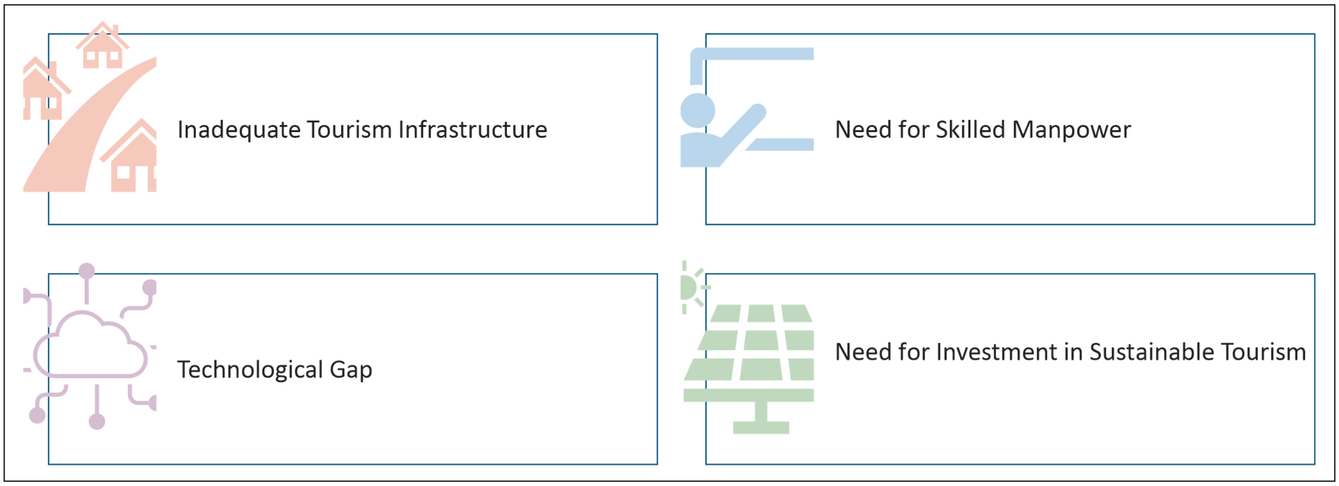
Need for Investment in Sustainable Tourism

Sustainable tourism has gained momentum in India's hospitality sector, driven by growing consumer awareness and environmental concerns. Despite the growing awareness and positive intentions, only a small fraction of tourism in India currently qualifies as truly sustainable. A major barrier to scaling sustainability lies in the underdevelopment of critical infrastructure particularly in waste management and renewable energy infrastructure.

Lack of waste management practises: Waste management remains one of the most pressing challenges in India's tourism sector. Popular destinations like Goa and Rishikesh suffer from significant waste accumulation, often exceeding the capacity of existing disposal systems. Goa alone produces approximately 12,000 tonnes of plastic waste annually, largely linked to tourism activities. Rishikesh generates an estimated 30 metric tonnes of solid waste daily[16]. The lack of integrated waste segregation, recycling, and disposal infrastructure contributes to pollution, environmental degradation, and declining destination appeal. Furthermore, insufficient sewage treatment and overburdened landfill sites exacerbate health and ecological risks in tourist hotspots.

[15] Hotel Association of India, Vision 2047, Indian Hotel Industry – Challenges and Road Ahead.
[16] Sustainable Tourism Market in India (2025 – 2030), Netscribes, February 2025.

Exhibit 4.2: Challenges Facing India's Tourism Industry



Source: India Exim Bank Research

Investments in sustainable waste management systems such as decentralized composting units, waste-to-energy plants, and plastic recycling hubs are essential to managing tourism-related waste sustainably. Equally important is the promotion of responsible tourist behaviour and regulatory enforcement to control littering and single-use plastics.

Limited investment in energy-efficient infrastructure: The integration of renewable energy in tourism infrastructure remains limited. High upfront costs, limited access to green financing, and uncertain returns deter investment in solar, wind, and bioenergy solutions within hotels and resorts. Yet, these technologies offer significant long-term benefits reducing carbon emissions, lowering energy costs, and enhancing brand value among environmentally conscious travellers.

High upfront costs for MSMEs: One of the primary barriers to sustainable tourism adoption is the high upfront cost associated with eco-friendly technologies, energy-efficient infrastructure, and responsible waste management systems. These are particularly financially burdensome for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), limiting their ability to participate in sustainable tourism initiatives. Despite increasing consumer preference for eco-conscious travel, businesses often struggle to justify the immediate financial outlay against long-term gains. This cost-benefit gap hampers broader industry transition towards sustainability.

Addressing these challenges require coordinated action from governments and industry stakeholders to provide targeted financial support such as subsidies, concessional loans, and fiscal incentives. Without innovative financing mechanisms and strategic communication of long-term benefits, the growth of sustainable tourism risks being constrained by affordability rather than ambition.

To sum up, India's tourism sector performs modestly when compared against globally top rankers as well as peer Asian economies in overall infrastructure quality, international openness, and policy prioritization of tourism. This emphasizes the need for increasing investments required in tourism infrastructure (physical as well as digital), need for skilled manpower especially in emerging technologies and investment in sustainable tourism infrastructure. The **Exhibit 4.2** shows the areas where India needs to focus in terms of tourism service capacity as well as quality.

Chapter

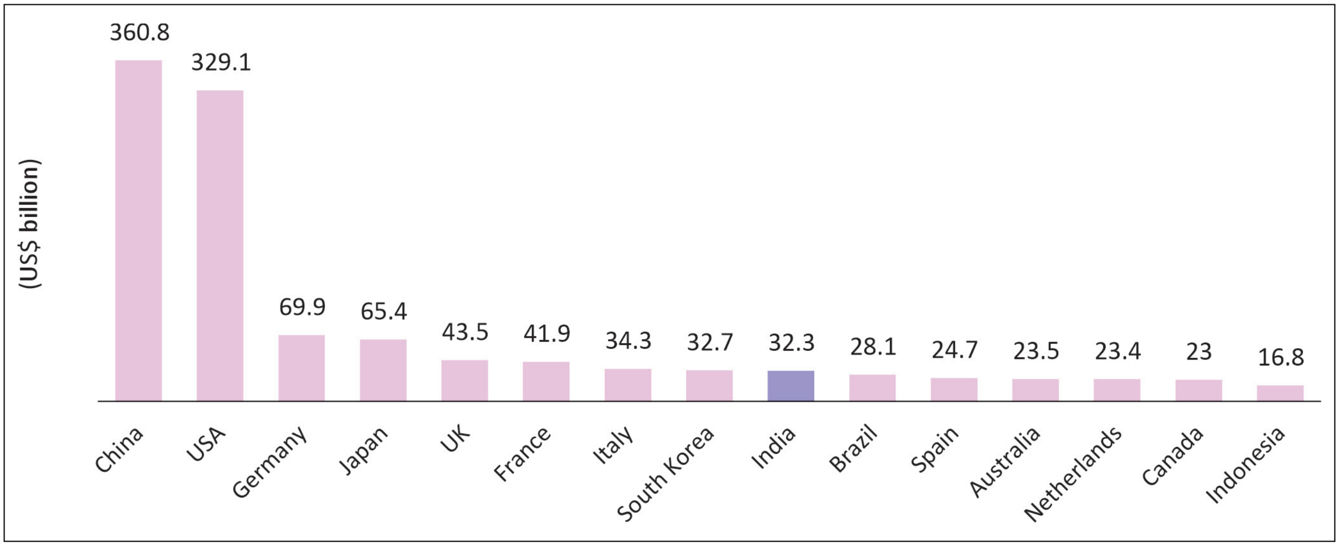
5

Select Strategies for further Improvement

India's tourism landscape is diverse, shaped by its rich cultural heritage, geographical variety, and vibrant traditions across its states. India has 43 UNESCO World Heritage sites, 10 biogeographic zones, 106 national parks, and 573 sanctuaries, providing diverse opportunities for investments in cultural, wildlife, sustainable, medical, and adventure tourism. India ranks sixth globally **(Chart 5.1)** with 43 UNESCO World Heritage Sites, including 35 cultural, 7 natural, and 1 mixed site.

The cultural sites reflect India's rich history and architectural grandeur, such as the Taj Mahal (Uttar Pradesh), Qutub Minar (Delhi), Hampi (Karnataka), Khajuraho Temples (Madhya Pradesh), Ajanta and Ellora Caves (Maharashtra), and the Sun Temple at Konark (Odisha). Other culturally significant sites include the Pink City of Jaipur (Rajasthan), Great Living Chola Temples (Tamil Nadu), Santiniketan (West Bengal), and the Sacred Ensembles of the Hoysalas (Karnataka)[17].

Chart 5.1: Top 10 Countries with Highest Number of World Heritage Sites



Source: UNESCO World Heritage Convention; India Exim Bank Research

The natural sites showcase India's ecological diversity, including the Western Ghats (Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Maharashtra), Sundarbans National Park (West Bengal), Kaziranga National Park (Assam), Manas

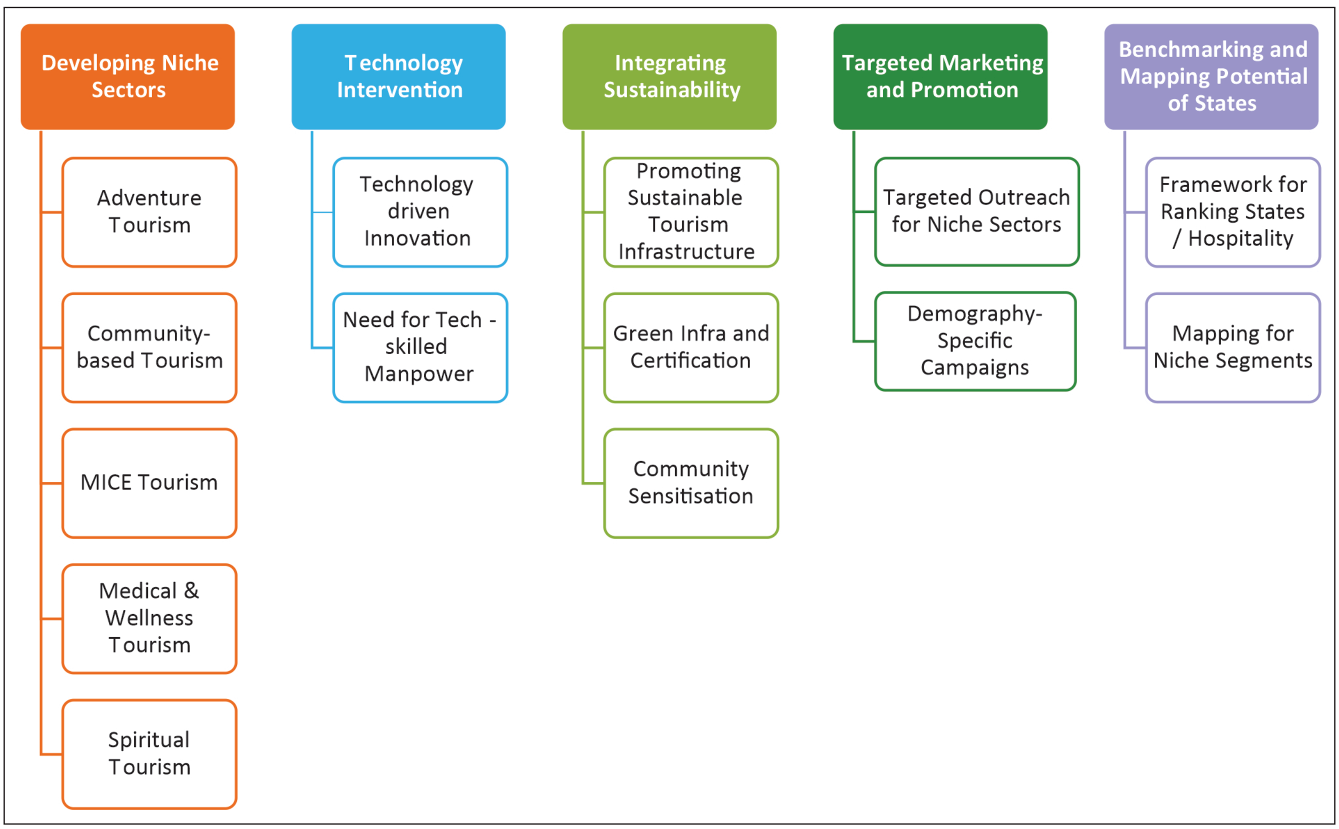
[17] UNESCO World Heritage Convention – India (https://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/in)

Wildlife Sanctuary (Assam), Nanda Devi and Valley of Flowers National Parks (Uttarakhand), and the Great Himalayan National Park (Himachal Pradesh). The mixed site, Khangchendzonga National Park (Sikkim), holds both cultural and natural significance[18].

The previous chapter highlights the challenges facing the Indian tourism industry in terms of inadequate tourism infrastructure, need for targeted marketing and promotion, lack of skilled labour, gaps in use of emerging technology, and need for investment in sustainable tourism. India has set an ambitious target of achieving a US$ 3 trillion tourism economy by 2047 as a part of the Viksit Bharat.

This Study identifies and focuses on the strategies and recommendations in this chapter to increase India's competitiveness in the global tourism landscape.

Exhibit 5.1: Strategies for Development and Promotion of India's Tourism Sector



Source: India Exim Bank Research

A. DEVELOPING NICHE SECTORS

The geographic and thematic diversity of India has the potential to make it a year-round destination for foreign tourists. However, to increase foreign exchange earnings, India needs to strengthen the niche offerings like adventure tourism, eco-friendly or rural tourism, medical and wellness tourism and Meetings Incentives Conferences & Exhibitions (MICE) segments, aligning with global consumer preferences **(Exhibit 5.2)**. Conducive government policies, supplementary credit growth and infrastructure development initiatives can further bolster the growth of the tourism industry.

[18] World Heritage Convention - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

Exhibit 5.2: Select Niche Sectors for Development and Promotion of India's Tourism

Adventure Tourism

Jammu and Kashmir, Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarkhand, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Lakshadweep

Community-based Tourism

Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh, Kerala, North-Eastern states

Meetings, Incentives, Conferences & Exhibitions

Delhi NCR, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata, Bengaluru, Goa, Hyderabad,

Medical and Wellness Tourism

Chennai, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Uttarakhand and Kerala

Heritage / Spiritual Tourism

Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Amritsar, Rajashtan, Odisha, Tamil Nadu

Source: Ministry of Tourism; India Exim Bank Research

A1. Adventure Tourism

Adventure tourism is a specialised segment of the travel industry encompassing tourism activities that blend physical activity and interaction with nature. Based on the level of risk and expertise required, adventure tourism is typically categorised into two segments: hard adventure and soft adventure. Hard adventure activities involve high levels of risk and demand significant technical skills, physical and mental fitness, and expert supervision.

Examples include high-altitude mountaineering, white-water rafting, scuba diving, skydiving, and hang gliding. These need to be conducted under supervision. In contrast, soft adventure activities carry lower levels of risk and usually do not require prior training or experience[19]. Activities such as hiking, camping, and cycling are primarily undertaken for recreation and are popular among a wider range of tourists.

India is witnessing a growing interest in adventure tourism fuelled by its diverse landscapes. Tourists are increasingly exploring remote and exotic destinations through activities such as paragliding, skiing, trekking, and scuba diving.

Popular trekking destinations include Ladakh, Sikkim, and the Himalayan ranges. States like Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir attract visitors for skiing, while Uttarakhand has emerged as a hub for white-water rafting[20]. Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep with their pristine white sandy sea beaches offer water-based adventure sports like scuba diving, snorkelling, kayaking, windsurfing, among others.

[19] National Strategy for Adventure Tourism, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, April 2022.
[20] Hotel Association of India.

Exhibit 5.3: Strategies to Promote Adventure Tourism in India

Improving connectivty and environment friendly infrasturcture	Adherence to global safety and quality standards	Marketing of adventure tourism hotspots	Local capacity building for inclusive developement

Source: India Exim Bank Research

However, progress is often hindered by inadequate infrastructure, particularly in terms of accommodations, last mile connectivity, and safety provisions and adherence to global standards. To address these gaps, the Government of India has allocated ₹782.6 crore for the Northeast circuit and ₹518 crore[21] for the Himalayan circuit under the Swadesh Darshan Scheme, with the goal of enhancing adventure tourism infrastructure. The identified circuits span six Northeastern states along with Jammu & Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh, highlighting their strategic importance in India's adventure tourism roadmap.

However, the unregulated expansion of adventure tourism poses environmental challenges, including ecological degradation and poor waste management in high-traffic areas.

To promote adventure tourism and attract foreign tourists, India must adopt a multi-pronged strategy focused on infrastructure, safety, branding, and sustainability. Developing infrastructure including roads, eco-friendly lodging, and rescue services will improve accessibility to adventure hotspots.

The Ministry of Tourism, in association with the Adventure Tour Operators Association of India has formulated "Model Adventure Safety Guidelines" with an aim to establish a comprehensive and standardized framework to ensure safety in the adventure tourism sector across India. These guidelines have been circulated to all states and union territories for adoption and formulation or updation of safety protocols[22]. However, challenges persist at implementation of stringent safety regulations, environmental safeguards, and standardised certifications for operators.

Global best practices in adventure tourism regulation and certification emphasize safety, sustainability, and accountability. International standards like ISO 21101 guide operators in implementing robust safety management systems, while the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) sets benchmarks for environmental and social responsibility. Countries such as New Zealand mandate operator registration and independent safety audits, Canada and Switzerland require guide certification and insurance, and the UK regulates youth-focused activities through the Adventure Activities Licensing Authority (AALA). International industry bodies like the Adventure Travel Trade Association (ATTA) promote guide qualification standards and ethical practices. Enforcing global safety standards, certified guides, and setting up a regulatory authority can ensure a secure and high-quality experience.

For a robust and globally competitive adventure tourism ecosystem, it is essential to build local capacity and ensure service quality. This includes training adventure service providers to meet international safety and operational standards and certifying members of local communities in adventure sports to enable inclusive participation. Marketing campaigns showcasing India as a year-round adventure destination, supported by digital platforms and international events, can enhance global visibility **(Exhibit 5.3)**.

---

[21] Ministry of Tourism, Promotion of Adventure Tourism, Lok Sabha, Unstarred Question No. 67, July 22, 2024.
[22] Ministry of Tourism, Rajya Sabha Unstarred Question No. 1742, Adventure Tourism, March 13, 2025.

A2. Community-based tourism

Community-based tourism (CBT) is a model of travel that prioritizes the well-being and empowerment of local communities. For instance, in Peru, this approach allows travellers to engage directly with indigenous cultures, contributing to their economic stability and cultural preservation. Unlike conventional tourism, which often prioritizes profit over people, CBT ensures that the benefits of tourism are equitably distributed among local residents. A similar approach can be followed across India.

Further, geographical indication (GI) tags identify products linked to specific geographic origins, showcasing their unique qualities and cultural significance. These can promote cultural tourism by attracting tourists interested in traditional crafts and experiencing local culture and traditions. India's diverse range of GI-tagged products spanning handicrafts, textiles, food, and agro-products offers strong potential to promote experiential and cultural tourism. These products are deeply rooted in local traditions and can enhance destination branding while supporting rural economies.

Products like Kanchipuram Silk (Tamil Nadu), Muga Silk (Assam), Chanderi (Madhya Pradesh), Pochampally Pashmina Wool (Jammu and Kashmir), Channapatna Toys (Karnataka), and Madhubani Paintings (Bihar), among others can anchor craft trails, workshops, and artisan tourism.

India's GI-tagged products evoke a sense of belonging and nostalgia for the location, making them appealing to tourists seeking authentic experiences. Promoting them through GI tourism circuits, festivals, artisan villages, and farm stays can enhance local economies, preserve heritage, and create distinct brand identities for destinations.

Further, the One District One Product (ODOP) initiative provides support to local artisans and producers, enhancing their livelihoods and can emerge as a facilitator of rural and eco-tourism. The Union Budget 2023-24 had urged states to establish a "Unity Mall" in their capital or the busiest tourist attraction to promote "One District, One Product", GI items and other handicraft items.

Box 5.1: Leveraging Tea-Tourism to Promote Sustainable Development

Tea tourism, traditionally a niche segment in India's Northeastern and Southern regions, is witnessing renewed interest driven by the broader trend toward experiential travel. Amid structural challenges ranging from global economic downturns and climate change to rising production costs and regional competition the tea industry is increasingly exploring diversification through tourism. In response, state governments have introduced enabling policies. West Bengal's revised Tea Tourism and Allied Business Policy (2019) allows tea estates to utilise up to 15% of their land (subject to a cap of 150 acres) for tourism ventures. This policy has catalysed investment proposals, leading to the development of tea garden resorts offering immersive experiences such as plantation walks, tea tasting, and factory tours in Siliguri and Darjeeling. Similarly, Assam's initiative - Promotion and Development of Tea Tourism Infrastructure focuses on modernising heritage bungalows and enhancing visitor engagement within tea estates. These state-led efforts to integrate tourism with the tea economy present significant potential for growth in India's hospitality sector.

Exhibit 5.4: Leveraging GI-tagged and ODOP Products for Promoting Rural Tourism

Leveraging Diverse GI-tagged and ODOP offerings

- Textile, handicrafts, agro-based and other unique products
- Craft trails, artisan workshops - experiential tourism

Vocational Training for Women and Local Youth

- Training for online bookings, data management, e-payments, digital marketing
- Micro financing tools

Source: India Exim Bank Research

Vocational training in tourism-related services especially for women, tribal populations, and rural youth can help in further accelerating rural tourism. Public-private partnerships can enhance the scale and relevance of skilling programmes, while digital platforms can increase access to training and certification for informal sector workers. Aligning these efforts with state tourism boards and private sector hospitality players can unlock immense potential in experiential tourism.

Bridging the digital divide and expanding opportunities is also important. Access to digital financing tools and platforms must be extended to rural tourism entrepreneurs through government support, mobile-based applications, and regional-language content. This will ensure that MSMEs benefit from online marketing, booking systems, and e-payments.

A3. Developing India as a Global MICE Destination

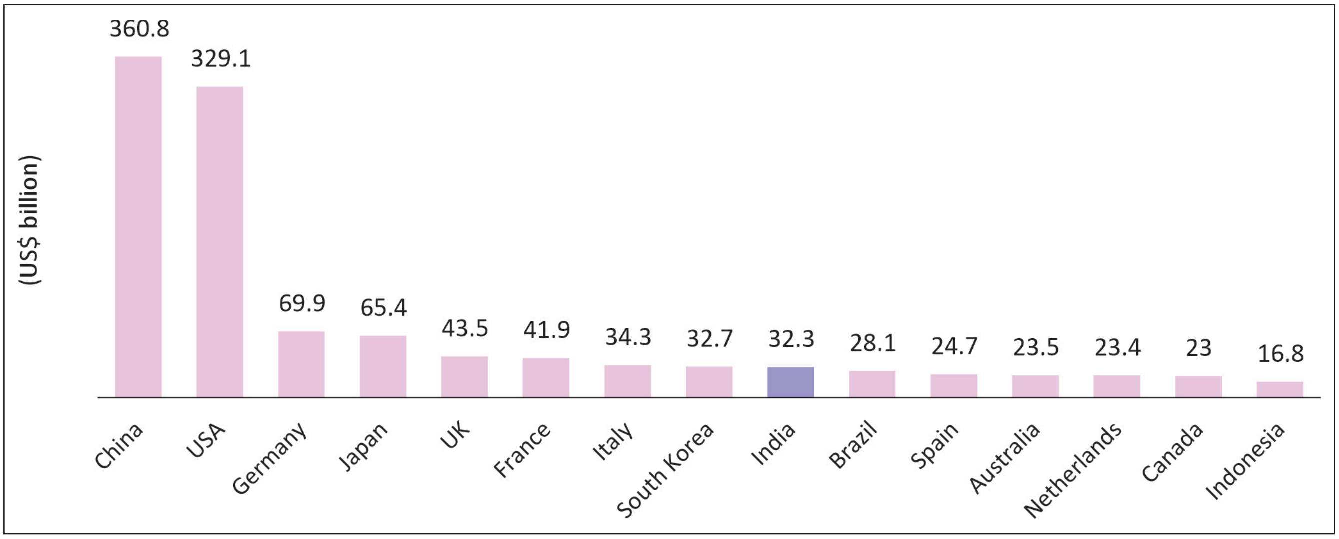
The Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions (MICE) sector has emerged as a strategic pillar of the global tourism and hospitality industry, contributing significantly to economic growth, business linkages, and international travel. As countries seek to diversify tourism offerings and attract high-value visitors, the MICE segment offers strong potential for investment and development.

The sector is evolving rapidly with the adoption of virtual and hybrid event formats, driven by use of technology and sustainability practises. Technological integration augmented by artificial intelligence and data analytics has enabled more efficient, personalized event planning, aligning with the growing demand for tailored experiences.

As globalisation drives cross-border business engagement, business travel continues to rise, particularly in emerging markets. In 2023, global business travel spending exceeded US$ 1 trillion, led by China and the USA[23] **(Chart 5.2)**.

[23] Global MICE Market Report, Mordor Intelligence.

Chart 5.2: Business Travel Spending of Top 15 Markets in 2023



Source: Mordor Intelligence; India Exim Bank Research

India's growing MICE sector presents a strategic opportunity to position the country as a premier global tourism destination. The India MICE market, valued at US$ 49.4 billion in 2024, is projected to reach US$ 103.7 billion by 2030, growing at 13% CAGR[24].

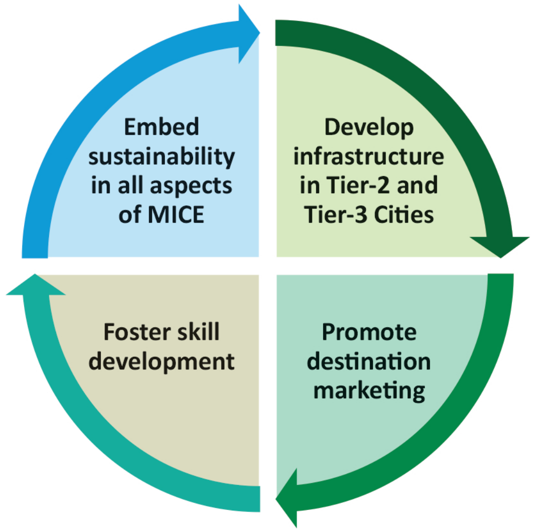
Business and professional travel comprised 10.3% of India's foreign tourist arrivals in 2023, highlighting India's increasing attractiveness as a hub for international commerce and professional engagement. Source countries include USA, Sri Lanka, Japan, Bangladesh, UK and Germany, and Republic of Korea accounting for more than 50% of total foreign tourist arrivals.

Besides cities like Mumbai, Delhi, Chennai, Bangalore, Ahmedabad, and Kolkata emerging cities like Jaipur, Indore, Bhubaneshwar, Khajuraho, Greater Noida, Lucknow, Varanasi, and Goa are witnessing a rising demand, hinting at their potential to evolve into prominent MICE hubs. This aligns with the goal of geographically diversifying tourism flows through infrastructure development like enhanced road connectivity and operational airports.

Integrating MICE into India's tourism strategy offers multifaceted benefits. It drives year-round tourism by filling hotel occupancy during off-peak periods, enhances destination branding through high-profile global events, and stimulates local economies by boosting demand for local hospitality, transport, and cultural experiences. Moreover, it supports regional development by attracting investment to emerging cities and promotes sustainable tourism through the adoption of eco-friendly infrastructure and global sustainability standards **(Exhibit 5.5)**.

[24] India's MICE Industry Set to Be a Major Economic Driver, Generating High-Quality Jobs: Union Tourism Minister Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Ministry of Tourism, PIB Press Release, May 5, 2025.

Exhibit 5.5: Focus Areas for Boosting MICE Tourism



Source: India Exim Bank Research

With the experience of hosting the G20, India has demonstrated its ability to deliver international events. By aligning MICE growth with national tourism objectives, India can unlock new opportunities for high-impact tourism, regional development, and global recognition. In fact, the cities and destinations which have organised such high-profile events should continue to leverage upon its success to attract more tourist.

Box 5.2: India's G20 Presidency: Strengthening India's Position as a Global MICE Destination

India's G20 Presidency, through the successful organization of nearly 200 meetings over 11 months, has significantly enhanced the country's standing in the global MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions) landscape. This achievement aligns with national tourism policy objectives of promoting India as a high-potential, year-round destination offering world-class infrastructure and culturally immersive experiences. The meetings were strategically hosted across a diverse set of locations: Rann of Kutch, Bhuj (Gujarat), Srinagar (Jammu & Kashmir), Jodhpur (Rajasthan), Siliguri and Darjeeling (West Bengal), Lucknow (Uttar Pradesh), Thiruvananthapuram (Kerala). These destinations demonstrated India's ability to extend international conferencing beyond metro cities, in line with policy goals for regional tourism development and balanced growth. The influx of international delegates, media, and organizations stimulated key sectors such as hospitality, transportation, and local tourism. Additionally, it created new platforms for artisans and craftspeople to engage with global audiences. The integration of cultural performances, heritage landmarks, and culinary diversity reinforced India's soft power and global tourism appeal. The G20 Presidency has thus emerged as a major catalyst for MICE tourism, reinforcing India's global competitiveness in hosting international events. It contributes directly to the goals of the National Strategy for MICE Tourism, particularly in employment generation, destination diversification, and infrastructure-led tourism growth. ODOP showcased India to the world at the various G20 events organised across the country during India's G20 Presidency, where the artisans, sellers and weavers got much visibility on the global stage during the events.

A4. Medical and Wellness Tourism

India's global prominence in medical tourism is underscored by its 10th position in the Medical Tourism Index (MTI) 2020–21, out of 46 international destinations, as assessed by the Medical Tourism Association. Countries ranked ahead of India include Canada, Singapore, Japan, Spain, UK, UAE, Costa Rica, and Israel.

India's medical tourism sector, valued at US$ 8.7 billion in 2025, is expected to reach US$ 16.2 billion by 2030, growing at a CAGR of 13.2% driven by high treatment costs in developed nations, advancements in healthcare infrastructure and technology.

India has emerged as a prominent destination owing to its outstanding medical facilities, cost-effective treatments, and skilled healthcare professionals. For instance, cancer treatment in India may cost around US$ 7,000, whereas the same treatment in the United States can exceed US$ 100,000. This price differential, combined with shorter waiting times and advanced procedures, has drawn patients from across the globe to India. As a result, India has become a hub for specialized treatments like cardiac surgeries, orthopaedics, and transplants, offered by renowned hospitals at lower costs compared to developed countries[25].

Exhibit 5.6: Strategies to Bolster India's Medical Tourism and Wellness Industry

Diversify International Tourism Base	**International Awareness and Quality Assurance**	**Need for Accredited Hospitals in East and Northeast**	**Promote "Heal in India" Brand**	**Upskilling Medical and Wellness Workforce**

Source: India Exim Bank Research

At the same time, there is India's wellness tourism market which is valued at US$ 21.3 billion, is projected to reach US$ 41 billion by 2030, growing at a CAGR of 14%[26]. The country's rich heritage in traditional healing systems like traditional medicine systems like AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, and Homeopathy) has made it a global hub for holistic wellness. Alongside established centres such as Kerala, Rishikesh, and Goa, emerging destinations in Maharashtra, Himachal Pradesh, and Karnataka are contributing to this growth, attracting wellness travellers from the US, Europe, and the Middle East.

To bolster its global standing in wellness and medical tourism, the Indian government has introduced key strategic initiatives. In March 2023, it launched the "Heal in India" campaign to showcase the country's robust healthcare infrastructure and to standardize treatment packages for international patients. Additionally, in August 2023, the Ministry of Home Affairs unveiled the Ayush Visa, a dedicated visa category for foreign nationals seeking traditional and wellness therapies, including Ayurveda, yoga, and other holistic treatments.

However, the country faces increasing competition from destinations like Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore, and Indonesia, among others, which offer internationally recognised medical procedures and wellness facilities. Following are select strategies (as highlighted in **Exhibit 5.6**) where India could focus on to promote its medical and wellness tourism.

[25] Mordor Intelligence
[26] ibid

Diversify International Tourism Base

Medical tourism accounted for 6.9% of total foreign tourist arrivals to India in 2023. Most international patients originate from neighbouring countries with underdeveloped healthcare systems, with Bangladesh accounting for over 76.2% of the total medical tourist inflow in 2023. Other key source countries include Iraq (4.4%), Yemen (2.3%), Oman (2%), among others. Additionally, India attracts medical tourists from African nations such as Kenya, Nigeria, Sudan and Tanzania.

While the share from developed countries remains relatively small, patients from the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, Switzerland, and Canada constitute the top five source markets from advanced economies, accounting for a modest 0.6% of total foreign tourist arrival in medical visas. Further, the political instability in Bangladesh in 2024 disrupted inflows, exposing India's overreliance on a single market. This dependence makes the sector vulnerable and highlights the urgent need to diversify source countries.

Promote the "Heal in India" Brand

India should bolster its effort in positioning itself globally as a hub for both modern and traditional healthcare through the "Heal in India" brand, under the Incredible India umbrella. Marketing must involve digital outreach, events conducted by Indian missions abroad, and partnerships with the private sector to raise visibility in key source markets. Campaigns should promote health-plus-tourism packages for Indian diaspora. Targeted promotional activities and government-to-government tie-ups, especially with Africa, Middle East, and Central Asian countries like Kazakhstan can facilitate institutional patient flows and position India as a trusted healthcare partner.

Promote International Awareness of Accreditation and Quality Assurance

While India has many National Accreditation Board for Hospitals (NABH) domestically accredited hospitals, globally recognised Joint Commission International (JCI) accredited hospitals have a higher demand among international patients. There are 55 JCI-accredited hospitals and 1,245 NABH-accredited hospitals in India[27]. Despite both JCI and NABH's adherence to global healthcare standards, lack of international recognition of NABH undermines confidence of medical tourists in Indian hospitals.

Therefore, greater global recognition of India's NABH accreditation system remains essential. Similarly, limited awareness about AYUSH restricts the growth of India's traditional medicine offerings in global medical tourism. Promoting dual accreditation (NABH and JCI), hospitals and AYUSH centres should be encouraged through targeted mechanisms.

Need for Accredited Hospitals in East and Northeast Regions

The JCI accredited hospitals remain concentrated in cities including in Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore, Chennai, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad. The eastern and northeastern regions of India have very few JCI accredited hospitals in Kolkata. Whereas these regions are closer to source countries like Bangladesh and Nepal lack sufficient infrastructure. This imbalance forces patients to travel farther or depend on unregulated services, reducing accessibility and quality.

[27] ibid

Upskilling the Medical and Wellness Workforce

The National Strategy and Roadmap for Medical Tourism and Wellness Tourism 2022 identifies recruitment and retention of skilled manpower as a major challenge faced by the wellness industry. Good training institutes need to be set up with standardized and accredited courses. To ensure high-quality service, besides technical skills, medical and wellness staff must be trained in multiple languages, hospitality, and cross-cultural care. Certification and skill-building in AYUSH therapies, paramedical services, and facilitation could raise sectoral standards.

Tailor-made packages combining treatment and travel can also enhance visitor experience. For instance, Thailand boasts of international hospitals that are situated in tourist cities and have multilingual staff. It offers all-inclusive medical vacation packages covering various treatments and a relaxing holiday prior to or post the surgery. The cultural heritage and beautiful scenery of Thailand offer medical tourists an effective way to recoup from surgery[28].

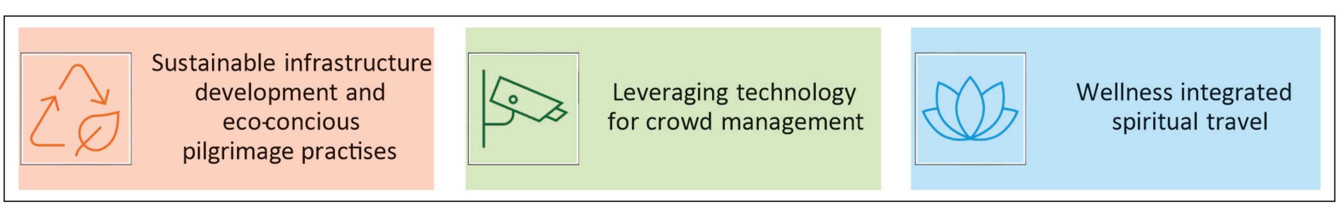
A5. Spiritual Tourism

Pilgrimage travel in India is gaining popularity domestically and among the large Indian diaspora worldwide. According to a KPMG report, religious tourism accounts for more than 60% of domestic tourism in India. India's spiritual tourism holds immense potential due to its rich tapestry of religious traditions, sacred sites, and spiritual practices. Iconic spiritual circuits like the Buddhist Circuit, Ramayana Circuit, and Krishna Circuit attract several global followers of these faiths.

As highlighted in Chapter 2, the Asia-Pacific region is emerging as a growth driver for global tourism. Several Asia-Pacific countries present strong potential as source markets for India's Buddhist Circuit tourism due to shared religious heritage and growing outbound travel. To attract tourists to India's Buddhist Circuit, a culturally sensitive and well-connected approach is essential. Countries like China, Japan, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Myanmar, Vietnam, and Cambodia share deep spiritual ties with sites such as Bodh Gaya, Sarnath, and Kushinagar, which can be highlighted through tailored pilgrimage packages that include local language guides, meditation sessions, and rituals aligned with their traditions.

Strategic collaborations with travel agencies across the potential Asia-Pacific markets countries, along with multilingual digital campaigns and virtual previews of sacred sites, can further boost interest. Leveraging India's cultural diplomacy through ASEAN and BIMSTEC platforms can position the Buddhist Circuit as a shared spiritual legacy, encouraging Asian travellers to rediscover the roots of their faith in India.

Exhibit 5.7: Enhancing Visitor Experience of Spiritual Tourism



Source: India Exim Bank Research

[28] Future Market Insights Inc.

India's Maha Kumbh 2025 in Prayagraj (Uttar Pradesh) marked a transformative moment in how technology and tradition converged to manage the world's largest religious gathering of 660 million devotees. Artificial intelligence played a pivotal role through facial recognition cameras and AI-powered crowd density analysis. An Integrated Command and Control Centre (ICCC), developed by L&T Technology Services, coordinated live video feeds, IoT data, and predictive analytics to ensure seamless crowd management across 4,000 hectares.

Drones, including underwater variants, monitored pilgrim safety both in the air and in the sacred rivers, while RFID wristbands tracked individual movements to aid logistics and emergency response. Pilgrims received assistance through the AI chatbot "Kumbh Sah'AI'yak," available in 11 languages via WhatsApp and a dedicated app. Immersive experience such as 360° virtual reality of spiritual events and drone light shows narrated mythological stories, while eco-friendly technologies like AI-based waste segregation and electric transport systems underscored a commitment to sustainability. By integrating AI and smart systems, the 2025 Maha Kumbh set a global benchmark for managing mass events through digital innovation.

Further, India should leverage global events such as International Day of Yoga to position itself as the spiritual capital of the world, while also promoting spiritual tourism through international roadshows, expos, and partnerships with spiritual organizations. Together, these strategies can enhance visitor experience, improve infrastructure, and create immersive, authentic journeys that highlight India's profound spiritual legacy.

B. Need for Technology Intervention

Digital innovation is redefining and transforming the tourism industry for travellers, businesses, and destinations. In fact, in the last decade or so technology has revolutionised international and domestic travel using a range of offerings like e-visas, biometric immigration, mobile boarding passes and contactless payments.

Technology Driven Innovation: Virtual and augmented reality (VAR), especially post pandemic, has been playing a critical role to interested travellers to provide an online immersive tour of the place of travel. To provide the customer an actual experience, global tourism industry is also creating stories through videos and drones.

The integration of data analytics and artificial intelligence (AI) is transforming hotel operations by facilitating personalized recommendations and targeted marketing, based on guest behaviour and preferences. Digital innovations encompass various aspects of the guest experience, including online booking systems, mobile check-in, digital room keys, and AI-enabled concierge services.

In India's case there is a long way to go for the travel and tourism sector to leverage upon the opportunities that technology has to offer. Many tourism operators, especially MSMEs, lack access to digital infrastructure, funding, and the skills needed to adopt technology. The absence of common digital standards, weak data governance frameworks, and concerns around data privacy further hinders progress.

Need for Tech-Skilled Manpower: With tourism becoming increasingly technology-driven, future jobs in the sector will demand a mix of technical expertise and advanced soft skills to manage and implement smart solutions. Startups and MSMEs, key engines of innovation in tourism, will play a vital role in developing future-ready skills and jobs. To harness this potential, the Indian tourism sector must focus on empowering these enterprises through policy-level support and promote tech-based capacity building.

Future roles in the tourism and hospitality sector may increasingly require digital competencies, including application management, data handling, and the use of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence to enhance customer experiences. Accordingly, hospitality sector employees will have to be trained using a balanced mix of technical and soft skills. Particularly, hosting international-level meetings, conferences, exhibitions and events demands a high standard of professionalism, service quality, and adherence to standardized technology and procedures. Achieving this requires significant professional development at both organisation and workforce level. India faces strong competition from established regional leaders such as Singapore, Thailand, UAE, China, and Malaysia, which are already preferred destinations due to their advanced infrastructure and skilled industry ecosystems. The tourism sector holds considerable potential to generate employment opportunities, provided that targeted skilling interventions are implemented.

Table 5.1: Best Practises Leveraging Technology in Tourism in Select Countries

Country	Key Technologies Used	Objective
Japan	Analysing Traveller Surveys using AI platforms	The Fukui Prefecture Tourism Federation (Japan) uses a data platform that collects traveller surveys and spending data across 90 facilities. The AI system automatically processes data by region and time period, providing summaries and actionable insights. This enables marketing teams to quickly identify strengths and gaps, supporting collaborative improvement plans with local businesses to boost tourism management and spending.
Spain	AI powered chatbot for Smart Tourism Destination Programme	Zoobot - AI-powered chatbot at Barcelona Zoo to enhance accessibility for visitors with visual, auditory, cognitive, or mental health disabilities. Zoobot provides real-time, personalized support in multiple formats audio, text, and visual aids helping users navigate the zoo and provides inclusive experience.
France	Predictive analytics, AI technology for iconic monument restoration	Crowd forecasting is done at major tourist sites like the Louvre. Notre-Dame Cathedral being restored, guided by AI technology. AI generated digital model combines prior 3D scans of the cathedral with reality capture scans and AI-powered modelling to develop precise and effective rebuilding plans.
UAE (Dubai)	AI chatbots and AI powered kiosks in luxury hotels; smart room systems	Seamless luxury experiences through AI powered kiosks for smart check-in operations. Guests can control lighting, temperature, and even room service preferences via voice or mobile app, powered by integrated smart-room systems.
New Zealand	AI, GIS mapping, sustainability analytics	Promotes off-peak travel, balances tourist flows, supports sustainable tourism planning and land management.

Source: Tourism New Zealand; Visit Dubai; Artificial Intelligence and Tourism, OECD, 2024; India Exim Bank Research

C. Integrating Sustainability into Tourism

Globally, the sustainable tourism sector is estimated to expand from US$ 3.2 trillion in 2024 to US$ 11.4 trillion by 2034 growing by a CAGR of 11.4%[29], highlighting the importance of timely investment in sustainable tourism infrastructure. India's sustainable tourism market is valued at US$ 37 million in 2024[30], and has the potential to grow to US$ 216 million by 2034 driven by a CAGR of 19.3%. Presently, the share sustainable tourism industry in India as compared to the overall tourism industry remains approximately between 2% to 5% reflecting the immense scope for investments. Select strategies that has the potential to promotes sustainable tourism in India includes:

Exhibit 5.8: Potential Areas of Investment to Encourage Sustainable Tourism

Infrastructure	Equipment and Technology	Community Sensitisation
• Eco-certifications for tourism facilities • Energy efficient designing and building practises • Use of electric vehicles for transportation	• Water and sanitation - recycling, storage, hygeine • Waste - segregation, processing and recycling • Renewable energy	• Promoting responsible consumption among tourists • Training employees on sustainable practises • Local community involvement

Source: India Exim Bank Research

Promoting Sustainable Tourism Infrastructure

Tourism infrastructure like hotels, transport, attractions should adopt green technologies including solar power, electric vehicles, and energy-efficient building practices. State tourism policies can mandate renewable energy use in government-run tourism facilities and offer subsidies or tax breaks for private sector adoption of clean energy solutions. Public-private partnerships (PPPs) are of growing significance to sustainable tourism development in India. Cooperation between public and private sector is beneficial in developing sustainable and eco-friendly tourism experiences. For instance, the development of eco-tourism facilities in the Andaman & Nicobar and Lakshadweep islands is an example of sustainable tourism supported by PPP. The Ministry of Home Affairs, in association with NITI Aayog, initiated the bidding for developing sustainable and eco-tourism projects in seven islands through the PPP model. The initiative aims to promote the complete development of the islands while ensuring environmental sustainability[31].

Scheme for Certification for Sustainable Tourism

The Certification Scheme for Sustainable Tourism aims to mainstream sustainability across India's tourism sector by establishing clear benchmarks and recognizing responsible practices. At the heart of this initiative is the Sustainable Tourism Criteria of India (STCI), which sets standards for destinations, accommodation providers, and tour operators. The Ministry of Tourism has been working on a comprehensive certification framework aligned with STCI, with active collaboration from industry stakeholders and expert organizations. This process will be fully digitalized, supported by strong branding, and promoted through official tourism platforms. States will be encouraged to identify key destinations for certification and build local industry capacity to meet these standards. However, this continues to remain to be implemented.

---

29 Sustainable Tourism Market Size, Share, and Trends 2025 to 2034, Precedence Research, May 2025.
30 India Sustainable Tourism Market, Future Market Insights, August 2024.
31 Transforming the Islands through Creativity and Innovation, NITI Ayog, May 2019.

Community Sensitization

The success of sustainability interventions depends on strengthening community engagement. Local populations must be integrated into planning and operations, through awareness campaigns and capacity-building programs, to ensure ownership, employment, and long-term sustainability. At the same time, incentivising eco-certification for tour operators and accommodations can further ensure that tourism actively supports ecological preservation.

Table 5.2: Best Practises in Sustainable Tourism in Select Countries

Country	Measure	Details
Costa Rica	Certification for Sustainable Tourism	The Certificate of Tourism Sustainability (CST), developed by the Costa Rican Tourism Institute, promotes sustainable tourism by assessing and certifying tourism organizations based on their adherence to environmental, social, cultural, and economic sustainability practices. The CST evaluates businesses across four key areas viz, business management, social-economic-cultural impact, environmental impact, and sector-specific indicators, through an online audit. It offers two certification levels: Basic (100% compliance with mandatory criteria) and Elite (additional compliance with improvement and external impact indicators). The certification is overseen by a Technical Verification Commission comprising representatives from government, academia, private sector, and international bodies, ensuring credibility and rigorous standards.
Indonesia	Bali Tourism Tax	Effective February 14, 2024, the Bali Provincial Government has introduced a levy of IDR 150,000 per foreign tourist, payable on first arrival in Bali either in advance or on arrival through designated payment methods. The funds will support the preservation, conservation, and revitalization of Bali's natural and cultural heritage, as well as enhance tourist services, safety, and comfort by improving integrated infrastructure across land, sea, and air.
Mauritius	Integrating Circularity into Tourism	Plastic straws, cutlery, stirrers and takeaway containers are banned by national legislation in Mauritius. They have been replaced by biodegradable materials. Hotels in Mauritius work with local artisans to upcycle various types of waste, including plastic, into reusable products. Hotel staffs are also trained to sort waste (especially plastic) according to sustainability standards.

Source: Various Country Tourism Policies and Websites and India Exim Bank Research

D. Need for Targeted Marketing and Promotion

There has been a significant reduction in the budget allocated for overseas promotion of tourism. In the Union Budget of 2025-26, funding for global tourism promotion was reduced by 90.7%, which may hinder the sector's endeavours to attracting foreign visitors due to lower investments in marketing activities. Such a steep decline in overseas promotion spending may adversely affect India's capacity to attract foreign tourists, particularly in a post-pandemic global travel environment where countries are increasingly competing to revive inbound tourism.

Table 5.3: Government Expenditure on Promotion and Marketing of Tourism

Promotion and Publicity	2023-24	2024-25		2025-26	Growth C/A (%)	Growth C/B (%)
	(Actual)	Budget Estimate (A)	Revised Estimate (B)	Budget Estimate (C)		
Overseas Promotion and Publicity including Market Development Assistance	48.0	33.0	33.0	3.1	-90.7	-90.7
Domestic Promotion and Publicity including Market Development Assistance	71.5	177.0	93.0	136.9	-22.6	47.3
Total	**119.5**	**210.0**	**126.0**	**140.0**	**-33.3**	**11.1**

Note: BE – Budget estimates; RE – Revised estimates

Source: Union Budget 2025-26, Government of India.

Inadequate marketing and visibility on international platforms could weaken India's position in global tourism markets, especially in segments such as adventure tourism, medical tourism, spiritual tourism, and eco-tourism. As development of tourism is mainly undertaken by states, targeted promotional campaigns need to be designed which can highlight the diversity of India's tourism offerings and attract specific traveller demographics.

According to the India State Ranking Survey by Hotelivate and World Travel and Tourism Council[32], in terms of effectiveness of marketing campaigns, Kerala, Karnataka, Uttarakhand, Rajasthan and Gujarat achieved the highest scores in both social media outreach and state tourism website ratings, establishing them as highly popular destinations for online users.

Additionally, the survey also compared the Incredible India website to other comparable countries' official tourism site. The websites were ranked according to their monthly average traffic. India ranked 4 out of the 9 analysed countries. This ranking indicates that although India is well recognised in the region, there is still potential for improvement in the marketing of the country as a tourism destination. As shown in **Table 5.4**, India ranked 4th after Thailand, Indonesia, and Singapore based on website traffic in 2024.

Table 5.4: Website Rankings of Select Country Tourism Campaigns

Rank	Country	Tourism Campaign	Official Website Traffic
1	Thailand	Amazing Thailand	12,00,000
2	Indonesia	Wonderful Indonesia	9,16,900
3	Singapore	Passion made Possible	6,58,100
4	India	Incredible India	3,18,500
5	Vietnam	Live Fully in Vietnam	2,83,400
6	Sri Lanka	So Sri Lanka	93,200
7	Malayasia	Truly Asia Malaysia	61,300
8	Cambodia	Kingdom of Wonder	12,700
9	Bangladesh	Beautiful Bangladesh	742

Source: State Ranking Survey 2024, Hotelivate; India Exim Bank Research

32 India State Ranking Survey 2024, Hotelivate and World Travel and Tourism Council, India Initiative (WTTCII).

Thailand for example has undertaken more than 50 marketing campaigns specifically for Indian consumers, travel agents and businesses. It has showcased itself as a destination for weddings, Thai culture and tourist attractions and tailored packages for both budget as well as high-spending travellers[33]. India has emerged as the 3rd largest source market for Thailand after China and Malaysia.

E. Benchmarking States and Mapping their potential for Niche Segments of Tourism

A national level ranking framework should assess various states and union territories in India on their performance of tourism sector with respect to various parameters like business environment, sustainability initiatives, policy initiatives undertaken and existing ecosystem for tourism, and marketing outreach, among others. In fact, this could be initiated by Ministry of Tourism while working with an internationally accredited agency towards devising its framework.

Presently, a consultancy firm, Hotelivate in collaboration with World Travel and Tourism Council publishes a biennial survey – "The India State Ranking Survey 2024"[34] that evaluates 28 states and 2 union territories on the basis of their travel and tourism potential on 14 identified parameters. These parameters are state expenditure on tourism, tourist visits, presence of branded hotel rooms, GSDP per capita, effectiveness of marketing campaign, urbanisation, rail and road infrastructure, air connectivity, literacy rate, green cover, ease of doing business, cleanliness, smart city initiative, and intangible aspects (safety and security, human resources and political stability).

Such a survey could also be prepared and released by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India. Such an initiative could further be extended to set up benchmarks for firms operating both as a private entity or under the Government. With growing importance of technology in tourism sector, such benchmarking should give due importance to initiatives undertaken by firms at the State level which in turn help to improve customer experience and sustainability.

The states could be also mapped according to their strengths as destinations for niche sectors of tourisms like adventure tourism, medical tourism and eco-tourism, among others. For instance, medical value travel (MVT) readiness could be assessed based on the quality of care, infrastructure, ease of access, and patient satisfaction. Such competitive assessment can foster innovation and state-level ownership of MVT development. Likewise for adventure tourism, rankings based on globally recognized parameters can foster competition among states for developing a sustainable ecosystem.

Presently the NITI Ayog releases "Healthy States, Progressive India" report which ranks the states based on their performance in terms of healthcare.

In conclusion

India's tourism sector holds immense potential, underpinned by its cultural richness, ecological diversity, and growing global appeal. However, to realise this potential and achieve the goal of a US$ 3 trillion tourism economy by 2047, strategic and coordinated efforts are essential. This chapter has outlined actionable strategies to develop niche segments such as adventure tourism, medical and wellness travel, MICE,

[33] From India to the world: Unleashing the potential of India's tourists, McKinsey & Company, November 2023.
[34] https://www.hotelivate.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/2024-India-State-Ranking-Survey-12.03.2024.pdf

spiritual circuits, and community-based tourism. These sectors can drive foreign exchange earnings, regional development, and employment generation.

Adopting global best practices in sustainability, and digital innovation, as well as building local capacity and improving tourism infrastructure remains important. Additionally, enhancing India's international visibility through targeted marketing, strengthening the certification framework for sustainable and adventure tourism, and addressing regional disparities in tourism readiness remain crucial. As tourism becomes increasingly experience-driven and technology-enabled, India must invest in digital transformation, skill development, and inclusive community engagement to remain competitive. These strategies provide a comprehensive roadmap for transforming India into a sustainable, and resilient tourism destination.

About India Exim Bank's Working Paper Series

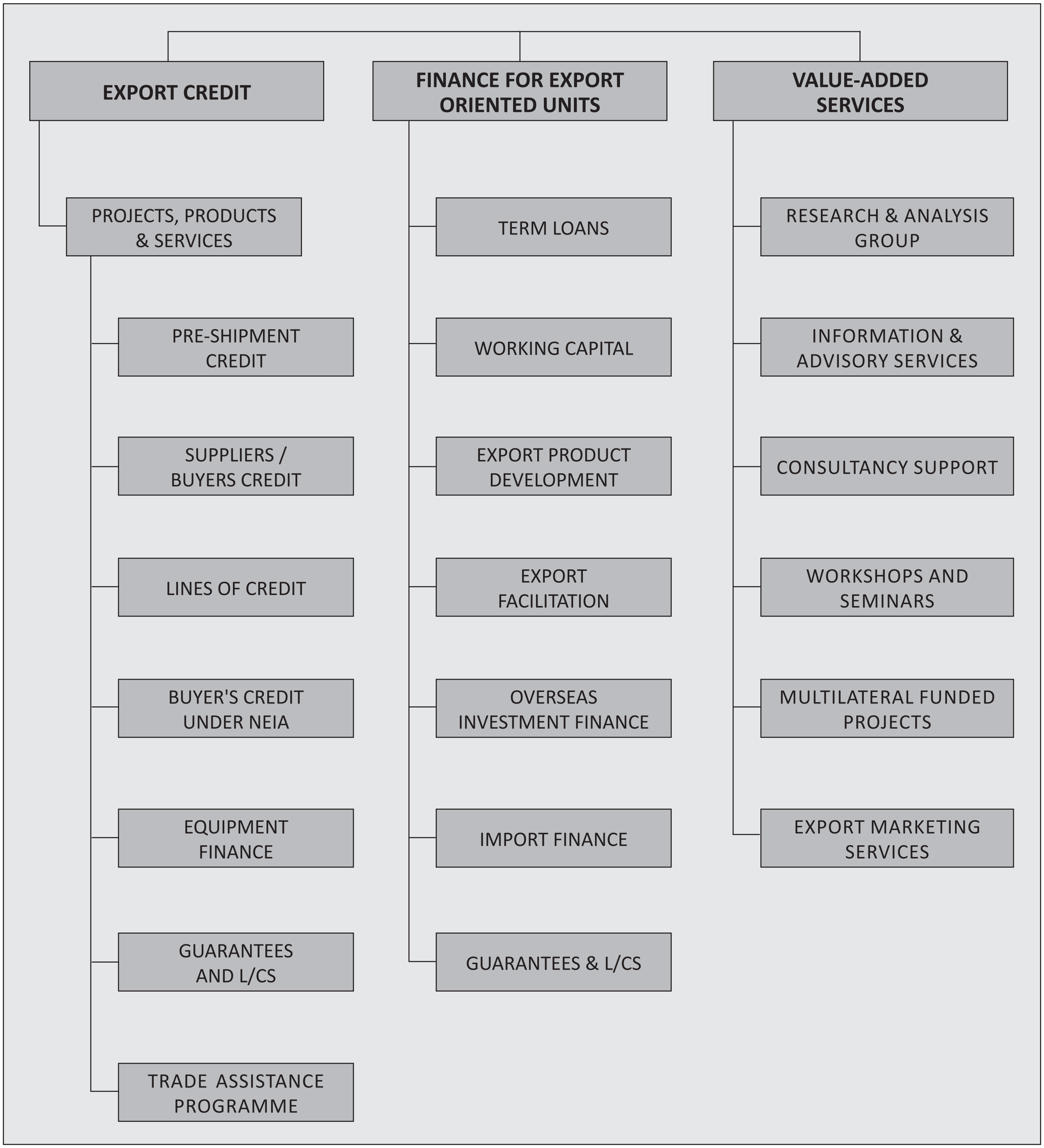
As part of its endeavour in enriching the knowledge of Indian exporters and thereby to enhance their competitiveness, India Exim Bank periodically conducts research studies. These research studies are broadly categorized into three segments, viz. sector studies, country studies and macro-economic related analysis. These studies are published in the form of Occasional Papers, Working Papers and Special Publications. The research papers that are brought out in the form of Working Papers are done with swift analysis and data collation from various sources. The research papers under the series provide an analytical overview on various trade and investment related issues.

Previous Working Papers brought out by India Exim Bank

Working Paper No. 110	Building a Resilient Africa: Enhanced Role of India
Working Paper No. 111	Reflection & Development of India's Creative Economy
Working Paper No. 112	Reinvigorating India's Economic Engagements with Southern Africa
Working Paper No. 113	Unlocking Assam's Export Potential
Working Paper No. 114	A New Era of India-European Union Strategic Partnership
Working Paper No. 115	Indian Chemical Industry: Exploring its Growth Potential
Working Paper No. 116	Prospects for Enhancing India-Canada Economic Relations: Trends and Potential
Working Paper No. 117	Building Bridges: An Economic Analysis of India-Australia Trade Relations
Working Paper No. 118	India's Engagement with the Lithium Triangle Nations: Securing India's Lithium Needs
Working Paper No. 119	Enhancing Trade and Investment Relations between India and Central America
Working Paper No. 120	India's Investment Potential in Africa
Working Paper No. 121	Transitioning to Circular Economy: A Possible Approach for India
Working Paper No. 122	Forging Sustainable India-Africa Partnership through Green Transition
Working Paper No. 123	Investing in LAC: Unlocking Opportunities for Indian Investors
Working Paper No. 124	Evaluating India's Middle-Export Districts: Opportunities under ODOP-DEH
Working Paper No. 125	Connecting Continents: Enhancing India-Eurasian Economic Union Trade and Investment Relations
Working Paper No. 126	India-Bangladesh: A New Age Partnership
Working Paper No. 127	Enhancing Production and Exports of Millets from India
Working Paper No. 128	India and Southern African Customs Union: Building a Stronger Economic Partnership
Working Paper No. 129	Strengthening Ties: Evolving Dynamics in India-Oman Bilateral Relation
Working Paper No. 130	Fostering Collaboration: A Roadmap for Enhancing India-Saudi Arabia Bilateral Relations
Working Paper No. 131	Charting the Course for Telangana's Export Growth: Strategies and Policy Recommendations
Working Paper No. 132	Unraveling the Dynamics of India-ASEAN Economic Relations
Working Paper No. 133	Exploring New Frontiers in India-US Bilateral Relations
Working Paper No. 134	Exploring Economic Opportunities for India in East Africa
Working Paper No. 135	India's Defence Equipment Industry: Exploring New Frontiers
Working Paper No. 136	Accelerating Uttar Pradesh's Export Growth: Insights and Strategies
Working Paper No. 137	India-Qatar Trade and Investment: Strengthening Global Synergies
Working Paper No. 138	A New Era of Cooperation: India's Relationship with EFTA
Working Paper No. 139	Towards a Viksit Madhya Pradesh: A Possible Export Strategy & Policy Perspective
Working Paper No. 140	Strengthening India-Brazil Economic Relations through Sustainable Cooperation
Working Paper No. 141	Forging Strategic Links: Advancing India-New Zealand Partnership
Working Paper No. 142	Building Exports from Jammu & Kashmir
Working Paper No. 143	Navigating Opportunities: Strengthening India's Economic Engagements with Peru
Working Paper No. 144	Deepening India Nepal Economic Ties: From Trade to Development Cooperation
Working Paper No. 145	Strengthening Exports from Uttarakhand
Working Paper No. 146	Unlocking Africa's Sustainable Growth: India's Role and Opportunities
Working Paper No. 147	Bridging the Gulf: Enhancing India–Bahrain Economic Partnership

INDIA EXIM BANK'S MAJOR PROGRAMMES

Bank's Major Programmes



EXPORT-IMPORT BANK OF INDIA

HEAD OFFICE

Centre One Building, 21st Floor, World Trade Centre Complex, Cuffe Parade, Mumbai 400 005.
Phone: (91 22) 22172600 ● Fax : (91 22) 22182572
E-mail : ccg@eximbankindia.in ● Website: www.eximbankindia.in

LONDON BRANCH

5th Floor, 35 King Street, London EC2V 888 United Kingdom
Phone : (0044) 20 77969040 ● Fax : (0044) 20 76000936 ● E-Mail : eximlondon@eximbankindia.in

DOMESTIC OFFICES

Ahmedabad
Sakar II, 1st Floor,
Next to Ellisbridge Shopping Centre,
Ellisbridge P. O., Ahmedabad 380 006
Phone : (91 79) 26576843
Fax : (91 79) 26577696
E-mail : eximahro@eximbankindia.in

Bengaluru
Ramanashree Arcade, 4th Floor,
18, M. G. Road, Bengaluru 560 001
Phone : (91 80) 25585755
Fax : (91 80) 25589107
E-mail : eximbro@eximbankindia.in

Chandigarh
C- 213, Elante offices, Plot No. 178-178A,
Industrial Area phase 1,
Chandigarh 160 002
Phone : (91 172) 4629171
Fax : (91 172) 4629175
E-mail : eximcro@eximbankindia.in

Chennai
Overseas Towers, 4th and 5th Floor,
756-L, Anna Salai, Chennai 600 002
Phone : (91 44) 28522830/31
Fax : (91 44) 28522832
E-mail : eximchro@eximbankindia.in

Guwahati
NEDFi House, 4th Floor, GS Road,
Dispur, Guwahati 781 006
Phone : (91 361) 2237607 /609
Fax : (91 361) 2237701
E-mail : eximgro@eximbankindia.in

Hyderabad
Golden Edifice, 2nd Floor,
6-3-639/640, Raj Bhavan Road,
Khairatabad Circle, Hyderabad 500 004
Phone : (91 40) 23307816
Fax : (91 40) 23317843
E-mail : eximhro@eximbankindia.in

Indore
Unit No. 800-802, 8th floor,
Maloo 01, Plot No 26,
Scheme No 94 C,
Ring Road, Indore 452010
Email: eximiro@eximbankindia.in

Kolkata
Vanijya Bhawan, 4th Floor,
(International Trade Facilitation Centre),
1/1 Wood Street, Kolkata 700 016
Phone : (91 33) 68261301
Fax : (91 33) 68261302
E-mail : eximkro@eximbankindia.in

Lucknow
Unit No. 101, 102 and 103, 1st Floor,
Shalimar Iridium Vibhuti Khand,
Gomti Nagar, Lucknow 226010
Phone: (91 522) 6188035
Email: lro@eximbankindia.in

Mumbai
8th Floor, Maker Chamber IV,
Nariman Point, Mumbai 400 021
Phone : (91 22) 22861300
Fax : (91 22) 22182572
E-mail : eximmro@eximbankindia.in

New Delhi
Office Block, Tower 1, 7th Floor,
Adjacent Ring Road, Kidwai Nagar (E)
New Delhi 110 023
Phone : (91 11) 61242600 / 24607700
Fax : (91 11) 20815029
E-mail : eximndo@eximbankindia.in

Pune
No. 402 & 402(B), 4th floor,
Signature Building, Bhamburda,
Bhandarkar Rd., Shivajinagar,
Pune 411 004
Phone : (91 20) 26403000
Fax : (91 20) 25648846
E-mail : eximpro@eximbankindia.in

OVERSEAS OFFICES

Abidjan
5th Floor, Azur Building,
18-Docteur Crozet Road,
Plateau, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire
Phone : (225) 2720242951
Fax : (225) 2720242950
Email : eximabidjan@eximbankindia.in

Dhaka
Madhumita Plaza, 12th Floor,
Plot No. 11, Road No. 11, Block G,
Banani, Dhaka, Bangladesh - 1213.
Phone : (88) 01708520444
E-mail : eximdhaka@eximbankindia.in

Dubai
Level 5, Tenancy lB,
Gate Precinct Building No. 3,
Dubai International Financial Centre,
PO Box No. 506541, Dubai, UAE.
Phone : (971) 43637462
Fax : (971) 43637461
E-mail : eximdubai@eximbankindia.in

Johannesburg
2nd Floor, Sandton City Twin Towers East,
Sandhurst Ext. 3, Sandton 2196,
Johannesburg,
South Africa.
Phone : (27) 113265103
Fax : (27) 117844511
E-mail : eximjro@eximbankindia.in

Nairobi
Unit 1.3, The Oval, Jalaram Road,
Westlands,
Nairobi, Kenya
Phone : (254) 741757567
E-mail : eximnairobi@eximbankindia.in

São Paulo
Unit - 1603, World Trade Center
Avenida das Nações Unidas 12.551
São Paulo 04578-903,
Brazil
Phone: +55 (11) 3080 7561
Email: eximsaopaulo@eximbankindia.in

Singapore
20, Collyer Quay, #10-02,
Tung Centre,
Singapore 049319.
Phone : (65) 65326464
Fax : (65) 65352131
E-mail : eximsingapore@eximbankindia.in

Washington D.C.
1750 Pennsylvania Avenue NW,
Suite 1202,
Washington D.C. 20006,
United States of America.
Phone : (1) 2022233238
Fax : (1) 2027858487
E-mail : eximwashington@eximbankindia.in

India Exim Bank

Centre One Building, 21st Floor, World Trade Centre Complex, Cuffe Parade,
Mumbai - 400005 | Ph.: (91 22) 22172600
E-mail: ccg@eximbankindia.in | Website: www.eximbankindia.in
Follow us on