Interim Update, April 2011

This Interim Update edition and Statistical Annex of the UNWTO World Tourism Barometer includes an analysis of the 2010 international tourism receipts and preliminary results for international tourism in the first months of 2011.

This release is available in electronic format only through the UNWTO elibrary and is free for members. Its text is edited in English only, while the Statistical Annex is available in English, French, Spanish and Russian.

First results of 2011 confirm consolidation of growth

International tourist arrivals grew by close to 5% during the first two months of 2011, consolidating the rebound registered in 2010. Growth was positive in all world (sub)regions in January and February with the exception of the Middle East and North Africa. South America and South Asia led growth (both at +15%), followed by Subsaharan Africa (+13%) and Central and Eastern Europe (+12%).

Quick overview of key trends

International tourism receipts surpass US$ 900 billion mark in 2010

- In 2010, international tourism receipts are estimated to have reached US$ 919 billion worldwide (693 billion euros), up from US$ 851 billion (610 billion euros) in 2009. In real terms (adjusted for exchange rate fluctuations and inflation) international tourism receipts increased by 5% as compared to an almost 7% growth in arrivals, showing the close relation between both indicators and confirming that in recovery years, arrivals tend to pick up faster than receipts.

China reinforces its position as a leading destination and source market

- In the 2010 rankings of top destinations, China has reinforced its position both with regard to international tourist arrivals and receipts. In terms of arrivals, China has overtaken Spain and now ranks third after France and the USA, while in terms of receipts it ranks fourth, having overtaken Italy. France continues to lead the ranking in terms of arrivals and ranks third in receipts, while the USA ranks first in receipts and second in arrivals. Spain maintains its position as the second biggest earner worldwide and the first in Europe and ranks fourth in arrivals. Italy ranks fifth in both arrivals and receipts. The only other change among the first ten in the ranking by receipts came from Hong Kong (China), which climbed from the 12th to the 9th position.

- The top 10 ranking of international tourism spenders shows China moving up, once again, to the third position. China was able to multiply expenditure four times since 2000, thus achieving the fastest growth in this category over the last decade. Other changes in the ranking of international tourism expenditure include the rise of Canada and Australia to the 6th and 10th positions respectively.
International tourism – 2011 short-term trend

- Based on a sample of almost 100 destinations that reported results for the first months of this year, growth of international tourist arrivals worldwide for January and February of 2011 is estimated to have reached 4.7%.
- Worldwide, international tourist arrivals surpassed 124 million in the first two months of 2011, up from 118.5 million in the same period of 2010, with emerging economies (+6%) continuing to grow at a faster pace than advanced ones (+4%).

Asia and the Pacific, the region with one of the fastest growth rates in 2010, saw its pace of growth slow down (+6%) in the first two months of 2011. Results were better than expected for Europe (+6%), boosted by the recovery of Central and Eastern Europe, and the temporary redistribution of travel to destinations in Southern and Mediterranean Europe due to the developments in North Africa (-9%) and the Middle East (-10%). The Americas (+5%) was in line with the world average growth, posting strong results for South America and the Caribbean, but rather weaker ones in North and Central America.

- These results confirm that the international tourism recovery is consolidating, in spite of the challenges by the recent development in North Africa and the Middle East, as well as the aftermath of the earthquake and tsunami in Japan. However, overall the impact on tourism is expected to be limited to the destinations directly involved, with alternative destinations picking up most of the slack.

The detailed information in the continuation of this *Interim Update* of the UNWTO World Tourism Barometer is not included in the free excerpt of this document. The full document is available in electronic format for sale and free for UNWTO members and subscribed institutions through the UNWTO elibrary at <www.e-unwto.org/content/w83v37>.

For more information on the UNWTO World Tourism Barometer, please refer to the Facts & Figures section on the UNWTO website at <www.unwto.org/facts>.

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