



U.S. retains its position as the world's biggest Travel & Tourism market despite lengthy travel restrictions by boosting domestic travel

UK sees biggest drop in the global rankings

China and Germany hold onto second and third position

London, UK: The latest World Travel & Tourism Council's ([WTTTC](#)) Economic Trends Report reveals the U.S. remains the world's biggest and most powerful Travel & Tourism market.

Its top ranking was reaffirmed, despite suffering long and damaging travel restrictions which did little to halt the spread of COVID-19 and only resulted in serious economic losses.

However, while its number one position was retained, the U.S. Travel & Tourism sector's contribution to the nation's economy fell by US\$700 billion in 2019, to just under US\$1.3 trillion last year.

Research by Oxford Economics for WTTTC shows there has been no change in the top three countries - with China second and Germany third.

But the rankings are illusionary as the top economies bolstered their numbers through domestic travel, while international visitor numbers plummeted.

In the U.S., International traveller spend rankings saw it toppled from its pre-pandemic top position.

But despite the challenges of the past two years, the new report from the global tourism body shows business travel is on the road to recovery.

Julia Simpson, WTTTC President & CEO, said: "Our report shows the resilience of the Travel & Tourism sector, despite the impact of travel restrictions around the world which failed to

halt the spread of the virus.

“Despite a challenging macro environment, Travel & Tourism has bounced back. The world, with some exceptions, is travelling again. And we are seeing a resurgence in business travel. Over the next 10 years, Travel & Tourism growth will outstrip the global economy.”

WTTC’s data reveals that in terms of the Travel & Tourism sector’s contribution to GDP, China held onto its second position, with more than US\$814 billion, while Germany remained the third biggest Travel & Tourism sector in the world, contributing US\$251 billion to the German economy.

The UK slipped dramatically from fifth place in 2019 to ninth in 2021, with a contribution of just over US\$157 billion, the biggest faller of the top 10 countries.

In terms of international traveller spend, France, which before the pandemic struck was in fourth place, overtook Spain, China, and the U.S. to grab first place.

China, which remains closed to much of the rest of the world, was in second place before the pandemic, but fell dramatically to 11th position in 2021.

Across Asia Pacific, major Travel & Tourism markets such as Thailand and Japan saw huge losses in international spending, which resulted in both markets - in fifth and eighth place respectively before the pandemic - falling out of the top 20 altogether in 2021.

According to WTTC’s predictions, worldwide business travel is expected to grow more than 41% this year. For the next 10 years it predicts business travel could grow an average of 5.5% annually and may return faster in the Asia-Pacific region.

WTTC predicts by 2032, China could overtake the U.S. to become the world’s biggest Travel & Tourism market.

The research shows China’s Travel & Tourism sector’s contribution to GDP could reach US\$3.9 trillion by 2032, making it the world’s most powerful Travel & Tourism market, and India could leapfrog Germany to reach third place with a projected value of US\$457 billion.

To read the report in full, please click [here](#).

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