

INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL AND TOURISM

1st Semester 2019

1. INTRODUCTION

This issue of the Economic and Social Indicators presents data on International Travel and Tourism for the first semester of 2019. A brief on the compilation of these statistics is given at Annex I and a glossary of terms at Annex II.

2. INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

Passenger traffic, 1st Semester 2018 and 2019

	1 st Semester 2018	1 st Semester 2019 ¹	% Change
Arrivals by			
Air	834,271	838,277	+ 0.5
Sea	31,245	49,510	+ 58.5
<i>of which Cruise travellers</i>	29,208	47,277	+ 61.9
Total	865,516	887,787	+ 2.6
Departures by			
Air	872,708	872,658	0.0
Sea	33,564	53,138	+ 58.3
Total	906,272	925,796	+ 2.2

¹ Provisional

2.1 Arrivals in 1st Semester 2019

Compared to 1st semester 2018:

- total arrivals increased by 2.6% from 865,516 to 887,787, of which arrivals in Rodrigues direct from Reunion Island amounted to 752;
- total tourist arrivals increased by 0.5% from 646,865 to 650,082; those arriving by air decreased by 1.3% from 633,870 to 625,694, while those arriving by sea increased by 87.7% from 12,995 to 24,388. Among those arriving by sea, 22,794 were cruise tourists compared to 11,461, representing a growth of 98.9%;
- the number of excursionists (arriving and leaving on the same day) increased by 6.7% from 19,866 to 21,204.

In the first semester 2019, 23 cruise ships arrived in the country and carried some 47,277 cruise travellers which include 22,794 tourists, 10,678 excursionists, 365 Mauritian residents and 13,440 crew members.

2.2 Departures in 1st Semester 2019

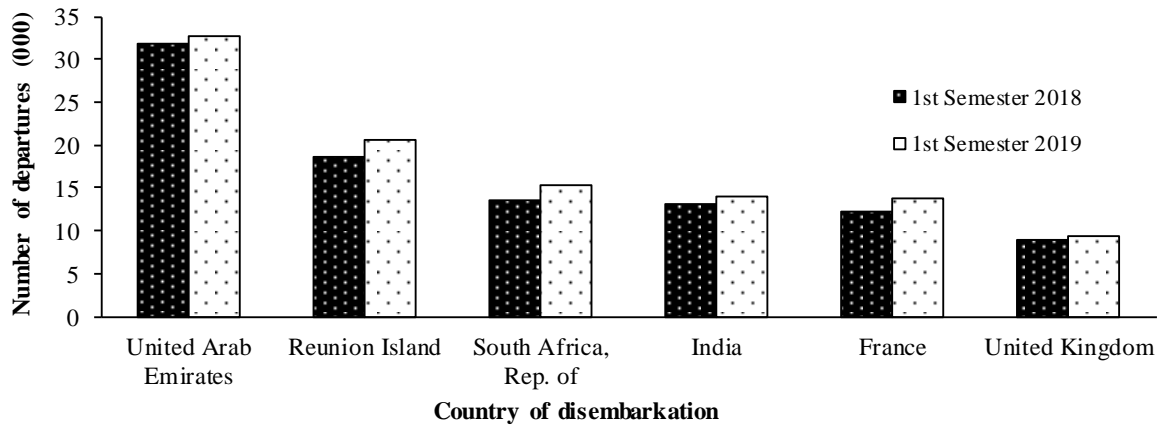
Compared to 1st semester 2018:

- total departures increased by 2.2% from 906,272 to 925,796, of which departures from Rodrigues direct to Reunion Island amounted to 792; and
- departures of Mauritian residents increased by 8.1% from 133,665 to 144,554.

Comparative figures for the first semesters of 2019 and 2018 for Mauritian Departures by main country of disembarkation are given in Figure 1 and Table 2. In the 1st semester of 2019, the main countries of disembarkation (country of final destination or transit country) for Mauritian residents were United Arab Emirates (32,590 or 22.5%), Reunion Island (20,548 or 14.2%),

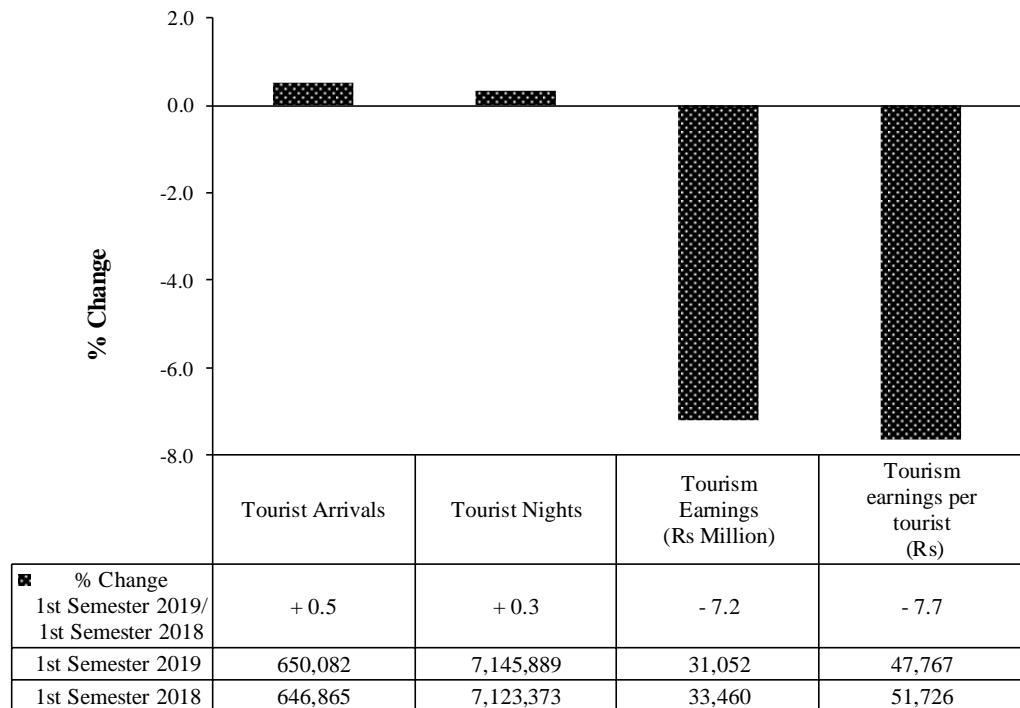
Republic of South Africa (15,224 or 10.5%), India (13,957 or 9.7%), France (13,676 or 9.5%) and United Kingdom (9,260 or 6.4%).

Figure 1 - Mauritian departures by main country of disembarkation, 1st Semester of 2018 and 1st Semester of 2019



3. TOURISM

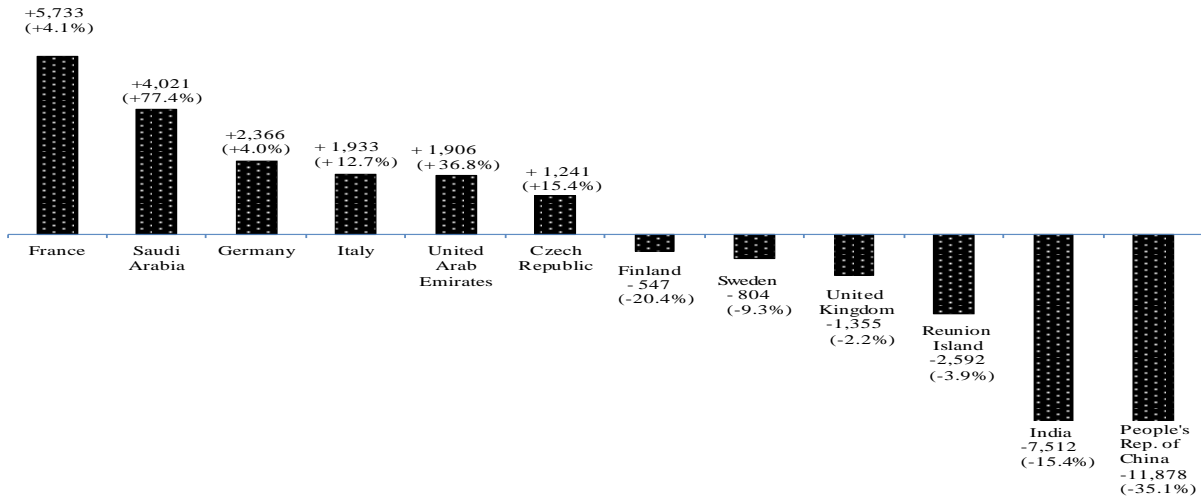
Figure 2 - % Change in main tourism indicators, 1st Semester 2019 compared to 1st Semester 2018



3.1 Tourist Arrivals

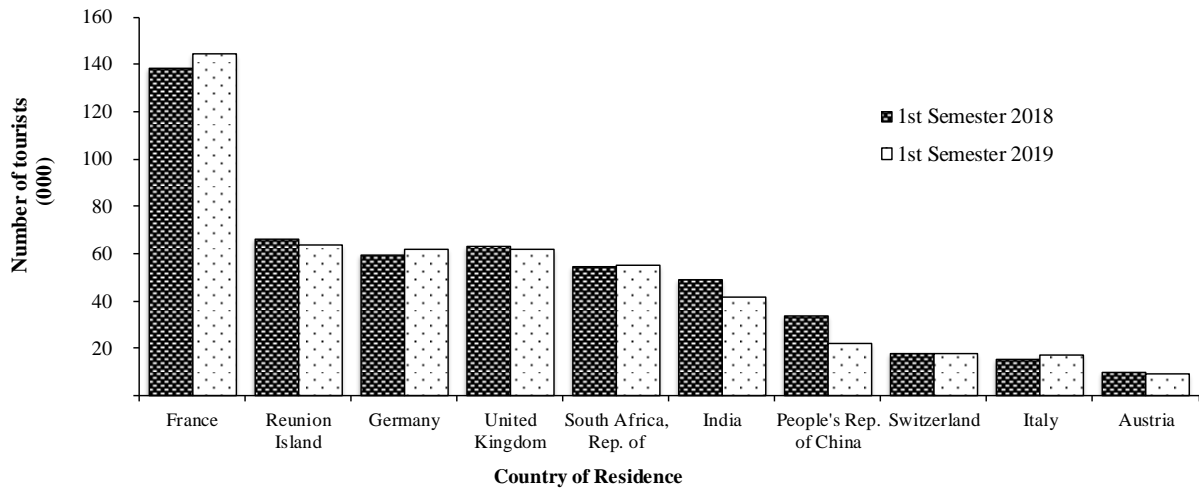
Compared to 1st semester 2018, tourist arrivals increased by 3,217 or 0.5% to reach 650,082 in 1st semester 2019 as a result of main changes shown in figure 3.

Figure 3 - Main changes, number and % change over previous period, in tourist arrivals by selected country of residence, 1st Semester 2019 compared to 1st Semester 2018



In the first semester of 2019, France, our top tourist generating country, registered an increase of 4.1% while Reunion Island decreased by 3.9%. Among the main markets, Germany recorded growth of 4.0% whereas United Kingdom, India and People’s Republic of China witnessed decreases of 2.2%, 15.4% and 35.1% respectively.

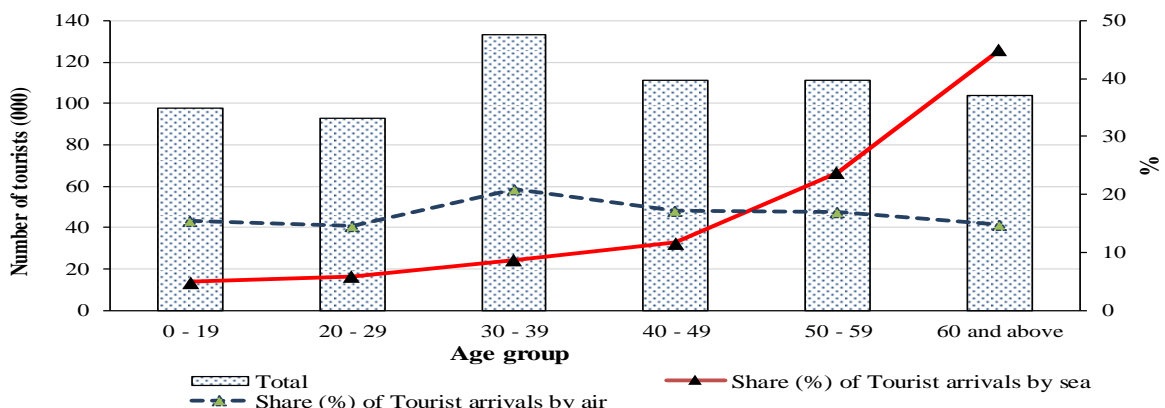
Figure 4 - Tourist arrivals from top ten markets, 1st Semester 2018 and 1st Semester 2019



3.2 Tourist arrivals by age

During the period under review, 103,836 or 16.0% of tourists who visited Mauritius were aged 60 years and above. Among those who arrived by sea, the proportion was much higher at 45.1%.

Figure 5 - Tourist arrivals by age, 1st Semester 2019



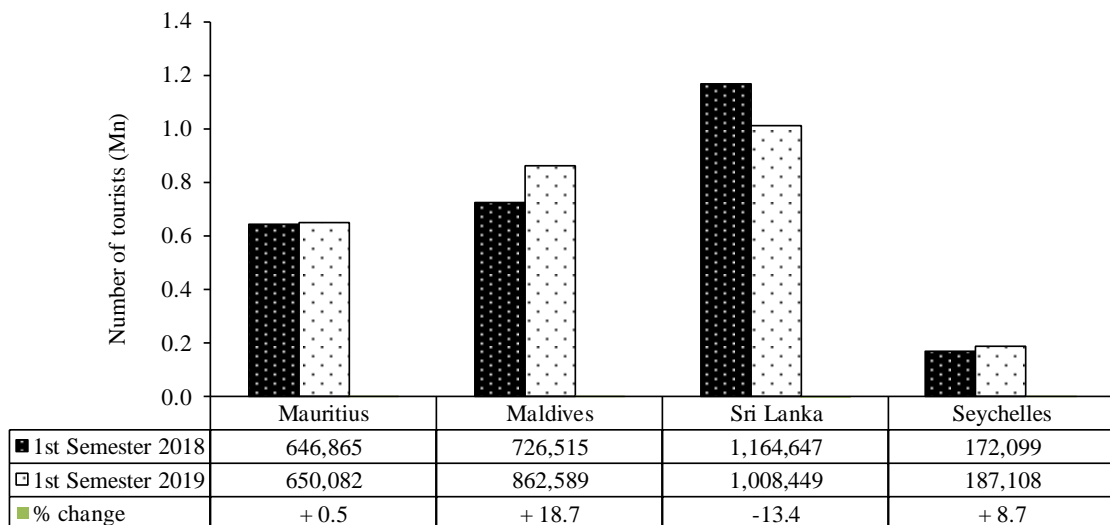
3.3 Tourist arrivals by air and by main port of last embarkation for selected markets

From Table 7, it is observed that during the 1st semester 2019, a high proportion of tourists arrived mainly by direct flights from their own country of residence except for Russian Federation, where there were no direct connections. Tourists from Russian Federation travelled mainly through United Arab Emirates which is the most used transiting port. For the 1st semester 2019, the proportion of tourists who travelled to Mauritius through United Arab Emirates from Russian Federation was 48.4%. It is also worth noting that during the period under review, some 37% of tourists from People's Republic of China travelled on direct flights. The remaining used mainly United Arab Emirates as transiting port.

3.4 Tourist arrivals - Selected tourist destinations

During the 1st semester 2019, while tourist arrivals in Mauritius increased by 0.5%, higher growths were observed for Maldives (+18.7%) and Seychelles (+8.7%). Sri Lanka, on the other hand, experienced a decline of 13.4%.

Figure 6 - Tourist arrivals for Mauritius, Maldives, Sri Lanka & Seychelles, 1st Semester 2018 and 1st Semester 2019



Source: Maldives Statistics section - Ministry of Tourism, Arts & Culture; Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority; Seychelles National Bureau of Statistics

3.5 Tourist Nights

Compared to 1st semester 2018:

- the number of nights spent by tourists who departed during 1st semester 2019 increased by 0.3% from 7,123,373 to 7,145,889; and
- the average length of stay increased from 10.4 to 10.6 nights.

3.6 Employment

Employment data for the tourism sector as obtained from the Survey of Employment and Earnings relate to employment in food service, hotels and travel and other services establishments with 10 or more workers. Latest available data for March 2018 (Table 11) indicate that employment in these establishments increased marginally by 0.3% to 30,939 as compared to 30,861 for March 2017.

3.7 Accommodation

Licensed hotels in the island of Mauritius

As at end of June 2019, there were 113 licensed hotels of which 110 were in operation and 3 were temporarily closed due to renovation works. The total room capacity of these 110 hotels was 13,361 with 30,123 bed places.

During the 1st semester 2019,

- the room occupancy rate of all licensed hotels in operation averaged 69%, lower compared to 73% in 1st semester 2018; and
- the bed occupancy rate was 62%, lower than the recorded 66% in 1st semester 2018.

'Large' hotels in the island of Mauritius

At the end of June 2019, 58 'large' hotels (i.e. well-established beach hotels with more than 80 rooms) were in operation; they had a total room capacity of 10,533 with 24,192 bed places. These 'large' hotels represent 53% of all licensed hotels in operation but make up 79% of total room capacity and 80% of total bed places.

During the 1st semester 2019,

- the room occupancy rate of large hotels was 71% lower than the 74% registered in the 1st semester of 2018;
- the bed occupancy rate was 63%, lower than the 68% recorded in 1st semester 2018.

3.8 Forecast for Year 2019

Based on latest available data on tourist arrivals and information gathered from stakeholders, the forecast of tourist arrivals for 2019 is revised downwards from 1,435,000 to 1,425,000, representing an increase of 1.8% over the figure of 1,399,408 in 2018.

The Bank of Mauritius has revised the forecast of tourism earnings for the year 2019 downwards from Rs 66.0 billion to Rs 64.7 billion, representing an increase of 1.0% compared to Rs 64.0 billion recorded in 2018.

Statistics Mauritius

Ministry of Finance and Economic Development

Port Louis

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COMPILATION OF PASSENGER TRAFFIC STATISTICS

Sources of data

The main source of data for the compilation of passenger traffic statistics is the Passport and Immigration Office, which maintains a database of all travellers entering and leaving the country. The data are collected from the passport of travellers, disembarkation cards filled in by non-residents and questions put to non-residents entering the country. At the end of every month, the electronic database of passenger traffic for that particular month is downloaded and supplied to the statistics unit of the Ministry of Tourism within ten days. Additional data on cruises are obtained from the Mauritius Ports Authority.

Tourism earnings

The Bank of Mauritius (BoM) is responsible for the estimation of tourism earnings based on monthly statements of Inward and Outward Remittances of Commercial Banks. As from 2015, BoM is also including data culled from Money changers and Foreign exchange dealers.

Monthly Occupancy Rates

All hotels are contacted by phone at the end of every month for data on room/bed nights available and rented during the month for the calculation of room and bed occupancy rates.

Short-term projections of tourist arrivals

A Tourism Statistics Committee grouping various stakeholders of the tourism industry meet regularly under the chairmanship of Statistics Mauritius to discuss performance of the tourism sector and to provide information for short-term forecast of tourist arrivals.

Publications

The regular publications of the unit are:

- (i) Monthly tourist arrivals uploaded on Statistics Mauritius website at latest 10 working days after reference month
- (ii) Quarterly Economic and Social Indicators on International Travel and Tourism (with a lag of seven weeks)
- (iii) Tourism statistics (Pamphlet)
- (iv) Digest of International Travel and Tourism
- (v) Handbook of statistical data on tourism
- (vi) Report of the Survey of Inbound Tourism

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

1. Tourist

A tourist is defined as a non-resident staying overnight but less than a year, and who has no employer-employee relationship with a resident.

2. Transit

A transit passenger is one who stops over in the country for flight connections to other destinations. There are two types of transit passengers:

Type I: Passengers who do not leave the transit area of the airport or the harbour.

Type II: Passengers who do leave the airport or harbour and stay in the country overnight but only for flight connection purposes.

Only Type II transit passengers, as defined above, are included in the definition of "Tourists".

3. Excursionist or Same-day Visitor

Excursionists are non-resident visitors, other than those who do not leave the airport, who depart on the same day they arrived.

4. Tourist Nights

"Tourist nights" for year Y refer to nights spent by tourists who departed in year Y.

5. Large Hotels

Large hotels are well established beach hotels with more than 80 rooms.

6. Occupancy rate

The room/bed occupancy rate is the ratio of room/bed nights rented to the total number of room/bed nights available.

$$= \frac{\text{Total number of room/bed nights rented}}{\text{Total number of room/bed nights available}} \times 100$$