**Introduction**

This report presents the main results of the survey of Inbound Tourism for the first six months of 2024. It is to be noted that this survey was not conducted as from 2020 to 2022 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The primary objective of the survey is to gather information on tourists visiting Mauritius, mainly on their spending pattern, purpose and frequency of visits, place of stay and rating of the Mauritian destination. During the survey, data was collected from departing tourists at Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam International Airport.

Table 1 below shows the distribution of respondents by country of residence compared to that of tourist departures during the first six months of 2024.

The questionnaire is given at Annex.

**Table 1: Distribution of parties and tourists by country of residence, 1st Semester 2024**



1. **Main findings, 1st Semester, 2023 and 2024**



*Note: Figures in shaded cells should be treated with caution; they are subject to low reliability since they are based on fewer than 30 observations in the sample.*

**1.1 Tourists travelling on package tour**

For the first semester of 2024, 62.2% of tourists travelled on package tour compared to 50.2% in the first semester of 2023. During the first semester of 2024, package tour was more popular among tourists from Australia (89.2%), India (76.5%), Italy (72.7%), Germany (71.3%) and Republic of South Africa (69.5%). Tourists making their own travel arrangement were mainly from Switzerland (62.5%) and Reunion Island (53.2%) (Table 2).

During the first semester of 2024, among the tourists staying in hotels, 79.0% of them were on package tour compared to 66.3% for the corresponding period of 2023 (Table 5c).

**1.2 Tourists travelling on non-package tour stayed longer than those travelling on package tour**

For the first semester of 2024, the average length of stay for tourists arriving on package tour was 9.4 nights, lower than the figure of 15.2 nights for those travelling on non-package tour. A similar trend was observed for the first semester of 2023 (Table 3).

During the first semester of 2024, American tourists stayed longer with an average of 14.4 nights compared to the other regions: Oceania (14.1 nights), Asia (13.5 nights), Europe (11.9 nights) and Africa (9.5 nights) (Table 3).

During the first semester of 2024, the average length of stay of tourists staying in non-hotel accommodations is longer (19.0 nights) compared to those staying in hotels (9.4 nights) (Table 5c).

**1.3 Tourists visited Mauritius mainly to spend holidays**

For the first semester of 2024, 93.0% of tourists visited Mauritius mainly for holidays, slightly higher than the figure of 92.0% in the first semester of 2023.

The proportion of tourists visiting Mauritius for honeymoon in first semester of 2024 stood at 0.8%, lower than the figure of 3.5% registered during the corresponding period of 2023. The share of tourists coming on business declined from 1.5% in the first semester of 2023 to 0.1% during the corresponding period of 2024 while the share for those visiting friends and/or relatives increased to 5.2% compared to 1.4% during the first semester of 2024 (Table 4).

**1.4 Nearly eight out of 10 tourists preferred to stay in hotels than in non-hotel accommodations**

During the first semester of 2024, 77.2% of tourists preferred to stay in hotels rather than in non-hotel accommodations compared to 74.0% of tourists who stayed in hotels during the first semester of 2023. Among the non-hotel accommodations, tourists preferred to stay in tourist residence. For the first semester of 2024, 9.9% of tourists stayed in tourist residence compared to 14.2% in the first semester of 2023, followed by 9.4% of tourists staying with friends and/or relatives compared to the figure of 6.6% registered in the first semester of 2023 (Table 5a).

In the first semester of 2024, among those staying in hotels, 98.9% came for holidays, 1.0% were honeymooners and some 0.1% came on business trips (Table 5c).

**1.5 Average expenditure per tourist**

For the first semester of 2024, the average expenditure per tourist amounted to Rs 67,200, that is around Rs 1,200 lower compared to Rs 68,400 in the same period of 2023. On average, a European tourist spent Rs 72,400 during the first semester of 2024 compared to Rs 73,800 in the first semester of 2023. Tourists from France, our leading market spent an average of Rs 68,300 per person in the first semester of 2024, Rs 5,100 higher compared to Rs 63,200 in the corresponding period of 2023 (Table 6).

Average expenditure for those staying in hotels was Rs 74,000 in the first semester of 2024, compared to Rs 72,800 in the first semester of 2023. Those staying in non-hotel accommodations spent on average Rs 44,500 in the first semester of 2024 compared to Rs 55,900 for the same period of 2023 (Table 5c).

The average expenditure per tourist per night for the first semester of 2024 amounted to Rs 5,800, slightly lower than the figure of Rs 6,000 in the first semester of 2023 (Table 6).

During the first semester of 2024, tourists travelling on package tour spent Rs 7,700 per night on average, higher when compared to an average of Rs 3,900 per night for those travelling on non-package tour. The same trend was observed for the first semester of 2023 (Table 7).

A tourist staying in hotels spent on average Rs 7,900 per night in the first semester of 2024 which was more than threefold the amount spent by a tourist staying in non-hotel accommodations (Rs 2,300 per night). Corresponding figures for the first semester of 2023 were Rs 7,900 for hotels and Rs 3,200 for non-hotel accommodations (Table 5c).

**Figure 1: Tourist arrivals from main generating countries, 1st Semester, 2023 and 2024**



*Source: Passport & Immigration Office*

**Figure 2: Average length of stay (in nights) by purpose of visit, 1st Semester, 2023 and 2024**



**Figure 3: Average length of stay (in nights) by selected country of residence, 1st Semester, 2023 and 2024**



**Figure 4: Average expenditure (Mauritian Rupees) per tourist by selected country of residence, 1st Semester, 2023 and 2024**



**Figure 5: Distribution of tourists by group composition, 1st Semester, 2023 and 2024**

**1st Semester 2023 1st Semester 2024**



**Figure 6: Distribution of first-time tourists by influencing factor, 1st Semester, 2023 and 2024**

**1st Semester 2023 1st Semester 2024**



**Figure 7: Distribution of tourists by meal arrangement, 1st Semester, 2023 and 2024**

**1st Semester 2023 1st Semester 2024**



1. **Methodology**
   1. **Data collection**

Survey period

The survey was conducted during the first semester of 2024. Interviews were carried out in 2 time slots for each schedule (day and night) as follows:

1. day schedule: between 06.00 and 14.00; or between 08.00 and 16.00 hours;
2. night schedule: between 14.00 and 22.00; or between 16.00 and 23.00 hours.

Target population

Tourists leaving the Island of Mauritius by air.

Questionnaire design

The views of the main stakeholders, including the Ministry of Tourism, Association of Hoteliers and Restaurants in Mauritius (AHRIM) and Mauritius Tourism Promotion Agency (MTPA), were sought regarding the content of the questionnaire. The questionnaire comprises 35 questions (*see Annex*), including opinion questions on level of security, state of environment, customer service at the airport and an overall appreciation score to Mauritius as a holiday destination.

Data collection method

Data were collected on tablet PCs and face-to-face interviewing technique was used.

Response rate

Around 85% of tourists who were approached for the survey responded positively. Non-respondents who were replaced, were mostly those who did not have enough time due to their late arrival for check-in formalities and those who had language difficulties.

Fieldstaff

The fieldstaff comprised of around 5 interviewers and 3 supervisors each month.

Consistency and validation checks

The data capture application on the tablet PCs flagged errors at data collection and were corrected on the spot. In addition, supervisors monitored the interviews being carried out and advised the interviewers on remedial action to be taken, if warranted.

* 1. **Sampling**

Sampling method

The number of interviews conducted per day was determined by making use of Probability Proportional to Size (PPS) sampling method based on the seat capacity of the airplanes which left the country in 2023. Interviews were conducted on the ‘first available’ basis i.e. tourists were approached as they entered the departure lounge after check-in formalities.

Sample size

A total of 4,935 interviews were conducted during the first 6 months of 2024, covering 10,763 tourists.

Data reliability

The results published in this report are based on a sample, rather than the census of all tourists who departed during the first 6 months of 2024. As with all sample surveys, the results are subject to sampling variability and therefore may differ from figures that would be obtained if all tourists had been included in the survey.

* 1. **Expenditure data**

Expenditure figures relate to expenses incurred by the tourists during their stay in the country and include items like accommodation, meals and beverages, local transportation, sightseeing, entertainment, shopping etc. However, expenses on **international fares** paid to carriers are excluded.

The method of calculating tourism expenditure by means of Airport Exit Surveys is widely used internationally, but problems arise for tourists travelling on package tour. The cost of package has to be broken down in order to obtain the proportions which accrue to hotels, tour operators etc. in Mauritius. Based on information gathered, it is assumed that 37% of the cost of the package goes to the local hoteliers. In cases where the package includes other destinations besides Mauritius, adjustments are done to determine the expenditure incurred in the country.

* 1. **Weighting methodology**

The survey results were benchmarked to data on monthly tourists departed during the first 6 months of 2024, as obtained from the Passport and Immigration Office. The variables “country of residence” and “length of stay” were used in weighting the survey data. Moreover, for better estimates, weighted number of nights derived from survey data have been realigned with the actual number of tourist nights spent by departing tourists.

* 1. **Problems/Limitations**

As with all sample surveys, the Survey of Inbound Tourism is subject to weaknesses including:

* Tourists departing by sea are not covered. However, it is to be noted that tourists by sea represent around 3% of total tourist arrivals.
* Tourists in the VIP lounges are not covered; these tourists are perceived as high spenders.

1. **Concepts and Definitions**

The concepts and definitions are based on the International Recommendations for Tourism Statistics 2008 (IRTS 2008) framework prepared by United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO). The framework is consistent with other statistical frameworks such as the System of National Accounts 2008 and the Tourism Satellite Account Recommended Methodological Framework 2008.

**Unit of inquiry**

The unit of inquiry is the tourist. The latter is defined as a non-resident staying overnight in the country but less than a year, and is not involved in any gainful occupation in the country during his/her stay.

A tourist may be travelling alone or in a group.

**Inbound tourism**

Inbound tourism comprises the activities of a non-resident visitor within the country of reference.

**Inbound tourism expenditure**

Inbound tourism expenditure is the tourism expenditure of a non-resident visitor within the economy of reference.

**Party**

The travelling unit is the “party”, which usually consists of one or more members for whom individual expenditures are not available separately. Thus, for certain sections of the questionnaire, the information obtained may refer to more than one tourist.

The size of the “party” is the total number of persons present in the “party”. This has been taken into consideration when calculating average expenditure per tourist.

**Country of residence**

Tourist arrivals are compiled on the basis of the **permanent address** of the tourist, which may not be the same as his nationality.

**Main purpose of visit**

The main purpose of a trip is defined as the purpose in the absence of which the trip would not have taken place.

**Package or inclusive tour**

A package tour is defined as one in which airfare, accommodation and other items such as meals, sightseeing, car hire are included in the tour price paid before departure from the home country of the tourist. The package may include other countries besides Mauritius.

**Statistics Mauritius**

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