



12882

Monthly Tourist Arrivals Report:

A Monthly Snapshot of International Arrivals to
Sri Lanka from Immigration Statistics

April 2023

Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority



Introduction

The following document provides a synthesis of the most recent April, 2023 international visitor arrivals data sourced from the Department of Immigration & Emigration. The data is current as of 30th April 2023, and subject to change. The data provides an overview of month-on-month and annual changes in visitor arrivals to Sri Lanka from international source markets. The data is meant to provide an overview of how travel and tourism is performing to Sri Lanka.

This report is developed by the Research & International Relations Division at Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority (SLTDA). Questions, comments and feedback are welcome and will support the future amendment and enhancement of the report to ensure it meets the data and insights needs of Sri Lanka's Government and industry stakeholders.

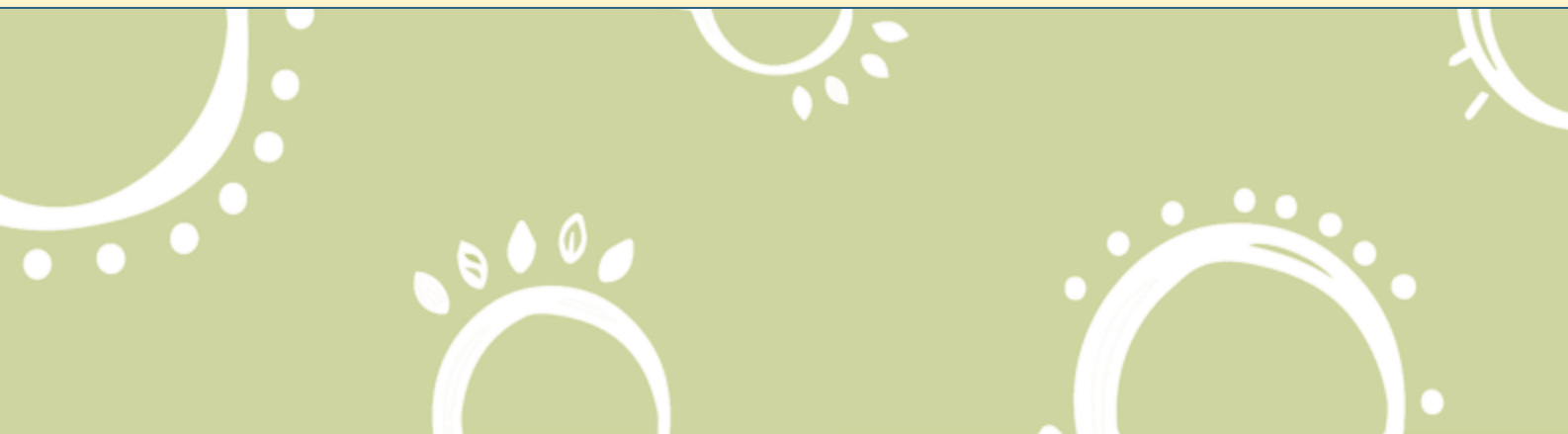


Table of contents

Summary.....	4
Tourist arrivals by region and percentage share, April 2023.....	5
Top primary markets and top potential markets, April 2023.....	6
Top ten source markets, April 2023	8
Tourist arrivals by purpose of visit, April 2023	11
International tourist arrivals by country of residence.....	13
Main last departure airports and airlines to Sri Lanka, April 2023.....	16



Summary

In April 2023, Sri Lanka recorded 105,498 international tourist arrivals, which is a significant increase of 67.5% compared to the same period in 2022. This impressive growth brought the total number of tourists to 58% of pre-pandemic levels in 2018. However, compared to March 2023, there has been a decrease of 15.9% in tourist arrivals, which suggests the end of the peak season in Sri Lanka.

Generally, the surge in tourism can be attributed to various factors, including the high season for travel in Sri Lanka, improved socio-economic conditions, and better accessibility to the country. Additionally, the relaxation of travel restrictions in many countries has also played a crucial role in the recovery of the travel industry. The top countries of origin for tourists in April were India, Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, Germany, and France.

Table 1. Monthly tourist arrivals, April 2023

Month	2022	2023	% change 2023/22
January	82,327	102,545	24.5
February	96,507	107,639	11.5
March	106,500	125,495	17.8
April	62,980	105,498	67.5
May	30,207		
June	32,856		
July	47,293		
August	37,760		
September	29,802		
October	42,026		
November	59,759		
December	91,961		
TOTAL	719,978	441,177	



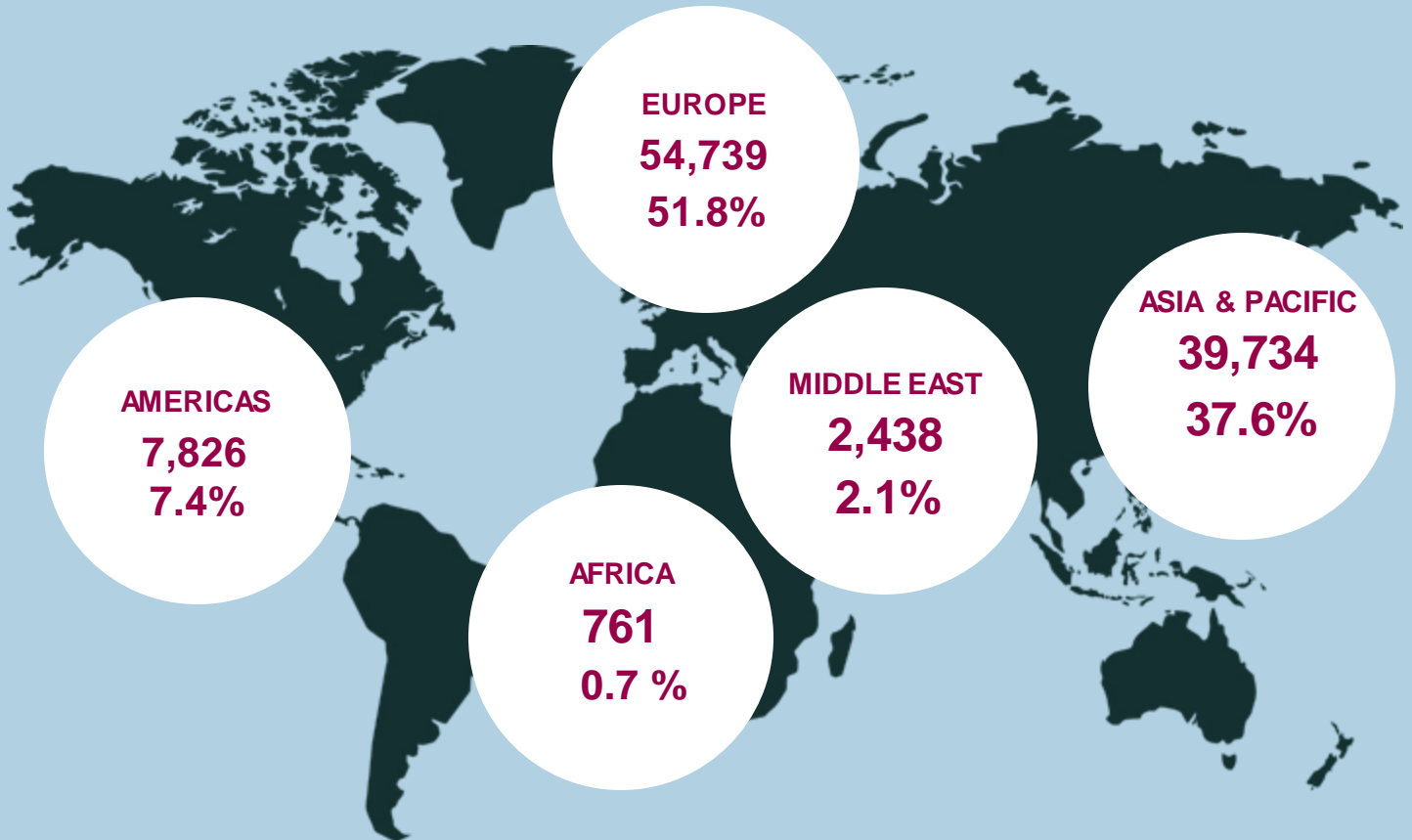
Tourist Arrivals | April 2023

105,498



Tourist arrivals by region and percentage share April 2023

Map 1. Tourist arrivals by region and percentage share



Europe accounted for the majority of tourists visiting Sri Lanka, representing 51.8% of total arrivals. The increase in tourism is believed to be a result of growing demand from countries such as the Russian Federation, United Kingdom, Germany, and France.

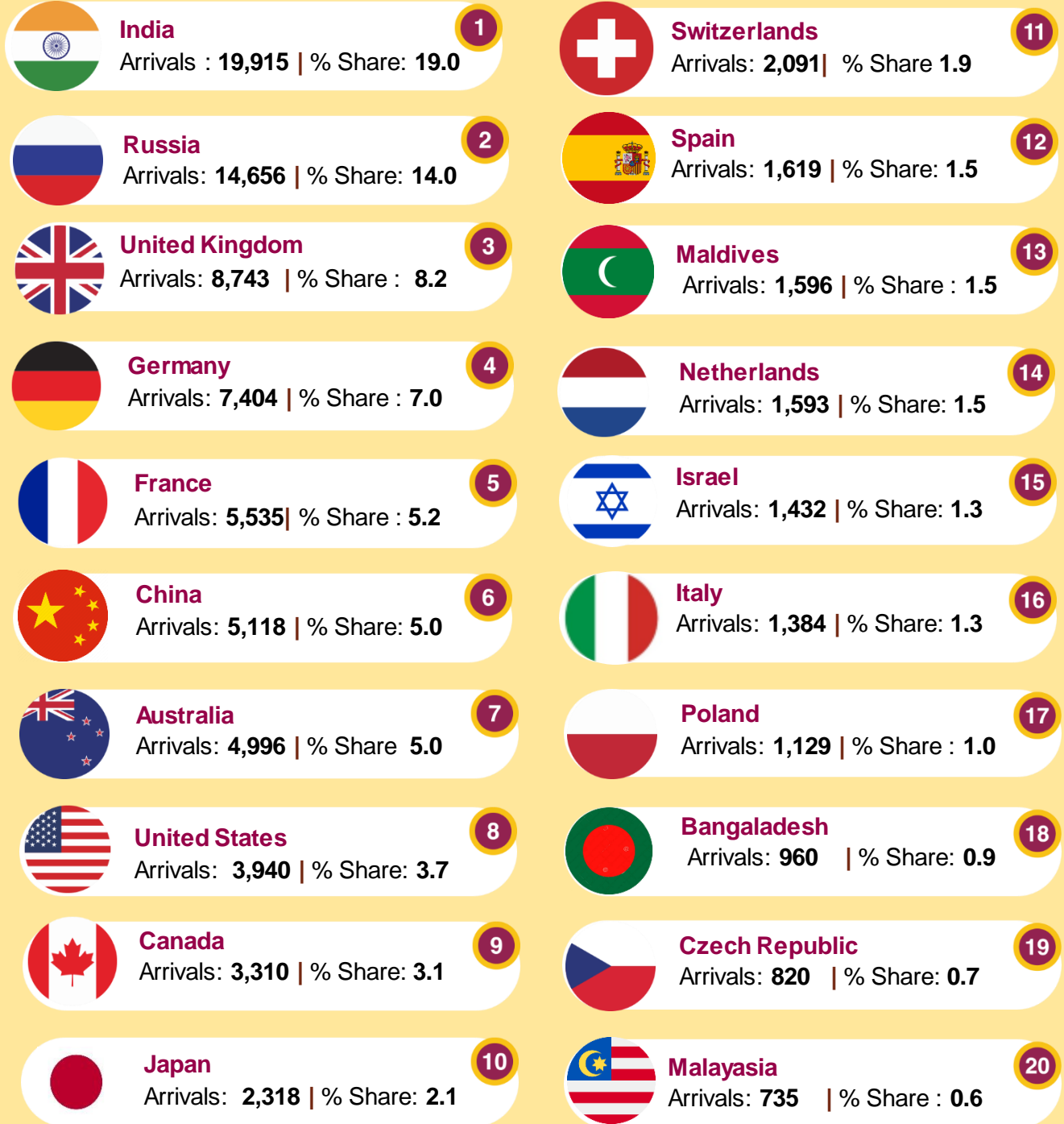
The Asia and Pacific region accounted for 37.6% of total tourist arrivals to Sri Lanka, while the Americas and the Middle East contributed 7.4% and 2.1% respectively. The easing of travel restrictions and enhanced air connectivity to Sri Lanka could be the key drivers behind the growth in tourism during this period.

UNWTO predicts that international tourism will continue to recover in 2023, driven by a rising demand for travel. However, the sector's growth could be hindered by several obstacles, including economic, health-related, climatic, and geopolitical factors that may impact its sustained recovery.



Top primary markets and top potential markets

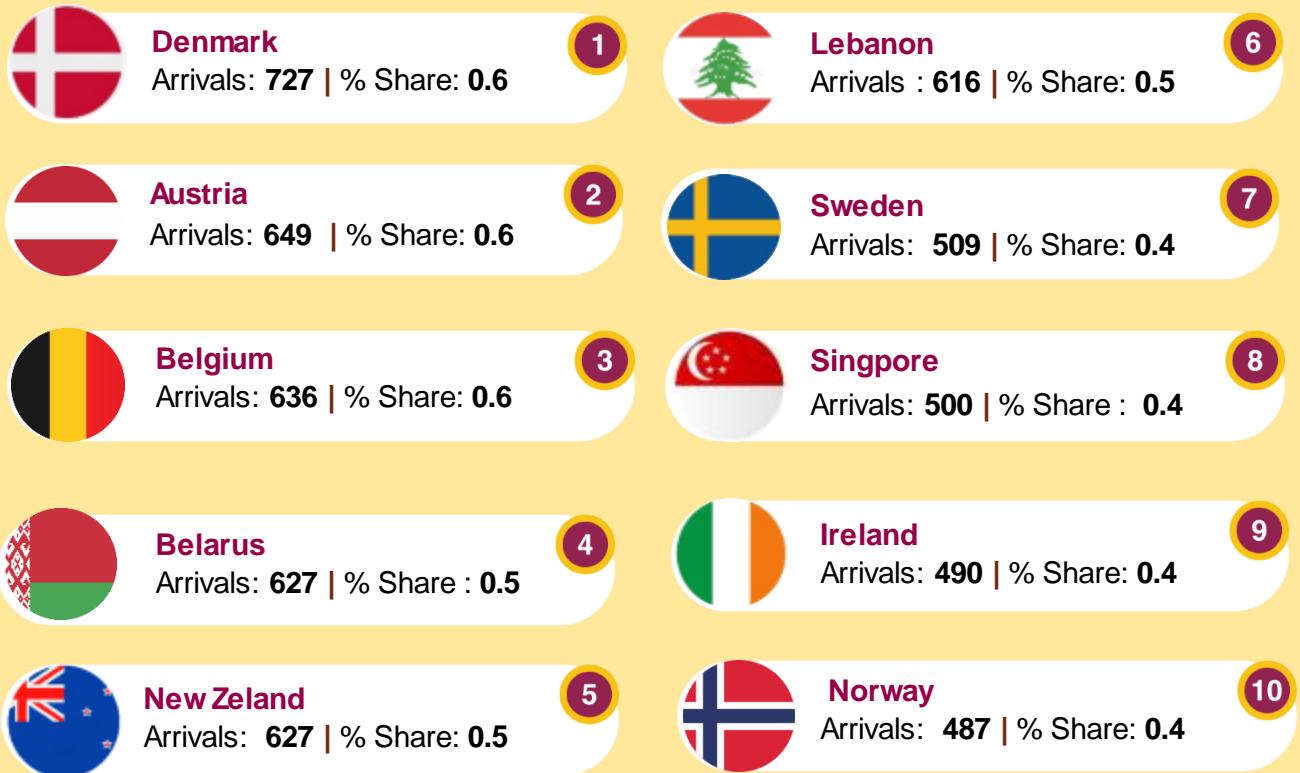
Top primary markets – April 2023



Note: The top primary markets for Sri Lanka have been identified using visitor arrivals. The previous methodology used to identify the markets was altered due to the current arrival trends in the source markets and the socio economic factors in Sri Lanka. The intention is to track these source markets on a go-forward basis to understand future performance of Sri Lanka's tourism economy, including during the projected international tourism recovery period, 2022-2025.



Top potential markets - April 2023



Note: The top primary markets for Sri Lanka have been identified using visitor arrivals data. The previous methodology used to identify the markets was altered due to the current arrival trends in the source markets and the socio economic factors in Sri Lanka. The intention is to track these source markets on a go-forward basis to understand future performance of Sri Lanka’s tourism economy, including during the projected international tourism recovery period, 2022-2025.





Top ten source markets

April 2023

During March, Sri Lanka experienced a surge in international tourist arrivals, with the majority coming from India, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, Germany, and France. India accounted for the highest percentage of arrivals at 19%, while the Russian Federation, United Kingdom, Germany, and France represented 14%, 8%, 7%, and 5% respectively. Improved air accessibility, favorable conditions within the country, proximity, and geopolitical factors continued to make India the primary source of tourism for Sri Lanka. Notably, there has been substantial growth in arrivals from countries like Russia, India, and the United States, while France and Germany have shown the lowest growth rates when compared to March 2022 likely due to the negative travel advisories and perceptions regarding Sri Lanka.

The United Kingdom witnessed a decrease of 24.2% in tourist arrivals compared to March 2022, which could be due to Sri Lankan diaspora visiting friends and relatives less frequently and a preference among British tourists for closer destinations like Spain, Italy, and France. When compared to March 2018, there was a significant 66% drop in tourist arrivals from the United Kingdom. Travel bag's analysis of the average Google search volume for holidays revealed that Maldives, Turkey, Thailand, Mexico, Egypt, and Barbados are among the top long-haul destinations for Brits in 2023.

These trends signify changes in outbound travel preferences and travel patterns, with growth in arrivals from India and Russia indicating a shift towards emerging destinations.

Chart 1. Top ten source markets to Sri Lanka, April 2023

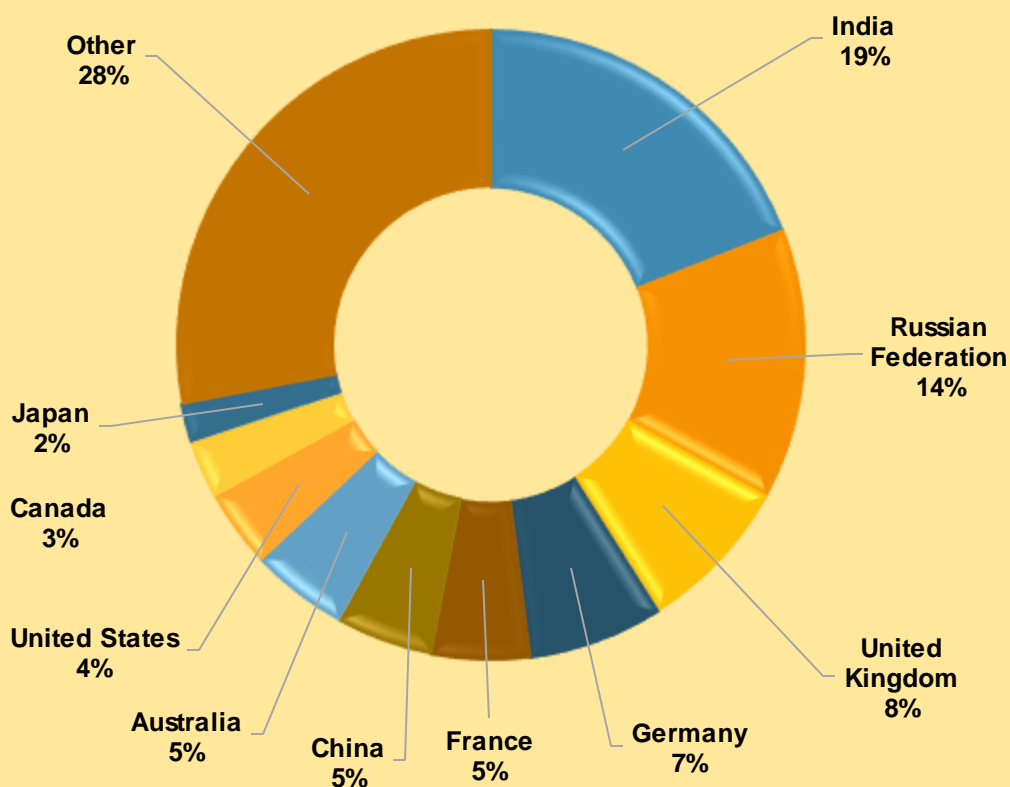
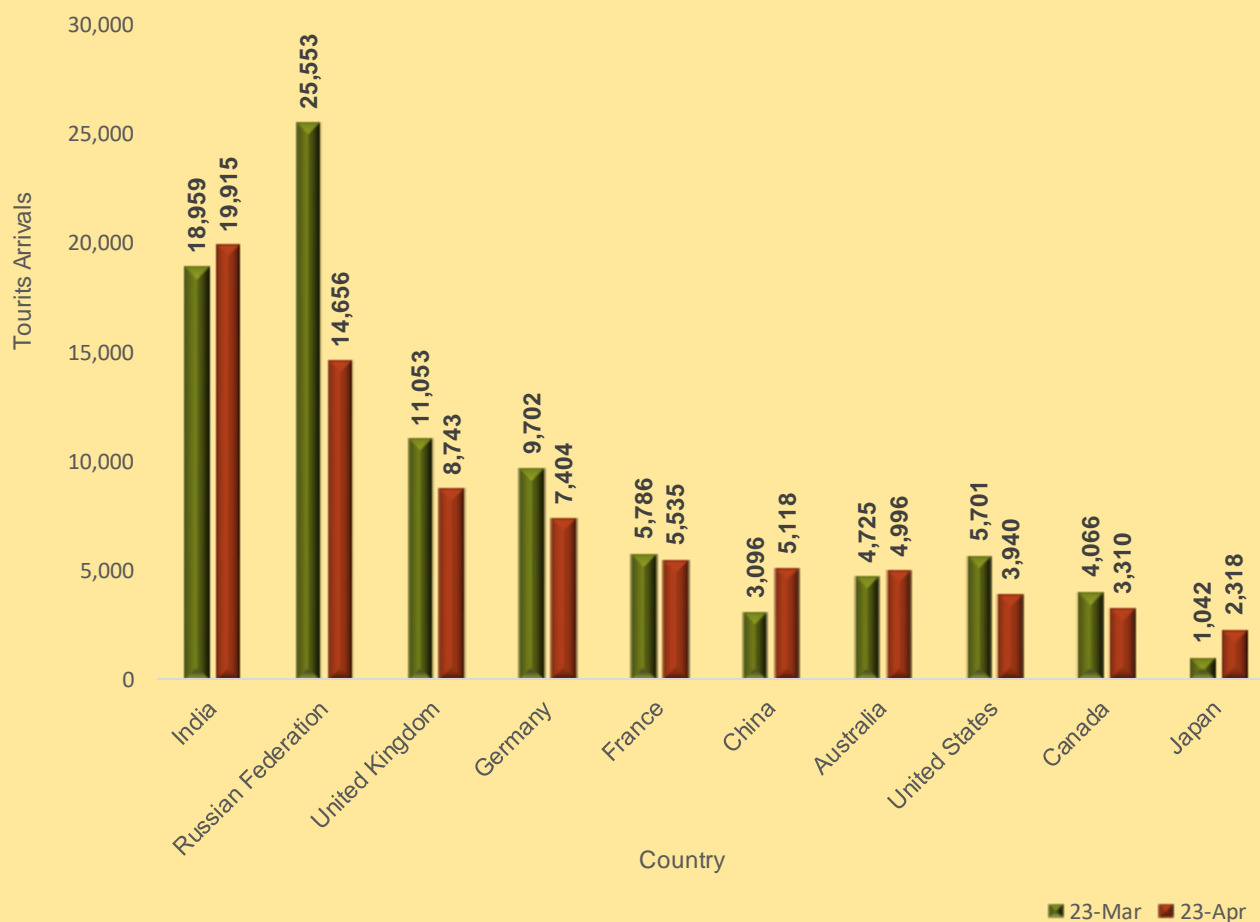




Table 2. Top ten source markets to Sri Lanka, April 2023

Rank	Country of Residence	Tourist Arrivals (April 2023)			Tourist Arrivals (April 2022)
		By Air	By Sea	Total	
1	India	19,907	08	19,915	8,678
2	Russian Federation	14,653	03	14,656	3,874
3	United Kingdom	8,521	222	8,743	11,539
4	Germany	6,576	828	7,404	6,088
5	France	4,318	1,217	5,535	4,035
6	China	5,054	64	5,118	261
7	Australia	4,777	219	4,996	3,508
8	United States	2,863	1,077	3,940	1,872
9	Canada	3,165	145	3,310	2,083
10	Japan	1,049	1,269	2,318	249

Chart 2. Comparison of arrivals from top ten markets to Sri Lanka, Mar / April – 2023





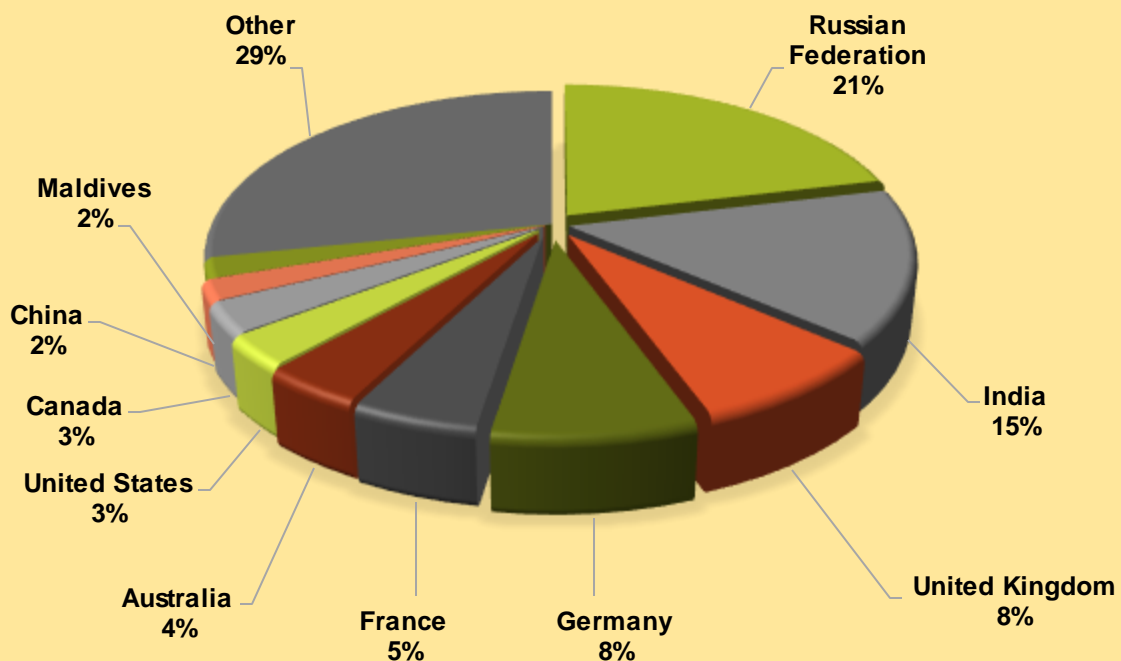
Top ten source markets January to April 2023

From January to April 2023, the main sources of international tourists for Sri Lanka were the Russian Federation, India, the United Kingdom, Germany, and France. Notably, during this period, there was a significant rise in tourist arrivals from countries like China, Russia, Maldives, United States, and Canada, compared to the same period in 2022. On the other hand, it should be highlighted that the number of tourists from the United Kingdom decreased by 13.3% during the January to April 2023 period, as opposed to the same period in 2022.

Table 3. Top ten markets to Sri Lanka, January to April 2023

Rank	Country of Residence	Tourist Arrivals (Jan ~ April 2023)	Tourist Arrivals (Jan ~ April 2022)
1	Russian Federation	94,547	41,591
2	India	66,347	56,389
3	United Kingdom	36,854	42,531
4	Germany	33,253	28,768
5	France	22,279	19,091
6	Australia	16,502	10,369
7	United States	14,720	8,670
8	Canada	14,164	8,696
9	China	10,584	1,111
10	Maldives	7,391	6,410
	Others	124,536	124,688
	Total	441,177	348,314

Chart 3. Top ten source markets to Sri Lanka, January to April 2023





Tourist arrivals by purpose of visit

April 2023

An analysis of the purpose of visits by tourists to Sri Lanka revealed that 60% of them came for pleasure or vacation, while 14% visited friends and relatives, and only 5% came for business-related reasons. Furthermore, 4.5% of tourists visited for MICE purposes, with a small percentage of 0.7% and 0.2% visiting for health/Ayurvedic and sports-related reasons, respectively.

Among the top source markets such as India, Russia, Germany, the United Kingdom, France, China, USA, and Japan, the primary reason for visiting Sri Lanka was for pleasure or vacation, accounting for the majority of visits. Specifically, Indian tourists constituted 64.3%, Russian tourists 43%, German tourists 71.4%, British tourists 54.1%, French tourists 76%, US tourists 62%, Chinese tourists 84.9%, and Japanese tourists 81% who visited for this purpose.

Canadian tourists (63.1%) and Australian tourists (54.4%), on the other hand, visited Sri Lanka primarily to see their friends and relatives, likely due to the presence of Sri Lankan diaspora in these countries. Only 27.8% of Canadian tourists and 31.8% of Australian tourists came for pleasure/vacation purposes.

Furthermore, a fraction of Indian tourists, 17.4%, and 3.9% of Indian tourists visited Sri Lanka for business-related purposes and MICE purposes, respectively. 4.1% of German tourists and 1.4% of Japanese tourists had visited Sri Lanka for health purposes

Chart 4: Purpose of visit

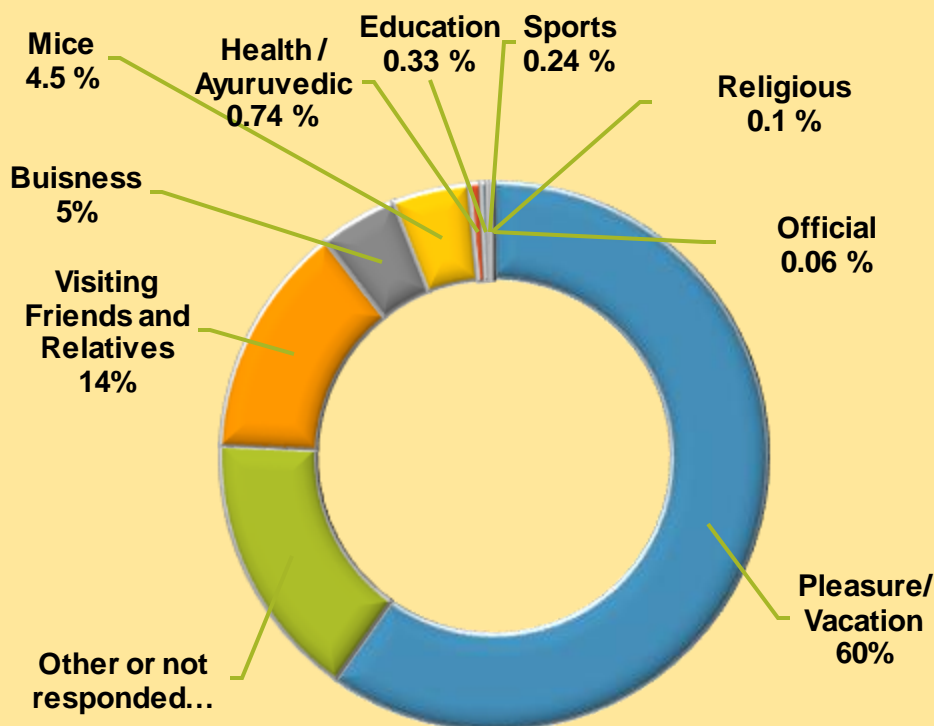
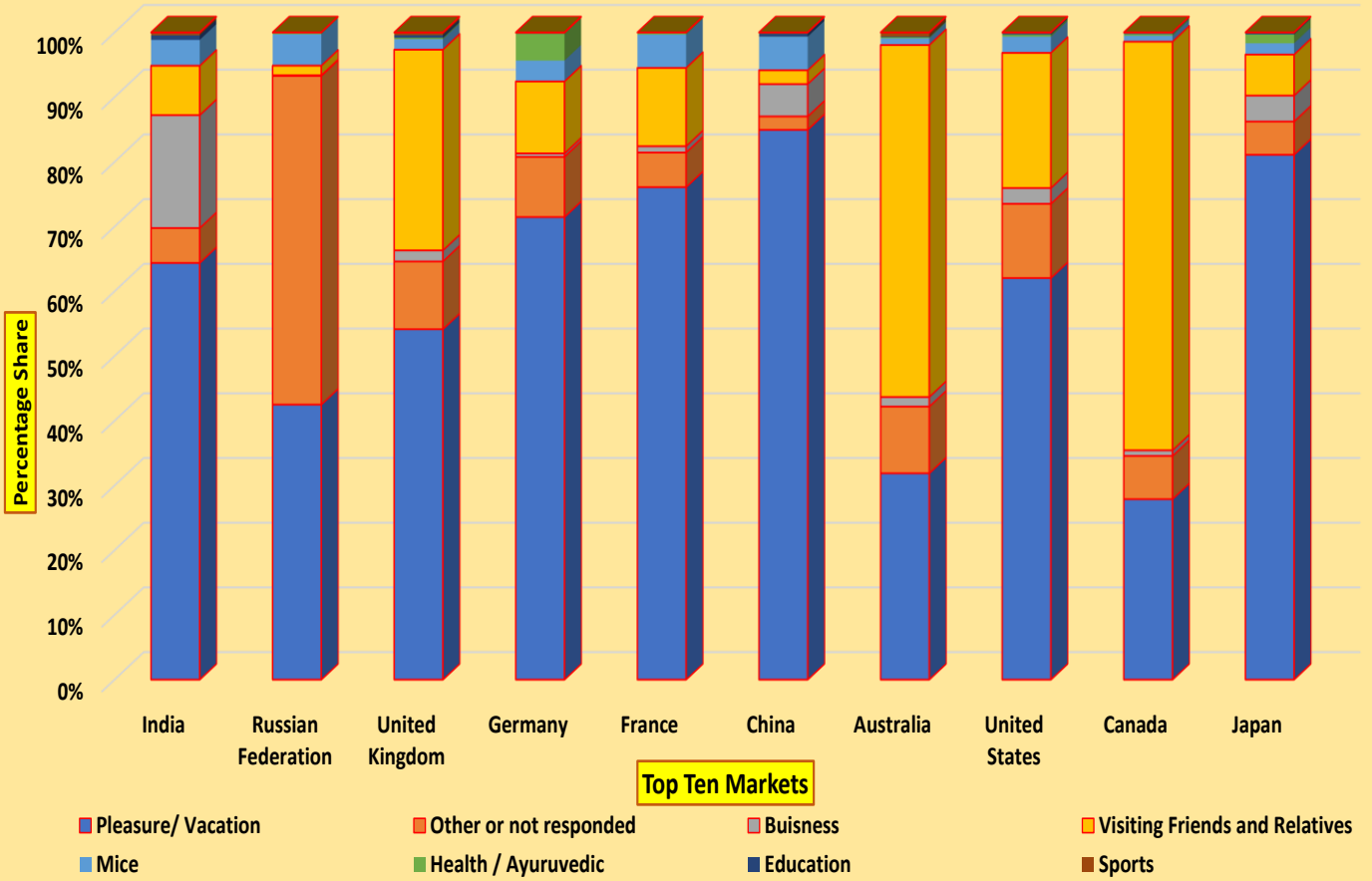


Chart 5 : Purpose of visit vs main source markets





International tourist arrivals by country of residence

	April 2023			Tourist Arrivals April 2022	% Change April (23/22) 2023	Total Tourist Arrivals up to April 2023	Total Tourist Arrivals up to April 2022	% Change up to April (23/22)
	Tourist Arrivals							
	By Air	By Sea	Total					
AMERICAS	6,428	1,398	7,826	4,309	81.62	30,607	18,455	65.85
North America	6,097	1,235	7,332	3,990	83.76	29,105	17,498	66.33
Canada	3,165	145	3,310	2,083	58.91	14,164	8,696	62.88
Mexico	69	13	82	35	134.29	221	132	67.42
United States	2,863	1,077	3,940	1,872	110.47	14,720	8,670	69.78
Carribbean & Central America	43	7	50	45	11.11	226	148	52.70
Costa Rica	0	0	0	5	-	18	27	(33.33)
Jamaica	6	0	06	2	200.00	12	8	50.00
Others	37	7	44	38	15.79	196	113	73.45
South America	288	156	444	274	62.04	1,276	809	57.73
Argentina	60	11	71	27	162.96	284	119	138.66
Brazil	127	81	208	135	54.07	504	319	57.99
Chile	39	06	45	12	275.00	143	85	68.24
Colombia	01	55	56	61	(8.20)	176	149	18.12
Others	61	03	64	39	64.10	169	137	23.36
AFRICA	753	8	761	450	69.11	2,260	2,205	2.49
North Africa	248	0	248	74	235.14	723	929	(22.17)
Morocco	65	0	65	23	182.61	208	203	2.46
Sudan	44	0	44	15	193.33	194	469	(58.64)
Others	139	0	139	36	286.11	321	257	24.90
Sub-Saharan Africa	505	8	513	376	36.44	1,537	1,276	20.45
Kenya	52	0	52	20	160.00	166	100	66.00
Mauritius	20	0	20	12	66.67	88	42	109.52
Nigeria	03	0	03	5	(40.00)	18	16	12.50
South Africa	310	5	315	257	22.57	846	781	8.32
Others	120	3	123	82	50.00	419	337	24.33



	April 2023			Tourist Arrivals April 2022	% Change April (23/22)	Total Tourist Arrivals up to April 2023	Total Tourist Arrivals up to April 2022	% Change up to April (23/22)
	Tourist Arrivals							
	By Air	By Sea	Total					
ASIA & PACIFIC	38,201	1,533	39,734	15,465	156.93	131,163	87,971	49.10
North East Asia	6,972	1,197	8,169	678	-	18,434	2,496	638.54
China	5,054	64	5,118	261	-	10,584	1,111	-
Japan	1,269	1,049	2,318	249	-	5,078	689	-
South Korea	443	26	469	151	210.60	1,906	572	233.22
Taiwan	186	58	244	16	-	825	87	-
Others	20	0	20	1	-	41	37	10.81
South East Asia	2,338	52	2,390	1,087	119.87	8,604	4,039	113.02
Cambodia	12	0	12	4	200.00	147	49	200.00
Indonesia	171	02	173	56	208.93	619	324	91.05
Malaysia	718	17	735	244	201.23	2,564	867	195.73
Myanmar	44	0	44	42	4.76	188	100	88.00
Philippines	368	01	369	246	50.00	1,148	768	49.48
Singapore	478	22	500	289	73.01	2,036	1,290	57.83
Thailand	396	10	406	123	230.08	1,203	437	175.29
Vietnam	141	0	141	83	69.88	645	186	246.77
Others	10	0	10	0	-	54	18	200.00
Oceania	5,357	276	5,633	3,839	46.73	18,468	11,206	64.80
Australia	4,777	219	4,996	3,508	42.42	16,502	10,369	59.15
New Zealand	570	57	627	329	90.58	1,910	818	133.50
Others	10	0	10	2	400.00	56	19	194.74
South Asia	23,534	8	23,542	9,861	138.74	85,657	70,230	21.97
Afghanistan	01	0	01	0	-	13	18	(27.78)
Bangladesh	960	0	960	155	-	2,820	1,167	141.65
Bhutan	25	0	25	2	-	100	49	104.08
India	19,907	08	19,915	8,678	129.49	66,347	56,389	17.66
Iran	420	0	420	227	85.02	5,384	3,025	77.98
Maldives	1,596	0	1,596	567	181.48	7,391	6,410	15.30
Nepal	226	0	226	94	140.43	1,060	477	122.22
Pakistan	399	0	399	138	189.13	2,542	2,695	(5.68)
EUROPE	50,917	3,822	54,739	41,688	31.31	269,473	230,819	16.75
Northern Europe	10,689	404	11,093	14,690	(24.49)	48,243	55,358	(12.85)
Denmark	678	49	727	1,307	(44.38)	3,813	4,724	(19.28)
Finland	113	10	123	169	(27.22)	757	919	(17.63)
Norway	444	43	487	587	(17.04)	2,400	2,471	(2.87)
Sweden	441	68	509	464	9.7	2,847	2,690	5.84
United Kingdom	8,521	222	8,743	11,539	(24.23)	36,854	42,531	(13.35)
Others	492	12	504	624	(19.23)	1,572	2,023	(22.29)



	April 2023			Tourist Arrivals April 2022	% Change April (23/22)	Total Tourist Arrivals up to April 2023	Total Tourist Arrivals up to April 2022	% Change up to April (23/22)
	Tourist Arrivals							
	By Air	By Sea	Total					
Western Europe	15,461	2,555	18,016	14,837	21.43	75,412	64,978	16.06
Austria	547	102	649	575	12.87	3,411	3,304	3.24
Belgium	559	77	636	846	(24.82)	2,729	2,722	0.26
France	4,318	1,217	5,535	4,035	37.17	22,279	19,091	16.70
Germany	6,576	828	7,404	6,088	21.62	33,253	28,768	15.59
Netherlands	1,536	57	1,593	1,575	1.14	6,165	5,370	14.80
Switzerland	1,863	228	2,091	1,647	26.96	7,332	5,571	31.61
Others	62	46	108	71	52.11	243	152	59.87
Central/ Eastern Europe	19,590	73	19,663	7,938	147.71	123,519	95,833	28.89
Belarus	624	03	627	129	386.05	4,474	2,203	103.09
Czech Republic	806	14	820	686	19.53	4,273	5,717	(25.26)
Estonia	59	01	60	64	(6.25)	632	744	(15.05)
Hungary	175	14	189	217	(12.90)	1,397	1,652	(15.44)
Kazakhstan	159	0	159	122	30.33	1,929	7,582	(74.56)
Lithuania	215	08	223	146	52.74	1,157	1,519	(23.83)
Poland	1,117	12	1,129	1,391	(18.84)	5,023	12,206	(58.85)
Romania	311	04	315	475	(33.68)	1,369	2,296	(40.37)
Russia	14,653	03	14,656	3,874	278.32	94,547	41,591	127.33
Slovakia	475	0	475	287	65.51	1,951	1,627	19.91
Ukraine	323	03	326	158	106.33	2,288	13,621	(83.20)
Others	673	11	684	389	75.84	4,479	5,075	(11.74)
Southern/ Mediterranean Europe	5,177	790	5,967	4,223	41.30	22,299	14,650	52.21
Greece	145	03	148	145	2.07	605	475	27.37
Italy	1,065	319	1,384	584	136.99	5,542	2,370	133.84
Portugal	419	67	486	295	64.75	1,283	999	28.43
Spain	1,251	368	1,619	1,447	11.89	4,371	3,900	12.08
Turkey	277	12	289	176	64.20	1,124	806	39.45
Israel	1,431	01	1,432	1,228	16.61	7,253	4,529	60.15
Others	589	20	609	348	75.00	2,121	1,571	35.01
MIDDLE EAST	2,438	0	2,438	1,068	128.28	7,674	8,864	(13.43)
Bahrain	86	0	86	22	290.91	311	210	48.10
Egypt	309	0	309	170	81.76	862	1,285	(32.92)
Iraq	84	0	84	71	18.31	303	550	(44.91)
Jordan	376	0	376	135	178.52	1,109	952	16.49
Kuwait	191	0	191	49	289.80	673	420	60.24
Lebanon	616	0	616	305	101.97	1,121	745	50.47
Oman	64	0	64	18	255.56	539	339	59.00
Qatar	62	0	62	5	-	209	79	164.56
Saudi Arabia	414	0	414	225	84.00	1,772	3,650	(51.45)
United Arab Emirates	169	0	169	51	231.37	523	408	28.19
Others	67	0	67	17	294.12	252	226	11.50
TOTAL	98,737	6,761	105,498	62,980	67.51	441,177	348,314	26.66



Main last departure airports and airlines to Sri Lanka, April 2023

The significance of air travel for Sri Lanka's tourism industry is apparent from the examination of departure airports. Chart 6 shows that 39% of tourists departed from airports located in Dubai, Chennai, and Doha. In terms of airlines, Sri Lankan Airlines, Emirates, and Qatar Airways were the most popular options, serving a combined total of 55% of tourists arriving in Sri Lanka. It is worth mentioning that Dubai was the leading departure airport with a share of 17%, while Sri Lankan Airlines was the top airline, accounting for 32% of the market share.

Chart 6. Main last departure airports to Sri Lanka, April 2023

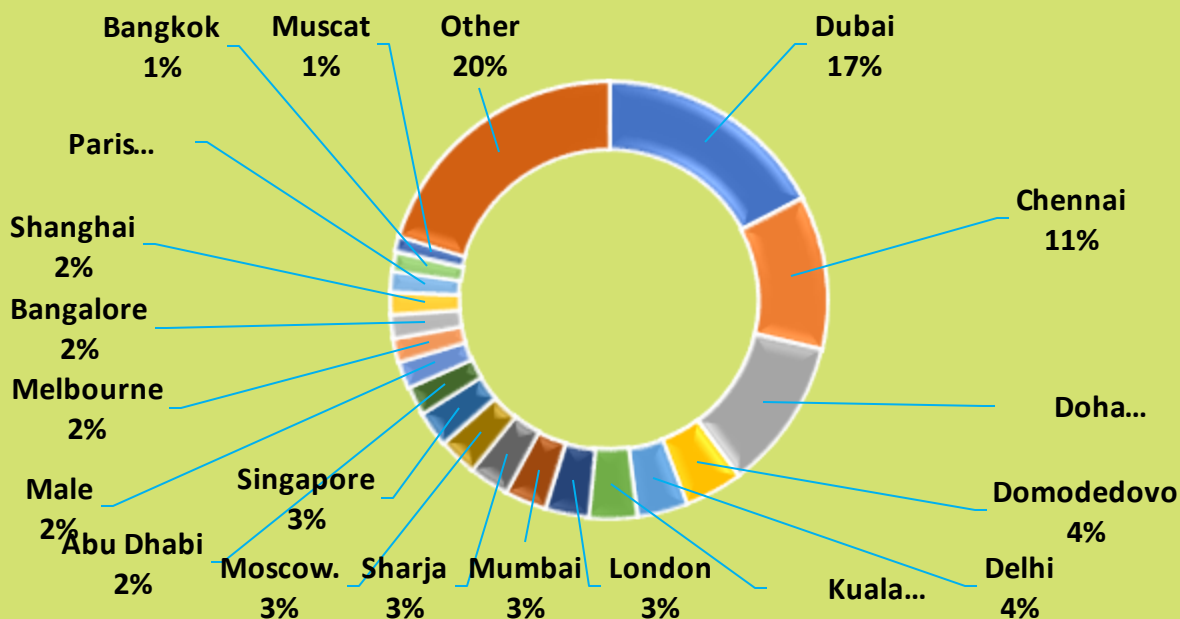
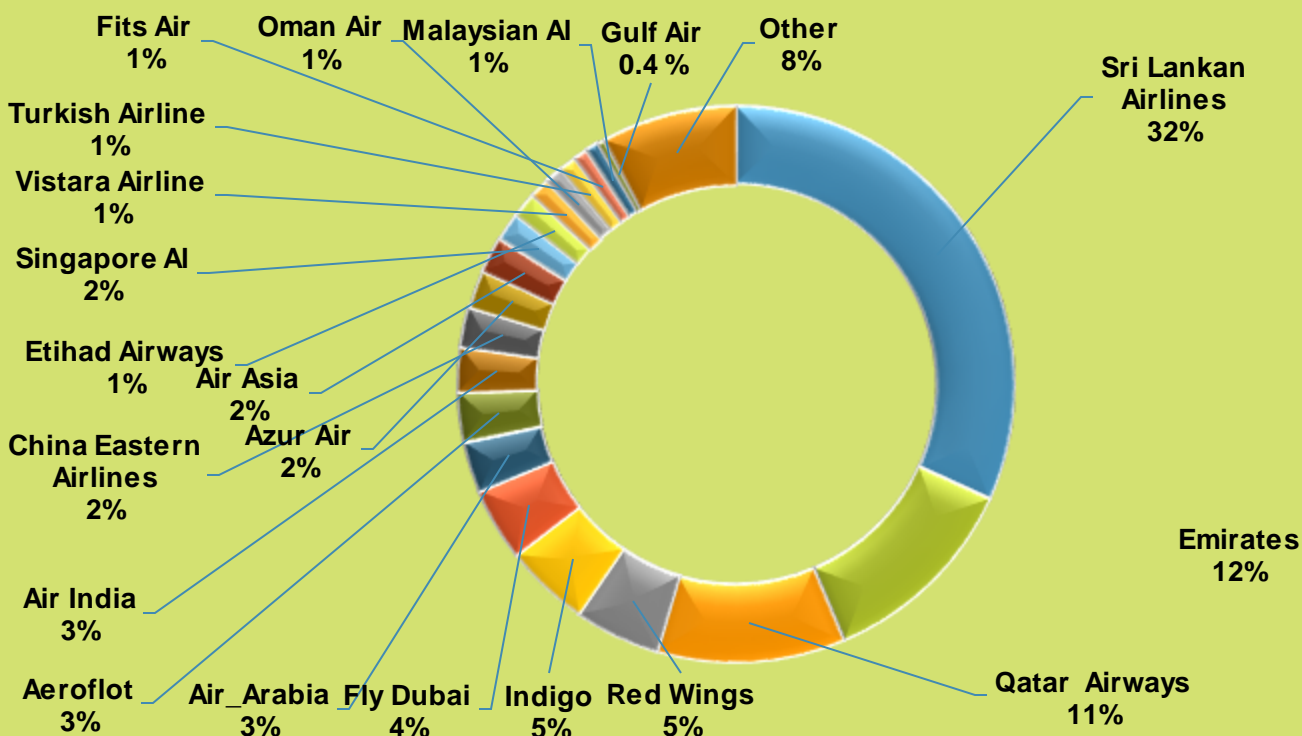


Chart 7. Main airlines to Sri Lanka, April 2023





Top ten markets versus main last departure airports and main airlines to Sri Lanka

April 2023

The data reveals that tourists coming to Sri Lanka exhibit variations in their preferred airlines and last departure airports, depending on their primary markets. For instance, Russian tourists commonly choose Red Wings, Aeroflot, and Azur Air, whereas Indian tourists tend to favour Sri Lankan Airlines and IndiGo. In comparison, Sri Lankan Airlines is a popular choice among tourists from countries like the United Kingdom, France, Australia, the United States, Japan, and Canada. It is worth noting that German and American tourist tourists frequently choose Qatar Airways and utilize Doha as their primary last departure airport. This highlights the crucial role of destination accessibility in promoting tourism.

Table 4. Top ten markets vs. main last departure airports to Sri Lanka, April 2023

Country	Chennai	Dubai	Doha	Domodedovo	Delhi	Mumbai	London	Moscow.	Kuala Lumpur	Sharja	Singapore	Bangalore	Melbourne	Shanghai	Paris	Kunming	Abu Dhabi	Sydney	Hyderabad	Bangkok	Other	Total
India	9,983	751	118	0	2,599	2,410	9	0	83	126	88	1,387	8	6	1	1	19	5	786	41	1,494	19,915
Russian Federation	215	1,254	253	4,230	67	10	2	2,991	260	1,591	8	20	0	4	1	5	134	0	1	53	3,557	14,656
United Kingdom	325	2,530	1,525	0	108	114	2,464	1	246	91	132	65	26	0	21	1	197	15	7	83	786	8,737
Germany	161	1,633	1,980	0	178	250	73	3	172	18	44	117	1	8	468	2	211	13	1	30	2,041	7,404
France	87	1,489	816	0	48	51	56	2	88	50	72	51	4	6	795	0	109	2	1	50	1,758	5,535
China	2	173	21	0	6	9	10	0	563	4	110	1	7	1,652	0	1,058	10	2	4	268	1,218	5,118
Australia	144	190	85	0	43	28	43	0	437	15	1,038	20	1,674	1	23	1	17	815	14	54	354	4,996
United States	145	573	884	0	119	63	37	0	125	35	168	45	7	6	9	3	161	2	18	59	1,481	3,940
Canada	265	992	736	0	83	121	319	0	64	16	68	27	8	3	144	0	45	13	0	32	374	3,310
Japan	75	21	12	0	148	26	3	1	114	2	124	18	1	6	0	0	2	1	4	156	1,604	2,318

Table 5. Top ten markets vs. main airlines to Sri Lanka, April 2023

Country	Sri Lankan Airlines	Emirates	Qatar Airways	IndiGo	Red Wings	Aeroflot	China Eastern Airlines	Air India	Azur Air	Air Arabia	Fly Dubai	Air Asia	Singapore Airlines	Vistara Airline	Etihad Airways	Oman Air	Fits Air	Turkish Airlines	Other	Total
India	56.7	1.6	0.5	22.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	9.9	0.0	0.6	1.0	0.2	0.1	5.1	0.1	0.1	0.8	0.0	1.0	100.0
Russian Federation	3.0	4.5	1.7	1.1	33.4	20.4	0.1	0.4	15.8	10.9	3.5	1.3	0.0	0.0	0.5	0.7	0.3	0.2	2.2	100.0
United Kingdom	41.7	23.2	16.6	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.9	0.0	1.0	3.6	1.9	0.6	0.3	1.8	1.1	1.2	0.5	4.5	100.0
Germany	24.1	19.1	26.3	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.9	0.0	0.2	2.7	1.6	0.3	0.3	2.1	2.7	0.2	1.4	17.2	100.0
France	23.5	22.3	14.5	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.7	0.0	0.9	3.4	1.5	0.7	0.1	1.3	3.4	0.5	2.8	23.7	100.0
China	38.1	1.7	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	46.3	0.1	0.0	0.1	1.1	7.2	1.0	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.5	0.1	3.2	100.0
Australia	63.2	2.9	1.6	0.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.6	0.0	0.3	0.4	2.5	16.7	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.3	0.0	10.1	100.0
United States	19.6	10.6	21.5	1.4	0.0	0.0	0.2	1.7	0.0	0.9	3.1	2.3	3.0	1.0	3.5	0.3	0.5	0.3	30.2	100.0
Canada	34.5	24.7	22.0	1.4	0.0	0.0	0.1	1.8	0.0	0.5	2.1	1.0	1.2	0.4	1.1	0.5	0.3	0.2	8.3	100.0
Japan	44.1	0.6	0.5	0.9	0.0	0.0	0.3	1.4	0.0	0.1	0.2	3.3	1.5	0.4	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	46.5	100.0



Research & International Relations Division

011 2426800 Ext. 151/155

research@srilanka.travel

www.sltda.gov.lk