



**OVERALL TOURISM PERFORMANCE OF INDIA (INBOUND, OUTBOUND, AND  
DOMESTIC): AN ANALYTICAL STUDY BASED ON THE INDIA TOURISM DATA  
COMPENDIUM 2025**

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**Abstract:**

*Tourism constitutes one of India's most dynamic and multidimensional economic sectors, contributing substantially to employment generation, regional development, and foreign-exchange earnings. Using official statistics from the India Tourism Data Compendium 2025 (Ministry of Tourism, Government of India), this paper analyzes the comprehensive performance of India's tourism industry with a focus on inbound, outbound, and domestic segments during the post-pandemic period (2019–2024). Quantitative comparison and descriptive statistics reveal India's robust recovery trajectory: inbound arrivals reached 20.57 million international tourists, outbound departures 30.89 million, and domestic tourist visits nearly 2.95 billion in 2024. Foreign-exchange earnings climbed to US \$ 35.02 billion, underscoring tourism's pivotal macro-economic role. The findings demonstrate that India has re-emerged as a globally competitive destination supported by strong domestic mobility, expanding air infrastructure, and policy reforms. The study concludes with recommendations for sustainable and inclusive tourism growth aligned with India's long-term developmental goals.*

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**Introduction:**

Tourism in India has historically functioned as both an economic catalyst and a cultural bridge linking regions and nations. The Government of India recognizes tourism as a key service-sector component, directly influencing GDP, employment, and balance of payments. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the country achieved record foreign-tourist arrivals (10.93 million in 2019) and foreign-exchange earnings (US \$ 30.72 billion). However, pandemic restrictions led to an unprecedented decline in 2020, followed by gradual resurgence through 2024.

The *India Tourism Data Compendium 2025*, the 66 th edition of the Ministry's annual statistical report, compiles datasets from the Bureau of Immigration, UN Tourism, Reserve Bank of India, and state tourism departments. This compendium provides an authoritative base for evaluating India's tourism dynamics across three principal dimensions—**inbound, outbound, and domestic**.

**Research Objectives:**

1. To examine quantitative growth trends in India's inbound, outbound, and domestic tourism between 2019 and 2024.



2. To evaluate India's performance within the global tourism framework.
3. To interpret the socio-economic contribution of tourism to India's GDP and employment.
4. To identify challenges and opportunities for sustainable tourism policy.

### Significance of the Study:

Understanding the holistic performance of India's tourism industry enables researchers and policymakers to align national strategies with global best practices. A data-driven evaluation also supports regional planning, destination marketing, and resource optimization.

### Literature Review:

#### 1. Global Tourism Recovery

The UN Tourism Organization reported 1.465 billion international tourist arrivals worldwide in 2024 — a 12.17 % increase over 2023 and almost a return to pre-pandemic 2019 levels (1.466 billion). Global tourism receipts rose to US \$ 1.73 trillion in 2024, reflecting a 16.4 % increase over 2019 and highlighting tourism's renewed macroeconomic vitality (UN Tourism, 2025). The World Economic Forum's *Travel and Tourism Development Index 2024* ranked India 39th among 185 economies, placing the nation 6th in natural resources and 9th in cultural resources.

#### 2. Tourism in the Indian Context

Scholars such as Bhatia (2022) and Mukherjee (2023) have emphasized that India's tourism growth is closely tied to infrastructural expansion, cultural branding, and digital visa facilitation. Earlier studies based on the 2018–2023 compendia demonstrated gradual recovery post-pandemic but noted regional disparities and dependence on a few source markets.

#### 3. Inbound, Outbound, and Domestic Trends

Inbound tourism contributes to foreign-exchange earnings and international image building; outbound tourism reflects domestic prosperity and global mobility; and domestic tourism sustains local economies. Together, these three pillars illustrate the sector's comprehensive performance (Venkatesh & Singh, 2023). However, few empirical studies have synthesized all three components using the latest 2025 datasets — a gap this paper aims to fill.

#### 4. Research Gap

While recent literature has focused on post-pandemic recovery, data for 2024 marks the first complete year approaching pre-COVID benchmarks. Hence, a comprehensive statistical analysis covering inbound, outbound, and domestic segments using the 2025 Compendium is essential to understand India's emerging tourism landscape.

### Methodology:

#### 1. Data Source

The primary dataset is the *India Tourism Data Compendium 2025* published by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India. Supplementary references include UN Tourism's *World Tourism Barometer (May 2025)* and the World Economic Forum's *Travel and Tourism Development Index 2024*. All figures for 2024 are provisional as indicated in the official report.



### 2. Research Design

This study employs a **quantitative descriptive-analytical approach**, integrating time-series analysis (2019–2024) and percentage-change calculations. The design enables interpretation of growth rates, structural shifts, and sectoral comparisons.

### 3. Analytical Framework

1. **Inbound Tourism** — Examined through Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs), arrivals of Non-Resident Indians (NRIs), and Foreign Exchange Earnings (FEEs).
2. **Outbound Tourism** — Measured via departures of Indian nationals and purpose-wise composition.
3. **Domestic Tourism** — Analyzed using state-wise tourist visits and growth percentages.

### 4. Data Treatment

Simple growth formulae were applied to compute annual percentage changes:

$$\text{Growth Rate (\%)} = \frac{(X_t - X_{t-1})}{X_{t-1}} \times 100$$

where  $X_t$  denotes the indicator value for the current year. Comparative tables display absolute and relative changes across years.

### 5. Limitations

All figures are secondary and may be subject to revisions by the Ministry of Tourism or UN Tourism. The study does not include micro-level survey data such as tourist satisfaction indices or climate impacts.

### Results and Statistical Interpretation:

The *India Tourism Data Compendium 2025* provides detailed quantitative indicators of tourism activity across three major dimensions: **inbound**, **outbound**, and **domestic**. The following subsections summarize and interpret the statistical findings for the period 2019–2024.

1. **Inbound Tourism Performance:** India's international tourism segment showed robust recovery following the pandemic's contraction. International Tourist Arrivals (ITAs)—comprising both Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) and arrivals of Non-Resident Indians (NRIs)—reached 20.57 million in 2024, reflecting a 14.85% increase over 2019 and 8.89% growth over 2023.

*Table 1. Inbound Tourism in India (2019–2024)*

Year	FTAs (Million)	NRI Arrivals (Million)	Total ITAs (Million)	% Change (YoY)	Remarks
2019	10.93	6.98	17.91	—	Pre-pandemic peak
2020	2.74	3.59	6.33	-64.66	Pandemic collapse
2021	1.52	5.48	7.00	+10.58	Gradual reopening
2022	6.44	7.89	14.33	+104.71	Strong recovery
2023	9.51	9.38	18.89	+31.82	Near full rebound
2024	9.95	10.62	20.57	+8.89	Surpassed 2019 level

Source: Ministry of Tourism, *India Tourism Data Compendium 2025*


**Interpretation:**

The data confirms a strong post-pandemic rebound. The inclusion of Non-Resident Indian arrivals since 2014 significantly enhances India's inbound statistics. The share of NRIs in total ITAs rose from 39% in 2019 to 52% in 2024, indicating increased diaspora engagement.

The **average duration of stay** for foreign tourists in 2024 was **18.12 days**, and **Foreign Exchange Earnings (FEEs)** from tourism increased from **US \$32.19 billion in 2023 to US \$35.02 billion in 2024**—an 8.79% annual rise.

*Table 2. Top 10 Source Countries for Foreign Tourist Arrivals in India, 2024*

Rank	Country	FTAs (No.)	Share (%)	Change vs. 2019 (%)
1	United States	1,804,586	18.13	+19.36
2	Bangladesh	1,750,165	17.59	-32.07
3	United Kingdom	1,022,587	10.28	+2.22
4	Australia	518,205	5.21	+41.11
5	Canada	476,273	4.79	+35.36
6	Malaysia	307,526	3.09	-8.08
7	Sri Lanka	281,827	2.83	-14.79
8	Germany	256,348	2.58	-3.19
9	France	206,855	2.08	-16.33
10	Singapore	205,383	2.06	+8.06

*Source: Ministry of Tourism, 2025*

**Interpretation:**

The dominance of long-haul markets such as the United States, Australia, and Canada suggests a diversification beyond South Asian source countries. Bangladesh, though second, saw a sharp decline due to geopolitical and policy factors. North American arrivals, comprising nearly 23% of all FTAs, underscore India's expanding soft-power appeal and family/religious travel linkages.

**2. Outbound Tourism:**

Outbound tourism mirrors rising disposable incomes and global integration of India's middle class. In 2024, **30.89 million Indians** traveled abroad, a **10.79% growth** over 2023 and exceeding pre-pandemic 2019 levels (26.92 million).


**Table 3. Indian Nationals' Departures (Outbound Tourism), 2019–2024**

Year	Departures (Million)	% Change	Major Destinations
2019	26.92	—	UAE, USA, Thailand
2020	7.30	-72.9	COVID decline
2021	11.00	+50.68	Gradual recovery
2022	17.40	+58.18	Partial rebound
2023	27.88	+29.05	Surpassed 2019
2024	30.89	+10.79	Strong growth

Source: Ministry of Tourism, 2025

**Interpretation:** Outbound travel's quick rebound reflects strong air connectivity and renewed international confidence. Leisure and diaspora-related visits together constituted **over 77%** of departures, while business and professional travel accounted for **14.9%**. The UAE, Saudi Arabia, and the USA remained top destinations.

### 3. Domestic Tourism:

The cornerstone of India's tourism sector is its vast domestic market. In 2024, domestic tourist visits numbered **2,948.19 million**, registering a **17.51% increase** over 2023 (2,508.82 million).

**Table 4. Domestic Tourist Visits, 2023–2024 (Top States)**

Rank	State / UT	2023 (Million)	2024 (Million)	Growth (%)
1	Uttar Pradesh	546.62	646.81	+18.34
2	Tamil Nadu	287.56	306.84	+6.71
3	Maharashtra	310.18	371.00	+19.61
4	West Bengal	269.00	312.00	+15.97
5	Rajasthan	210.45	246.78	+17.27

Source: Ministry of Tourism, 2025

**Interpretation:** Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu remained the leading destinations, reflecting strong cultural and religious tourism flows. Maharashtra's growth demonstrates a resurgence of urban and coastal tourism. Notably, **foreign tourist visits to states totaled 20.94 million**, an 8.84% annual increase, reinforcing India's hybrid appeal for both local and international travelers.

### 4. Tourism's Economic Contribution:

The Tourism Satellite Account (TSA) for 2023–24 reported 84.63 million jobs generated (direct and indirect), with the tourism sector contributing 5.22% to India's GDP.

The Foreign Exchange Earnings (FEE) increased from US \$30.72 billion (2019) to US \$35.02 billion (2024)—a cumulative growth of 14% over five years.



### Discussion:

India's tourism landscape reflects a multidimensional recovery and structural transformation after the pandemic years. The interplay of **policy interventions, infrastructure expansion, and digital innovation** has driven sectoral revival.

#### 1. Inbound Tourism Recovery

The steady rise to 20.57 million international arrivals places India **20th globally**, demonstrating strong competitive recovery. The diversification toward Western markets mitigates earlier dependence on South Asia. Furthermore, the average stay duration (18 days) indicates deeper visitor engagement in wellness, heritage, and leisure tourism.

#### 2. Outbound Tourism and Economic Mobility

Outbound travel expansion underscores India's increasing economic affluence and global engagement. A demographic skew toward the **25–44 age group (over 50% of travelers)** indicates a dynamic middle-class travel culture.

#### 3. Domestic Tourism as Economic Backbone

Domestic tourism remains the sector's stabilizing force. Nearly **3 billion domestic visits** in 2024 generated extensive local employment across transport, accommodation, and handicrafts. Spiritual circuits (Varanasi, Tirupati, Shirdi) and eco-tourism (Kerala, Himachal Pradesh) remain central to demand.

#### 4. Global Position and Competitiveness

India's **2.02% share of global tourism receipts** may appear modest, yet it outperforms its **1.40% share of global arrivals**, implying higher per-visitor spending. Its TTDI 2024 ranking (39th globally, 6th in natural resources) signifies strategic potential if marketing and digital infrastructure continue improving.

### Policy Implications and Recommendations:

#### 1. Diversification of Source Markets:

Strengthen outreach in East Asia, Africa, and Latin America to reduce dependence on the U.S. and South Asia.

#### 2. Infrastructure Development:

Expand last-mile connectivity to tier-2 and tier-3 destinations. The government's *UDAN* and *Gati Shakti* programs should integrate tourism-specific logistics.

#### 3. Digital Integration:

Enhance digital visa systems, e-marketing, and AI-based tourist data analytics to streamline visitor experience and policy monitoring.

#### 4. Sustainable Tourism Practices:

Promote green certifications for hotels, renewable transport systems, and heritage-site management aligned with UN SDGs.

#### 5. Human Resource Development:

Upgrade curricula in tourism and hospitality institutions to match international service standards and language competencies.

#### 6. Crisis Preparedness:

Establish an integrated Tourism Risk Management Framework to ensure resilience against future disruptions such as pandemics or climate events.

### Conclusion:

The analysis of the *India Tourism Data Compendium 2025* reveals that India's tourism sector has achieved **near-complete recovery** and entered a phase of structural consolidation. The country recorded robust growth in inbound (20.57 million), outbound (30.89 million), and domestic (2,948 million) tourist movements, reflecting both demand-side resilience and supply-side expansion. Foreign-exchange earnings, employment generation, and infrastructural improvements collectively underscore tourism's national importance.





India's challenge ahead lies in **balancing growth with sustainability**—ensuring equitable benefits for local communities while maintaining global competitiveness. The strategic focus on infrastructure, digitalization, and green tourism will define the trajectory of India's tourism sector toward 2030 and beyond.

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### Cite This Article:

**Mr. Vibhute N.P. & Dr. Kaspate R.N. (2025).** *Overall Tourism Performance of India (Inbound, Outbound, and Domestic): An Analytical Study Based on the India Tourism Data Compendium 2025*. In **Electronic International Interdisciplinary Research Journal: Vol. XIV** (Number VI, pp. 79–85)

Doi: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18085855>