



China's Travel & Tourism sector forecast to see swift post-pandemic recovery despite prolonged restrictions

11.5MN more Travel & Tourism jobs in China this year

Guangzhou, China: The World Travel & Tourism Council's ([WTTTC](#)) 2023 Economic Impact Research (EIR) today reveals China's Travel & Tourism sector's GDP contribution is forecast to grow more than 150% this year.

The sector is set to contribute CNY 9.9TN to the economy this year, edging closer to the 2019 pre-pandemic high of CNY 12.27TN.

Despite the effects of the pandemic spanning into 2022 in China, WTTTC is forecasting for the sector to create almost 11.5MN jobs this year, recovering one in two of the jobs lost to reach 74.7MN. This means around one in 10 workers in China, are directly or indirectly employed in the Travel & Tourism sector.

While the sector is still shy of 7.9MN jobs to reach pre-pandemic levels, by the end of this year it will only be 10% below 2019 levels.

International visitor spend in China is forecast to grow more than 50% this year to reach more than CNY 306BN. Although this is positive growth, it is still almost 70% below the 2019 peak.

A look back on last year

Due to ongoing travel restrictions, last year the sector's GDP contribution declined by almost 30% to reach CNY 3.9TN, representing just over 3% of the economy.

In 2019, before the pandemic, the Travel & Tourism sector in China was worth CNY 12.3TN, representing almost 12% of the economy.

The sector saw jobs decline in 2022, from the previous year, to a low of 62.9MN jobs nationally – one in 12 jobs across China.

International visitor spend in China also declined in 2022 as the effects of prolonged travel restrictions continued to have a chokehold on the sector. International visitor spend declined a further 8.5%, remaining almost 80% below 2019 levels.

Domestic visitor spend followed a similar pattern, declining 33% last year, remaining 67% below 2019 levels.

Julia Simpson, WTTC President & CEO, said: “Travel & Tourism is a vital driver of economic growth and job creation to China, and we predict a significant boost to the global Travel & Tourism sector as residents begin to travel once again.

“The fact China has reopened is great news. In 2019 Chinese tourists represented 15% of international spending and that figure is set to grow. We are urging governments to prioritise and streamline visa applications to ensure embassies can manage the high visa demand from Chinese residents.”

In 2019 and 2022, between 74-77% of international visitors to mainland China came from Hong Kong, Macau, Myanmar, South Korea, Japan, the U.S. and Vietnam. There were 49.7MN arrivals from those source markets in 2019, however in 2022, this reduced by 85% to 7.2MN arrivals.

What does the next decade look like?

The global tourism body is forecasting that the sector will grow its GDP contribution to almost CNY 27TN by 2033, 14% of the Chinese economy and will employ over 100MN people across the country, with one in seven Chinese residents working in the sector.

Asia-Pacific

In 2022, the Asia-Pacific Travel & Tourism sector contributed \$1.6TN to the regional economy, but this is still 50% behind the 2019 peak. WTTC forecasts the region’s GDP contribution from the sector will reach more than \$2.6TN in 2023 – just 16% below the 2019 highpoint.

The sector employed over 155MN people across the region in 2022, an increase of 8.7MN from the previous year but still 15% behind pre-pandemic levels. WTTC forecasts the sector will fully recover the jobs lost during the pandemic by the end of 2024.

For more information, please visit [wttc.org](https://www.wttc.org)

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Editors Notes

The research was carried out in partnership with Oxford Economics with information sourced from UNWTO, Oxford Economics and national sources. All values are in constant 2022 prices and exchange rates, as reported in March 2023.

The Economic Impact Research defines Asia-Pacific as all countries in Asia and Oceania. Monetary figures for China are in CNY. Monetary figures for the Asia-Pacific region are in USD.