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Tourism update: Tourist numbers down 1.4% year-on-year, between January and May 2019.





Figure 1: South Africar	n residents an	nd foreign travell	lers by travel direction
	May-18	May-19	% Change
Grand Total	3190914	3285819	3.0
SA Residents (Total)	857349	896563	4.6
Arrivals	439970	442436	0.6
Departures	416597	453266	8.8
Transits	782	861	10.1
Foreign Travellers (Total)	2333565	2389256	2.4
Arrivals	1196107	1213675	1.5
Departures	1076526	1106649	2.8
Transits	60932	68932	13.1
			Source: Stats S

Source: Stats SA

Source: Stats SA

- The number of travellers passing through SA's ports of entry grew by 3.0% y/y to 3.3 million in May 2019, following April's 1.4% y/y lift (see figure 1).
- A disaggregation of the data indicates that travel by South African residents recovered on a year-onyear basis in May, rising by 4.6% (after slipping by 2.6% y/y in April), primarily underpinned by a 8.8% y/y lift in departure numbers recorded. Foreign travel (arrivals, departures and transits) however, moderated in May, lifting by 2.4% y/y following April's 3.0% y/y increase (see figure 1).
- Tourist numbers (defined as overnight visitors by Stats SA), which constituted around 62% of foreign arrivals in May 2019, fell by 1.8% y/y (see figure 2), following April's 4.2% y/y lift, in turn bringing the year- to-date total (Jan. – May) to -1.4% y/y.
- Specifically, tourists travelling from overseas countries (excl. African nations) slid by 2.2% y/y between January and May 2019, with numbers from key destinations including Germany and France waning notably.
- Additionally, tourist numbers from Africa also diminished, falling by 1.2% y/y, year-to-date, underpinned largely by the 11.7% y/y (92 367 individuals) decline in tourists from Lesotho, which makes up over 20% of all tourists stemming from Africa.

Figure 2: Breakdown of foreign arrivals % Change May-18 May-19 **Foreign Arrivals** 1196107 1213675 1.5 Non-visitors 78492 1.2 77559 **Visitors** 1118548 1135183 1.5 Same-day 351218 381666 8.7 Overnight (Tourists)* 767330 753517 -1.8

^{*}A visitor who stays at least one night in collective or private accommodation in the place visited

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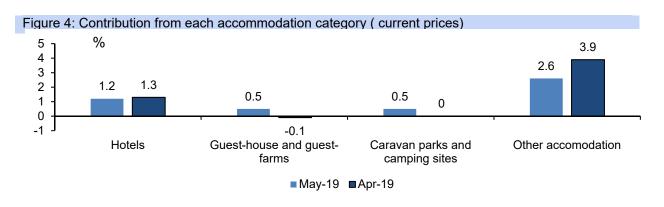






Source: Stats SA, Investec

- Total income derived from the tourist accommodation industry, measured in nominal terms however picked up in May, rising by 4.4% y/y, following April's 3.5% y/y lift (see figure 3), with income received from just the accommodation component rising by 4.8% y/y to R1 773.4 million. A marked 6.3% y/y increase in the average income charged per stay unit (unit of accommodation) boosted this result.
- An analysis of the data (income from accommodation), suggests that all four accommodation categories surveyed grew on a year-on-year basis in May 2019. The 'other accommodation' segment (which includes lodges, bed-and-breakfasts and self-catering establishments) made the largest positive contribution to the topline reading once again, rising by 9.3 y/y and in turn adding 2.6% points to the headline outcome.
- "Tourism has an important role to play in placing our economy on a sustainable inclusive growth trajectory", the minister of tourism recently stated. "The indirect contribution of the tourism sector to our economy's GDP" was around 8.2% in 2018. This "(c)aptures the strong economic links to the demand and supply side that the sector has with other sectors of the South African economy". SA tourism remains a vital conduit for job creation in a country burdened by extremely high unemployment rates, especially within the youth category.
- In order to reach the Presidency's target of doubling tourist arrivals to around 21 million by 2030 (as specified in the President's State of the Nation Address), in the face of heightened competition by other regions, various initiatives and reforms have been prioritised, with a further reduction in regulatory barriers and the management of crime, key amongst these.



Sources: Stats SA, Investec



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