

PRESS RELEASE

KTB COURTS EUROPEAN MARKETS IN PURSUIT OF 12.5% TOURISM GROWTH

Nairobi – Thursday, 19th June 2025: Air connectivity and safety assurances are the key factors crucial for Kenya's strategy to draw more European visitors as the country targets a 12.5% increase in arrivals for 2025.

The Kenya Tourism Board (KTB) is spearheading efforts to achieve this ambitious goal, aiming to welcome 764,734 European tourists this year up from 680,373 received in 2024.

In a high-level forum drawing diplomats from various European missions, the tourism stakeholders expressed commitment to addressing teething issues that have hindered growth in the sector. The engagement, organized by the Kenya Tourism Board in conjunction with the State Department of Foreign Affairs, sought to strengthen collaboration and explore new avenues for promoting Kenya as a premier destination.

Speaking at the event, Alexander Fierley, Deputy Head of Mission and Head of Economic Affairs at the German Embassy, highlighted Kenya's brand strengths and collaboration need.

"Kenya's diversity from its beaches and mountains to its wildlife parks and cultural sites like Lamu makes it a must-visit destination. Above all, the genuine hospitality of its people sets it apart. To change outdated perceptions that conflate all of Africa with crisis, we need stronger partnerships between KTB, our embassies and investors who understand European source markets. With better branding and value-for-money offerings, doubling the 87,000 German tourists today is easily within reach."

According to the 2024 Tourism Performance Report, Europe remains a cornerstone source market for Kenya, contributing 680,373 arrivals in 2024 with the United Kingdom, Italy and Germany ranking as the top markets. KTB is banking on renewed engagement, enhanced marketing and improved travel facilitation to hit the 12.5 % growth target.

Notably, Kenya Airways is set to launch direct flights to London Gatwick from July 2nd, an important move that stakeholders say will expand

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Magical Kenya is the flagship tourism brand created and managed by the KTB. Magical Kenya captures the essence of Kenya's diverse offerings, promoting the country as a must-visit destination for local, regional, and international travelers.



capacity and convenience for European travelers. However, discussions also addressed the recent move by Kenya to reject a licence application by Europe's largest tour operator TUI - a concern recognized by KTB which assured that active measures are underway to address the situation.

Filippo Amato, First Counsellor and Head of Trade Section at the European Union Delegation to Kenya, urged improved infrastructure and flight links. "Europe is Kenya's second-largest source market, yet air connections remain limited," Amato stated.

"Direct scheduled services from Italy, stronger incentives for refurbishment of older hotels and an invitation to European investors through our newly formed European Chamber of Commerce will all contribute to growth. Simplifying immigration with online ETAs upon arrival will make Kenya more accessible and competitive against destinations like Morocco, Turkey and Thailand," he added.

Dr. Rose Anyona, Deputy Director of the Europe & Commonwealth Directorate at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Diaspora Affairs, noted the country's commitment to facilitating trade and investment. She highlighted recent developments such as the Economic Partnership Agreement with the EU and UK, providing duty-free access to these markets and potentially boosting tourism-related businesses.

On her part, KTB CEO June Chepkemei underscored the strategic role of diplomatic missions, stating: "The insights, networks and partnership of foreign missions are fundamental as we pursue aggressive expansion to positioning Kenya as Africa's leading tourism brand. This engagement follows our recent successful outreach to Asian and Middle Eastern markets, demonstrating our comprehensive approach to global tourism promotion."

She added, "It is through the continuous engagement with our European partners and the affirmation of their support that we can transform Kenya's rich cultural and natural heritage into unparalleled travel experiences."

Envoys reiterated that while Kenya's appeal remains strong, targeted actions like leveraging diaspora communities, increasing bilateral trade missions and expanding participation in major cultural and sporting events can exponentially raise the country's profile.

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The creation of European business chambers and ongoing efforts to fast-track free trade cooperation with Kenya were highlighted as additional avenues for partnership and growth.

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