

# Russia Drops 4 Rungs for Tourism Competitiveness

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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**The**  **Moscow Times**

Russia is about as attractive to tourists as Saudi Arabia according to the results of a new report by the World Economic Forum released on Thursday.

The country ranked 63rd in the world for travel and tourism industry competitiveness, finishing between the Arab kingdom and South Africa and well behind top spots Switzerland and Germany.

It trailed much of the pack in three key indices: business environment and infrastructure (46th place), human, cultural and natural resources (58th place) and regulatory framework (92nd place).

Problems include poor ground transport infrastructure, and safety and security issues such as a "high level" of crime and violence and a "lack of trust" in the police.

The report also faulted Russia's "very non-conducive policy environment" (123rd place), caused by "extremely rare foreign ownership, property rights that are not well protected, and visa requirements for visitors from many countries."

But the news wasn't all bad. Russia received a good assessment for cultural heritage sites, natural resources, and for its air transport and railroad infrastructure.

The report suggested that the travel and tourism industry could improve if the government gave it higher priority—a measurement where Russia is currently in 124th place.

An estimated 22.5 million tourists spent \$11.4 billion in Russia in 2011, and the industry is expected to grow by 3.9 percent by 2022, according to figures cited in the report.

Last year, Russia was in 59th place overall.

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