



Tourism, 2020
Statistics South Africa
Statistician-General: Risenga Maluleke



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This report provides information on population movements into and out of South Africa in 2020.

Specifically, the report provides:

01

Travel Information

Information on arrivals, departures and transits of South African residents and foreign travellers.

02

Tourist Characteristics

A detailed analysis of the movements of tourists and their demographic characteristics.



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2020 Border Statistics



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There were approximately
12,3M travellers

(arrivals plus departures and transits) recorded in
2020



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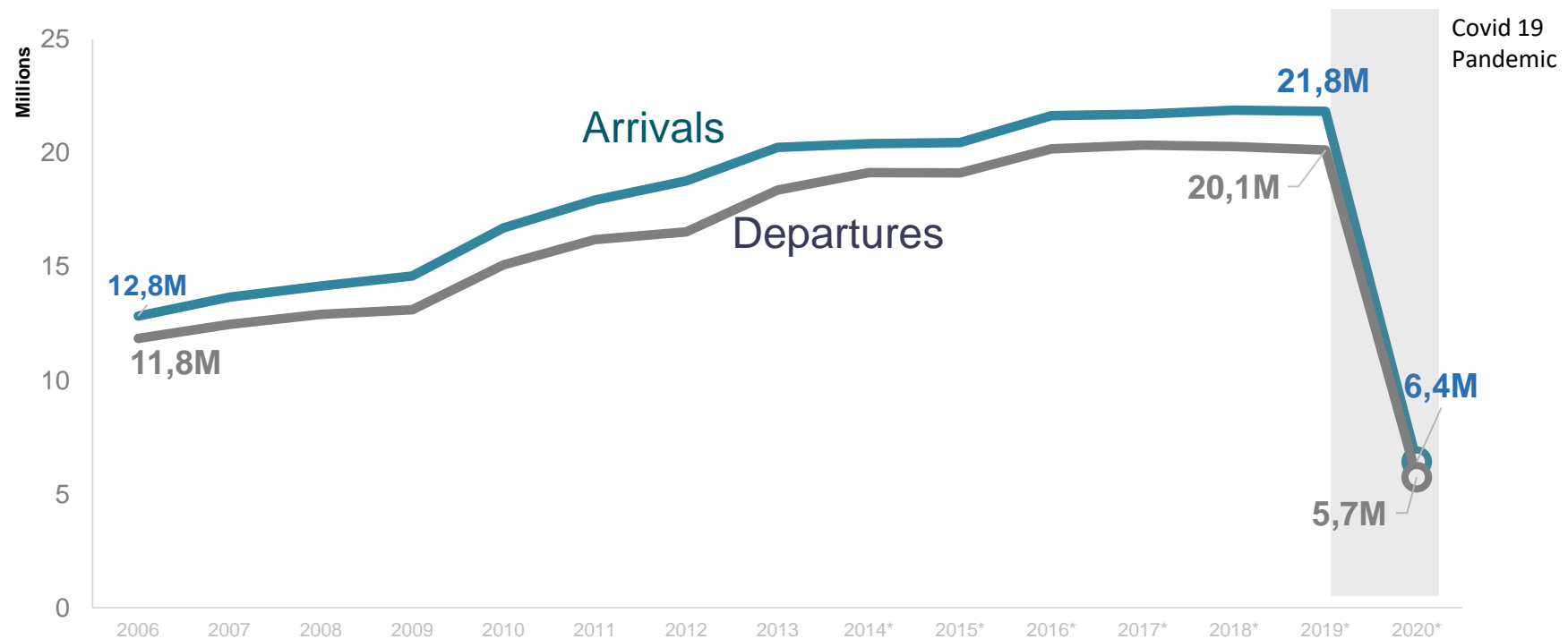
There were 12,3 million travellers to SA in 2020. *This includes arrivals, departures and transits.*

All arrivals, departures and transits, 2020



Trends show that the overall number of travellers (arrivals and departures) decreased by 71,0% between 2019 and 2020. *The overall number of travellers decreased by 50,7% over the 15-year period from 24 667 000 recorded in 2006 to 12 153 000 travellers recorded in 2020.*

Number of arrivals and departures of travellers by year of travel, 2006 – 2020



*2014-2020 data excludes travellers in transit



2020 South African Residents



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In 2020, 3,4M South African resident travellers were recorded travelling, compared to 12,1M in 2019. *This includes arrivals, departures and transits.*

Arrivals, departures and transits of SA residents, 2020



Annual volumes of arrivals and departures for South African residents dropped in 2012 and then generally increased throughout the period from 2013 to 2019. A drastic drop is observed in 2020. *There were nearly as many departures as arrivals over the years.*

Number of arrivals and departures of travellers by year of travel, 2006 – 2020



**2014-2018 data excludes travellers in transit*



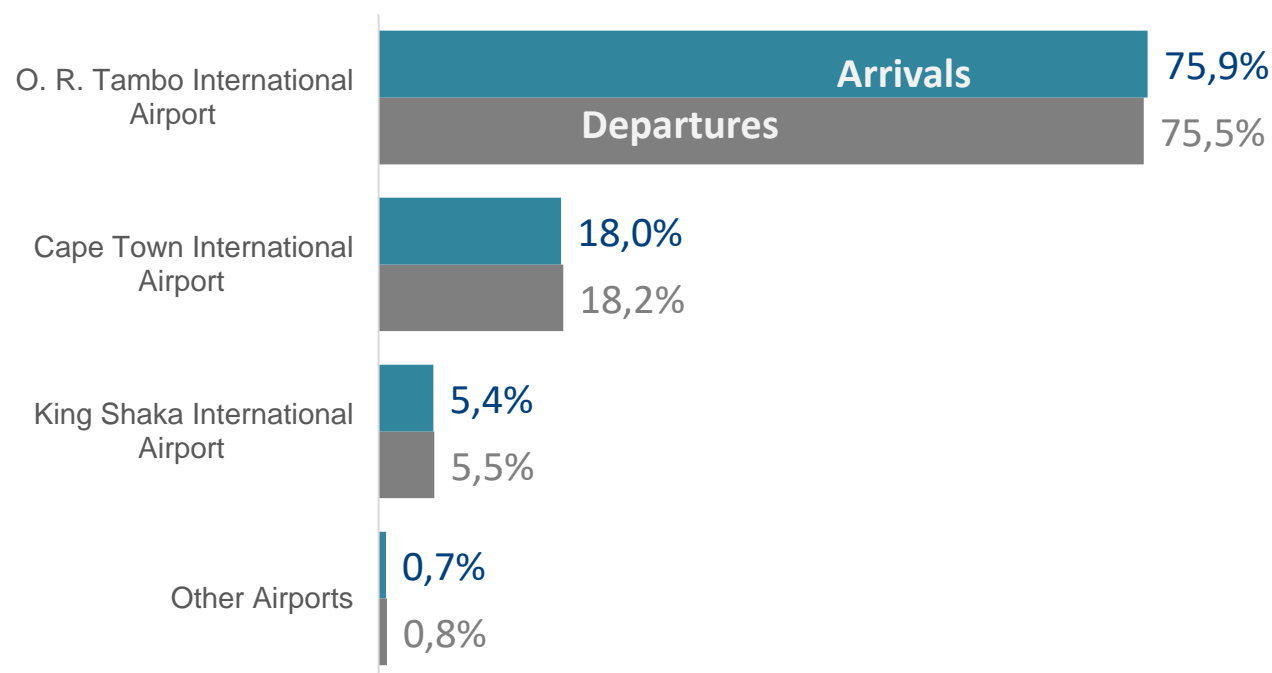
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Of the total number of residents using air as their mode of travel, the majority (75,9%) arrived and departed (75,5%) at O.R. Tambo International Airport while 18,0% arrived and 18,2% left through Cape Town International Airport. Less than 6,0% came (5,4%) or left (5,5%) the country using King Shaka International Airport and 1,0% arrived and left through other airports

Percentage distribution of South African residents by mode of travel and place of arrival or departure, 2020



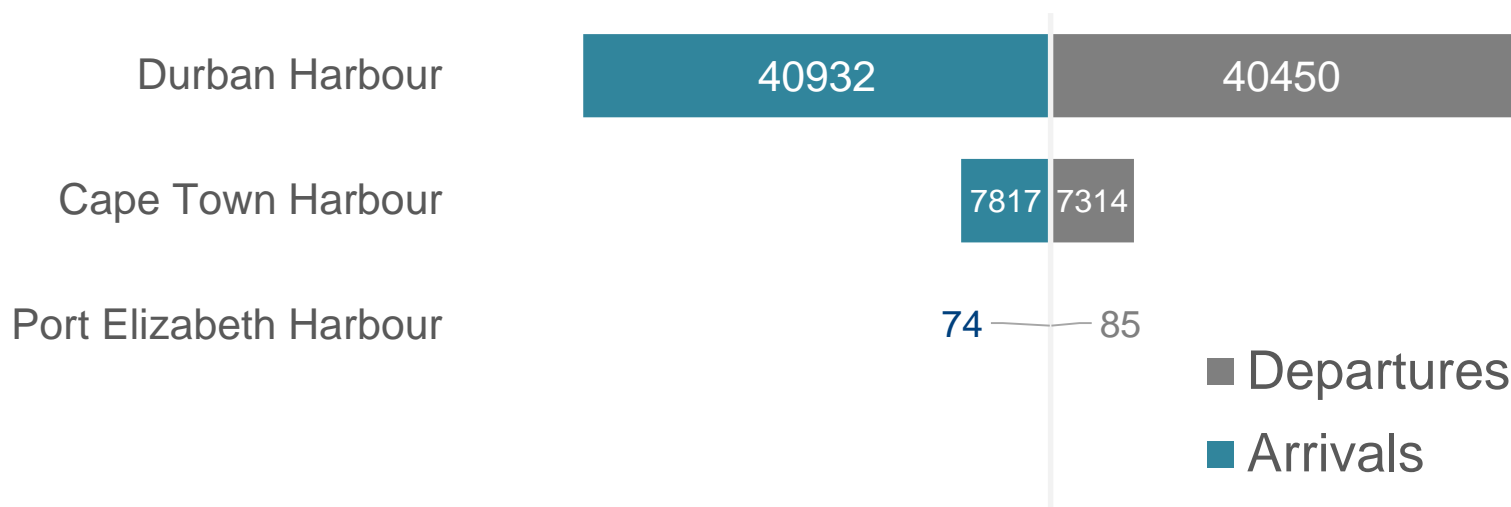
Transits

99,2%

0,8%

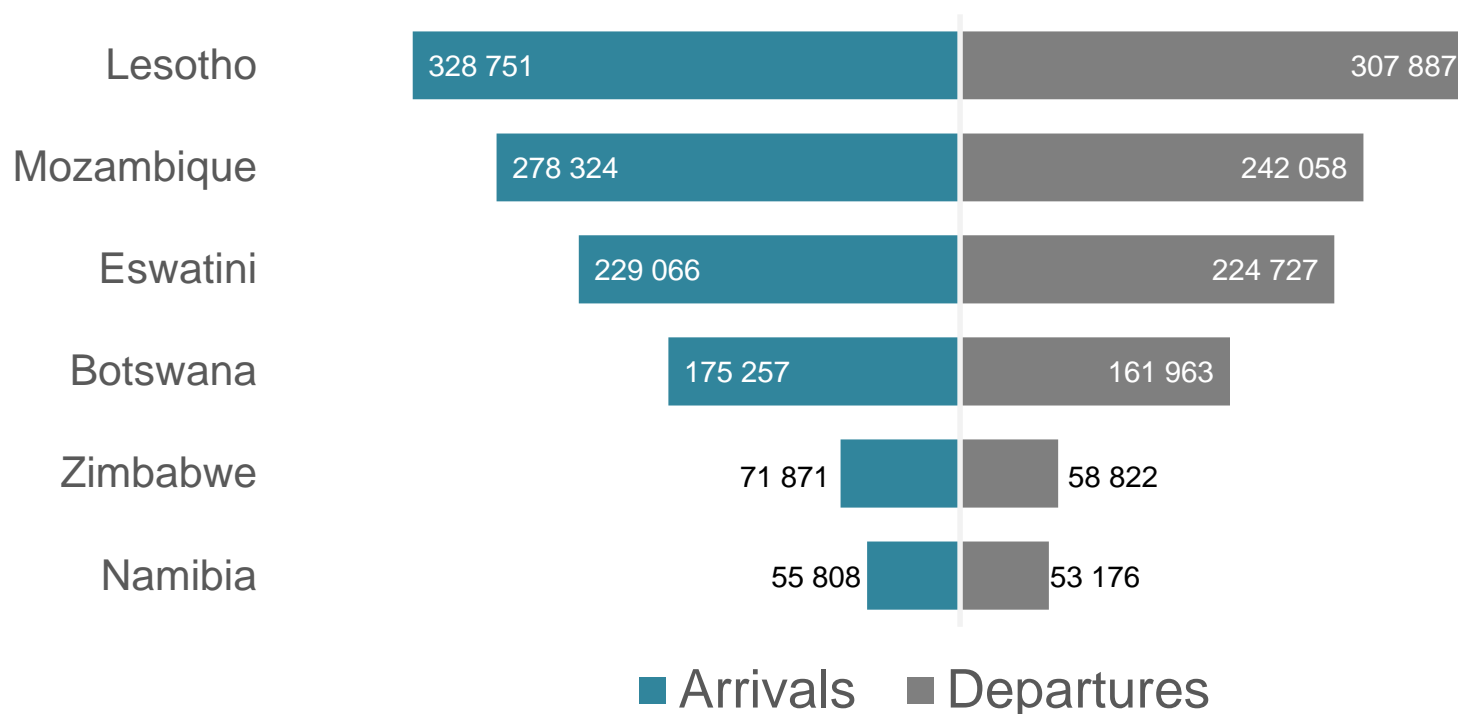
SA residents who arrived by sea, arrived (83,8%) or left (84,5%) through the Durban harbour. Cape Town Harbour was the second busiest harbour used by SA residents for sea travel.

Arrivals and departures by sea
of SA residents, 2020



Over half of South African residents travelling by road used Lesotho and Mozambique ports of entry. For arrivals, 28,9% entered the country through Lesotho and 24,4% through Mozambique. Similarly, for departures, most road users went through Lesotho (29,4%) and Mozambique (23,1%) ports.

Arrivals and departures by *land/road*
of SA residents, 2020



2020 Foreign Travellers



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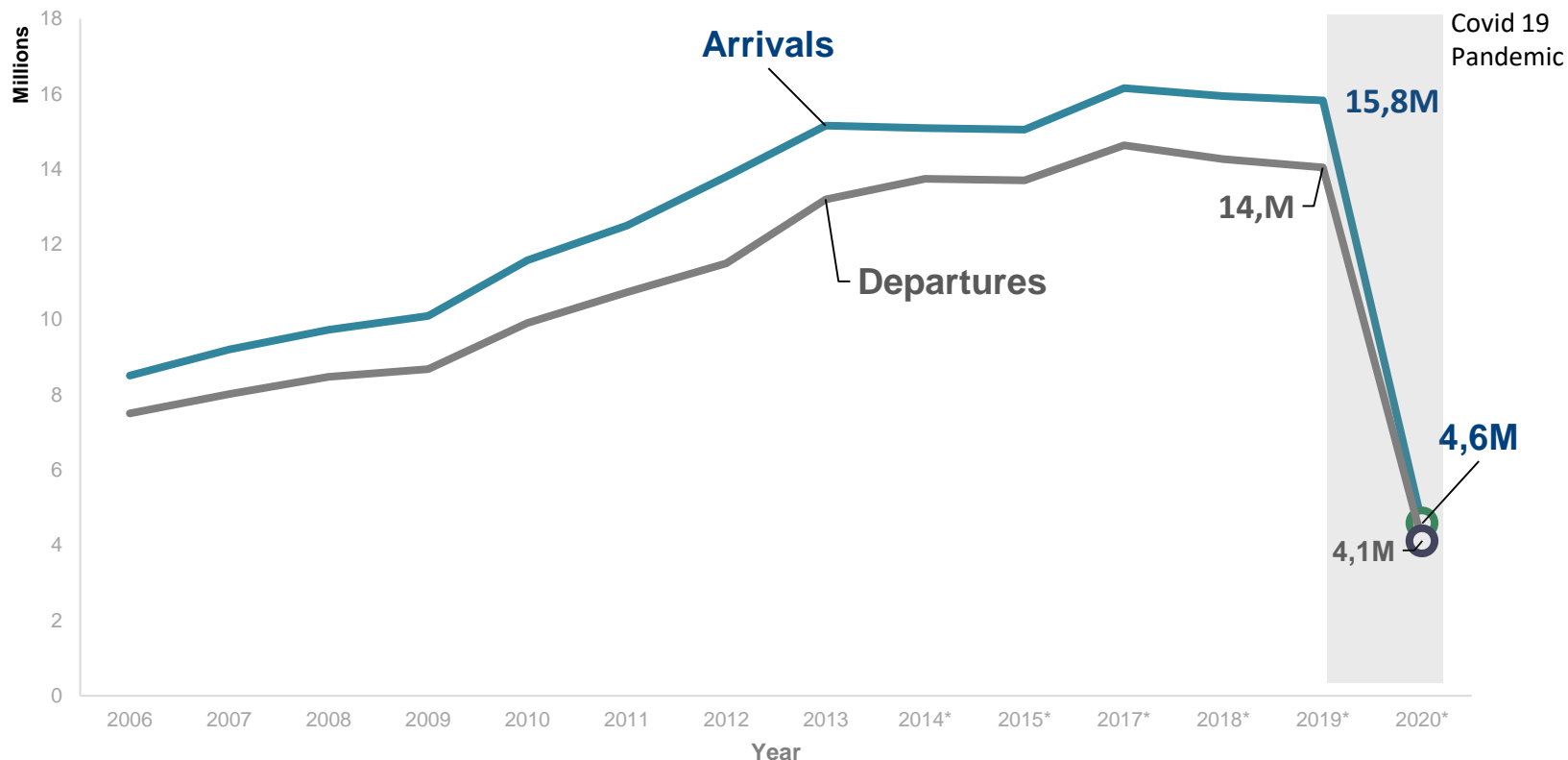
There were 8,8M foreign travellers in 2020 compared to 30,7M travellers in 2019. This includes arrivals, departures and transits.

*Arrivals, departures and transits of
foreign travellers, 2020*



The number of both foreign arrivals and departures increased between 2006 and 2019, with a slight decrease between 2014 and 2015 taking into account the exclusion of travellers in transit. A drastic drop was observed in **2020**.

Number of arrivals and departures of foreign travellers by year of travel, 2006 – 2020



**2014-2020 data excludes travellers in transit*



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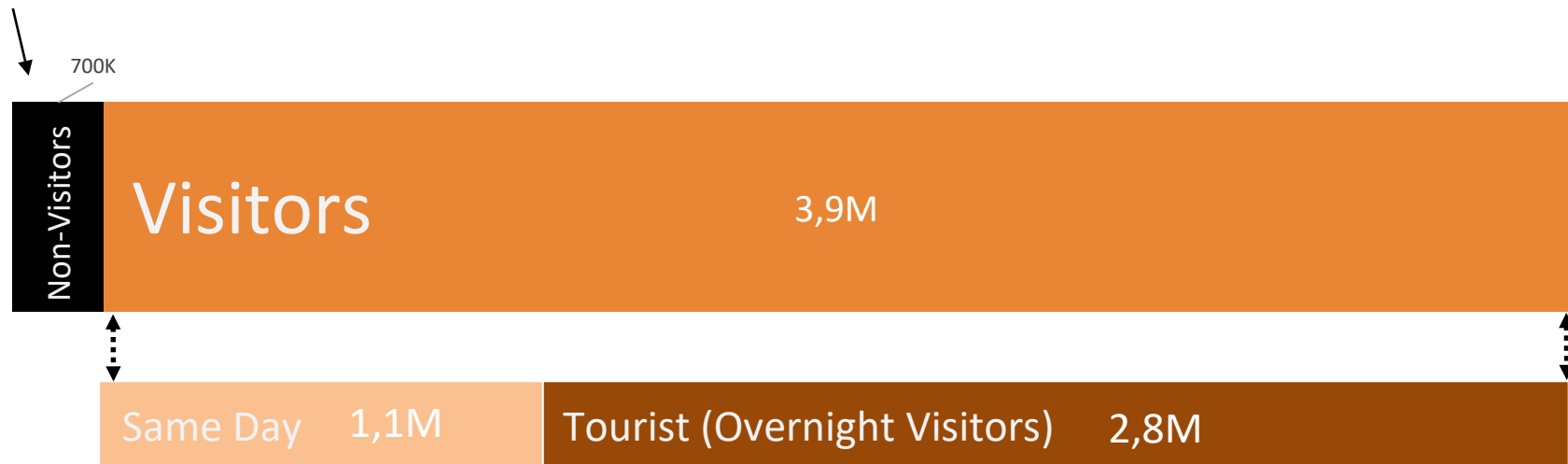
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In 2020, there were 699 804 (15,3%) non-visitors and 3 886 583 (84,7%) visitors. *The visitors were made up of 1 084 263 (27,9%) same-day visitors and 2 802 320 (72,1%) overnight visitors or tourists.*

Distribution of Foreign Arrivals

Workers and other
permit holders, etc



* Overnight visitor (Tourist) is a visitor who stays at least one night in collective or private accommodation in the place visited



2020 Tourists



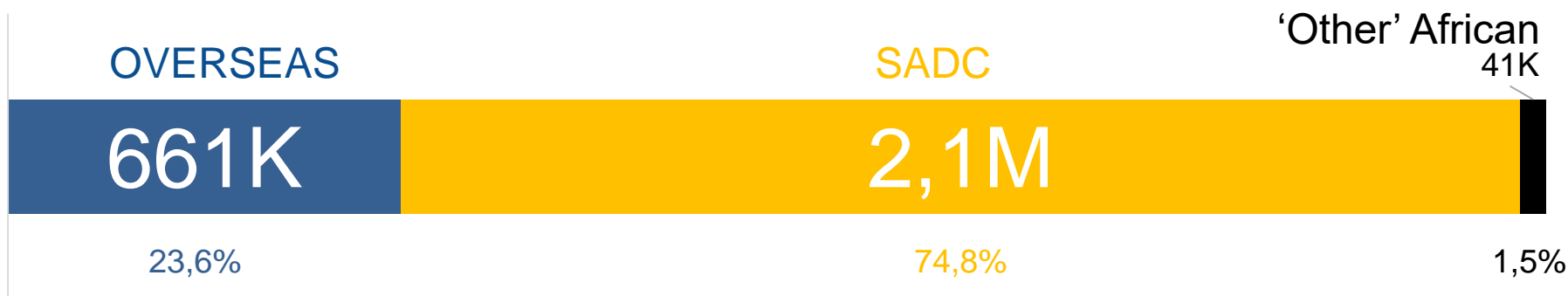
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74,8% of the tourists who arrived in South Africa in 2020 were residents of SADC countries and 1,5% were from 'other' African countries. *These two sub-regions made up 76,3% of tourists from Africa in total. Residents of overseas countries made up 23,6% of the tourists.*

Percentage distribution of tourists by region of residence, 2020



Unspecified not shown was 3 766 or 0,1%

A total of 2 802 320 tourists came to South Africa in 2020, showing a decrease of 72,6% from the 10 228 593 tourists recorded in 2019. *The highest number of tourist arrivals was recorded in January 2020 whilst the least number was recorded in October 2020.*

Number of tourists by month and year of travel, 2019 and 2020



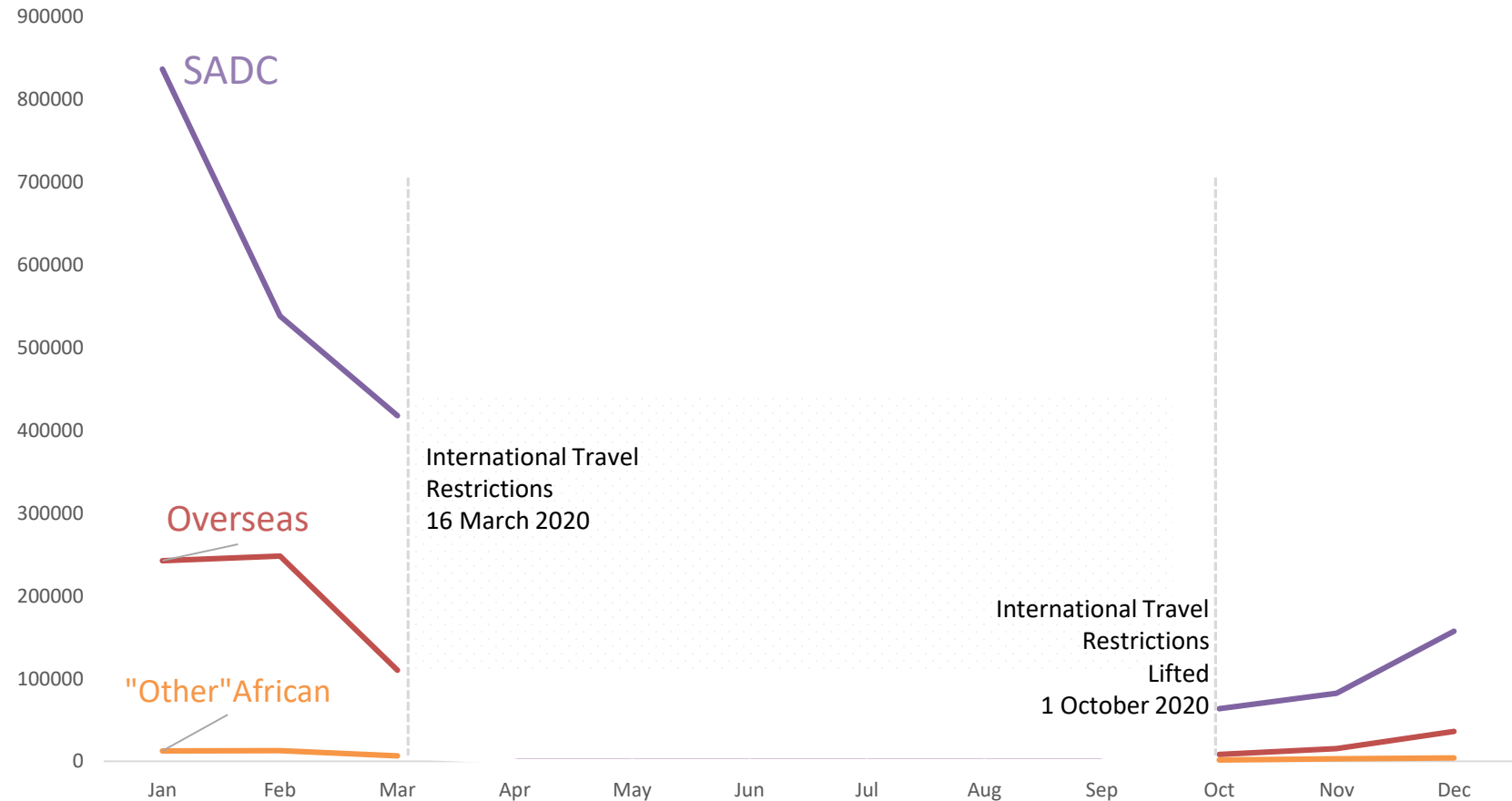
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Dramatic decline in tourist from all regions is observed due to global pandemic

Number of tourists by month of travel, 2020



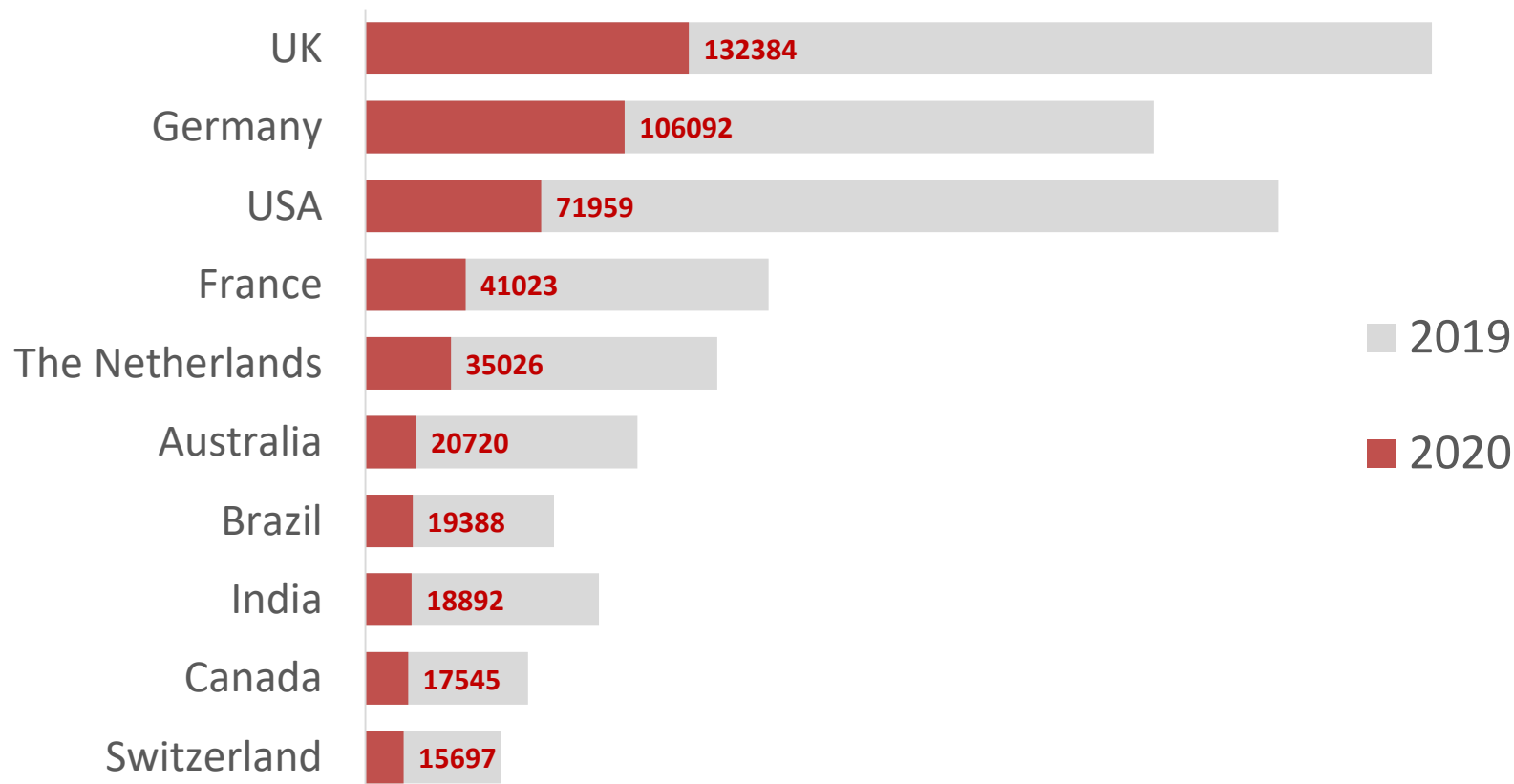
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Tourists from the UK topped the overseas visitor list. *When comparing the 2020 volumes with the 2019 volumes we see that the number of tourists decreased in all ten leading overseas countries. Australia had the largest decrease of visitors to SA by 81,4%.*

Tourists from the top 10 overseas countries, 2020



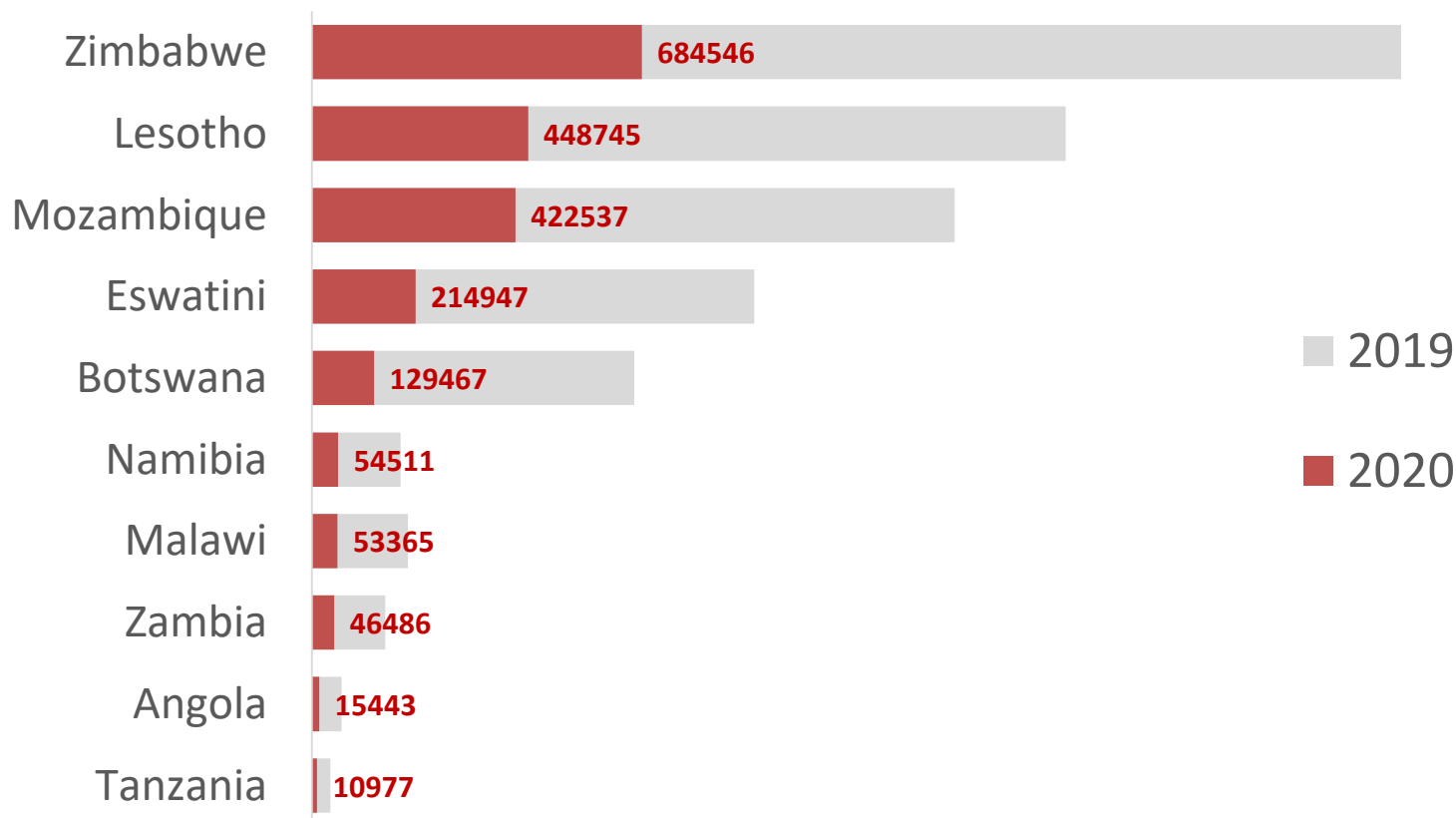
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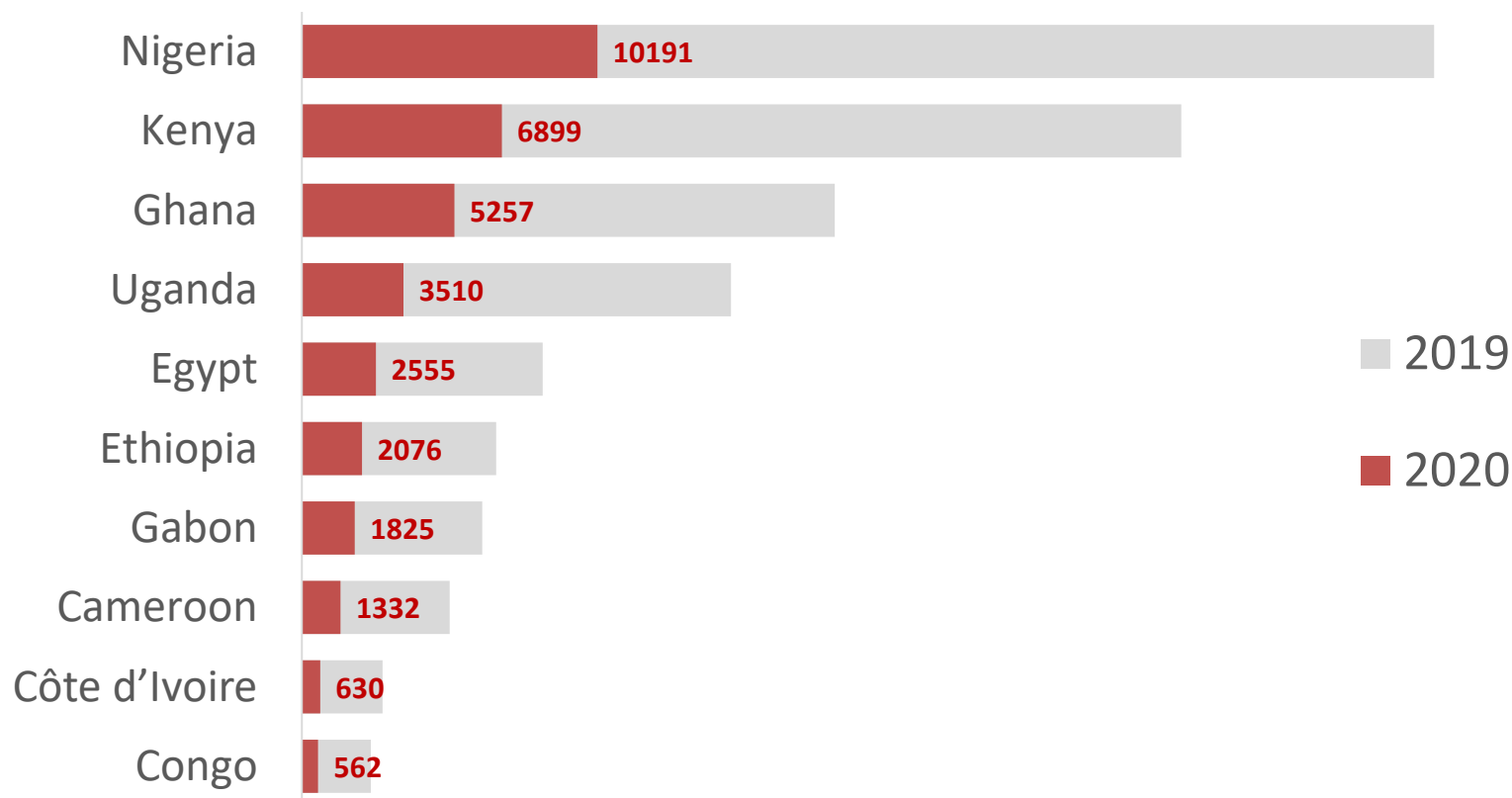
Zimbabwe was the leading country for tourists from SADC countries. All ten leading SADC countries showed a decrease in the number of tourists from 2019 to 2020. Botswana had the largest decrease of 80,6%.

Tourists from the top 10 SADC countries, 2020



Nigeria was the leading country for tourists from 'Other' African countries. A comparison between 2019 and 2020 volumes indicates that the number of tourists decreased in all ten leading countries. Côte d'Ivoire had the largest decrease of 77,4%.

Tourists from the top 10 'Other' countries, 2020

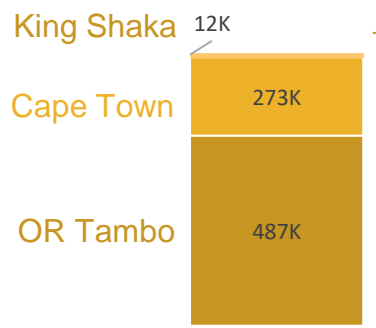
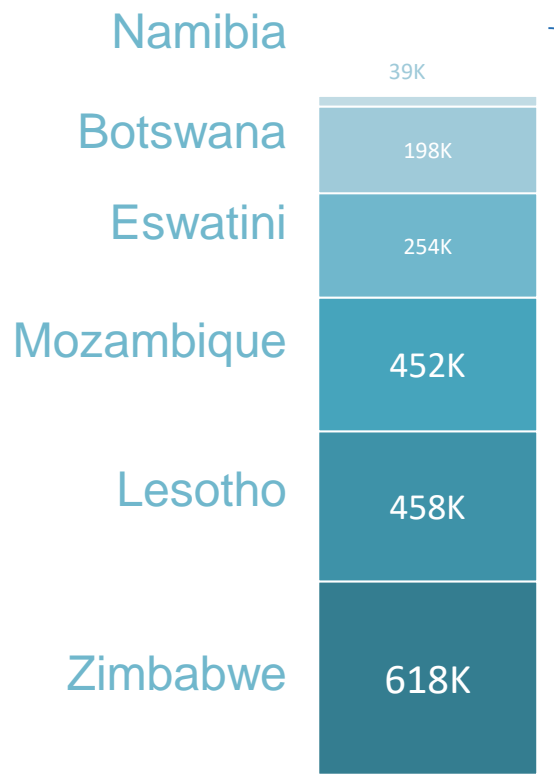


The largest number of tourists who came to South Africa in 2020 used road transport (72,0%); followed by those who came by air (27,6%) and those who arrived through sea ports (0,4%). Road users mainly came in through the Zimbabwe (30,6%) and Lesotho (22,7%) ports of entry. Namibia (1,9%) had the least number of the 2020 tourists using its ports of entry.

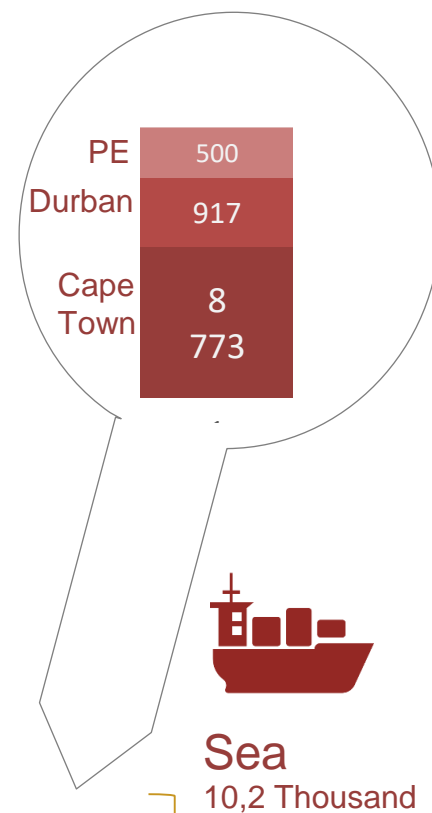


2,0 Million

Number of tourists by mode of travel, place of arrival, 2020

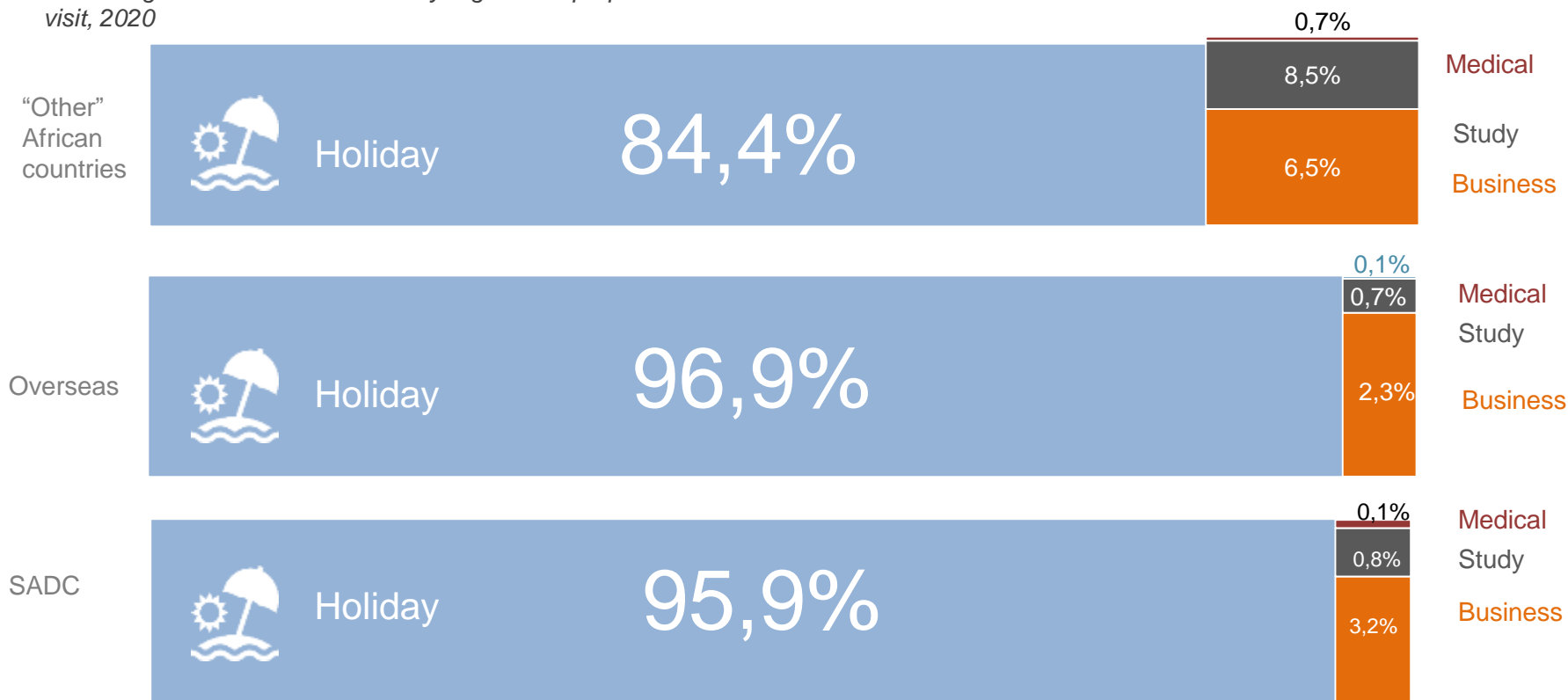


Air
0,7 Million



Holiday (Vacation, Shopping, Visiting friends and relatives, and other personal reasons) is the main reason travellers come to South Africa. Tourists from 'other' African countries (6,5%) and tourists from overseas countries (2,3%) came for business compared with 3,2% who came from SADC countries.

Percentage distribution of tourists by region and purpose of visit, 2020



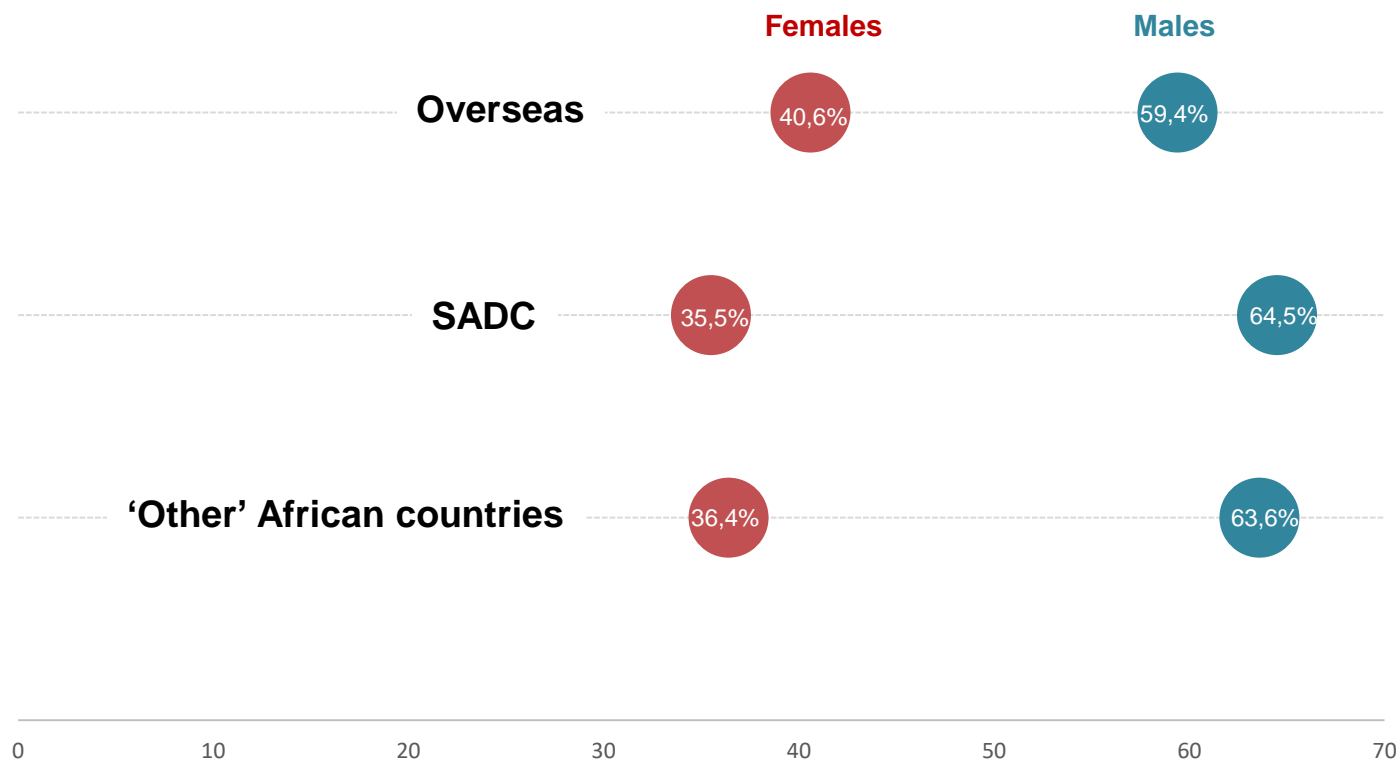
On average, tourists from overseas and 'other' African countries spent more days (about five to seven days per month) in the country compared to SADC residents who spent an average of two days in a month.

Average (median) number of days tourists spent by month of arrival, 2020



In 2020, there were more male than female tourists arriving in SA. *The highest proportion of female tourists was from overseas (40,6%), followed by 'other' African (36,4%) and the lowest from SADC countries (35,5%).*

Percentage distribution of tourists by region of residence and sex, 2020



The highest proportion of tourists from SADC countries (33,5%) and those from ‘other’ African countries (31,6%) were aged 35-44 while those from overseas (18,4%) were aged 55-64. The median ages of tourists from overseas, SADC and ‘other’ African countries were 46, 37 and 37 years respectively.

Percentage distribution of tourists by region of residence and age, 2020

	Overseas	SADC	‘Other’ African
0-14	6,0%	3,8%	4,8%
15-24	7,4%	8,4%	9,0%
25-34	18,1%	28,9%	28,4%
35-44	16,0%	33,5%	31,6%
45-54	16,6%	16,9%	16,8%
55-64	18,4%	6,4%	6,9%
65+	17,4%	2,3%	2,5%



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