

Tourism in Algeria from Independence to SDAT 2030: Historical Evolution, Development Planning and Contemporary Challenges

Chems Eddine Boukhedimi¹

¹Assistant Professor Department of Commercial Sciences, Faculty of Economic, Commercial & Management Sciences, University of Oran 2 Mohamed Ben Ahmed, Oran, Algeria

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Abstract

Tourism has long been identified as a potential driver of economic diversification and territorial development in Algeria, yet its development remains uneven. This article examines the historical evolution of Algerian tourism, focusing on tourism planning, tourist flows, accommodation infrastructure, investment, and contemporary challenges. A descriptive-historical and documentary methodology is adopted, drawing on official statistics from the Ministry of Tourism and Handicrafts, national tourism-planning documents, and academic literature. The analysis covers the period from independence in 1962 to the SDAT 2030 framework. Findings show a transition from predominantly state-led tourism development during the 1960s and 1970s toward a broader strategic approach emphasizing destination development, investment, quality, territorial planning, environmental sustainability, and economic diversification. In 2024, Algeria recorded 3,548,405 border entries, including 2,454,706 foreign entries and 1,093,699 entries by Algerians residing abroad. Hotel capacity reached 1,423 establishments and 139,963 beds, while hotels recorded 4,006,173 arrivals and 7,470,258 overnight stays. Persistent challenges include seasonality, market concentration, service quality, investment implementation, territorial imbalance, and short stays.

Keywords: Algeria; tourism development; tourism planning; SDAT 2030; tourist flows; hotel capacity; accommodation; sustainable tourism; tourism policy.

Introduction

Tourism has become an important component of economic development strategies in many countries because of its capacity to generate employment, stimulate investment, support local businesses, and diversify sources of income. Its economic effects extend beyond accommodation and travel to transport, restaurants, cultural industries, handicrafts, construction, agriculture, and other services. For countries possessing substantial natural and cultural resources, tourism can therefore contribute to both economic diversification and territorial development. Algeria represents a particularly relevant case for examining tourism development. The country possesses a diversified tourism resource base that includes a Mediterranean coastline, mountain landscapes, the Sahara, thermal resources, archaeological sites, historic cities, and a rich cultural and natural heritage. Its geographical position in the Mediterranean and its proximity to European and African markets also provide favorable conditions for tourism development. Nevertheless, the existence of substantial tourism resources has not automatically resulted in their full valorization as competitive tourism products. Previous research has highlighted the difficulties involved in transforming Algeria's tourism potential into sustained destination development, particularly in relation to planning, investment, destination attractiveness, and the organization of tourism products (Barkat & Doubakh, 2022; Boutora & Smaïli, 2021; El Azzaoui et al., 2022).

The evolution of Algerian tourism must therefore be understood through the interaction of public planning, infrastructure development, investment, tourism demand, and territorial organization. Since independence in 1962, the sector has experienced several distinct phases. The first decades were characterized by strong state

intervention and the construction of tourism infrastructure. Tourism development was subsequently affected by the political and security crisis of the 1990s. From the 2000s onward, tourism progressively regained importance within national development policy, culminating in the adoption of the Tourism Development Master Plan (Schéma Directeur d'Aménagement Touristique, SDAT) as a strategic framework for the sector.

The contemporary SDAT 2030 is officially presented by the Ministry of Tourism and Handicrafts as the strategic reference framework for Algerian tourism policy and as a component of the National Land-Use Planning Scheme (SNAT 2030). Its orientations include destination development, tourism poles and villages of excellence, tourism quality, public-private partnership, investment, professional training, and tourism financing. The framework also links tourism development with environmental sustainability, heritage valorization, and economic diversification.

Recent tourism statistics provide an opportunity to examine the extent to which this strategic orientation is reflected in measurable tourism activity. According to the Ministry of Tourism and Handicrafts, Algeria recorded 3,548,405 tourist entries at its borders in 2024, representing an increase of 7.77% compared with 2023. Of these entries, 2,454,706 were foreign tourists and 1,093,699 were Algerians residing abroad. The same year, the national hotel stock reached 1,423 establishments and 139,963 beds.

However, border-entry statistics and accommodation statistics measure different dimensions of tourism activity. A border entry represents an entry into Algeria recorded at a national border point, whereas an accommodation arrival represents a person registered at a tourism accommodation establishment. Consequently, these indicators should not be treated as equivalent or interpreted as measures of the number of unique tourists.

Against this background, the objective of this article is to examine the long-term evolution of Algerian tourism by combining historical analysis with recent official quantitative indicators. More specifically, the study addresses four research questions:

1. How has tourism developed in Algeria since independence?
2. How has tourism planning evolved from the state-led development model toward the SDAT 2030 framework?
3. How have tourist flows and accommodation capacity evolved in recent years?
4. What principal structural challenges emerge from the 2024 tourism evidence?

2. Literature Review

2.1. Tourism as an Instrument of Economic Diversification

Tourism is characterized by strong intersectoral effects because tourist expenditure generates demand for accommodation, transport, food services, entertainment, cultural activities, handicrafts, retail, and other services. Consequently, tourism development can generate economic effects extending beyond tourism enterprises themselves.

This logic is explicitly reflected in the Algerian tourism-planning framework. The SDAT presents tourism as an activity capable of generating employment, investment, income, and spillover effects for agriculture, handicrafts, culture, transport, construction, and other sectors. It also assigns tourism a role in economic diversification and in reducing dependence on hydrocarbons.

The Algerian case is particularly relevant because the country's tourism resource base is geographically and functionally diversified. Coastal tourism represents only one component of the national tourism offer. Algeria also possesses opportunities for Saharan, cultural, archaeological, thermal, mountain, ecological, and heritage tourism.

Nevertheless, tourism resources alone do not guarantee international competitiveness. The transformation of resources into competitive tourism products requires accessibility, adequate accommodation, qualified human resources, destination marketing, service quality, investment, digital technologies, and an institutional environment capable of supporting tourism enterprises and destinations.

El Azzaoui et al. (2022) emphasize Algeria's strategic geographical position and substantial tourism potential while showing that the country has not developed into a major Mediterranean tourism hub. Their analysis of the Horizon 2025 framework also identifies socio-political and external factors that constrained the achievement of its expected objectives, including political instability and the COVID-19 pandemic.

At the same time, domestic tourism has become an important component of Algerian tourism activity. This dimension became particularly visible during the COVID-19 period, when international mobility was severely restricted. Recent empirical research also suggests the relevance of tourism experience and future visit intentions for understanding domestic tourism demand in Algeria (Boukhedimi, 2025).

Thus, tourism's contribution to economic diversification should not be evaluated solely through the number of international visitors. Domestic demand, accommodation use, length of stay, employment, investment, territorial effects, and the capacity to develop diversified tourism products are also relevant dimensions of tourism development.

2.2. Historical Development of Tourism Planning

Tourism planning in Algeria has historically been closely associated with state intervention. Following independence in 1962, national development policy concentrated strongly on reconstruction, industrialization, and the development of strategic productive sectors. Tourism initially occupied a relatively secondary position compared with other national development priorities, but the state progressively established planning mechanisms to organize tourism infrastructure and investment.

At independence, Algeria inherited an estimated 5,922 tourist accommodation beds. According to Idir (2013), this inherited capacity comprised approximately 2,969 beds in seaside areas, 2,377 in urban areas, 486 in Saharan areas, and 90 in rural and mountain areas. The distribution illustrates the importance of coastal and urban locations in the accommodation structure inherited at independence.

The post-independence period subsequently witnessed the establishment of a state-led tourism development model. The 1966 Tourism Charter provided an important orientation for the development of tourism, while the 1967–1969 Triennial Plan, the 1970–1973 First Four-Year Plan, and the 1974–1977 Second Four-Year Plan translated tourism objectives into investment programs.

Across these three planning periods, 47,306 accommodation beds were programmed and 18,242 were completed, corresponding to an overall implementation rate of approximately 39% (Idir, 2013). The first of these programs alone planned 11,610 beds, of which 2,576 were ultimately completed.

Tourism investment during the 1960s and 1970s placed substantial emphasis on large-scale infrastructure, particularly in coastal destinations, while tourism facilities were also developed in Saharan and other inland

destinations. This period therefore established important elements of the country's tourism infrastructure but also contributed to a spatial structure in which coastal and urban tourism occupied a particularly important position.

The subsequent political and security crisis of the 1990s interrupted the development trajectory of the tourism sector and negatively affected Algeria's international tourism positioning. From the 2000s onward, tourism progressively regained attention within national development strategies.

The development of the national tourism planning framework subsequently evolved toward a more comprehensive approach. Rather than focusing primarily on infrastructure construction, the policy framework increasingly incorporated destination attractiveness, product diversification, environmental sustainability, tourism quality, professional training, investment, territorial planning, and partnerships between public and private actors.

2.3. SDAT 2030

The contemporary SDAT 2030 represents the principal strategic reference framework for Algerian tourism. The Ministry of Tourism and Handicrafts describes SDAT 2030 as an integral component of SNAT 2030 and as the framework for the strategic development and spatial organization of tourism in Algeria.

The framework pursues five principal objectives:

1. making tourism a contributor to economic growth and an alternative source of development beyond hydrocarbons;
2. generating spillover effects in other sectors, including public works, agriculture, and culture;
3. reconciling tourism promotion with environmental protection;
4. valorizing historical, cultural, and religious heritage; and
5. improving Algeria's tourism image.

The strategy is structured around five major dynamics:

1. valorizing the Algeria destination in order to increase attractiveness and competitiveness;
2. developing tourism poles and villages of excellence through rationalized investment and development;
3. implementing a Tourism Quality Plan incorporating professional training, education, and information and communication technologies;
4. strengthening transversal coordination across the tourism chain and promoting public-private partnerships; and
5. establishing tourism financing mechanisms capable of supporting tourism activities and attracting investment.

The framework therefore represents a transition from a predominantly infrastructure-oriented conception of tourism development toward a more integrated destination-management approach.

Nevertheless, academic research indicates that implementation has been incomplete. El Azzaoui et al. (2022) show that the Horizon 2025 framework did not achieve all of its expected results and identify political, institutional, and external constraints, including the COVID-19 pandemic. Barkat and Doubakh (2022) examine the realities and prospects of Algerian tourism within the SDAT framework, while Hadji and

Boubaker (2023) discuss tourism investment under public investment programs and identify investment-related constraints.

The existence of a strategic framework therefore represents an important institutional foundation, but its effectiveness depends on implementation, investment completion, territorial coordination, service quality, and the transformation of tourism resources into operational tourism products.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Design

This study adopts a descriptive-historical and documentary methodology. The objective is not to estimate a causal econometric model but to reconstruct the development trajectory of Algerian tourism and examine its evolution through historical evidence, tourism-planning documents, academic literature, and official quantitative indicators.

The analysis covers the period from independence in 1962 to 2024, with particular attention to the principal tourism-planning phases and the most recent official tourism statistics.

The historical component identifies major changes in tourism planning, infrastructure development, and public intervention. The quantitative component focuses principally on the 2024 indicators published by the Ministry of Tourism and Handicrafts.

3.2. Data Sources

The principal quantitative source is the Algerian Ministry of Tourism and Handicrafts (MTA). Its official publications provide information on tourist entries at national borders, foreign tourists, Algerians residing abroad, hotel establishments, accommodation capacity, accommodation arrivals, and overnight stays.

The 2024 tourism-flow statistics are based on information provided through the national border-control system and published by the Ministry. The study also uses the Ministry's sectoral dashboard and its detailed accommodation statistics (Ministère du Tourisme et de l'Artisanat, 2025b, 2025c).

A second category of sources consists of official tourism-planning documents, particularly the SDAT. These documents provide information on the objectives, orientations, and strategic dynamics of Algerian tourism policy.

Finally, academic sources are used to contextualize the historical and institutional evidence. These include studies on Algerian tourism development and the Horizon 2025 plan (El Azzaoui et al., 2022), tourism planning under SDAT 2030 (Barkat & Doubakh, 2022; Boutora & Smaïli, 2021), tourism investment (Hadji & Boubaker, 2023), historical tourism development (Idir, 2013), and service quality in Algerian hotels (Terkmani & Ghidouche Ait-Yahia, 2024).

3.3. Distinction Between Border Entries and Accommodation Arrivals

A central methodological issue in this study is the distinction between tourist entries at national borders and arrivals recorded by tourism accommodation establishments.

Border-entry statistics refer to entries into Algeria recorded at border points. They therefore measure flows crossing the country's borders and do not necessarily represent unique tourists, hotel guests, or persons undertaking leisure tourism.

Accommodation-arrival statistics, by contrast, refer to persons registered in accommodation establishments. They provide information about the use of tourism accommodation and are therefore conceptually different from border-entry statistics.

The two indicators should consequently neither be added together nor treated as equivalent.

For 2024, Algeria recorded 3,548,405 entries at its borders. In the same year, the Ministry reported 4,173,006 arrivals in tourism accommodation establishments and 7,258,470 overnight stays. The Ministry's detailed table also provides a separate hotel series, recording 4,006,173 hotel arrivals and 7,470,258 hotel overnight stays, with an average stay of 1.86 nights.

Because the general accommodation total and the detailed hotel series represent different statistical aggregates, the present analysis uses the detailed hotel series when discussing hotel arrivals, overnight stays, and average length of stay. This distinction avoids treating different statistical series as interchangeable.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Tourism Development and Planning Evolution

The development of tourism in Algeria has been characterized by successive phases of state-led planning followed by a gradual shift toward a broader and more diversified strategic approach.

During the first decades following independence, the state played a central role in developing tourism infrastructure. The inherited accommodation base was limited and spatially concentrated, while subsequent public programs sought to increase accommodation capacity and establish tourism complexes in different regions.

The planning programs of the 1960s and 1970s demonstrate the importance assigned to public intervention. The 47,306 beds programmed across the principal planning periods and the 18,242 beds completed indicate substantial investment ambitions, but also a considerable gap between planned and completed capacity (Idir, 2013).

This historical experience is important because it illustrates a recurring issue in Algerian tourism policy: the difference between strategic objectives, planned investment, and effective implementation.

The development trajectory was subsequently interrupted by the political and security crisis of the 1990s. From the 2000s, tourism progressively regained policy attention, leading to the establishment of the Horizon 2025 framework and subsequently the SDAT 2030 orientation.

The contemporary framework differs from the earlier infrastructure-cantered approach by giving greater attention to destination attractiveness, tourism products, quality, environmental sustainability, human resources, investment, and territorial organization.

The 2024 indicators provide an opportunity to assess the sector within this broader strategic context. They indicate that both tourism flows and accommodation capacity have expanded, although the figures also reveal persistent structural characteristics such as seasonality, market concentration, and a strong domestic component in hotel accommodation.

4.2. Tourism Recovery and the Contemporary Development Framework

Official Ministry statistics indicate that Algeria recorded 3,548,405 entries at its borders in 2024, representing a 7.77% increase compared with 2023.

Foreign entries reached 2,454,706, representing 69.18% of total recorded entries and an increase of 11.81% compared with 2023. Algerians residing abroad accounted for 1,093,699 entries, representing 30.82% of the total.

The increase in foreign entries indicates that the post-pandemic recovery was not limited to the Algerian diaspora component of cross-border mobility. However, the border indicator must be interpreted carefully because it measures entries rather than unique tourists or accommodation demand.

The geographical composition of foreign entries also reveals substantial concentration. Tunisia accounted for 2,038,000 foreign entries, equivalent to 83.02% of foreign entries, while France accounted for 124,715, or 5.08%.

This distribution demonstrates the importance of geographical proximity and established cross-border mobility in Algeria's international tourism flows. It also indicates the potential importance of broader international market diversification if Algeria seeks to expand its international tourism base.

At the same time, the composition of border entries reinforces the importance of distinguishing mobility statistics from accommodation statistics. A person entering Algeria from Tunisia, for example, is recorded in border statistics but may not necessarily stay in a hotel or other tourism accommodation establishment.

4.3. Seasonality and Composition of Tourist Entries

The quarterly distribution of border entries confirms the seasonal character of tourism activity in Algeria.

In 2024, the third quarter recorded the highest quarterly share, representing 27.71% of annual border entries. The fourth quarter recorded the lowest quarterly volume.

The concentration of entries during the third quarter is consistent with the importance of the summer period in Algerian tourism. This period is particularly relevant for coastal tourism and for visits by Algerians residing abroad.

Seasonality has implications for accommodation utilization, transport infrastructure, beaches, restaurants, and other tourism services. Strong concentration during a limited period can create pressure on tourism infrastructure during peak months while leaving part of the available capacity less intensively used during other periods.

From a planning perspective, this pattern increases the relevance of tourism-product diversification. Saharan tourism, thermal tourism, cultural and heritage tourism, mountain tourism, ecological tourism, and business tourism may provide opportunities for extending tourism activity beyond the traditional summer season.

However, the 2024 data alone do not establish the effectiveness of individual diversification policies. They instead demonstrate the persistence of temporal concentration and provide evidence supporting the importance of addressing seasonality within future tourism planning.

4.4. Expansion of Accommodation Infrastructure and Tourism Investment

The supply-side indicators demonstrate continued expansion in Algerian tourism accommodation.

In 2024, Algeria had 1,423 hotel establishments with a total capacity of 139,963 beds. During the same year, 47 new hotel establishments were added, representing an additional 4,687 beds.

In addition, subsequent sectoral information reported in 2025 indicated that 2,143 tourism investment projects were under realization, with a projected capacity of 255,850 beds and approximately 100,000 jobs. These

figures should not be interpreted as operational capacity in 2024. They represent an investment pipeline and therefore provide an indication of future supply rather than existing accommodation capacity.

These figures must be interpreted carefully because existing accommodation capacity and approved investment projects represent different stages of tourism development.

The figure of 139,963 beds represents the accommodation capacity of the existing hotel stock reported by the Ministry. By contrast, the 255,850 beds associated with approved projects represent projected future capacity. Approved projects therefore cannot be treated as operational accommodation capacity.

The distinction is important when evaluating the implementation of SDAT 2030. A project may be approved without having been completed, opened, or integrated into the operational tourism supply. Consequently, future assessments should distinguish clearly between approved projects, projects under construction, completed projects, and operational establishments.

The investment pipeline nevertheless indicates that tourism accommodation development remains an important component of sectoral policy. Its ultimate contribution to tourism development will depend on the effective completion and operation of these projects and on their integration into diversified tourism destinations.

4.5. Tourist Accommodation Arrivals and Overnight Stays

Accommodation statistics provide a second dimension of tourism activity that differs from border-entry statistics.

Furthermore, the detailed hotel series published by the Ministry for 2024 records 4,006,173 hotel arrivals, 7,470,258 overnight stays, and an average stay of 1.86 nights.

The same series records 403,857 non-resident arrivals and 3,602,316 resident arrivals. Residents therefore represented approximately 89.92% of recorded hotel arrivals, while non-residents represented 10.08% (Ministère du Tourisme et de l'Artisanat, 2025c). Here, "residents" refers to persons whose usual residence is in Algeria, while "non-residents" refers to persons whose usual residence is outside Algeria. The figures represent arrivals registered by hotel establishments rather than unique individuals; consequently, the same person may be counted more than once if they made multiple hotel stays during the year.

This distribution demonstrates the substantial importance of domestic demand within Algeria's formal hotel accommodation activity. It also complements the border statistics, in which foreign entries constitute a larger share of the total.

The distinction is particularly important because border statistics and accommodation statistics answer different questions. Border statistics measure movements across the country's borders, whereas hotel-arrival statistics measure registered use of hotel accommodation.

The relatively short average hotel stay of 1.86 nights also provides an important indication of the structure of hotel demand. It suggests that hotel activity in 2024 was characterized predominantly by short-duration stays.

Nevertheless, average length of stay should be interpreted carefully. Different tourism segments may produce substantially different accommodation patterns. Domestic leisure tourism, business travel, family visits, transit activity, and international tourism can each generate different lengths and forms of stay.

The accommodation data therefore indicate that domestic demand and short-duration stays constitute major characteristics of the formal hotel sector. These findings support the need to consider not only visitor volumes but also length of stay, overnight stays, expenditure, and occupancy when evaluating tourism development.

4.6. Relationship Between Tourism Flows, Infrastructure, and Investment

Taken together, the 2024 indicators reveal three simultaneous characteristics of Algerian tourism: increasing border flows, expanding hotel capacity, and a substantial pipeline of approved tourism investment.

These trends indicate that tourism development is continuing at both demand and supply levels. Nevertheless, the indicators also demonstrate the difference between tourism potential, tourism flows, accommodation use, and effective economic performance.

The increase in border entries indicates greater mobility into Algeria, but it does not directly measure tourist expenditure, length of stay, hotel occupancy, or the number of unique visitors.

Similarly, an increase in accommodation capacity expands potential supply but does not automatically imply equivalent increases in occupancy or tourism revenue. Finally, approved investment projects represent future potential rather than operational capacity.

The assessment of Algerian tourism should therefore rely on a multidimensional set of indicators. Border entries, accommodation arrivals, overnight stays, average length of stay, hotel capacity, occupancy, investment implementation, employment, expenditure, and geographical distribution provide complementary perspectives on tourism development.

This multidimensional approach is particularly relevant for evaluating SDAT 2030 because the objective of tourism development extends beyond increasing the number of visitors. It also involves developing a diversified, territorially balanced, higher-value, and environmentally sustainable tourism system.

4.7. Main Challenges Emerging from the 2024 Evidence

The 2024 evidence highlights several challenges for the continued development of Algerian tourism.

First, the international tourism-flow structure remains geographically concentrated. Tunisia alone accounted for 83.02% of foreign border entries in 2024. This concentration reflects the importance of neighboring markets and established mobility patterns but also indicates the relevance of broader international market diversification.

Second, tourism activity remains seasonally concentrated. The third quarter accounted for 27.71% of annual border entries, demonstrating the continuing importance of the summer period.

Third, the difference between existing accommodation capacity and the projected capacity associated with approved projects emphasizes the importance of implementation. Tourism investment should therefore be evaluated not only according to the number of projects approved but also according to completion, operation, employment generation, and actual tourism demand.

Fourth, the accommodation statistics indicate the importance of short stays. The average hotel stay of 1.86 nights suggests that increasing the number of visitors does not necessarily imply a proportional increase in overnight stays or tourism expenditure.

Destination diversification, product development, improved accessibility and connectivity, service quality, and stronger integration between accommodation and cultural, natural, recreational, and heritage attractions are therefore relevant areas for tourism development.

Service quality represents another important dimension. Terkmani and Ghidouche Ait-Yahia (2024), in a qualitative study involving nine hotel managers in Algeria, identified differences between the criteria customers use to evaluate hotel service quality and the criteria emphasized by managers, who relied more strongly on normative standards. Their findings highlight the importance of considering both provider and customer perspectives in the improvement of hotel services.

Overall, the 2024 evidence indicates measurable expansion in tourism flows and accommodation infrastructure, but it also demonstrates that quantitative expansion alone is insufficient to characterize tourism development. The next stage of development requires greater attention to quality, market diversification, geographical distribution, seasonality, length of stay, investment implementation, and economic value.

5. Conclusion

The evolution of tourism in Algeria since independence reflects the broader transformation of the country's economic development and territorial planning policies. From an initially state-led model centered on the construction of accommodation infrastructure and tourism facilities, Algerian tourism policy has progressively moved toward a more comprehensive strategic approach incorporating destination development, investment, tourism quality, human-resource development, territorial planning, environmental sustainability, and economic diversification.

The historical trajectory demonstrates the central role played by public intervention during the 1960s and 1970s. Tourism infrastructure expanded through successive national development plans, although the difference between planned and completed capacity also illustrates the implementation constraints that have characterized tourism planning.

The development of the tourism sector was subsequently disrupted by the political and security crisis of the 1990s. The post-2000 period marked a gradual reorientation of tourism policy and the emergence of a more comprehensive planning framework.

The SDAT represents the principal strategic framework for this contemporary orientation. The 2030 framework places tourism within the broader national territorial-planning system and emphasizes destination attractiveness, tourism poles, tourism quality, professional training, public-private partnerships, investment, financing, environmental sustainability, and heritage valorization.

The recent statistical evidence indicates substantial recovery in tourism activity. In 2024, Algeria recorded 3,548,405 entries at its borders, including 2,454,706 foreign entries and 1,093,699 entries by Algerians residing abroad. Foreign entries represented 69.18% of total recorded entries and increased by 11.81% compared with 2023.

The supply side also expanded. The national hotel stock reached 1,423 establishments with 139,963 beds, following the addition of 47 establishments and 4,687 beds during the year. In addition, the Ministry reported 2,143 approved tourism projects, with projected capacity of 255,850 beds and expected employment of 101,742 positions.

The accommodation statistics provide a complementary perspective. The detailed hotel series recorded 4,006,173 arrivals and 7,470,258 overnight stays, corresponding to an average stay of 1.86 nights. Residents accounted for approximately 89.92% of hotel arrivals, while non-residents accounted for 10.08%.

These results underline the importance of distinguishing border entries from accommodation arrivals. The former measure entries into the country, whereas the latter measure registered accommodation activity. Neither indicator should be interpreted as a direct measure of the number of unique tourists.

The findings also show that the development of tourism cannot be assessed solely through the growth of visitor numbers or accommodation capacity. The strong concentration of foreign entries in neighboring and historically connected markets, the seasonal concentration of border flows, the importance of domestic demand in hotel accommodation, and the relatively short average hotel stay all demonstrate the need for a broader evaluation framework.

Future assessments of Algerian tourism should therefore give greater attention to length of stay, visitor expenditure, accommodation occupancy, employment, service quality, territorial distribution, investment implementation, digitalization, destination marketing, and environmental performance.

Algeria nevertheless possesses a highly diversified tourism resource base extending from the Mediterranean coastline to the Sahara and encompassing natural, cultural, historical, archaeological, thermal, and mountain resources. The principal development challenge is consequently not simply the existence of tourism resources, but their effective transformation into integrated, accessible, diversified, and sustainable tourism products capable of generating economic value throughout the year and across different territories.

In this context, SDAT 2030 provides an established strategic framework for integrating tourism into Algeria's broader economic diversification and territorial-development objectives. Its contribution ultimately depends on implementation at both national and territorial levels. Strengthening wilaya (city) level tourism planning, monitoring investment projects, improving professional training, accelerating digitalization, developing destination marketing, improving service quality, and strengthening public-private cooperation are therefore important dimensions of continued tourism development.

The Algerian tourism sector has thus moved from a predominantly infrastructure-oriented and state-led development model toward a broader strategic approach. The 2024 evidence demonstrates measurable progress in tourism flows and accommodation capacity, while also revealing persistent structural challenges related to quality, diversification, seasonality, territorial balance, investment implementation, and economic value. The long-term challenge is therefore to transform Algeria's considerable tourism potential into a more integrated and resilient tourism economy capable of making a stronger contribution to national economic diversification.

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