crescent rating

MASTERCARD CRESCENTRATING

GLOBAL MUSLIM TRAVEL INDEX 2026

JUNE 2026

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01 FOREWORD

Fazal Bahardeen

Founder & CEO
CrescentRating
HalalTrip

It is with great pleasure that we present the 2026 edition of the Global Muslim Travel Index (GMTI), marking an extraordinary milestone of entering its 12th year of collaboration alongside Mastercard. Over the past decade, our research efforts have tracked the structural changes of the global Muslim travel market as it transitioned from a resilient niche segment into a mainstream economic powerhouse. Today, GMTI operates as the definitive global standard for Halal travel intelligence, utilized by governments, multinational hospitality brands, and financial institutions to mitigate risk, strengthen inclusivity, and unlock premium market share.

The data within this edition reveals a market expanding at an unprecedented speed, accelerating well past previous linear forecasts. In 2025, the market demonstrated exceptional resilience, with actual international Muslim arrivals reaching 196 million, a solid 11.3% year-on-year increase that solidifies recovery momentum and proves the sector's continued expansion. Looking into the remainder of 2026, we project arrivals to scale to 208 million, on a trajectory toward 262 million international Muslim arrivals by 2030, commanding an estimated annual expenditure of USD 310 billion. This macro scale is backed by an unyielding demographic engine: the global Muslim population is scaling from 2.22 billion in 2026 to 2.57 billion by 2036. With a youthful median age of 25–27 years, nearly 70% of this population are digitally native consumers under 40.

While many destinations may already offer Muslim-friendly services, the competitive landscape has permanently shifted from static physical availability to live algorithmic visibility. As intelligent AI search agents intermediate the travel timeline, destinations that fail to structure and digitize their faith-based offerings run an immediate risk of being excluded early in the consumer recommendation loop.

This generational shift introduces a profound evolution in how travel is consumed, entering the era of agentic travel, trust, and digital delegation. With smartphone ubiquity exceeding 80% across all stages of the travel timeline, modern travelers are shifting away from active searching toward delegating decision-making to intelligent systems to lower their planning time and transform travel uncertainty into on-demand certainty.

To help global stakeholders navigate this digital transition alongside real-world volatility, this edition showcases our most advanced framework stack yet: the Destination Activation Stack. This stack seamlessly bridges the quantitative infrastructure baseline of the ACES envelope (Access, Communications, Environment, Services) with the qualitative value curation of the RIDA experience filter (Responsible, Immersive, Digital, Assured) and the transactional validation of the TRUST catalyst.

Furthermore, recognizing the pressing need for resilience in today's macroeconomic climate and geopolitical crisis, we have integrated a dedicated focus on crisis scenario planning. The Travel Ecosystem Stress-Test Matrix provides a practical, flexible lens to help tourism stakeholders build operational agility, protect traveler trust, and manage fluid arrival corridors under varying geopolitical and economic conditions.

We extend our deepest gratitude to our long-standing partner, Mastercard, to our network of world-class industry experts, and to the progressive destinations worldwide that continue to innovate alongside us. We invite you to utilize these blueprints of global mobility to future-proof your strategies, lower mobility barriers, and build a more accessible, welcoming, and inclusive travel ecosystem for all.

Aisha Islam

Senior Vice President,
Head of Customer Solutions Center,
South East Asia

Muslim friendly travel is now part of a mainstream destination strategy. What was once considered as a specialist offering is increasingly built into how markets grow, compete, and position themselves in the global tourism landscape.

As that progress continues, the standard is rising. The question is no longer whether the right services exist, but whether they are delivered in a way that feels joined up from planning through to the experiences on the ground.

Destinations that do this holistically are making stronger progress than those that approach each aspect separately. This year's results reflect that momentum.

Many markets continue to strengthen infrastructure, services, and accessibility, while also placing more emphasis on how these elements come together to make travel simpler and more dependable for Muslim travelers.

For destination leaders, the next stage is about strengthening what is already in place and making the overall journey more coherent. Reliable information, dependable services, and a smoother experience at each step can make a meaningful difference in how a destination is chosen and experienced.

Comparative insight plays an important role here, helping stakeholders see where performance is strong, where further attention is needed, and where investment can have the greatest impact over time.

At Mastercard, we see how consistency and simplicity influence travel behavior, particularly as digital tools and data continue to shape how journeys are planned. When experiences are easy to navigate and reliable to use, they build confidence and encourage broader participation.

Our partnership with CrescentRating reflects a shared commitment to supporting that progress. As the Halal travel market continues to grow in scale and importance, the ability to deliver consistently across the journey will become even more important – whether you look to book a solo trip, travel with friends or plan a once in a lifetime experience with family.

We hope this edition of the Global Muslim Travel Index provides a practical reference for stakeholders looking to strengthen their position and capture the opportunities ahead.

GMTI 2026 Executive Dashboard

The 2026 edition of the Global Muslim Travel Index (GMTI) marks a structural milestone, demonstrating that the global Muslim travel market has completely transitioned from a resilient niche segment into a mainstream economic powerhouse. By evaluating 150 destinations representing over 98% of global Muslim arrivals, this dashboard distills the three defining macro-conclusions that shape future performance, technological readiness, and capital allocation across the global mobility landscape.

I. THE DEMOGRAPHICS JUGGERNAUT

2.57B

PROJECTED MUSLIM POPULATION BY 2036
70% Under 40 Years Old

The global Muslim population is expanding from 2.22 billion to 2.57 billion, encompassing nearly 29% of humanity. Driven by a youthful median age of 25–27 years, approximately 70% of this entire demographic is under 40 years old. These digitally native consumers represent the primary driver of global travel demands. Capturing this segment requires a decisive structural shift away from legacy, analog travel packages toward hyper-personalized, algorithm-ready, and mobile-first discovery ecosystems.

II. THE DIGITAL SHIFT

80%+

SMARTPHONE UBIQUITY & AI USAGE BASELINE
Algorithmic Invisibility Risk

The competitive landscape has permanently shifted from static physical availability to live algorithmic visibility. With smartphone ubiquity exceeding 80% across the travel timeline, modern travelers are delegating decision-making to intelligent agents to eliminate planning friction. Destinations that fail to digitize and structure faith-based assets run an immediate risk of complete exclusion from automated AI recommendation loops. Integrating native suggestive data architectures is a prerequisite for market capture.

III. THE ECONOMIC PRIZE

$310B

ESTIMATED ANNUAL EXPENDITURE BY 2030
262M Arrivals Projected by 2030

The global Muslim travel market has accelerated past previous linear forecasts, demonstrating exceptional resilience. In 2025, international arrivals reached 196 million (+11.3% YoY). Trajectory projections estimate arrivals to hit 208 million in 2026, scaling rapidly to 262 million by 2030. This expansion positions the sector as a mainstream global economic powerhouse, commanding premium market share for destinations that proactively address faith-essentials.

INTEGRATING THE **DESTINATION ACTIVATION STACK**

To successfully capture this massive spend pool, destinations must bridge physical assets with digital visibility. The Destination Activation Stack unifies the quantitative baseline of the **ACES** infrastructure envelope (Access, Communications, Environment, Services) with the qualitative refinement of the **RIDA** experience filters (Responsible, Immersive, Digital, Assured) and the transactional validation of the **TRUST** (Transparency, Relevance, User Experience, Social Connection, and Thoughtful Rewards) catalyst to eliminate planning leakage, build ecosystem resilience, and optimize conversion across all travel demographics under shifting macroeconomic conditions.

CONSUMERS

- Muslim Women in Travel 2026
- Indonesia Muslim Brand Engagement 2025
- Malaysia Muslim Brand Engagement 2025
- Muslim Gen Z Travel 2023
- Muslim Women In Travel 2019
- Digital Muslim Travel 2018
- Muslim Millennial Travel 2017

INDUSTRIES

- Muslim-Friendly Sports Tourism 2026
- Muslim-Friendly Cruise 2024
- Halal Food Lifestyle Indonesia 2021
- Halal Food Lifestyle Singapore 2021
- Muslim Travel Shopping Index 2015

GLOBAL MUSLIM TRAVEL INDEX (GMTI)

- GMTI 2026
- GMTI 2025
- GMTI 2024
- GMTI 2023
- GMTI 2022
- GMTI 2021
- GMTI 2019
- GMTI 2018
- GMTI 2017
- GMTI 2016
- GMTI 2015

COUNTRIES

- Indonesia Muslim Travel Index 2025
- Indonesia Muslim Travel Index 2023
- Indonesia Muslim Travel Index 2019
- Indonesia Muslim Travel Index 2018
- Japan Muslim Travel Index 2017

TRENDS

- Halal Travel Trends 2026
- Halal Travel Trends 2025
- Ramadan & Eid Lifestyle 2022
- Travel Readiness 2020
- Halal Travel Frontier 2020
- Halal Travel Frontier 2019
- Halal Travel Frontier 2018
- Ramadan Travel 2016

Charting the Course: 12 Years of Mastercard & CrescentRating's Muslim Travel Insights

Mastercard and CrescentRating's longstanding partnership continues to reflect a shared commitment to delivering market intelligence on Muslim lifestyle market. Over the past 12 years, the collaboration has produced 34 reports a wide range of topics related to Muslim travel, destination development, and lifestyle trends.

At the center of this partnership lies the Global Muslim Travel Index (GMTI), the flagship publication that continues to serve as a key benchmark for the Muslim-friendly travel sector. The GMTI 2026 edition reinforces this commitment through deeper market analysis, expanded traveler insights, and enhanced destination benchmarking to better reflect the evolving needs of Muslim travelers worldwide.

Segments on technological advancements further strengthen GMTI's role as a leading reference for destinations, tourism organizations, and businesses seeking to better understand and engage the global Muslim travel market.

Download the Reports here

02 FOUNDATIONAL INTELLIGENCE & OPERATIONAL ARCHITECTURE

The 2026 GMTI Edition: Showcasing the Blueprints of Global Mobility

As the global Muslim travel market continues its evolution from a resilient niche segment into a mainstream economic powerhouse, the entry points for destination engagement have dramatically shifted. This edition of the Global Muslim Travel Index (GMTI) serves a dual purpose: it deploys immediate enhancements to our current tracking capabilities while actively showcasing the predictive trend frameworks that will shape the future evaluation models of global destination performance.

Here is how the 2026 edition expands its strategic horizon

Active Integration: Refined Social Listening & Sentiment Analysis: The immediate operational upgrade for the 2026 Index is the deployment of an enhanced digital listening data layer.

Real-Time Discourse Analysis: The methodology now integrates sentiment tracking across global news and online discussions specifically mapped to the Environment and Services metric categories.

Nuanced Public Perception: By capturing digital conversations surrounding safety, traveler satisfaction, hospitality standards, and accessibility, the index provides a highly responsive look at market sentiment rather than relying solely on static infrastructure data.

Strategic Trend Showcases: The Blueprint for Future GMTI Evolution

Beyond immediate score tracking, this edition highlights critical behavioral subsegments drawn from our newly released 2026 satellite research reports. These deep-dives act as the structural testing ground for how destination performance will be weighted in future editions:

The Multi-Layered Female Demographic Paradigm: We are highlighting the massive influence of the Muslim Women in Travel (MWIT) segment, a 90 million-strong market representing 48% of all global Muslim arrivals. By analyzing their digital discovery habits (e.g., 40% prioritizing Instagram, 25% YouTube) and their focus on faith-friendly environments as a secondary decision driver, GMTI is outlining how future scoring models will measure personalized security and content-driven destination appeal.

The Sports Tourism Spend Acceleration: This edition showcases the rapid expansion of sports tourism among younger, digitally native Muslim travelers. With a projected active sport-event market spend pool of $21 billion by 2030, our insights demonstrate that booking conversion triggers heavily on upfront, visible proof of faith-essentials. This framework provides a predictive blueprint for how venue readiness and logistical transparency translate into confirmed bookings.

Operationalizing Predictive Frameworks (RIDA & ACES): We are showcasing a multi-dimensional lens that seamlessly bridges behavioral data with practical inclusion standards. By introducing the RIDA (Responsible, Immersive, Digital, Assured) and ACES (Access, Communications, Environment, Services) frameworks within our trend analysis, we are setting the stage for future index metrics to systematically weigh advanced attributes such as automated border-tech readiness and immersive community-level heritage interaction.

The Global Footprint: Quantifying the Impact of GMTI

Built upon over twelve years of collaborative analytical rigor alongside Mastercard, the Global Muslim Travel Index (GMTI) methodology has transitioned from an industry innovation into the definitive global standard for Halal travel intelligence. Today, GMTI operates as the core benchmarking tool used by governments, multinational hospitality brands, and financial institutions to mitigate risk and unlock premium market share.

Institutional Validation & Media Resonance

The footprint of GMTI is an active benchmark embedded within global academic and commercial ecosystems:

Scientific & Academic Endorsement: With over 3,400 citations in peer-reviewed academic journals and global economic research papers, the GMTI ACES framework is recognized by international researchers as a methodology for measuring destination readiness.

Global Media Authority: Capturing more than 22,000 news media mentions across tier-one international networks and financial publications, GMTI serves as the primary source of market data during global tourism summits and fiscal forecasting cycles.

Executive Market Adoption: Reaching a milestone of over 62,000 direct downloads, the annual index is actively utilized on the ground by tourism boards, hotel development groups, and transit authorities to build multi-year strategy models.

+3,400 **citations** in academic articles

+22,000 **news media mentions**

+62,000 **Downloads**

Longitudinal Rigor & Intelligence Infrastructure

GMTI data depth. The index is fueled by a decade-long historical baseline that tracks more than 60 data sets.

Mastercard-CrescentRating Legacy: Backed by 30+ comprehensive strategic reports published over a decade, creating an unmatched data repository of historical benchmarks.

Expert-Led Strategic Frameworks: The analytical trajectory of the index is guided by world-class global industry pioneers.

Near-Real-Time Sentiment Tracking: Anchored by 60 months of continuous, monthly tracking data via the CrescentRating Muslim Travel Intent Tracker (MTIT), ensuring that the final index reflects actual operational realities and shifting live sentiments.

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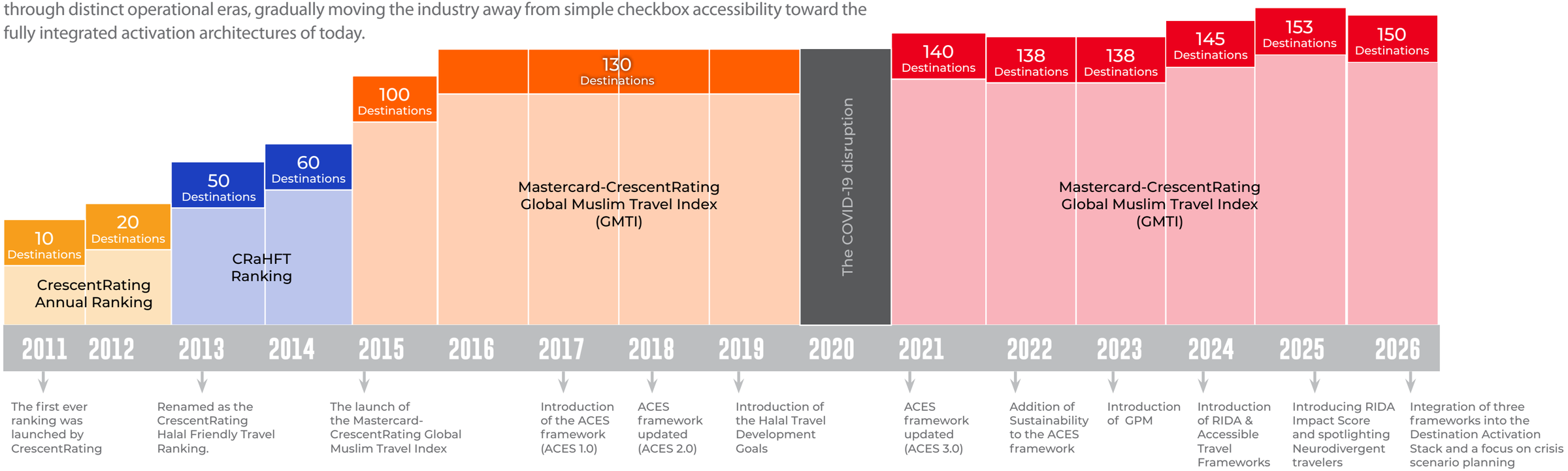
GLOBAL MUSLIM TRAVEL INDEX 2026

A Decade of Longitudinal Evolution of GMTI

From Baseline Infrastructure to Enterprise Destination Activation

The Global Muslim Travel Index maps the multi-year trajectory of global travel standards to demonstrate how market expectations have continuously matured. Since the formal codification of our data models, the index has adapted through distinct operational eras, gradually moving the industry away from simple checkbox accessibility toward the fully integrated activation architectures of today.



2017: Codifying the Foundational DNA:
In 2017, the index introduced the foundational ACES framework, standardizing over 50 quantitative datasets to establish the industry's first global baseline for measuring destination preparedness.

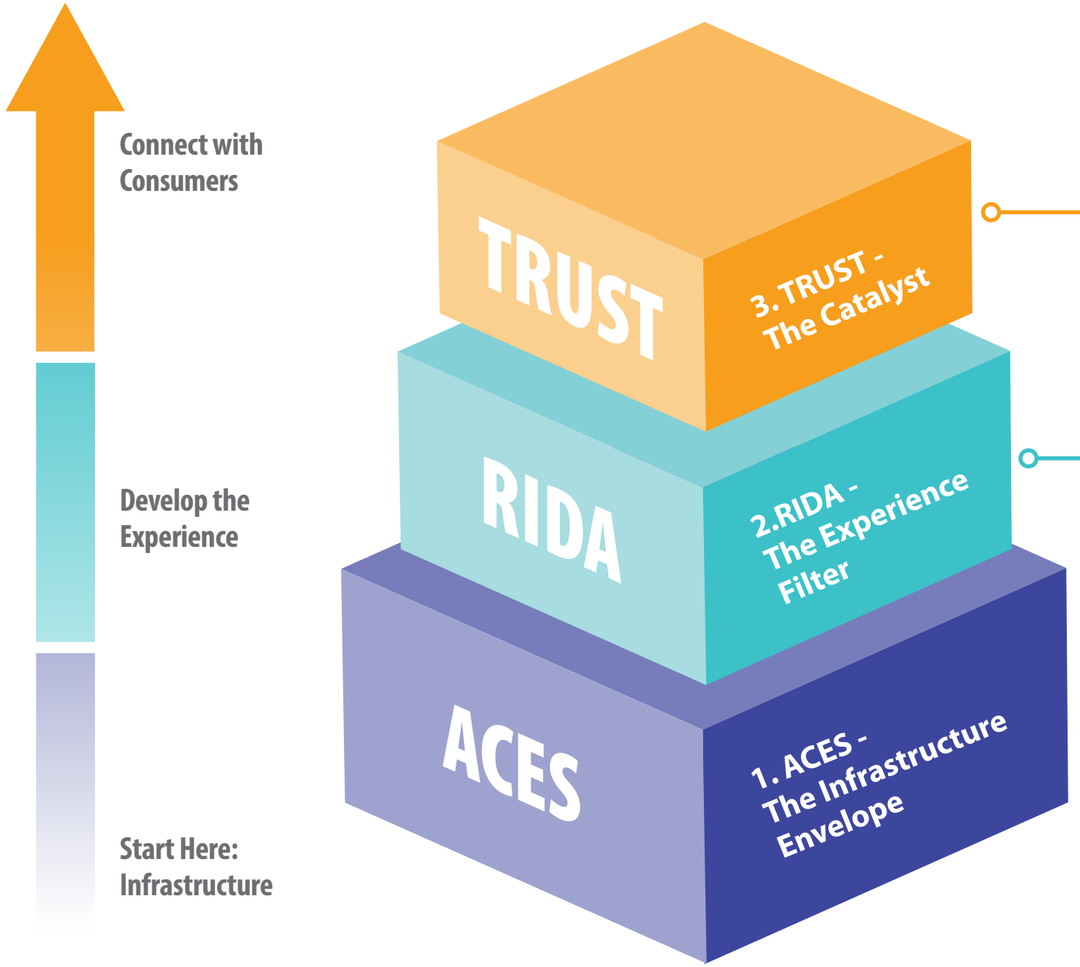
2019: The Segmented Intelligence: Recognizing that the global market is not uniform, deep-dive segment analytics was launched to de-average the traveler demographic through specialized satellite tracking. This structural shift led to the launch of reports such as the Muslim Women in Travel research track in 2019.

2025: The RIDA and TRUST Frameworks:
The frameworks evolved to capture technological changes, qualitative experiences, and transaction confidence, centred around the launch of the RIDA and TRUST models

2026: The Destination Activation Stack
A predictive framework stack that unifies accessibility, experience curation, and validation.

The Future-Proofing Stack: The Destination Activation Stack

Navigating the global travel metamorphosis toward deep values-alignment. This Destination Activation Stack transforms raw assets into future-proof advantages.



Consumer Activation & Conversion.
This catalyst is the activation mechanism that eliminates intention-to-booking leakage through clear, unassailable validation signals.
Measure: **Transparency, Relevance, User Experience, Social Connection, and Thoughtful Rewards.**

Qualitative Refinement.
The RIDA filter builds upon basic infrastructure to engineer highly personalized, emotionally resonant journeys. The refinement matrix assesses: **Responsible, Immersive, Digital, and Assured experiences.**

The Foundational Backbone.
Over 17 years of longitudinal research and 60+ quantitative datasets define destination preparedness across four key areas ACES: **Access, Communications, Environment, and Services.**

Core Strategic Takeaways of GMTI 2026

The 2026 edition of the Global Muslim Travel Index (GMTI) marks a structural milestone, demonstrating that the global Muslim travel market has completely transitioned from a resilient niche segment into a mainstream economic powerhouse. By evaluating 150 destinations representing over 98% of global Muslim arrivals, this report unifies longitudinal research with predictive trend tracking through the Destination Activation Stack. The critical operational takeaways shaping global destination performance are stratified below:

The Macro-Acceleration & Milestone Velocity

Sustained Scale Trajectory: The travel market has broken past historical linear forecasts, achieving 196 million actual international Muslim arrivals in 2025 (an 11.3% year-on-year surge) and is on track to hit 208 million in 2026.

The 2030 Scale Horizon: Based on the last few years growth trajectory, long-term projections now show the market expanding to 262 million international arrivals by 2030, driving an estimated annual market expenditure of USD 310 billion.

The Demographic Engine: This economic growth is sustained by a continuous, massive population expansion. The global Muslim population is scaling from 2.22 billion to 2.57 billion by 2036, encompassing nearly 29% of humanity. With a youth median age of 25–27 years, approximately 70% of this entire demographic is under the age of 40, forming an unyielding consumer core of digital natives.

Geopolitical Spillover & "Home-Continent" Mobility

The Proximity Pivot: Real-world macroeconomic stress, such as fuel cost volatility, airspace closures, and heightened security anxieties, has established "proximity risk" as a primary booking filter. Rather than canceling itineraries entirely, travelers are adjusting behaviors, trading high-cost cross-continental transit for safe, predictable "home-continent" corridors.

Subregional Winners: Market center-of-gravity shares are actively transitioning into low-friction safe havens. For Asian Muslims, South-Eastern Asia has overtaken Western Asia as the top operational corridor for inbound stability. Concurrently, European travelers are centralizing transit inside Southern European destinations e.g., Spain and Bosnia and Herzegovina) that offer rich heritage assets alongside transparent security records.

Global Competitiveness & Index Realignment

The OIC Leaders: Malaysia continues to command the global benchmark position, retaining its undisputed #1 rank with an increased score of 83. Meanwhile, Indonesia has re-emerged as a top-tier performer, registering a historic score surge (+3 points) to climb the rankings and share the #2 spot at a score of 79 with Saudi Arabia, and Türkiye.

The Non-OIC Landscape: Within non-OIC territories, Singapore maintains its long-standing dominance at #1 (and #10 globally with a score of 73), fueled by its exceptional safety metrics, multicultural integration, and advanced smart-airport infrastructure. Hong Kong rises to #2 (score 64) following aggressive government-led faith accreditation programs, while Taiwan and the United Kingdom remain tightly competitive, sharing the #3 non-OIC spot with a score of 59.

The Behavioral Shift: From Active Search to AI Agent Delegation

Algorithmic Disintermediation: Modern travel dynamics are experiencing a fundamental cognitive evolution. Driven by smartphone ubiquity (exceeding an 80% usage baseline across all travel phases), travelers are aggressively moving away from standard information searches toward delegating destination filtering to intelligent AI systems.

The Mandate for Algorithmic Visibility: Tourism ecosystems now face a critical data risk. Destinations that fail to digitize and structure their faith-based assets into algorithm-ready touchpoints will be systematically excluded from automated AI recommendation loops, irrespective of the quality of their physical on-ground infrastructure. Natively suggestive, context-aware digital data architectures are the new baseline required to unlock market capture.

Audience De-Averaging: High-Yield Subsegments

The Female Powerhouse Factor: Destination planning can no longer evaluate the market as a uniform block. The Muslim Women in Travel (MWIT) segment has surged to 90 million strong, accounting for a staggering 48% of all global Muslim arrivals.

Sports Tourism Capitalization: Younger demographics are accelerating sports-related travel through the lens of identity and shared community experience. The global Muslim sports-event travel market spend pool is projected to expand to USD 21 billion by 2030.

03 STRATEGIC SATELLITE SPOTLIGHTS (The 2026 Research Showcases)

Halal Travel Trends 2026 Report: The Era of Agentic Travel, Trust and Regenerative Stewardship

The global travel landscape is undergoing a deep alignment with personal values, cognitive technology, and spiritual autonomy. This showcase highlights the macro-economic shifts and core psychographics mapped in the Halal Travel Trends 2026 report.

Demographics & Regional Dynamics:

The 2035 Demographic Dividend: Destination planning is increasingly anchored in a youth-driven demographic boom that completely resets traditional consumption timelines.

Institutionalization in Asia: Asia sits at the epicenter of today's travel flows, moving past temporary hospitality adjustments toward the permanent institutionalization of faith-compatible tourism.

High-Frequency Corridor Alignment: Shorter travel distances between major hubs combined with high Halal food density make the Asian region the definitive global anchor for high-frequency short trips and multi-generational family travel.

Scan the QR code to explore our interactive report.

Volatility & Shifting Intentionality:

"Home-Continent" Mobility: Rising fuel costs and proximity risks have inflated long-haul airfares, forcing a strategic pivot toward diversified regional corridors that prioritize safety and cost-efficiency.

Building Destination Trust: Travelers are actively avoiding perceived geopolitical instability, transforming safety and security from operational checklists into foundational booking filters.

The Intentional Traveler: Motivations have shifted from passive leisure toward deeper emotional connection, driving growth in ancestry, roots-exploration, and heritage tourism

Picked Asia as the leading region for tourism in 2026

4 Major Trends

01 PURPOSE-LED JOURNEY
02 INCLUSIVE-TRAVEL
03 DIGITAL TRAVEL
04 SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

77% Care more about travel experience than cost of the trip.*

51% 51% Travelers cited that safety has become the leading criterion when selecting a destination.**

1 in 3 Travelers are influenced by social media when planning a trip.

75% of global travelers express a desire to travel more sustainably.

*The American Express
**European Travel Commission

Muslim Women in Travel (MWIT) 2026 Report: Redefining Global Tourism Decision-Making

Muslim women represent one of the most dynamic growth segments in global tourism, currently 90 million strong and accounting for 48% of all global Muslim arrivals. Driven by a youthful demographic with a median age of 25, this segment has emerged as a primary powerhouse in global travel decision-making and expenditure planning.

Discovery & Behavioral Profiles

Algorithmic Discovery: Destination discovery is heavily dictated by highly visual social media channels, led by Instagram (40%), YouTube (25%), and TikTok (23%).

Purposeful Motivations: Travel planning prioritizes shopping, cultural immersion, and learning opportunities that align with personal values.

Solo & Group Expansion: While family travel remains a major baseline, there is a distinct structural surge in independent all-female travel groups and solo female travelers.

Pillars of Experience Expectation

The Identity Matrix: Travelers look for destination environments that understand and respect the intersectional layers of faith expression and gender.

Safety & Proactive Dignity: Proactive safety infrastructure serves as a leading booking filter, enabling women to explore freely without compromising faith values.

Privacy-Ready Spaces: Widespread demand continues to rise for privacy-conscious recreational zones, single-gender wellness options, and modest dressing facilities.

PRIVACY
Muslim women require spaces that respect modesty and privacy.

AMENITIES
Essential services, such as prayer spaces and family-friendly amenities need to be accommodated

IDENTITY
Muslim women want to travel comfortably without being discriminated against.

NETWORK
Finding and connecting with like-minded local communities.

SAFETY
Muslim Women travelers are concerned about their general safety and encountering Islamophobia.

TOP EXPERIENCES AMONG MUSLIM WOMEN TRAVELERS

- SHOPPING
- CULTURAL IMMERSION
- LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

40% Instagram

25% YouTube

23% TikTok

Digitally
Drive destination discovery.

Scan the QR code to explore our interactive report.

Muslim-Friendly Sports Tourism 2026 Report: Unlocking the $21 Billion Event Market

Sports tourism is entering a highly dynamic phase of global growth, heavily driven by young, digitally native travelers who view sports through the lens of community, identity, and shared experience. This showcase maps out how stadiums, tournaments, and national event ecosystems can operationalize standard inclusion criteria to eliminate booking friction and maximize international event yields.

These Travelers (domestic & international) identify themselves as:

41% Being spectators

32% Being both

27% Being participants

Market Economics & Booking Triggers

The $21 Billion Spend Pool: The global Muslim sports-event travel market spend pool is projected to expand to USD 21 billion by 2030. This represents an immediate USD 4 billion (23.5%) financial uplift achievable through proactive, Muslim-friendly event readiness.

The "Proof Wins" Mandate: Fan enthusiasm alone does not guarantee ticket sales; booking conversion leaks when faith-based essentials are unclear. Intent only converts to confirmed bookings when organizers provide upfront, credible proof during the planning cycle.

Eliminating Itinerary Leakage: The booking moment depends heavily on transparent, visible logistics, including trusted ticketing pathways, clear transport guidance, secure payment options, and easily accessible digital resources.

Venue Inclusivity & Core Essentials

Top Global Anchors: Global fan engagement and sports tourism discovery are heavily concentrated around three core sports: Soccer, Cricket, and Basketball.

The Non-Negotiable Essentials: Travelers place a decisive 72% importance rating on faith-compatible experiences. Venues must deliver clear access to Halal food services, dedicated prayer spaces (Salaath), water-friendly washrooms, and an environment explicitly free from Islamophobia.

Smart Inclusion Standards: Providing culturally aware event staffing, no-alcohol blocks, and gender sensitive spaces serves as a smart standard that elevates safety and comfort for all guests, including families, women, and seniors.

Scan the QR code to explore our interactive report.

04 TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENTS & TRUST AUTOMATION

Smart Tourism Infrastructure: Accelerating Trust Automation Globally

In 2026, technology has become a crucial element of the global travel industry. Many destinations are now actively integrating digital solutions into their travel ecosystems. Common examples are the existence of biometric verification, e-visas, auto gates, and digital travel credentials.

In Indonesia, for instance, at Soekarno-Hatta International Airport, the implementation of e-visas and automated immigration gates has significantly reduced processing time while improving border security. Similar systems are widely adopted across major international airports, enabling travelers to move faster through checkpoints using facial recognition, passport biometrics, or QR-based credentials, ultimately enhancing both efficiency and traveler satisfaction.

At the same time, destinations are also moving beyond basic digitalization toward more intelligent systems. Technologies such as QR-based travel passes, AI-powered assistants, and real-time data platforms are reshaping how visitors plan, book, and experience trips. These innovations enable more personalized and responsive services, making travel planning more accessible and convenient through digital platforms.

Biometrics, e-Visas, & Autogates

Enables faster immigration processes using facial recognition, fingerprints, and digital visa systems.

AI Chatbots & Travel Assistants

Smart assistants that can help visitors with trip planning and real-time support.

Data-Driven Personalization

The usage of traveler data to deliver tailored recommendations, pricing, and experiences in real time.

Integrated Digital Ecosystems

Seamless connection between destination providers through shared data system.

Smart Destination Management

The usage of AI tools to predict crowd levels and resource allocation for better experience.

The Agentic Travel Frontier: Re-engineering Digital Discovery and Trust Infrastructure

Artificial Intelligence is redefining how Muslim travelers plan and experience their journeys. AI-powered platforms can curate end-to-end trips based on traveler preferences, including Halal dining options, prayer spaces, and Muslim-friendly accommodations. This not only enhances convenience but also reduces travel friction, enabling a more intuitive and seamless experience from motivation to booking and real-time navigation.

80% of travelers use AI tools for travel purposes*

Shift from Search to Delegation

This reflects a broader behavioral shift where travelers are moving away from active searching toward delegating decision-making to intelligent systems. For Muslim travelers, this is particularly significant as AI reduces the complexity of validating faith-based needs, which has traditionally required cross-checking multiple sources. As a result, platforms that can deliver accurate, pre-validated recommendations gain a disproportionate influence in shaping destination choice.

For destinations, AI enables data-driven tourism management, optimizing visitor flows, enhancing service delivery, and improving overall traveler satisfaction. By leveraging behavioral insights and analytics, destinations can better align offerings with the expectations of Muslim travelers, ensuring both inclusivity and efficiency. This positions AI as an enabler in building smart, Muslim-friendly destination that prioritize ease, personalization, and confidence throughout the travel journey.

From Availability to Visibility

While many destinations may already offer Muslim-friendly services, the key challenge lies in making these services visible and discoverable within AI-driven ecosystems. As AI increasingly intermediates the travel journey, destinations that fail to digitize and structure their offerings risk being excluded from recommendation systems altogether. This shifts the competitive landscape from simply providing services to ensuring they are algorithm-ready, integrated, and contextually surfaced at the right decision points.

Transitioning from static availability to live algorithmic visibility is a foundational prerequisite to unlock the Digital parameters of the Destination Activation Stack. To remain competitive, destinations must optimize their data architecture to ensure faith-based amenities are seamlessly crawled, contextually surfaced, and natively suggested by next-generation AI agents.

Common AI Enabled Features Used by Travelers

The First Trust Checkpoint: Transforming Border Control into a Seamless Gateway Experience

Technological advancements in border control are significantly enhancing the speed, security, and overall ease of international travel. Biometric authentication, E-gates, and digital identity systems are streamlining immigration processes, reducing wait times while maintaining high security standards. For Muslim travelers, particularly those undertaking religious journeys or traveling with families, these innovations contribute to a more predictable and stress-free arrival experience, minimizing uncertainty at key entry points.

Border Control as the First Trust Checkpoint

A smooth, technology-enabled arrival experience can signal safety, organization, and inclusivity factors that are especially critical for Muslim travelers who may already anticipate friction due to documentation, group travel, or unfamiliar procedures. As a result, the first interaction at immigration can significantly influence overall destination perception and satisfaction.

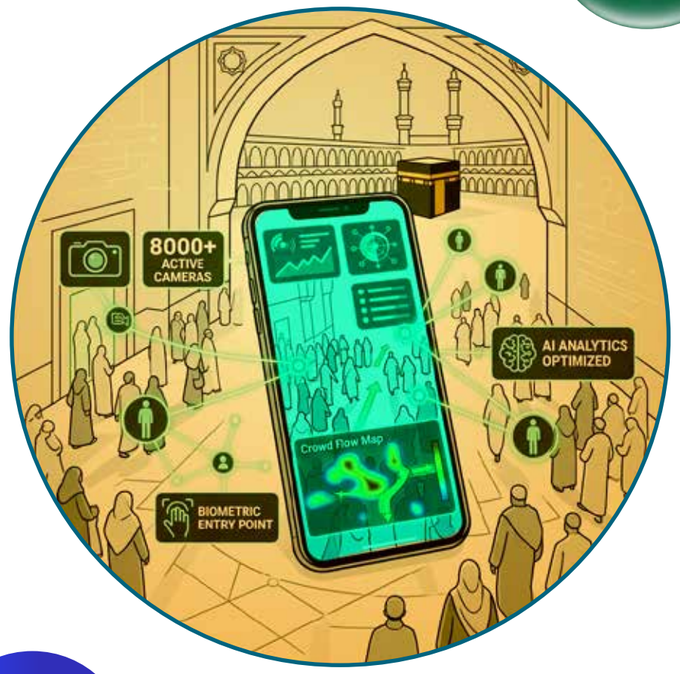
Moreover, beyond operational efficiency, smart border technologies are enabling greater coordination across national tourism agencies, airlines, and other hospitality stakeholders, fostering a more integrated travel ecosystem. This connectivity reinforces a seamless end-to-end travel experience. As destinations continue to shift to digital visas and automated clearance systems, border control is increasingly evolving, shaping destinations' first impressions and setting the tone for the overall visitor experience.

From Entry Point to Seamless Gateway Experience

As systems become more interconnected, there is growing potential to link immigration processes with downstream services such as transportation, accommodation check-ins, and even personalized travel recommendations. Destinations that leverage this integration can transform border control from a procedural step into a strategic gateway that enhances flow, personalization, and overall travel confidence.

Border readiness is the definitive starting point for a destination's Access baseline. Optimizing entry points through automated trust checkpoints directly supports the Assured experience engine of the RIDA framework, ensuring that a traveler's very first physical touchpoint with a destination establishes a foundation of total safety and structural efficiency.

Saudi Arabia leverages AI-powered crowd management for pilgrims, supported by 8000+ real-time monitoring systems and biometric-enabled entry points.*



74% **of travelers say they would be willing to share their biometric information if it means they can skip showing a passport or boarding pass at checkpoints.****

*Saudi Data and AI Agency
**IATA

Immersive Utility & Live Language Automation: Driving Down Contextual Friction

In the current global landscape, immersive technologies and advanced language tools have undergone a permanent structural pivot. They have transitioned from experimental marketing gimmicks into critical, high-yield functional infrastructure. Rather than relying on static promotional text, modern destinations deploy mobile Augmented Reality (AR), Virtual Reality (VR), and real-time AI translation as active trust frameworks. These systems remove critical booking hesitation by providing visual proof before travel, while systematically eliminating on-the-ground communication barriers during transit.

70% of travelers report that virtual experiences influence decisions*

Visual Pre-Validation & Immersive Utility

Upstream Booking Validation: Virtual experiences directly influence the final destination decisions of 70% of global travelers. WebAR allows travelers to digitally inspect hotel properties, transit layout designs, and specialized lifestyle facilities before any capital is committed.

Eliminating Spatial Uncertainty: For values-driven demographics, this real-time validation is indispensable. It allows consumers to visually verify room orientations, privacy parameters, and accessible amenities upfront—effectively closing the early discovery conversion loop.

Intuitive Wayfinding Infrastructures: On-site AR has evolved into a vital tool for space navigation. This is demonstrated by major transit hubs, such as Türkiye iGA Istanbul Airport, which utilizes interactive AR data overlays to seamlessly guide international passengers through commercial and transit pathways.

Cognitive Automation via Real-Time Translation

Subsecond Speech Automation: Real-time translation has graduated from clumsy text-input typing into advanced, end-to-end speech-to-speech (S2ST) models. Operating with sub-second latencies and natural voice preservation, these AI tools allow fluid, multi-lingual conversational interactions.

Multimodal Visual Overlays: By combining smartphone cameras with generative vision models, travelers can instantly project localized real-time translation text onto physical menus, street infrastructure, and regulatory signage. This instantly defuses destination anxiety and reduces on-the-ground cognitive strain.

Lowering Mobility Barriers: This language automation serves as a primary tool for destination inclusivity. Culturally sensitive translation AI captures regional nuances and local idioms, instantly boosting travel confidence across historically hesitant or less-experienced demographics.

Integrating visual validation and conversational tools executes the Digital and Assured parameters of the RIDA engine. By transforming unverified destination claims into live, context-aware utility, operators mitigate traveler vulnerability, unlock massive operational efficiencies, and directly drive higher tourism engagement.

*Booking.com

OIC Destinations: Advancing Muslim-Friendly Travel Through Technology

TÜRKIYE

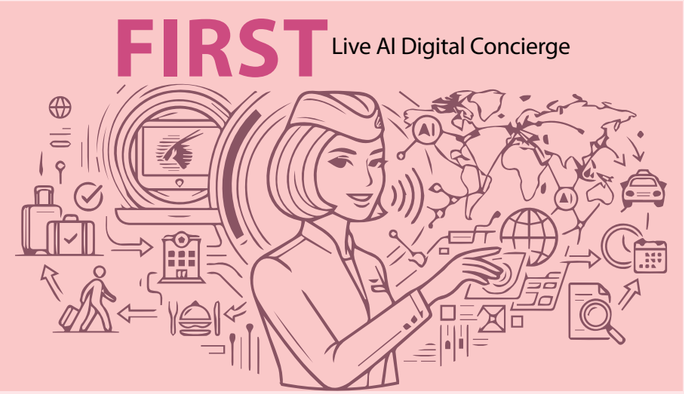
iGA Istanbul Airport has utilized CİGA, an Augmented Reality (AR) character to solve the primary logistical bottleneck by offloading 40% of standard wayfinding inquiries to this AR assistant. CİGA acts as a live assistant, smoothing passenger flow through real-time, visual navigation cues.

This demonstrates how immersive technology can move beyond engagement into tangible operational impact. By reducing reliance on human staff for routine inquiries, AR not only improves efficiency but also enhances each traveler's touchpoint, an important factor in reducing stress and confusion in high-traffic environments such as airports.

QATAR

Qatar Airways has successfully implemented AI in making the world's first live digital concierge through Sama 2.0. Aside from acting as an AI agent tailored for seamless journeys, Sama also has her own dedicated Instagram account: @SamaOnTheMove, leveraging technological advancement for marketing purposes.

Sama 2.0 reflects a shift where AI is not only a service tool but also a brand interface. By extending the AI concierge into social media, Qatar Airways blurs the line between customer support and engagement, creating a continuous relationship with travelers across both functional and inspirational touchpoints.



INDONESIA

The Ministry of Tourism of The Republic of Indonesia has officially announced the introduction of MaiA (Meticulous Artificial Intelligence of Indonesia), an AI-powered digital companion curated for tourists in trip itineraries. MaiA can be accessed on the Indonesia.Travel website. MaiA also comes with the chatbox feature which facilitates highly-personalized itineraries.

MaiA signals a strategic move toward centralized, government-led digital ecosystems. By embedding AI within the official tourism platform, Indonesia is positioning itself to better control information quality, enhance personalization, and ensure that Muslim-friendly offerings are more visible and accessible within the early stages of travel planning.

Non-OIC Destinations: Driving Innovation in Smart Tourism Ecosystems

CHINA

China has recently launched a palm payment method through Tencent Holdings, enabling metro passengers in Beijing to pay for rides by scanning their palms via WeChat Pay. This initiative leverages advanced biometric technology, including palm prints and vein recognition, to streamline transit access and improve convenience, especially for elderly users and individuals with disabilities.

This reflects a broader shift toward invisible payments and zero-friction mobility, where transactions are embedded seamlessly into movement. For travelers, especially in unfamiliar destinations, reducing transactional steps enhances confidence and accessibility. Such systems also signal a future where physical wallets, tickets, and even smartphones may become secondary in high-tech travel environments.

SINGAPORE

In August 2025, the government of Singapore introduced advanced agentic AI initiatives by integrating Google Gemini within a secure Google Distributed Cloud environment. This enables public sector systems to launch autonomous AI agents while still safeguarding sensitive data. For tourism industry, this means faster service and a more personalized tourist experiences.

Moreover, Travel DMC Group in Singapore has introduced a Tours & Transfers API through its in-house transport company, allowing real-time bookings and instant confirmations on platforms such as GetYourGuide and Klook, making operations more efficient and simplifying access for both travel agents and local drivers.

SPAIN

In 2024, the Spanish city of Valencia was awarded the European Capital of Smart Tourism title, recognising its strong use of digital technologies in managing tourism. The city applies a data-driven approach, using sensors and centralised dashboards to monitor crowd levels, mobility, and environmental impact in real time, allowing authorities to respond quickly to tourism pressures.

These technologies also support a more sustainable and balanced tourism system. Digital tools help redistribute visitor flows, improve transport efficiency, and enhance the overall tourist experience, while also integrating community feedback into planning. This demonstrates how technology can play a key role in aligning tourism growth with environmental sustainability and local well-being.

Algorithmic Optimization: Bridging the Digital Visibility Disconnect (AIRA)

While establishing a robust on-ground Halal ecosystem remains a critical baseline, securing market share in today's landscape demands a transition from static physical availability to live algorithmic visibility. As global travel discovery increasingly shifts to agentic AI frameworks, with 80% of modern travelers actively utilizing AI tools to delegate decision-making, an unoptimized digital footprint will leave faith-compatible assets completely invisible to automated itinerary planners. Natively suggestive, context-aware digital data architectures are the new baseline required to unlock market capture.

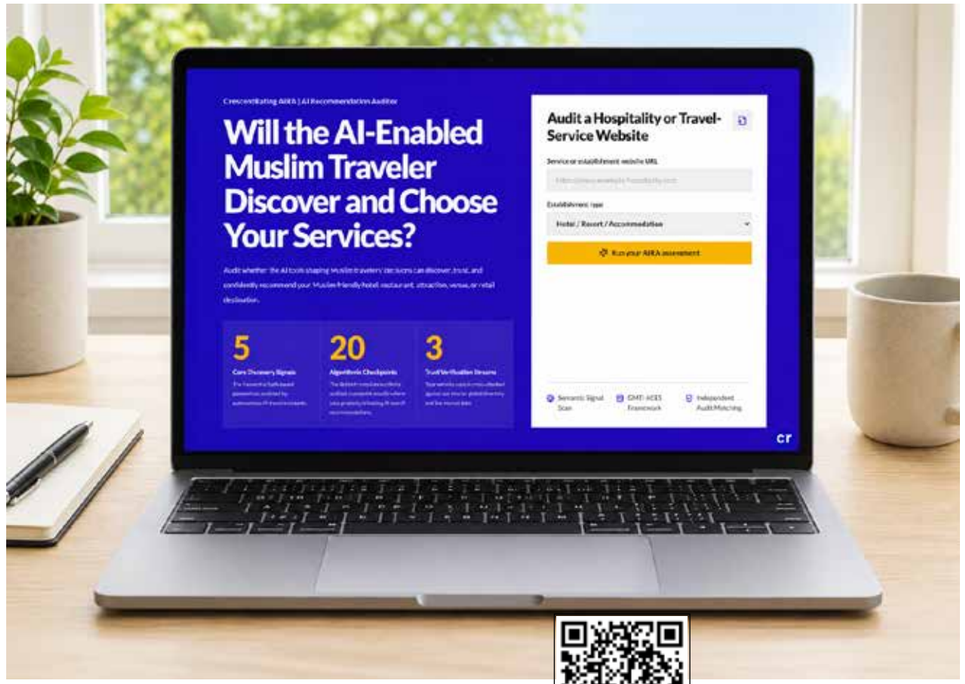
To bridge this visibility gap, CrescentRating has developed the AI Recommendation Readiness Auditor (AIRA), a specialized diagnostic engine designed to transition destinations from experimental technology trials into highly visible, machine-readable ecosystems. AIRA systematically audits destination platforms across 20 critical algorithmic checkpoints to ensure that AI agents can seamlessly crawl, verify, and confidently recommend your services at the crucial decision-making moments of the traveler journey.

The Audit Workflow & Diagnostic Vectors

Stakeholders simply input their establishment's first-party website URL into the platform. AIRA instantly runs an automated scan across 20 algorithmic checkpoints, benchmarking data against authoritative global registries:

The diagnostic engine evaluates your footprint across five independent alignment vectors to compute a final Combined Recommendation Readiness Index out of 100:

- **Discovery Readiness:** Measures how easily semantic AI systems can locate your explicit faith-based assets.
- **Recommendation Readiness:** Assesses an AI planner's confidence level when processing your amenity details.
- **Optimization Readiness:** Tracks how close your digital evidence is to a machine-readable recommendation profile.
- **Trust & Verification:** Corroborates your website copy against CrescentRating's master global directory.
- **External AI Visibility:** Confirms your discoverability footprint across authoritative off-site ecosystems.



Scan the QR code to access the website.

05 MUSLIM DEMOGRAPHICS AND MARKET

Generational Horizon 2026–2036: Mapping Global Scale and Youth Trajectories

Median Age	25 years	31 years	33 years	27 years
Population above 60 years	9%	2.4%	3.2%	11%
Population between 40 & 60 years	20%	5.3%	6.1%	21%
Population under 40 years	71%	19.1%	19.5%	68%
Population	2.22 Billion	26.8%	28.8%	2.57 Billion
	2026 Muslim Population			2036 Muslim Population

Capitalizing on the Youth Dividend

With a median age of just 25–27 years, approximately 70% of the global Muslim population is under the age of 40. For destinations, this means the primary consumer engine is now entirely composed of digital natives. Marketing to this audience requires shifting away from legacy, analog travel packages toward hyper-personalized, algorithm-ready, and mobile-first discovery ecosystems.

Shifting from Niche to Scale:

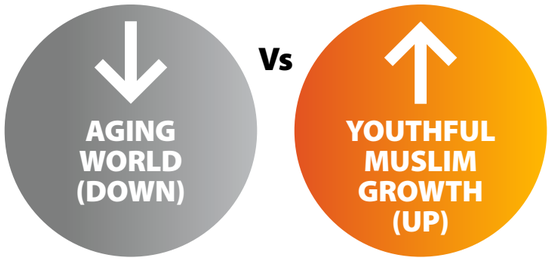
The demographic is scaling rapidly from 2.22 billion to 2.57 billion by 2036, ultimately representing nearly 29% of the total world population. This immense macro scale means that integrating faith-compatible services, such as clear Halal culinary verification and accessible prayer spaces, is no longer a localized niche strategy. It has become a foundational baseline required to secure high-volume global travel market share.

Engineering for Multi-Generational Cohorts

While the market remains young, the mature tiers (ages 40 and above) are expanding steadily and will command a 32% share by 2036. Because family and collective community travel are central to this demographic, destinations must design inclusive on-the-ground infrastructure that seamlessly supports large, high-spending, multi-generational family groups traveling together.

Age Dynamics: The Great Demographics Divergence

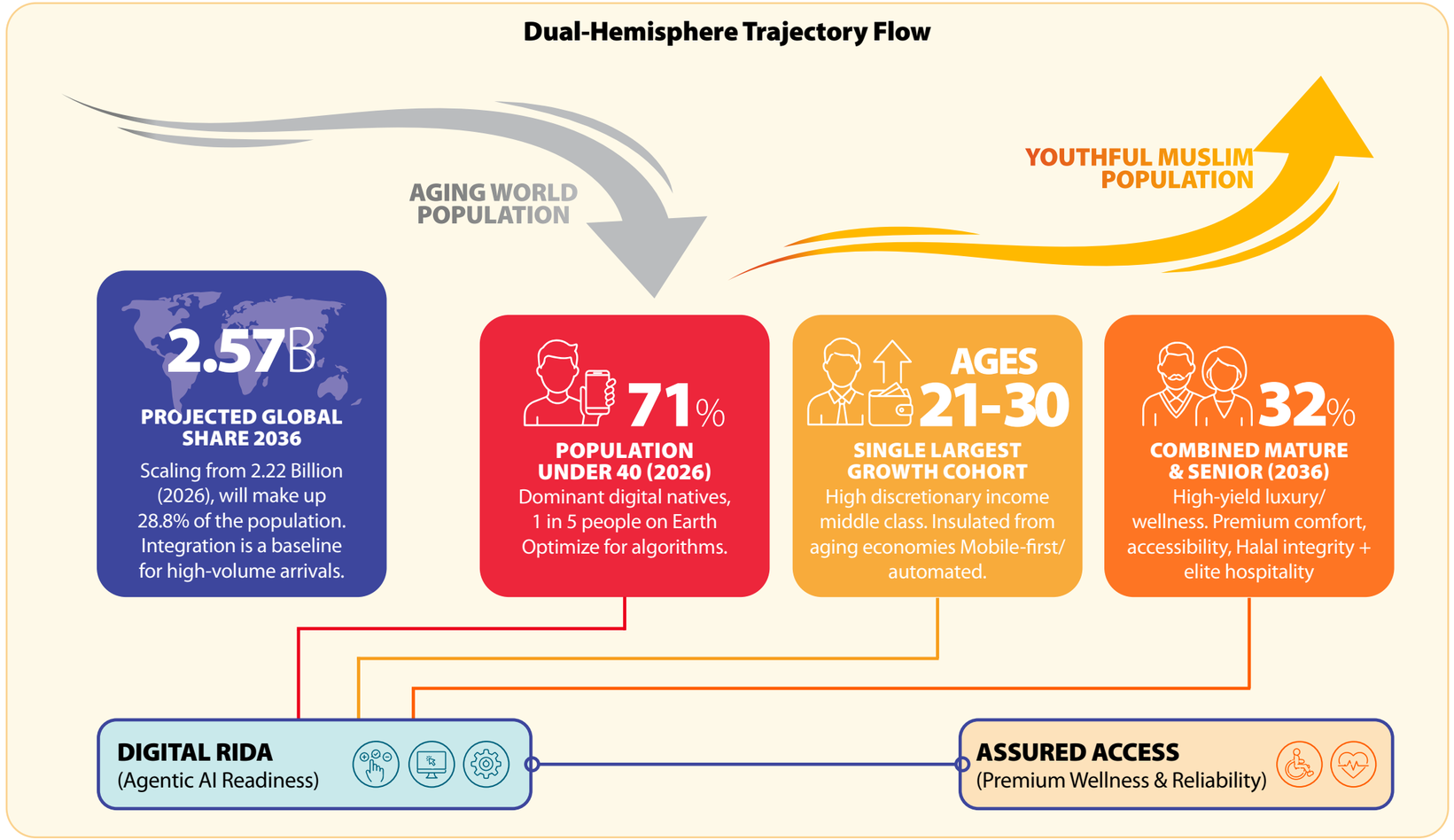
Age Dynamic Contrasting structural aging with a continuous, youth-driven Muslim economy, from 2.22B to 2.57B (2036). Multi-generational, simultaneous growth.



To capture both hemispheres of this demographic divergence, destinations must execute a two-speed marketing and infrastructure strategy:

High-Tech for Youth: Optimize digital footprints for AI agents, LLM discovery, and mobile-first frictionless payments to capture the under-40 market.

High-Touch for Silver: Invest heavily in universal accessibility, certified wellness services, and transparent faith-compliance to secure high-yield senior loyalty.



A two-pronged execution: Capture digitized youth (21-30) via Digital vectors of RIDA. Engage high-yield Silver (51+) via Assured dimension, delivering premium wellness, access, and visible safety to secure loyalty.

Accelerating Past Forecasts: Quantifying the Momentum of Sustained Global Growth

Actual Sustained Growth

In 2025, the market demonstrated resilient growth, with international Muslim arrivals reaching 196 MILLION. This robust performance, reflecting a solid 11.3% YoY increase, solidifies recovery momentum and proves the sector's continued expansion beyond previous forecasts.

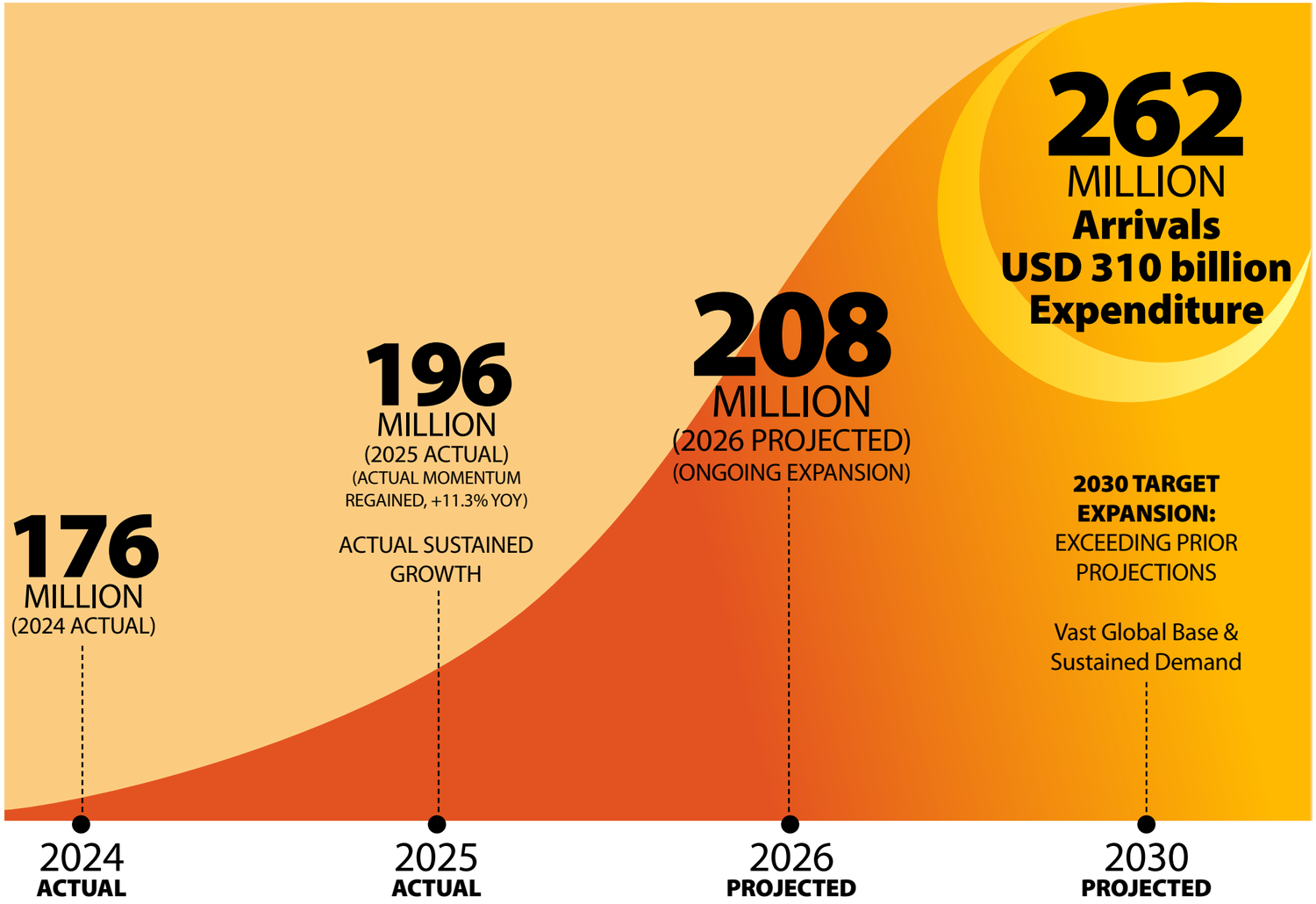
Key Catalysts Driving Market Growth:

Young Native Muslim Travelers: This highly connected and high-growth segment is now the primary driver of global digital demand.

Technological Innovation Enhancing Travel Experiences: Advances in Artificial Intelligence (AI) are making travel more accessible and personalized for Muslim travelers..

Future Outlook:

Looking ahead, the market outlook is extremely positive. Revised and exceeded projections estimate that Muslim international arrivals will scale to 262 Million by 2030, reflecting a vast, expanding global base and sustained high demand. With an estimated annual expenditure of USD 310 billion, the sector's economic contribution will be further elevated.



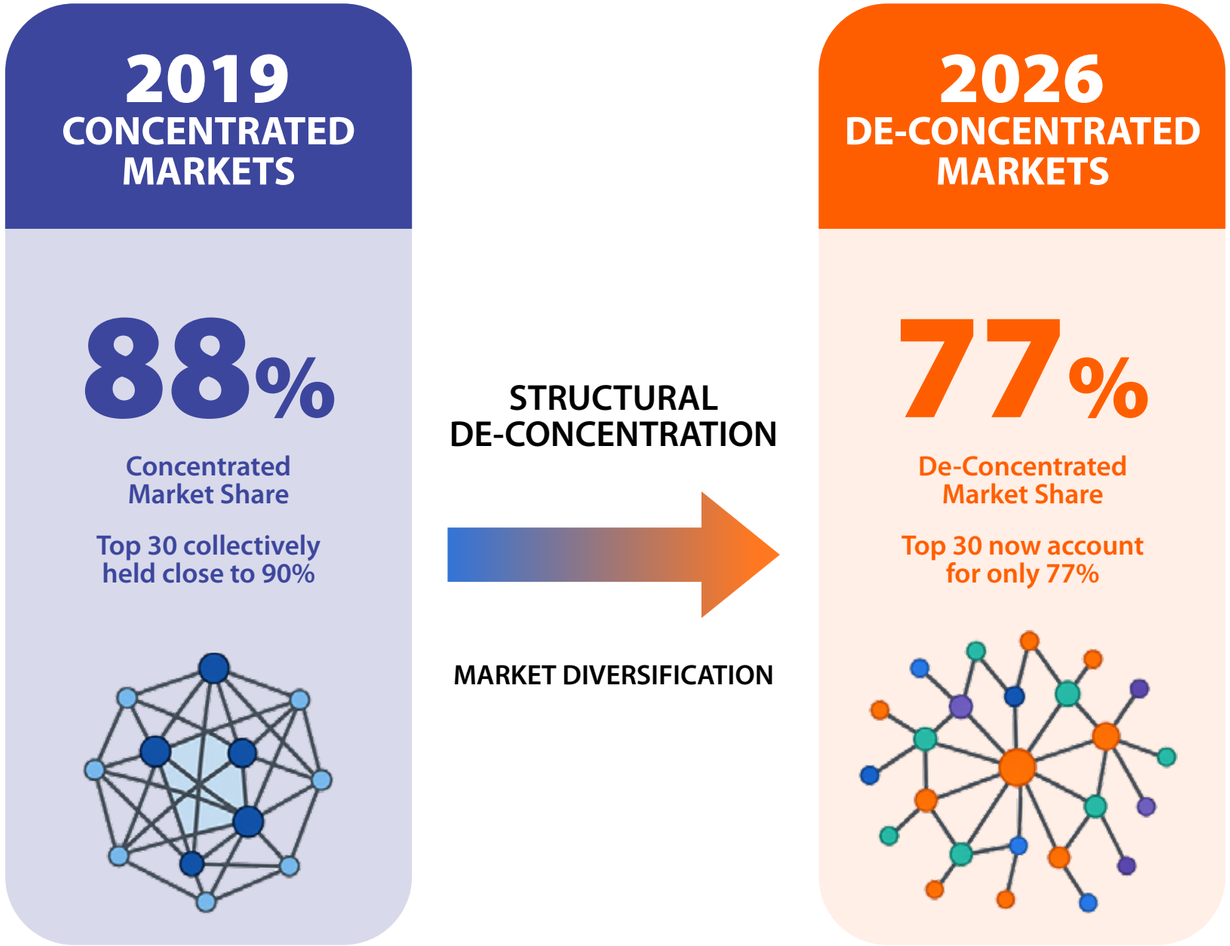
Muslim Outbound Market Architecture: The Structural De-Concentration of Global Travel Flows

Earlier editions of the Global Muslim Travel Index (GMTI) highlighted the concentration of Muslim outbound travel within a relatively small group of dominant source markets. In previous years, the Top 30 outbound markets collectively represented close to 90% of the global Muslim outbound travel economy, reflecting a market landscape heavily driven by several established OIC and non-OIC economies.

GMTI 2026 reveals a significant evolution in this structure. The Top 30 outbound markets now account for only 77% of the total Muslim outbound market, indicating that outbound travel demand is becoming increasingly diversified across a wider range of countries and regions. While traditional powerhouse markets such as Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Indonesia, Türkiye, and Malaysia continue to play a leading role, a growing number of emerging economies and diaspora-driven markets are contributing more to global Muslim travel flows.

Improved visa accessibility, enhanced air connectivity, digital travel platforms, and wider availability of Muslim-friendly tourism services are lowering barriers to travel participation. Muslim diaspora communities across Europe, North America, and East Asia are visible contributors to outbound expenditure and travel demand. The findings demonstrate that the Muslim travel market is evolving into a broader and more globally distributed ecosystem, shaped by diverse traveler profiles, economic tiers, and travel motivations. This shift has important implications for destinations and industry stakeholders. Destinations must increasingly understand and cater to a wider spectrum of Muslim traveler segments with varying needs, spending patterns, and expectations.

As the Muslim travel market continues its long-term growth trajectory toward 2030, its future will be shaped by the rapid emergence of new and increasingly influential source markets across the globe.



The Top Outbound Engines: Balancing Economic Tiers against Demographic Scale

The Top OIC Outbound Markets - Represent 64% of the Muslim Outbound Market

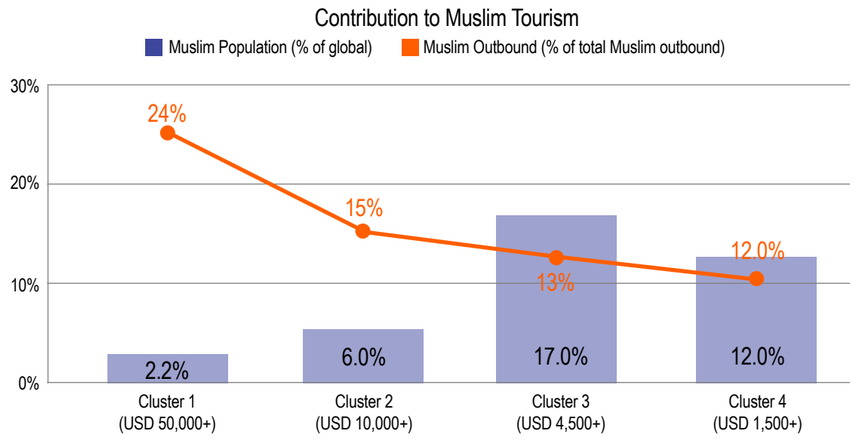
GDP Per Capita (USD)

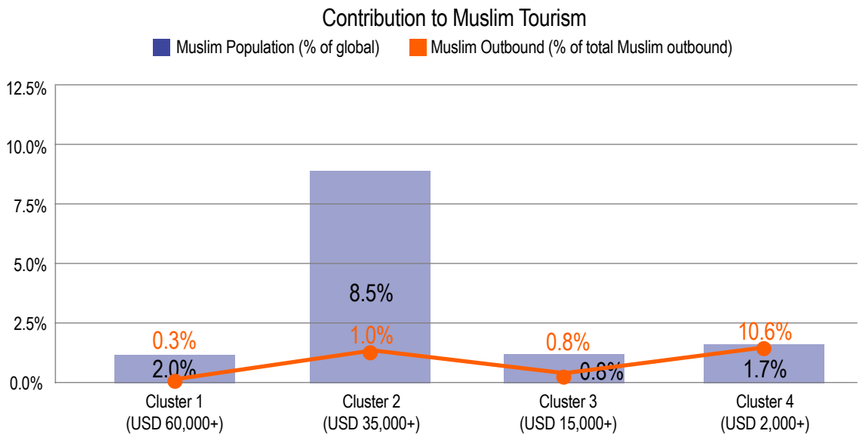
1,500	Iran Uzbekistan Egypt Kyrgyzstan Tajikistan
4,500	Azerbaijan Algeria Indonesia Jordan Tunisia Morocco
10,000	Oman Türkiye Kazakhstan Malaysia Albania
25,000	Qatar United Arab Emirates Saudi Arabia Kuwait Bahrain

The Top Non-OIC Outbound Markets - Represent 13% of the Muslim Outbound Market

GDP Per Capita (USD)

2,000	India
15,000	Russia
35,000	Germany United Kingdom France Italy
60,000	Singapore United States of America Netherlands





This provides an overview of key Muslim global populations and outbound travel markets, charting the relationship between a destination's economic tier and its market contribution. This illustrates the concentrated spending power of high-GDP nations found in Cluster 1 (such as Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Qatar), which have a dominant share of the outbound market despite smaller populations. It also highlights the high-volume contribution of mid-to-lower GDP tiers, where populous nations such as Indonesia (OIC Cluster 3) and India (Non-OIC Cluster 4) drive strong outbound shares.

Regional comparison: The geopolitical shift in tourism center of gravity

ASIA'S INFRASTRUCTURE MONOPOLY:

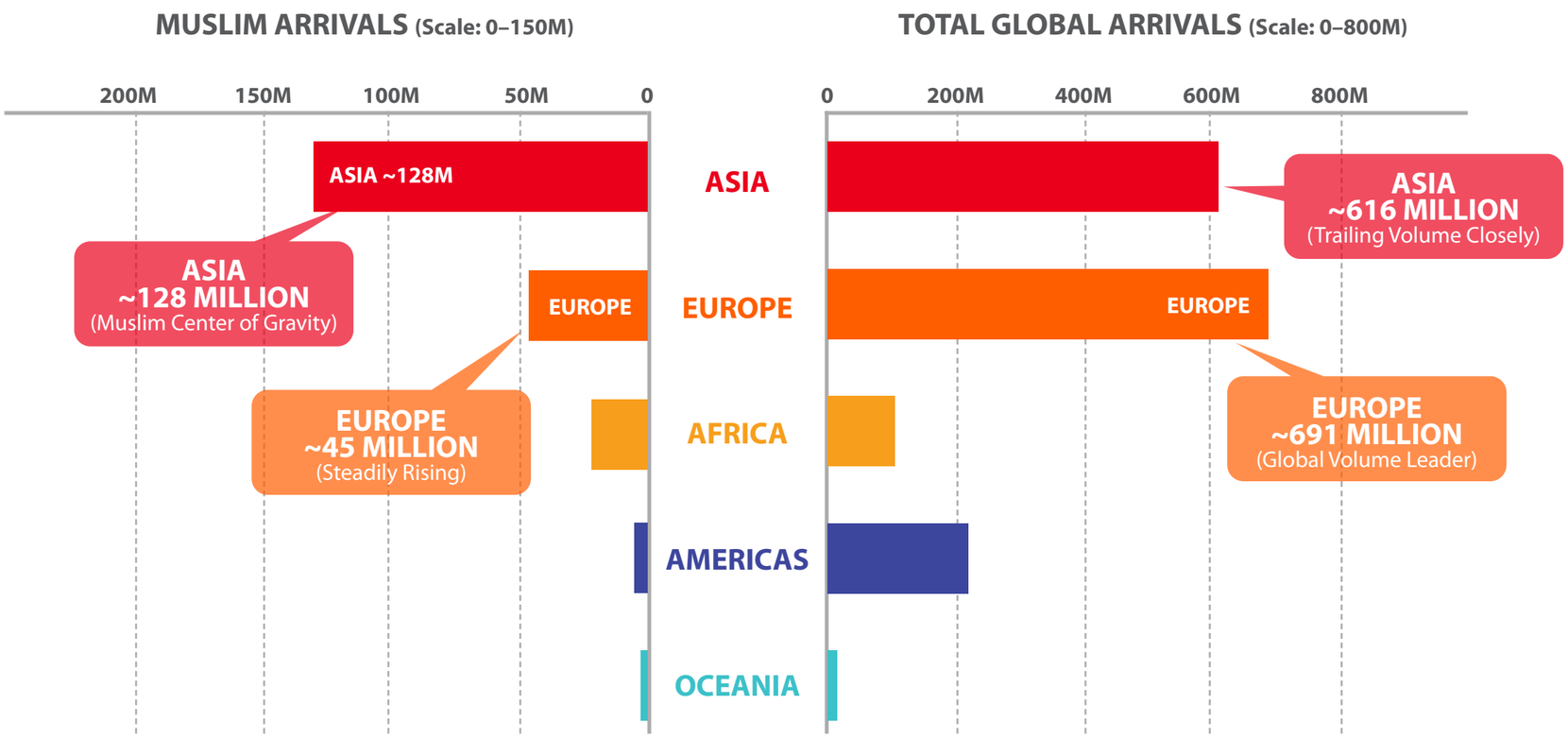
Nearly 128 Million Muslim arrivals (2025), a massive 20.8% market penetration. Anchored by deep regional corridors and pervasive faith ecosystems

EUROPE'S UNTAPPED VOLUME:

Over overwhelming 691 Million global arrivals, but only 45 Million are Muslim travelers (minor 6.5% share). High-yield growth vector via visible inclusivity metrics

THE AMERICAS ECOSYSTEM FRICTION:

Experienced subtle dip in arrivals. Operational warning: lack of transparent digital visibility stalls conversion



Strategic Alignment: Unlocking Regional Potential

Asia's footprint validates maximizing the **ACES Infrastructure Model.** Western volume gaps highlight failure to upfront proof via the **TRUST Catalyst;** without digital visibility, destinations become invisible to automated AI search agents.

06 MACRO-ECOSYSTEM RESILIENCE & SCENARIO PLANNING

Scenario Planning: Stress-Testing the Global Travel Matrix

Persistent geopolitical tension across critical transit hubs instantly ripples through energy networks, inflates basic consumer costs, and alters international consumer confidence. This section stress-tests the global travel landscape against an adaptive, multi-quadrant matrix. By mapping the volatile intersections of macro-economic performance and geopolitical stability, industry stakeholders can plan their operations against unpredictable external shocks.

The Energy & Transit Catalyst

Chokepoint Vulnerability: Escalating security activities and regional frictions across the Middle East have triggered severe logistical complications, manifesting in immediate supply chain disruptions and acute international shipping delays.

The Strait of Hormuz Shock: As a primary maritime choke point handling approximately 20% of global oil shipments, any structural blockade or severe traffic threat in this corridor instantly destabilizes energy markets and global distribution channels.

Discretionary Budget Contraction: With oil prices sustained at a $100+ per barrel baseline, fuel and commodity prices have surged relative to pre-conflict levels. This directly impacts traveler psychographics, forcing individuals to aggressively prioritize basic daily necessities and scale back their leisure travel budgets.

A Flexible Framework for Strategic Horizon Mapping

As a flexible approach to scenario planning, this matrix maps macro-economic performance against geopolitical friction. It offers tourism stakeholders one practical method to build operational agility, adapt infrastructure, and protect traveler trust amid shifting global dynamics.

	Geopolitical Climate **Stabilized**	Geopolitical Climate **High Volatility**
Macroeconomic Performance **Expansion**	SCENARIO - A **Return to Growth** Defined by strong economic performance and high geopolitical stability. This represents the ideal growth horizon where outbound travel confidence and luxury leisure spending flourish seamlessly.	SCENARIO - B **Volatile Corridors** Characterized by robust economic growth undercut by sharp geopolitical instability. A fluid landscape where border access parameters, visa rules, and safety advisories shift rapidly, forcing sudden re-routing of traditional travel flows.
Macroeconomic Performance **Stagnation**	SCENARIO - C **Fragile Peace** Marked by weak economic performance balanced against strong geopolitical stability. Outbound flows continue but contract heavily into conservative, hyper-value-driven, and shorter regional journeys.	SCENARIO - D **Perfect Storm** The severe convergence of a broad economic recession and deep geopolitical conflict. Consumer demand retreats sharply toward hyper-safe, localized domestic baselines and trusted, politically insulated destinations.

Scenarios A & C: Navigating the Stabilized Geopolitical Horizon

When the global geopolitical climate shifts toward a stabilized and secure baseline, physical international mobility constraints ease, opening up traditional flight paths and re-establishing cross-border transit predictability. However, the commercial trajectory of this horizon splits depending on macroeconomic performance. Destinations must prepare for a dual-speed consumer market: a high-yield arrival surge driven by robust economic expansion (Scenario A) versus a highly conservative, value-driven market shaped by persistent inflation and structural budget contractions (Scenario C).

Scenario A — Return to Growth (Robust Expansion)

The Subsidized Macro Engine: Currency stabilization, targeted government subsidies, and falling outbound transit costs trigger a robust economic expansion across Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) economies.

The First-Mover Source Markets: Powered by a rapid return of consumer confidence, key powerhouse source markets, most notably Indonesia, Malaysia, and Türkiye, will regain high discretionary spending capacity, resulting in a surge of outbound travel.

Phased Phasing of Travel Demands: Outbound travel patterns scale out in highly predictable, structured waves:

Short-Term: Direct concentration within ultra-safe, high-accessibility intra-continental corridors (Southeast Asia, East Asia, and established intra-European routes).

Mid-Term: Accelerated tourist interest moving toward proximity Islamic heritage hubs, such as Central Asia.

Long-Term: A total, unconstrained growth of global travel flows, marked by a powerful renewed demand for primary Middle Eastern hubs.

Scenario C — Fragile Peace (Stagnation/Contraction)

The Inflationary Squeeze: While regional connectivity and destination investments show a cautious, gradual return, broader macroeconomic performance remains heavily suppressed by sticky global inflation and elevated operational costs.

Selective High-Yield Demographics: The affluent Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) market remains structurally resilient but becomes intensely selective, forcing broader traveler demographics to contract their budgets and shift decisively toward shorter, more affordable regional trips.

The Pivot to Purpose and Community: To maximize value under severe budget constraints, travelers could lean heavily into purpose-led, culture-first itineraries that prioritize deep community connections, localized Islamic heritage, and family-centric activities.

Capturing Alternative Market Volatility: Traditional expensive hubs lose volume to emerging, alternative, and developing destinations (such as parts of Africa and alternative Asian hubs) that can successfully project high Halal awareness and affordable, short-stay community packages.

Scenarios B & D: Managing High-Volatility Corridor Disruptions

When the global geopolitical climate moves into a phase of acute volatility and friction, physical transit infrastructure faces immediate, systemic operational constraints. Airspace closures, unpredictable border restrictions, and sudden adjustments to travel advisories rewrite typical booking timelines, forcing international passenger traffic to constantly adapt and re-route. The strategic posture of destinations under this horizon depends directly on prevailing macroeconomic performance, requiring operators to manage fluid, high-spend rerouting patterns under expansion (Scenario B) or insulate against severe travel avoidance during a compounding global contraction (Scenario D).

Scenario B — Volatile Corridors (Robust Expansion)

The Velocity of Policy Shifts: Even though global consumer capital remains strong and outbound investment continues, the travel landscape is heavily fragmented by sudden changes in visa access, strict border permissions, and shifting safe corridors.

Hyper-Adaptive Traveler Psychographics: Rather than canceling trips completely, Muslim travelers become highly adaptive. They proactively adjust their itineraries mid-cycle, diverting capital away from traditional flashpoints toward destinations perceived as structurally stable and geographically isolated from regional friction.

The Surge into Safe Haven Clusters: Outbound flows see sudden, concentrated spikes into alternative premium markets. Destinations such as Japan, Hong Kong, South Korea, Uzbekistan, and Bosnia and Herzegovina witness significant inbound traffic increases due to their strong security records, improving accessibility, and rapidly expanding Halal infrastructure.

The Operational Priority: Success in this quadrant requires massive data agility. Destinations must be capable of communicating live changes in accessibility and infrastructure readiness in real time to capture fluid, displaced traveler traffic.

Scenario D — Perfect Storm (Stagnation/Contraction)

The Double-Squeeze Deterioration: Global tourism conditions face severe downward pressure under the combined weight of a prolonged international conflict and a deep economic recession.

Systemic Real Income Reductions: Persistent supply chain disruptions paired with surging fuel prices drastically inflate baseline aviation costs, draining middle-class discretionary capital and driving widespread, sustained travel avoidance.

The Retreat to Localized Baselines: Consumer behavior pivots sharply toward defensive, value-driven, and safety-assured travel. Outbound long-haul tourism collapses as families aggressively prioritize domestic staycations and hyper-localized, short-haul regional options.

Strategic Alternative Captures: The very little international traffic that remains active concentrates exclusively in emerging, affordable destinations that can offer absolute, verified safety alongside budget-friendly, culture-first community hospitality.

Geopolitical Tension's Spillover: The Shift to Home-Continent Mobility

The intersection of localized regional instability and escalating macroeconomic pressures creates a compounding "proximity risk" that alters outbound flight behaviors. Combined with rising fuel costs that heavily inflate long-haul airfares, international travelers are structurally adjusting their itineraries. The result is a defining market realignment: a strategic pivot toward "home-continent" corridors, where consumers trade unpredictable cross-continental transit for predictability, safety, and regional cost-efficiency.

The Proximity Pivot & Airspace Realities

The Home-Continent Mandate: As long-haul financial and security burdens grow, regional corridors have become the primary choice for travel planning. Travelers are intentionally keeping their journeys closer to home to guarantee personal predictability.

The High-Yield Asian Redistribution: For Asian Muslims, this shift has firmly established Eastern and South-Eastern Asia as the preferred corridors for stability. Driven by low regional transit costs and a dense baseline of established Halal ecosystems, destinations such as Japan, Malaysia, China, and South Korea are capturing displaced traffic.

The Mediterranean Safe Havens: Concurrently, European Muslims are bypassing volatile airspaces altogether. Outbound flows are concentrated safely within Southern Europe, with Spain, and Bosnia and Herzegovina emerging as top choices due to their strong safety records and rich Islamic heritage sites.

The 2025 vs. 2026 Subregional Realities

An empirical analysis of the March 2026 Muslim Travel Intent Tracker (MTIT) data confirms a re-alignment in the top outbound destination corridors, proving that market share is rapidly transitioning toward stable, low-friction subregions.

The 2025 Outbound Baseline: Historical data positioned Western Asia as the absolute dominant corridor (anchored by high-yield hubs such as Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Türkiye, Kuwait, and Bahrain) commanding 73 Million arrivals, followed sequentially by Central Asia (17 Million) and Southern Europe (16 Million).

The 2026 Structural Realignment: In response to proximity risks, South-Eastern Asia is moving forward to claim the top operational spot for inbound stability. While core historical destinations maintain baseline pull, they face seasonal adjustments as travelers hedge against regional volatility by diversifying into alternative, high-safety clusters.

2025 Top Subregions for Muslim Travelers		2026 Top Subregions for Muslim Travelers*
WESTERN ASIA	73 Million	SOUTH-EASTERN ASIA
CENTRAL ASIA	17 Million	CENTRAL ASIA
SOUTHERN EUROPE	16 Million	SOUTHERN EUROPE

*CrescentRating data

Top mentions from MTIT, excluding Saudi Arabia

MTIT Insights: Activating Predictive Demand and Leading Indicators for Volatile Markets

In a rapidly shifting global travel landscape marked by macroeconomic pressures and geopolitical volatility, historical arrivals data is insufficient for agile planning. The newly revamped Muslim Travel Intent Tracker (MTIT) shifts the industry paradigm from retrospective analysis to proactive forecasting. By evaluating consumer willingness and readiness to travel within critical forward-looking windows, MTIT equips stakeholders with predictive capabilities to anticipate market movements before they materialize.

A. Timing Shifts & Velocity Thresholds

The Insight: MTIT segments travel intent into distinct forward-looking windows: Short-Term (1-3 months), Mid-Term (4-6 months), and Long-Term (7-12 months).

Strategic Value: Tracking variance across these distinct phases reveals consumer velocity. It explicitly signals whether global disruptions are forcing travelers to advance, delay, or cancel their itineraries entirely, giving revenue teams a clear horizon look.

B. Dynamic Destination Signals & Safety Re-Route

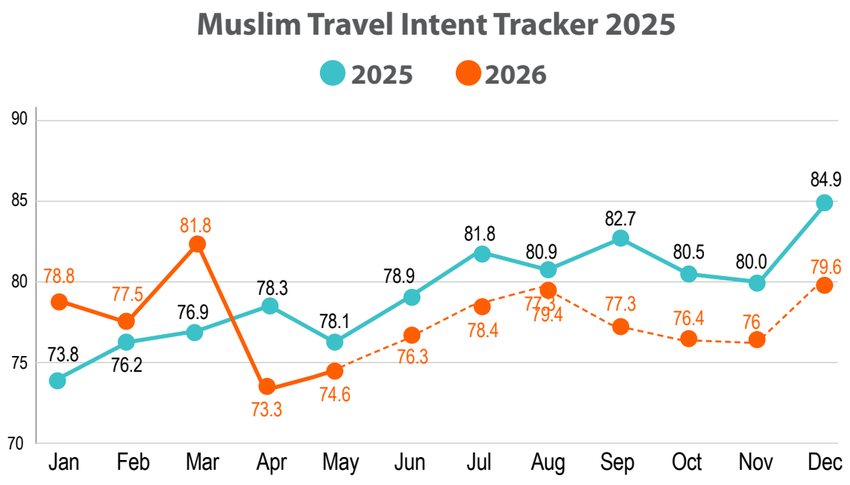
The Insight: Real-time visibility into fluctuating demand vectors across both OIC and non-OIC markets.

Strategic Value: When supply chain or security situations evolve, traveler behavior changes instantly. Destination signals expose early-stage migration patterns where faith-based segments are shifting bookings away from volatile zones toward destinations perceived as safer or more stable.

C. Faith-Based Calendar Contextualization

The Insight: Natively maps key Islamic calendar variations, including the annual 10-to-11-day regression of Ramadan, Eid-ul-Fitr, Eid-ul-Adha, and the seasonal restrictions of the Hajj corridor.

Strategic Value: Generic global travel intelligence tools overlook these faith-based calendar shifts. MTIT eliminates these data blind spots, demonstrating how religious observances compress or expand outbound travel windows—particularly within high-spending regions such as the GCC.



07 GMTI 2026 OVERVIEW

ACES Framework: The foundational DNA of the Global Muslim Travel Index (GMTI)

The CrescentRating ACES model, established in 2017, evaluates destinations' Muslim-friendliness in four areas. Since its introduction in 2017, the ACES framework has firmly established itself as the foundational DNA of the Global Muslim Travel Index (GMTI). Serving as the essential backbone of the assessment methodology, ACES continues to guide the analysis, ensuring that destinations comprehensively cater to the specific needs of Muslim travelers. Consistent adaptation and refinement of this model ensures that GMTI remains at the forefront of identifying destinations that provide exceptional Muslim-friendly experiences, grounded in clear, quantifiable standards.

Access : Ease of access to the destination.

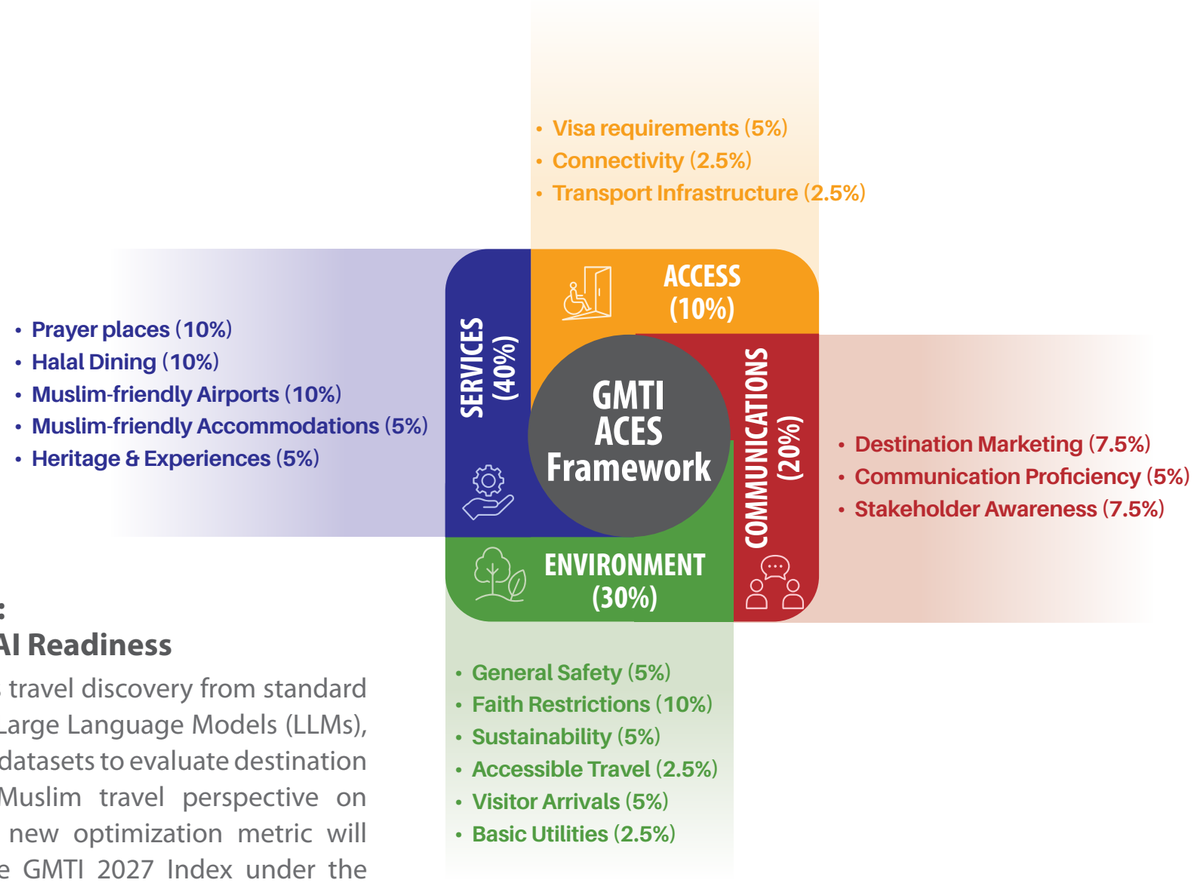
Communication : Internal and external communication by the destination, facilitating travelers' planning and navigation.

Environment : The overall atmosphere and setting of the destination.

Services : The range of services provided by the destination to cater to the needs of Muslim travelers.

Each of these four key areas is assessed using quantitative measurements across several criteria, and each criterion score is derived using several subcriteria. More than 60 data sets are used to compile the GMTI scores based on the ACES 3.0 model.

Framework Evolution: Since 2017, the criteria and subcriteria have evolved to keep pace with the development of the Muslim travel market, taking into account overall trends in the travel and lifestyle space.



Future Outlook: LLM & Agentic AI Readiness

As agentic AI shifts travel discovery from standard search engines to Large Language Models (LLMs), we are developing datasets to evaluate destination visibility from a Muslim travel perspective on AI platforms. This new optimization metric will be included in the GMTI 2027 Index under the Communications pillar.

ACES Criteria Overview - Access & Communication

ACCESS

The Access criteria evaluate the accessibility of a destination from the top 30 Muslim travel outbound markets. This includes:

Connectivity:

Air Connectivity: Assesses the availability, frequency, and convenience of direct flight connections between the destination and major Muslim outbound markets.

Distance: Considers geographical proximity, as shorter travel distances generally contribute to greater convenience and accessibility.

Land Connectivity: Evaluates cross-border land access and transportation links with key Muslim outbound markets, where direct land connections can facilitate smoother travel experiences.

Visa Requirements:

Examines the ease of entry through visa policies, including visa-free access, e-visas, visa-on-arrival options, and other traveler-friendly entry procedures.

Transport Infrastructure:

Assesses the quality, efficiency, and accessibility of transportation systems within the destination, including public transport networks and overall ease of mobility.

By considering these factors, the Access criteria provide insights into how accessible a destination is for Muslim travelers and help identify areas for improvement.

COMMUNICATION

The Communication criteria assess a destination's ability to communicate with and market to Muslim travelers. This includes:

Communication Proficiency:

Assesses the destination's ability to communicate in the major languages spoken by Muslim travelers, including English, Arabic, Bahasa Indonesia, Bahasa Melayu, Urdu, Turkish, Russian, French, Persian, and German.

Destination Marketing:

Evaluates how actively the destination promotes its Muslim-friendly offerings through official websites, Halal travel guides, media coverage, digital campaigns, and other marketing initiatives highlighting services for Muslim travelers.

Stakeholder Awareness:

Examines the level of awareness and understanding among tourism stakeholders regarding the needs and preferences of Muslim travelers. This includes factors such as the local Muslim population, participation in Halal tourism conferences and events, online interest in Muslim-friendly travel, and familiarity with Halal standards and requirements.

These factors provide insight into a destination's communication strengths and help improve its appeal to Muslim travelers.

ACES Criteria Overview - Environment & Services

ENVIRONMENT

The Environment pillar evaluates a destination's overall conditions and appeal for Muslim travelers. This includes:

Basic Utilities: Measures the availability and reliability of essential services such as internet connectivity, sanitation, clean drinking water, and electricity to support the travel experience.

General Safety: Evaluates overall security conditions, including crime rates and incidents of hate crimes, determining safety and security for Muslim travelers.

Faith Restrictions: Examines limitations that may affect Muslim travelers, including restrictions related to religious practices or modest dress, particularly for Muslim women, and how these impact traveler perception and experience.

Muslim Visitor Arrivals: Considers the number of Muslim visitor arrivals as an indicator of the destination's attractiveness and ability to cater to Muslim traveler needs.

Sustainability: Assesses environmental and social sustainability initiatives, including carbon emissions management, renewable energy adoption, air quality, heritage preservation, and human development efforts, which increasingly align with the values of Muslim travelers.

Accessible Travel: Reviews the accessibility and convenience of transportation systems, public facilities, and open spaces to ensure ease of mobility and inclusive travel experiences.

These factors provide a comprehensive view of how supportive, inclusive, and appealing a destination's environment is for Muslim travelers.

SERVICES

The Services criteria assess the range and quality of services available to Muslim travelers. This includes:

Availability of Prayer Places and Mosques: Assesses access to mosques, prayer rooms, and dedicated spaces that enable travelers to fulfill their faith obligations during their journey.

Availability of Halal Dining Options: Evaluates the presence of Halal-certified restaurants, Muslim-friendly eateries, and dining options that accommodate dietary requirements.

Muslim-Friendly Airports: Reviews airports' ability to cater to Muslim travelers through facilities such as prayer rooms, ablution areas, and access to Halal food and beverages.

Muslim-Friendly Accommodation: Assesses hotels that provide services and amenities tailored to Muslim travelers, such as prayer facilities, Qibla direction indicators, Halal food options, and privacy-conscious environments.

Heritage Experiences and Attractions: Examines Islamic heritage sites, cultural landmarks, and faith-related attractions that offer cultural and spiritual experiences, allowing travelers to connect with their history and identity.

Taken as a whole, these factors show the degree to which a location meets the expectations and values of Muslim tourists by offering easily accessible services, facilities that respect their beliefs, and culturally significant activities.

Macro-Regional Stratification: The 150 Benchmarked Tourism Ecosystems

The Global Muslim Travel Index (GMTI) continues to evolve alongside the growing landscape of Muslim-friendly travel, striving to provide a comprehensive and representative view of destinations across the globe. For this edition, the index has refined its coverage to 150 destinations. This scope reflects GMTI's commitment to ensuring stronger data representation, improved comparability, and more accurate reflections of destination performance across the global Muslim travel market.

The destinations account for over 98% of Muslim visitor arrivals worldwide, ensuring that the GMTI remains a reliable and meaningful benchmark for travelers, destinations, and industry stakeholders. The index serves as a valuable resource for Muslim travelers seeking destinations that cater to their faith-based needs, while also providing governments, tourism boards, and businesses with data-driven insights to strengthen inclusivity and competitiveness within the travel sector.

By prioritizing concrete data coverage and market representation, the GMTI reinforces its commitment to delivering credible and relevant information into the evolving dynamics of Muslim-friendly travel worldwide.

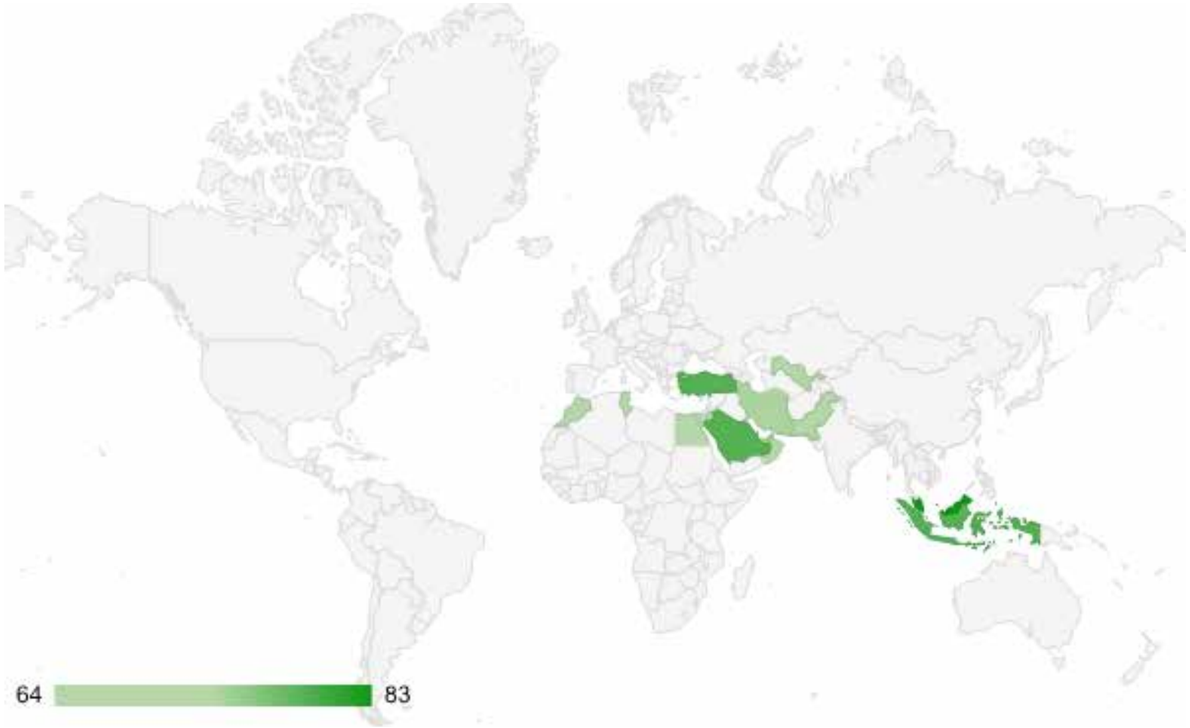
Africa	Asia	America	Europe
Africa	Armenia	Argentina	Albania
Algeria	Azerbaijan	Aruba	Andorra
Benin	Bahrain	Bahamas	Austria
Botswana	Bangladesh	Belize	Belgium
Burkina Faso	Brunei	Bolivia	Bosnia and Herzegovina
Cabo Verde	Cambodia	Brazil	Bulgaria
Cameroon	China	Canada	Croatia
Chad	Cyprus	Chile	Czechia
Comoros	Georgia	Colombia	Denmark
Cote d'Ivoire	Hong Kong	Costa Rica	Estonia
Egypt	India	Cuba	Finland
Eswatini (formerly Swaziland)	Indonesia	Dominican Republic	France
Ethiopia	Iran	Ecuador	Germany
Gabon	Japan	El Salvador	Greece
Gambia	Jordan	Guam	Hungary
Ghana	Kazakhstan	Guatemala	Iceland
Guinea	Kuwait	Guyana	Ireland
Guinea-Bissau	Kyrgyzstan	Jamaica	Italy
Kenya	Laos	Mexico	Latvia
Lesotho	Lebanon	Nicaragua	Lithuania
Madagascar	Macao	Panama	Luxembourg
Malawi	Malaysia	Peru	Malta
Mali	Maldives	Puerto Rico	Monaco
Mauritius	Mongolia	Suriname	Montenegro
Morocco	Nepal	Trinidad and Tobago	Netherlands
Mozambique	Oman	United States of America (USA)	North Macedonia (formerly Macedonia)
Namibia	Pakistan	Uruguay	Norway
Niger	Philippines		Poland
Nigeria	Qatar		Portugal
Reunion	Saudi Arabia		Romania
Rwanda	Singapore	**Oceania**	Russia
Senegal	South Korea	Australia	Serbia
Seychelles	Sri Lanka	Fiji	Slovakia
Sierra Leone	Taiwan	New Zealand	Slovenia
South Africa	Tajikistan		Spain
Sudan	Thailand		Sweden
Tanzania	Türkiye		Switzerland
Togo	United Arab Emirates (UAE)		Ukraine
Tunisia	Uzbekistan		United Kingdom (UK)
Uganda	Vietnam		
Zambia			
Zimbabwe			

08 GMTI 2026 RESULTS

GMTI 2026 Rankings - Top 20 Destinations

The Global Muslim Travel Index (GMTI) 2026 reflects the continued evolution of the Muslim-friendly travel sector, with destinations increasingly strengthening their efforts to remain competitive in the global market. While several destinations maintained stable rankings, notable shifts this year highlight changing momentum across the industry.

Malaysia continues to be the top performer of the GMTI rankings with a score of 83, increasing by 4 points from 2025 and reinforcing its long-standing position as the leading Muslim-friendly destination. Türkiye and Saudi Arabia continue to share second place, each with a score of 79. Indonesia emerged as one of the strongest performers this year, climbing three places to join the second position after increasing its score by 3 points, reflecting renewed progress in its Muslim-friendly tourism ecosystem, especially through efforts of key travel & Halal ecosystem stakeholders.



Meanwhile, the United Arab Emirates has dropped four places to 6th. Oman and Jordan also saw slight decreases in both ranking and score, suggesting that relative improvements in other destinations have surpassed its pace. Bahrain showed improvement, to share the 7th position.

Overall, the GMTI 2026 scores this year demonstrate that destinations are continuing to invest in Muslim-friendly tourism services. However, the increasingly competitive landscape suggests that destinations also need to continue adapt to travelers' expectation to retain their position.

GMTI 2026 Rank	Change VS 2025	Destination	GMTI 2026 Score	Change VS 2025
1	0	Malaysia	83	+4
2	+3	Indonesia	79	+3
2	0	Saudi Arabia	79	+1
2	0	Türkiye	79	+1
5	0	Qatar	76	0
6	-4	United Arab Emirates (UAE)	75	-3
7	+5	Bahrain	74	+4
7	+2	Iran	74	+1
7	0	Kuwait	74	0
10	-3	Oman	73	-1
10	+1	Singapore	73	+2
12	-2	Jordan	72	-2
13	-1	Egypt	71	+1
14	-2	Morocco	70	0
14	+3	Uzbekistan	70	+3
16	-1	Brunei	68	-1
17	-2	Maldives	66	-3
18	0	Pakistan	65	-1
18	+1	Tunisia	65	0
20	+2	Hong Kong	64	+2

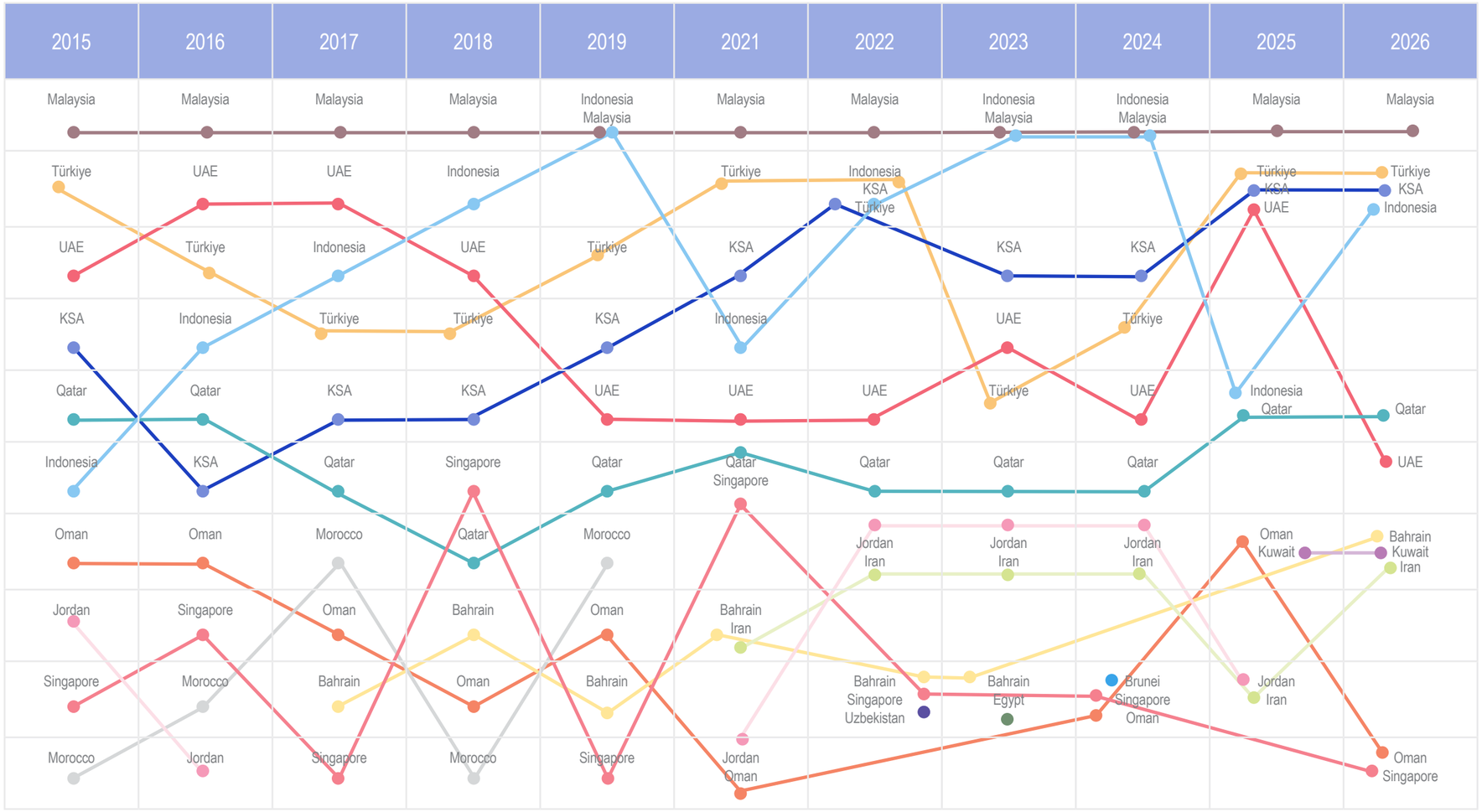
*Scores were evaluated before the conflict in the Middle East

Longitudinal Rigor: Charting a Decade of Structural Realignment and Market Velocity (2015–2026)

The GMTI rankings from 2015 to 2026 shows both enduring leadership and dynamic shifts among the top destinations for Muslim travelers. Malaysia has remained a consistent leader throughout the decade, maintaining its first place in 2026. Reflecting their sustained efforts through enhanced Halal services and diversified offerings, Indonesia has risen from the 5th place last year to share the 2nd place with Türkiye and Saudi Arabia.

The UAE, although still among the top ten, has dropped in ranking after a decade of being in the top 5, highlighting the increasingly competitive landscape. A similar shift also occurred for Oman, which now holds the tenth position. Meanwhile, Qatar and Kuwait maintain their steady positions at ranks 5 and 7, showing their sustained efforts to preserve a strong ecosystem.

Notably, Jordan has dropped out of the top 10 in 2026. These developments reflect the dynamic nature of the Muslim travel market, where new leaders are emerging and long-standing destinations are being challenged to adapt and innovate to retain their appeal.



*Scores were evaluated before the conflict in the Middle East

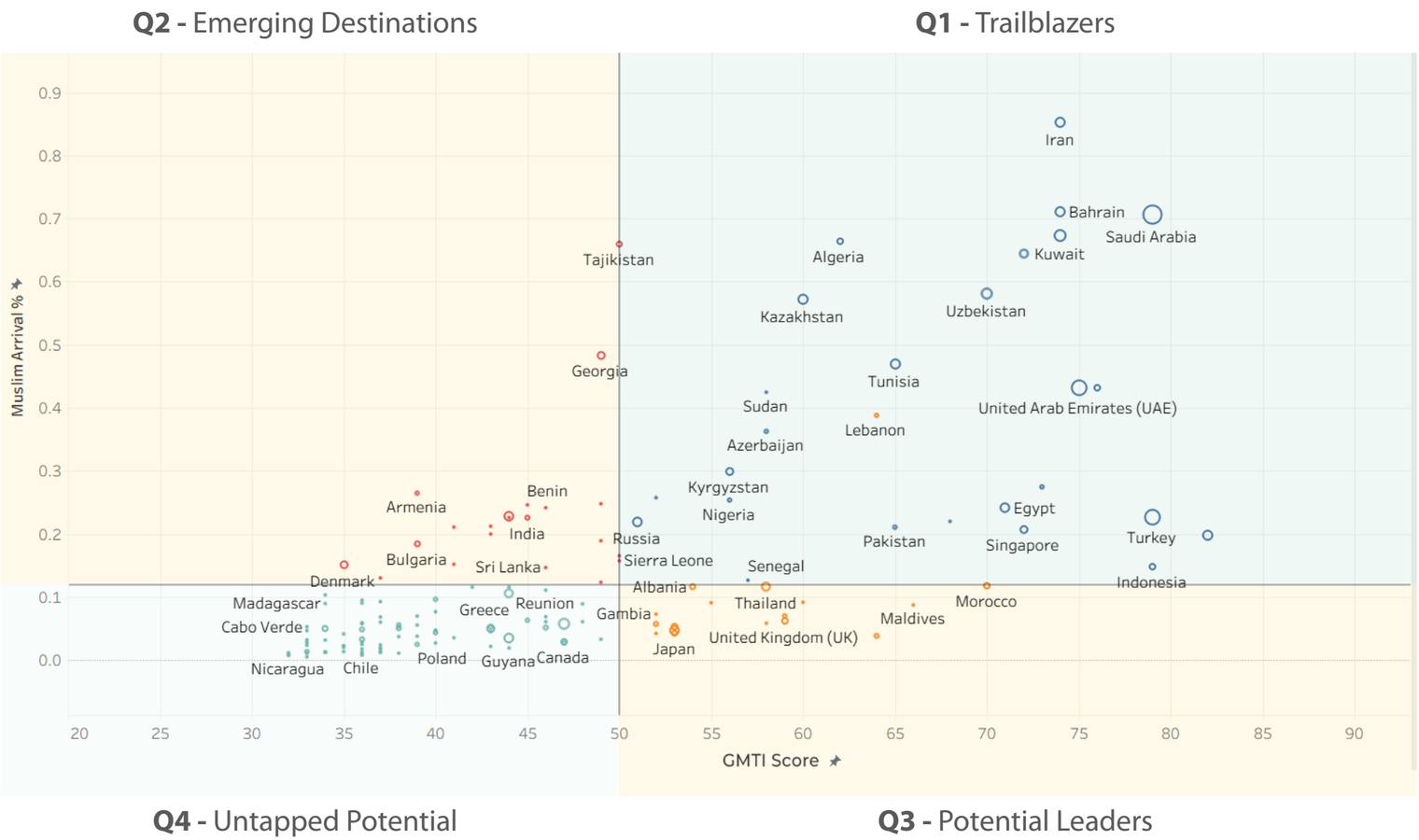
The GMTI Performance Matrix (GPM): Stratifying Global Infrastructure Scores and Yield Density

Q1 - The Trailblazers quadrant consists of 27 destinations that are leading the way in accommodating Muslim travelers. These destinations include both OIC and non-OIC destinations such as Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Türkiye, the UAE, Indonesia, Iran, and Singapore. Together, they welcomed approximately 119 million Muslim visitors representing about 61% of the total 196 million global Muslim arrivals.

Q2 - The Emerging Destinations quadrant contains 24 destinations that are in the early stage of recognizing and addressing the needs of Muslim traveler market. Despite being in their development phase, they welcomed about 17 million Muslim visitors, accounting for approximately 9% of global Muslim arrivals.

Q3 - The Potential Leaders quadrant includes 17 destinations that show great promise with their progressive offerings and services, though they currently attract a lower percentage of Muslim travelers. This group features OIC destinations such as Albania and Morocco, followed by non-OIC destinations such as Thailand, Hong Kong, the Maldives, and the United Kingdom. Collectively, these destinations attracted around 22 million Muslim travelers, accounting for roughly 12% of global Muslim arrivals.

Q4 - The Untapped Opportunities quadrant comprises the remaining 82 destinations. These destinations, including Canada, Poland, and Chile, currently have under-utilized in terms of their potential to attract Muslim travelers. Nevertheless, they still drew an estimated 37.5 million Muslim visitors, representing approximately 19.1% of global Muslim arrivals.



Leading Muslim-Friendly Destinations - OIC

MALAYSIA

Malaysia has continued to solidify its position as the leading destination for Muslim-friendly travel. Along with the Visit Malaysia 2026 campaign, this destination has scaled up its policies, programs, and digital systems to ensure seamless safety and quality across its Halal tourism sector.

Beyond its cultural richness and deep Islamic heritage, Malaysia's appeal is also amplified by its dual nature. It is a multi-ethnic, Muslim-majority destination that blends tradition with modernity. While offering world-class natural attractions, such as pristine beaches and rainforests to luxury eco-resorts. Halal dining options, Muslim-friendly facilities, and certified services are universally accessible, making travel incredibly comfortable, safe, and welcoming for Muslim travelers.

INDONESIA

Indonesia has also continued to grow as a leading multicultural destination, offering a rich spiritual experience and breathtaking nature for Muslim travelers. With strong stakeholder initiatives and community support, the destination has put significant effort to upgrade its Halal tourism sector through advanced major events, i.e., Halal expos.

Indonesia blends faith-based needs with attractive leisure offerings. The Halal certified food also gives travelers the peace of mind when traveling, along with clean prayer facilities in airports, malls, and public spaces. Indonesia ensures a highly safe, convenient, and welcoming experience for all Muslim visitors.

SAUDI ARABIA

Saudi Arabia is still one of the most significant destination for Muslim travelers, mainly because of Hajj and Umrah. Moreover, as part of its Vision 2030, the destination is now growing fast into a complete travel destination for everyone. Saudi Arabia has upgraded its infrastructure, transport, and digital services, making it much easier and comfortable for Muslim tourists.

The appeal of this destination is that it fits perfectly with Islamic values. While Makkah and Madinah remain the spiritual hearts of the destination, cities such as Riyadh and Jeddah also offer great family theme parks, cultural events, and excellent shopping for modest fashion. With accessible Halal food and clean prayer rooms at every corner, Saudi Arabia makes travel easy and safe for Muslim families and solo travelers.

TÜRKIYE

Türkiye has also continued to grow as a top destination for Muslim-friendly travel. The Turkish travel stakeholders are stepping up strategic investment in building a Halal ecosystem. The destination is also now actively welcoming more visitors from more diverse source markets, due to the reach and expansion of its national airline.

The destination's main appeal lies in its great balance between faith-based experiences and modern leisure. Historic cities of Istanbul, Konya, and Bursa are home to iconic mosques and sacred sites that are highly welcoming to tourists. At the same time, it also has diverse activities, shopping malls, and beaches. For tourists, finding Halal food is incredibly easy, and accessible prayer facilities in public areas, traveling to Türkiye has become smoother and more comfortable.

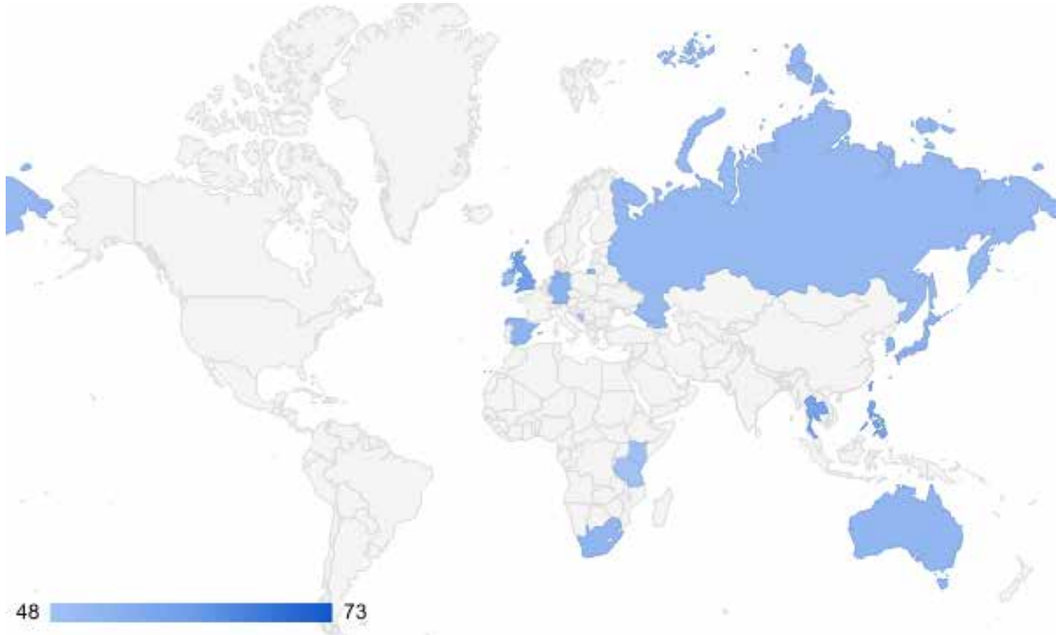
QATAR

Qatar has emerged as a popular destination for Muslim travelers, blending faith-based cultural needs with massive international events. As the host of major global events, such as the Formula 1 and the FIFA World Cup, Qatar has proven that it can welcome the world while staying rooted in Islamic values.

The highlight of Qatar is its ability to offer a luxury yet completely Halal-friendly holiday. The capital city, Doha, serves as the ultimate destination, with its modern cultural sites, traditional markets, and stunning architecture. Almost all high-end resorts and hotels in Qatar are also Muslim-friendly, ensuring Halal dining, and easily accessible prayer facilities.

GMTI 2026 Rankings - Top 20 Non-OIC Destinations

The GMTI 2026 rankings reveals a dynamic shift among non-OIC destinations, with a 1% increase in the average score of the top 20 non-OIC destinations. This shift signals the global effort to refine services and environments that are more inclusive toward Muslim travelers. Singapore retains its position as the leading non-OIC destination with a score of 73, while Hong Kong successfully climbed to the second position with its score peaking at 64. Concurrently, both Taiwan and the United Kingdom have secured the third position with both destinations having a score of 59.



Dynamic Growth Trajectories: A geographically diverse cohort of destinations, most notably the Philippines, Japan, South Korea, Russia, and Mauritius, demonstrated advancements this year. By improving their positions within the top 20 non-OIC rankings by 3 to 7 places, these markets have proven a highly concentrated, commitment to expanding their local Halal infrastructure.

The Standout Performer: The Philippines registered the single highest index momentum shift, capturing a +5 score surge compared to all other destinations within the ranking. This growth highlights aggressive on-the-ground execution and successful value-alignment.

Consolidated Baseline Resilience: While high-growth corridors captured new market share, traditional travel anchors maintained solid defensive positions. Thailand and Kenya achieved highly stable standings within the global rankings, while Germany, Spain, and Macao continued to display consistent, steady baseline growth.

Non-OIC Rank	Non-OIC Rank Change VS 2025	Global Rank Change VS 2025	GMTI 2026 Rank	Destination	GMTI 2026 Score	Change VS 2025
1	0	+1	10	Singapore	73	+2
2	+1	+2	20	Hong Kong	64	+2
3	+1	+2	25	Taiwan	59	+1
3	-1	-3	25	United Kingdom (UK)	59	-4
5	0	+2	27	Thailand	58	+1
5	+3	+9	27	Philippines	58	+5
7	+2	+2	36	Germany	53	+1
7	+2	+2	36	Spain	53	+1
7	+7	+8	36	Japan	53	+2
10	+5	+7	39	South Korea	52	+2
10	-4	-5	39	Australia	52	-2
10	-1	-1	39	South Africa	52	0
13	+3	+4	44	Russia	51	+2
14	-5	-7	45	Bosnia and Her-zegovina	50	-2
14	+2	+3	45	Macao	50	+1
16	-10	-15	49	Ireland	49	-5
16	0	-1	49	Kenya	49	0
16	-7	-11	49	Georgia	49	-3
19	+6	-1	54	Mauritius	48	0

Decadal Non-OIC Destination Evolution: 2015–2026 Longitudinal Analysis

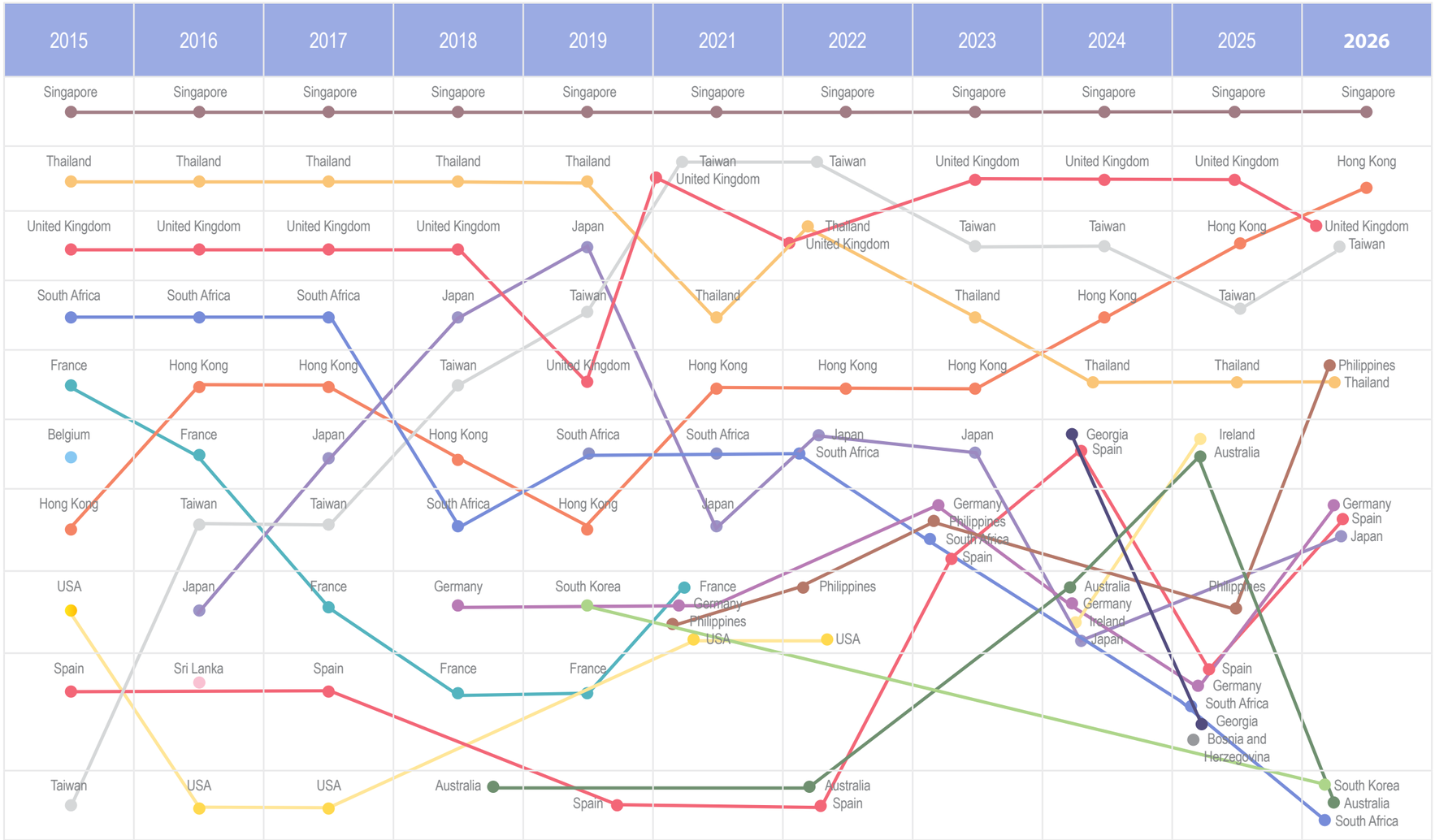
Unbroken lead: Longitudinal data spanning from 2015 to 2026 reveals Singapore has maintained an absolute lock on the #1 position for over a decade.

The Rise of the Tier-1 Challenger: Over the 11-year trajectory, Hong Kong has successfully scaled its competitive posture, shifting from historical baselines to firmly capture the #2 ranking by 2026. This upward momentum reflects a multi-year, institutional commitment to upgrading high-quality service architectures and dedicated faith-friendly transit infrastructure.

The Shared Tier-2 Anchor: Taiwan and the United Kingdom converge in 2026 to jointly claim the #3 spot on the leaderboard. Their historical paths diverge strategically: Taiwan's multi-year arc demonstrates a profound structural pivot toward adaptive, Halal-friendly infrastructure, whereas the United Kingdom secures its position via the long-term, highly consistent delivery of premium-tier traveler experiences.

Deep-Ecosystem Preservation: Thailand displays remarkable stability at the #5 position in 2026. This baseline resilience highlights the deep, integration of Halal amenities, dining networks, and operational protocols embedded across its legacy tourism network over the decade.

Decadal Competitive Realignment: The lower quadrants of the timeline track an aggressive structural displacement as the Philippines, Germany, Spain, Japan, and South Korea emerge as promising Muslim-friendly destinations.



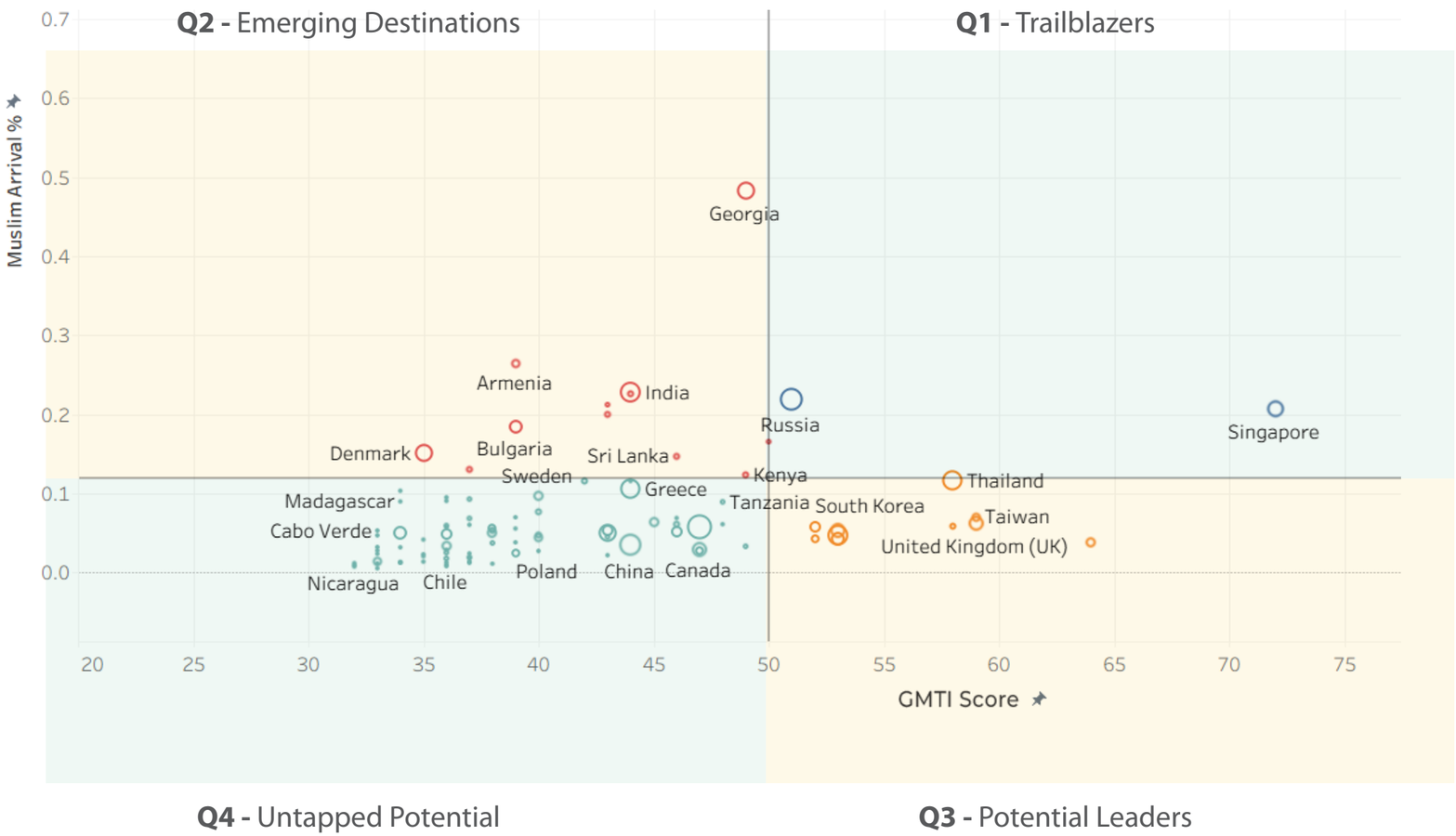
The GPM Matrix (Non-OIC): Strategic Performance Clustering of Destinations

Q1 - The Trailblazers quadrant includes Singapore consistent with its mature Halal ecosystem and robust infrastructure, while Russia represents a strategic newcomer. Collectively, these destinations welcomed approximately 7.7 million Muslim visitors in 2025, accounting for about 4% of the total global Muslim arrivals.

Q2 - The Emerging Destinations quadrant for non-OIC destinations includes 12 destinations, such as India, Georgia, Armenia, and Denmark that are in the early stages of recognizing and addressing the needs of the Muslim traveler market. Despite being at the beginning of their journey, these destinations drew around 13.8 million Muslim visitors, accounting for 7% of total global Muslim arrivals.

Q3 - The Potential Leaders quadrant for non-OIC destinations includes eleven promising destinations, namely Hong Kong, United Kingdom, Taiwan, Thailand, Philippines, Germany, Spain, Japan, South Korea, Australia, and South Africa with progressive offerings and services. These destinations attracted approximately 18.2 million Muslim travelers, representing 9.2% of the global Muslim arrivals.

Q4 - The Untapped Opportunities quadrant for non-OIC destinations comprises 78 destinations. Although currently under-utilized in terms of their potential to attract Muslim travelers, destinations such as Chile, Poland, China, and Canada still drew around 37.2 million Muslim visitors, representing approximately 18.9% of global Muslim arrivals.



Sovereign Benchmarks: Operationalizing Inclusivity Across Leading Non-OIC Hubs

SINGAPORE

Singapore maintained its position as the leading destination in the Global Muslim Travel Index (GMTI) among non-OIC destinations. The city-state provides integrated Muslim-friendly services and amenities, most notably a vibrant Halal gastronomy sector featuring extensive MUIS-certified options that range from local delicacies to contemporary Western and Middle Eastern fusion.

The destination further distinguishes itself through a commitment to the Singapore Green Plan 2030, integrating sustainability into its tourism core with initiatives such as the specialized MICE Venue playbooks. This is complemented by high-tech advancements, such as Changi Airport's SMART airport ecosystem.

By harmonizing technological innovation with deep cultural inclusivity and environmental stewardship, Singapore continues to define the global frontier for modern Muslim-friendly travel.

HONG KONG

Since 2024, Hong Kong has strategically accelerated its engagement with the global Muslim travel market, deploying multi-layered initiatives to cultivate a deeply inclusive environment for faith-conscious travelers.

These structured efforts yielded measurable milestones by mid-2025: the city now boasts over 60 Muslim-friendly hotels alongside close to 220 Halal-certified restaurants, giving inbound visitors access to an authentic and highly diverse culinary ecosystem.

Proactive, targeted campaigns by the Hong Kong Tourism Board continue to amplify the city's cross-border visibility and solidify its reputation as an exceptionally welcoming destination.

Hong Kong's institutional commitment to delivering a respectful, premium-tier experience has firmly established the metropolis as a major force within the competitive global Halal tourism landscape.

TAIWAN

Solidifying its standing among the top three Muslim-friendly non-OIC destinations, Taiwan has consistently demonstrated its long-term dedication to capturing global market share.

Since making its initial top-10 debut in the 2015 GMTI report, the destination has maintained an impressive, consecutive 11-year foothold among global performers, successfully climbing into a top-3 ranking during this trajectory.

This institutional commitment is underscored by a massive expansion of its faith-compatible infrastructure: as of 2026, over 450 local hospitality and dining establishments have been integrated into the island's Muslim-friendly travel ecosystem. This robust structural foundation ensures that inbound travelers can explore the territory with total confidence and peace of mind.

Serving as the strategic heartbeat of these coordinated efforts, the "Salam Taiwan" campaign leverages digital innovation to maximize visitor engagement and bolster customer assurance.

UNITED KINGDOM

The United Kingdom demonstrates remarkable resilience, maintaining a joint third-place standing despite an increasingly competitive field. The UK's urban infrastructure is highly responsive to the Muslim market, offering a sophisticated array of Halal-certified F&B and iconic prayer facilities such as the London Central Mosque, which reinforce the inclusivity of the destination.

The UK's Heritage & Experience metric remains a core differentiator, offering travelers a seamless blend of historical exploration and modern luxury. From the bustling streets of Birmingham to the tranquil hills of Scotland, the destination provides a diverse environment that also accommodates Muslim travelers.

While the UK excels in much of the ACES framework, it still lacks in some areas such as General Safety and Destination Marketing sub-pillar. Optimizing such metrics is vital as it may affect Muslim travel intention.

Market Accelerators: Strategic Horizons of Maturing Non-OIC Tourism Corridors

PHILIPPINES

The Philippines has emerged as a high-velocity market accelerator in Southeast Asia, registering the single highest index momentum shift across the entire non-OIC leaderboard with a +5 score surge. This growth trajectory reflects an aggressive, multi-layered institutional commitment to engineering an inclusive tourism ecosystem that balances the country's legendary hospitality with rigorous faith-compatible parameters.

To capitalize on this momentum, the Department of Tourism (DOT) has spearheaded the deployment of targeted, multimodal digital assets and specialized marketing frameworks mapped to primary entry hubs, including Manila, Cebu, and Davao. By structuring its faith-based offerings early in the upstream planning cycle, the destination has significantly boosted its visibility and consumer discoverability.

SPAIN

Spain has successfully solidified its position within the top 10 non-OIC destinations, through highlighting its rich Islamic history of the region of Andalusia. Within the region, cities such as Cordoba and Granada offers Halal-certified amenities and Halal heritage tourism.

The Spain Tourism Office has strategically deployed specialized promotional campaigns and roadshows across the Middle East and Southeast Asia to showcase the country's readiness in embracing Halal-friendly tourism. These initiatives are supported by comprehensive regional guides that map out Halal infrastructure within the destination, providing assurance for Muslim travelers.

Collaborative efforts between the government and other stakeholders have accelerated the adoption of faith-based standards among local entrepreneurs. These educational programs ensure that Muslim travelers can travel without having to compromise.

GERMANY

Germany is rapidly maturing as a Muslim-friendly premier destination in Europe. Major cities such as Berlin, Frankfurt, and Cologne offer an extensive array of Halal dining options, ranging from traditional Middle Eastern and Turkish flavors to "Halal-assured" German fusion.

Germany has over 2,500 mosques and a number of certification bodies ensuring services and accommodation catered to the faith needs of a Muslim. This has resulted in the integration of a robust Halal-friendly ecosystem in Germany.

While still expanding its outreach compared to traditional OIC markets, Germany's strategic focus on the Services and Environment pillars of the GMTI highlights a strong commitment to welcoming Muslim tourists.

JAPAN

Since its debut in the 2016 GMTI report, Japan has consistently positioned itself as one of the leading non-OIC destination, proven by its ability in securing the top 10 foothold for over 9 years.

To sustain this momentum, Japanese tourism stakeholders have launched Muslim-friendly guides and digital maps for major cities such as Tokyo, Osaka, and Kyoto. These resources highlight a growing network of Halal-certified dining and prayer facilities.

Through regional certification programs and the mainstreaming of Halal Washoku, local businesses are now better equipped to meet the specific needs of Muslim visitors. Combined with Japan's iconic seasonal beauty and unique cultural heritage, these strategic efforts make the destination a more inclusive and top-tier choice for the global Muslim travel market.

ACES Framework - ACCESS : Benchmarking Cross-Border Corridors and Border Gateways

In the ACES framework, the Access criterion evaluates how easily a destination can be reached from the top outbound Muslim markets. These destinations have demonstrated strong performance through improved air connectivity, visa facilitation, and investments in transport infrastructure, key factors in attracting visitors.

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) retains its top position from last year as one of the most accessible destinations. This is especially due to their superior air and land connectivity. Additionally, its world-class airports, efficient public transit, and seamless visa policies continues to set the standard for a seamless travel experience.

Qatar also holds steady second place, leveraging high-quality transport infrastructure and its reputation for hosting major international events. More simplified digital visa process as well as expanded transit capacity also ensure their position as a premier accessible hub.

Oman maintains its third position from last year, supported by a robust land transport sector designed to facilitate regional transit especially within the GCC. It also features continuous infrastructure upgrades and more welcoming entry requirements, contributing to the maintenance of its steady appeal to Muslim travelers.

Saudi Arabia has climbed to the fourth place, especially fueled by its Vision 2030 expansion, and a new seamless e-visa system. Additionally, significant investment in national airlines and rail networks also have rapidly increased its reach to the global Muslim market.

Jordan rises to the top five, driven by a notable improvement in ranking.. This growth is driven by its modernized visa facilitation and increased flight connectivity, making this destination an overall more convenient and welcoming for Muslim travelers.

Connectivity

Connectivity has continued to strengthen in recent years, with destinations expanding both air routes and regional land access to better serve Muslim travelers. The improvement in connectivity scores reflects a sustained focus on enhancing global and regional reach. Leading destinations driving this trend include the Türkiye, United Arab Emirates (UAE), Saudi Arabia, and Qatar through extensive air networks, alongside Jordan and Oman, which benefit from strong cross-border land connectivity.

Transport Infrastructure

Transport infrastructure remains a key enabler of accessibility, enabling seamless journeys through destinations. Modern high quality transport networks that are integrated across various transport modes amplify operational capacity, ensuring a frictionless journey and prevent congestion during peak holiday seasons. Macao, Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan, and Japan are among the leading destinations for transport infrastructure.

Visa Requirements

Visa facilitation continues to improve as more destinations streamline their entry procedures and expand a visa-free or e-visa access for Muslim majority nations. The rapid digitalization of visa applications has also further simplified the process for travelers. The top destinations that have eased entry requirements are Malaysia, Kazakhstan, Türkiye, and Macao.

Top 10 Destinations in ACCESS:

- United Arab Emirates (UAE)
- Qatar
- Oman
- Saudi Arabia
- Jordan
- Türkiye
- Azerbaijan
- Georgia
- Malaysia
- Uzbekistan

*The Access dimension was evaluated before the conflict in the Middle East

Addressing Visa Procedures as a Major Pain Point

Clear and accessible visa procedures play a critical role in shaping traveler confidence and destination competitiveness. Lengthy processing times, unclear documentation requirements, and limited digital accessibility will discourage travelers, particularly within today's fast-moving travel environment where convenience and reliability strongly influence destination choice. Destinations that provide transparent guidelines, efficient e-visa systems, multilingual support, and simplified entry procedures are better positioned to attract international visitors and enhance overall traveler satisfaction.

Thailand

Thailand's visa policies in 2026 have faced growing criticism and uncertainty despite earlier efforts to make travel easier. One of the biggest issues has been the government's reversal of its popular 60-day visa-free entry scheme introduced in 2024. In May 2026, Thailand approved plans to reduce visa-free stays back to 30 days for most eligible travelers, while also reducing the number of countries eligible for visa exemptions and visa-on-arrival programs.

The frequent policy revisions have created uncertainty among travelers and tourism stakeholders. Reports throughout early 2026 showed confusion regarding whether the 60-day exemption was still active, when new rules would take effect, and how immigration officers would interpret repeated entries.

Although it remains as one of Asia's leading tourism destinations, the changing regulations, inconsistent enforcement, and concerns over long-stay travelers have highlighted the need for clearer communication, greater policy stability, and more transparent digital visa systems moving forward.

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia has continued significantly improving its travel visa ecosystem as part of its Vision 2030 tourism strategy. Saudi Arabia has further integrated religious tourism into its standard travel system. Travelers can now perform Umrah using regular tourist eVisas rather than requiring separate pilgrimage visas, greatly simplifying access for Muslim travelers. The Kingdom is also preparing for the upcoming GCC Unified Tourist Visa, a Schengen-style regional visa expected to simplify multi-destination travel across Gulf states including United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, and Oman.

Japan

Japan has continued improving its travel visa system as part of broader efforts to support tourism growth, streamline border procedures, and manage increasing visitor arrivals. One of the biggest developments is the expansion of the official JAPAN eVISA system, allowing eligible travelers from more countries to apply fully online for short-term tourism visas of up to 90 days. Japan has expanded eligibility to additional markets in Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America, helping diversify inbound tourism demand beyond traditional source markets. The process reduces embassy visits, simplifies documentation submission, and enables travelers to receive digital visa approvals electronically.

ACES Framework - COMMUNICATION: Driving Global Visibility and Stakeholder Awareness

The communication category evaluates how efficiently destinations communicate with Muslim travelers and educate stakeholders within the destinations. This includes language accessibility, the visibility of Muslim-friendly offerings, and the level of stakeholder awareness on Muslim travel requirements.

Communications

This criterion measures how well destinations support communication in the top ten languages spoken by Muslim travelers, including Arabic, English, Bahasa Melayu, Urdu, Turkish, and Bahasa Indonesia. Despite the widespread adoption of real-time AI translation and digital tools, direct access to human support and native-language resources remains essential, particularly for Arabic and English—the two primary languages used across this demographic.

By 2026, destinations such as Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, and the UAE emerged as pioneers in this sector. They deliver exceptional multilingual experiences through trained frontline staff, dedicated tourism portals, intuitive transit signage, and comprehensive travel guides. Despite these strong individual performances, the average score for this criterion dropped slightly from 32 to 31 globally, highlighting a broader need for consistent, industry-wide language access. Ultimately, these communication efforts ensure that visitors can seamlessly navigate services, seek help, and feel genuinely respected and culturally included.

Destination Marketing

This criterion examines how actively destinations promote their Muslim-friendly services and experiences through various measures. It includes dedicated digital platforms, downloadable Halal travel guides, Muslim-oriented campaigns, and participation in relevant trade shows or familiarization trips. The ubiquity of these efforts has made these destinations highly discoverable, ensuring information is seamlessly accessible to travelers.

In 2026, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Indonesia, Singapore, and Malaysia emerged as frontrunners in this category. These destinations successfully expanded their market share through highly visible, culturally responsive marketing. For example, the Hong Kong Tourism Board launched dedicated, interactive Halal travel portals alongside robust promotional campaigns, while Taiwan actively engaged local boards and communities to foster a welcoming environment. Simultaneously, Indonesia, Singapore, and Malaysia solidified consumer trust by collaborating with prominent travel influencers and hosting familiarization trips for Muslim-specialist travel agencies. Globally, the average score for this marketing category remained stable at 17, underscoring a broader, steady shift toward targeted outreach as a critical driver of visibility and brand loyalty among Muslim travelers.

Stakeholder Awareness

By 2026, Indonesia, Malaysia, Türkiye, Pakistan, and Iran emerged as the global benchmarks in this category. Their leadership is driven by highly effective, practical steps, such as mandatory Halal certification programs for tourism businesses, widespread training sessions on cultural expectations, and close partnerships with local organizations to design inclusive services. Despite these strong individual efforts, the global average score for this criterion decreased slightly to 19 from 20 last year. Ultimately, these steady investments do more than just improve day-to-day service, they build a welcoming, well-informed environment that ensures long-term visitor trust and comfort.

Top 10 Destinations in COMMUNICATION:

- Malaysia
- Indonesia
- Singapore
- Egypt
- Philippines
- Qatar
- Saudi Arabia
- United Arab Emirates (UAE)
- Hong Kong
- Australia

Raising Muslim-Friendly Visibility Through Destination Marketing

Effective destination marketing is important in attracting and engaging Muslim travelers. Beyond developing Muslim-friendly services and infrastructure, destinations must also ensure that these offerings are clearly communicated through targeted campaigns, digital platforms, multilingual content, and strategic partnerships. Strong visibility and authentic representation not only improve traveler awareness but also strengthen destination trust, consideration, and competitiveness within the growing Muslim travel market.

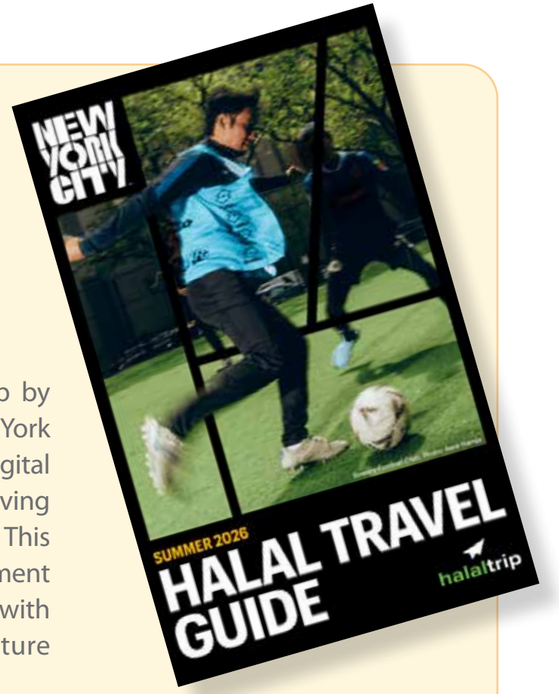
Jelajah Hong Kong

Launched by the Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB), the Jelajah Hong Kong campaign successfully drives inbound market trust through integrated digital and experiential vectors. By deploying comprehensive digital travel guides, targeted marketing campaigns, and immersive KOL/influencer tours, the initiative natively showcases the city's operational readiness directly to digitally native consumer feeds.

This synchronized outreach highlights Hong Kong's on-ground infrastructure, guiding visitors seamlessly to cultural and culinary anchors such as the Kowloon district, home to the Kowloon Mosque and Islamic Centre alongside close to 220 Halal-certified restaurants. This faith-compatible transparency extends to premium establishments citywide, including Chinesology, and the vegetarian fine-dining venue, Yuan.

New York City Travel Guide

Revitalized for the Football World Cup by NYC Tourism + Conventions, the New York Halal Travel Guide serves as a targeted digital playbook for global Muslim travelers arriving for the world's biggest sporting event. This comprehensive toolkit blends tournament logistics and local Muslim history with borough - by - borough infrastructure mapping to build destination trust.



The guide seamlessly highlights NYC's expansive, faith-friendly ecosystem. It navigates visitors from iconic dining options such as The Halal Guys and Safari Restaurant to premium, faith-sensitive accommodations well-equipped to handle the market's specific expectations. It also provides clear visibility for key spiritual anchors citywide, such as the Islamic Cultural Center of New York in Manhattan, Masjid At-Taqwa in Brooklyn, and Masjid Malcolm Shabazz in Harlem.

The Indonesia Sharia Economic Festival (ISEF): Driving Stakeholder Awareness

ISEF 7th
Indonesia Sharia Economic Festival

A Leading Sharia Economic Nexus: Launched in 2014 by Bank Indonesia, ISEF has grown into a premier international platform unifying policymakers, businesses, and global players to accelerate the Sharia economy and capitalize on the country's massive growth potential.

The Indonesia Halal Showcase: A central highlight of the event is an experiential showcase featuring a vibrant marketplace across key sectors, including Halal culinary options, modest fashion exhibitions, and cosmetics.

Community-Driven Identity: By integrating traditional Islamic boarding schools and grassroots communities, the event embeds a unique cultural authenticity directly into its commercial ecosystem.

Strategic Destination Value: This comprehensive multi-sector approach reinforces Indonesia's long-term commitment to the global Halal market, elevating its competitiveness and destination appeal to capture high-volume Muslim traveler segments worldwide.

In 2025, the event was held in **4 cities** across Indonesia. A total of **444,000** attended Road to ISEF and ISEF events.

ACES Framework - ENVIRONMENT: Benchmarking Destination Safety, Growth Volume, and Sustainable Infrastructure

The Environment category evaluates multiple facets of a destination's environment to determine its overall suitability and attractiveness for Muslim travelers.

Faith Restrictions

The Faith Restrictions evaluation focuses on identifying and assessing any limitations or bans that might affect Muslim travelers' ability to practice their faith freely during the journey. This includes examining three key areas; Hijab, Niqab and Ritual Slaughter restrictions.

Hijab Restrictions: Some destinations have restrictions on wearing the hijab in specific public places, which can influence the overall perception of religious acceptance and freedom.

Niqab restrictions: Similarly a few destinations have enacted bans on the niqab, impacting the comfort and freedom of a small minority of Muslim women who wear it.

Ritual Slaughter Restrictions: Only a small number of destinations have restrictions on ritual slaughter, which limits the availability of Halal food options for Muslim travelers. However, many destinations allow the import of Halal-slaughtered meat to resolve this issue.

Similar to the previous edition, some restrictive policies remain that negatively impact Muslim travelers. Consequently, this has led to a slight decrease in the average score for the faith restriction criterion, from 90.4 to 90.2. This decline is further compounded by current global anxieties surrounding geopolitical instability and conflicts, which have heightened traveler caution. Nevertheless, despite the small decline, the majority of destinations do not impose restrictions and Muslim travelers feel more at ease.

General Safety

This evaluation is crucial for understanding a destination's safety and security landscape. This criterion assesses several key areas to determine how safe and inclusive a destination is for Muslim travelers, focusing specifically on the prevalence of hate speech, hate crimes, and the overall perception of Islamophobia.

Reflecting a positive global shift, the average score for this safety category improved from 75 to 79, demonstrating that more destinations are becoming safer and more welcoming. While challenges such as verbal harassment, discriminatory language, or property damage still occur in certain areas, often amplified by digital platforms, the rising global score highlights a widespread, successful effort to combat hate crimes. This upward trend underscores safer environment where Muslim travelers can explore with greater peace of mind and confidence.

Basic Utilities

Basic Utilities assesses the availability and reliability of critical infrastructure for a comfortable and stress-free travel experience. It includes services such as internet connectivity, clean and well-maintained sanitation facilities, safe and readily available drinking water, and electricity. These basic amenities play a central role in ensuring the safety, convenience, and well-being of travelers, particularly those visiting unfamiliar destinations. While the global average score for this category remains stable at 84, prominent non-OIC destinations such as Singapore, Denmark, South Korea, Finland, and Iceland continue to maintain their strong performance. These destinations consistently rank highly due to their exceptionally reliable utilities and advanced infrastructure.

Top 10 Destinations in ENVIRONMENT

- Kuwait
- Bahrain
- Saudi Arabia
- Iran
- Malaysia
- Türkiye
- Singapore
- Georgia
- Greece
- Uzbekistan

Sustainability Evaluation

A core dimension of the RIDA framework, the Sustainability evaluation monitors cross-sector socio-economic, environmental, and socio-cultural initiatives. Reflecting escalating global implementation challenges, the category's average score contracted from 50 to 46. This decline underscores a critical need for destinations to reinforce long-term commitments across all three pillars to safeguard balanced and resilient growth.

Accessibility

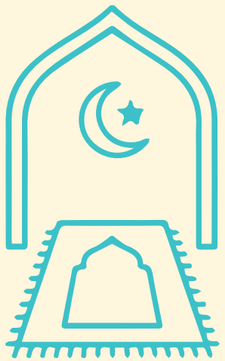
The Accessible Travel category evaluates how effectively destinations support physically and mentally challenged visitors by enhancing transportation networks, public spaces, and facility infrastructure. Driven by a global push toward universal design, the average score increased from 59 to 61. This upward trajectory underscores successful structural investments to eliminate physical and cognitive barriers, ensuring a supportive, inclusive, and seamless experience for all travelers.

Visitor Arrivals

The Muslim Visitor Arrivals metric tracks a destination's competitive appeal and its absolute capacity to capture faith-based market share. Spurred by substantial arrival surges from primary Muslim source markets, the global average score climbed from 18 to 19. This upward momentum signals robust sector expansion and a broadening footprint across the global travel landscape.

ACES Framework - SERVICE: Structuring Core Amenities, Transit Touchpoints, and Heritage Experiences

The Services pillar of the ACES framework evaluates the availability and quality of services that are tailored to the faith needs of Muslim travelers.



Prayer Places

The Muslim travel market is defined by the demand for services that cater to faith-based needs, particularly the availability of prayer facilities. While OIC destinations naturally lead in this area, non-OIC destinations are no longer passive observers. Driven by the expansion of the global market, these non-OIC destinations have adopted proactive strategies to create a more inclusive environment for Muslim travelers. Globally, the average score for this category remains stable at 51. Among non-OIC destinations, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Rwanda, Singapore, Tanzania, the United Kingdom, Seychelles, Cyprus, and Sri Lanka stand out this year for providing the most notable prayer facilities.

Muslim-friendly Airports

Airports represent the primary touchpoint of the traveler journey and are instrumental in defining the initial perception of a destination's hospitality for Muslim visitors. The provision of infrastructure that facilitates faith-based comfort, such as prayer rooms and ablution facilities significantly elevates the transit experience. While OIC destinations generally offer these services inherently, a significant gap remains in many non-OIC destinations, reflected in the stable global average score of 35, which signals a critical area for infrastructure development.

Non-OIC destinations such as Singapore, have enhanced their airports to better serve Muslim travelers. These airports excel by offering Muslim-friendly facilities, including prayer rooms, ablution (wudu) areas, and Halal-certified food outlets. These amenities help create a welcoming and inclusive experience for Muslim visitors from the moment they arrive.

Halal Dining

The availability of Halal dining is a foundational requirement for Muslim travelers, serving within the Services pillar. The assurance of Halal in dining experience is a non-negotiable factor that directly impacts their level of trust and comfort during a journey.

When it comes to destinations that are well-catered to the dietary needs of Muslim travelers, OIC destinations lead this sector with the abundance of Halal infrastructure. Such convenience enables Muslim travelers to enjoy their culinary experience without concern about dietary restrictions.

Non-OIC destinations on the other hand has seen an increase in integrating Halal dining experience, providing more dietary inclusivity towards Muslim travelers. The average Halal dining score of non-OIC destinations has recorded a significant surge with an increase from last year's score of 49 to 63 in 2026.

The top non-OIC destinations with improvements in Halal dining are Singapore, United Kingdom (UK), Bosnia and Herzegovina, and North Macedonia.

Muslim-Friendly Hotels

The average score for the hospitality metric in the GMTI remained at 45, indicating a period of stabilization following previous gains. This performance underscores that while many destinations and hotel chains have successfully integrated fundamental faith-sensitive offerings, such as Halal dining options, prayer facilities, and Qibla indicators, the sector has a huge opportunity to improve further. To move forward, the hospitality industry must move beyond baseline amenities and further refine service design and staff training to maintain a competitive edge in an increasingly demanding market.

Heritage & Experience

The Heritage & Experience metric evaluates a destination's capacity for authentic cultural immersion. Connecting with Islamic history, local landmarks, and traditions provides Muslim travelers with a profound sense of purpose. While baseline experiences are widely available globally, destinations possess a significant strategic opportunity to further elevate and differentiate their unique cultural offerings.

Premium Transit Infrastructure: Optimizing Aviation and Maritime Gateways for Faith-Inclusive Hospitality

Hong Kong has continued to strengthen its position as a leading Muslim-friendly destination in Asia through a growing commitment to inclusive tourism and hospitality services. Recent developments in Hong Kong further demonstrate the destination's growing commitment to enhancing the Muslim traveler experience through improved facilities at key transport hubs. These enhancements reflect a broader destination-wide effort to integrate inclusivity and faith-based considerations into travel infrastructure, ensuring greater comfort and convenience.

Kai Tak Cruise Terminal

Located at Victoria Harbour, the Kai Tak Cruise Terminal is an architectural gem designed to host two of the world's largest cruise ships simultaneously. This terminal includes excellent facilities, such as scenic rooftop garden with 365-degree harbor views, free Wi-Fi, retail shops, and various restaurants. It is also highly accessible, offering convenient public transport links that easily connect travelers to nearby shopping malls, metro stations, and major transport hubs.

To better accommodate Muslim travelers, the terminal holds a CrescentRating Gold standard for its exceptional

Muslim-friendly hospitality. The facility is equipped with water-friendly toilets and ablution facilities for comfortable cleansing. A dedicated prayer room is available, complete with provided prayer rugs and clearly marked Qibla directions. Additionally, a selection of Halal-certified snacks are available on-site, ensuring a seamless and worry-free experience for Muslim cruise passengers.

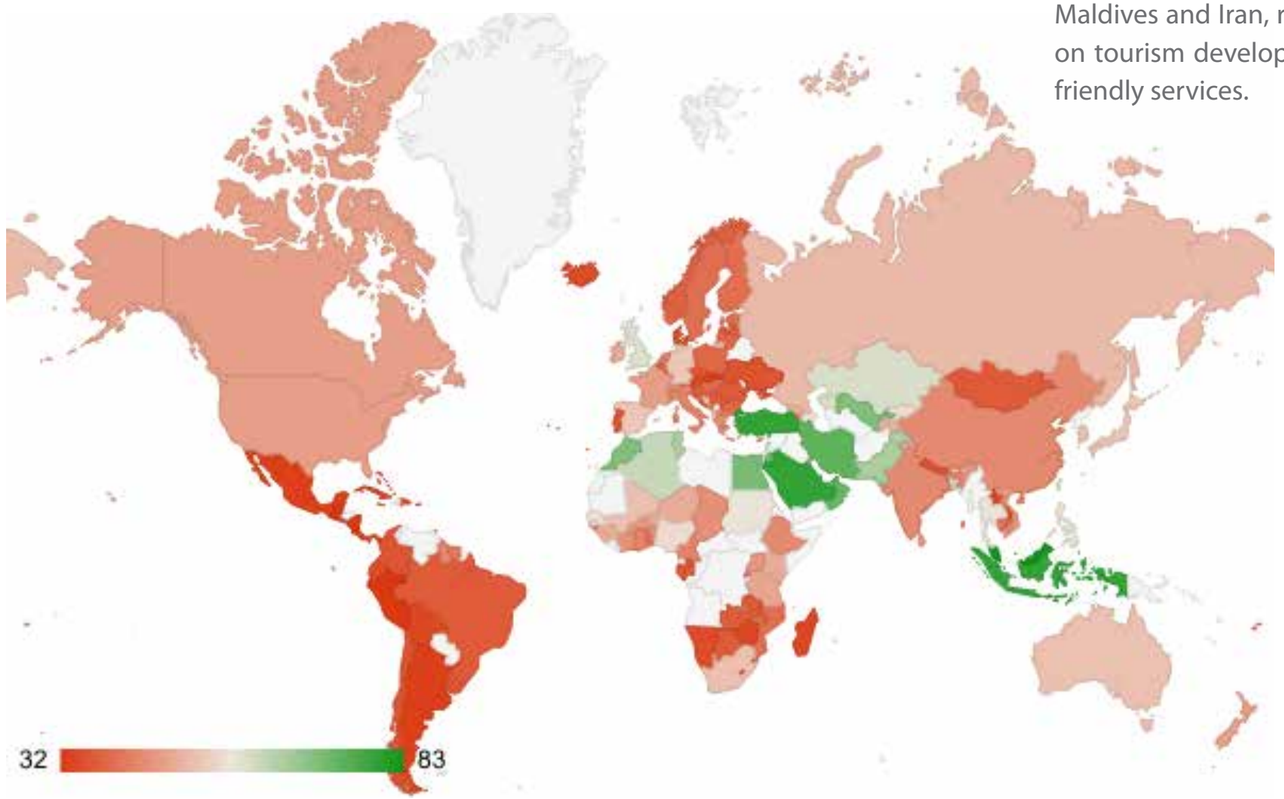
Hong Kong Business Aviation Center

Located at the Hong Kong International Airport, the Hong Kong Business Aviation Centre (HKBAC) is a world-class private jet terminal that holds the title as "Best Asian Fixed-Base Operator (FBO)" for 18 consecutive years. Since 1998, HKBAC has been Hong Kong's only business jet operator providing full aircraft technical support, ground handling, and VIP passenger services. It was also the first in Asia to offer on-site Customs, Immigration, and Quarantine (CIQ) services.

In September 2025, HKBAC upgraded its facility with a brand-new world-class terminal featuring Asia's first metal Sky Canopy. Notably, HKBAC has also adapted its premium services to meet the specific faith-based needs of Muslim travelers. Travelers can enjoy a selection of Halal-certified snacks readily available in the lounge. Additionally, to support their religious duties, prayer rugs are provided, and dedicated prayer rooms are available upon request.

GMTI 2026 Rankings - Subregional Analysis

Western Asia remains the leading subregion, followed closely by Northern Africa, supported by strong-performing Muslim-majority destinations such as Saudi Arabia, Türkiye, Egypt, and Morocco, which continue to demonstrate a deep understanding of Muslim-friendly travel needs.



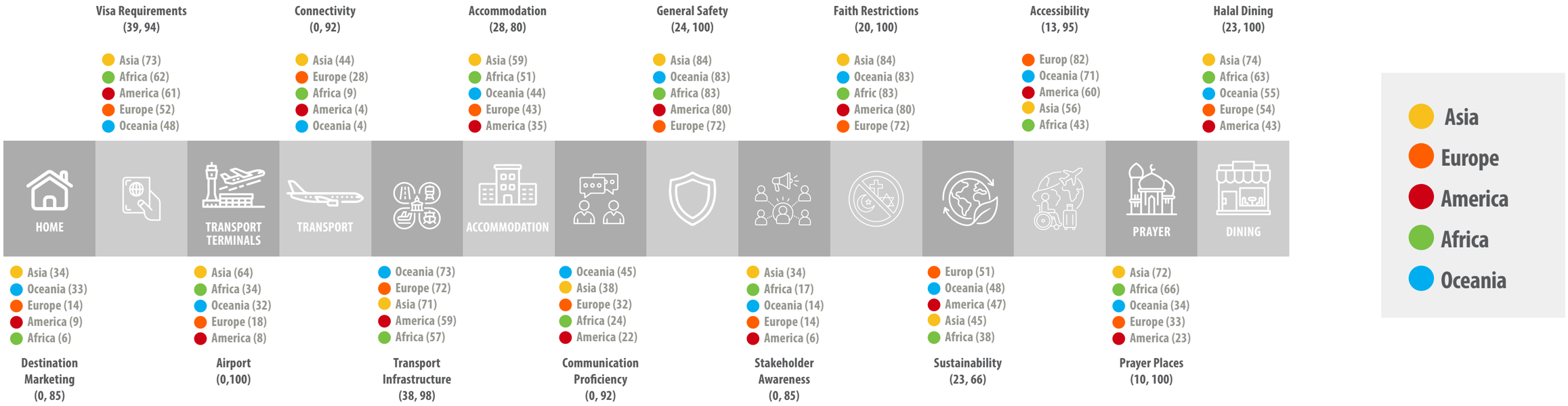
South-eastern Asia and Central Asia follow with strong regional averages of 60 and 59 respectively, driven by destinations such as Malaysia, Indonesia, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan, all of which benefit from strong Islamic heritage and growing tourism ecosystems. Southern Asia also recorded a competitive average score of 56, led by Maldives and Iran, reflecting the region's increasing focus on tourism development, cultural offerings, and Muslim-friendly services.

Regions such as Europe, the Americas, and parts of Africa continue to show gradual progress, though the comparatively lower regional averages indicate further opportunities to strengthen inclusivity and competitiveness within the global Muslim travel market. Oceania recorded a comparatively lower regional performance this year, highlighting opportunities for destinations within the region to further enhance Muslim-friendly offerings and maintain competitiveness within the evolving Muslim travel market.

Subregions	Average GMTI Score	Top Destinations
Western Asia	66	Saudi Arabia, Türkiye
Northern Africa	65	Egypt, Morocco
South-eastern Asia	60	Malaysia, Indonesia
Central Asia	59	Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan
Southern Asia	56	Iran, Maldives
Eastern Asia	51	Hong Kong, Taiwan
Western Africa	47	Senegal, Nigeria
Northern America	47	Canada, United States of America (USA)
Oceania	45	Australia, New Zealand
Eastern Africa	43	Comoros, Kenya
Southern Europe	43	Albania, Spain
Western Europe	42	Germany, France
Central Africa	41	Chad, Cameroon
Northern Europe	41	United Kingdom (UK), Ireland
Eastern Europe	39	Russia, Hungary
Southern Africa	38	South Africa, Botswana
Caribbean	37	Trinidad and Tobago, Aruba
South America	36	Guyana, Suriname
Central America	33	Belize, Costa Rica

Key Touchpoints of a Muslim Traveler: Regional Highlights and Opportunities

This page provides a visual representation of the ACES framework criteria throughout the traveler's journey, illustrating each element that shaped the Muslim travel experience from start to finish. At every stage of the journey, the overall average score is presented alongside the regional average scores, enabling clear comparisons across different parts of the world. These insights highlight regional strengths and gaps, offering better understanding of destination performance and identifying opportunities to further enhance the Muslim-friendly travel experience.



*(Minimum, Maximum GMTI score)
**(Average regional GMTI score)

09 ACCESSIBLE & MUSLIM WOMEN-FRIENDLY DESTINATIONS

Muslim-Friendly Accessible Destinations

Within a dynamic global sector, the GMTI 2026 index emphasizes universal design as an operational priority. Accessible travel and faith-compatible tourism are rapidly converging, transforming inclusive infrastructure into a mandatory industry benchmark.

Expanding Influence and Market Significance

Universal accessibility represents a massive growth sector, with over 1.3 billion people globally living with specialized physical or cognitive needs (UN Tourism). Because these individuals typically travel with companions, a vital factor for multi-generational Muslim families, the commercial potential is immense. This demand is reinforced by the 60% of households willing to pay premium rates for itineraries that accommodate neurodiverse travelers (TripAdvisor).

Evolving Trends and Traveler Preferences

This shift aligns seamlessly with Islamic principles centered on human dignity and inclusive care. However, while market demand is substantial, only 9% of international destinations currently offer robust accessibility solutions (UN Tourism). This vast supply gap presents a strategic window for destinations to capture long-term loyalty by deploying universally accessible, faith-friendly travel ecosystems.

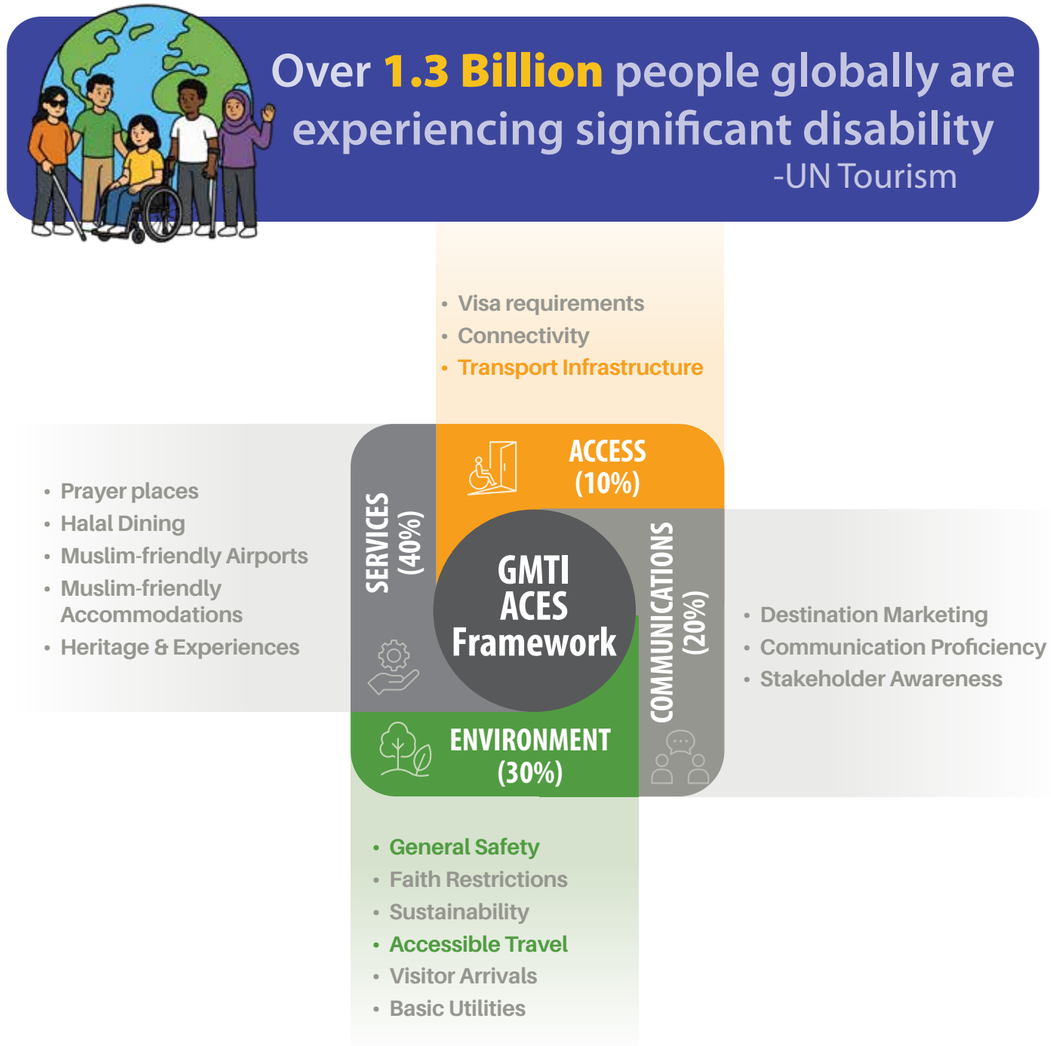
Core Criteria for Destination Evaluation

The GMTI evaluates Muslim-Friendly Accessible Destinations using criteria integrated from the Access dimension's transport infrastructure and the Environment dimension's safety and accessibility. These emphasize:

Accessibility: Ensuring a universally accessible environment, catering to diverse needs and ease of navigation for all travelers.

Transport Infrastructure: Assessing the ease of movement within the destination.

Safety: Ensuring that the destinations are safe for any travelers, regardless of their physical or cognitive conditions.



Muslim-Friendly Accessible Destinations - Top 20 OIC & Non-OIC Destinations

OIC Performance: Established Leadership and Regional Diversification

The Global Benchmarks: Malaysia continues to command the top position. Qatar maintains a resilient second place, showcasing the impact of robust, highly integrated accessibility networks.

Emerging Cross-Regional Momentum: While Asian nations historically anchor the top tiers, significant policy investments and rising operational readiness are driving strong index gains across other continents, notably led by Senegal, Morocco, Guyana, Tunisia, Gambia, and Algeria.

Non-OIC Performance: Premium Co-Leaders and Structural Inclusivity

The Inbound Co-Leaders: Hong Kong and Singapore successfully secure the top tier among non-OIC destinations. This leadership is directly driven by advanced public amenities, seamless citywide transit links, and specialized institutional awareness for differently-abled travelers.

East Asian Inclusivity Clusters: Regional peers Taiwan, Macao, Japan, and South Korea continue to achieve outstanding marks by standardizing highly accessible hospitality and urban environments.

European Tier Performance: Europe exhibits highly competitive structural readiness, marked by barrier-free integrations across key destinations, most notably Malta, Ireland, Iceland, the United Kingdom (UK), Greece, Czechia, Poland, Monaco, and Andorra.

OIC Destinations

Destination	Index Score	Rank
Malaysia	83	1
Qatar	80	2
Indonesia	76	3
Kuwait	76	3
Bahrain	75	5
Maldives	75	5
Brunei	74	7
Iran	73	8
Saudi Arabia	71	9
Oman	70	10
Senegal	70	10
United Arab Emirates (UAE)	69	12
Türkiye	68	13
Uzbekistan	67	14
Morocco	66	15
Jordan	63	16
Guyana	62	17
Algeria	61	18
Gambia	61	18
Tunisia	61	18

Non-OIC Destinations

Destination	Index Score	Rank
Hong Kong	84	1
Singapore	84	1
Taiwan	80	3
Macao	77	4
Malta	77	4
Ireland	76	6
Japan	76	6
South Korea	76	6
Iceland	75	9
United Kingdom (UK)	75	9
Czechia	74	11
Greece	74	11
Monaco	74	11
Poland	74	11
Australia	73	15
New Zealand	73	15
Reunion	73	15
Seychelles	73	15
Andorra	72	19
Uruguay	72	19

Muslim Women Friendly Destinations

Elevating Female-Centric Design: The GMTI 2026 framework spotlights Women Muslim-Friendly Travel Destinations as a critical growth frontier. This dimension highlights the strategic necessity of engineering travel spaces tailored to the specialized needs of Muslim women, acknowledging their ascending leadership and influence across the hospitality sector.

Disproportionate Market Leverage: Female travelers represent a highly lucrative, foundational segment of the global Halal tourism economy. This demographic exerts exceptional influence over destination selection, particularly within family and couple cohorts, where their direct input in trip planning and final decision-making is nearly double that of other travel groups.

Digital Drivers and Safety Expectations: The proliferation of social media and community-focused digital platforms has significantly amplified the voices and global visibility of female Muslim travelers. This shift is driving increased demand for destinations that natively support traveler autonomy, uncompromising personal safety, and seamless respect for faith-based cultural practices.

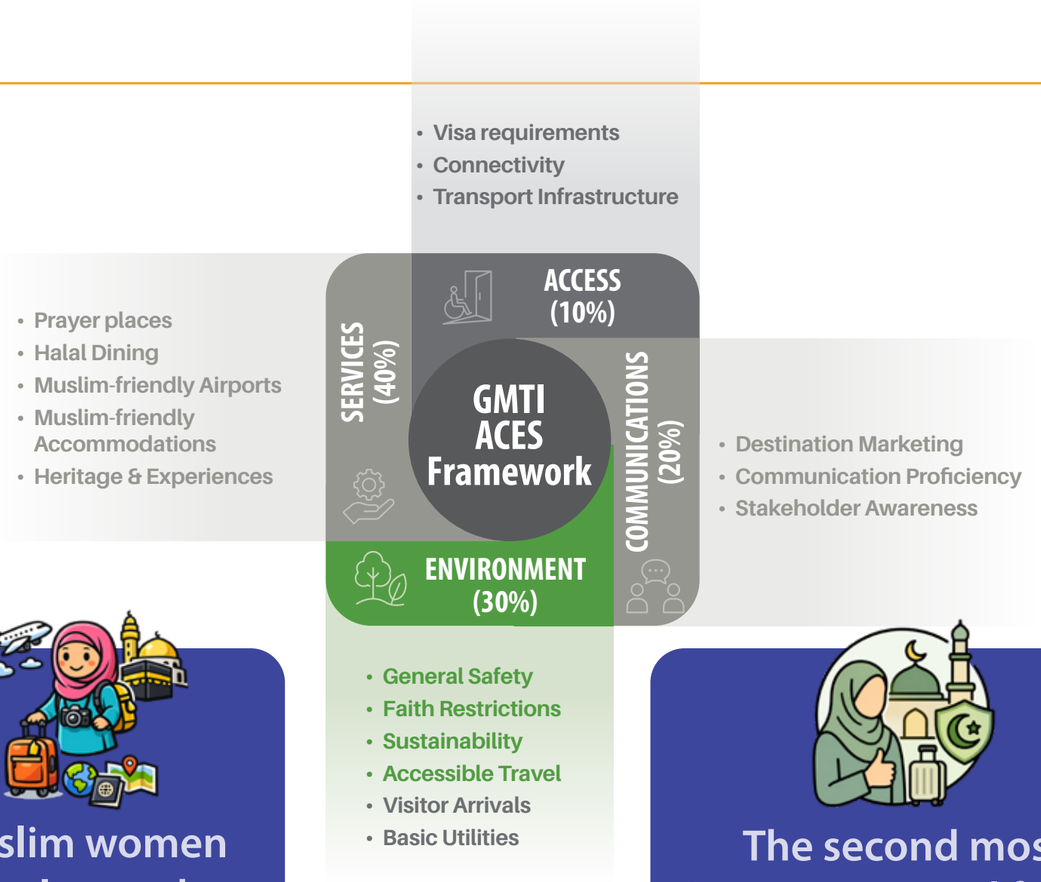
Key Criteria in Destination Assessment: The GMTI assesses Muslim Women-Friendly destinations using a set of tailored criteria integrated into the ACES model's Environment dimension. These criteria focus on:

Faith Restrictions: Evaluating how destinations accommodate religious practices and attire without imposing restrictions.

Safety: Ensuring that the destinations are safe for women travelers, addressing concerns from street safety to harassment.

Sustainability: Incorporating sustainable practices that align with the values of Muslim women travelers, such as eco-friendly tourism options and community-based tourism that benefits local women.

Muslim-friendliness: The overall Muslim-friendliness of the destination, derived from the GMTI scores.



Muslim women travelers make up 48% of global Muslim visitor arrivals.

The second most important travel factor for 30% of Muslim women travelers is Muslim-friendliness

Muslim Women Friendly Destinations - Top 20 OIC & Non-OIC Destinations

Integrating the core ACES environmental and security parameters, the 2026 index evaluates destinations that deliver maximum personal safety, supportive infrastructure, and minimal faith restrictions to ensure absolute peace of mind for female Muslim travelers.

OIC Market Performance: Resilient Leadership and Expanded Entry

The Sovereign Benchmarks: Malaysia successfully maintains its #1 position. Qatar continues its strong performance at rank #2, now joined by Indonesia, which advanced one spot this year.

Emerging Top 20 Competitors: The 2026 tier reflects expanding cross-border readiness, welcoming new entrants Bangladesh, Algeria, Gambia, and Tunisia into the top 20, signaling targeted national initiatives to cultivate safe, welcoming travel environments.

Non-OIC Market Performance: High-Security Hubs and Global Diversification

The Inbound Co-Leaders: Singapore retains the premier spot through exceptional structural safety and multicultural integration, while Hong Kong holds steady at rank #2.

Ascending Growth Catalysts: South Korea demonstrated the most notable upward mobility, surging from 10th place last year to co-hold the rank #3 position with Taiwan.

Geographic Footprint Expansion: Highlighting a broader global push to capture this high-yield demographic, the top 20 welcomes diverse leisure and island destinations outside of Asia, including Reunion, Mauritius, Seychelles, Vietnam, Cyprus, and Aruba.

OIC Destinations

Destination	Index Score	Rank
Malaysia	84	1
Indonesia	81	2
Qatar	81	2
Bahrain	79	4
Kuwait	79	4
Oman	79	4
Saudi Arabia	79	4
Brunei	78	8
Iran	78	8
Maldives	78	8
Türkiye	78	8
Jordan	74	12
Uzbekistan	74	12
Morocco	73	14
Senegal	73	14
Algeria	69	16
Bangladesh	69	16
Gambia	69	16
Lebanon	69	16
Tunisia	68	20

Non-OIC Destinations

Destination	Index Score	Rank
Singapore	82	1
Hong Kong	81	2
South Korea	78	3
Taiwan	78	3
Ireland	76	5
Japan	75	6
Malta	75	6
Reunion	74	8
Mauritius	73	9
Seychelles	73	9
Cyprus	72	11
Georgia	72	11
Iceland	72	11
Montenegro	72	11
New Zealand	72	11
Uruguay	72	11
Vietnam	72	11
Andorra	71	18
Aruba	71	18
Slovenia	71	18

10 GMTI 2026 RESULTS TABLES

	GMTI		ACCESS (10%)			COMMUNICATION (20%)			ENVIRONMENT (30%)						SERVICES (40%)				
Destination	2026 Rank	2026 Score	Connectivity	Visa Requirements	Transport Infra-structure	Communication Proficiency	Destination Marketing	Stakeholder Awareness	Basic Utilities	General Safety	Faith Restrictions	Sustainability	Visitor Arrivals	Accessibility	Halal Dining	Prayer Places	Airport	Heritage & Experiences	Accommo-dation
Albania	35	54	23	80	69	14	17	51	96	84	60	43	18	66	85	90	33	18	60
Algeria	22	62	36	42	56	70	3	34	87	84	80	42	60	47	90	100	67	20	72
Andorra	115	36	4	49	96	12	10	4	97	92	100	42	3	83	35	30	0	10	32
Argentina	140	33	3	56	60	3	7	8	94	64	100	50	1	70	40	10	0	12	32
Armenia	95	39	55	80	59	36	3	2	92	84	100	44	20	68	31	30	0	12	28
Aruba	101	38	2	49	70	24	7	1	97	92	100	48	1	71	40	30	17	10	32
Australia	39	52	8	41	77	55	72	22	99	75	80	56	10	86	70	30	46	21	56
Austria	133	34	56	49	83	35	3	12	98	51	26	51	17	86	60	25	9	11	40
Azerbaijan	27	58	82	69	78	25	19	34	93	84	60	51	27	52	75	100	63	19	60
Bahamas	106	37	3	70	59	51	10	1	92	84	100	47	1	66	35	25	0	11	28
Bahrain	7	74	33	72	77	76	26	33	99	84	100	45	85	70	97	100	100	20	72
Bangladesh	23	60	38	58	55	12	7	43	73	84	100	31	6	26	93	100	87	19	69
Belgium	101	38	52	49	70	41	3	15	99	56	20	56	8	93	60	50	20	15	40
Belize	128	35	0	54	59	36	10	1	79	84	100	41	1	56	35	30	0	11	28
Benin	66	45	3	60	74	10	0	11	46	84	100	40	15	48	55	70	33	14	48
Bolivia	133	34	0	68	49	4	0	1	74	84	100	48	1	63	40	25	0	11	32
Bosnia and Herzegovina	45	50	24	56	48	14	21	52	92	77	60	42	12	74	75	80	32	20	60
Botswana	106	37	0	79	65	21	3	2	85	92	100	43	1	70	45	30	0	3	36
Brazil	106	37	6	64	55	2	10	10	89	71	100	58	3	62	45	25	0	23	36
Brunei	16	68	17	69	60	39	30	35	97	92	100	45	13	57	100	100	100	12	80
Bulgaria	95	39	38	49	62	16	3	13	94	75	60	51	25	78	50	50	18	15	36
Burkina Faso	60	46	7	58	53	10	3	23	37	76	100	32	14	42	70	70	33	15	56
Cabo Verde	140	33	0	69	66	1	0	1	80	92	100	35	4	56	25	25	0	11	48
Cambodia	88	40	9	68	56	12	33	12	75	84	100	40	5	39	38	30	27	15	34
Cameroon	76	43	7	56	52	39	2	12	54	76	60	41	11	41	55	90	33	16	44
Canada	56	47	28	42	76	57	3	43	98	74	60	47	6	80	65	50	37	21	56
Chad	66	45	8	39	42	21	3	15	30	76	60	26	12	26	65	70	93	16	52
Chile	115	36	2	58	73	4	10	3	96	84	100	47	1	71	40	25	0	15	32
China	70	44	67	54	89	1	42	37	94	65	34	65	43	44	55	30	19	62	40
Colombia	115	36	4	74	60	1	12	3	86	76	100	53	1	76	35	25	7	11	36
Comoros	34	55	0	66	43	23	0	24	48	84	100	33	5	38	95	100	57	14	76
Costa Rica	133	34	4	54	58	4	17	1	94	84	100	47	1	68	40	10	0	11	32

	GMTI		ACCESS (10%)			COMMUNICATION (20%)			ENVIRONMENT (30%)						SERVICES (40%)				
Destination	2026 Rank	2026 Score	Connectivity	Visa Requirements	Transport Infra-structure	Communication Proficiency	Destination Marketing	Stakeholder Awareness	Basic Utilities	General Safety	Faith Restrictions	Sustainability	Visitor Arrivals	Accessibility	Halal Dining	Prayer Places	Airport	Heritage & Experiences	Accommo-dation
Cote d'Ivoire	66	45	3	58	69	15	0	26	66	84	100	41	21	46	50	60	33	16	40
Croatia	101	38	12	49	72	30	3	6	94	80	100	57	11	74	40	25	6	12	44
Cuba	140	33	3	58	48	4	17	1	84	84	100	49	2	72	35	10	0	10	28
Cyprus	60	46	16	49	61	44	17	14	99	84	100	49	6	77	55	70	0	17	48
Czechia	115	36	46	49	75	20	0	5	97	78	100	52	13	91	40	10	0	15	36
Denmark	128	35	32	49	82	47	3	11	99	52	44	49	32	91	50	25	9	11	40
Dominican Republic	115	36	5	60	63	1	14	1	80	84	100	46	2	51	35	10	33	12	28
Ecuador	128	35	2	85	62	16	3	2	80	76	100	49	1	56	40	10	11	11	32
Egypt	13	71	48	69	80	88	36	43	91	84	80	37	53	19	93	100	100	42	72
El Salvador	140	33	3	69	58	4	3	1	71	84	100	42	0	57	35	25	0	11	28
Estonia	88	40	11	49	72	64	7	3	99	92	86	53	2	85	50	10	28	11	40
Eswatini (formerly Swaziland)	140	33	0	55	65	27	3	0	70	84	100	40	3	38	23	30	0	11	32
Ethiopia	70	44	4	64	67	0	7	12	33	76	100	36	16	30	65	50	43	23	52
Fiji	84	41	1	63	70	15	10	7	83	84	100	37	2	53	45	50	30	12	36
Finland	88	40	18	49	84	33	17	5	99	54	84	54	7	86	50	25	33	10	40
France	56	47	57	49	82	28	14	20	97	44	40	66	57	76	65	50	46	45	37
Gabon	115	36	0	58	43	14	0	7	74	84	100	44	8	44	40	30	17	13	36
Gambia	39	52	1	77	45	1	2	24	60	84	100	33	4	44	90	100	33	13	72
Georgia	49	49	68	85	77	17	0	8	93	80	100	48	51	81	50	50	33	14	40
Germany	36	53	50	49	75	38	60	32	98	64	60	53	20	85	61	50	53	48	52
Ghana	76	43	7	43	62	39	7	12	63	84	100	39	14	39	50	50	33	13	40
Greece	70	44	61	51	69	21	3	12	96	86	86	52	40	93	55	40	13	23	44
Guam	88	40	1	43	70	53	7	0	89	84	100	49	0	59	40	30	33	11	32
Guatemala	148	32	2	69	46	4	0	1	70	84	100	41	1	26	40	10	17	11	32
Guinea	49	49	4	61	43	9	0	22	47	84	100	37	15	25	85	100	17	15	68
Guinea-Bissau	84	41	0	66	38	1	0	12	43	84	100	32	9	41	60	50	33	13	48
Guyana	70	44	0	54	43	58	0	9	80	84	100	43	1	58	55	70	17	13	40
Hong Kong	20	64	22	87	98	26	85	40	99	92	100	47	10	95	65	55	80	20	60
Hungary	88	40	30	49	72	11	3	24	97	49	100	52	8	72	50	25	20	18	40
Iceland	128	35	1	49	66	58	17	4	99	100	84	50	3	94	27	10	0	11	32
India	70	44	45	54	64	13	3	19	70	42	50	41	49	51	70	50	47	60	50
Indonesia	2	79	27	69	79	44	85	85	90	92	100	45	30	53	100	100	100	40	80
Iran	7	74	60	82	53	31	3	54	85	76	100	51	90	76	100	100	100	55	80

	GMTI		ACCESS (10%)			COMMUNICATION (20%)			ENVIRONMENT (30%)						SERVICES (40%)				
Destination	2026 Rank	2026 Score	Connectivity	Visa Requirements	Transport Infra-structure	Communication Proficiency	Destination Marketing	Stakeholder Awareness	Basic Utilities	General Safety	Faith Restrictions	Sustainability	Visitor Arrivals	Accessibility	Halal Dining	Prayer Places	Airport	Heritage & Experiences	Accommo-dation
Ireland	49	49	22	48	69	60	3	6	92	92	100	50	4	84	60	50	53	11	48
Italy	76	43	46	49	69	17	14	15	95	50	68	64	29	88	50	25	33	60	48
Jamaica	106	37	4	58	56	59	17	2	86	84	100	45	1	49	29	30	0	13	32
Japan	36	53	16	64	98	10	59	24	97	81	100	63	18	81	59	10	67	29	48
Jordan	12	72	78	78	75	90	3	37	96	84	100	44	70	31	93	100	100	22	72
Kazakhstan	23	60	69	89	61	36	12	46	95	79	40	44	85	48	80	90	60	17	53
Kenya	49	49	27	63	67	9	3	43	55	80	100	44	10	40	65	60	47	19	52
Kuwait	7	74	84	65	60	70	25	33	98	92	100	38	99	58	95	100	100	13	76
Kyrgyzstan	32	56	68	82	53	24	3	29	90	84	60	45	43	57	71	90	47	13	56
Laos	133	34	1	67	60	26	7	2	74	92	100	38	3	37	30	25	0	13	29
Latvia	106	37	18	49	58	41	7	3	96	80	66	50	2	77	45	30	27	12	40
Lebanon	20	64	32	72	41	92	7	24	91	76	100	42	27	27	80	100	93	21	68
Lesotho	140	33	0	52	65	14	0	0	61	84	100	34	2	58	45	25	0	11	36
Lithuania	95	39	14	49	71	31	7	3	96	78	100	49	3	77	50	25	9	15	40
Luxembourg	95	39	36	49	89	69	10	5	99	87	68	49	4	95	50	25	0	11	40
Macao	45	50	5	89	98	22	77	2	95	92	100	49	5	88	53	40	23	11	43
Madagascar	133	34	3	66	43	6	3	6	38	84	100	37	5	30	55	25	0	15	44
Malawi	115	36	1	61	51	1	3	6	48	84	100	37	6	28	50	50	0	11	40
Malaysia	1	83	55	94	75	71	83	82	97	92	100	47	57	75	100	100	100	22	80
Maldives	17	66	28	67	70	58	17	32	89	92	100	36	7	65	100	100	87	10	80
Mali	39	52	0	48	53	25	3	27	53	76	100	35	15	53	85	100	33	18	52
Malta	76	43	13	49	59	54	17	3	99	92	100	50	4	93	50	30	17	14	40
Mauritius	54	48	17	86	70	9	17	17	91	92	100	49	4	61	66	50	27	15	48
Mexico	140	33	12	50	60	5	3	7	87	76	100	51	6	40	40	10	0	28	32
Monaco	115	36	4	49	89	28	0	3	99	92	100	40	4	89	40	25	0	9	32
Mongolia	106	37	4	60	46	1	14	5	85	92	100	49	4	38	35	50	0	12	29
Montenegro	83	42	1	71	60	1	17	12	92	92	100	45	9	70	70	25	0	14	52
Morocco	14	70	29	83	65	63	37	41	90	84	80	48	27	56	95	100	100	36	76
Mozambique	88	40	0	61	43	10	0	9	41	84	100	35	4	29	50	55	33	18	40
Namibia	128	35	0	64	74	8	7	1	69	92	100	39	2	40	45	30	0	11	36
Nepal	115	36	16	67	51	20	17	12	64	84	100	36	6	46	42	25	0	14	33
Netherlands	76	43	53	49	92	58	3	19	97	53	60	48	13	86	60	50	14	12	52

	GMTI		ACCESS (10%)			COMMUNICATION (20%)			ENVIRONMENT (30%)						SERVICES (40%)				
Destination	2026 Rank	2026 Score	Connectivity	Visa Requirements	Transport Infra-structure	Communication Proficiency	Destination Marketing	Stakeholder Awareness	Basic Utilities	General Safety	Faith Restrictions	Sustainability	Visitor Arrivals	Accessibility	Halal Dining	Prayer Places	Airport	Heritage & Experiences	Accommo-dation
New Zealand	56	47	5	47	75	57	43	28	98	90	84	53	3	87	65	25	17	11	52
Nicaragua	148	32	0	78	56	16	3	1	65	84	100	42	0	53	35	10	0	11	28
Niger	49	49	1	41	43	2	0	22	33	76	100	30	11	20	90	100	33	18	72
Nigeria	32	56	23	56	47	51	29	51	60	72	100	37	20	33	70	90	50	13	56
North Macedonia (formerly Macedonia)	76	43	0	53	56	1	10	18	93	92	80	40	14	64	75	50	13	14	56
Norway	101	38	15	49	81	54	17	9	98	78	64	52	4	81	50	25	0	10	56
Oman	10	73	81	85	82	71	32	36	96	92	100	53	22	41	97	100	100	18	76
Pakistan	18	65	40	69	65	42	3	58	63	76	100	23	18	21	96	100	100	26	76
Panama	133	34	3	68	67	7	7	2	86	84	100	49	1	53	45	10	0	11	36
Peru	148	32	2	58	53	4	10	3	79	84	100	50	1	39	40	10	0	13	32
Philippines	27	58	22	87	60	41	76	46	77	84	100	43	6	28	62	50	70	16	50
Poland	95	39	54	49	71	16	0	5	96	62	100	52	6	86	50	25	9	19	40
Portugal	115	36	16	49	79	16	18	6	97	52	60	62	10	87	60	10	20	20	44
Puerto Rico	115	36	2	41	58	27	10	1	91	84	100	48	3	75	45	25	0	11	36
Qatar	5	76	90	74	89	70	36	51	99	92	100	39	44	71	100	100	100	16	80
Reunion	60	46	1	49	70	10	3	5	72	92	100	47	4	78	60	100	3	12	48
Romania	106	37	16	49	62	19	0	8	94	88	100	50	5	61	37	30	3	17	36
Russia	44	51	55	55	55	35	31	46	92	60	80	44	57	74	53	50	37	37	44
Rwanda	95	39	4	75	71	7	0	7	61	84	100	35	5	50	40	75	0	13	32
Saudi Arabia	2	79	91	68	80	64	41	51	97	84	100	47	100	52	100	100	100	37	80
Senegal	31	57	9	68	59	25	0	34	76	84	100	39	10	69	85	100	53	17	64
Serbia	106	37	18	67	65	28	0	12	94	52	100	48	10	77	50	20	0	15	40
Seychelles	70	44	0	59	52	12	17	5	90	92	100	39	7	80	55	70	0	13	56
Sierra Leone	45	50	1	64	43	50	3	18	39	84	100	35	9	37	60	80	60	14	48
Singapore	10	73	27	82	98	66	83	53	100	92	100	45	34	87	91	70	87	16	61
Slovakia	140	33	12	49	62	19	0	5	94	82	86	49	2	83	40	10	9	10	32
Slovenia	101	38	12	49	63	41	10	6	98	92	100	50	6	74	55	10	0	10	44
South Africa	39	52	8	75	64	17	26	19	85	70	100	40	6	62	65	60	67	17	52
South Korea	39	52	20	56	94	10	55	41	99	92	100	65	13	81	60	25	43	15	44
Spain	36	53	43	50	82	16	77	26	98	84	60	66	41	83	60	35	33	70	48
Sri Lanka	60	46	28	57	59	36	34	19	84	83	60	42	12	49	59	70	30	14	45

	GMTI		ACCESS (10%)			COMMUNICATION (20%)			ENVIRONMENT (30%)						SERVICES (40%)				
Destination	2026 Rank	2026 Score	Connectivity	Visa Requirements	Transport Infra-structure	Communication Proficiency	Destination Marketing	Stakeholder Awareness	Basic Utilities	General Safety	Faith Restrictions	Sustainability	Visitor Arrivals	Accessibility	Halal Dining	Prayer Places	Airport	Heritage & Experiences	Accommo-dation
Sudan	27	58	29	43	56	61	3	22	43	60	100	34	28	13	95	100	60	12	64
Suriname	84	41	0	90	43	51	10	9	87	84	100	36	2	45	50	10	33	16	40
Sweden	88	40	15	49	81	48	30	11	98	62	72	51	13	92	60	25	7	13	40
Switzerland	66	45	59	49	96	45	58	12	99	61	44	52	10	89	51	50	30	11	40
Taiwan	25	59	11	59	98	26	85	27	97	92	100	44	9	87	65	50	63	20	56
Tajikistan	45	50	59	83	66	22	3	25	70	84	20	35	51	36	70	100	60	12	64
Tanzania	54	48	12	65	67	17	7	12	48	84	100	38	7	40	70	70	33	20	60
Thailand	27	58	37	88	66	15	57	35	96	80	100	48	40	31	61	50	80	10	52
Togo	84	41	4	57	38	11	0	9	58	84	100	41	14	42	55	50	33	14	44
Trinidad and Tobago	76	43	0	57	56	58	18	9	92	84	100	45	1	59	70	30	7	14	52
Tunisia	18	65	36	82	50	92	3	37	84	80	80	43	73	45	92	100	67	24	72
Türkiye	2	79	65	89	76	22	45	82	97	76	100	57	73	55	95	100	100	65	76
Uganda	60	46	20	57	67	27	3	12	35	84	100	33	8	37	65	50	53	15	52
Ukraine	115	36	0	79	59	15	0	4	91	60	100	45	5	76	45	10	15	14	36
United Arab Emirates (UAE)	6	75	92	75	91	87	19	48	99	54	100	41	85	49	100	100	100	23	80
United Kingdom (UK)	25	59	40	49	74	62	22	39	98	44	100	59	22	70	80	70	61	36	56
United States of America (USA)	56	47	20	41	81	56	22	29	99	24	100	48	19	51	60	35	37	31	48
Uruguay	115	36	0	54	67	12	7	3	94	92	100	49	1	82	40	25	0	11	32
Uzbekistan	14	70	65	86	71	27	57	34	91	84	88	42	91	55	85	100	80	29	60
Vietnam	60	46	20	67	64	30	50	20	92	92	100	45	12	65	45	25	26	17	37
Zambia	106	37	0	80	59	7	7	2	56	84	100	39	7	38	50	25	13	11	40
Zimbabwe	133	34	0	63	48	49	0	1	50	84	100	39	6	41	29	30	0	11	32

11 DATA SOURCES, METHODOLOGY & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Technical Notes

Data Collection and Sources

To ensure a comprehensive and accurate assessment, the data underpinning the Global Muslim Travel Index (GMTI) is gathered through a rigorous, multi-layered research process. This methodology combines CrescentRating's proprietary data platforms with extensive primary research, advanced data modeling, and trusted external benchmarks to provide a holistic view of the global travel landscape.

- **Primary Research & AI-Assisted Sourcing:** CrescentRating's in-house research team deploys a hybrid intelligence model, combining deep-dive data extraction from official global tourism registries with advanced AI tools and social listening to systematically aggregate high-integrity market data.
- **Proprietary Data Insights:** The index draws heavily from historical and real-time data maintained within CrescentRating's own CR MAPS platform, alongside insights from previous research conducted by both CrescentRating and HalalTrip.
- **Advanced Data Modeling:** To translate raw data into actionable intelligence, specialized data extraction and analytical models are utilized to isolate specific trends and indicators.
- **Trusted Third-Party Benchmarks:** To complement internal research, the index integrates a select number of standardized datasets from leading international organizations and global indices. These include the United Nations (UN), the World Bank, UN Tourism (formerly UNWTO), UNESCO, the World Economic Forum (WEF), Our World in Data, Vision of Humanity, the Global Innovation Index, and IQAir.
- **On-the-Ground Expert Panels:** To capture nuances that data alone might miss, the methodology incorporates qualitative feedback from a panel of destination experts. These specialists provide essential, localized perspectives on the actual availability, quality, and readiness of Muslim-friendly facilities within each destination.

Data Utilization and Projections

GMTI utilizes data primarily from the current year, with this report incorporating data from 2025 and early 2026. The cut-off date for data used in this report is the end of March 2026, ensuring the most up-to-date information is included.

Data from Recent Years: In some instances, certain datasets may not be available for the current year. In these cases, GMTI resorts to using data from the most recent previous years. This ensures a comprehensive overview of the travel industry, avoiding significant data gaps.

Three-Pronged Approach: To maintain the continuity, comprehensiveness, and reliability of the index when specific, real-time data for a destination is unavailable, the GMTI utilizes a three-pronged estimation framework:

- **Trend Projections:** This method leverages a destination's own historical data patterns to estimate current figures. By analyzing past growth rates and seasonal trends, the framework provides an informed, mathematically consistent calculation to fill temporary reporting gaps.
- **Comparative Proxies:** In situations where data is missing but strong structural similarities exist between markets, data from a comparable destination is utilized as a proxy. This ensures the estimation reflects realistic behavior by pairing destinations with aligned cultural, economic, or inbound travel patterns.
- **AI-Driven Modeling and Benchmarking:** For destinations lacking both recent historical data and direct regional proxies, advanced machine learning models are deployed. These models analyze broader global benchmarks and evaluate data from peer economies with similar macroeconomic indicators to generate precise, context-aware estimates.

Data Normalization Techniques

GMTI utilizes two primary normalization techniques to ensure that the data is comparable and standardized across diverse variables: Clipping Normalization and Linear Normalization.

Clipping Normalization is a technique where a maximum (and possibly minimum) value for a data set is defined, and these defined maxima and minima are assigned to any outlier data points that fall beyond these set boundaries. This method is used when dealing with data that contains extreme values or outliers that might distort the overall analysis. By 'clipping' these outliers to a predetermined maximum or minimum, it is ensured that they don't disproportionately influence the results.

Linear Normalization, on the other hand, transforms all data points to fall within a predefined range. This process maintains the original distribution of the data while ensuring all values are within a comparable range. This

normalization technique is particularly used when combining data of different units, scales, or magnitudes, as it brings them all to a uniform scale without losing their original relational differences.

Calculating GMTI Scores

The calculation of scores for each destination follows a three-step process that is embedded within the ACES Framework.

The Two-Tiered Approach: Each of the four main categories - Access, Communication, Environment, and Services, comprises two distinct tiers of data. This structured approach ensures that every critical aspect within each category is duly considered.

Weighted Average Calculations for Subcategories: The individual scores for each subcategory are computed based on a weighted average of the number of data sets contained within that subcategory. This process ensures that each element within the subcategory influences the final score, in proportion to its relevance and importance.

Overall GMTI Score Determination: The comprehensive score for each destination, is determined by calculating the weighted average of the four main categories. This final score offers a robust and fair representation of the destination's Muslim-friendliness based on access, communication, environment, and services.

Strategic Navigation with the GMTI Performance Matrix (GPM) 2026

The GMTI Performance Matrix (GPM) continues to be a pivotal analytical tool in the Global Muslim Travel Index, providing essential insights into how global destinations perform and tap into the Muslim travel market. By integrating GMTI scores with the percentage of Muslim visitor arrivals, the GPM offers a detailed overview of a destination's effectiveness in catering to and attracting Muslim travelers.

Matrix Configuration

The GPM organizes destinations into four distinct quadrants, each named to reflect the specific characteristics of the destinations within them:

- **Quadrant I - Trailblazers:** High GMTI Score / High Muslim Visitor Percentage
- **Quadrant II - Emerging Destinations:** High GMTI Score / Low Muslim Visitor Percentage
- **Quadrant III - Potential Leaders:** Low GMTI Score / Low Muslim Visitor Percentage
- **Quadrant IV - Untapped Potential:** Low GMTI Score / High Muslim Visitor Percentage

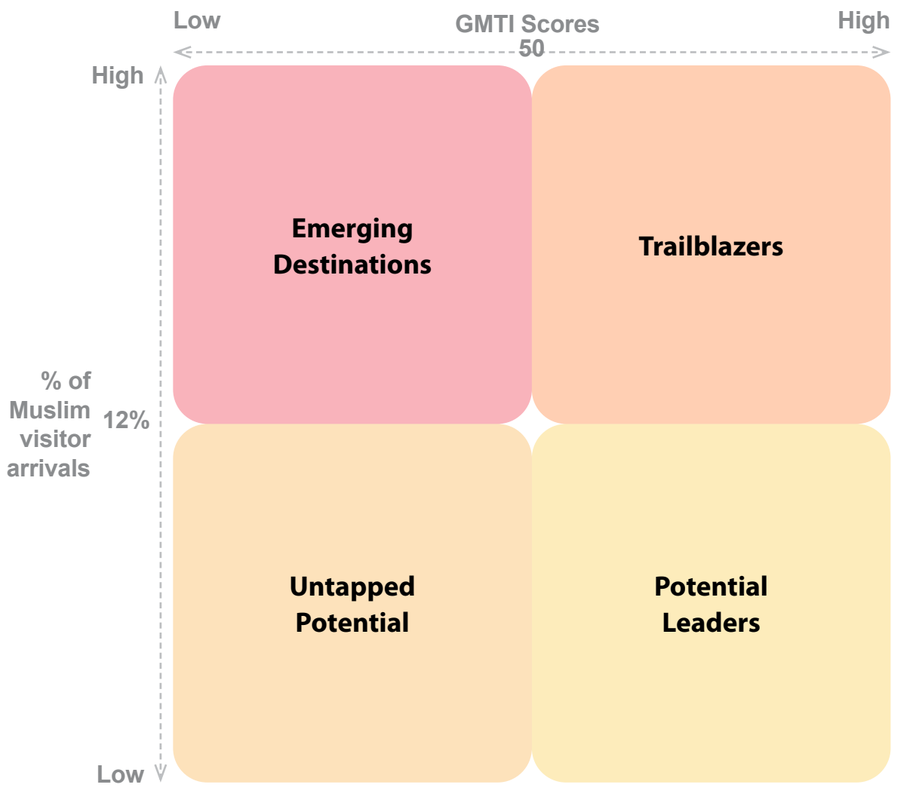
These categories enable destinations to clearly understand their current standing in the Muslim travel market and identify strategic areas for growth and improvement.

Strategic Application

The GPM serves as a roadmap for destinations to refine their offerings and marketing strategies to better connect with Muslim travelers:

- **Enhancing Services and Infrastructure:** For destinations such as those in Quadrant II (Emerging Destinations) and Quadrant IV (Untapped Potential), there is a clear incentive to elevate service quality and infrastructure to better meet the needs of Muslim travelers and move towards Quadrant I (Trailblazers).
- **Focused Marketing and Outreach:** Destinations in Quadrant III (Potential Leaders) and Quadrant IV (Untapped Potential) can benefit from targeted marketing campaigns designed to increase their visibility among Muslim travelers and potentially shift their position to a higher quadrant.

The midpoint for GMTI scores is set at 50, establishing an industry benchmark, while the midpoint for Muslim visitor arrivals has been set to 12%.



GMTI Digital Ecosystem: Interactive & Multilingual Hub

14 Native Languages.

Global Localization: Breaking language barriers by launching dedicated pages across 14 international languages, ensuring regional tourism ministries and investment bodies can access localized insights seamlessly.

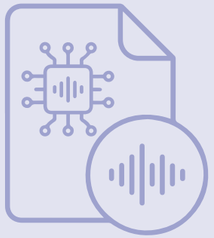
Interactive Data Elements.

Dynamic Analytics: Move beyond traditional reading. Users can directly interact with live data modules, filter destination performance indicators, and cross-reference ACES benchmarks.

AI-Powered Audio.

Audio Summaries: High-level executive briefs delivered via crisp, automated audio summaries for on-the-go professionals.

Audio Debates: Immersive, multi-perspective policy debates, breaking down complex global travel trends into highly engaging conversational insights.



Instant Full-Report Access.

Unified, single-click portal to instantly download the complete GMTI 2026 Full Report (PDF) for offline deep dives, strategic planning, and citation.

Scan the responsive asset matrix on the portal to activate your interactive experience.

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CrescentRating is the world's leading authority on Halal-friendly travel. The company's vision is to lead, innovate and drive this segment through practical and deliverable solutions in what is regarded today as one of the fastest growing segments in the tourism sector.

The company uses insight, industry intelligence, lifestyle, behavior and research on the needs of the Muslim traveler to deliver authoritative guidance on all aspects of Halal-friendly travel to organizations across the globe.

www.crescentrating.com

HalalTrip's vision is to be the trusted global online platform, catering for Muslim travelers to make inspired and educated travel choices. It is the most comprehensive and innovative platform with its next generation mobile app.

It aims to make destination discovery and trip planning fun and more intuitive for those looking for a Halal-friendly travel experience.

www.halaltrip.com

Halal In Travel Global Summit

June 2027

HALAL IN TRAVEL
Global Summit 2027

Attend the most influential event in the Halal Tourism space. The industry stakeholders will set the stage for building a resilient and sustainable future Muslim/Halal Tourism Market.

The 3-day event will also see the launch of the Mastercard-CrescentRating Global Muslim Travel Index 2027 and Halal In Travel Awards 2027.

Contact info@crescentrating.com for sponsorship and speaking opportunities

Halal In Travel Awards

June 2027

Mastercard-CrescentRating GMTI Awards
Muslim-Friendly Service Provider Awards
Halal Travel Personalities of the Year
HalalTrip Travelers Choice Awards

Halal In Travel Awards is a celebration of the travel industry players' efforts to make Halal travel a seamless experience. These awards recognize destinations, organizations, companies, and individuals who have made a considerable impact on the Muslim lifestyle travel segment spanning different categories..

Nominate organizations or individuals for 2027 awards

To nominate, visit https://www.crescentrating.com/hit-awards.html

CONTENT CREATOR TANK

is your destination looking for muslim storytellers?

JUDGE THE PITCH, CHOOSE YOUR WINNER.

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are you a content creator?

PITCH THE VISION, EARN YOUR JOURNEY.

halaltrip Gastronomy Awards 2026

HalalTrip Gastronomy Awards 2026

Nominations for 2026 will open soon. Stay tuned.

halaltrip.com/halaltrip-gastronomy-awards

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PEOPLE AWARDS 2026

The HalalTrip People Awards celebrate grassroots Muslims

whose impact is shaped by service, care, and community

Know someone making a difference?

Nominations for the 2027 HalalTrip People Awards
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CR MAPS

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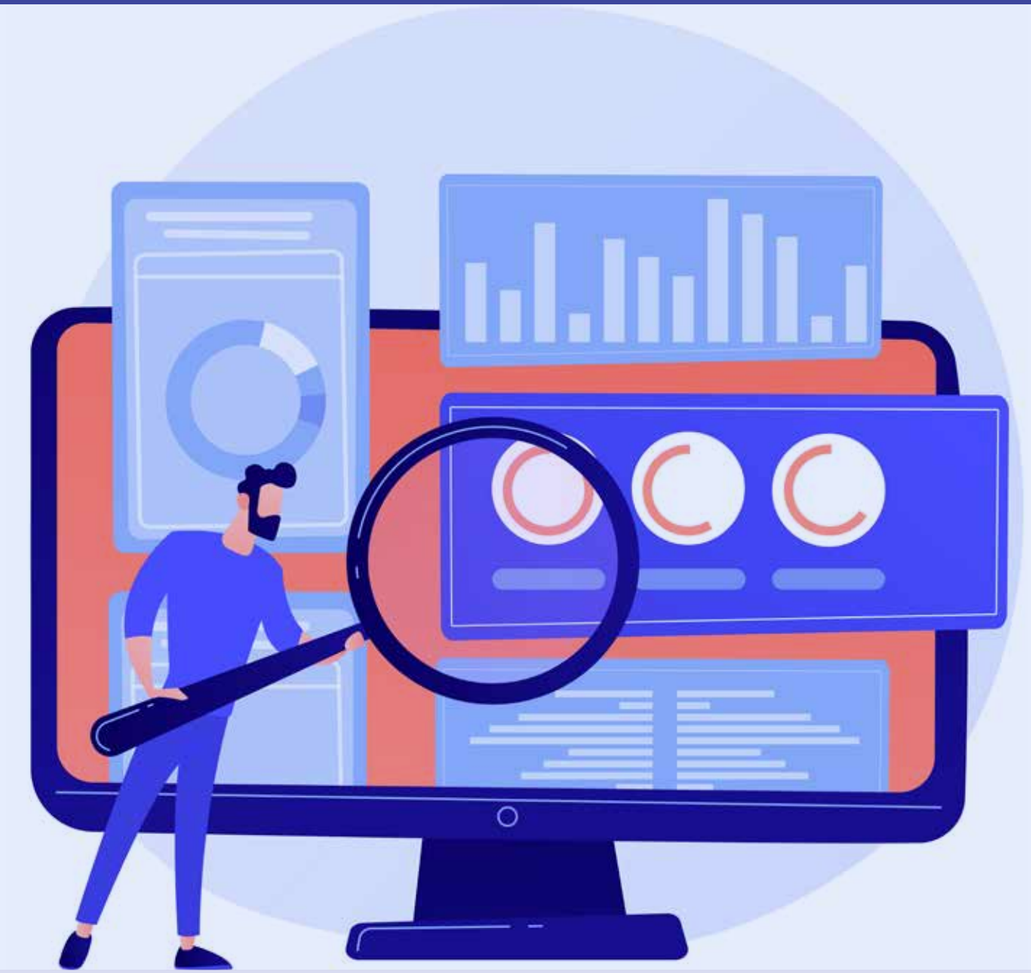
Explore exclusive insights into the Muslim market and empower your organization to make faster, more impactful business decisions.

A comprehensive database features the latest worldwide trends and developments in the global Muslim market.

Gain access into our extensive database to explore and obtain insights from a multitude of information about the Muslim market at a global, regional and country level.



Contact us at **info@crescentrating.com** for more information

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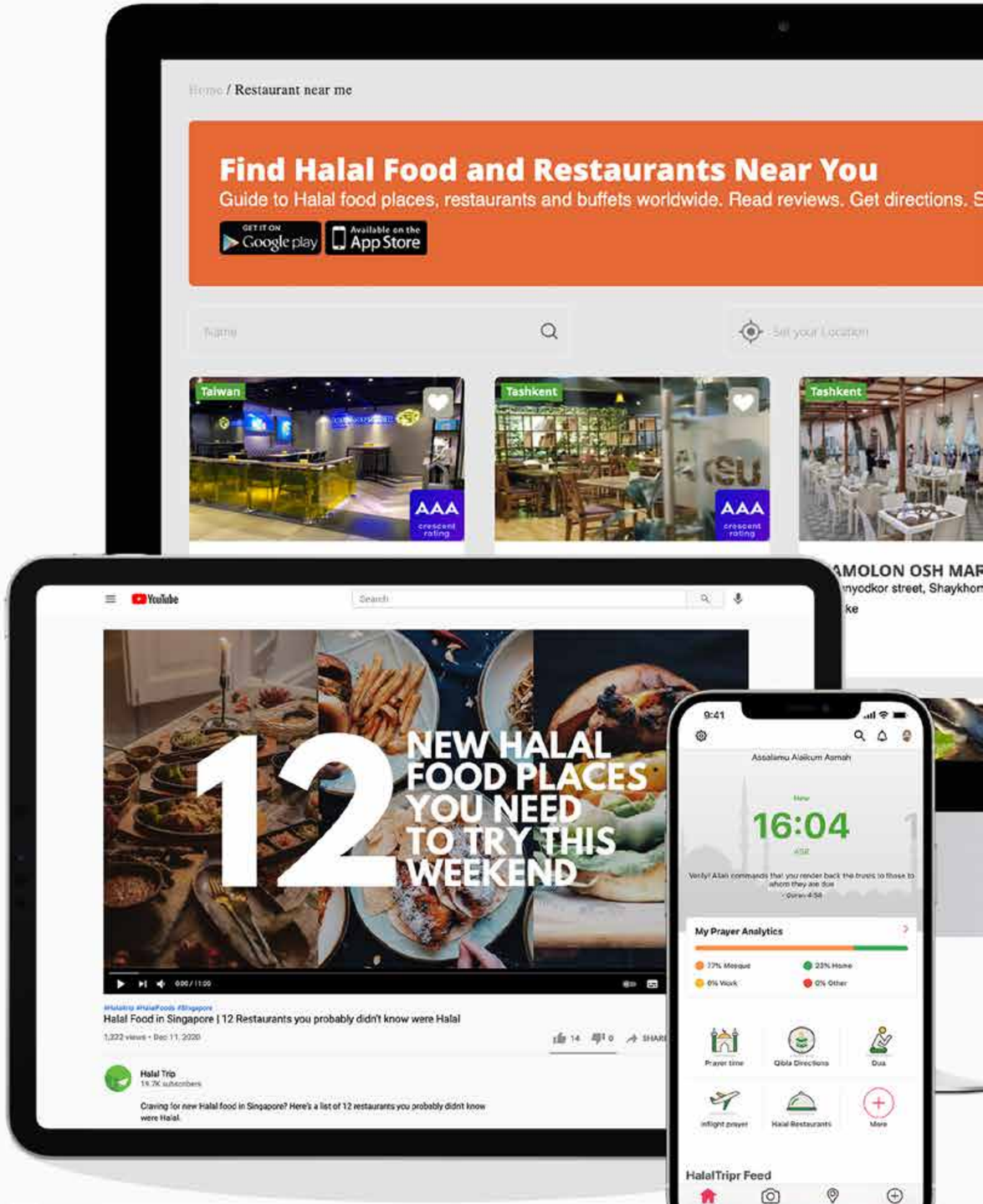

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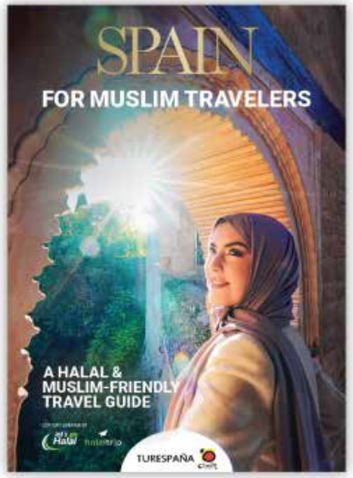
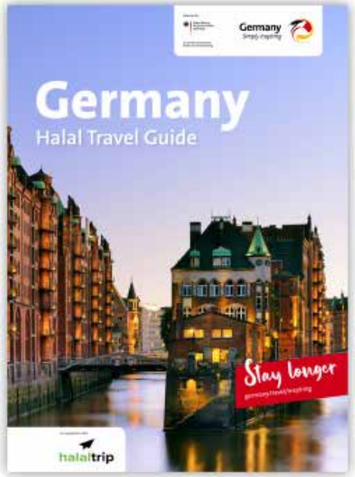
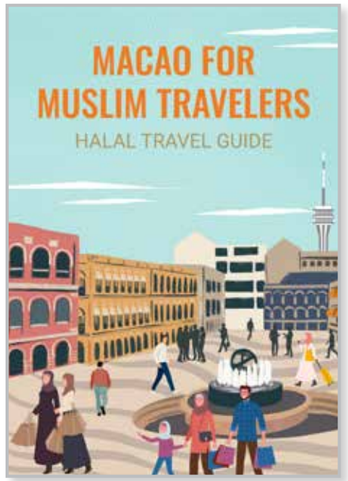
Downloadable Muslim Visitor Guides in partnership with Destinations

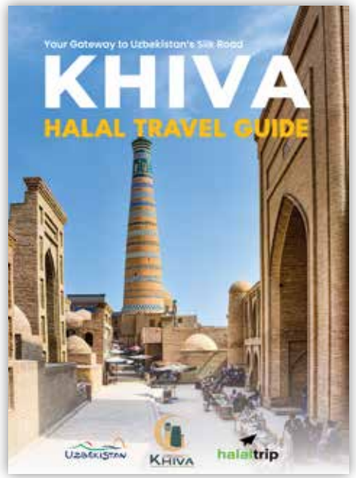
Access the latest Downloadable Muslim Visitor Guides on HalalTrip mobile app or Halaltrip.com

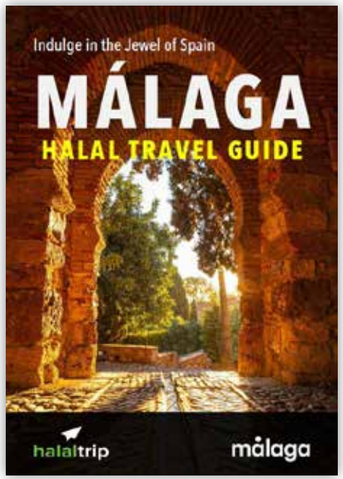
www.Halaltrip.com/downloadable-halal-travel-guides/











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REACHOUT

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Talk with our Experts...

Find out how you can better connect with Muslim travelers.

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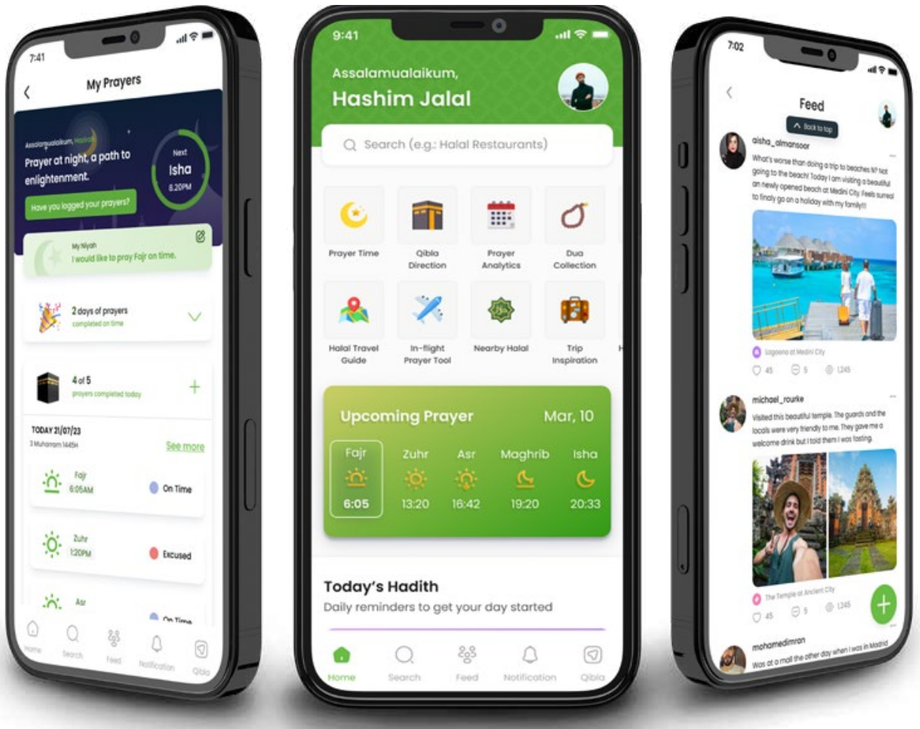
Get inspired • Go • Inspire others

Every Muslim's Lifestyle App



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