

TOURISM STATISTICS IN GEORGIA

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ABSTRACT

By the beginning of the 21st century, tourism has been formed as a sustainable development branch of economics, which has established special place in global economic structure. Tourism makes significant impact on the incentive of economic growth, on creating employment places and shaping positive environment, which is positively reflected on other economic activities. The role of statistics is important in the management of economy. That is why the quantitative study of the processes and events in tourism is of high importance. Right with the help of statistic methods is the information about public lifestyle structure elements – labor and labor hours gained, processed and analyzed. Statistics can study the level, potential of tourism development by general and private methods. It can gain public services and other information. Statistics can find out unfriendly factors for tourism development, define tourism influence on the economic growth of the country and can work out recommendations for infrastructure optimization on the basis of its analysis.

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At the beginning of the 21st century in the world culture and economy tourism has been developed as a sustainable field. It has established a special place in the global economic structure. Tourism has an important impact on the incentive of economic growth, creating work places and factors for positive environment, which are positively reflected on other economic activities. The role of statistics is very important in the management of economics. Consequently, quantitative studies of the processes and events in tourism are actually special. Right statistics and no other science can characterize events and processes of tourism quantitatively, make analysis with private methods and make relevant conclusions.

There are some difficulties in gaining data of the events and processes in tourism field. It is quite difficult to define the reason of tourist visit, which is a real tourist. The record of the total number of tourists according to countries and regions, purpose of visit, activities, gender, age, destination place and other indices is incomplete.

In 2010 National Statistics Office of Georgia worked out a questionnaire according to countries distribution of visitors, which are sent to registered tourist companies of these countries. Gained information creates information base about international and domestic tourism. Statistic study of tourism belongs to the specially organized selection of statistic observation. Since 2014, the survey of foreign visitors and local tourism economy has been carried out according to the forms ascertained by the Council of National Statistics Office of Georgia (15 July 2014 N 11). The questionnaire is filled by 15 years old persons and over.

Tourism is classified into three forms according to the recommendations given by the United Nations Organization in 1994 (concerning tourism statistics): 1. Domestic tourism- travel only within the country borders; 2. Foreign tourism (incoming) – non-residents travel into given country; 3. Foreign tourism (outgoing) – travel to other countries. By combining of these three main forms, the United Nations has also formed the following category of tourism: 1. Domestic tourism, consisting of inner and (incoming) tourism; 2. National tourism, consisting of inner and outgoing tourism.1 According to the survey data, carried out by the National Administration of Tourism of Georgia, in 2016 the number of international travelers was

- 6,350,825 people. If we compare it with the data of 2015, it increased by 7.6%. From the total number, 2,714,773 tourist visits were made for 24 hours and more. The most visitors were from Azerbaijan (+9.3%), Armenia (+1.9%), Turkey (-9.9%), Russia (+12%) and Ukraine (+21.8%). From the United Nation countries the growth in number of visits to Georgia was characterized to the following countries: Latvia +24%, Lithuania +16%, Czech +15%, Bulgaria +12% and Germany +11%. Significant growth is recorded from the following countries: Iran +485%, India +199%, Saudi Arabia +116%, Oman +75% and China +46%. International tourism is a significant source of inflow of international currency. Incomes from international tourism grows in dynamics – if we compare 2016 with 2015 it grew by 11,9%, but if we compare it with 2010, it grew three times.

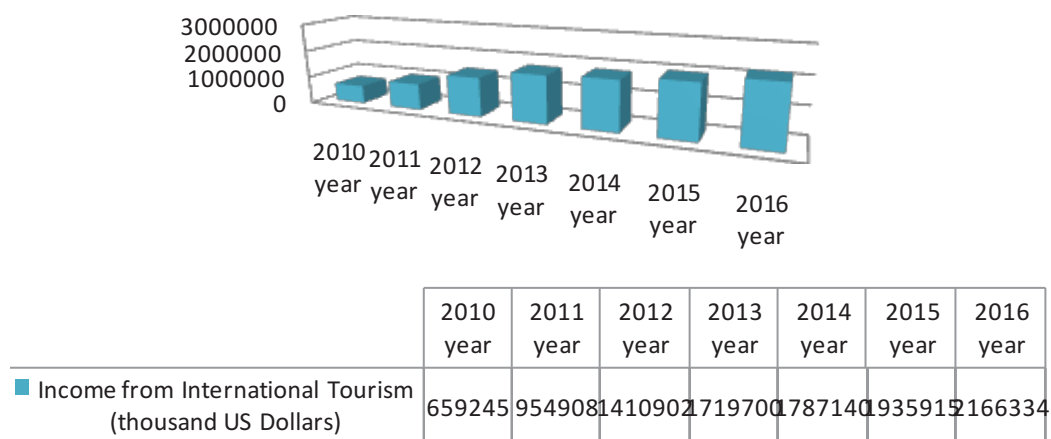


Fig. 1. Income from International Tourism (thousand US Dollars)

Source: National Administration of Tourism of Georgia

Domestic tourism is not of the less importance for the country than international tourism. Significant economic advantage of the domestic tourism is the improvement of payment balance, as spending one's own expenses in ones country decreases the outflow of money from the country. National Administration of Tourism of Georgia defines tourism in the following way: inner travel is the travel of the residents of Georgia outside usual environment in given period, during which they spend money on activities and accommodation, contributing to the development of local economy.

National Statistics Office of Georgia publishes data of domestic tourism according to the following indices: 15 year old and older visitors' average monthly division according to the living place; 15 year old and older visitors' average monthly division according to the age groups; 15 year old and older visitors' average monthly division according to gender; 15 year old and older visitors' average monthly number of visits on the territory of Georgia; 15 year old and older visitors' average monthly overnight visits' average number; 15 year old and older visitors' average monthly division of visited places according to regions; average monthly division of visits according to the purpose of visit; 15 year old and older visitors' average monthly division according to the satisfaction level; average monthly expense division according to categories.

According to the data of National Statistics Office of Georgia, average annual number of visits on the territory of Georgia reaches 1080,0 thousand, which exceeds the previous year by 49,9 thousand.

According to the living place, Tbilisi dwellers are distinguished by the most share, which takes 30,4% of the total amount. But in the age structure, 31-50 aged visitors take a more part. The modal age of visitors is defined 41 (mode in statistics is the meaning of figure which is met most frequently in the research unity), and the median (median is situated in the middle of random row)– with the age 43.

Average number of overnights on the territory of Georgia is 2,22, the most active period is summer when average number of overnights reaches 3,68. 15 year old and older visitors' average monthly division of visits according to the regions, Tbilisi is distinguished with 23,3% of visitors, and the number of visits is 24,4% in total.

For comparison in statistics we use relative variation of quantities - variation coefficients that show the percentage of variants move from the average quantity. According to the visited places, variation coefficient of the number of visitors is calculated by the formula:

$$V_{\sigma} = \frac{\sigma}{\bar{x}} \times 100\% = 59\%$$

Variation extent is quite high, which is caused by the big difference of the number of visitors according to the visited places.

The most spread reason for domestic tourism in 2016 is mainly visiting close friends and relatives – 52,5%, shopping takes – 12,3%, as for relaxation, entertainment and recreation, it takes 9%. Domestic tourists rarely stay at the hotel type places. They spent 59.5% of total number of overnight visits at friends or relatives' homes.

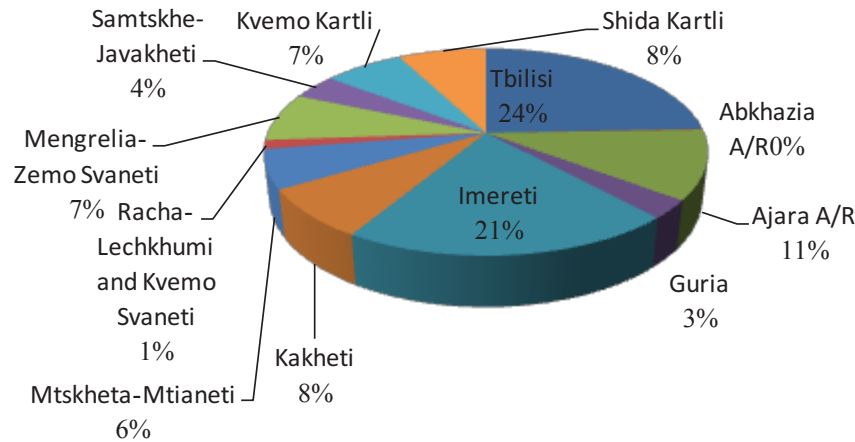


Fig. 2. 15 year old and older visitors' average monthly division of visited places according to regions

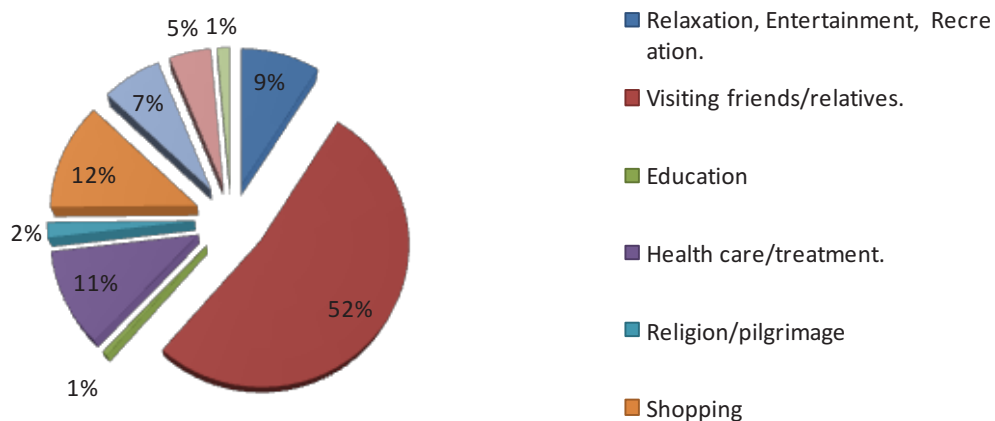


Fig. 3. The amount of average monthly visits according to the visit purpose

In 2016 80,5% of visitors were satisfied and very satisfied with the visit. Average monthly expenditure made by the visitors during the year is approximately 125,2 million Gel. Expenses are different according to seasons. In the third quarter average monthly expenditure is about 160,7 million Gel. The most part of expenditure comes on food (35,8%), shopping (33,4%) and transport (21,1%). This difference is shown by absolute meaning of average differentiation $\bar{\Delta} = \frac{\sum \sum |x - \bar{x}|}{n^2} = 15,9$ million Gel calculated according to the

expenses. Consequently, gin coefficient – variation quality in percentage is due to $k_{\text{var}} = \frac{\bar{\Delta}}{\bar{x}} 100\% = 70,6\%$ (gin), which points to the big difference of separate expenditure types made by visitors. We can say that, in case of domestic tourism visitors have the least expenditure in accommodation, entertainment, recreation, cultural and sport activities.

The share of tourism in gross domestic product is 7,6% being significant income of the country. Alongside, average nominal salary of people employed at hotels in 2016 is defined by 900,6 Gel, which is 219,9 Gel more than the nominal salary of the people employed in the field of education.

On the basis of statistic analysis we can say that tourism in Georgia is one of the developing fields. It is proved by the growth of accommodation places and tourist flow in the country. Alongside, the development of tourism contributes to business development, creating labour places, the growth of employment level, which is the basis to improve lifestyle of local population.

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