2019

GEORGIAN TOURISM IN FIGURES

STRUCTURE & INDUSTRY DATA

Summary

This yearbook provides statistical information on the Georgian tourism sector and the activities of the Georgian National Tourism Administration (GNTA) in 2019. It covers statistical data, trends, activities undertaken by the GNTA to promote tourism, and Georgia's standing in international tourism indices.

In 2010, the GNTA was established as a Legal Entity of Public Law under the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development. The Administration plays an essential role in the economic development of the tourism industry in Georgia. Its goals are to ensure the development of sustainable tourism by positioning Georgia as a unique travel destination on the international tourist map, to improve visitors' experiences, maximize their expenditures to significantly contribute to the national economy, and cooperate effectively with strategic partners.

From a statistical viewpoint, the performance of the tourism industry in Georgia in 2019 can be characterized as a period of further growth. In 2019, the number of trips conducted by nonresident travelers grew by 678,420, surpassing the nine million mark for the first time.

Domestic and international tourism are important factors in the Georgian economy. Foreign visitors' expenditures have a significant effect on Georgia's balance of payments. Approximately 71% of Georgia's service export revenue comes from tourism. Revenues from international tourism displayed an increasing trend and reached 3.3 billion USD in 2019. Tourism made up 8.1% of total GDP. This is due to a 511 million GEL increase in value-added from tourism-related activities.

In 2019, there were a total of 2,575 accommodation units registered in the GNTA database, comprising 94,438 beds. According to STR Global, in 2019 the occupancy rate of brand hotels in Georgia was 56.7%. The highest occupancy rates were registered in August (77.1%), September (74.5%), July and October (66.8%), while the lowest were in January (34.6%), February (36.4%), and December (38.5%). The highest occupancy rate among cities was registered in Tbilisi (59.7%), followed by Batumi (58.9%) and in the category "other Georgia" (46.7%).

Georgia has been successful in international relations, as well. In 2019 several memoranda and agreements were signed with a number of countries, including Portugal, Argentina, and the Republic of Maldives.

Among the actions taken by the GNTA to increase the number of visits are the development of tourism infrastructure, facilitation of international travel, improvement of service, increasing awareness of Georgia, implementation of marketing activities on both the domestic and international markets, and development of tourist products.

In 2019, the GNTA participated in 30 international tourism fairs and hosted 131 press and FAM trips (574 journalists and bloggers and 257 tour operators). In addition, the Georgian National Tourism Administration made presentations about Georgia as an attractive destination in several countries including Japan, Uzbekistan, Czechia, Israel, Spain, and Korea. Other significant activities included integrated digital and TV campaigns in target markets. The campaign giving international visitors Georgian wine on the border proved very popular among international visitors and received very positive feedback.

We firmly believe that this publication will become an important source of data and information that you will come back to frequently.

International Trips to Georgia

International traveler trips to Georgia have been growing rapidly in recent years. In 2019, they reached a record number of 9,357,964, which represents an annual growth rate of 7.8%.

International traveler trips include trips made by international visitors (83%) and other (non-tourist) trips (17%). Out of the total number of international visitor trips, 66% were tourist trips, and 34% were same-day trips.

The largest numbers of international visitor trips were registered in August: 1,086,596 (14%); July: 882,331 (11%); and September: 784,280 (10%). The fewest trips were conducted in February: 389,218 (5%); January: 437,218 (6%); and March: 507,064 (7%).

The majority of trips conducted by international visitors (excluding nonresident citizens of Georgia), 76.3% (5,519,738), were from neighboring countries. Only 23.7% (1,717,195) were from other countries. Azerbaijan was the leader in terms of both international visitor trips and growth at 1,526,619 (+102,009).

The largest share of international visitor trips to Georgia, 5,775,983 (74.8%), was via land transport, followed by air transport 1,829,341 (23.7%). Trips by rail and sea were 79,902 (1%) and 40,548 (0.5%), respectively. The busiest border was Tbilisi Airport, which saw 1,355,626 trips in 2019, amounting to 17.5% of all trips to Georgia. This was followed by Sarpi (Turkish border) at 17.5%, Kazbegi (Russian border) at 16.3%, Tsiteli Khidi (Azerbaijani border) at 16%, and Sadakhlo (Armenian border) at 15.7%. The number of international visitor trips surpassed one million only at those five borders, which accounted for 83% of all trips.

In 2019, 484,996 trips were conducted by EU visitors, with the largest number of trips from Germany: 89,051 (+38%), Poland: 88,300 (+32%), and the United Kingdom: 37,478 (+27%).

The majority of trips to Georgia were conducted by male visitors (5,002,270; 65%), while female trips amounted to 2,723,504 (35%).

The largest number of trips were conducted by the 31-50 age category (3,695,443; 48%), followed by the 15-30 age group (1,984,120; 26%) and the 51-70 age segment (1,901,353;25%). The lowest number of trips was conducted by the 71+ age group (144,858; 2%).
International visitors conducted on average 1.27 trips to Georgia, with the largest number of average trips by Turkish visitors (1.44), followed by Armenian (1.41), Bulgarian (1.37), and Azerbaijani visitors (1.37).

Basic Information
International travel statistics are provided by the Information-Analytical Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia.

Methodology
International travel statistics describe the dynamics of inbound travelers registered at 21 border checkpoints.

Main published indicators:
In line with UNWTO recommendations, an international traveler is someone who moves between different geographic locations for any purpose and any duration. It excludes foreign citizens who are Georgian residents and includes Georgian citizens who are foreign residents.
An international visitor is a traveler taking a trip to a main destination outside his/her usual environment, for less than a year, for any purpose (business, leisure, or another personal purpose) other than to be employed by a resident entity in the country or place visited. The usual environment of an individual, a key concept in tourism, is defined as the geographical area within which an individual conducts his/her regular life routines. To define the “usual environment” in Georgia, travelers conducting eight or more trips are excluded from the data. A visitor (domestic, inbound, or outbound) is classified as a tourist (or overnight visitor) if his/her trip includes an overnight stay, or as a same-day visitor (or excursionist) otherwise.

Others (non-tourists) are characterized by the reason for which they are excluded from being defined as visitors: either being less than 15 years old or being within their usual environment.

Countries use differing methodologies to measure international tourist arrivals. During the analysis, it is important to take these differences into account. The following main differences can be distinguished according to UNWTO Publications:

TF = International tourist arrivals at frontiers (overnight visitors, i.e. excluding same-day visitors)
VF = International visitor arrivals at frontiers (tourists and same-day visitors)
THS = International tourist arrivals at hotels and similar establishments
TCE = International tourist arrivals at collective tourism establishments
TD = Departures of tourists (overnight visitors, i.e. excluding same-day visitors)
VD = Departures of both overnight and same-day visitors

According to the International Monetary Fund's classification, Central/Eastern Europe includes: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bulgaria, Czechia, Estonia, Georgia, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Moldova, Romania, the Russian Federation, Slovakia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan.

More detailed information can be found on the Georgian National Tourism Administration's website: www.gnta.ge
International Travel by Residence (XSL): https://bit.ly/3iPZdPu

The share of trips from neighboring countries within the total number of international traveler trips is decreasing. In 2019, trips from neighboring countries totaled 5,519,738, registering a 6.2% growth rate compared to the previous year. The increase in the number of trips from other countries was rather large, reaching 1,717,195 (+12.2%) trips. As a result, the share of neighboring countries in the total number of trips decreased from 77.3% to 76.3%. Structural changes in trips are foreseen in Georgia's tourism strategy.

Growth in total visitor trips was primarily caused by tourist trips. The total number of trips increased by 522,424, and the contribution of tourist trips to this growth was 62% (+323,658).

The structure of the top 15 countries (excluding nonresident citizens of Georgia), remained the same. However, significant repositioning took place within the rankings with Kazakhstan moving up three spots. The neighboring countries, Germany, and India retained their positions. Among the countries whose rankings increased were Ukraine (+1), Israel (+1), Kazakhstan (+3), Saudi Arabia (+1), and China (+1). The following countries lost their positions: Iran (-2), Poland (-2), Belarus (-2), USA (-1).

The largest increase in international visitor trips was registered from neighboring countries, while the largest decrease took place from Iran. The leader in growth was Azerbaijan (+102,009),followed by Armenia (+96,162), Russia (+66,801) and Turkey (+57,958). Among non-neighboring countries, Israel (+48,129), Kazakhstan (+44,656), and Ukraine (+30,609) showed the largest growth, while the largest decrease was registered from Iran (-149,073).

The largest decrease in international visitor trips was registered at Tbilisi Airport. Out of the 21 borders, a decrease was recorded at 6 borders, with a total decrease of 77,779 trips, out of which international trips at Tbilisi Airport decreased by 46,531 (contribution to the decrease 60%), followed by Vale (-20,674, contribution to the decrease 27%), and Kartsakhi (8,095,contribution to the decrease 10%). Other borders showed a comparably smaller decrease: Vakhtangisi -2,366, Kulevi Port -93, Samtackaro -20. The decline was balanced by an increase at the other 15 borders amounting to +600,203. Out of these, three borders showed an increase in visits by more than 100,000: Sadakhlo +154,009, (contribution to growth 26%), Kazbegi +127,141 (contribution to growth 21%), Tsiteli Khidi +114,750 (contribution to growth 19%).

The decrease in international visitor trips at Tbilisi Airport was caused by the reduction in international trips from Iran and Russia. The decrease from Iran amounted to 101,166 (contribution to decrease 53%), while from Russia the decrease was 81,258 (contribution to decrease 42%). However, the increase from a number of countries helped to balance the decline: Israel +20.624 (contribution to growth 14%), Saudi Arabia +19,658 (contribution to growth 14%), Germany +15,964 (contribution to growth 11%).

The number of international visitor trips from the European Union to Georgia is increasing. Significant growth was registered from European Union countries. The number of trips by European visitors reached 484,996 (an increase of 25.9%), with remarkable growth from Germany (+24,565) and Poland (+21,397).

The share of tourist trips in the number of international visitor trips from non-neighboring countries is comparably larger (excluding non-resident citizens of Georgia). The structure of trips from neighboring and non-neighboring countries are significantly different. While the share of tourist trips in total visitor trips from neighboring countries was only 55% (3,035,147), the same indicator for non-neighboring countries was 92.7% (2,045,331).

The largest increase in international visitor trips was registered among the 31-50 age category. International visitor trips increased by 272,000 among the 31-50 age category, followed by the 51-70 age group (159,289). In the other two categories, growth was comparably smaller; the 15-30 age category showed a 66,888 increase, while the 71+ age category increased by only 24,247.

The share of international visitor trips conducted by male visitors increased. International visitor trips by male visitors compared to last year increased by 388,302, while trips of female visitors increased by 134,122. As a result, the share of male visitors increased by 1 percentage point and equaled 65%.

Russia is the leader in the number of international tourist trips to Georgia, while Armenia leads in day trips. In 2019, the number of international trips from Russia was 1,077,395, which is 0.6% less than the previous year. Armenia is the leader in day trips with 795,611, which is a 4.9% increase compared to last year.

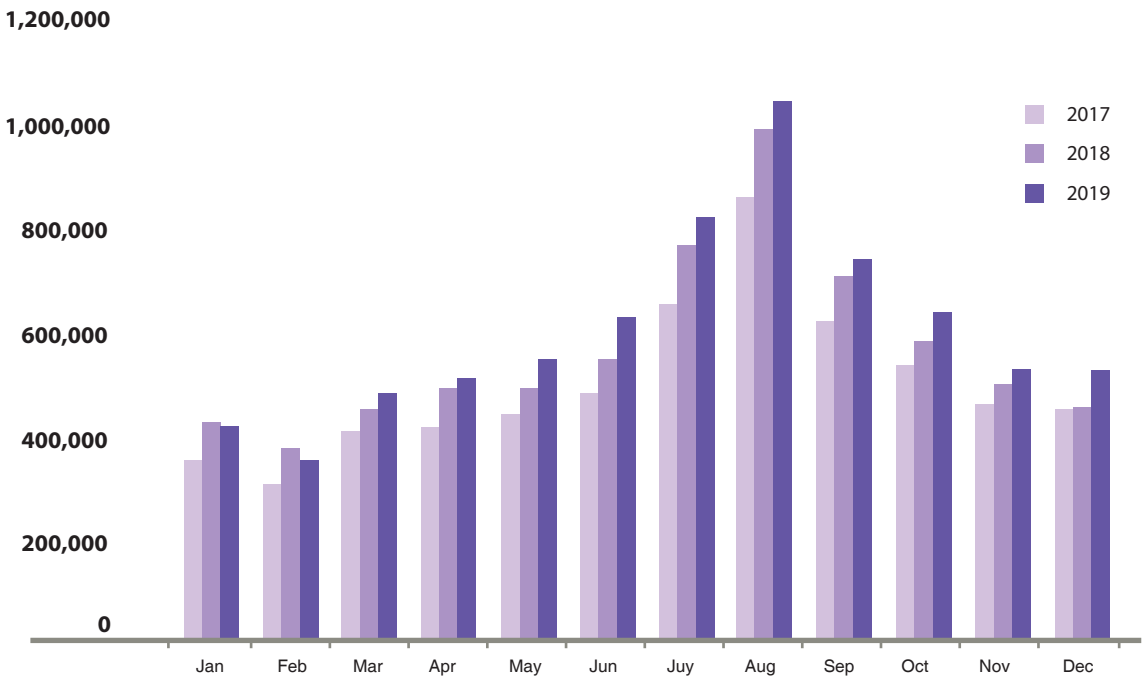
Georgia is among the leaders in Central Eastern Europe by international traveler receipts. Throughout the last years, Georgia has been among the leaders by percentage increase in tourist visits not only in the region but in the world. The high increase in trips translated into high incomes and as a result, Georgia ranks among the leaders in Central Eastern Europe with a 5% share in international receipts.

International Travel Classification

Trip Type	2018	2019	Change	Change %	Share %
International Traveler Trips	8,679,544	9,357,964	678,420	7.8%	100.0%
International Visitor Trips	7,203,350	7,725,774	522,424	7.3%	82.6%
Tourist Trips	4,756,820	5,080,478	323,658	6.8%	65.8%
Same Day Trips	2,446,530	2,645,296	198,766	8.1%	34.2%
Other Trips (Non-tourist)	1,476,194	1,632,190	155,996	10.6%	17.4%

Source: The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia

International Visitor Trips by Month



Source: The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia

Source: The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia

Source: The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia

International Visitor Trips by Borders

Border name	Border with	2018	2019	Change	Change %	Share %
Total	⬇	6,482,830	7,203,350	720,520	11.1%	100%
Including	⬇	⬇	⬇	⬇	⬇	⬇
Airport Tbilisi	.....	1,402,157	1,355,626	-46,531	-3.3%	17.5%
Sarpi	Turkey	1,296,833	1,355,489	58,656	4.5%	17.5%
Kazbegi	Russia	1,129,490	1,256,631	127,141	11.3%	16.3%
Tsiteli Khidi	Azerbaijan	1,121,052	1,235,802	114,750	10.2%	16.0%
Sadakhlo	Armenia	1,057,581	1,211,590	154,009	14.6%	15.7%
Airport Batumi	.....	239,251	258,159	18,908	7.9%	3.3%
Tsodna	Azerbaijan	207,309	219,626	12,317	5.9%	2.8%
Kutaisi Airport	.....	147,009	215,556	68,547	46.6%	2.8%
Ninotsminda	Armenia	163,985	167,157	3,172	1.9%	2.2%
Kartsakhi	Turkey	106,006	97,911	-8,095	-7.6%	1.3%
Vale	Turkey	112,763	92,089	-20,674	-18.3%	1.2%
Guguti	Armenia	47,784	69,835	22,051	46.1%	0.9%
Vakhtangisi	Azerbaijan	71,769	69,403	-2,366	-3.3%	0.9%
Gardabani Railway	Azerbaijan	37,694	46,677	8,983	23.8%	0.6%
Sadakhlo Railway	Armenia	29,257	32,652	3,395	11.6%	0.4%
Poti Port	.....	14,038	19,362	5,324	37.9%	0.3%
Batumi Port	.....	16,445	19,291	2,846	17.3%	0.2%
Kulevi Port	.....	1,988	1,895	-93	-4.7%	0.0%
Kartsakhi Railway	Turkey	527	573	46	8.7%	0.0%
Samtatskaro	Azerbaijan	337	317	-20	-5.9%	0.0%
Akhkerpi	Armenia	75	133	58	77.3%	0.0%

Source: The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia

International Visitor Trips top 10 Countries

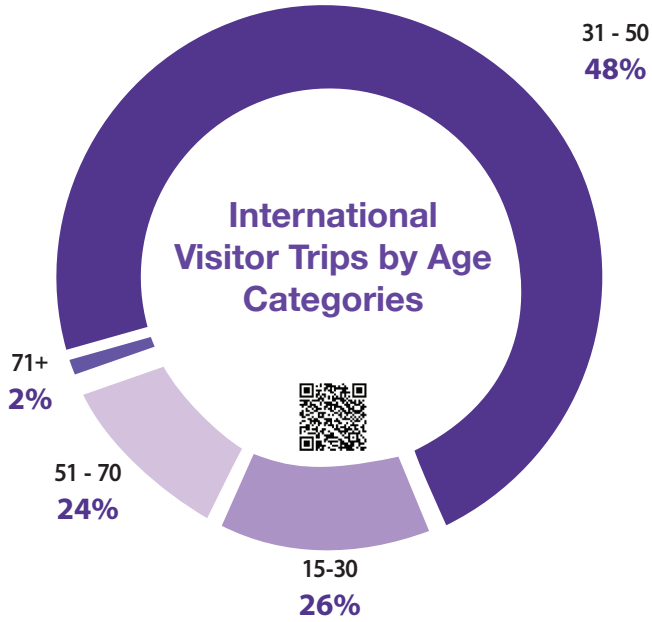
	Country	2018	2019	Change	Change %
1	Azerbaijan	1,424,610	1,526,619	102,009	7.2%
2	Russia	1,404,757	1,471,558	66,801	4.8%
3	Armenia	1,268,886	1,365,048	96,162	7.6%
4	Turkey	1,098,555	1,156,513	57,958	5.3%
5	Georgia (nonresident)	476,389	488,841	12,452	2.6%
6	Ukraine	177,058	207,667	30,609	17.3%
7	Israel	156,922	205,051	48,129	30.7%
8	Iran	291,070	141,997	-149,073	-51.2%
9	Kazakhstan	58,955	103,611	44,656	75.7%
10	Germany	64,486	89,051	24,565	38.1%

Source: The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia

International Tourist Trips Top 10 Countries

	Country	2018	2019	Change	Change %
1	Russia	1,083,874	1,077,395	-6,479	-0.6%
2	Azerbaijan	697,782	751,215	53,433	7.7%
3	Turkey	589,340	637,100	47,760	8.1%
4	Armenia	510,542	569,437	58,895	11.5%
5	Israel	154,764	202,370	47,606	30.8%
6	Ukraine	158,160	189,210	31,050	19.6%
7	Iran	280,735	137,223	-143,512	-51.1%
8	Poland	65,361	86,716	21,355	32.7%
9	Germany	61,422	85,251	23,829	38.8%
10	Kazakhstan	51,489	77,856	26,367	51.2%

Source: The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia



Source: The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia

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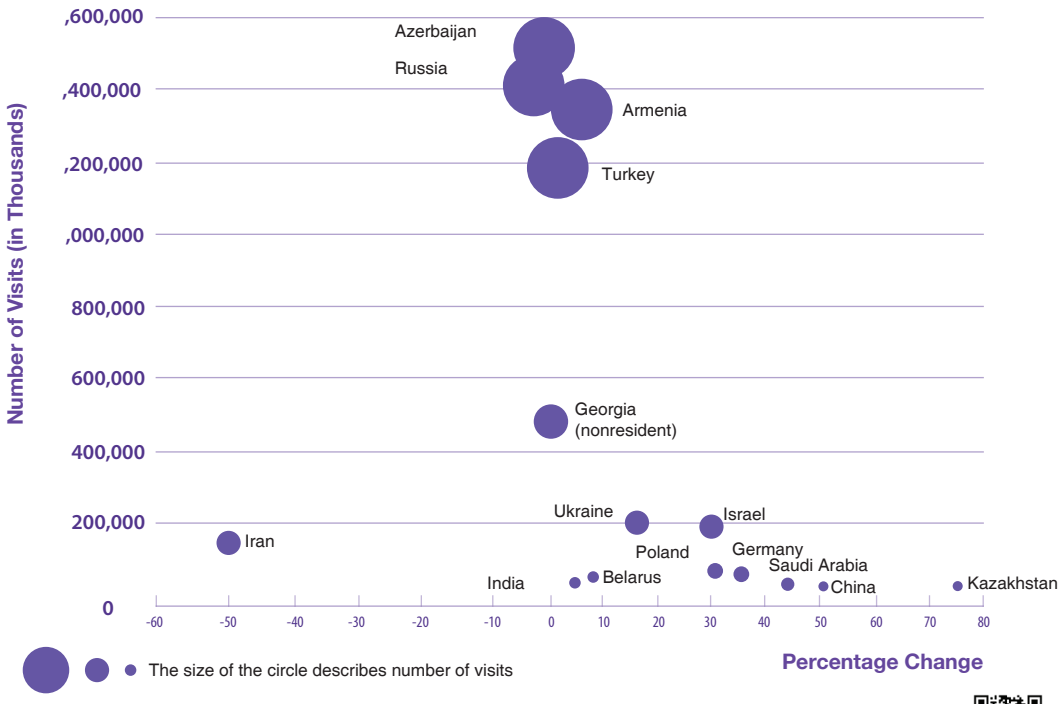
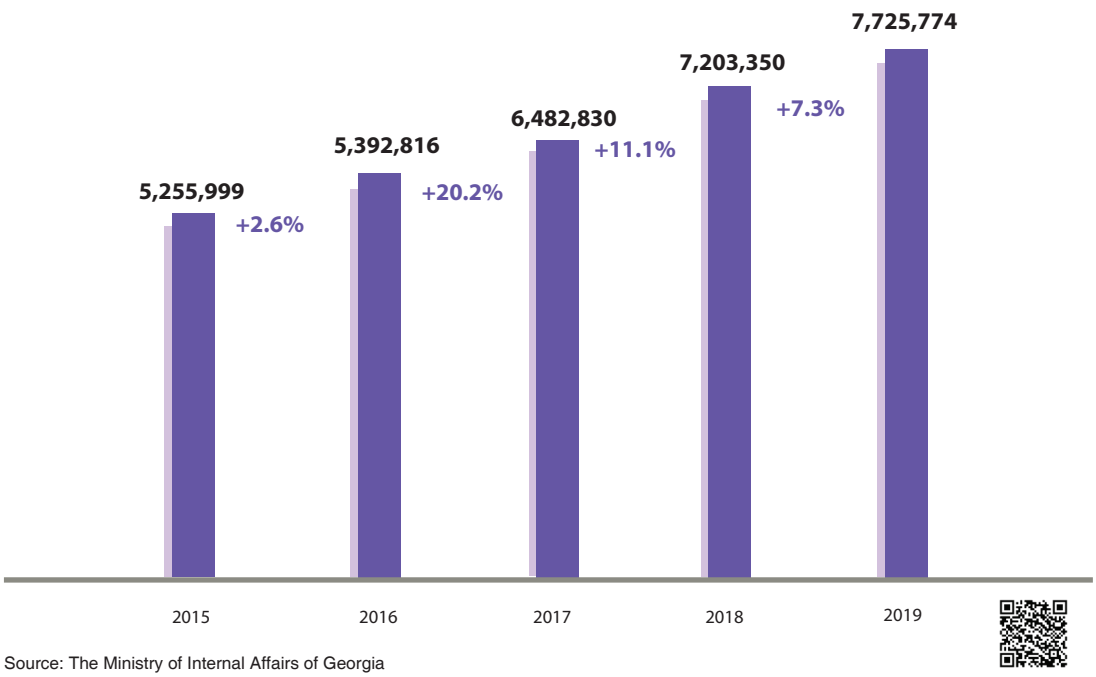
International Visitor Trips: Quanity VS Percentage Increase



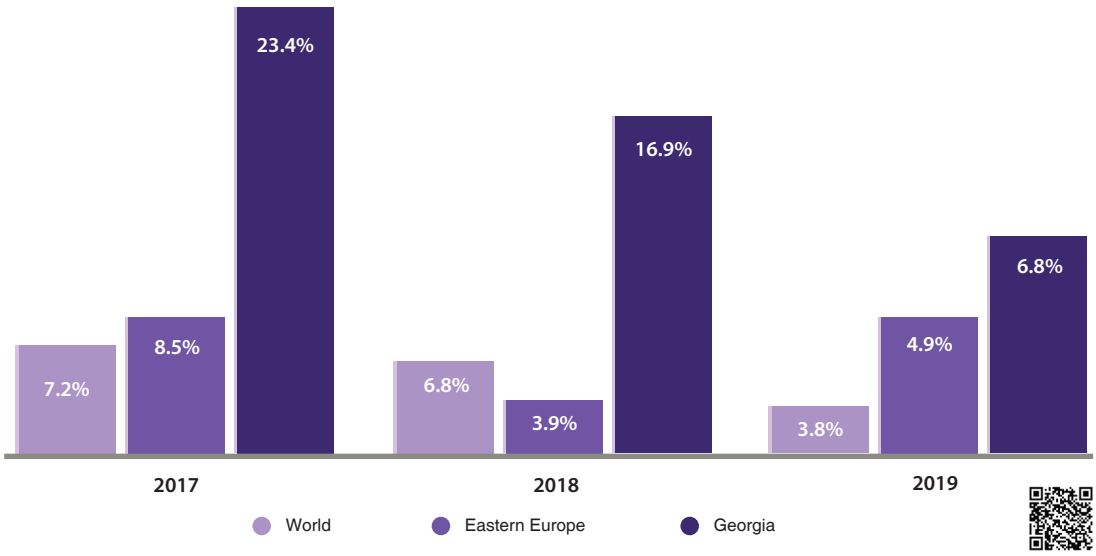
Source: The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia

International Visitor Trips by Years

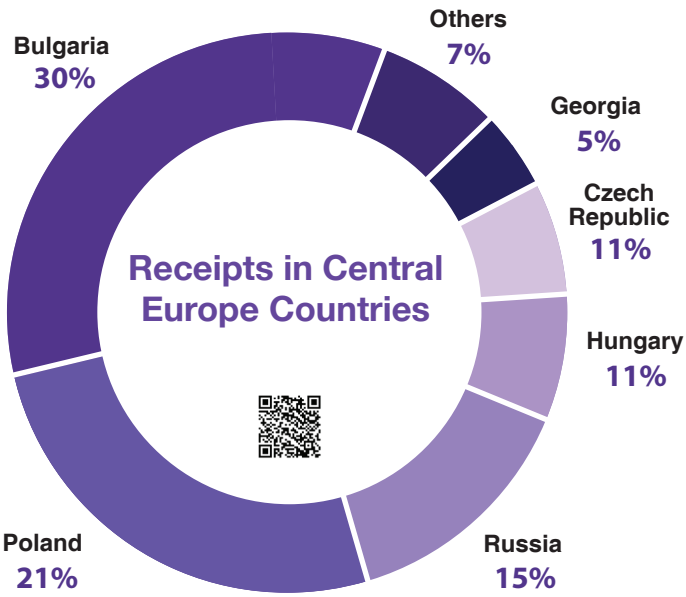


Source: The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia

International Visitor Trips: Georgia Vs World



Source: The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia



Source: The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia

Travel Behavior of International Visitors

In 2019 the number of international trips to Georgia amounted to 7,725,774. A total of 66% (5,080,478) of trips included at least one overnight stay, which is by definition a tourist trip. 34% were day trips (2,645,296).

Out of the total number of trips, 73.8% were repeat trips and 26.2% of trips were for the first time. Most of the residents of neighboring countries have traveled to Georgia before. The largest share of repeat trips was conducted by Azerbaijani visitors (28.9%), followed by Armenian (22.2%), Russian (20.8%), and Turkish (15.5%). The leaders among first-time trips were Russia and Turkey, with 23% and 16.8% shares respectively.

Purpose of Travel

International visitor trips were mostly undertaken for holiday, leisure, or recreation purposes (43.5%). Other frequently observed purposes included visiting friends or relatives (19%), transit (16.1%), business/professional trips (10.8%) shopping (6.8%), and health and medical care (1.8%). Only 1.5% of trips were for other purposes.

Accommodation

During this period, the total number of overnight stays was 31,741,402, with an average duration of 4.1 nights. Trips from neighboring countries tend to last for shorter periods, except for trips from Russia, which averaged 5.9 nights.

The most used form of accommodation was hotel with 34.2% of nights spent of the total overnights. Slightly less than a quarter of nights were spent in the private home of a friend or relative (22.9%). Other types of accommodation were less utilized by international visitors. 13.5% of nights were spent in a guesthouse or hostel.

Travel Destinations

54.6% of international trips were to the capital city, Tbilisi , followed by 28.9% of trips to Batumi. Other destinations had a smaller number of visits. Among the most popular were Marneuli (11.4%), Kazbegi (8.3%) and Mtskheta (9.9%), Other destinations included: Kutaisi (4.6%), Gudauri (4.5%), Sighnaghi (3.7%), Rustavi (3.7%), Borjomi (3.1%), and Kobuleti (2.8%).

Expenditure

Total expenditure by international visitors during the estimation period was 8.5 billion GEL, and average expenditure per visit was 1,102 GEL. The largest share of visitors' expenditures was registered on served food and drinks (27.5% of total expenses) and accommodation (23.7% of total expenses). 21.2% was spent on shopping, while 18% of expenditures were made on cultural and entertainment services.

Basic Information

The National Statistics Office of Georgia conducted this research to determine the structure of international trips to Georgia.

Methodology

The survey was conducted in a face-to-face format, and a printed questionnaire was used. The data was gathered via a survey using quantitative research techniques based on the recommendations of the United Nations World Tourism Organisation. A stratified systematic sample method was applied to selected respondents. The sample size varied across quarters: Quarters I, II, and IV: 900 respondents monthly, Quarter III: 1,300 respondents monthly. Interviews were conducted with international visitors aged 15 years or older at the moment of leaving Georgia. The interviews took place at the ten biggest checkpoints (air and land).

Main Published Indicators

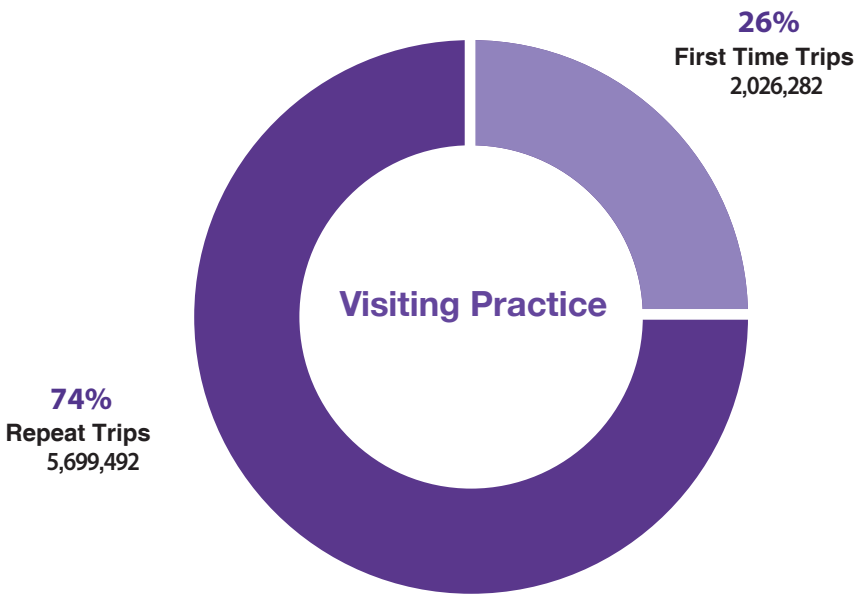
Place of permanent residence, purpose and frequency of visit, length of stay, places visited, accommodation, source of information, accompanying persons, means of transport, organization of the trip, popular activities and attractions, and satisfaction level.

More detailed information can be found at www.gnta.ge and www.geostat.ge.

International Visitor Characteristics (xsl): https://bit.ly/3iQhw71

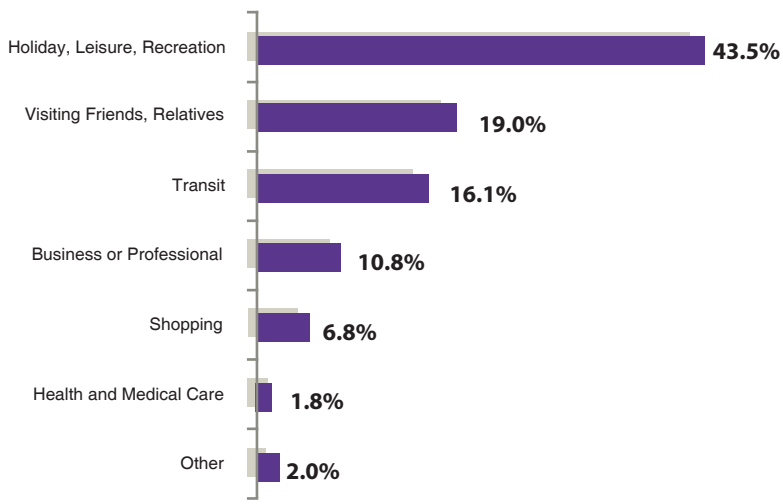
Report on International Visitor Characteristics (pdf): https://bit.ly/2ZT9z9I

Cross Tabulation Analysis (pdf): https://bit.ly/3kAhlgz



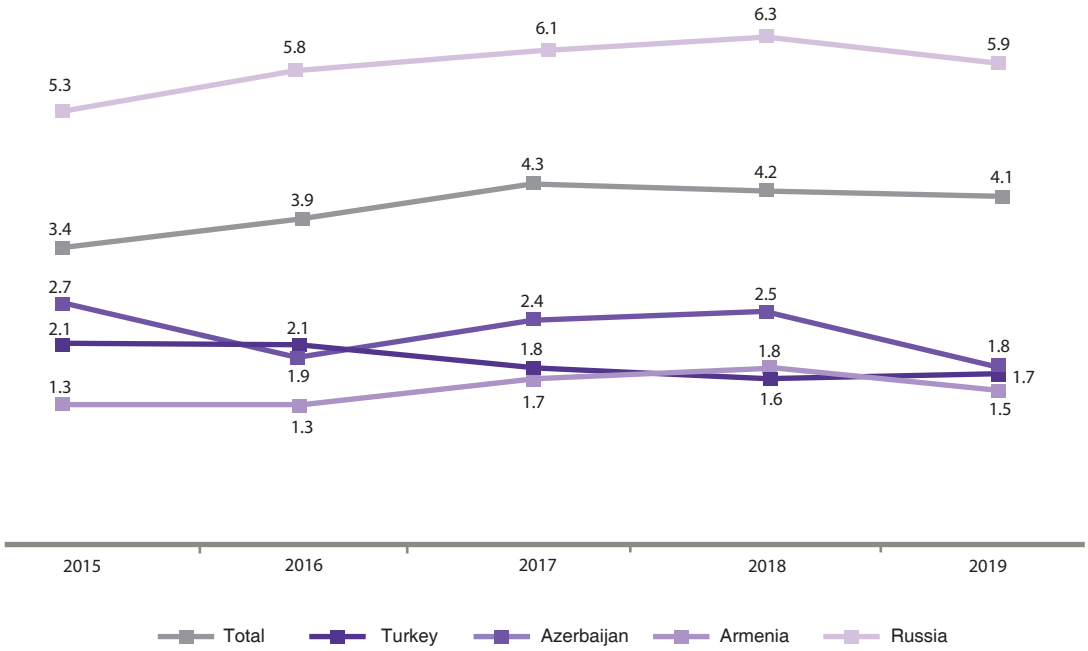
Source: The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia

Main Purpose of Trip



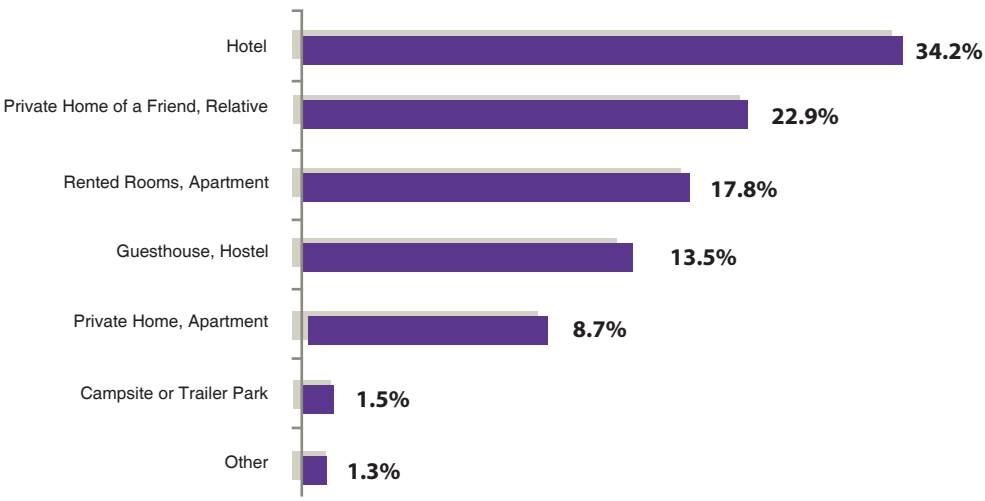
Source: The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia

Average Length of Stay



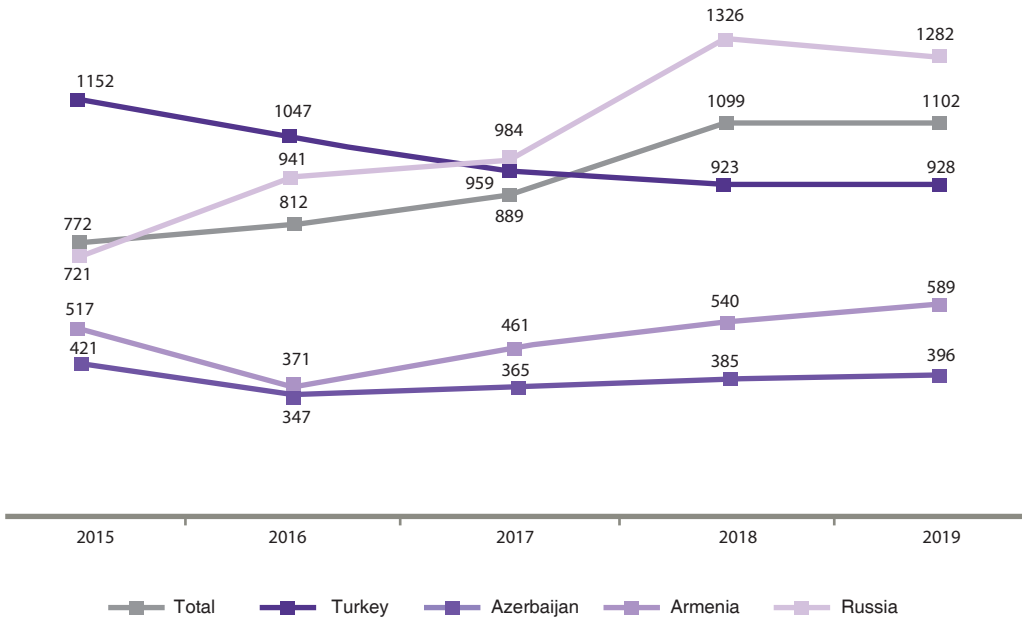
Source: The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia

Nights Spent



Source: The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia

Average Expenditure



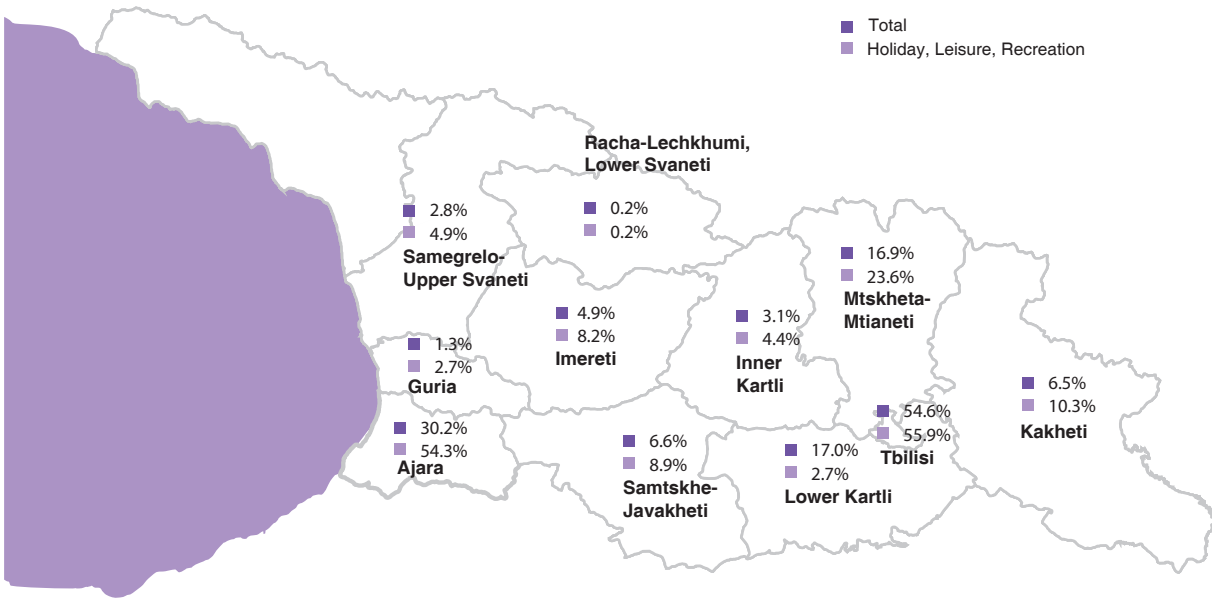
Source: The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia

Expenditure Structure

Components	2018	2019	Change %	Share %
Served Food and Drinks	2,266,881,133	2,343,421,279	3.4%	28%
Accommodation	1,854,514,224	2,021,228,953	9.0%	24%
Shopping	1,611,720,529	1,800,271,650	11.7%	21%
Cultural and Entertainment Services	1,434,705,232	1,528,705,888	6.6%	18%
Local Transport	560,769,313	644,544,830	14.9%	8%
Other Expenditures	188,913,699	173,362,328	-8.2%	2%

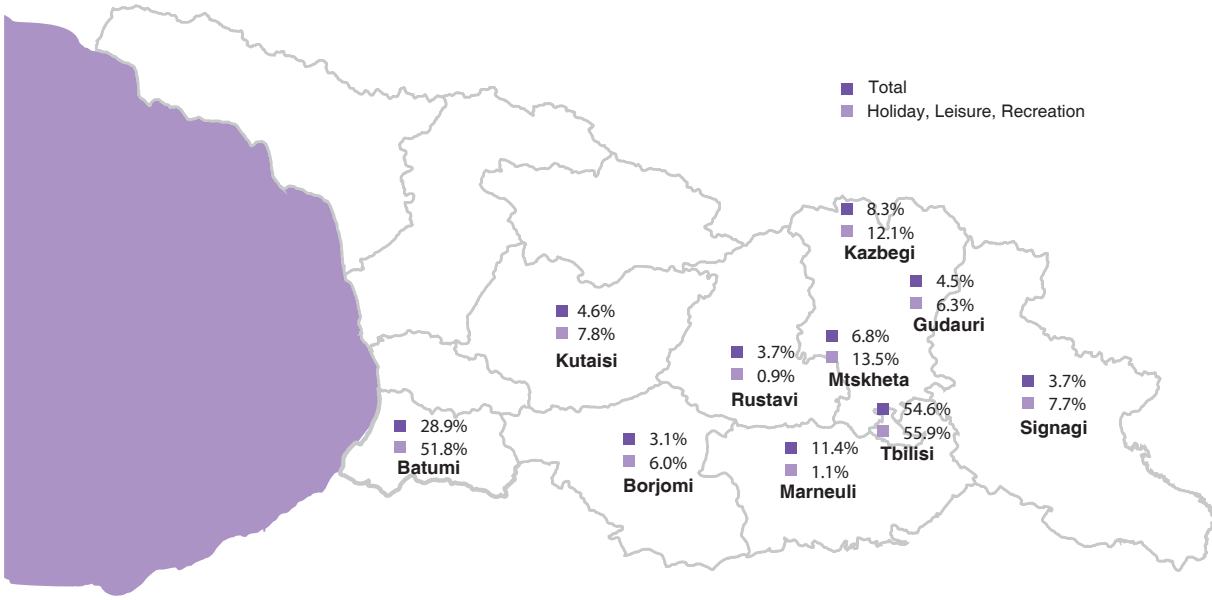
Source: The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia

Most Visited Regions



Source: The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia

Most Visited Destinations



Source: The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia

Travel Behavior of Domestic Visitors

In 2019, the number of domestic trips within Georgia amounted to 14.3 million. The majority of trips were from Tbilisi (29.9%). Most visits were to large cities.

Duration and Purpose of Travel

Visitors' average trip length was 2 nights and varied by place of residence. Visitors from Tbilisi tended to stay for longer periods (3.4 nights, on average), while on average, other visitors spent one or two nights away from their usual environment.

The majority of domestic trips (51%) were carried out by domestic residents to visit friends or relatives. Shopping was the main reason for 12.3% of visitors, and leisure and recreation for 9.7% of visitors. Other frequently-observed purposes were: health and medical care (8.8%) and business and professional purposes (4.7%).

Travel Destinations

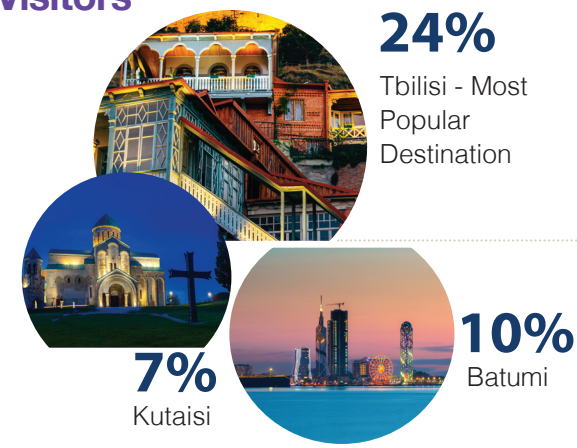
About 24.2% of total domestic trips were made to the capital, followed by 9.8% to Batumi and 7% to Kutaisi. Among other destinations were: Rustavi (2.6%), Mtskheta (2.4%), Gori (1.6%), Marneuli (1.5%), and Zugdidi (1.4%). Among the regions, the most popular places were Imereti (17.5%), Ajara (13.9%), and Kakheti (7.6%).

Accommodation

During this period, the total number of overnight stays was 28.1 million, including 58.3% of domestic travelers who stayed in the private homes of friends and relatives. This is partially a consequence of the dominant influence of the "visiting friends and relatives" segment. A considerable number of domestic visitors, 28.8%, stayed in their own homes, while 4.2% stayed in a family hotel.

Expenditure

Total expenditure by domestic visitors during the estimation period was 1.8 billion GEL; the average expenditure per visit was 129.3 GEL. The largest share of visitors' expenditures, 33.1%, was registered for shopping.



24%
Tbilisi - Most Popular Destination

7%
Kutaisi

10%
Batumi

Basic information

The National Statistics Office of Georgia conducted this research to determine the structure of domestic visits within Georgia.

Methodology

The results of this report are based on in-person, face-to-face interviews with respondents living in households throughout the territory of Georgia. The survey was designed to collect information from a representative sample of the resident population aged 15 and above who had a travel experience within the country in the last month.

In line with UNWTO Recommendations on Tourism Statistics, domestic tourism refers to trips of residents within Georgia to a location outside of their usual environment.

In the context of tourism statistics, two simultaneous methods are used for the classification of a domestic visit: location and frequency. The location method takes into consideration the municipal structure of the country. For defining the usual environment, it is crucial whether the domestic traveler made a visit out of his/her municipality. The second criterion defines the specific frequency of visits that are considered regular. If a Georgian domestic traveler visits another municipality less than once every two weeks, it is not considered regular and is therefore classified as a domestic visit.

The Main Indicators

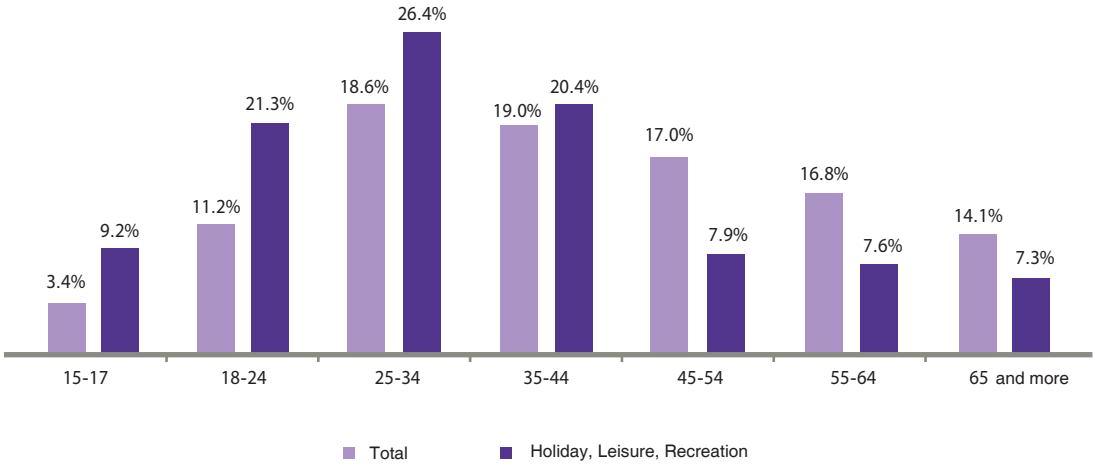
The main published indicators include: place of permanent residence, purpose of visit and frequency, length of stay, places visited, accommodation, source of information, means of transport, satisfaction level, and expenditure.

More detailed information can be found at www.gnta.ge and www.geostat.ge

Domestic Trip Characteristics (XSL): https://bit.ly/3kffain

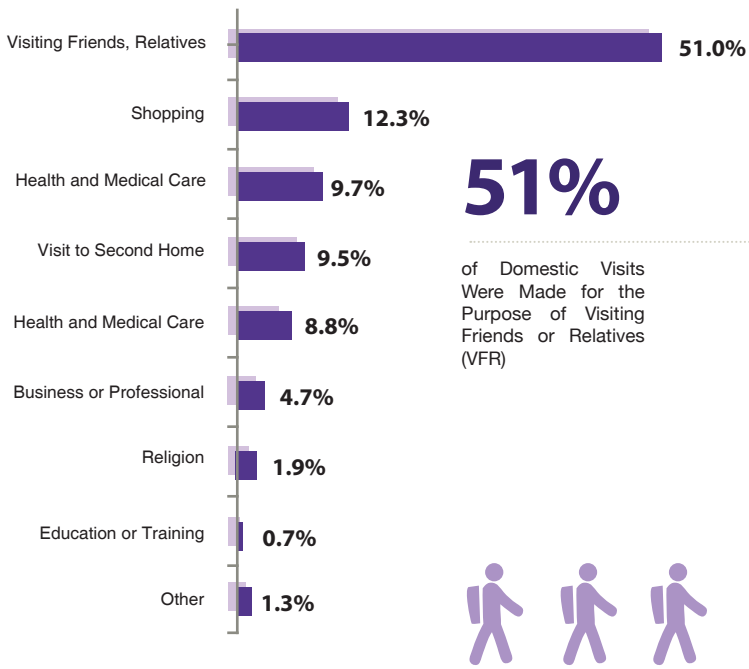
Report on Domestic Trip Characteristics (Pdf): https://bit.ly/32qK01y

Age Groups



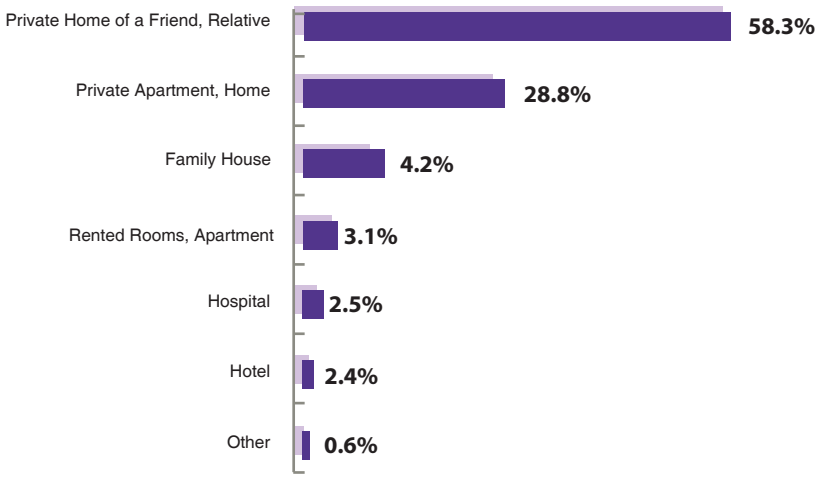
Source: The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia

Main Purpose of Trip



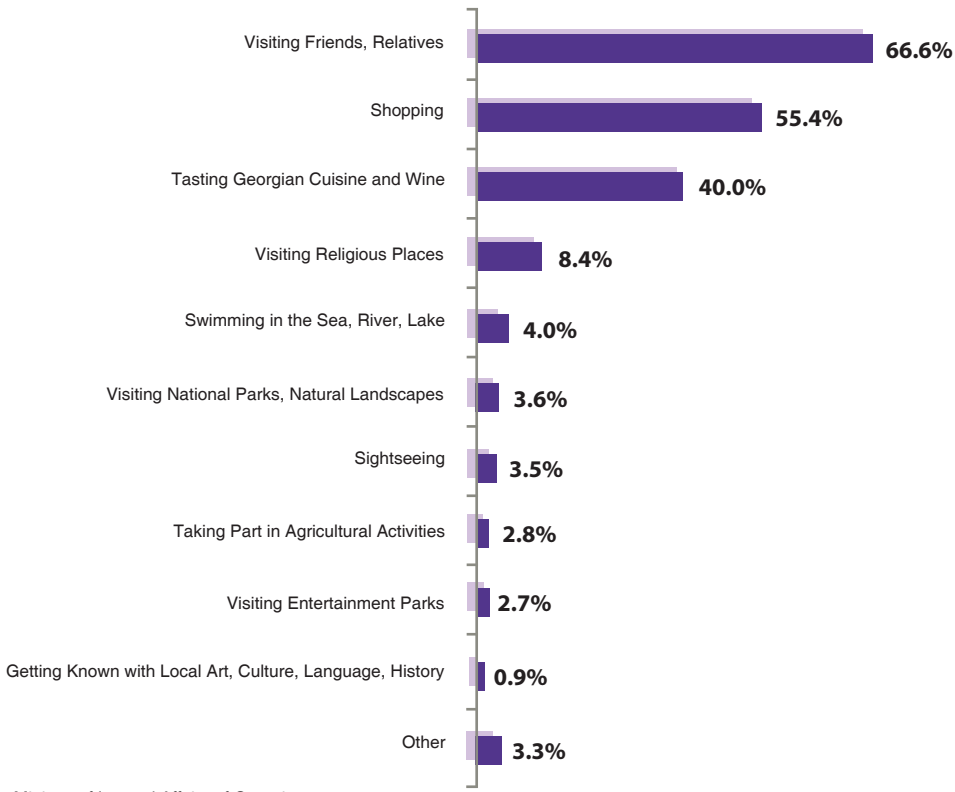
Source: The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia

Nights Spent



Source: The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia

Popular Tourism Activities



Source: The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia

Expenditure Structure

Components	Total Expenditure GEL (x1000)	Share of Total Expenditure
Shopping	609,816	33.1%
Served Food and Drinks	451,137	24.5%
Local Transport	335,886	18.2%
Accommodation	82,797	4.5%
Cultural and Entertainment Services	29,636	1.6%
Other Expenditures	333,244	18.1%

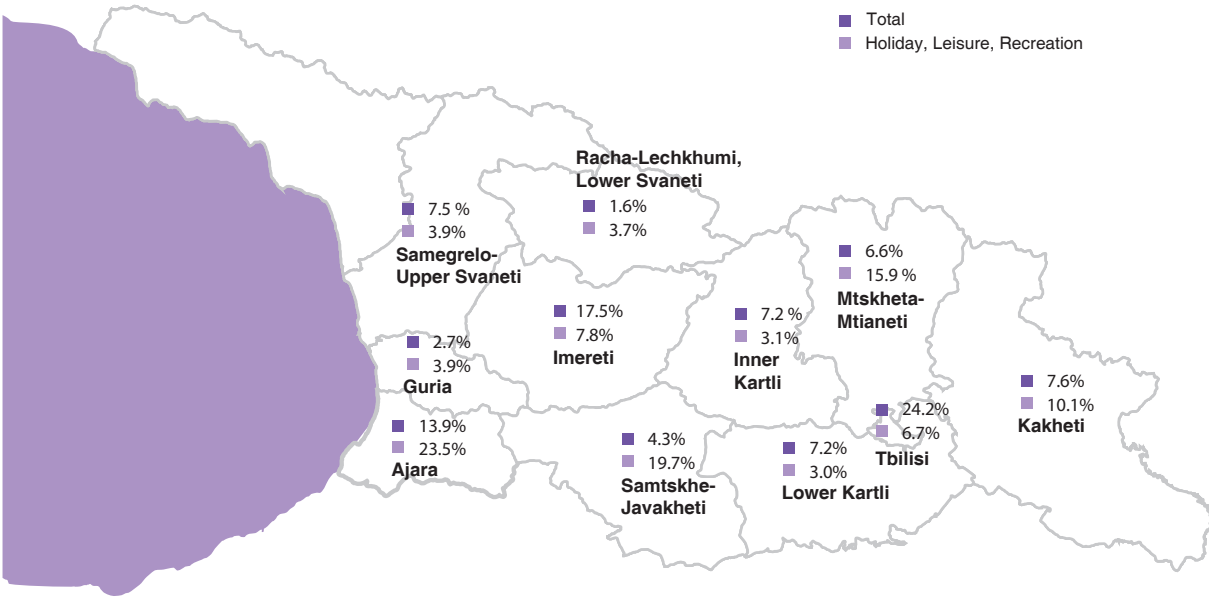
Source: The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia

Average Length of Stay

Region	Average Overnights
Tbilisi	1.7
Ajara	1.8
Guria	2.5
Imereti	1.4
Kakheti	2.0
Mtskheta-Mtianeti	1.7
Racha-Lechkhumi, Lower Svaneti	7.2
Samegrelo-Upper Svaneti	2.9
Samtskhe-Javakheti	3.6
Lower Kartli	1.7
Inner Kartli	1.6

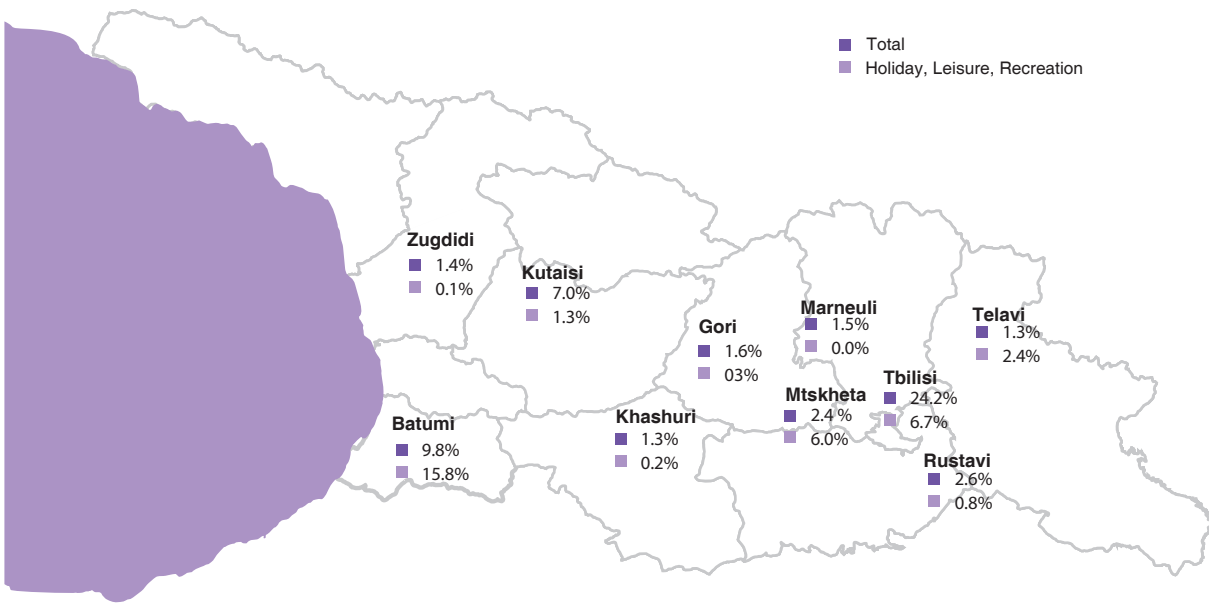
Source: The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia

Most Visited Regions



Source: The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia

Most Visited Destinations



Source: The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia

Travel Behavior of Outbound Visitors

In 2019 the number of international trips from Georgia amounted to 2,373,888. A total of 57% (1,357,207)) of trips included at least one overnight stay, which is by definition a tourist trip. 43% were day trips (1,016,681).

The largest share of outbound trips was conducted by the 31-50 age category, followed by the 15-30 and 51-70 age categories with 29% and 24% respectively. Only 2% were aged 71+. The majority of outbound visitors were male (59%), while 94% of outbound trips were repeat trips.

Purpose of Travel

International outbound trips were mostly undertaken to visit friends and relatives (36.2%). Other frequently observed purposes included shopping (28.7%), business/professional trips (17.5%), holiday, leisure, or recreation (12.8%), health and medical care (3.1%), and education (1.1%). Only 0.7% of trips were for other purposes.

Accommodation

During this period, the total number of overnight stays was 9,313,690. The average duration of a trip was 4 nights.
The most used form of accommodation was in the private home of a friend or relative with 42.6% of total overnights. Slightly less than a quarter of nights were spent in hotels (21.6%). Other types of accommodation were less utilized by international visitors. 12.4% of nights were spent in own home, while 12.1% were in a guesthouse or hostel.

Travel Destinations

The majority of outbound trips (80%) were conducted to neighboring countries. Among them, Turkey was the leader (44.7%), followed by Azerbaijan (19.5%), and Armenia (11.7%). The smallest number of trips among neighbors was conducted to Russia (7%). Significantly fewer trips are conducted to non-neighboring countries, where Germany is among the leaders with 2.1%, Ukraine with 1.7%, and Poland with 1.6%.

Expenditure

Total expenditure by outbound visitors during the estimation period was 2.1 billion GEL, and average expenditure per visit was 877 GEL. The largest share of visitors' expenditures was registered on served food and drinks (32.6% of total expenses) and shopping (31.4% of total expenses). 18.3% was spent on accommodation, while 7.2% of expenditures were made on cultural and entertainment services.

Basic Information

The National Statistics Office of Georgia conducted this research to determine the structure of outbound trips abroad.

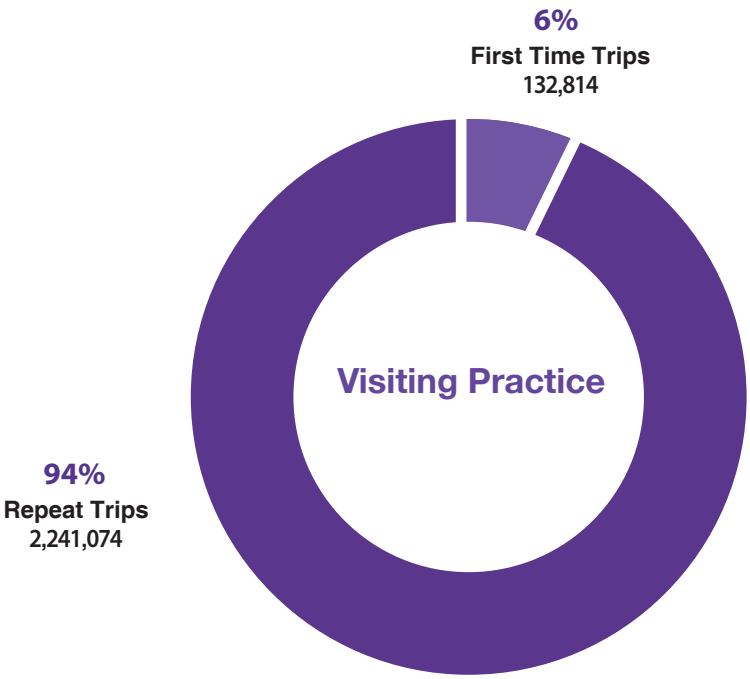
Methodology

The survey was conducted in a face-to-face format, and a printed questionnaire was used. The data was gathered via a survey using quantitative research techniques based on the recommendations of the United Nations World Tourism Organisation. A stratified systematic sample method was applied to selected respondents. The sample size is 12,000 annually, (1,000 monthly). Interviews were conducted with outbound visitors aged 15 years or older at the moment of returning to Georgia. The interviews took place at the ten biggest checkpoints (air, land).

Main Published Indicators

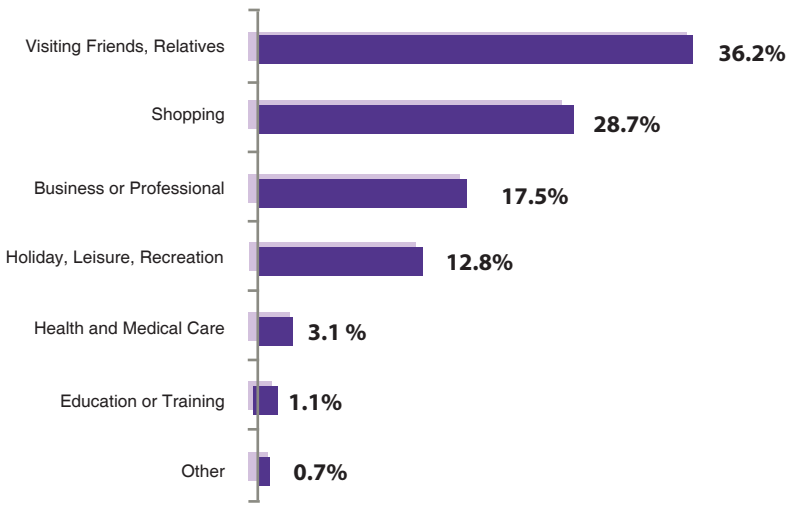
Place of permanent residence, purpose and frequency of visit, length of stay, places visited, accommodation, source of information, accompanying persons, means of transport, organization of the trip, popular activities and attractions, and satisfaction level.
More detailed information can be found at www.gnta.ge and www.geostat.ge.

Outbound Visitor Characteristics (XSL): https://bit.ly/3iKtAGZ
Report on Outbound Visitor Characteristics (pdf): https://bit.ly/32Pcm5D



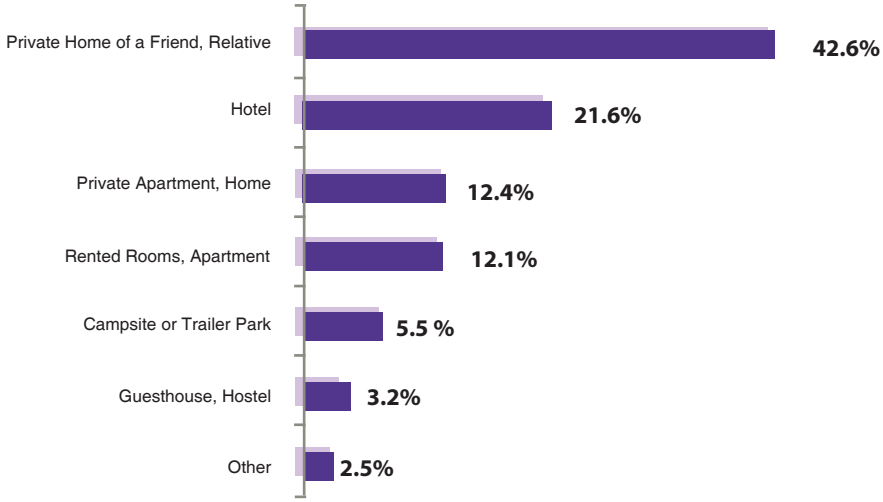
Source: The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia

Main Purpose of Trip



Source: The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia

Nights Spent



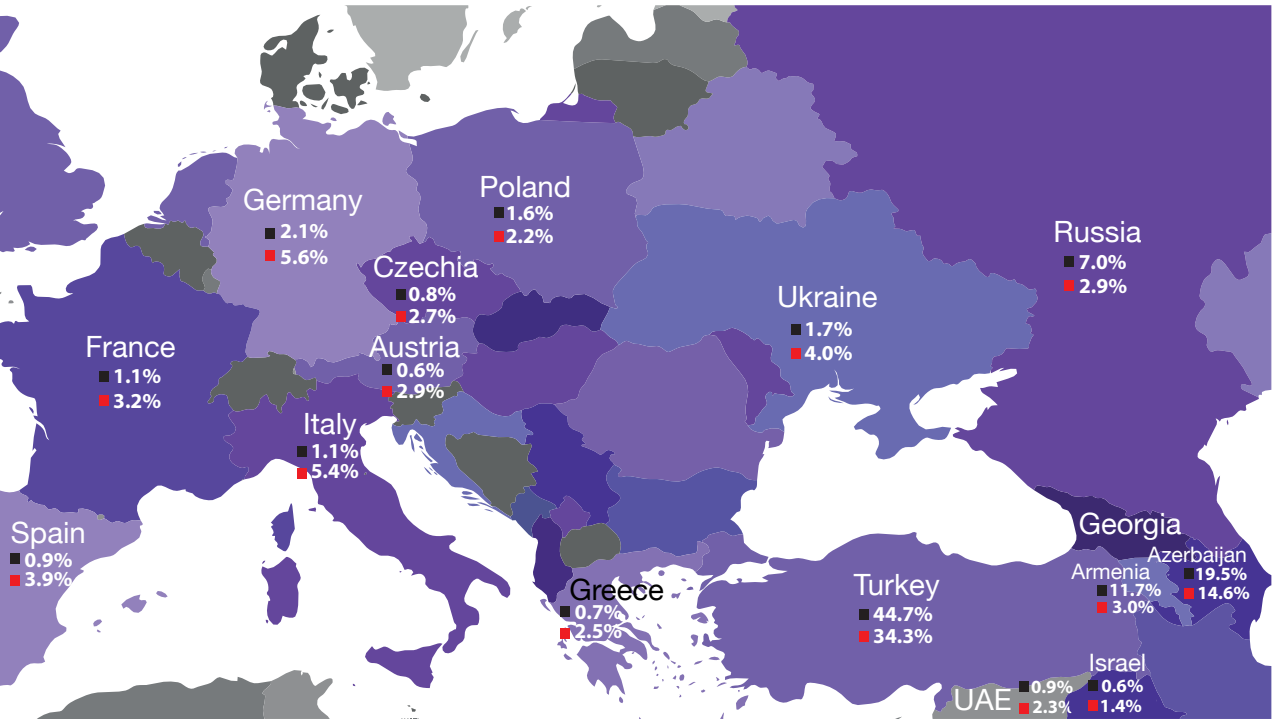
Source: The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia

Expenditure Structure

Components	2019	Share %
Served Food and Drinks	679,472,926	32.6%
Shopping	653,523,931	31.4%
Accommodation	380,488,271	18.3%
Cultural and Entertainment Services	150,942,954	7.2%
Other Expenditures	113,294,231	5.4%
Local Transport	104,370,370	5.0%
Total Expenditure	2,082,092,683	100.0%

Source: The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia

Outbound Trips, Top 15 Countries



Source: The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia

Total
Holiday, Leisure, Recreation

Tourism - an Important Sector of the Economy

The travel and tourism industry is one of the largest and fastest-growing service industries globally. According to the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), the industry's total contribution to world GDP in 2019 was 8.9 trillion USD and it supported 330 million jobs. The WTTC assessed the total economic contribution of this sector to be 10.3% of world GDP in 2019. It is responsible for 1 in 10 jobs, 4.3% of total economic investment, and 6.8% of world exports (WTTC).

Tourism - an Invisible Export

The expenditures of foreign guests in Georgia have a huge effect on the national balance of payments. Approximately 71% of Georgia's service export revenues come from tourism. On the asset side, the balance of payments reports Georgia's income from foreign visitors; on the liabilities side, it shows the expenditure of Georgian residents while abroad. In 2019, the foreign exchange income from foreign tourism in Georgia amounted to 3.27 billion USD, which is 1.4% higher than in 2018. Foreign exchange expenditures for foreign tourism in Georgia amounted to 0.66 billion USD; compared to 2018, this indicator increased by 25.2%. In 2019, the balance of foreign tourism in Georgia amounted to 2.6 billion USD, a 3.2% increase over 2018.

In 2019, foreign card operations of international travelers amounted to 2.69 billion GEL, an increase of 25.8%, compared to 2018.

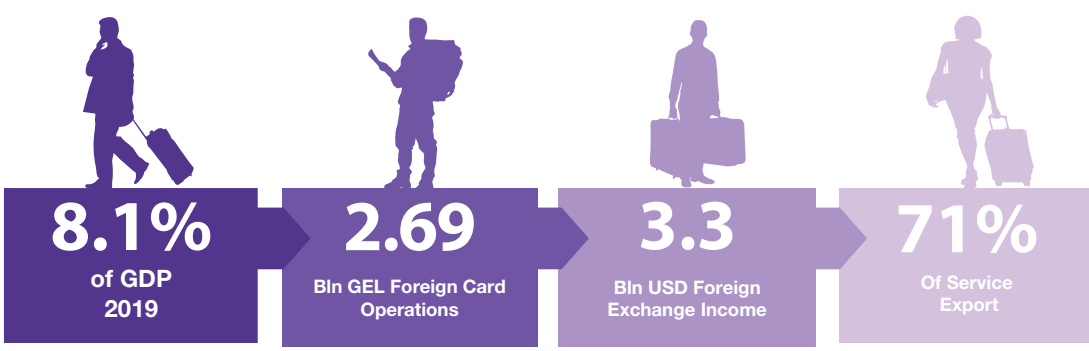
Share of Tourism in the Economy

Between 2018 and 2019, the total value added in the tourism sector increased by 16.9% and reached 3.53 billion GEL due to increased demand. As a result, tourism's gross value added, as a proportion of GDP, increased from 7.8% to 8.1%. The additional value added in the tourism industry in 2019 was mainly driven by accommodation (+10.9%), transport (air transport increased 11% and other transport increased 20.9%), food objects (an increase of 23.3%), and travel companies (an increase of 17.4%).

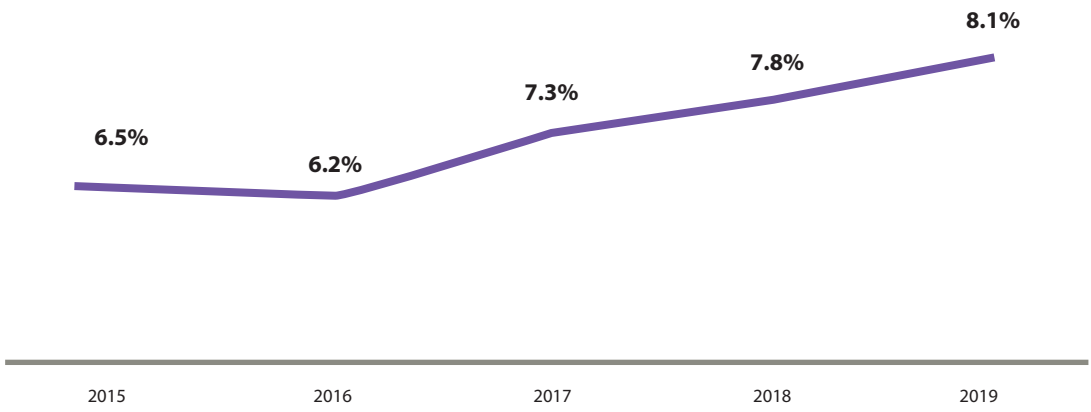
Main published indicators:

- Share of tourism in GDP
- Share of tourism in total output
- Foreign currency income from foreign tourism
- Foreign currency expenses for foreign tourism
- Balance of foreign tourism
- Foreign card operations of international travelers

More detailed information about the contribution of tourism to the economy can be found at the National Statistics Office website **www.geostat.ge**, the National Bank of Georgia's website **www.nbg.ge** and the Georgian National Tourism Administration's website **www.gnta.ge.**
Economic Indicators (XSL):
https://bit.ly/3ke47Ge



Share of Tourism in GDP



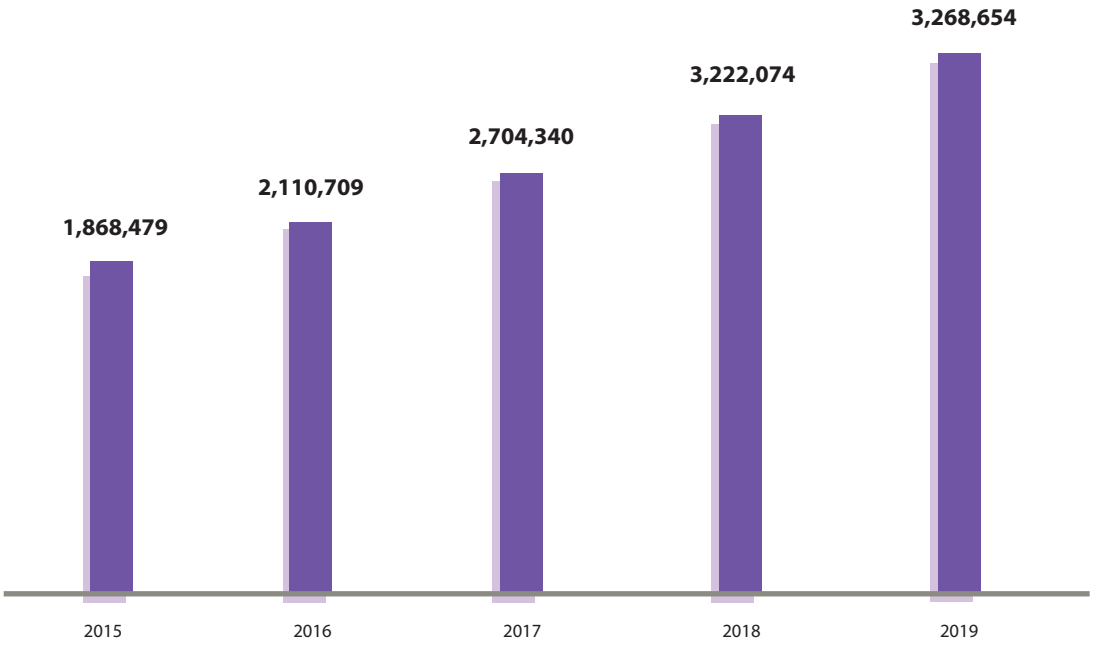
Source: National Statistics Office of Georgia

Tourism Value Added 2016-2019 (Thousands of GEL)

	2016	2017	2018	2019	% Change 2018 - 2019
Total	1,968	2,597	3,016	3,527	16.9%
Including	⬇	⬇	⬇	⬇	⬇
Accommodation Units	594	861	1,185	1,314	10.9%
Food Establishments	460	576	615	758	23.3%
Transport	832	1,050	1,096	1,314	19.9%
Travel Companies	82	110	120	141	17.4%

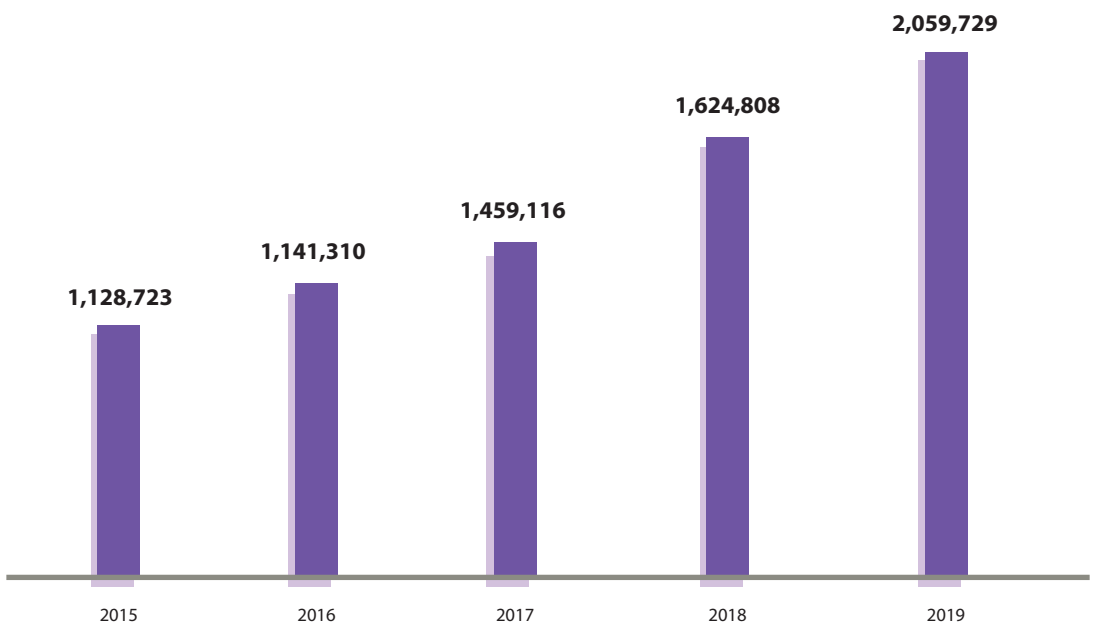
Source: The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia

International Tourism Receipts (Thousands of USD)



Source: National Bank of Georgia

Foreign Card Operations of International Travelers (Thousands of GEL)

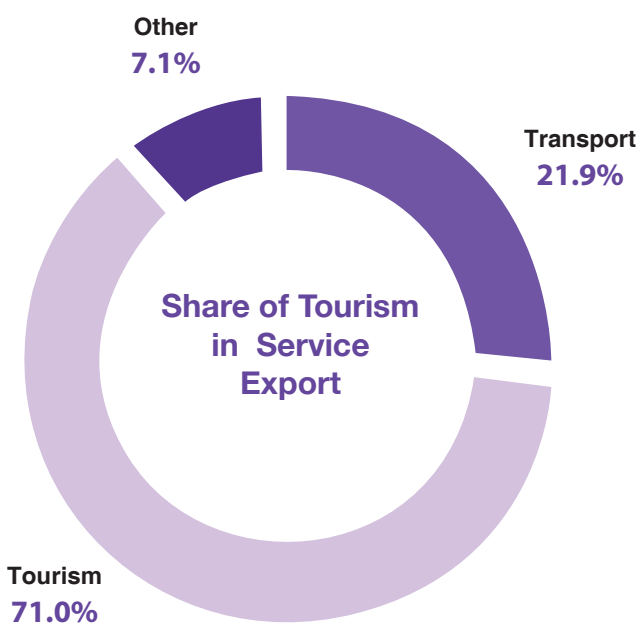


Source: National Bank of Georgia

Foreign Currency Revenues from Incoming Tourism 2016 - 2019 (Thousands of USD)

	2016	2017	2018	2019	Change % 2018 - 2019
Total	2,110,709	2,704,340	3,222,074	3,268,654	1%
Including	⬇	⬇	⬇	⬇	⬇
I Q	342,590	425,673	550,730	578,442	5%
II Q	497,441	629,854	809,969	877,626	8%
III Q	813,161	1,078,274	1,210,561	1,126,771	-7%
IV Q	457,517	570,538	650,814	685,814	5%

Source: National Bank of Georgia



Source: National Bank of Georgia

The Aviation Market

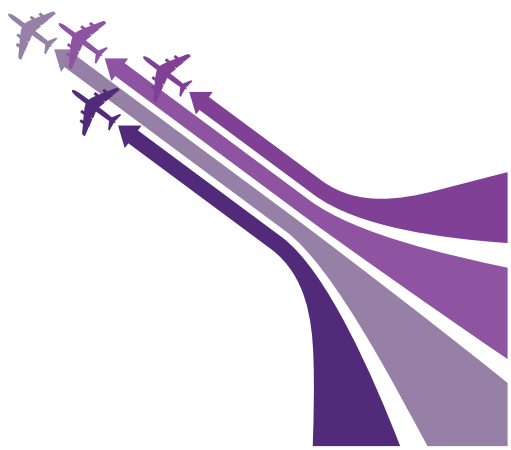
The aviation market in Georgia has demonstrated considerable growth in recent years. Three international and two domestic airports currently operate in Georgia, all of which fully comply with International Civil Aviation Organization standards. Georgia's aviation market is primarily international, with the majority of flights being served by Tbilisi International Airport.

Tbilisi and Batumi International Airports are run by Turkish TAV Airports Holding Company. They started operations in February and May 2007, respectively. Mestia's Queen Tamar Airport officially opened in 2011, while the construction of Kutaisi's King David the Builder International Airport was completed in September 2012. The opening of Kutaisi Airport was marked by the launch of flights by Wizz Air Hungary. Wizz Air is one of the low-cost carriers (LCC) on the Georgian market, along with Pegasus Airlines, Air Arabia, Flydubai, Pobeda Airlines, airBaltic, Buta Airways, SalamAir, Flynas, Ukraine International Airlines, and SkyUp Airlines. In 2019, Ryanair joined the market of low-cost carriers in Georgia. In 2017, one more domestic airport was constructed in Ambrolauri. In the future, the number of airports in Georgia is expected to grow. There is an ongoing study of old inactive airports to evaluate prospects for their future exploitation.

The capacity of Tbilisi and Batumi International Airports annually is 6.1 mln and 600,000 passengers respectively. The capacity of the other airports is the following: Kutaisi International Airport: 600,000; Ambrolauri: 50,000; and Mestia: 50,000 passengers/year.

Airlines

According to the Georgian Civil Aviation Agency (GCAA), Wizz Air Hungary is the dominant air company operating in Georgia and carries the largest number of passengers. In 2019, it served 825,290 (16.1%) passengers. Turkish Airlines is the second most popular airline, with 572,181 (11.2%) passengers, followed by Georgian Airways: 500,482 (9.8%); Ukraine International Airlines: 207,588 (4.1%); Flydubai: 204,364 (4%); Ural Airlines: 190,341 (3.7%); Pegasus Airlines: 180,761 (3.5%); Pobeda Airlines: 180,684 (3.5%); and SkyUp Airlines: 156,186 (3.1%).
In total, 49 international and two domestic airlines operated in Georgia in 2019. The major airlines operating are: Wizz Air Hungary, Turkish Airlines, Georgian Airways, Ukraine International Airlines, Flydubai, Ural Airlines, Pegasus Airlines, Pobeda Airlines, SkyUp Airlines, Air Arabia, Azerbaijan Airlines, Belavia, Qatar Airways, El Al Israel Airlines, Israir Airlines, Qeshm Air, and Lufthansa.
Nine new international companies entered the Georgian market in 2019, including Air France, Aircompany Armenia, Air Malta, Ryanair, and Uzbekistan Airways. Charter flights were provided by Thai AirAsia X, GetJet Airlines, and Onur Air.



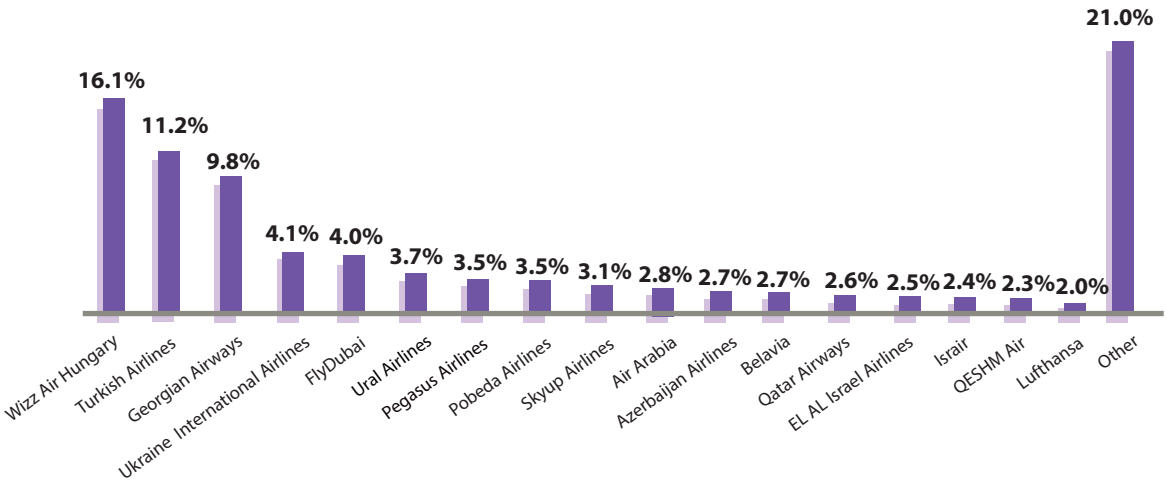
Following airports included:

Tbilisi International Airport, Kutaisi David the Builder International Airport, Batumi International Airport, Mestia Queen Tamar Airport, and Ambrolauri Airport.

-0.9%
24,386
Flights

+3.3%
5,200,494
Passengers

Share of Airlines

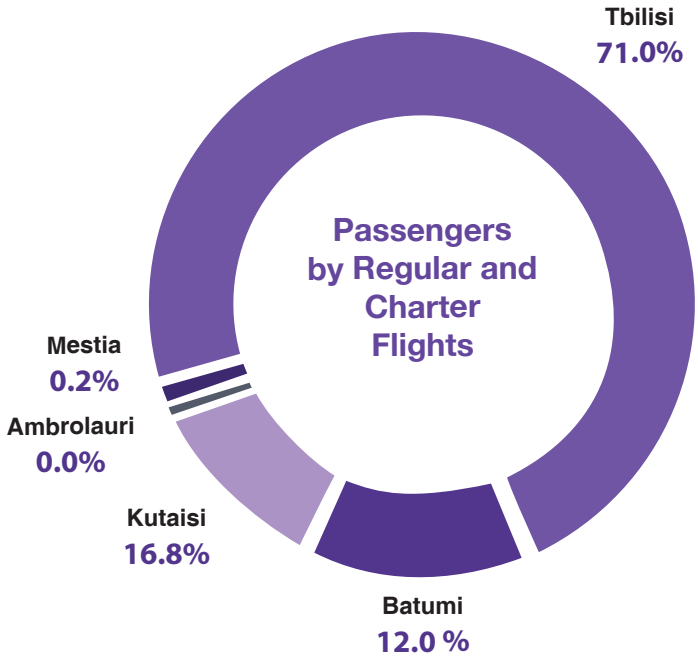


Source: Georgian Civil Aviation Agency

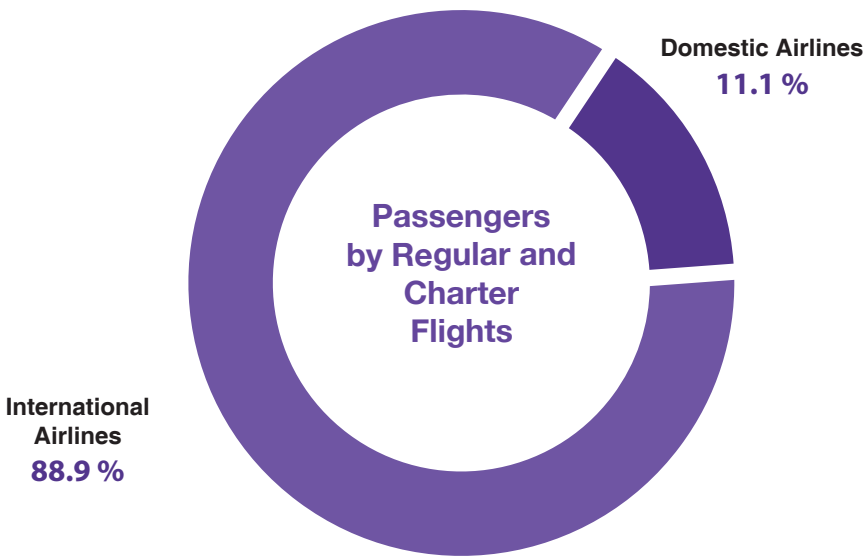
New Airlines in 2019 (Regular)

Airline	Route	Frequency
Ryan Air	Tbilisi-Milian-Tbilisi	Four Times a Week
	Kutaisi-Bologna-Kutaisi	Twice a Week
	Tbilisi-Marseille-Tbilisi	Twice a Week
Air France	Tbilisi-Paris-Tbilisi	Twice a Week
Air Malta	Tbilisi-Malta-Tbilisi	Once a Week
Aicompany Armenia	Tbilisi-Erevan-Tbilisi	Fourteen Times a Week
Uzbekistan Airways	Tbilisi-Tashkent-Tbilisi	Twice a Week

Source: Georgian Civil Aviation Agency



Source: Georgian Civil Aviation Agency



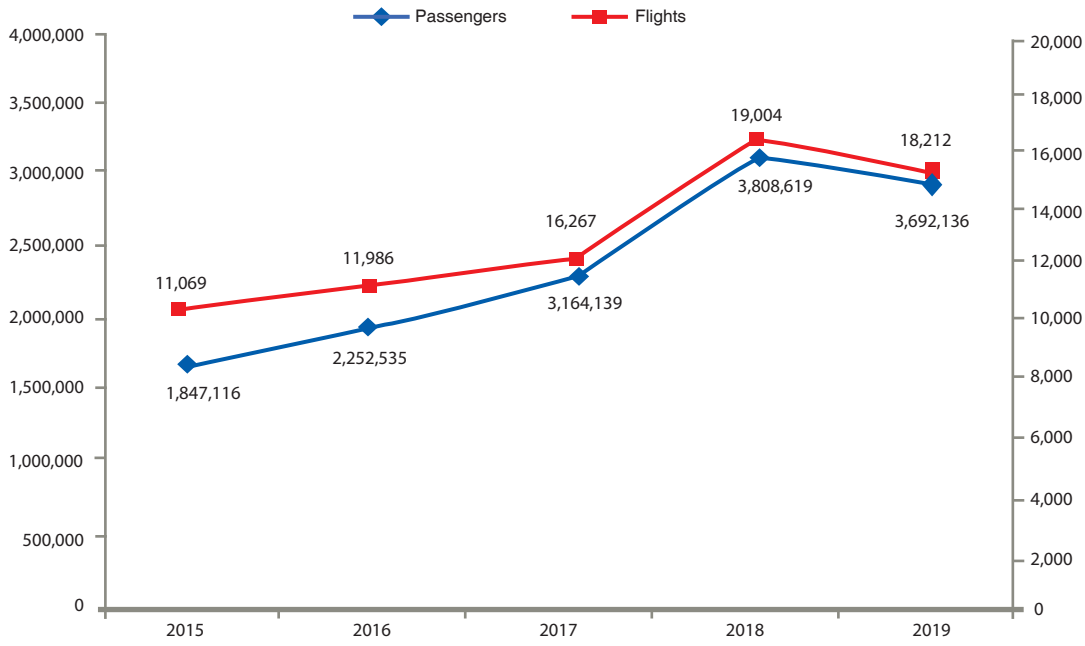
Source: Georgian Civil Aviation Agency

New Routes from Georgian Airports in 2019

Airline	Route	Frequency
Skyup Airlines	Tbilisi-Kharkov-Tbilisi Kutaisi-Kharkov-Kutaisi	Twice a Week Twice a Week
S7 Airlines	Batumi-Novosibirsk-Batumi	Once a Week
Flynas	Batumi-Raida-Batumi	Three times a Week
Buta Airways	Batumi-Baku-Batumi	Three times a Week
Ural Airlines	Tbilisi-Samara-Tbilisi	Twice a Week
Scat	Batumi-Nur-Sultan-Batumi	Twice a Week
Wizz Air Hungary	Kutaisi-Gdanski-Kutaisi	Twice a Week
	Kutaisi-Tallinn-Kutaisi	Twice a Week
	Kutaisi-Poznam-Kutaisi	Twice a Week
	Kutaisi-Krakov-Kutaisi	Twice a Week
	Kutaisi-Basel-Kutaisi	Twice a Week
	Kutaisi-Brussels-Kutaisi	Twice a Week
	Kutaisi-Bari-Kutaisi	Twice a Week
	Kutaisi-Copenhagen-Kutaisi	Twice a Week
	Kutaisi-Eindhoven-Kutaisi	Twice a Week

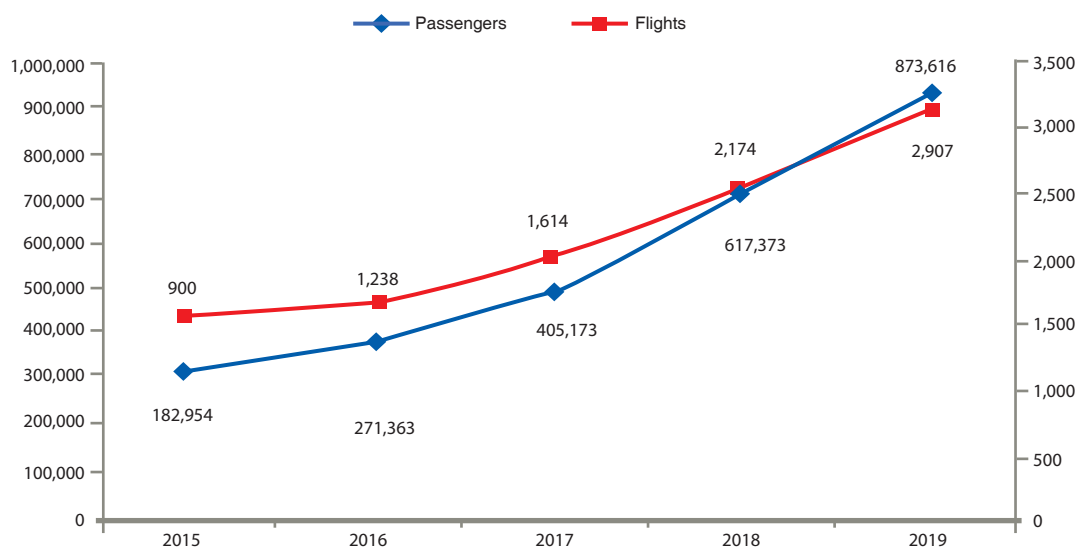
Source: Georgian Civil Aviation Agency

Tbilisi International Airport: Passengers and Flights



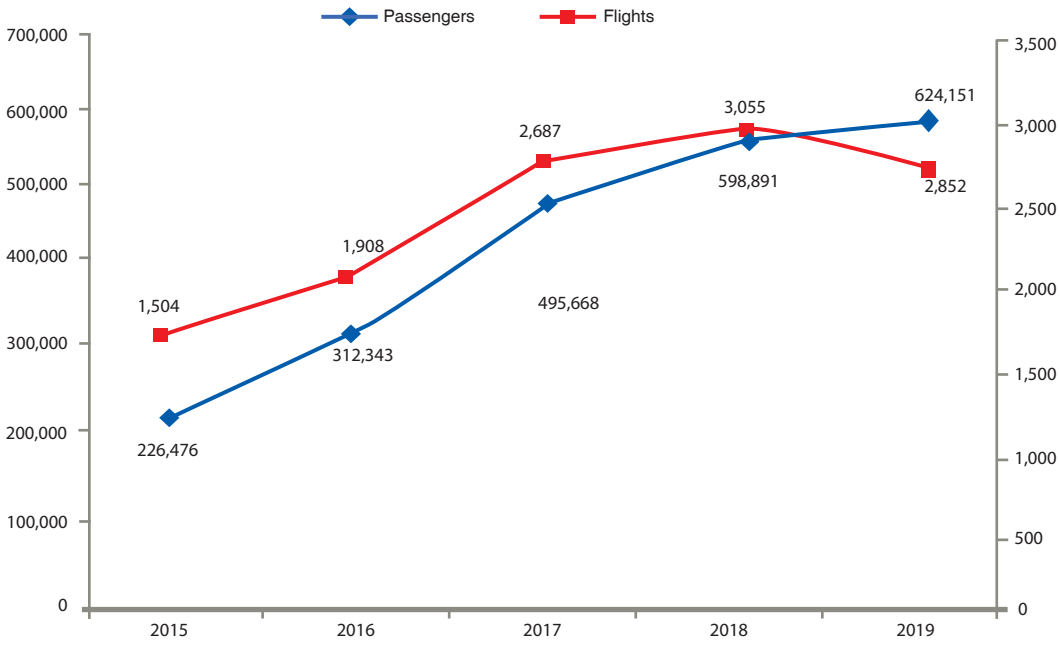
Source: Georgian Civil Aviation Agency

Kutaisi International Airport: Passengers and Flights

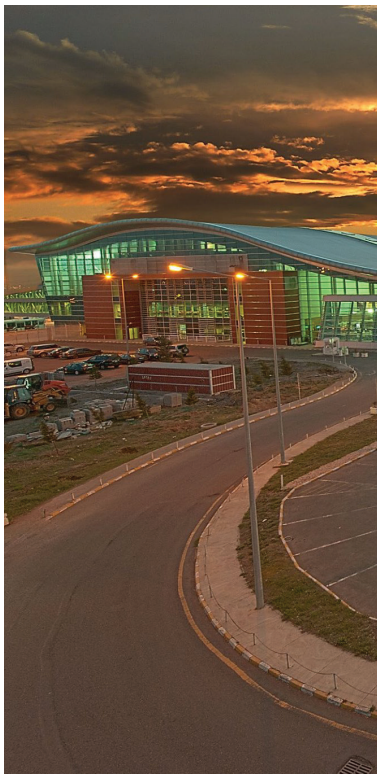


Source: Georgian Civil Aviation Agency

Batumi International Airport: Passengers and Flights



Source: Georgian Civil Aviation Agency



Accommodation Market

The number of accommodation units registered in the database of the Georgian National Tourism Administration (GNTA) is 2,575, with a total of 94,438 beds. Ajara region has the largest number of beds (26,519 28.1%), followed by Tbilisi with 23,596 beds (25%).

Tbilisi boasts several international hotel brands: Radisson Blu Iveria Hotel, Tbilisi Marriott, Courtyard Marriott, Sheraton, Holiday Inn, Citadines Apart'Hotel, Best Western Tbilisi, Mercure, Hotels and Preference, The Biltmore Hotel, Ibis Styles Tbilisi Center, Best Western Tbilisi City Centre, Ramada Encore, and Moxy by Marriott. In 2019, Wyndham Grand and Ibis Tbilisi Stadium were added to this list.

Several brand hotels have also started operating in the regions of Georgia. In Kakheti, Radisson Blu Tsinandali, Park Hotel Tsinandali, and Holiday Inn Telavi joined the list of hotel brands. Furthermore, Best Western Gudauri started to operate.
According to STR Global, the occupancy rate of hotels in Georgia equaled 56.7%; a decrease compared to the previous year of 6.3%. The highest occupancy rates were registered in August (77.1%), September (74.5%), and July and October (66.8%), while the lowest were in January (34.6%), February (36.4%), and December (38.5%). The highest occupancy rate among cities was recorded in Tbilisi (59.7%), followed by Batumi (58.9%) and in the category "other Georgia" (46.7%).

There are currently several planned and ongoing hotel construction projects in Georgia. Construction of the following brand hotels is planned in Tbilisi: Hilton Garden Inn, Holiday Inn Express, Park Inn by Radisson, Ramada Encore, Hyatt Regency, Radisson Blu Telegraph, Golden Tulip, Marriott Autograph Collection-Panorama Freedom Square, Marriott Autograph Collection-Panorama Sololaki, Pullman Hotels & Resort da Tabori Ridge Recreation & Golf Resort, Pullman Hotels & Resort, Hilton Tbilisi, Swissotel, Ibis Hotel Tbilisi.
In the regions, the following hotel construction projects are planned: Courtyard by Marriott (Batumi), Babylon Tower (Batumi), Le Meridien (Batumi), Swissotel (Batumi), Wellness Resort & Spa on Mtsvane Kontskhi (Mtsvane Kontskhi), Ramada Resorts (Goderdzi), Radisson Blu Gudauri (Gudauri), Ramada Encore (Kutaisi), Best Western Plus Likani Resort (Borjomi), etc.
The majority of hotels being constructed are located in Tbilisi and the Ajara, Imereti, Samtskhe-Javakheti, and Kakheti regions.

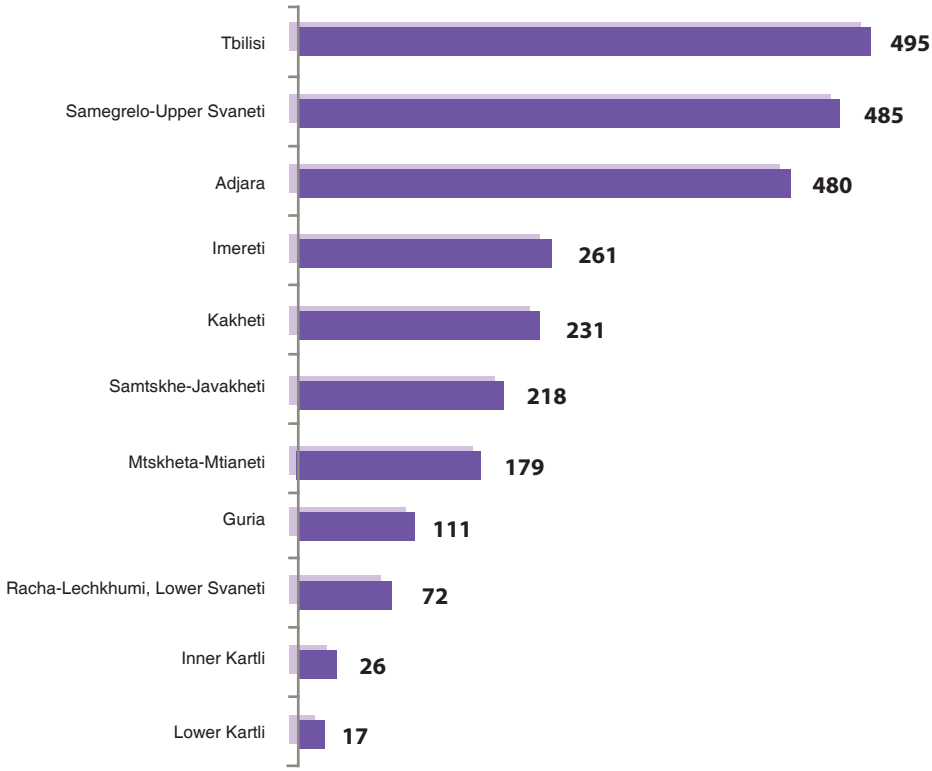
In 2019, Tbilisi was the leader in terms of growth in the number of beds. More than 85 new accommodation units were introduced on the market in 2019, with more than 5,100 beds. Tbilisi was the main contributor to the stock, supplying 1,400 additional beds (29%), followed by the Kakheti region with 1,039 beds (20%) and Samtskhe-Javakheti with 1,031 beds (20%).

The largest share (66%) of brand hotels are located in Tbilisi and Batumi. Out of the total number of 41 brand hotels, 18 are located in Tbilisi with 4,686 beds, while nine brand hotels with 2,350 beds function in Batumi. Out of the rest of the hotels, three hotels are located in Borjomi, two each in Bakuriani and Tsinandali, and one in Telavi, Gudauri, Sairme, Shekvetili, Kobuleti, Stepantsminda, and Kutaisi for a total of 3,099 beds.

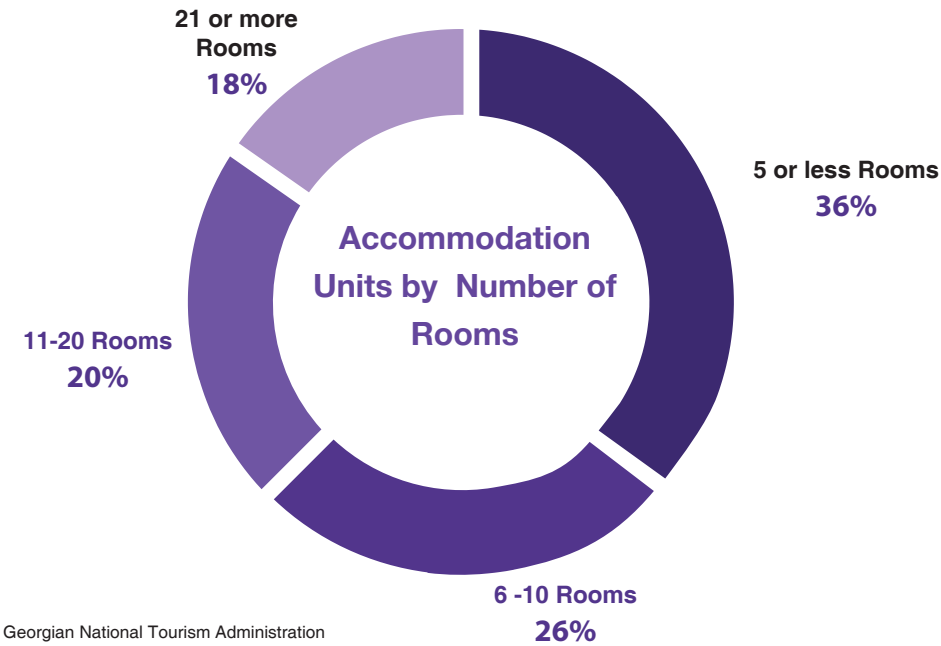
The number of international brand hotels is increasing substantially, especially in the regions. In 2019, six new brand hotels began functioning on the market, and four of them are located in the regions. In Kakheti, premium class hotels Radisson Blu Tsinandali, Park Hotel Tsinandali, and Holiday Inn Telavi started to operate. Best Western expanded its hotel chain in Georgia by introducing a hotel in Gudauri. More brand hotels are projected to open in different regional cities in 2020-2022 including Batumi, Mtsvane Kontskhi, Goderdzi, Borjomi, and Kutaisi.

In this report, "brand hotels" are defined as:
Best Western Tbilisi, Tbilisi; Citadines Apart'hotel, Tbilisi ; Courtyard Marriott Hotel, Tbilisi; Crowne Plaza Borjomi, Borjomi,; Divan Suites Batumi, Batumi; Hilton Hotel & Resorts, Batumi; Holiday Inn Tbilisi, Tbilisi ; Hotels and Preference Hualing Tbilisi, Tbilisi ; Mercure Tbilisi Old Town, Tbilisi; Radisson BLU Hotel, Batumi; Radisson BLU Iveria Hotel, Tbilisi; Borjomi Likani Hotel, Borjomi; Rooms Hotel Kazbegi, Stepantsminda; Rooms Hotel Tbilisi, Tbilisi; Sheraton Batumi Hotel, Batumi; Sheraton Metechi Palace Hotel, Tbilisi; Tbilisi Marriott Hotels, Tbilisi; The Biltmore Hotel Tbilisi; Golden Tulip Borjomi, Borjomi; Ibis Styles Tbilisi Center, Tbilisi; Best Western Kutaisi, Kutaisi; Best Western Plus Bakuriani, Bakuriani; Best Western Plus Batumi, Batumi; Wyndham Batumi, Batumi; Euphoria Hotel, Batumi; Sky Tower Hotel Batumi; Ramada Encore, Tbilisi; Moxy by Marriott, Tbilisi; Best Western Sairme Resorts, Sairme; Best Western Tbilisi City Centre, Tbilisi; Best Western Premier Batumi, Batumi; Georgia Palace Hotel & Spa Kobuleti, Kobuleti; Stamba Hotel, Tbilisi; Georgia Palace Hotel & Spa Kobuleti, Kobuleti; Borjomi Likani Hotel; Marriott Autograph Collection-Hotel & Spa Resort, Shekvetili; Radisson BLU Tsinandali, Tsinandali; Wyndham Grand Tbilisi, Tbilisi; Park Hotel Tsinandali, Tsinandali; Ibis Tbilisi Stadium, Tbilisi; Rooms Hotel Kokhta, Bakuriani; Best Western Gudauri, Gudauri; Holiday Inn Telavi, Telavi.
Further information:
Accommodation Units (XSL): https://bit.ly/2FDUtxO
Accommodation Pipeline (XSL): https://bit.ly/3iGGlwA

Number of Accommodation Units

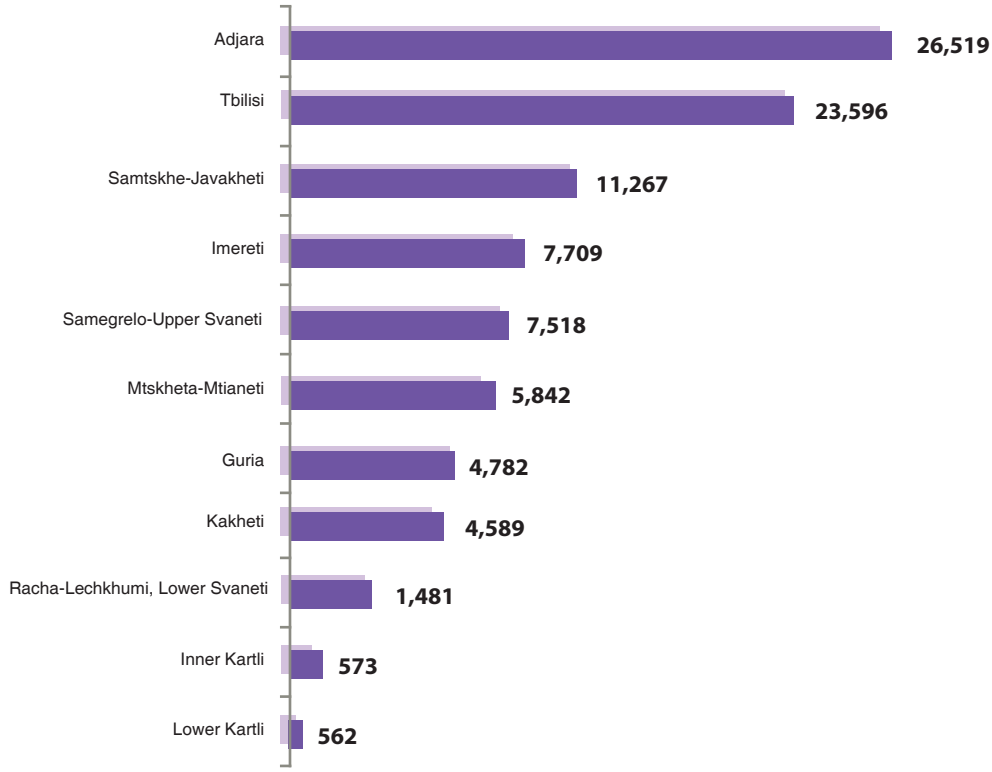


Source: Georgian National Tourism Administration

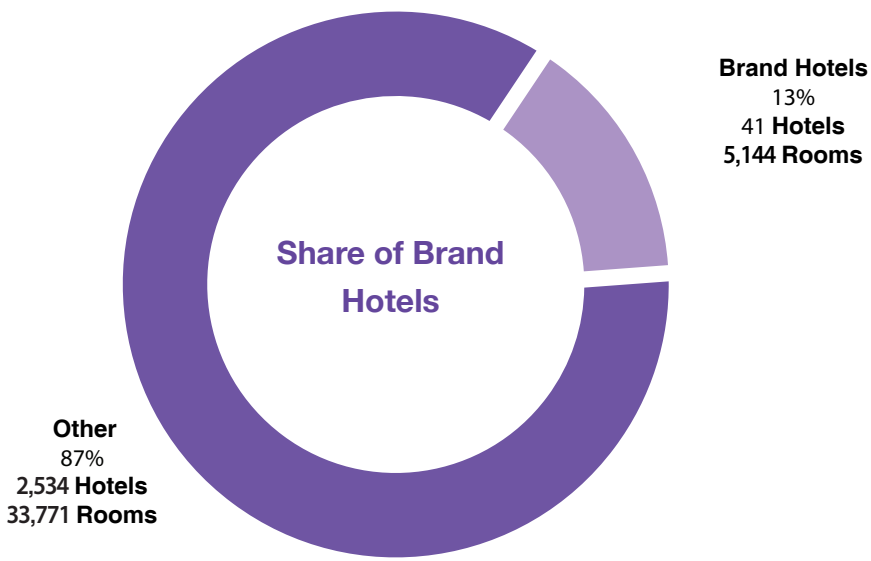


Source: Georgian National Tourism Administration

Bed Capacity by Region

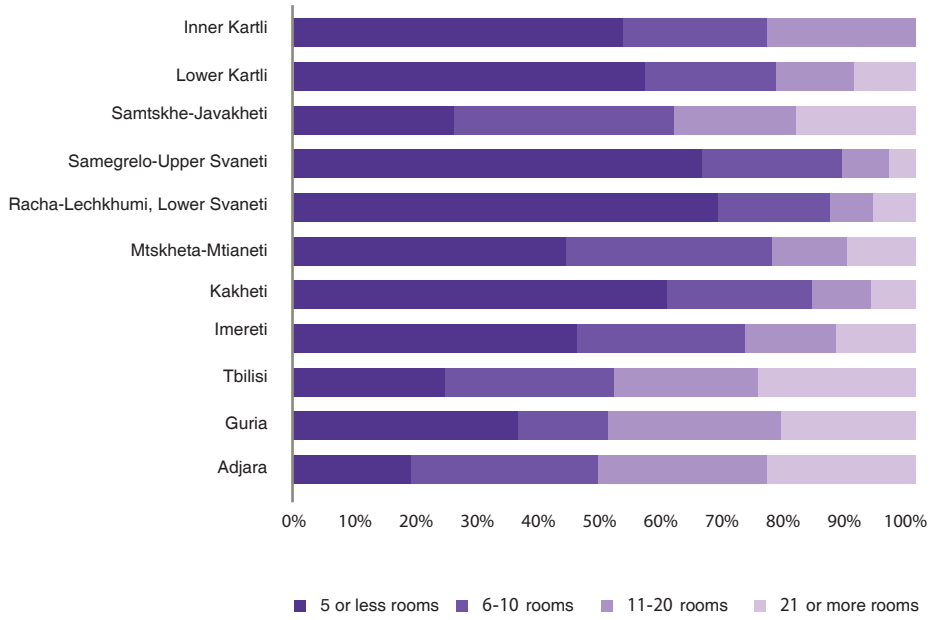


Source: Georgian National Tourism Administration



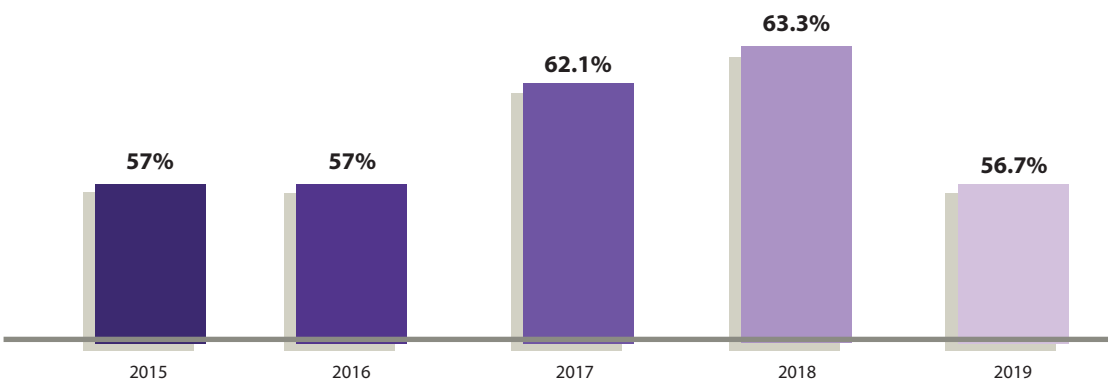
Source: Georgian National Tourism Administration

Accommodation Units by Type and Region



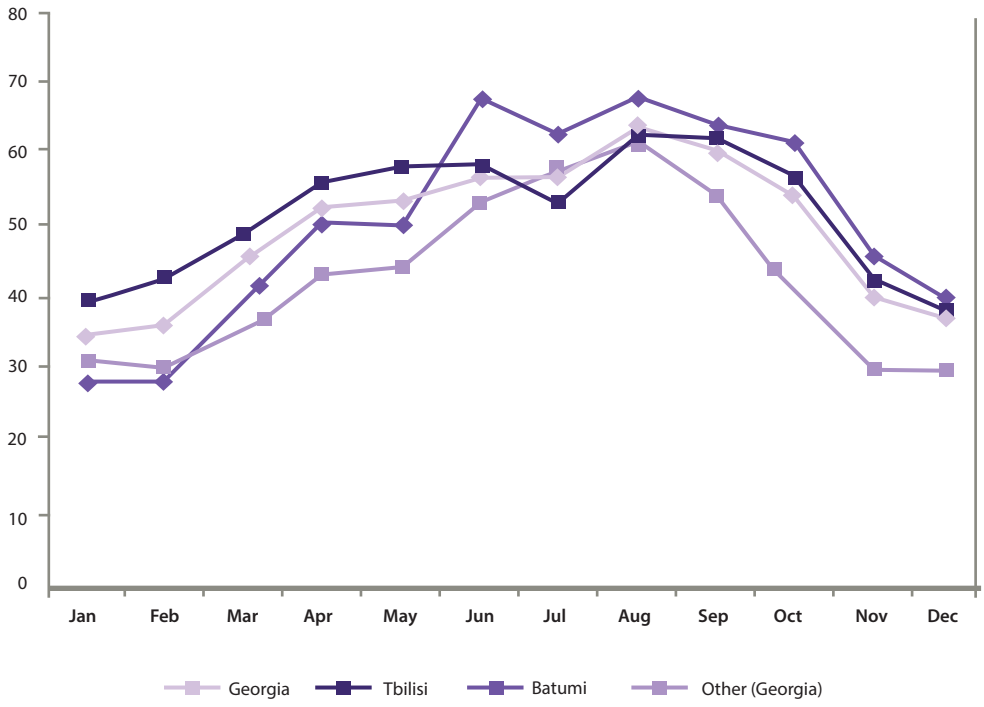
Source: Georgian National Tourism Administration

Occupancy Rate in Brand Hotels



Source: STR Global

Occupancy Rate in Brand Hotels



Source: STR Global

The occupancy rate is calculated based on the data of the following hotels: Leogrand Hotel, Crowne Plaza Borjomi, Divan Suites Batumi, Ambassadori Tbilisi Hotel, Citadines City Centre Tbilisi, Courtyard Tbilisi, Ibis Styles Tbilisi Center, Mercure Tbilisi Old Town, Hotel Citrus, Marriott Tbilisi Hotel, Millennium The Biltmore Tbilisi, Radisson Blu Iveria Hotel Tbilisi, ROOMS HOTEL Tbilisi, The Shota Hotel, Ramada Encore Tbilisi, Ameri Plaza, Hotels & Preference Hualing Tbilisi, Holiday Inn Tbilisi, Wyndham Batumi, Radisson Blu Hotel Batumi, Sheraton Hotel Batumi, Hilton Batumi, Georgia Palace Hotel & Spa, Golden Tulip Borjomi, MOXY Tbilisi, Iota Hotel Tbilisi, Paragraph Resort & Spa Shekvetili Autograph Collection, Best Western Kutaisi, Sheraton Grand Tbilisi Metechi Palace, Cron Palace Hotel Tbilisi, Best Western Tbilisi Art Hotel, Best Western Tbilisi City Center, Sole Palace, Tiflis Palace, Wyndham Grand Tbilisi, Radisson Collection Hotel Tsinandali Estate Georgia, Rooms Hotel Kazbegi, The Grand Gloria Hotel, Best Western Plus Batumi, Radius Hotel Tbilisi, Holiday Inn Telavi, The Grand Gloria Hotel.

HOTELS OPENED IN 2019

Radisson BLU Tsinandali / Tsinandali
Wyndham Grand / Tbilisi
Park Hotel Tsinandali / Telavi
Magnica Shekvetili / Shekvetili
Holiday Inn Telavi / Telavi
Hotel Chateau Khashmi / Sagarejo
Schuchmann Wines / Telavi
Hotel Resolute / Shekvetili
Top Gold Hotel / Tbilisi

Green Line Batumi / Mtsvane Kontskhi
Silver 39 Boutique Hotel / Tbilisi
Green Tower Hotel / Tbilisi
Radius Hotel Tbilisi / Tbilisi
Ibis Tbilisi Stadium / Tbilisi
BRIM HOTEL / Tbilisi
Bakuriani Inn / Bakuriani
Rooms Hotel / Bakuriani
Best Western Gudauri / Gudauri

5,100+
Beds

Hotel Pipeline 2020 / 2022

Hilton Garden Inn / Tbilisi
Radisson Park Inn / Tbilisi
Babylon Tower / Batumi
Pullman Hotels & Resort / Tbilisi
Radisson Blu Gudauri / Gudauri
Courtyard by Marriott / Batumi
Radisson BLU Telegraph / Tbilisi
Ramada Tbilisi / Tbilisi
Ramada Kutaisi / Kutaisi
Marriott Autograph Collection-Panorama
Freedom Square / Tbilisi
Marriott Autograph Collection-Panorama
Sololaki / Tbilisi
Swiss-Belhotel / Batumi

Le Meridien Batumi / Batumi
Holiday Inn Express / Tbilisi
Hilton Tbilisi / Tbilisi
Wellness Resort & Spa on
Mtsvane Kontskh / Mtsvane Kontskhi
Ramada Resorts / Goderdzi
Tabori Ridge Recreation & Golf Resort / Tbilisi
Best Western Plus Likani Resort / Borjomi
NOVOTEL / Batumi
Holiday Inn Express / Tbilisi
Pulmann Hotels & Resort / Batumi
Swissotel / Tbilisi
Ibis Hotel Tbilisi / Tbilisi

36,900+
Beds

Protected Areas

The main function of protected areas is to protect Georgia's natural heritage. In addition, they have other functions, one of which is to contribute to the development of ecotourism. Over time, it has become clear to Georgian society that protected areas are not banned territories, but can also be used for tourist purposes.

There are 86 different protected areas in Georgia: 14 Strict Nature Reserves, 12 National Parks, 40 Natural Monuments, 20 Managed Natural Reserves, and one Protected Landscape. The total size of all protected areas is 665,664 ha, which comprises 9.56% of the total territory of the country.

The number of visitors registered in protected areas in 2019 was 1,199,011. Compared to the previous year, this was a growth rate of 8.2%. Out of the total number of visitors, 51% were foreigners.

Kazbegi National Park (195,228; 16.3%), Martvili Canyon (189,894;15.8%) and Prometheus Cave (184,264;15.4%) had the highest number of visitors.
The share of foreign visitors exceeded Georgians in Prometheus, Okatse, Chachuna, Mtirala, Machakhela, Martvili, and Tusheti protected areas. The greatest number of foreigners visited Prometheus Cave and Martvili Canyon.
The number of foreign visitors in protected areas was 611,989 in 2019, compared to the previous year this was a growth rate of 15.7%. The majority of international visitors were Russians (20.5%), Israelis (12.2%), Poles (7.9%), Germans (7.8%), and Ukrainians (6%).

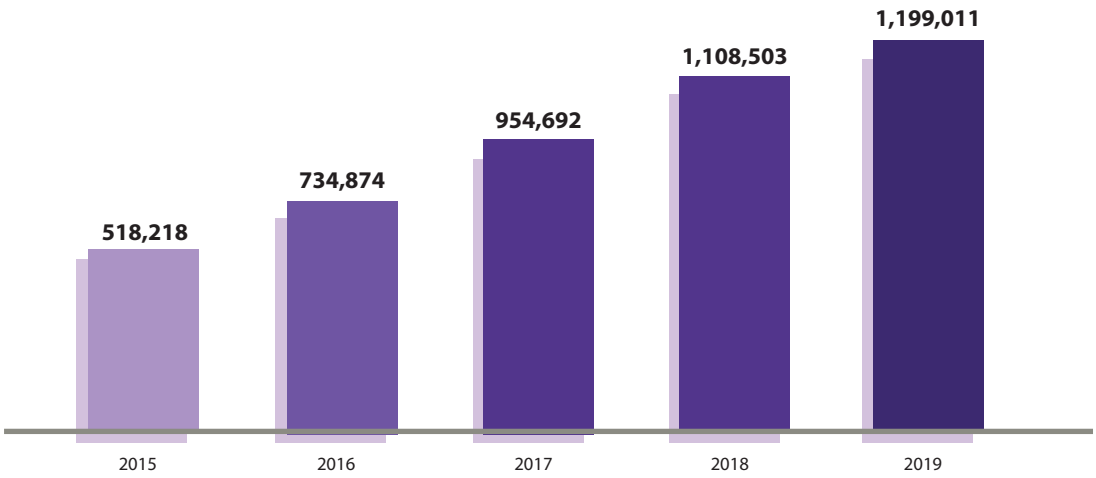
In 2019, income from tourism services in protected areas was 9,363,447 GEL, a growth rate of +11%. Calculated by amount of income, Prometheus Cave was the leader with 3,738,026 GEL, followed by Martvili Canyon (2,921,300 GEL), Okatse Canyon (1,152,511 GEL), and Sataplia (792,030 GEL).

Basic Information
The reason for designating protected areas is to protect and recover important national heritage, unique, rare, and typical ecosystems, plants and animal species, natural creations, and cultural resources. Protected areas can be used for scientific, educational, and recreational purposes.

The Agency of Protected Areas is the organization responsible for the development of protected areas. Its main function is the management of Strict Nature Reserves, National Parks, Natural Monuments, Managed Nature Reserves, and Protected Landscapes.

Methodology
Visitors fill in registration forms at visitor centers (including age, gender, nationality, etc.). This data is collected by territorial administrations and the Agency of Protected Areas.
There are five categories of protected areas in Georgia:
Strict Nature Reserve: a protected area designed mainly for science or wilderness protection. Tourist activities are not allowed.
National Park: a protected area created mainly for the conservation of ecosystems, education, and ecotourism development.
Natural Monument: a protected area promoted mainly for conservation of specific natural features (protection of all small-size territories).
Managed Natural Reserve: a protected area dedicated mainly to conservation through management intervention.
Protected Landscape: a protected area managed mainly for landscape/seascape protection and recreation.
More detailed information is available at:
www.apa.gov.ge
Statistics of Protected Areas (Xsl):
https://bit.ly/2Fx3LeX

Visitors of Protected Areas by Year



Source: Agency of Protected Areas

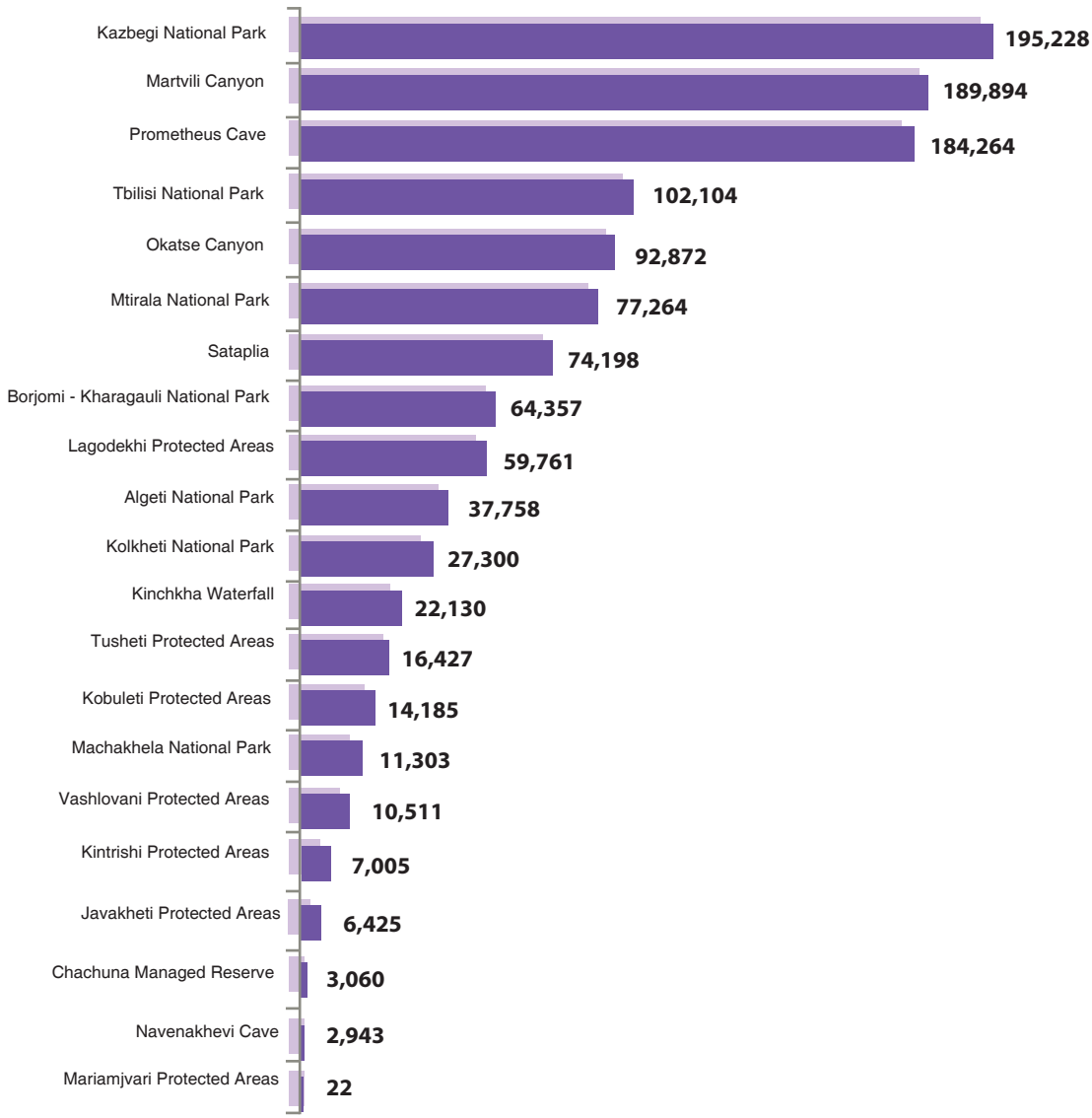
Source: Agency of Protected Areas

Visitors of Protected Areas by Nationalities

	2016	2017	2018	2019	Change % 2018-2019
Total	734,874	954,692	1,108,503	1,199,011	8.2%
Foreigners	310,477	412,529	529,023	611,989	15.7%
Georgians	424,397	542,163	579,480	587,022	1.3%

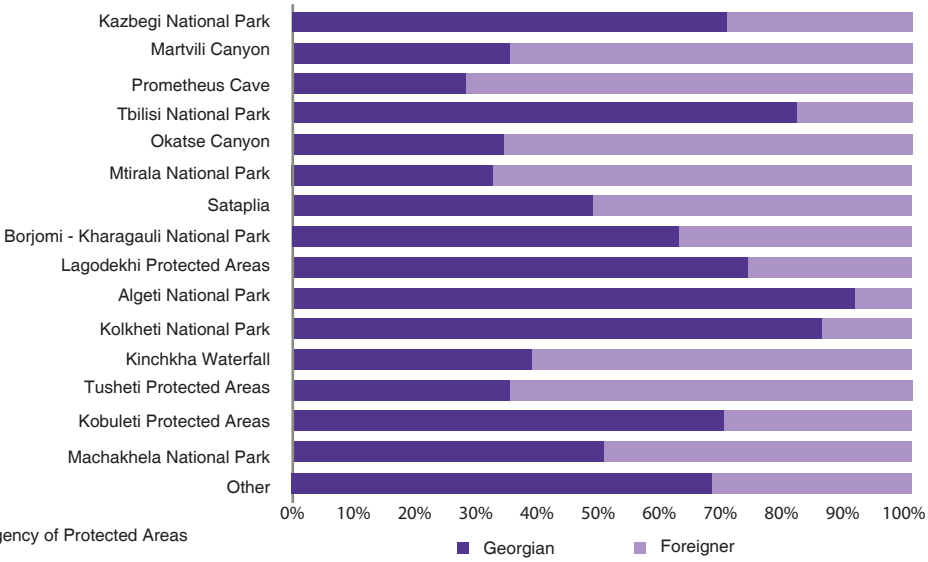
Source: Agency of Protected Areas

Visitors by Protected Areas



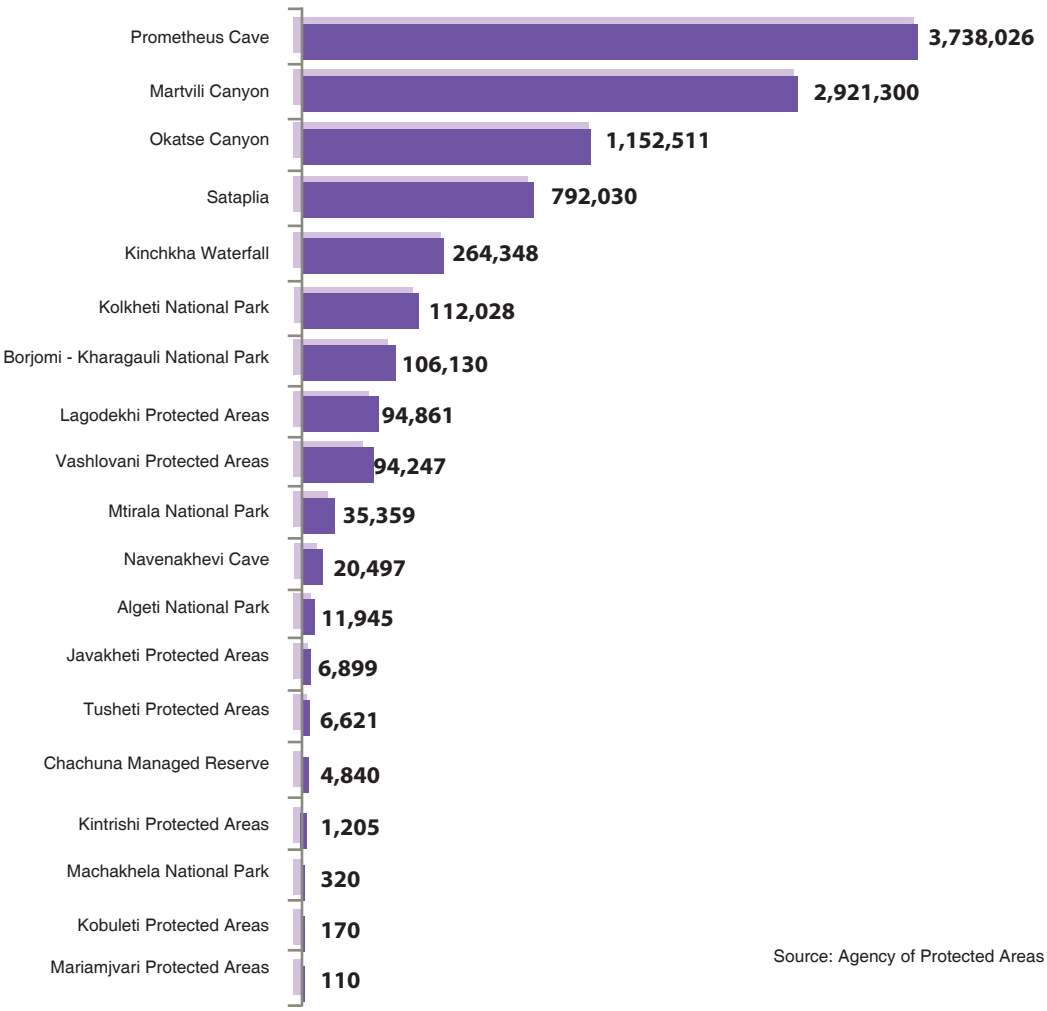
Source: Agency of Protected Areas

Georgian and Foreign Visitors in Protected Areas



Source: Agency of Protected Areas

Revenues by Protected Areas (GEL)



Source: Agency of Protected Areas

Georgian National Tourism Administration in 2019

Despite many obstacles, the Georgian tourism sector continued to grow in 2019, thanks to various steps taken by both the government in general and the Georgian National Tourism Administration (GNTA) in particular.

The actions taken by GNTA to increase the number of visits to the country are: developing tourism infrastructure, improving the quality of service, increasing awareness about Georgia, implementing marketing activities on both the domestic and international markets, and developing tourist products.

The development of tourist infrastructure stands high among the priorities of the government. In 2019, 47 new wine tourism entities were added to the "Wineroad" project. In total, there have already been 211 beneficiaries of this project. In 2019, hiking trails in Pankisi Valley, and Inner and Lower Kartli were marked. Furthermore, in Mestia municipality (Khaishi, Chuberi, and Nakra) research was conducted to investigate hiking trails. In the Ozurgeti and Martvili municipalities seven information and directional signs were installed. Furthermore, in Gori eight banners promoting the destination and four new information-sharing sites were installed.

Another significant issue is enhancing service quality. This is being achieved through intensive training of tourism and hospitality industry representatives throughout Georgia. Training courses have been provided for more than 2,000 representatives of the industry in the Inner and Lower Kartli, Racha-Lechkhumi, Lower Svaneti, Samegrelo-Upper Svaneti, Mtskheta-Mtianeti, Samtskhe-Javakheti, Kakheti, Guria, Imereti, and Adjara regions. Courses were provided in the following subjects: service skills, wine guide training, tourism diplomacy as an important priority of foreign policy, managing the Expedia booking system, managing the booking.com booking platform, hotel service skills, services for people with disabilities, how to create a 5-star sales and communication system, basic courses for adventure tourism guides, principles of teamwork, attracting Chinese visitors, and analysis of the GCC tourism market. In addition, the fourth edition of guidelines for planning inbound tourism was issued for people interested in starting a business in tourism. Furthermore, the conference "Tourism Development Perspectives of Georgia" was held in Tbilisi and Kakheti.

To stimulate domestic tourism, 19 press tours were held in 11 regions under the auspices of the project ''Get to Know Georgia" and "Reliable Tour". Furthermore, to foster the introduction of new tours on the market, seven info tours were organized in seven regions as well as gastronomic tours in the Samegrelo and Kakheti regions. Furthermore, "Discount Week" in the Adjara region boosted occupancy rates during the low season. Throughout the year different types of events were held: "Event of 26 May" in Mestia and Telavi, "Adventure Tour of Vardzia", Borjomoba 2019", "Festival of Hikers", "Wine Festival of Gurjaani", "Khachapuri Festival", International Gastronomic Festival Bocuse d'or Georgia".

DISCOUNT WEEK

Convention and Exhibition Bureau of Georgia

Choosing the right markets is unquestionably an integral part of marketing. Along with maintaining existing markets, the GNTA has concentrated on tapping into new countries. In 2019, the GNTA participated in 30 international fairs and hosted 131 press and FAM trips (574 journalists, bloggers, and 257 tour operators). As a result, more than 300 articles, posts, blogs, and 15 TV shows were released. Presentations were held in different countries (Japan, Uzbekistan, Czechia, Israel, Spain, Korea). Furthermore, other activities included integrated digital and TV campaigns in the target markets. The campaign giving international visitors Georgian wine on the borders proved to be very popular among international visitors and had very positive feedback.

Making the most of Georgia's rich natural and cultural resources by offering new tourist products provides increased possibilities to target travelers with different tastes. The GNTA's efforts focus on the development of different types of tourism, such as MICE, wine, eco, agro, adventure, and others. The Convention and Exhibition Bureau continues to function successfully within the structure of GNTA.

To stimulate the meeting industry in Georgia, the Convention and Exhibition Bureau participated in 14 international B2B meetings and exhibitions. Furthermore, the Bureau conducted presentations for tour companies in Kuwait, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Ukraine, and Saudi Arabia. It also organized B2B meetings with the leading tour companies in different countries, including Kazakhstan (12), China (8), Asia and Far East countries (34), Ukraine (27), and Scandinavia (Sweden, Norway, Finland) (10). Furthermore, to increase the qualification of the private sector engaged in the meeting industry, for the first time in Georgia, UNWTO and ICC organized a "Master class in Meeting industry". Georgia was chosen as a host among the numerous countries.

Georgia has been successful in international relations as well. In 2019 cooperation agreements and memoranda were signed with the following countries: Portugal, Argentina, and Republic of Maldives. In 2019, the Georgian National Tourism Administration became a member of the "WYSE Travel Confederation", which specializes in the youth travel industry and educational tourism.
In 2019 relationships were significantly deepened with donor organizations for the purpose of supporting the private sector:

The World Bank: Development of Tourism Infrastructure, Development of Marketing/ Branding Strategy (Kakheti, Imereti), Creation of Development Strategy and Action Plan for DMOS (Kakheti, Imereti)

USAID: Development of a new 2-year action plan for Tourism Strategy 2025, supporting marketing activities and stimulating the development of mountain tourism.

USAID/ZRDA: Supporting DMOs (Samegrelo, Samtskhe-Javakheti), Tourism Development Strategy (Samegrelo), Renovation of the interior of information centers (Zugdidi, Gori, Borjomi, Akhaltsikhe)

ADA/SIDA: Mountain Tourism Development Strategy, stimulating mountain and eco-tourism in mountain regions (Racha, Svaneti)

UNWTO Executive Council 2020

From 15-17 September 2020, Georgia will host the 112th session of the UNWTO Executive Council 112th. Within the event, Georgia will host more than 200 guests from different countries, including tourism ministers and high-level officials. The event will stimulate the promotion of Georgia as a safe and attractive tourist destination.

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Definitions

Agent - A person or company that sells the product on the owner's behalf, including ITOS, wholesalers retail agents.

Business Tourism - Incorporates visitors travelling for conventions, conferences, seminars, workshops, symposiums, incentives, exhibitions and special events.

Business Visitor - A business visitor is a visitor whose main purpose for a tourism trip corresponds to the business and professional category of purpose.

Commission - The fee paid agents for them to market, distribute and sell the product.

Country of Residence - The country of residence of a household is determined according to the centre of predominant economic interest of its members. If a person resides (or intends to reside) for more than one year in a given country and has there his/ her centre of economic interest (for example, where the predominant amount of time is spent), he/she is considered as a resident of this country.

Destination - A destination is a geographical area consisting of all the services and infrastructure necessary for the stay of a specific tourist or tourism segment.

Distribution - The channels or places through which a consumer may purchase the product.

Domestic Tourism - Domestic tourism comprises the activities of residents of a given country travelling to and staying in places inside their residential country, but outside their usual environment for not more than 12 consecutive months for leisure, business or other purposes.

Fully Independent Travelers (FIT)- Travelers who plan their own travel arragements. There are a number of types of FIT including visiting friends and relatives, backpacking and partially packaged travel.

Inbound Tour Operator (ITO) - Country based agent that specializes in developing programs and itineraries for distributors, also known as ground operators and destination management companies (DMC).

Inbound Tourism - International tourist traffic coming into a country. Also referred to as export tourism.

Incentive Travel - Incentive travel is a trip offered as a prize or reward, for top perfoming employers or sales agents.

Industry - All businesses that are involved in tourism including distribution agents and product suppliers.

International Traveler - An international traveler is someone who moves between different geographic locations for any purpose and any duration. It excludes foreign citizens who are Georgian residents and includes Georgian citizens who are foreign residents.

International Tourism - International tourism comprises inbound tourism and outbound tourism, that is to say, the activities of resident visitors outside the country of reference, either as part of domestic or outbound tourism trips and the activities of non- resident visitors within the country of reference on inbound tourism trips.

International Visitor - An international visitor is a traveler taking a trip to a main destination outside his/her usual environment, for less than a year, for any purpose (business, leisure or other personal purpose) other than to be employed by resident entity in the country or place visited.

Long Haul Travel - International travel to a destination, generally more than 5 hours from the point of origin, i.e. Australia is a long haul destination for travelers from Europe and America.

Meeting and Incentive Planners - Organize and manage all aspects of meetings, incentives and events.

National Tourism - National tourism comprises domestic tourism and outbound tourism, that is to say, the activities of resident visitors within and outside the country of reference, either as part of domestic or outbound tourism trips.

Online Distribution - Using the internet and web portals to distribute or promote the product to consumers.

Operator - The owner and/or manager of the tourism product.

Outbound Tourism - Residents travelling out of their country to an international destination.

Purpose of a Tourism Trip (main) - The main purpose of a tourism trip is defind as the purpose in the absence of which the trip would not have taken place.

Same Day Visitor - A visitor (domestic, inbound or outbound) is classified as a same - day visitor (or excursionist) if his/her trip does not include an overnight stay.

Short Haul Travel - International travel to a destination, generally less than 5 hours from the point of origin, i.e. Australia is a short haul destination for travelers from New Zealand.

Survey - An investigation about the characteristics of a given population by means of collecting data from a sample of that population and estimating their characteristics through the Sample: A subset of a frame where elements are selected based on a process with a known probability of selection.

Travel Distribution System - A global network of independent businesses which allow international consumers to research and book travel.

Tourism Expenditure - Tourism expenditure refers to the amount paid for the acquisition of consumption goods and services, as well as valuables, for own use or to give away, for and during tourism trips. It includes expenditures by visitors themselves, as well as expenses that are paid or reimbursed by others.

Tourism Industries - The tourism industries comprise all establishments for which the principal activity is a tourism characteristic activity. Tourism industries (also referred to as tourism activities) are the activities that typically produce tourism characteristic products.The term tourism industries is equivalent to tourism characteristic activities and the two terms are sometimes used synonymously.

Tourism Sector - The tourism sector, as contemplated in the TSA, is the cluster of production units in different industries that provide consumption goods and services demanded by visitors. Such industries are called tourism industries because visitor acquisition represents such a significant share of their production of these would case to exist in meaningful quantity.

Tourist - A visitor (domestic, inbound or outbound) is classified as a tourist (or overnight visitor) if his/ her trip includes an overnight stay, or as a same - day visitor (or excursionist) otherwise.

Usual Environment - The usual environment of an individual, a key concept in tourism, is defined as the geographical area (though not necessarily a contiguous one) within which an individual conducts his /her regular life routines.

Usual Residence - The Place of usual residence is the geographical place where the enumerated person usually resides.
Visiting Friends and Relatives (VFR) - Visitors whose main puropose is to visit friends and relatives.

This report was prepared by the Research and Planning Department of the Georgian National Tourism Administration

Head of Department: Giorgi Bregadze
g.bregadze@gnta.ge

Specialist: Ana Arabuli
a.arabuli@gnta.ge

Tel: +995 322 43 69 99 (1820)
infostatistics@gnta.ge

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შინაგან საქმეთა სამინისტრო

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National Bank of Georgia

Agency of Protected Areas

Georgian Civil Aviation Agency

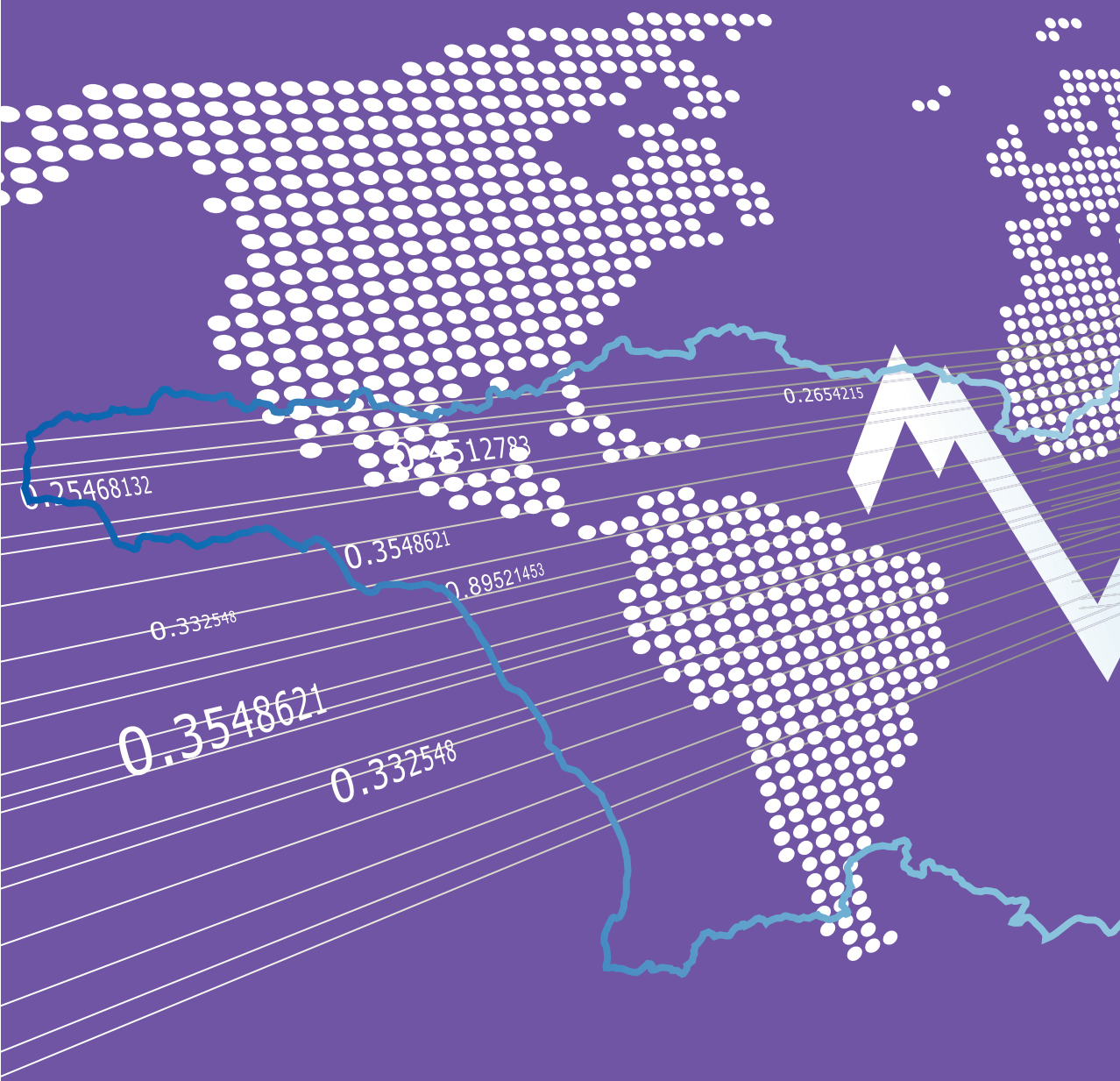
ISET Policy Institute - ISET-PI

MINISTRY OF ECONOMY AND
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF GEORGIA
10a Chovelidze str, 0108, Tbilisi, Georgia
Tel: +(995 32) 299 11 11; +(995 32) 299 11 05
Fax: +(995 32) 292 15 34
E-mail: ministry@moesd.gov.ge
www.economy.ge

Georgia

GEORGIAN NATIONAL TOURISM ADMINISTRATION
4 Sanapiro str, 0105, Tbilisi, Georgia
Tel: +995 32 2 43 69 99
Fax: +995 32 2 43 60 85
E-mail: info@gnta.ge
www.georgia.travel
www.gnta.ge

2020



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