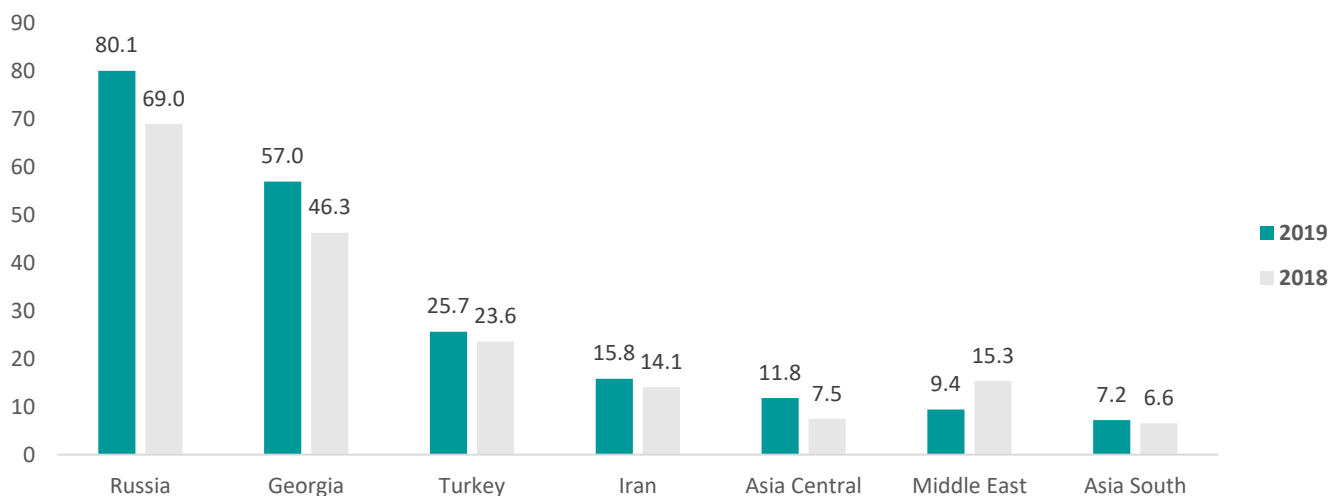




Twice as many guests from Western Europe in May

May 2019 is one of the most successful months for tourism in Azerbaijan; the increase in the number of travelers is observed for almost all countries/regions: Azerbaijan was visited by 246 thousand or 18% more foreign visitors, compared to the same month of the last year. The largest shares of this increase fell on Russia (11 thou.), Georgia (10 thou.) and Western Europe (8.9 thou.); the latter, leaving behind other countries characteristic of Azerbaijan's tourism, was noted with an impressive two-fold increase (102%). This figure is most likely a consequence of the flow of football fans to Baku for the UEFA Cup final on May 29th: about 7600 British travelers are an increase of 230%, 2700 German and 1400 Italian travelers correspond increases of 58% and 37%, respectively. There is also a substantial increase in the number of foreign travelers from Central Asian countries (58% or 4 thou.). As shown in Figure 1, the increases in visitors from Turkey, South Asia and Iran are 9%, 10% and 12%, respectively. Only the number of travelers from the Middle East is decreasing, this decrease being observed for almost all Middle Eastern countries with the exception of Israel which was in May the largest market in the Middle East with 4.7 thousand travelers and a growth of 40%.

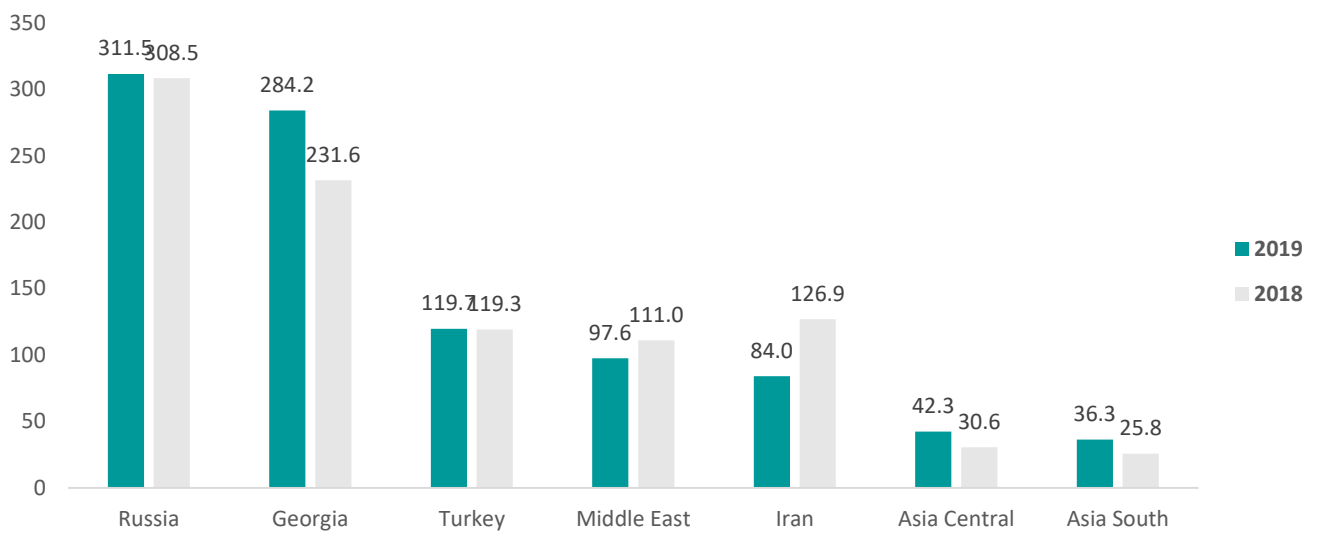
Figure 1: Foreign travellers (in thousands) from 7 countries/regions in may 2019 and 2018



In the period January to May 2019, the total number of foreign travelers who arrived in Azerbaijan increased by 4%, compared to the same period of 2018. Most guests came from Russia (311 thou.) and Georgia (284 thou.), the latter with the largest increase of 52 thousand or 23% among all countries of origin. Approximately 11 thou. of foreign travelers arrived from the countries of South and Central Asia, and from Western Europe; the growth of travelers from these regions amounts to 41%, 38% and 29%, respectively, compared with the same period of 2018.

The biggest decline is observed for Iranian citizens with 43 thousand or 34% fewer guests compared to the same period of 2018. There is also a decrease of 13 thousand or 12% in the number of travelers from the Middle Eastern region; this decrease is observed for Iraq, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait, amounting to 35%, 35%, 23% and 18%, respectively. The number of arrivals from Turkey, 119 thousand, is practically unchanged compared to 2018.

Figure 2: Foreign travellers (in thousands) from 7 countries and regions in Jan-May period of 2019 and 2018



Methodological note: The numbers of foreign travellers are counts of border crossings as registered by the State Border Service. These numbers cover touristic visitors but also other travellers who do not fulfil the definition of being a touristic visitor given by the International Recommendations for Tourism Statistics 2008, such as border workers, long-term workers and students and patients, etc.; hence, the inbound tourism flow is slightly lower than the numbers of travellers provided in this report.

Table 1: Number of foreign travelers from various countries and regions in May 2019 and in January-May 2019, and similar figures for 2018.

Region	2019		2018	
	May	January-May	May	January-May
Russia	80 124	311 535	69 008	308 464
Georgia	56 975	284 208	46 333	231 619
Turkey	25 687	119 715	23 590	119 253
Europe West	17 532	47 375	8 682	36 740
Iran	15 822	84 019	14 118	126 902
Asia Central	11 815	42 289	7 458	30 567
Europe East	10 708	37 462	8 923	36 883
Middle East	9 428	97 563	15 340	111 010
Asia South	7 240	36 319	6 557	25 758
Asia East-North	5 170	12 663	3 121	8 192
America	3 000	10 131	2 755	9 349
Asia East-South	1 015	3 976	795	3 527
Others	969	3 049	734	2 429
Africa	585	3 668	565	3 179
TOTAL	246 070	1 093 972	207 979	1 053 872