



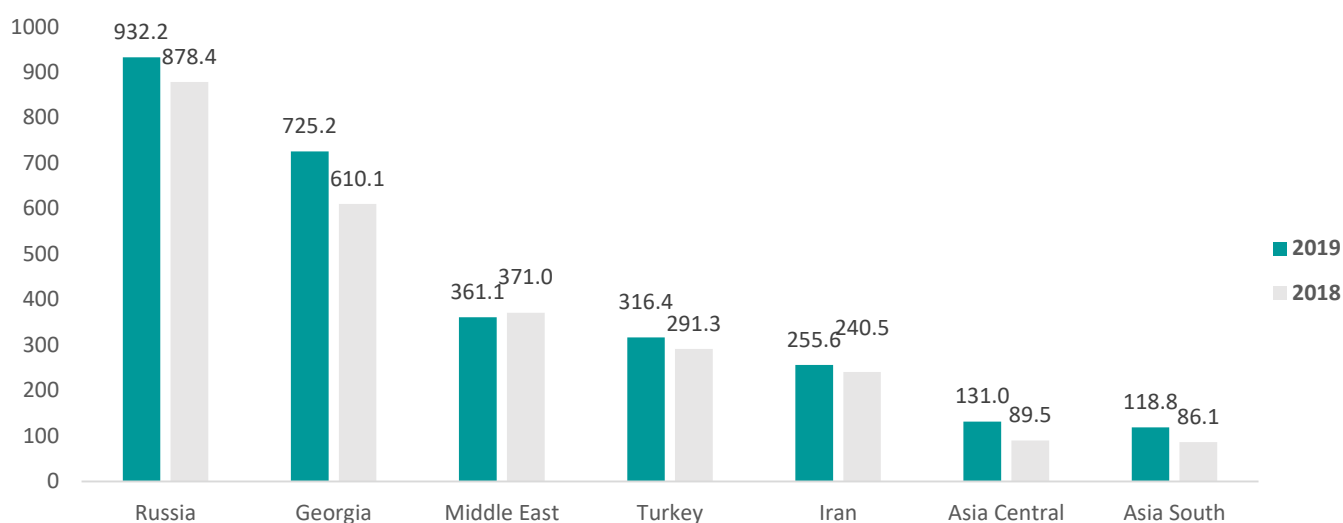
Inbound tourism in Azerbaijan hits the record of 3.2 mln!

According to the State Border Service, the number of arriving travelers in Azerbaijan during 2019 has increased by 323 thousand or 11.4% compared to 2018, setting a historical record of 3.2 million inbound travelers. This development is to a large extent due to the excellent results for September (+20.8%), October (+24.7%), November (+13.3%) and December (+14.2%, see below). The main features of this development are the huge increase of travelers from Georgia by 18.9% or 115 thousand up to 725 thousand, the substantial increases of travelers from Central and South Asia by 46,4% and 38.1%, respectively, and the stagnation of the traveler flows from countries of the Middle East in 2019 after a strong increase of 34.5% in 2018. Finally, it should be mentioned that the long lasting stagnation of inbound travelers from Iran during summer 2018 and March 2019 was changed into an increase of 6.3% up to 256 thousand travelers. The most remarkable markets in Central and South Asia are Turkmenistan (52 thousand; substantial growth of 85.8%) and India (65 thousand; substantial growth of 66.8%). For travelers from the Middle East, a decrease is observed for markets like UAE, Iraq, Oman and Qatar; these decreases are widely balanced by increases in travelers from Saudi Arabia and Israel by 46.7% and 17.3%, respectively.

For other important markets, the growth in the number of arrivals was slightly below the average increase. From Russia, 932.2 thousand travelers arrived, a substantial increase of 54 thousand or 6.1%. The number of travelers from Turkey and Iran have increased by 8.6% and 6.3%, totaling to 316 thousand and 256 thousand, respectively.

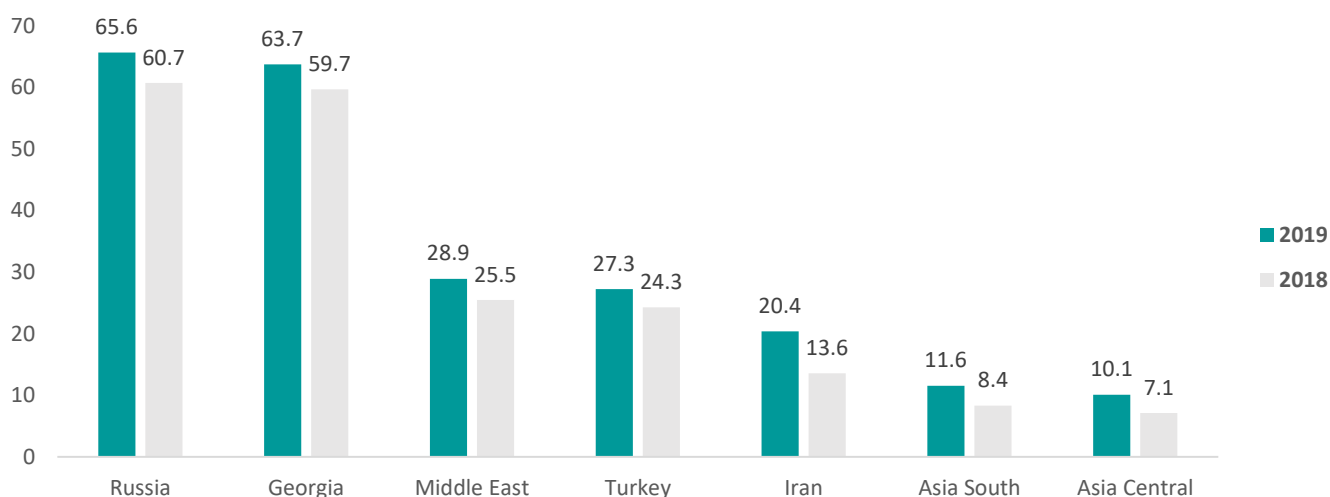
Some details of the emerging markets from Central Asia, highest growth is observed for Turkmenistan (52 thousand; substantial growth of 85.8%), Kazakhstan (47 thousand; 26.1% growth) and Uzbekistan (23 thousand; 28.3% growth), and India (65 thousand; substantial growth of 66.8%) and Pakistan (47 thousand; 12.9% growth) from South Asia.

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



In December 2019, 247 thousand inbound travelers crossed the borders of Azerbaijan, an increase of 14.2% or 30 thousand compared to December 2018. Most travelers arrived from Russia (66 thousand) and Georgia (64 thousand) with growth rates of 8.1% and 6.8%, respectively. Though, the largest increase of travelers is observed for Iran: 7 thousand or 50% more travelers totaling to 20 thousand compared to the last year. High are the growth rates of Central and South Asia as well, an increase of 42.3% and 38.6%, respectively. In December, most travelers from Central Asia came from Kazakhstan (3.9 thousand; 47.1% growth) and Turkmenistan (3.5 thousand; 28.7% growth), from South Asia from India (6.3 thousand; 58.1% growth) and Pakistan (4.6 thousand; 19.4% growth). The number of guests from Middle East increased by 13.6% totaled to 29 thousand. It is worth noting that in December, unlike in the preceding months, from almost all countries of the Middle East, an increase in the number of guest is observed; an exception is the UAE, with a decrease of 10.4%. The number of travelers from Turkey increased by 12.3% or 3 thousand and reached 272 thousand.

Figure 2: Foreign travellers (in thousands) from 7 countries/regions in December 2019 and 2018



1.2 million travelers in total arrived from the countries where Representation Offices have been established (China, India, Russia, Germany, Saudi Arabia, UAE) during 2019 which is an increase of 9.1% compared to 2018. The highest increases were observed for Russia, Saudi Arabia and India. Without UAE, the increase amounts to 12.4%, slightly more than the increase of 10.8% for travelers from all other countries.

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 December 2019 and in January-December 2019, and similar figures for 2018.

Region	2019		2018	
	December	January-December	December	January-December
Russia	65 642	932 198	60 702	878 391
Georgia	63 744	725 174	59 702	610 124
Middle East	28 936	361 055	25 464	370 998
Turkey	27 259	316 404	24 281	291 259
Iran	20 378	255 571	13 586	240 483
Asia South	11 572	118 808	8 352	86 052
Asia Central	10 113	130 968	7 108	89 474
Europe East	7 036	109 005	6 183	99 144
Europe West	5 672	115 220	5 261	96 299
Asia East-North	1 642	41 320	1 240	29 332
America	1 629	28 918	1 519	26 500
Asia East-South	1 393	12 854	989	9 520
Africa	959	10 148	969	8 629
Rest	618	10 261	616	8 672
GRAND TOTAL	246 593	3 167 904	215 972	2 844 877