

## Strong growth of the number of travellers from Asian and from Middle East countries in the period January to October of 2018

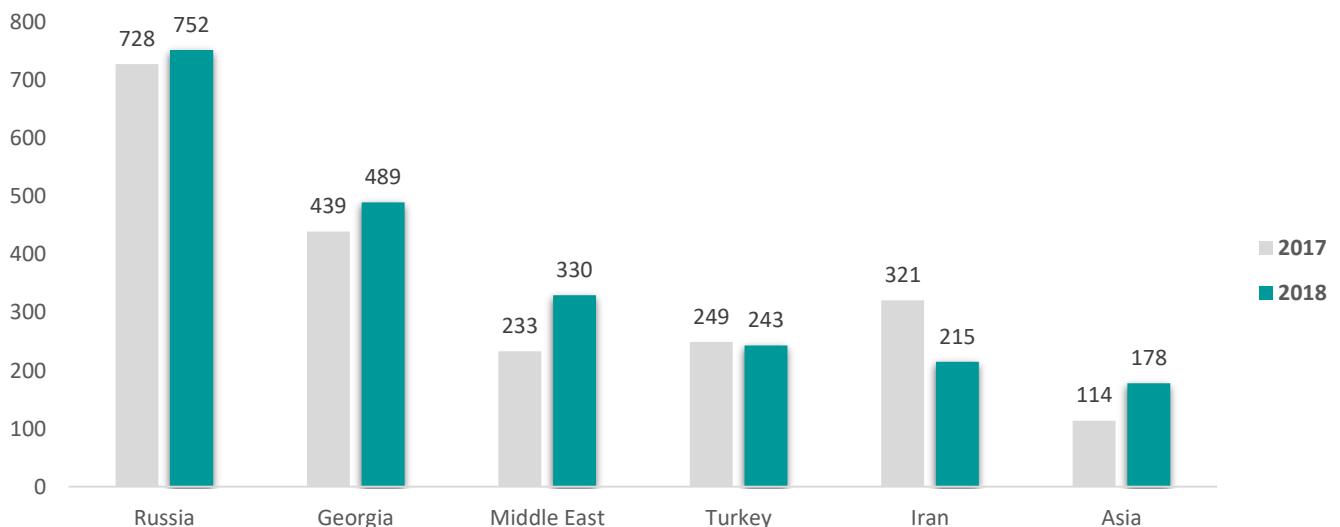
In October, the trends in travels to Azerbaijan which were observed so far in 2018 continued: From January to October, a strong growth in the number of arriving foreign travellers is observed for countries of the Middle East and Asia.

The growth rates of 42% for Middle East countries and of 57% for Asian countries between January and October are remarkable. The numbers of travellers from Russia and from Turkey are stable in this period, with growth rates of 3,3% and -2,5%, respectively; a larger growth of the number foreign travellers can be seen for Georgia, the growth rate amounting to 11,4%.

The overall growth rate of inbound travellers in the period January to October was 6,1%, the number of travellers growing from 2.277 to 2.416 million.

The general picture is illustrated by **Figure 1**; the country with the highest number of arrivals is still Russia: the 752 thousand travellers, increased by 3,3% over 2017, are 31% of all travellers coming to Azerbaijan.

**Figure 1: Foreign travellers (in thousands) from 6 countries and regions in Jan-Oct period of 2017 and 2018**



The most remarkable fact is the record increase in the number of travellers from India and Pakistan with growth rates of 183% and 149%; nearly 31 thousand Indians and nearly 34 thousand Pakistan came to Azerbaijan between January and October; also, for other Asian countries, high growth rates are observed, such as for China with 60%, for Turkmenistan with 76%, and for South Korea with 72%. The number of travellers from Asian countries grew in 2018 so far to 178 thousand.

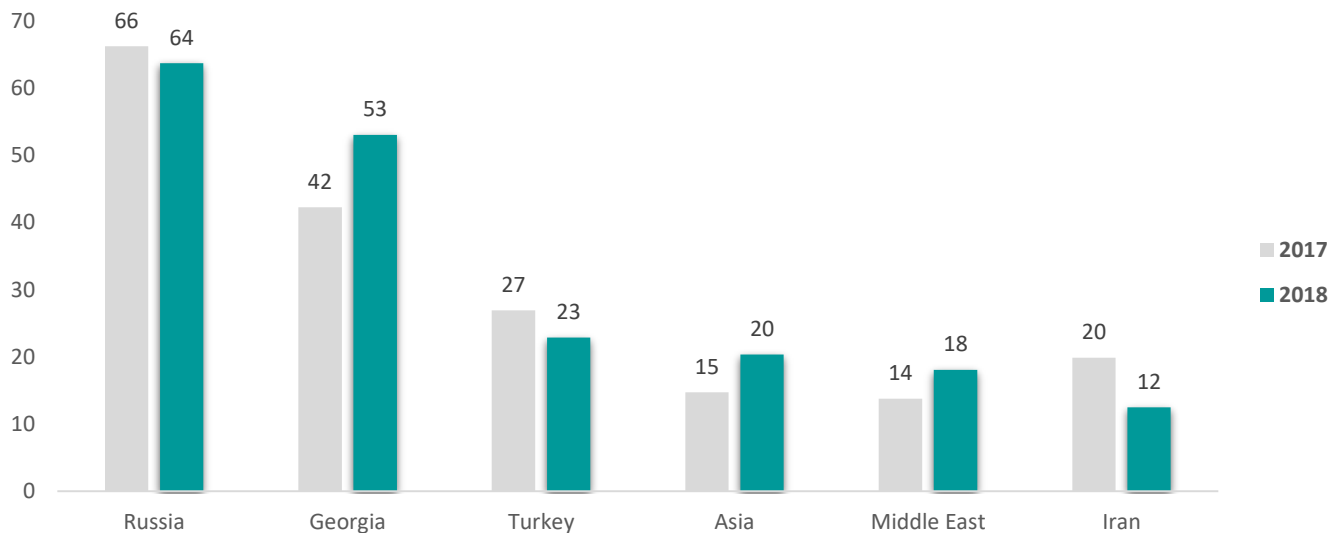
The number of travellers from Middle East countries increased between January and October 2018 to 330 thousand, a growth of 42% over the 233 thousand in the same period of 2017. Highest growth rates are observed for Saudi Arabia, Israel, and Kuwait with 115%, 228%, and 99%, respectively.

In October, the total number of arrivals in Azerbaijan increased by 3,5% to 212 thousand, compared to October of 2017. This growth is mainly due to the increasing numbers of travelers from Asian countries with 38%, from Middle East countries with 31% and from Georgia with 26%. Among Asian countries, major

increases of travellers are observed from India with 113%, from Pakistan with 64%, from Turkmenistan with 68%, and from China with 44%. The number of travellers from Turkey decreased by 15%.

**Figure 2** shows the developments in the numbers of foreign travellers for the six countries or regions with the highest contributions in October 2018.

**Figure 2: Foreign travellers (in thousands) from 6 countries/regions in October 2017 and 2018**



**Methodological note:** The numbers of foreign travellers are counts of border crossings as registered by the State Migration 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 October 2018 and in the period January to October 2018 as well as changes of these numbers against the same periods in 2017.

Region	2018		Change against 2017	
	October	January-October	October	January-October
Russia	63 745	751 908	66 228	727 577
Georgia	53 047	489 408	42 267	439 305
Turkey	22 865	243 097	26 952	249 210
Asia	20 342	178 342	14 738	113 819
Middle East	18 088	329 860	13 800	233 166
Iran	12 485	214 990	19 892	320 904
Europe West	8 830	84 758	8 328	78 261
Europe East	8 817	85 749	8 854	83 629
America	2 263	23 344	2 495	19 257
Rest	696	7 487	677	7 488
Africa	625	6 992	455	3 988
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>211 803</b>	<b>2 415 935</b>	<b>204 686</b>	<b>2 276 604</b>