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Scientific Conference

**2024 Regional Transformation by Tourism
Renovation and Reforms Triggered by Tourism: Case of Georgia**

ORGANIZED BY:
Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne (IREST)
Caucasus University (School of Tourism)

LOCATION:
Salle Goullencourt
12 Place de Panthéon 75005 Paris

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS



2024 Regional Transformation by Tourism

Renovation and Reforms Triggered by Tourism: Case of Georgia

INVESTIGATING STRATEGIC MARKETING APPROACHES FOR DEVELOPING
GAMBLING TOURISM IN ADJARA (A CASE OF GEORGIA)

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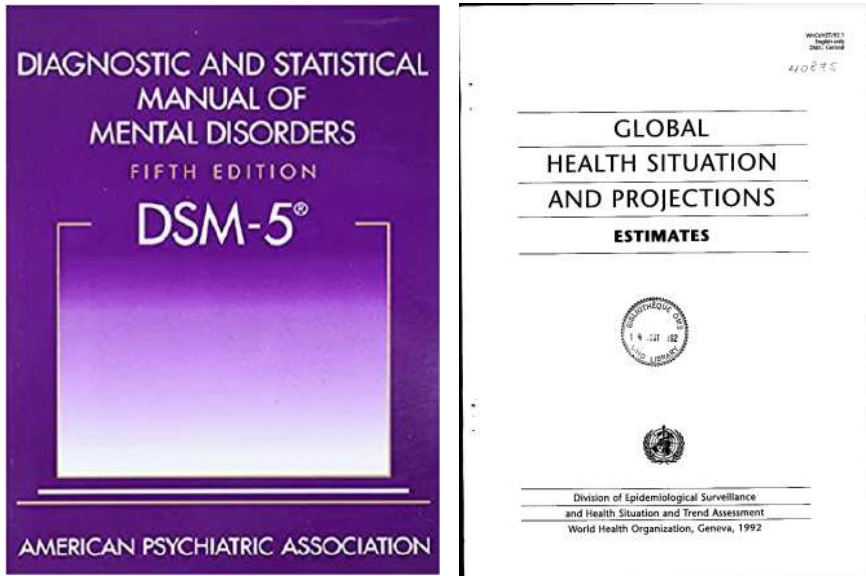


INTRODUCTION

Gambling is a form of entertainment where patrons stake an object of value, typically a sum of money, on the uncertain prospect of a reward. As a form of recreation, gambling dates for several centuries and across different cultures. Players engage in gambling because it is enjoyable pastime activity (Wood , 2008).

- It is a model of **risky** and **irrational** behavior
- A vast majority of gamblers are aware of the phrase “*the house always wins*”
- These is such type of behavior that can be spiral out of control and transform into pathological.

The tendency to such gambles raises the question of what motivates gamblers’ decision-making process and how it might be affected by a different stimulus.



American Psychiatric Association (APA, 2013) and the World Health Organization (WHO, 1992) accepted pathological gambling as ***the only behavioral addiction recognized as a mental disorder.***

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

State policies play a crucial role in addressing social challenges like gambling addiction, adult involvement, and financial issues, it's equally imperative to ensure that regulations are adjusted in a manner that doesn't impede the sector's potential as Georgia emerges as a gambling hub. Legal frameworks governing gambling in Georgia encompass laws regulating lotteries, gambling, and winning games. Recent modifications, including amendments to advertising laws, seek to strike a balance between addressing societal concerns and supporting the growth of the gambling industry. This delicate balance is essential for harnessing Georgia's potential as a prominent gambling destination while safeguarding against negative social impacts.

Potential Implications of Findings:

- ✓ Governmental units
- ✓ Individuals
- ✓ Private Sector
- ✓ Investors


This research aims to analyze marketing strategies oriented towards increasing tourism gambling, with the goal of understanding the industry's potential and investigating specific steps to enhance the flow of gambling tourists.

CURRENT STATE OF THE INDUSTRY



Gambling Salons


Casinos	17
Gambling Machine Salons	89
Sport Betting Salons	23



Adjara

Population
361.411 inhabitants

Tourists (1.6): 867.1 K Recreational Purpose




Visitors

> 1.6 mln international visitors

- Steadily Growing Industry with an increasing number of players
- Gambling tourism attracts visitors from neighbor countries: Turkey, Israel, Russia, Ukraine, and Azerbaijan
- Revenues generated from licenses play a crucial role in Georgia economy

Key gambling spot in the region



Tourism Destination

2-nd
Most visited destination

867.1
Visitors - recreational purpose



RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Methodology	Qualitative Research/Interviews With the Field's Experts
Research Area	Tbilisi
Research Technique	In-depth interview
Target Audience	Field experts
Sampling	Purposeful selection, Snowball sampling
Duration	1.5 - 2 hours

Out of the initial pool of 12 potential participants, 5 prominent land-based casinos (Casino Peace Batumi, Casino International Batumi, Leo Grand, Princess Casino Batumi, "X" Batumi) graciously consented to participate in the interviews, thereby offering a robust and comprehensive sample for the study.

After conducting 5 in-depth interviews, it was observed that there was a notable similarity in the responses obtained, indicating saturation of data. Recognizing this, the decision was made to halt the interviewing process as further interviews were unlikely to yield significantly new insights.



DATA ANALYSES

For data analysis, we used **Nvivo 14** program. Before data analyses, we collected all audio records transformed into the transcript. The transcript is a detailed reflection of audio records that includes examples and additional information discussed during focus groups. We used transcripts in Nvivo. The first step was making codes/nodes of our information. The separated clusters of our information allowed us to use the structural coding method (J. Saldana , 2021). Codes were grouped hierarchically and analyzed in different ways.

To accommodate the geographical dispersion of participants and ensure inclusivity in participation, 5 of the interviews were conducted online using the Zoom platform. This mode of interview delivery was carefully chosen to facilitate participation and minimize logistical barriers while maintaining the integrity and rigor of the data collection process.

DATA INTERPRETATION

- **Investigation Focus:** Marketing strategies of gambling companies in Georgia.
- **Objective:** Attract tourists to gamble and contribute to Adjara region development.
- **Methodology:** Thematic coding of qualitative interview data.
- **Key Findings:**
 - **Tourism Impact:** Gaming sector extended Batumi's tourist season from 1.5-2 months to year-round.
 - **Economic Role:** Crucial during 8-9 month low season, sustaining tourism activity.
 - **Sector Interdependence:** Supports local hotels, food establishments, and transportation.
- **Challenges & Opportunities:**
 - Identified challenges and collaboration opportunities.
 - Strategic marketing approaches.
 - Potential growth avenues.
- **Economic Significance:** Vital for financial sustainability of local businesses during tourist season and low periods.
- **Expert Insights:** In-depth interviews highlight the strategic importance of the gaming sector in Adjara.

MARKETING STRATEGIES

- **Customer Experience:** Exceptional, tailored to gambling tourists' needs.
 - Specialized services: bespoke menus, dietary accommodations
 - Amenities: spa procedures, guided tours, personal managers
- **Decision-Making:** Swift responses enhance guest experience.
- **Marketing Approach:**
 - Reliance on word-of-mouth
 - No dedicated marketing department
- **Loyalty Programs:**
 - Integrated across all casinos
 - Focus on fostering customer loyalty and satisfaction
- **Impact:**
 - Enhances tourism dynamics
 - Emphasizes customer-centric growth and development

MARKETING STRATEGIES

Promotional Campaigns and Events

- **Innovative Campaigns:**
 - Contests, PR events, shows
 - Interactive and high-profile entertainment
 - Enhanced visibility and tourist attraction

Communication Channels:

- Special apps
- Contact persons
- Direct calls

ROI Measurement:

- Essential for evaluating effectiveness
- Optimizes resource allocation

Online and Digital Marketing

Current Status:

- No online gambling platforms
- Digital platforms seen as ineffective

Marketing Efforts:

- Outdoor advertising (previously used, now prohibited)
- Limited international media engagement

MARKETING STRATEGIES

Segmentation Process

- **Post-Pandemic Shift:**
 - Economic and political changes altered tourist gambler demographics
- **Primary Segments:**
 - **Israeli Tourists:**
 - Predominantly elderly
 - Higher disposable incomes
 - Prefer leisurely holidays with family
 - Focus on quality time and pleasurable experiences
 - **Turkish Tourists:**
 - Age range: 25-50 years old
 - Lower disposable incomes
 - Attracted to gambling but budget-conscious
- **Other Segments:**
 - Diverse demographics and preferences
 - Contribute to the varied visitor profile in Adjara

OPPORTUNITIES

- **Direct Flights and Airport Infrastructure:**
 - Enhance accessibility and attract more tourists
 - Improve air connectivity to Adjara
 - Reduce travel time and logistical barriers
 - Expand marketing reach to new markets
- **Targeting Gulf Countries:**
 - High disposable income and interest in luxury tourism
 - Untapped market for gambling tourism
 - Potential for significant revenue generation
- **Business Consideration:**
 - Policy development and stakeholder engagement
 - Stakeholders' participation in decision-making processes
 - Transparency and inclusivity in policy formulation
 - Advance communication of decisions affecting the sector
- **Regulations:**
 - Less frequent tax increases for stability
 - Predictability reduces perceived investment risk
 - Enhances investor confidence and long-term planning
 - Promotes efficient resource allocation and business expansion

CHALLENGES

- **Airport Infrastructure:**

- Limited capacity and outdated facilities
- Impedes seamless arrival/departure
- Affects overall travel experience

- **Competitors in Cyprus:**

- Established gambling industry in Cyprus
- Requires strategic differentiation for Adjara
- Necessitates innovative marketing strategies

- **Direct Flights:**

- Limited availability of direct flights to Adjara
- Barrier to accessibility and ease of travel
- Deters travelers seeking convenience

Regulations:

Regulatory constraints and frequent tax policy changes
Creates a turbulent environment for gambling companies

Examples of unexpected tax hikes:

December 30, 2022: Batumi City Council increased local fees by 40%, effective January 1, 2023

December 13, 2023: New taxes introduced, effective January 1, 2024, with inadequate stakeholder notification

Impacts investment and expansion efforts

War in Neighboring Countries:

Political instability and conflicts
Disrupts regional travel patterns
Deterrent for tourists visiting Adjara

Weather:

Influences tourist preferences and travel patterns
Unfavorable conditions deter outdoor activities
Limits overall tourist influx and revenue generation

Dataset comprising information from **ten casinos in the Adjara region**, as provided by the **Adjara Casino's Association**. Analysis of the collected data for the years 2022-2023 reveals the following trends:

By the land-based casinos operating in the Adjara region during the year **2022**, revenue generated from services such as hotels, transportation companies, and local food and beverage service establishments amounted to approximately **82,300,000** (eighty-two million three hundred thousand) GEL.

Furthermore, concerning the tourism sector in the Adjara region, the influx of foreign visitors is notable. Specifically, in the year **2022**, the total number of foreign visitors amounted to **1,126,086** individuals, with **88.3%** originating from foreign countries.

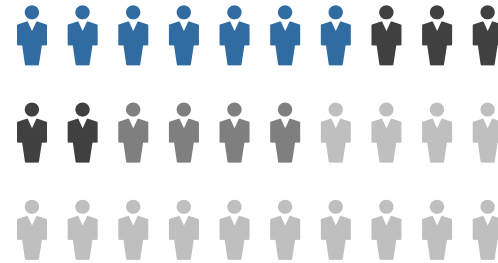
According to the data from the first three quarters of **2023**, expenditures made by land-based casinos in the Adjara region on services provided by hotels, transportation companies, and local food and beverage establishments amounted to approximately **69,100,000** (sixty-nine million one hundred thousand) GEL.

According to data from the third quarter of **2023**, the number of visitors to the Adjara region amounted to **1,047,988** individuals. Notably, **91.1%** of these visitors were foreign citizens.



EMPLOYEES

- > 105,600,000 in 2023 Salary Found
- > 80,800,000 in 2022 Salary Found



**Gambling sector
is a source of
local
employment**

Average Salaries

€ **2,520**

2023

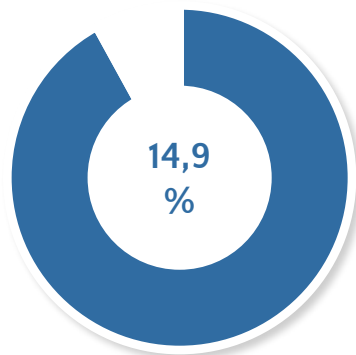
€ **2,392**

2022



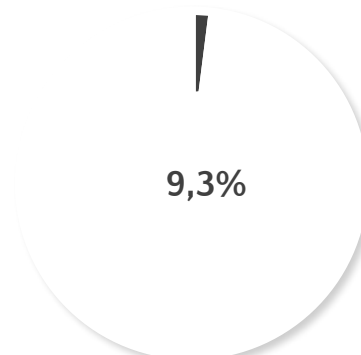
It is imperative to acknowledge that the salaries offered within this sector are among the highest compared to other industries operating within the country.

CONTRIBUTION TO BUDGET - 2022



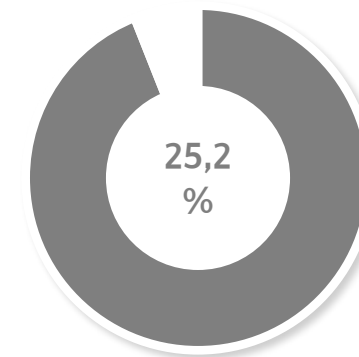
Direct taxes

Specifically, in **2022**, the taxes paid directly by the gaming sector amounted to **57,500** (forty seven million five hundred thousand) GEL, constituting **14.9%** of the region's budget for that year.



Indirectly generated

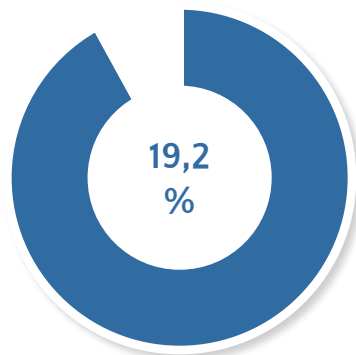
Indirectly generated as a consequence of the operations of the gaming sector in 2022, the total tax revenue amounted to 36,200,000 (thirty-six million two hundred thousand) GEL. This figure represents approximately 9.3% of the region's budget for the same year.



Direct & Indirect Tax

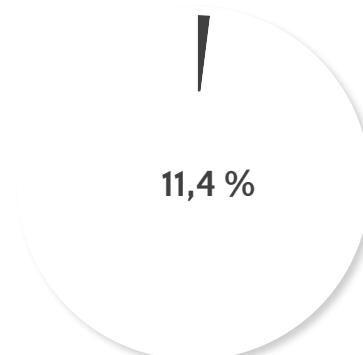
Consequently, the combined direct and indirect tax contributions from the gaming sector in 2022 amounted to 25.2% of the region's budget.

CONTRIBUTION TO BUDGET - 2023



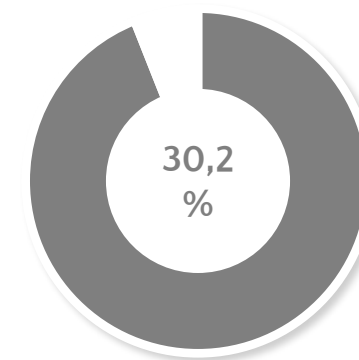
Direct Taxes

In **2023**, the direct taxes paid by the gaming sector amounted to **91,860,000** (ninety-one million eight hundred sixty thousand) GEL. This figure represents **19.2%** of the region's budget for the year **2023**.



Indirectly generated

In **2023**, the indirect tax revenue generated as a consequence of the operations of the gaming sector amounted to **55,700,000** (fifty-five million seven hundred thousand) GEL. This figure represents approximately **11.4%** of the region's budget for the same year.



Direct & Indirect Tax

Consequently, when combined with the direct tax contributions, the total tax revenue generated by the gaming sector in **2023** amounted to **30.2%** of the region's budget.

LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

- *Sample Size:* The study relied on a limited sample size of interviews conducted with representatives from a select number of land-based casinos in the region. As a result, the findings may not fully capture the diversity of perspectives and experiences within the gaming industry.
- *Generalizability:* Due to the specific focus on the Adjara region, the findings of this study may not be generalizable to other regions or countries with different socio-economic contexts and regulatory environments.
- *Self-reporting Bias:* The data collected through interviews and surveys may be subject to self-reporting bias, where participants provide responses that are influenced by social desirability or their own perceptions of the topic.
- Despite these limitations, this study provides valuable insights into the gaming industry in the Adjara region and serves as a foundation for further research in this area.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Diversify Marketing Strategies:

- Move beyond traditional methods
- Invest in digital marketing and social media

Long-term Planning and Monitoring:

- Develop strategic plans for sustainable growth
- Monitor trends and regulatory changes

Responsible Gambling Practices:

- Prioritize responsible gambling measures
- Implement age verification, self-exclusion programs, and education

Continued Research and Collaboration:

- Collaborate with academia, industry, and policymakers
- Conduct further research on emerging trends and marketing impacts

Host Congresses and Events:

- Organize industry-focused events for networking and business development
- Showcase Georgia as a gambling tourism destination

Invite Investors:

- Highlight investment opportunities in Georgia's gambling sector
- Facilitate meetings with key stakeholders

Engage Gambling Company Representatives:

- Participate in forums, discussions, and site visits
- Showcase Georgia's market potential and competitive advantages

Collaborate with Tourism Promotion Agencies:

- Coordinate marketing campaigns with tourism agencies
- Amplify Georgia's appeal as a gambling tourism investment destination

By implementing these recommendations, stakeholders can enhance the competitiveness and sustainability of the gaming industry in Adjara, driving economic development and prosperity in the region.

THANKS FOR ATTENTION!

2024 Regional Transformation by Tourism

Renovation and Reforms Triggered by Tourism: Case of Georgia

Regional Transformation and Post-Crisis Tourism Destination Recovery: Case of Imereti (Western Georgia)

by

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Tsitsino Davituliani, PhD

Akaki Tsereteli State University, Department of Geography

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Outline

- The goal of the research
- The theoretical basis
- Methodology
- Discussion and main findings
- Conclusions

The goal of the research

- ❖ Georgia is not a new player in tourism industry. However, with the break-up of the Soviet empire the country all but lost its economic ties and a huge tourist market.
- ❖ Taking into consideration Georgia's **natural** (extremely rich recreational resources but vulnerable regions to natural disasters), **economic** (inequality of regional development), **social** environment (large number of self-employed population), niche or sustainable forms of tourism (e.g. family-based, rural, eco-, ethno-cultural or wine tourism) should be defined as the main strategy for the field development.

The main *goal* of our research is to examine the extant of the post-Covid 19 pandemic family based tourism sector recovery of the tourist destination of Okatse Canyon, Imereti region, Western Georgia; particularly, the coping mechanisms of stakeholders – the regional government (DMO of Imereti), small businesses (guesthouse owners/managers) and indigenous people (small farmers) involved in local tourism and affected by the corona crisis the most.

Theoretical Basis

- According to the *balanced growth theory*, investing in and developing only a few export sectors is insufficient to overcome the natural inertia of a stagnant economy. The alternative approach of *unbalanced growth theory* implies to invest in a few leading sectors of a developing economy that will work as a catalyst to drag other sectors with it (Cooper, et al., (2008). *Tourism*. p.248).
- Transdisciplinary research means collaboration involving not only researchers from science but also practitioners outside academia;
- It is interesting to learn about the challenges of a transdisciplinary project as seen from the perspective of an actor of civil society or the private or public sector.
- One of the concepts of transdisciplinarity is to underline participatory research as its key feature (Pohl, Ch. (2010). From transdisciplinarity to transdisciplinary research. *Transdisciplinary Journal of Engineering & science*. <https://www.atlas-tjes.org/index.php/tjes/article/view/13>).

Methodology

- Our research that has been conducting since 2017 in the village of Gordi, showed the growing employment and social activity of the local population, the increase of family incomes and preservation of sustainability of the natural environment.
- During the February-June 2023 and 2024, by conducting the field work, the transdisciplinary approach and qualitative *method* of research in form of in-depth interviews, we studied the role of stakeholders in the local tourism sector post-pandemic recovery.
- GIS technology, desk research, expert research and method of discourse analysis were utilized as well.

Case study of the Okatse Canyon tourist destination (village of Gordi)

The Covid-19 pandemic has created serious problems for global economies. Tourism sector of Georgia, which accounted for 34% of export earnings and 8,4% of the country's GDP (2019) (7.1% 2022) was hit hard by the pandemic. However, since 2021, the rehabilitation of the sector has started and positive dynamics of the sector is visible in a short period of time.

- The Okatse Canyon is situated in close proximity to the village of Gordi within the limestone gorge of the Okatse river. Gordi is located at 800m a.s.l.
- The traditional activity of indigenous people is cattle breeding.
- Since 2010s the Agency of Protected Areas (APA) of Georgia oversees the construction of ecotourism infrastructure, including walkways, platforms and a visitors' center at the site.
- In 2017-2019 and 2023 we have conducted the field work in the village of Gordi and studied the role of stakeholders in the local tourism sector post-pandemic recovery.

A hundred-meter cliff of the Okatse canyon.
2300 m long stone paved path leads to the
Canyon checkpoint, where the 780 m long
hanging cliff trail starts.

<https://www.advantour.com/georgia/kutaisi/okatse-canyon.htm>



Main findings: *External support* - DMO, Banks, Taxes

- After the pandemic-related limitations were lifted, the regional *DMO* started an online campaign to activate domestic tourism in Imereti.

„We are among those few services that did not go into quarantine during the pandemic. We launched a campaign to promote domestic tourism. We shot commercial videos and designed video routes. In the non-positive environment of the epidemic, the culture of domestic tourism began to emerge, not as a family tours, but for small corporate groups, with the assistance of travel companies and guides that were nearly non-existent previously“. *Imereti DMO coordinator. Kutaisi, March 2023 and February, 2024.*

“The 2021 season was only 30% of the 2019 season and mainly, domestic tourism helped us. The situation was slightly better for 2022. The reason for this shortage is the war in Ukraine. Europeans perceive the Black Sea countries as one space. Until 2019, we had tourists from any European country. What a good time it was... we had very positive and emotional feedbacks from them... *Male, the family-based medium size hotel owner. Gordi, June, 2023.*

Compensation for self-employed and employees / tax benefits:

- One-time compensation of 300 GEL ($\approx 130\$$) was received by all entrepreneurs with small business status (<https://www.rs.ge/Covid19?cat=3&tab=1>);
- Tax benefits were not affected because according to the Tax Code of Georgia, small entrepreneurs, are taxed at only 1% of their income. As all our respondents belong to this category, the one percent tax was already a concession.

“We had a bank loan and they postponed the interest payment. To cancel, even temporarily, it did not happen. The government also helped us and covered part of the interest, in total it was 3000 euros... it was still a benefit... As for the tax reduction, we had no problem with it, only 1% of income is taxed. Our tax system is the best”.
Male, the family-based medium size hotel owner. Gordi, June, 2023.

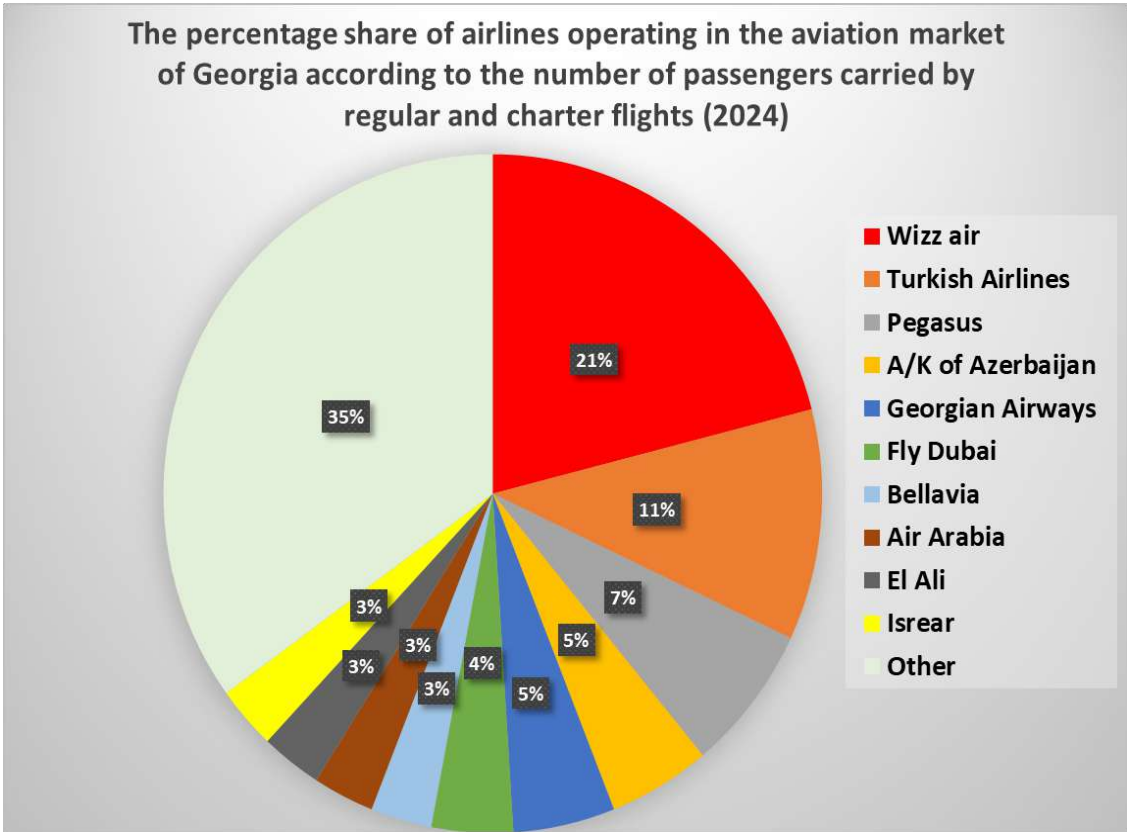
Number of passengers transferred by airports								
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	An increase over the previous year
Tbilisi International Airport	3 164 139	3 808 619	3 692 175	590 123	1 683 696	2 998 785	3 694 052	23%
Batumi International Airport	495 668	598 891	624 151	51 412	51 6017	616 885	621 514	1%
Kutaisi International Airport	405 173	617 373	873 616	183 873	282 514	796 063	1 671 198	110%

Source: Georgian Civil Aviation Agency <https://gcaa.ge/statistics/>

"Wizz Air" company

The Hungarian budget airline "Wizz Air," that operates at Kutaisi International Airport is one of the most important factors contributing to the tourism sector's rehabilitation in Imereti.

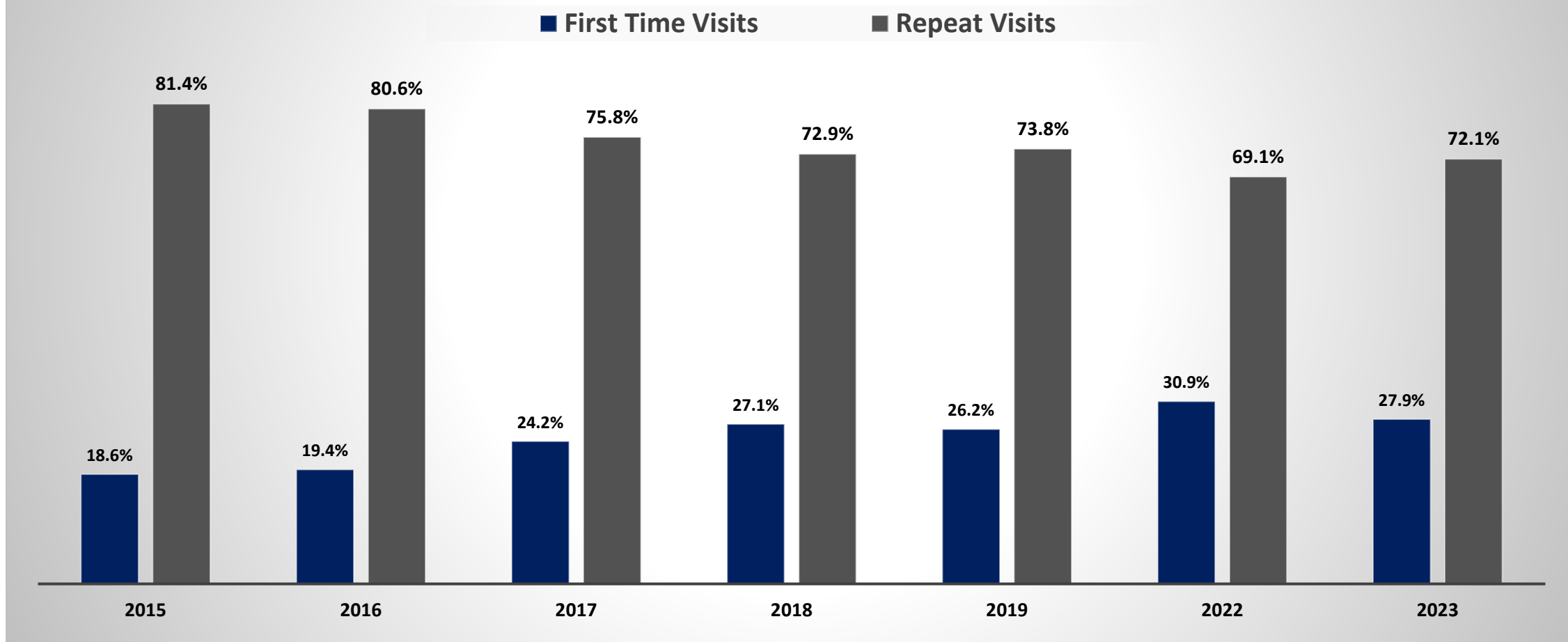
Source: Georgian Civil Aviation Agency <https://gcaa.ge/statistics/>



“Kutaisi Airport is an invaluable asset for Imereti tourist destinations. There are direct flights from many European countries. Polish tourist reserve rooms and come directly from the airport, especially those who have already been here. In Gordi, horse riding tours are also available, there are families who have this service and tourists know about it. The National Tourism Agency accomplishes a good job - it participates in international exhibitions and brings bloggers here, who then write about the tourist places of Georgia in their countries... This is a good campaign”. *Family couple, the small hotel owners. Gordi, May, 2023 and April, 2024.*

“There are direct flights from Latvia to Kutaisi airport. I have contacts with both Georgian and Latvian tour operators. Thank to these links, the previous seasons weren't bad for my business. However, there are few reservations now due to closure of the canyon for repair work. It has been started during the tourist season for the past two years, which has had a detrimental impact on our business.” *Female, the family based medium size hotel owner. Gordi, April, 2024.*

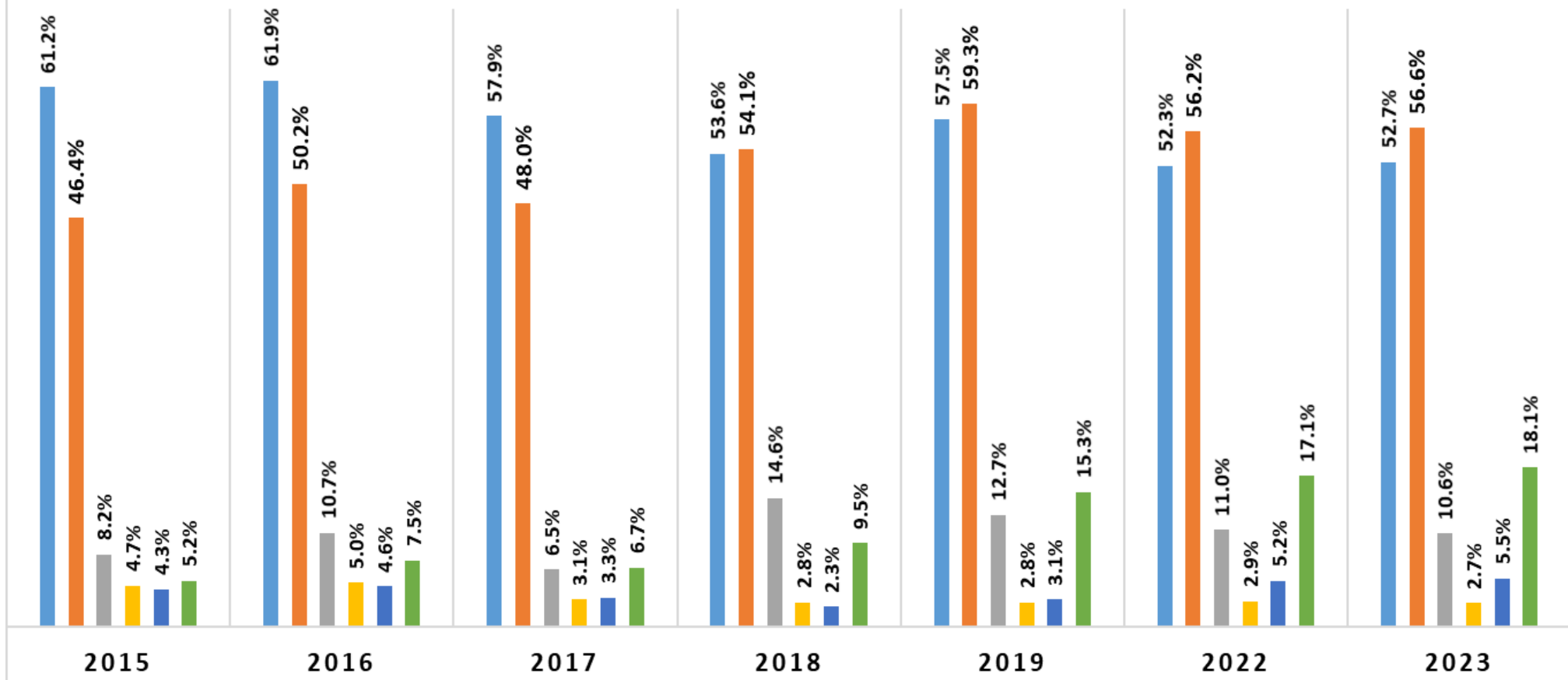
Visiting Practice of International Visitor Trips in Georgia



Source: <https://gnta.ge/statistics/>

INFORMATION SOURCE FOR INTERNATIONAL VISITORS

- Previous Visit
- Friends, Relatives
- Television, Radio
- www.Georgia.travel
- www.facebook.com/georgiaandtravel
- Other Internet



Source: <https://gnta.ge/statistics/>

Main findings: internal effort - private businesses coping mechanisms

- In the post-pandemic rehabilitation of the tourism sector, the efforts of private enterprises as stakeholders to cope with the situation, turned out to be critical.
- Some respondents indicated that with financial savings or bank credit, with their own physical and intellectual resources, during the pandemic period they were able to renew their businesses - renovate buildings or develop new directions.

„My business falls under the category of agribusiness. In 2020, two months before the pandemic, I decided to expand my business and obtained a loan. I had to arrange a new space for making dried persimmons, where there would be good natural ventilation. I was building during the pandemic... it was the perfect time to do it. My brother and son helped me, we used it well... We were able to do it with our own efforts and preferential agro-credit. Well, 2021 season wasn't bad, however, in 2022 I expected more tourists...but you know, war is a big disaster, war in Ukraine... and this repair work at the canyon currently... *Male, local farmer, owner of the enterprise "Gorduli". May, 2023, April 2024.*



The family owned medium size enterprises “Gorduli” and a honey house the startup funded by remittances.

Main findings: challenges

- Even though, the visitor statistics by the Agency of Protected Areas (APA) of Georgia demonstrates the positive dynamics of tourist flows in the post pandemic period, the total number of visitors to any tourist destination of the country's protected areas including Okatse Canyon, for 2023 still lag behind of that of 2019 (protected areas visitors in Georgia total: 1 199 011 in 2019 and 786 533 in 2023; for Okatse Canyon: 92 872 and 61 178 respectively).
- The respondents unanimously attribute the decline in tourist numbers during the 2023 and 2024 seasons to two main factors: the ongoing war in Ukraine and the inadequate planning of repair work at the canyon during the peak tourist season.

Conclusions

- The advertising campaign prepared by Imereti DMO during the pandemic contributed to the increase of domestic tourist flows in the region. Today, its efforts to present the Imereti tourist region at international exhibitions, should be assessed positively;
- The tourism industry in Imereti greatly depends on “Wizz Air’s” successful operation at Kutaisi International Airport that is crucial for attracting of international visitors in the region/country;
- The efforts of private businesses along with tax benefits, proved to be very important in the process of post-pandemic tourism sector recovery;
- Both external as well as internal factors such as war in Ukraine and poor management at the Okatse tourist destination, prevent the attraction of increasing flows of tourists.
- Rehabilitation is progressing and in our opinion can be rated as “slow”.



Creeping occupation...

No to Russian Law!

Thank you

Questions?

2024 Regional Transformation by Tourism

Renovation and Reforms Triggered by Tourism: Case of Georgia

Europeanization of Wine Tourism Regulations in Georgia

Dr. Maka Nutsubidze

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Wine tourism is the best way to get to know the country

Georgia has a great potential for the development of wine tourism:

“Georgia's wine tourism potential lies in showcasing what it has to offer the wine world. Georgia has much to offer that is very different from what you will find elsewhere. This includes:

- an extensive wine history,
- a *qvevri* wine making tradition,
- the celebration of wine and food through Georgian feasts or *supras*,
- Georgian wines made from indigenous grapes”.





Wine Tourism in Georgia

“Wine tourism is intimately related to the identity of destinations and comprises cultural, economic and historical values. Furthermore, it constitutes a major driver in diversification strategies helping destinations to enrich the touristic offer and to attract different publics” (*UNWTO Secretary-General Taleb Rifai*).

One of the most popular activities in Georgia is tasting local cuisine and wine, accounting for 78.1% of visitor activities.

Law of Georgia on Tourism

Wine tourism is “the direction of tourism, during the implementation of which the main purpose of the trip is to get to know vineyards and viticulture traditions, wineries, wine cellars and other means and objects related to wine production, as well as to purchase wines made from different varieties at the place of production and to participate in traditional celebrations and activities related to winemaking”.

Art. 4



Legal regulations of the Wine tourism sites

- An enterprise is an organized system for carrying out entrepreneurial activities with the aim of making a profit. The law distinguishes entrepreneurial activities from agricultural activities unless there are at least five non-family members permanently employed.
- Since 2012, the Georgian Tourism Administration has been working on the "Wine Routs" project, which aims to identify, assess, and document existing cellars across Georgia.

EU-Georgia Associated Agreement

The following principles are:

- respect for the integrity and interests of local communities, particularly in rural areas, bearing in mind local development needs and priorities;
- the importance of cultural heritage;
- positive interaction between tourism and environmental preservation.

Wine tourist's (wine consumers) rights

- *Wine sales and wine testing regulations*
- *Wine quality regulations*



Conclusions...

- Comparing Georgian wine tourism regulations with those in other EU wine-producing countries shows several gaps in Georgian legislation.
- For instance, there is no legal definition of wine tasting, and the "Wine Road" wine program lacks legislation for winery registration.
- Georgia must focus on developing legislative regulations for quality control of Georgian wine.
- This involves meeting local and international market demands and harmonizing Georgian legislation with EU legal acts, thereby enhancing the reputation of Georgian wine and promoting the growth of wine tourism in Georgia.



Thank you for your attention!



2024 Regional Transformation by Tourism

Renovation and Reforms Triggered by Tourism: Case of Georgia

The Impact of Digital Technologies on the Management of Georgian Tourist Destination

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Structure

- Introduction
- Digital Technologies in Georgian Market
- Case of Adjara and Surami
- Research Methodology
- Results
- Discussion
- Conclusion

Introduction

- Digitalization has radically changed the culture of tourism
- Digital technologies are a very powerful tool for DMO marketing
- It improves accessibility to cultural heritage sites and is a prerequisite for the sustainable development of a tourist destination.
- The digital elements of self-service still need refinement in the Georgian market



The Role of Virtual reality (VR) Tours

- Powerful tool for destination marketing in the tourism industry

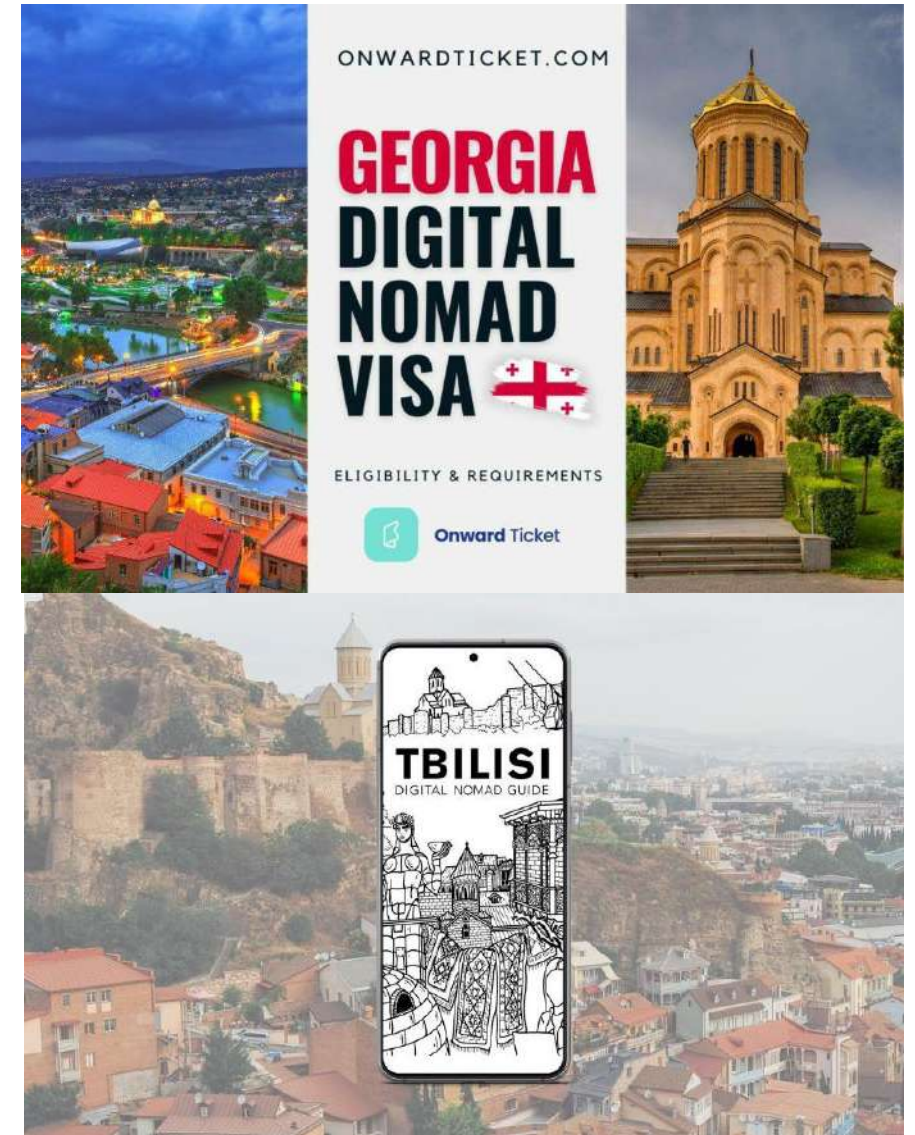
VR tours can improve:

- Perceptions of visitors
- Sustainable tourism development
- Experiences
- Time and cost savings
- Availability
- Enhancing customer engagement



Digital Technologies in Georgian Market

- In 2022, 36.5% of international visitors received information about Georgia from the internet or television
- According to GNTA Strategy Plan (2025) one of the main priorities for tourism development is implementation of content-oriented marketing activities with internet and social media tools
- Digital Days campaign and Digital conference TRAVERSE was held in Georgia, in 2024





Mission

To ensure sustainable tourism development and increase awareness of Georgia, as a unique tourist destination, on the international market.



Purpose

Georgia is one of the most unique tourist countries in the world. We aim to help visitors discover its diversity and experience it through its unique landscape.



Vision

Developing Georgia's brand and positioning its tourism industry on the international market.



#DigitalDaysCountryofGeorgia



THE USAID ECONOMIC SECURITY PROGRAM



Discover unique Georgia





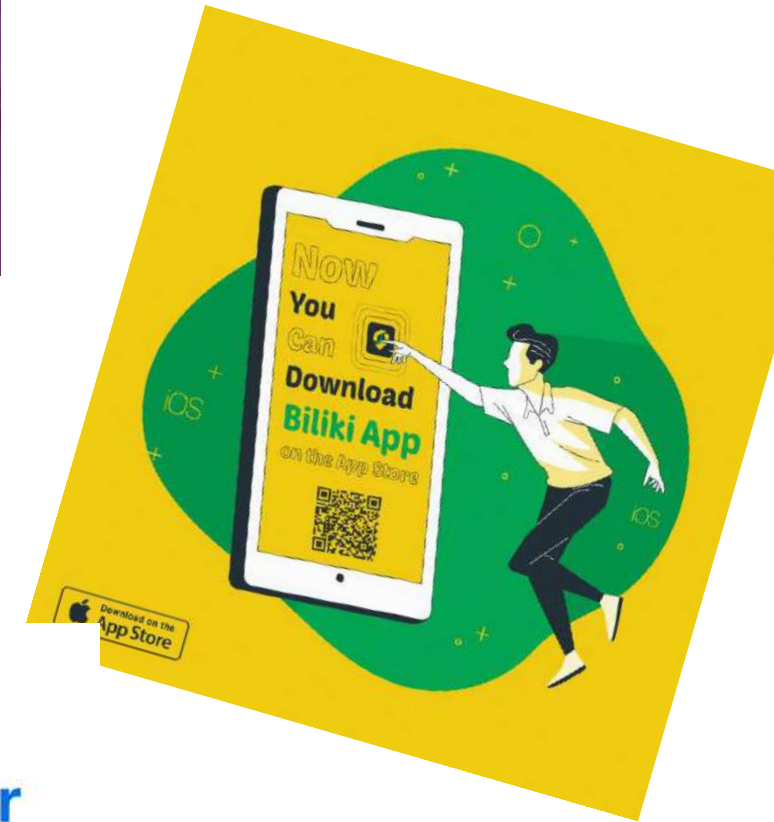
- **Vrex Immersive Inc** is Georgian famous company which specializing in creating virtual reality experiences for travel industry.
- **Georgian National Museum** developed a virtual museum for online exploration of collections and exhibitions.
- **Tbilisi Open Air Museum of Ethnography** offers an audio guide accessible via mobile phones for visitors.
- **City of Tbilisi** implements a smart tourism system with real-time information on attractions, transportation, and events.

Georgian Applications and Web pages

- Audio Guide Georgia
- TravelGis
- Biliki
- wearesait
- Georgia.Travel
- Places.Georgia.Travel

International applications:

- Skycanner
- Expedia
- Airbnb
- eDreams
- Booking.com and etc.



How can digitalization change destination: Case of Adjara and Surami

- **Adjara** is considered one of the best places for holiday stay in the territory of Georgia. Beautiful nature, subtropical climate and splendid sea will guarantee an energy boost here to last for the whole year.
- Tourism agencies and hotels in Adjara use developed digital products. Especially popular local Georgian providers are: *self.ge*, *retain.ge*, *biliki.ge*, *area.ly*, *travelgis.ge*, *LiveCaller.io*, *wifisher.com*, *Fina*, *FMG*, *Tripcamp.ge* and *Oris*.





EUROPEAN BEST
DESTINATIONS®

BATUMI - EUROPEAN
BEST DESTINATIONS 2024

- Batumi successfully hosts tourists and offers them highest services, the accommodation facilities there have hotel mobile apps, mobile payments, feedback apps, smart room technology, high speed internet that makes tourist trip more comfortable, convenient, easy and pleasant.

Batumi won the award of Europe's Leading All-Season Destination 2023 at the so-called tourism “Oscar” - the World Travel Awards.



- Georgia has many climate resorts but most of them are not developed enough. **Surami** is one of the outstanding resorts for its healing properties.
- “Surami Tourism Capacity Survey” shows the opportunity of this resort. 58 accommodation facilities in Suram participated in the survey. The results showed that 77.6% (45) out of the 58 accommodations are guesthouses and 17.2% are cottages, the number of hotels is low, the situation in food facilities is also bad.



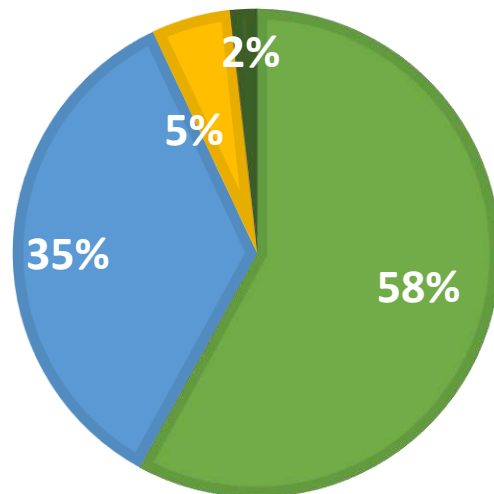
- Most of the Surami visitors are Georgians (91.4%)
- Without digital services, customer relationship system and environmental monitoring and sustainability tools positioning in a competitive market is very difficult.

Methodology

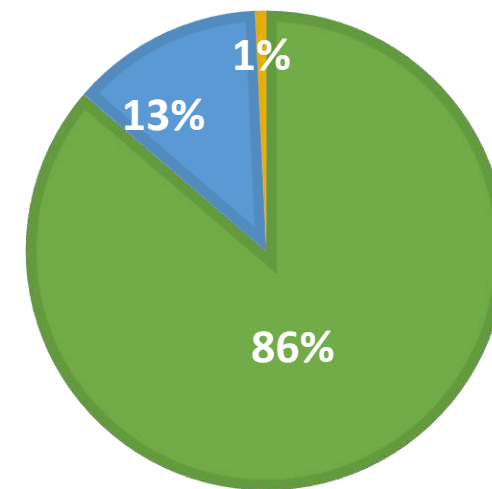
- The research methodology of the article is based on primary and secondary research data.
- Statistical data and additional information was retrieved from Georgian National Tourism Agency and Georgia's Innovation and Technology Agency.
- The qualitative research method was used to study the challenges of the Destination Management Organizations (DMO) in using the online programs/applications.
- The quantitative research method was used to study the role of digital technologies in the management of destination and highlight the importance of modern technologies.
- Data was collected by using online surveys that were distributed through various platforms such as social media, online forums and email invitations. The confidentiality of the respondents is ensured.

How travelers are using digital technologies

1. Sources of getting information



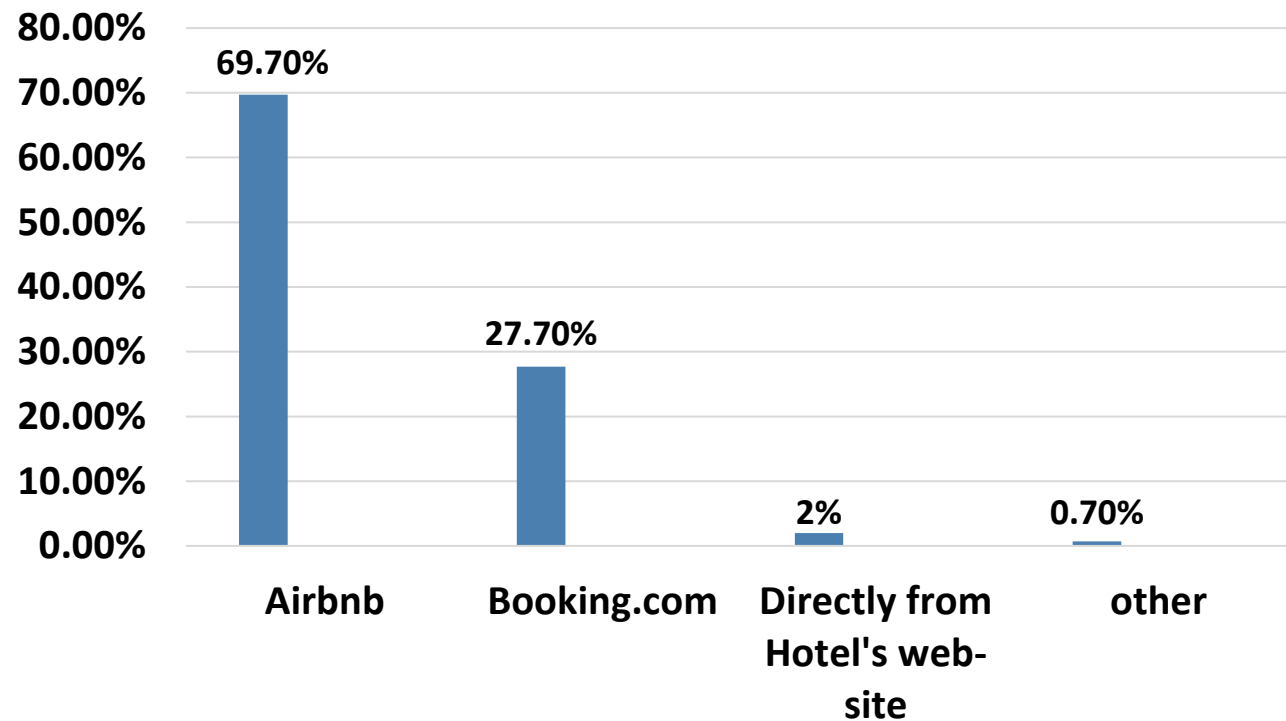
2. Using mobile applications while traveling



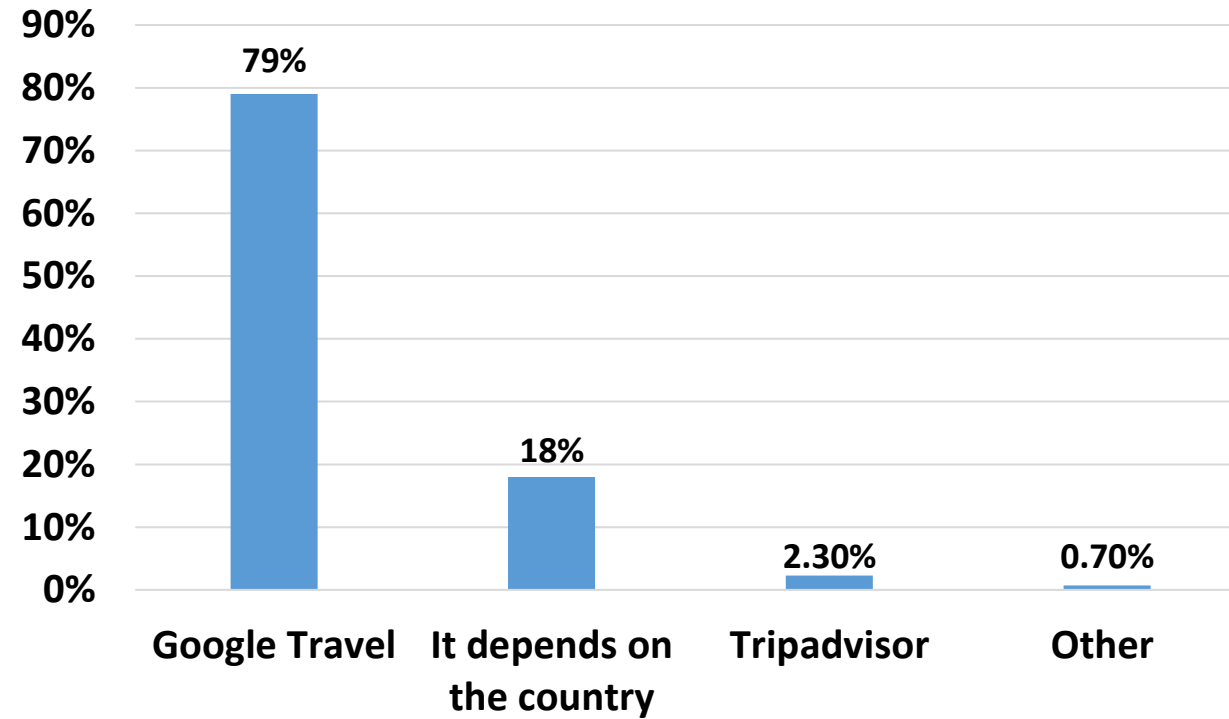
Source: Authors' according to the research

How travelers are using digital technologies

3. Popular applications/web-sites for accommodation booking



4. Applications which are used while traveling



Source: Authors' according to the research

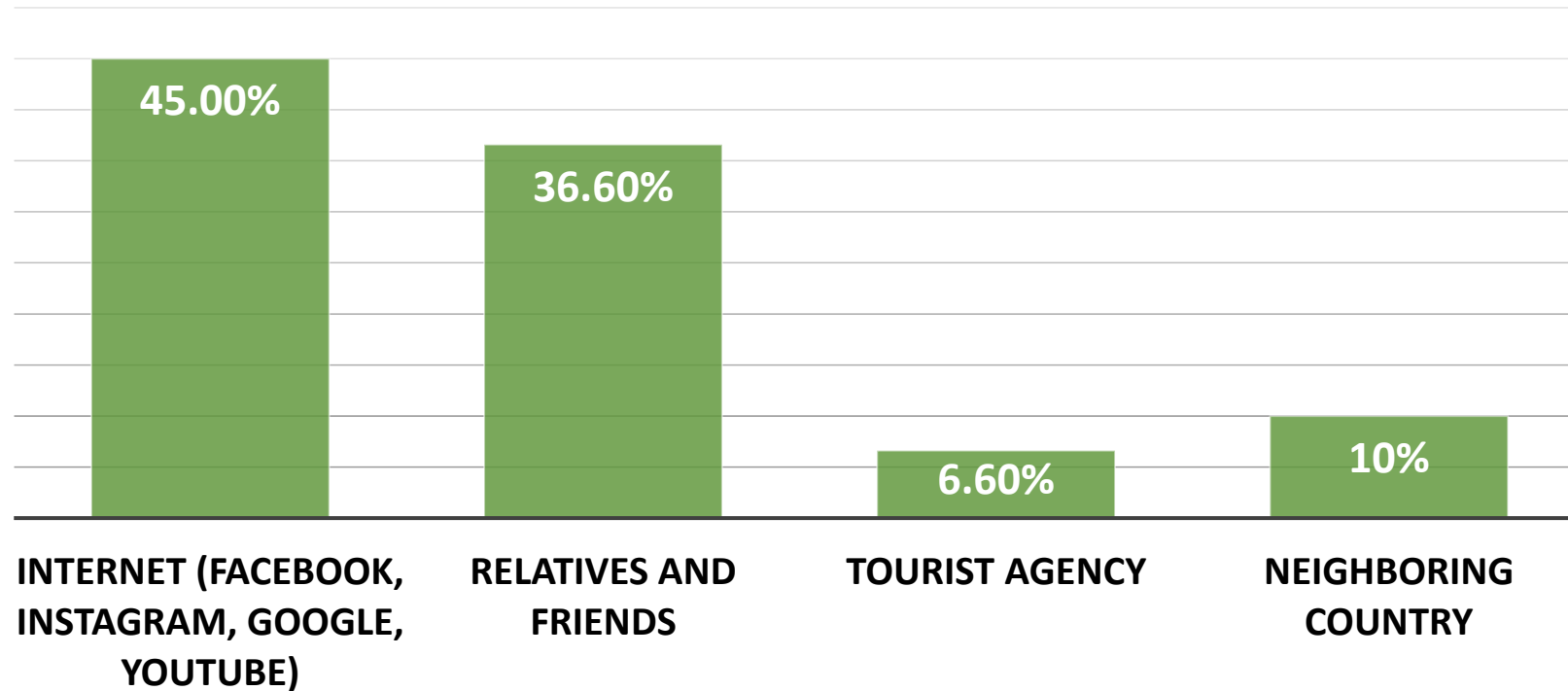
5. Sources of information when planning a vacation using a mobile phone

Sources of information	Year	
	2021	2023
Using a search engine for general pages	48.6%	30.9%
Social media websites	20.8%	38.8%
Online travel agencies websites	8.2%	7.9%
Airbnb.com	3.2%	7.3%
Recommendations of Friends	11%	10.7%
Bloggers	8.2%	4.5%

Source: Authors' according to the research

How travelers are using digital technologies

6. The influence of information flows on foreign tourists who travel in Georgia



Source: Authors' according to the research

Discussion

- The discussed data, showed that in Georgia, there are Georgian digital apps, but Georgian travelers are gradually getting used to use it.
- The research once again shown that internet is one of the main source of getting information. The campaigns which will be hold by organizations and business must be covered online.
- Travelers nowadays are not booking tickets or hotels at travel agencies as they were doing it before. They prefer to plan everything on their own, so DMO must become a source of authentic information and must proactively stimulate, distribute and influence online content.

Conclusion

- The functioning of the modern world is practically impossible without digital technologies.
- Tourism business has to keep up with the latest digital trends, if they want to successfully operate on the market.
- Destinations must have a digital presence, because it can improve visitor experiences, increase engagement, and promote sustainable practices in cultural tourism.
- Public and private services are trying to popularize tourism and hospitality industry by establishing new products and services, in Georgia.

Thank You For Your Attention!



2024 Regional Transformation by Tourism

Renovation and Reforms Triggered by Tourism: Case of Georgia

Diversification of the Rural Economy by Developing Sustainable Food Tourism Sector

(Case Study of Adjara mountain Region, Georgia)

Manana Vasadze, Professor of GTU, Tbilisi,



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Diversification of the Rural Economy by Developing Sustainable Food Tourism Sector

(Case Study of Adjara mountain Region, Georgia)

M.Vasadze, Professor, GTU, Tbilisi, Georgia

- The development of rural areas of Georgia is important for solving such tasks as: food security, environmental protection, economic development, creating a high standard of living and state security.
- An important role in rural development is the introduction of integrated management of natural resources in the Country and the functioning of various sectors of the economy, the well-being of people, the elimination of poverty and the sustainable development of the country. (Agriculture and Rural Development Strategy of Georgia, 2021-2027, 2019).

Diversification of the Rural Economy by Developing Sustainable Food Tourism Sector

(Case Study of Adjara mountain Region, Georgia)

M.Vasadze, Professor, GTU, Tbilisi, Georgia

- Tourism is an activity that contributes directly and indirectly to the development of rural areas. But this development needs to be sustainable. To do this, appropriate policies must be implemented in accordance with the Sustainable Development Goals.
- Gastronomy tourism fosters inclusive and sustainable economic growth, social inclusiveness, employment and poverty reduction, resource efficiency, cultural values, diversity and heritage. This kind of tourism has become an additional economic activity, so it is no longer depend exclusively on primary activities such as agriculture and livestock. There are extensive opportunities for agritourism, combining tourism with agriculture-related activities, which indicate the potential synergies between them.

Diversification of the Rural Economy by Developing Sustainable Food Tourism Sector

(Case Study of Adjara mountain Region, Georgia)

M.Vasadze, Professor, GTU, Tbilisi, Georgia

- The local authorities managing rural tourism must therefore implement policies to promote its development.
- Providing economic benefits to local people can bring alternative sources of livelihood. It is important to use local suppliers and labor. e.g. employ locals where possible, use local facilities and purchase local services; Purchase, carry and supply locally grown food and beverages

Diversification of the Rural Economy by Developing Sustainable Food Tourism Sector

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- UNTWO suggests that Rural Tourism activities take place in non-urban (rural) areas with the following characteristics: a) low population density, b) landscape and land use dominated by agriculture and forestry and c) traditional social structure and lifestyle". Rural and mountain tourism have a high potential to stimulate local economic growth and social change because of its complementarity with other economic activities, its contribution to GDP and job creation, and its capacity to promote the dispersal of demand in time (fight seasonality) and along a wider territory (UNWTO, 2021).

Diversification of the Rural Economy by Developing Sustainable Food Tourism Sector

(Case Study of Adjara mountain Region, Georgia)

M.Vasadze, Professor, GTU, Tbilisi, Georgia

- Gastronomy has established itself as one of the key elements for the sustainable tourist destinations. Gastronomy is part of the cultural, social, environmental, sustainable and economic history of nations and their people.

Diversification of the Rural Economy by Developing Sustainable Food Tourism Sector

(Case Study of Adjara mountain Region, Georgia)

M.Vasadze, Professor, GTU, Tbilisi, Georgia

- The process of tourism development in Adjara is quite active, which has a strong impact on the number of tourists on the one hand, and foreign investments on the other. It should be noted that domestic tourists are mainly attracted to the sea while foreign visitors are interested in ecotourism (mountainous Adjara). The region is attractive for tourists in any season of the year.

Diversification of the Rural Economy by Developing Sustainable Food Tourism Sector

(Case Study of Adjara mountain Region, Georgia)

M.Vasadze, Professor, GTU, Tbilisi, Georgia

- Due to the diversity of nature, over the centuries Georgia has developed a very interesting look of traditional Georgian cuisine. What makes this subject even more interesting is the radical difference between the corners of Georgia. It is not surprising that the existence and culture of the regions of the Country differ from each other.
- The interest of visitors in food tourism is growing together with interest in culture, traditions, emotions, experiences and creativity (Kiralova & Hamarneh)

Diversification of the Rural Economy by Developing Sustainable Food Tourism Sector

(Case Study of Adjara mountain Region, Georgia)

M.Vasadze, Professor, GTU, Tbilisi, Georgia

- Culinary tourism is to some extent a component element of all tours. But unlike other types of tourism, the main motive of gastronomic travel is to get to know the national cuisine.
- Supporting local farmers and producers is an integral part of any gastronomic tour.
- Based on the principles of sustainable development, economic opportunities in rural areas diversification/development, improvement of the standard of living of the social situation the direct beneficiaries of the strategy are the population living in rural areas and persons employed in the agricultural sector.

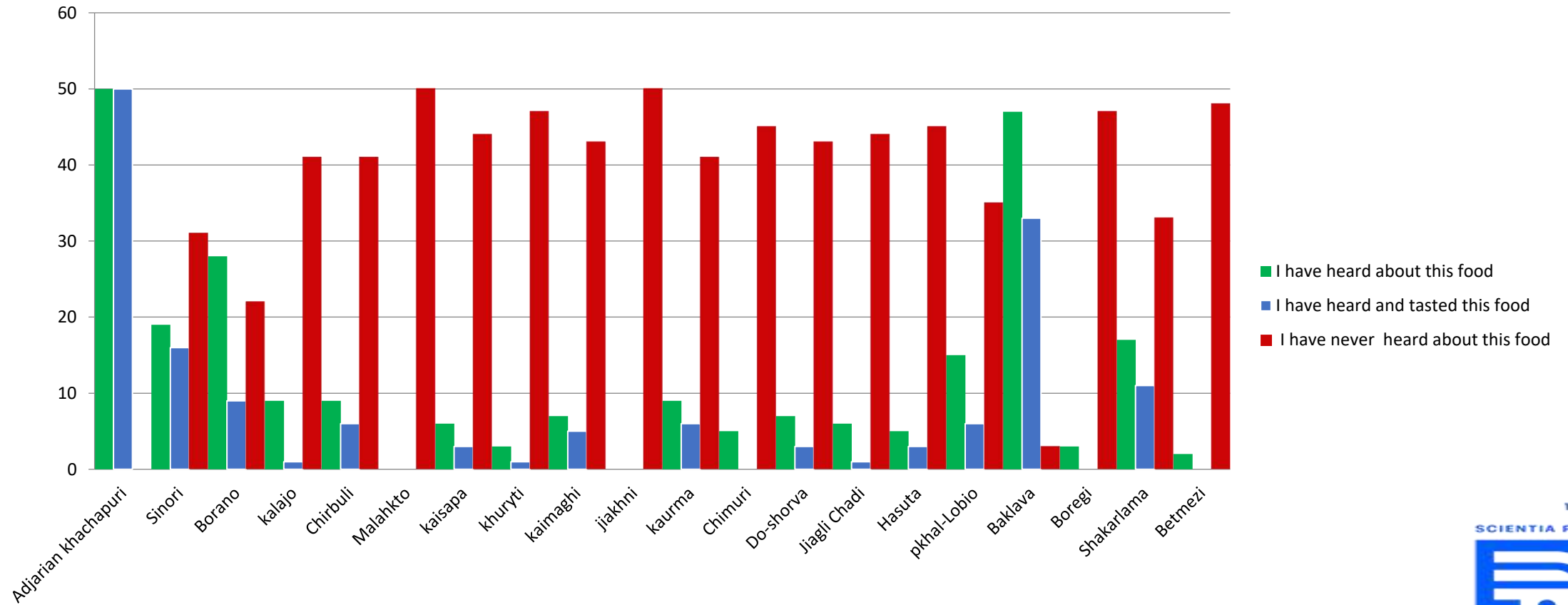
Diversification of the Rural Economy by Developing Sustainable Food Tourism Sector

(Case Study of Adjara mountain Region, Georgia)

M.Vasadze, Professor, GTU, Tbilisi, Georgia

- The paper represents a way to experiment with the local cuisine in Ajara mountain areas, Georgia. The major aim of the study was to identify the inbound tourists' perception of local foods and the factors that influence local food choice of inbound tourists in Ajara region, Georgia.
- Primary data were collected from 76 tourists who visited Ajara by distributing questionnaires, besides in-depth interview method was applied to gather data from 45 local food vendors.
- Quantitative and qualitative data were applied to thematic and descriptive analysis.

Diversification of the Rural Economy by Developing Sustainable Food Tourism Sector (Case Study of Adjara mountain Region, Georgia) M.Vasadze, Professor, GTU, Tbilisi, Georgia



Diversification of the Rural Economy by Developing Sustainable Food Tourism Sector

(Case Study of Adjara mountain Region, Georgia)

M.Vasadze, Professor, GTU, Tbilisi, Georgia

- The questionnaire mentions 20 traditional Adjarian dishes. The green column indicates the number of respondents who have heard of the dishes listed above. For example: Adjarian khachapuri is familiar to everyone, all 76 have heard about this dish. The blue column shows the number of tourists who have not only heard of but also tasted the dish. For example: 76 out of 76 tourists have heard of Adjarian khachapuri and have tasted it. And finally, the red column shows the number of dishes that the participants have neither heard of nor tasted.
- The study investigates the vendors' perception on local food as a tourism product and tourist's intention specifically on Ajara mountain region, Georgia.

Diversification of the Rural Economy by Developing Sustainable Food Tourism Sector

(Case Study of Adjara mountain Region, Georgia)

M.Vasadze, Professor, GTU, Tbilisi, Georgia

- The study confirmed that variety of local food in mountain region of Ajara is diverse. The purchase intention of inbound tourists is related to gastronomy. The study has proven that the promotion of local food depends on government involvement whereas a strategic marketing campaign could be used to bring traditional local food to the international level. Restaurant's environment should be familiar to international tourists while maintaining the authentic features of the restaurants.
- Tourism provides non-agricultural income with the majority of rural population. Georgian cuisine is well demonstrated in rural areas with gastronomic tours. What is more, Georgia has the most distinctive and ancient wine culture throughout the world. Due to the diversity of wine culture of local grape varieties and unique preparation technology (tradition of keeping wine in the Qvevri) Georgian wine stays an important activity for rural community.
- The distinguishing feature of Georgian wine is that the vine grows in small farms. Accordingly, the social development of the rural community results in the growing of non-agricultural as well as agricultural income of small enterprises.

Diversification of the Rural Economy by Developing Sustainable Food Tourism Sector

(Case Study of Adjara mountain Region, Georgia)

M.Vasadze, Professor, GTU, Tbilisi, Georgia

Ensuring the constant growth of the quality of life and social condition of the rural population of Georgia, gastronomy tourism should be based on:

- Diversification of the rural economy by strengthening the agricultural value chain and developing sustainable non-agricultural sectors
- Development of rural specificity and unique cultural identity.
- Government involvement in promotion of local food whereas a strategic marketing campaign could be used to bring traditional local food to the international level; Restaurant's environment should be familiar to international tourists while maintaining the authentic features of the restaurants.

Diversification of the Rural Economy by Developing Sustainable Food Tourism Sector
(Case Study of Adjara mountain Region, Georgia)
M.Vasadze, Professor, GTU, Tbilisi, Georgia

- It is necessary to realize that sustainable development of culinary tourism is not only about preserving traditions, but it is also about creations of the future. (Senkova A., Sotak M. 2016).
- *A major component of history, tradition and identity, gastronomy has also become a major motivation to visit a destination. (UNTWO, 2017).*
- Destination food in Georgia is available year-round. The image of Georgia is related to food and wine together with traditions (Georgian Supra) which give a high priority to authentic local cuisine and Georgian wine.

2024 Regional Transformation by Tourism

Renovation and Reforms Triggered by Tourism: Case of Georgia

EROSION OF BLACK SEA COASTLINE: AN EMERGING THREAT TO MARITIME TOURISM

MARIAM MGELADZE

PhD Candidate of Ankara University

2024

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AGENDA

- EROSION
- COASTAL CRISIS: SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECTS
- COASTAL KALEIDOSCOPE OF BATUMI COASTLINE
- COASTAL EROSION AND TOURSIM
- EFFECTS ON MARITIME BORDERS
- INTERPLAY BETWEEN TOURISM AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY
- LAWS IN COASTAL EROSION?
- TACTCS OF COASTAL DEFENSE
- SUGGESTIONS

EROSION

➤ What is the Coastal Erosion?

- increasing frequency of storms, rising sea levels, coastal erosion and collapsing drains;
- loss or displacement of land, or the long- term removal of sediment and rocks along the coastline

➤ Erosion affects and changes the ecological landscapes and costal dynamics; It leads to ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION

➤ It has nexus of socio- economic, cultural, political, and legal implications.

➤ Disrupts activities: tourism, fisheries, sport. Interconnectedness with environmental and economic dimensions.

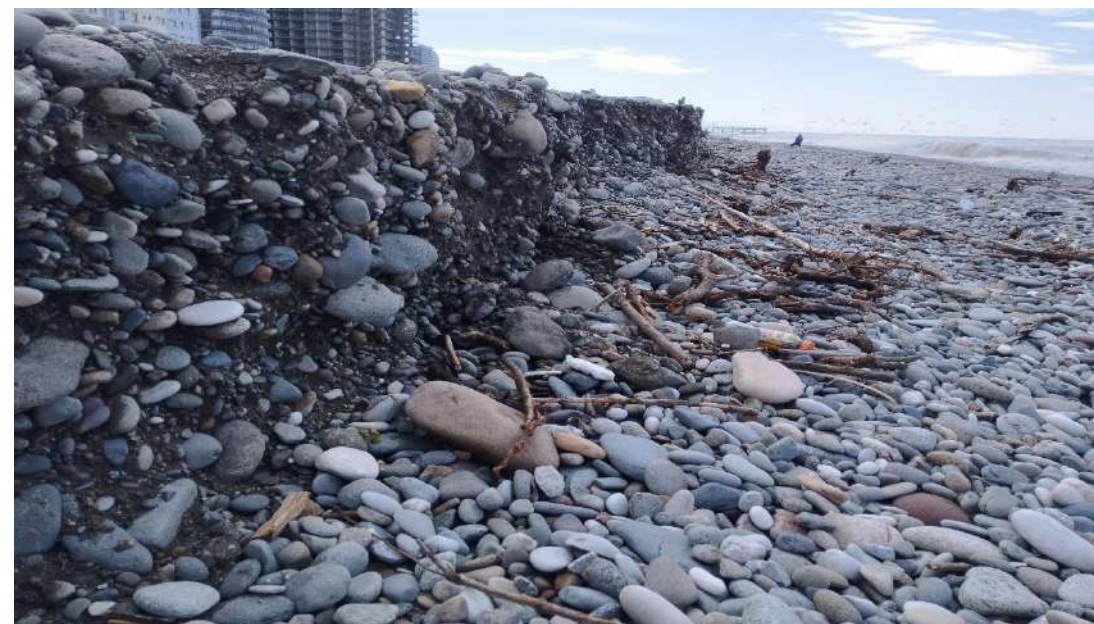
SOCIAL - ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECTS

- Frank Elgar: Ecosystem is more complex than we think
- Not easy to observe; region specific socio- economic fabric
- Damage to hotels, beaches, infrastructure, living and non- living resources
- Water quality change, pollution, habitat integrity
- Mutualistic inter – relationships of various actors
- long term- richness and security vs. short term monetization and impoverishment - POLITICS
- Right on healthy environment: right on clean water, sustainable resources (Sustainable Development Goals)
- Need for the protective measures/ balance of ecosystems

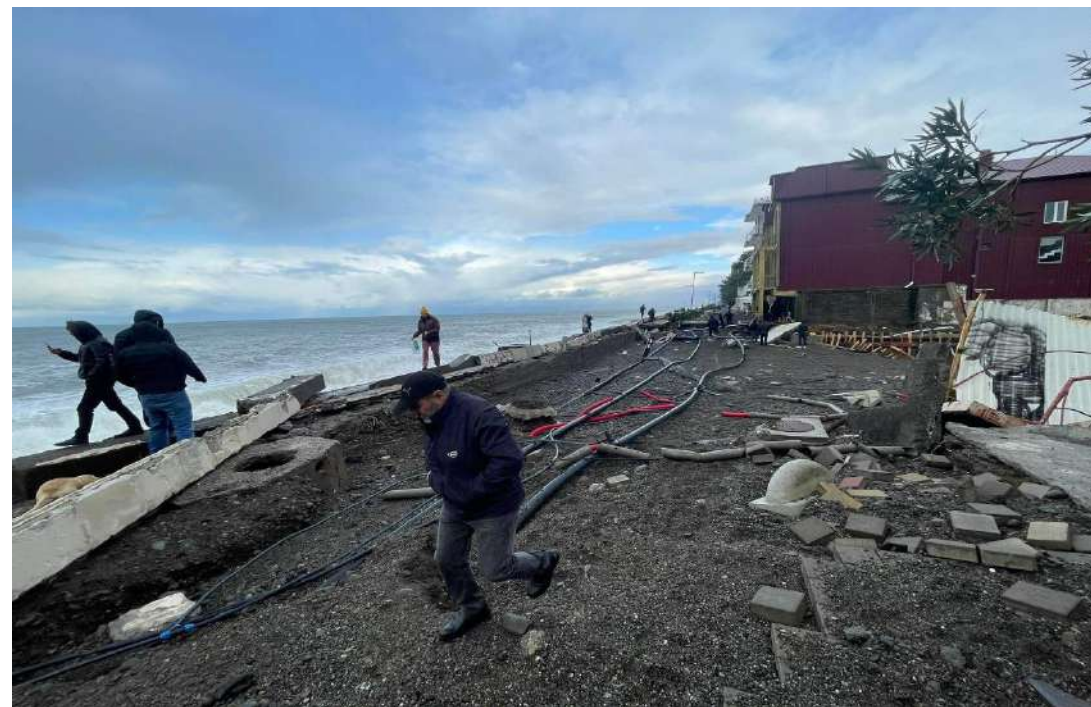
BATUMI COASTLINE

- Batumi – role in the economic, cultural and tourist development of the country
- Batumi's coastline is affected by the erosion
- It poses threat to human life, culture, history, biodiversity, natural resources and economic activities
- Sediment carried by the Chorokhi River, which is one of the important sediment source for the Black Sea
- On going use of beach deposit and sediments for the construction of dams and buildings
- Passive role Ministry of Environment and Natural Resource Protection
- Methods and budget used to mitigate the risks proves to be ineffective
- Failure of fostering sustainable development and safe urban environment
- Absence of a cohesive, long- term strategy for shoreline management plan

BATUMI COASTLINE



BATUMI COASTLINE



TOURISM

- Tourism – sustainable development, cultural exchange, generates revenue, stimulates investments and the community development
- Coastal erosion undermines the beauty of the beaches, jeopardizes infrastructure, and livelihoods
- Cementation of the coastline, ignoring the environmental consequences of dams, intensive transport of sediments degrades coastal ecosystems
- Changes Environmental status making the touristic destination less attractive for tourists
- Negative impact on sustainable tourism and the international reputation
- Responsible tourism practices- safeguard the tourism economies for future generation
- The need for Systematic and comprehensive approach for managing coastal areas – balance economy and environment conservation

TOURISM AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

- Brundtland Report of the World Commission on Environmental and Development
- Current need without jeopardizing the ability of future generation to fulfill their needs
- Sustainable Development Goals- Prosperity, Equity, Environmental Stewardship, social growth
- Sustainable tourism practices –country specific for creating more resilient and equitable future
- Sustainable coastal tourism management plan to avoid the degradation of the coastal ecosystem
- Sustainable coastal tourism economic growth and environmental protection and restoration (local, national, regional and international levels.
- authentic and effective plan which balances the needs of tourism and the risks of the coastal erosion
- Policymakers, governmental and non- governmental organizations, local communities, and stakeholders - holistic approach

MARITIME BORDERS

- Maritime boundaries shall be stable, clear, predictable, and certain under the UNCLOS, 1982
- Coastal erosion changes the maritime boundaries and renders them obsolete
- It leads to complexities of resolving maritime boundary disputes
- Gulf of Marine Case- inherent challenges posed by coastal dynamics in boundary demarcation. Maritime boundary delimitation that accounts for environmental factors such as erosion.
- Discussion of principles of equidistance, straight and normal baselines.
- Mitigating erosions effect while ensuring the integrity and permanence of boundary demarcations
- Multidisciplinary approach and collaborative efforts.
- Interplay of environmental dynamics, laws, economics, politics and national interests – international legal commitments
- Cases of France, Spain, Brazil, Italy – pragmatic solutions in geographic context

L A W S

- Abidjan convention, 1984
- Barcelona Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea Against Pollution
- Genoa Declaration
- UNCLOS, 1982; CBD; World Heritage Convention; MARPOL 73/78;
- United Nations Environment Programme Regional Seas Programme
- Recommendation on a Policy for the Development of Sustainable Environment- Friendly Tourism in Coastal Areas European Code of Conduct for Coastal Zone and Model Law on Sustainable Management of Coastal zones
- MEDCOAST – international Initiative in Black Sea to improve the coastal management practices
- World Tourism Organization initiative – International Network on the Sustainable Development of Coastal Tourism Destinations
- Mediterranean Technical Assistance Programme – EU commission, European Investment Bank, UNDP, World Bank
- EuroSION Programme

TACTICS

- Methods requires further investigation
- Laboratory studies
- Structural and engineering options
- Hard and soft alternatives
- Coastal revegetation
- Combination of methods should enhance efficiency and provide environmentally viable coastal protection
- Coastal Sediment budgets for sediment restoration actions- benefits in mitigating the coastal erosion. However, the ecological implications shall be undertaken seriously.
- Consultancy and stockholders involvement

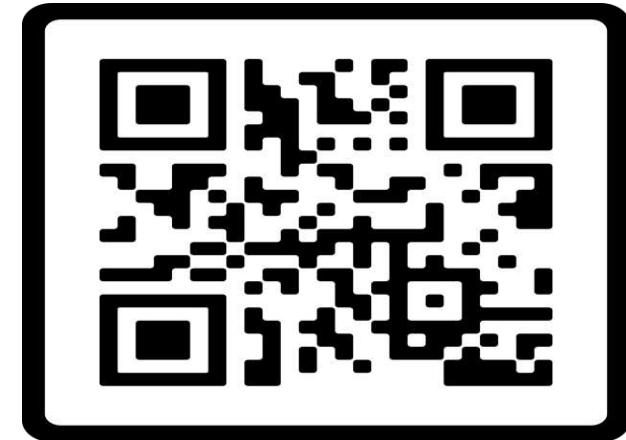
Thanks for attention

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Legal Researcher and Maritime Law Council

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2024 Regional Transformation by Tourism

Renovation and Reforms Triggered by Tourism: Case of Georgia

Strategic Directions of Georgian Tourism for Spatial Optimisation of the Country's Tourism Value Chain

Mariam Sharia

PhD student, Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State university

This research [PHDF-21-4839] has been supported by Shota Rustaveli National Science Foundation of Georgia (SRNSFG)

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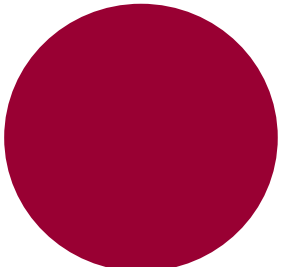
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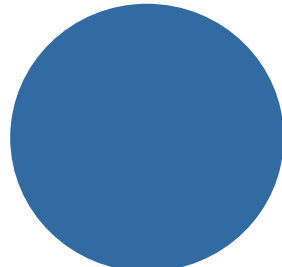
Structure

- Introduction
- Methodology
- Results
 - Empirical
 - Statistical
 - Systematic Review
- Conclusion

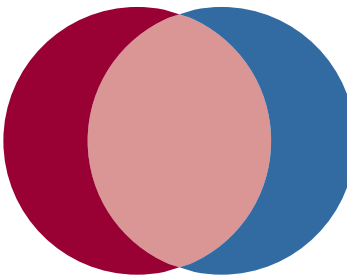
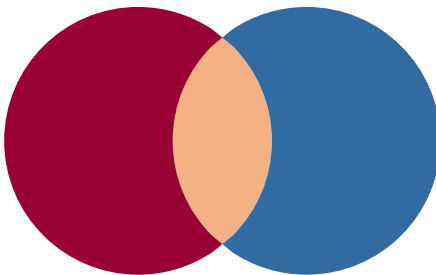
Introduction – Why Tourism Value Chain?



Tourism in Georgia



Georgian Production



What Happens in Import-Dependent Countries?



Photo from Geostat.ge

The majority of goods in the consumer basket are made up of imports

Purpose

Analyze and propose strategic directions for Georgian tourism aimed at spatial optimization of the country's tourism value chain

Methodology

- In-depth interviews with experts (5)
- Survey of accommodation (41)
- Analyzing statistical data (+20 000 inputs, HS4 codes)
- Systematic literature review

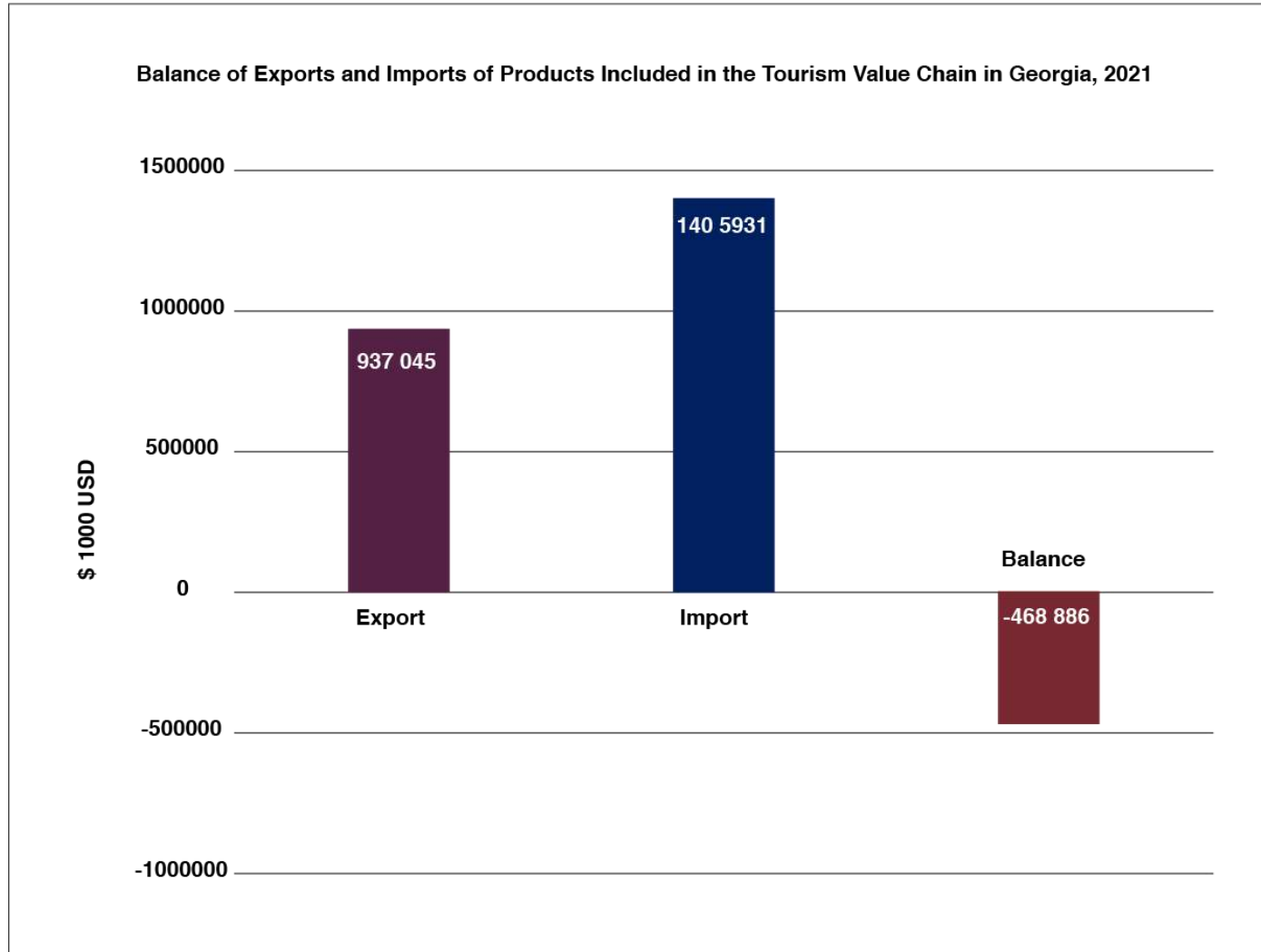
Results – Empirical Study

- International and local hotels' preferences are different
- Share of Georgian products has increased significantly in the last years
- Main challenges:
 - The mismatch between price and quality
 - Incompatibility for some specific products
- Identified 22 product groups

Results – Statistical Analyse

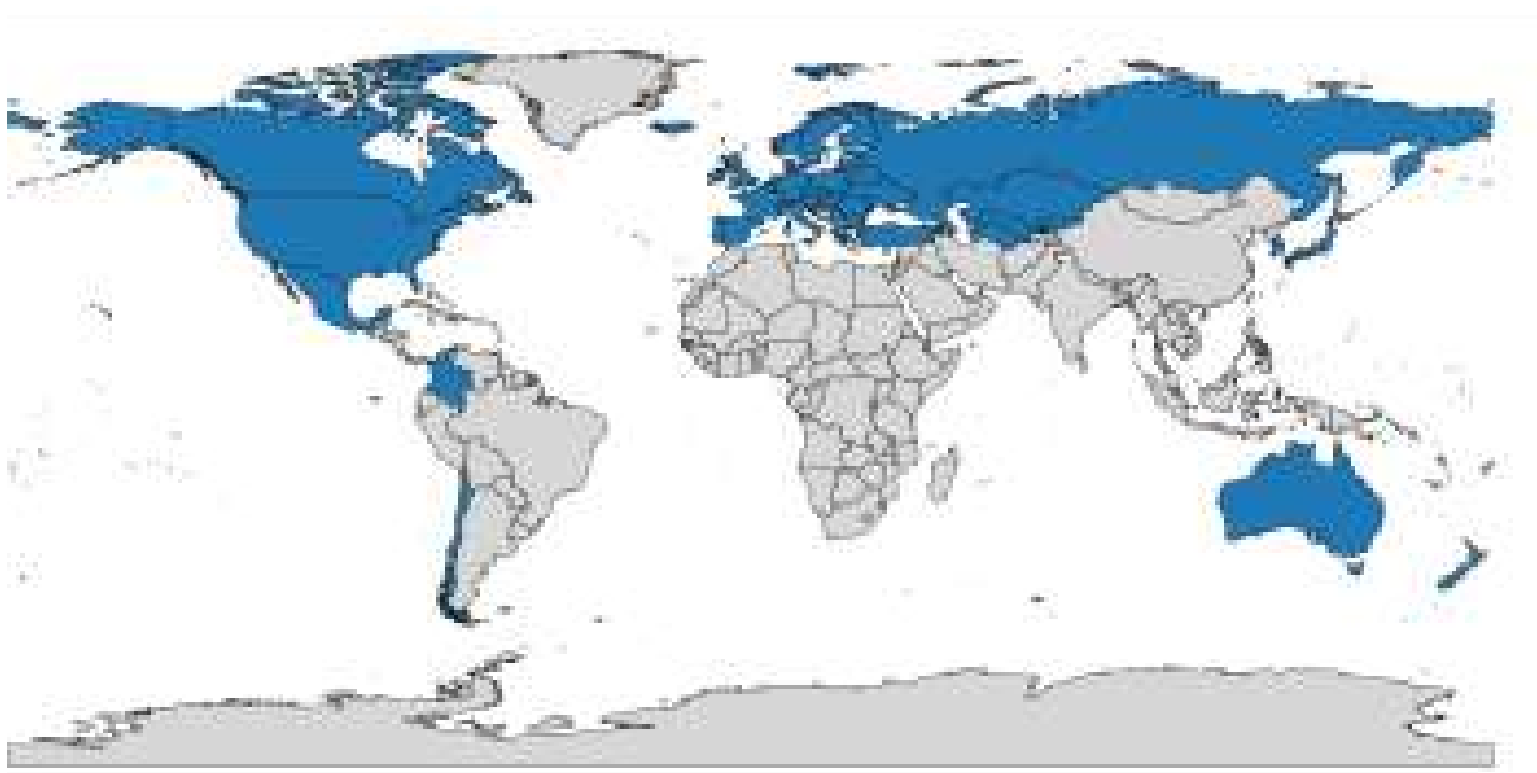
1. Accommodation, appliances, furniture	12. Spices and pepper powder
2. Cleaning products	13. Coffee and tea
3. Disposable amenities and items	14. Fruit and dried
4. Building materials	15. Nuts
5. Alcohols	16. Potatoes
6. Mineral and freshwater	17. Vegetables
7. Juices	18. Cereals and legumes
8. Sugar and confectionery additives	19. Fish and seafood
9. Canned foods and James	20. Dairy product
10. Food oil and butterfat	21. Egg
11. Flour	22. Meat

Results – Statistical Analyse



-468886 thousand
U.S. dollars

Results – Statistical Analyse



The tourism value chain of Georgia is dispersed in 55 countries

Results – Statistical Analyse



Frequency of getting into the top 10 importer countries

Results – Systematic Review

- Shift in tourist preferences - seeking for authenticity
- Focus on rural tourism and culinary tourism
- The third stage of culinary tourism – from 2018 to present

Sighnaghi Street, Georgia, 2023

Photo: Mariam Sharia





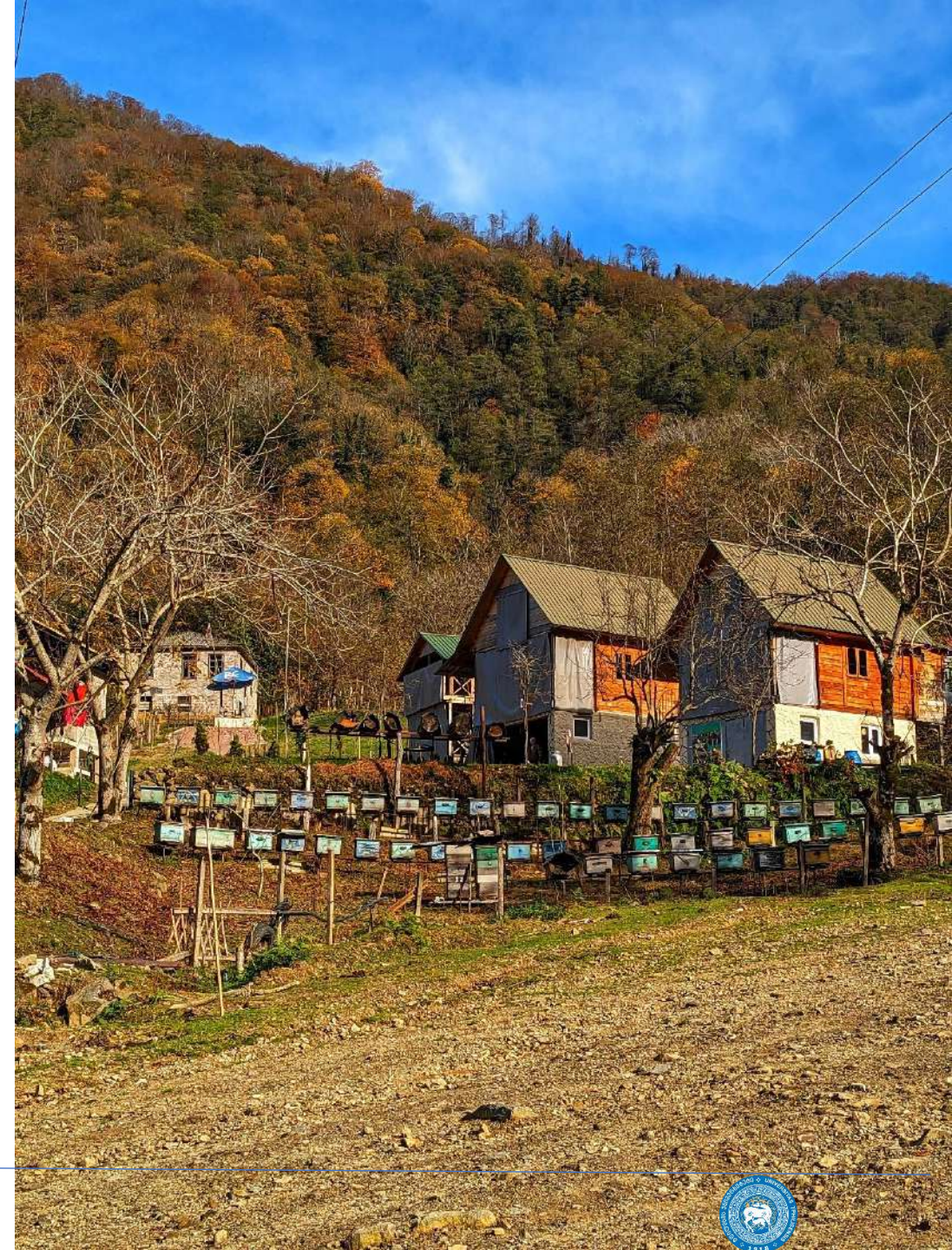
Sarajishvili Brandy Factory in Tbilisi, 2023

Photo: Mariam Sharia

- Culinary tourism is closely connected to rural tourism

Mtirala National Park, Georgia, 2023

Photo: Mariam Sharia



Conclusion

- Growing preference for an authentic and unique experience
- Georgia's rich culinary heritage
- Fostering culinary and rural tourism as a strategic direction



Thank you!

Mariam Sharia
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2024 Regional Transformation by Tourism

Renovation and Reforms Triggered by Tourism: Case of Georgia

Sustainable tourism and waste management optimization in Batumi city

Nargiz Phalavandishvili.

Nino Devadze

Natia Beridze.

Faculty of Tourism, Department of Tourism.
Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University.

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What is Sustainable tourism



A definition of sustainable tourism from 2020 is: "Tourism which is developed and maintained in an area in such a manner and at such a scale that it remains viable over an infinite period while safeguarding the Earth's life-support system on which the welfare of current and future generations depends."

Sustainable tourism is a concept that covers the complete tourism experience, including concern for economic, social, and environmental issues as well as attention to improving tourists' experiences and addressing the needs of host communities

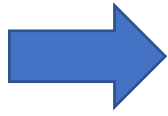
Sustainable tourism should embrace concerns for environmental protection, social equity, and the quality of life, cultural diversity, and a dynamic, viable economy delivering jobs and prosperity for all.





IS based on the growth rates of tourist flows to study the extent to which the basic principles of the sustainable development of tourism are met

**The goal
of the
research**



Therefore, we aimed to study the extent to which the principles of sustainable consumption of resources and promoting the reduction of load and waste in tourist areas are respected when developing a tourism development strategy,



the extent to which interested parties, government, municipality, local population or tourists are involved in the implementation of the sustainable tourism, whose lack of interest and support may not ensure the implementation of the sustainable development plan and set their priorities correctly. Local governments plays an important role in tourism management through their planning activities, policies and programs.



Task

The goal of the research is based on the principles of sustainable development of tourism to study the state of waste management in the administrative territory of Batumi city, to outline existing problems and to form optimal solutions so that they respond to the requirements defined by legislation and are in accordance with the national strategy of the tourism development.

Batumi

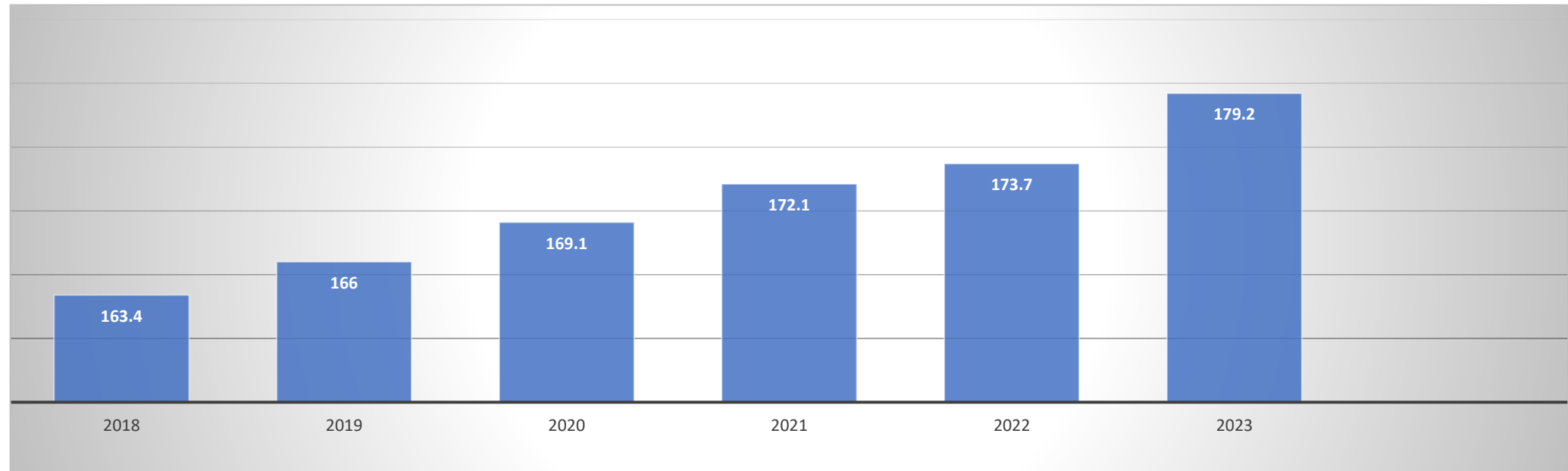
City is distinguished by the economic growth from other municipalities of Georgia, which is caused by the rapid development of the tourism sector, the growth of investment in real estate and the activation of the construction sector.

It should be noted that in 2012, the American Academy of Hospitality Sciences named Batumi as the best tourist destination of the year, and in 2019-2020, Batumi obtained the prestigious award of the World Travel Awards as the fast growing tourist destination of Europe.

In 2023, the number of visits to Adjara exceeded 4.3 million, tourist flows to Batumi and mountainous Adjara are increasing.



- Population of the city of Batumi (thousand people) 2018-2023



Source: National Department of Statistics of Georgia



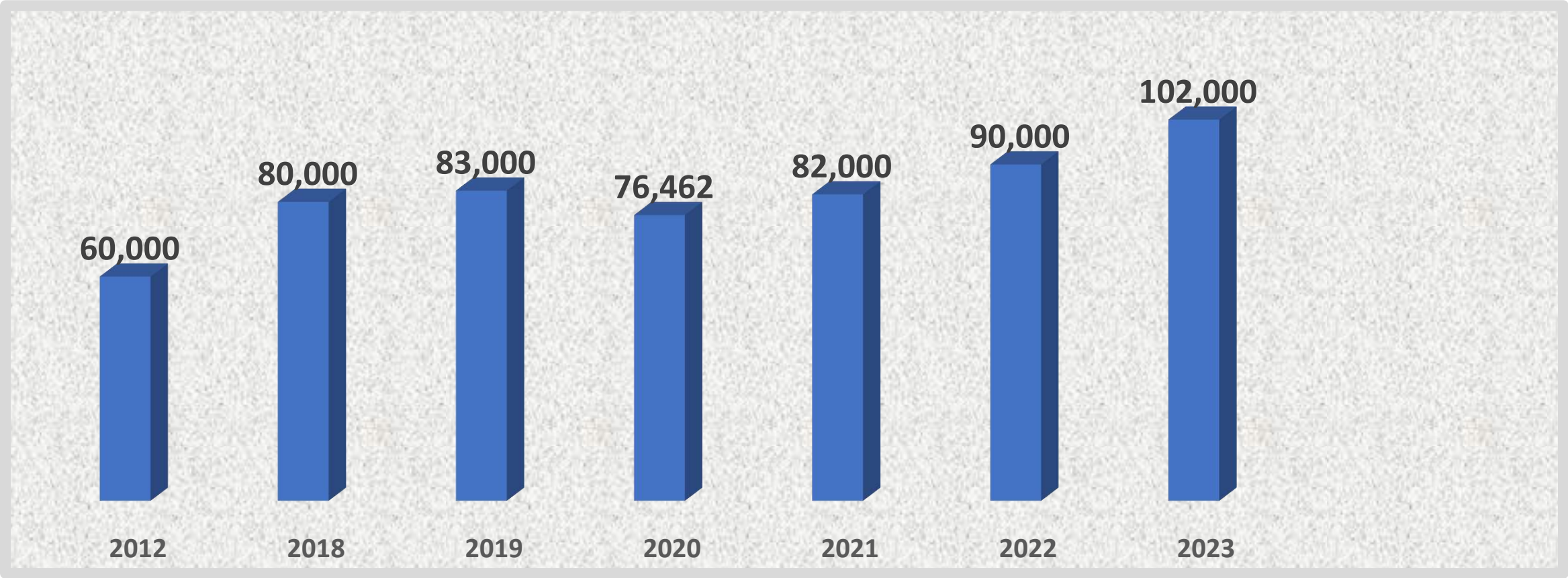
on the number of guests in hotels and hotel-type establishments
within Batumi municipality.)

Guests	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
all	672,118	711,325	892,695	273,537	514,794	1,194,105
From Georgia	235,161	222,556	243,177	217,689	235,261	409,233
From abroad	436,957	488,769	649,518	55,848	279,533	784,872

Source: National Department of Statistics of Georgia



for details on the volume of household waste, sourced from Batumi municipality



source is the City Hall of Batumi Municipality

- it should be noted that the quantity of waste varies according to the seasons. During the resort season in the city of Batumi, approximately 330-380 tons of municipal waste accumulate daily, while in other periods, it ranges from 250-300 tons. This variation is attributed to the tourist season, indicating an increase in household waste generated by tourists as well as locals.
- Unfortunately, the municipality lacks identifiable data distinguishing between household, industrial, or various commercial waste sources, making it challenging to determine the exact amount of household waste



Based on the Waste Management Code, Batumi Municipality City Hall developed an updated 5-year Batumi Municipal Waste Management Plan (2023-2027), prepared with the support of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and Sweden. The waste management plan aims to enhance the waste management system in the administrative territory of Batumi, addressing existing challenges and ensuring compliance with legislative requirements.



- As of 2023, waste collection services in Batumi will cover the entire population of the city.
- Additionally, daily cleaning is conducted over an area of approximately 5,606,980 square meters.
- As of today, waste collected in Batumi is disposed of at the solid domestic waste landfill in Batumi, which fails to meet environmental standards. However, in the near future, the sanitary landfill in Kobuleti municipality will commence operations, serving the entire region



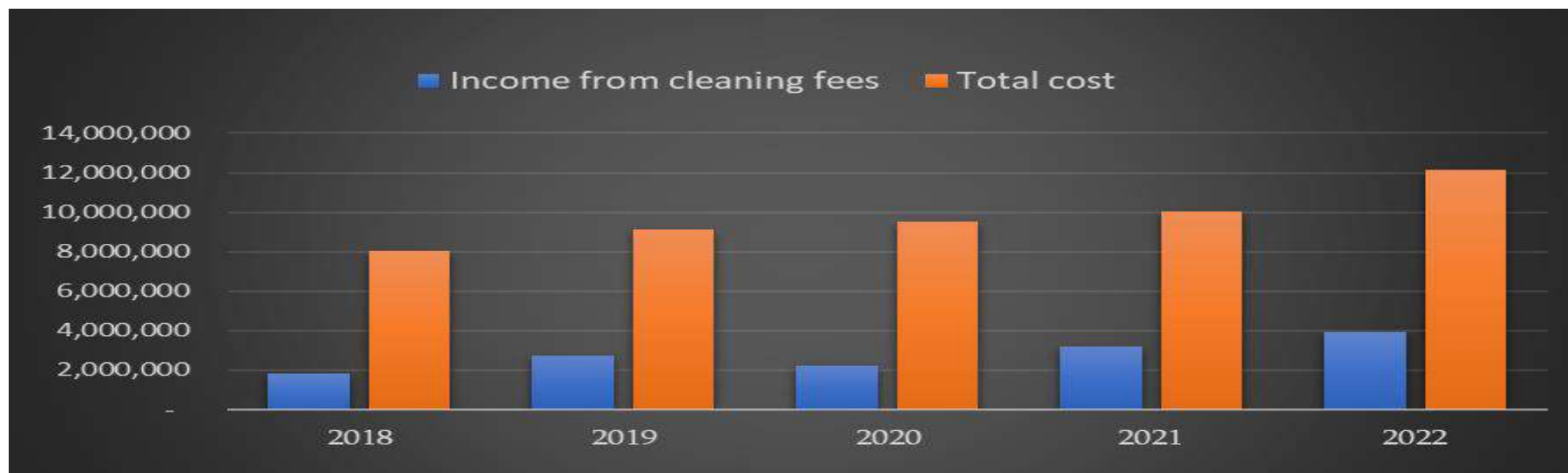
In Batumi, waste recycling and recovery practices have been initiated only on a pilot basis and remain relatively small-scale. Since 2019, with the support of USAID, a memorandum of cooperation was signed between Batumi City Hall and the network of environmental non-governmental organizations of the Caucasus within the framework of the "Waste Management Technology in the Regions" program. The aim of this memorandum is to introduce a waste separation system in Batumi and promote the reuse and gradual recycling of waste. "Sandasuptaveba" LLC is working in pilot mode to implement the source separation system. At the initial stage, 600 containers of various sizes and colors were purchased, provided by the Caucasus Environmental NGO Network (CENN). Additionally, 16 units of separation stands and a waste press machine were delivered, and with the support of the Czech government, a waste sorting line was established





In 2021, with the financial support of the United Nations Development Program, a pilot project was implemented in Batumi. As part of this project, LLC For sanitation purchased an additional plastic pressing device, which was used to compress separated cardboard and plastic waste, giving them a more marketable appearance. Plastic bottles prepared for recycling were sold through auctions. Since 2021, a total of 315 tons of cardboard and 11.6 tons of plastic bottles have been collected and auctioned separately.

Graph for cleaning, waste disposal and Expenditure incurred by the municipality for decontamination 2018-2023



General conclusions

The study revealed that the development of tourism and population growth will have a negative impact on the environment's ecological condition without comprehensive approaches to waste management. This necessitates reducing waste generation through tighter legal regulations, implementing efficient technologies, promoting reuse and restoration of waste, and encouraging recycling efforts. Effective actions by organizations, activation of waste management regulations with waste generators, and information dissemination campaigns on sustainable tourism principles among the population and tourists are also essential.

To implement these measures, the municipality must ensure the achievement of sustainable tourism goals and adherence to principles, involving various stakeholders and considering shared interests. This is a global challenge that requires concerted efforts.





Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University.

Thank you for
attention



2024 Regional Transformation by Tourism

Renovation and Reforms Triggered by Tourism: Case of Georgia

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Ethnographic Tourism and Social Media in Georgia: Urban and Rural Perspectives

Organized by:



With support of:



Keywords:

- Tourism
- Miracle of Batumi
- Social media
- The Pontic Greeks
- “One day in the village”
- Four seasons in Georgia
- Goderdzi
- World travel awards
- Adjara
- Batumi
- Village Merisi



Goals; Methods; Recommendations

- Our goal is to define the role of cultural heritage in the development of tourism in Adjara using the media in order to form a conceptual model for the development of tourism infrastructure in the future. One of the most important tasks is to offer a variety of tourism products to consumers through social media and to use this platform correctly, taking this into account - developing an optimal tourism model based on future visions.
- method. The main theoretical and methodological foundations of our research are field-ethnographic materials and visualization of ethnographic facts, modern literary sources and scientific research.
- Recommendations. Although the tourism development strategy in Georgia is based on the globally recognized principles of sustainable development of tourism, but since it is a young direction in Georgia, it cannot be protected from certain shortcomings and, it is possible that its individual elements are not fully compatible with market requirements. More functional use, creating a general plan, where the tourist location or cultural value will be presented in an interconnected dimension, while the configuration of individual elements of all its parameters will be processed.

Location



Adjara is a political-administrative region of Georgia. It is in the country's southwestern corner, on the coast of the Black Sea, The territory of the Adjara region has great history. It was populated from ancient time. Adjara is an amazing site for noisy entertainment and chocolate sunburn lovers as well as for the adventurers of harmony in a peaceful nature.

Adjara



- Located in the southwestern part of Georgia;
- The territory of Adjara occupies 304.6 kilometers, which is 4.3 % of the territory of Georgia;
- According to the estimation of 2022, 355.5 thousand people live in Adjara;
- Five administrative districts;
- Delicious food.



Batumi



- European-type city;
- Ethno-confessional portrait;
- In the first half of the 18th century - "The Small Town" was located at the junction of the Korolistskali river with the sea.
- Since 1878 Batumi has become a port city.
- The door of Batumi is open to people of all religions;
- Relations with Pontic Greeks .



Tourism and Social Media



“Miracle of Batumi”

- In terms of tourist resources, Adjara is special among the parts of Georgia, and the newly transformed and modernized city Batumi is the best example of transformation, which is called the **“miracle of Batumi”**. Batumi and the Adjara region in general are a successful example of regional development based on tourism.





The visual effects works very well for the development of tourism business, a clear example of the informative and entertaining TV show prepared by us – “One day in the village“







Spend 4 seasons in Georgia



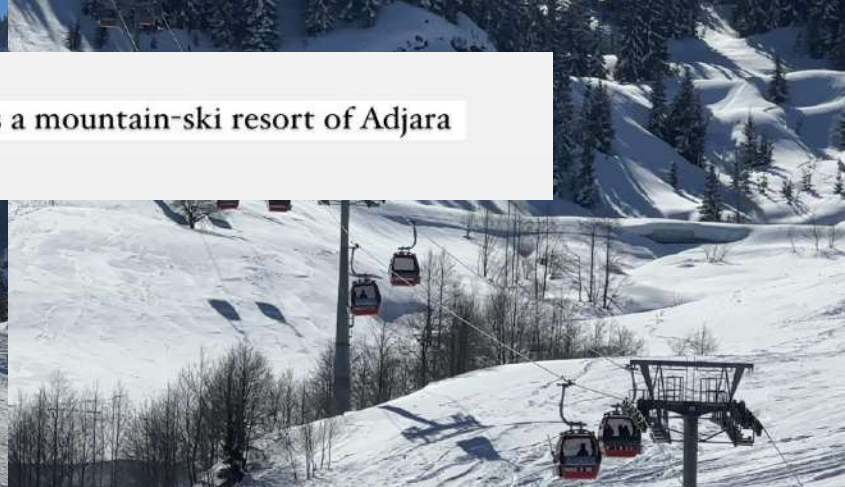


gobatumi.com





Goderdzi - is a mountain-ski resort of Adjara

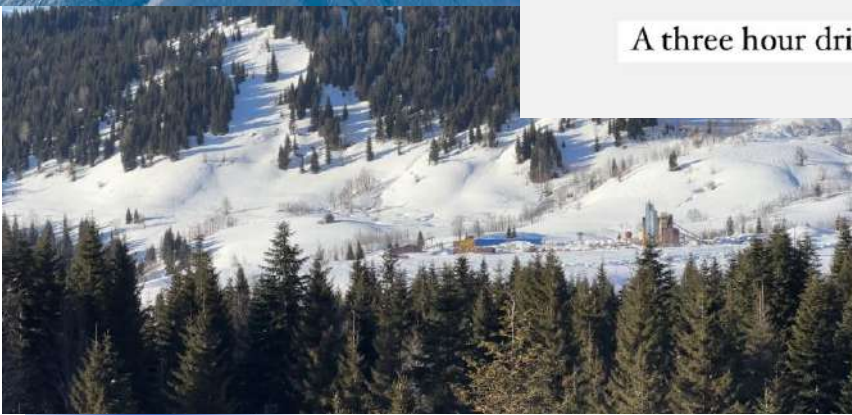


Goderdzi resort has the longest skiing track - seven kilometers long



A three hour drive from Batumi

This is the mountain where the snow falls the earliest and melts the latest



Village Merisi

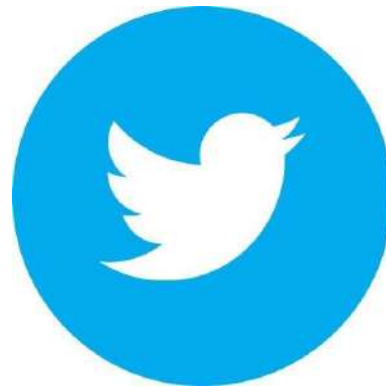
- An hour from Batumi;
- Closest mountain “Nakonaghvari”;
- Modern wooden cottages like “Eco House Merisi”;
- Folklore masterclasses in “Mokvare”;
- Rich historical past and notable sights;
- The valley is unique for coexisting generations under one roof, with elders averaging 90 years of age.



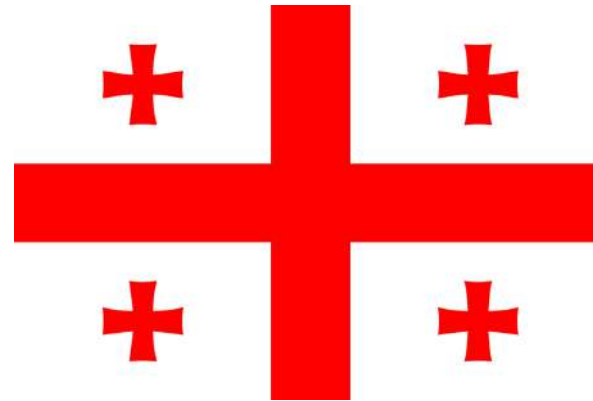
The prestigious award of the World Travel Awards



- On September 30, 2023;
- The ceremony was held in Batumi;
- Participated leading companies of the tourism industry.



Where you can find us



Georgia



2024 Regional Transformation by Tourism

Renovation and Reforms Triggered by Tourism: Case of Georgia

Thank you for attention !

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A Comprehensive Analysis of Georgia's Renewal, Urban Development, and Institutional Reforms

Nikoloz Siradze
Caucasus Tourism school, Caucasus University
Bachelor and invited lecturer
Rento Group

Organized by:

With support of:



Introduction and Tourism as a vector of Peace

The project analyzes Georgia's urban development and institutional reforms, focusing on tourism-led transformation. It identifies challenges and opportunities, aiming to improve sustainability and effectiveness in the tourism industry.

Tourism fosters peace by fostering understanding, respect, and empathy between nations and cultures through exposure to diverse customs and traditions.



Tourism Developments in Georgia: A Focus on the City of Batumi and Its Effects

Georgia's Batumi is a growing tourist destination between Europe and Asia. Located on the Black Sea, tourism development has impacted urbanization, economy, society, and the environment, with both positive and negative effects.

The tourism boom in Batumi has led to rapid urbanization, resulting in improved infrastructure and modern architecture like skyscrapers and luxury hotels. Investments in transportation have also increased. However, challenges such as gentrification, displacement of locals, rising property values, and housing shortages have emerged.



Economic Aspects

Tourism in Batumi drives financial growth, creates jobs, and attracts foreign investment, bringing millions of dollars into the local economy. The city's diverse attractions, favorable climate, and cultural life have led to a boom in hotels, restaurants, and other businesses.

As a tourism hub, Batumi has also become a center for conferences and events, stimulating broader economic development. However, the city's reliance on tourism leaves it vulnerable to external shocks and income inequality issues.



Social and Environmental Effects

The increase in tourism and foreign visitors in Batumi has resulted in cultural exchange, social diversity, and a cosmopolitan atmosphere. This multiculturalism is seen in the city's food, art, and social scene, benefiting both locals and tourists. However, tourism growth has also caused social tensions and conflicts over identity and heritage preservation. Concerns about traditional values eroding and residents being excluded are raised.

Sustainable tourism efforts, like eco-friendly infrastructure and wildlife conservation, are vital for balancing development with environmental protection in Batumi, requiring collaboration among government, businesses, and society.



Illustrations of Tourism Development in Georgian Regions

Georgia offers you a variety of attractions that go beyond its capital city, Tbilisi. Besides Batumi in Adjara, there are three outstanding locations that indicate the potentiality of tourism in the country: Signagi (Kakheti Region), Mestia (Svaneti Region), and Kutaisi (Imereti Region). These spots have separate features, opportunities and efforts for development contributing into the growth of tourist sector in Georgia.



Signagi – Kakheti Region

Signagi, known as the "city of love," is a charming hilltop town in Georgia's wine country. It is famous for its well-preserved medieval buildings, cobblestone streets, and stunning views of the Alazani Valley, creating a romantic atmosphere for visitors seeking tranquility and cultural exchange.

The town's tourism projects aim to preserve its historic character while improving visitor experiences, offering boutique hotels, guest houses, wineries, and cultural attractions such as the Signagi Museum and Bodbe Monastery. Signagi also serves as a gateway to the Kakheti wine region, where guests can explore vineyards, enjoy wine tours, and indulge in traditional Georgian cuisine at the annual Signagi Wine Festival.



Mestia – Svaneti Region

Mestia in the Svaneti region offers stunning views, ancient stone towers, and unique Svan culture. Nestled in the Caucasus Range, it provides opportunities for nature adventures like hiking and skiing. Tourism has grown with improved accessibility and services while preserving the region's culture.

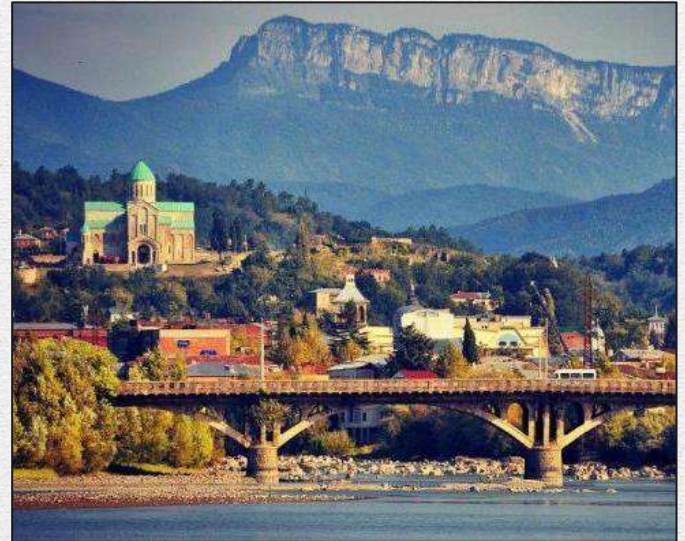
Queen Tamar Airport now allows for air travel to Mestia, attracting both local and foreign visitors. Accommodation options range from guest houses to luxury hotels. Cultural attractions include the Mestia Museum of History and Ethnography, showcasing Svaneti traditions. Mestia is a gateway to landmarks like the Ushguli community and trekking trails in the Caucasus Mountains, making it a must-visit destination.



Kutaisi – Imereti Region

Kutaisi, as the capital of Imereti region, is rich in culture and history with archaeological sites, religious places, and natural features. Tourism projects have revitalized the historical center while preserving its architecture. The city is home to UNESCO World Heritage sites like Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Monastery.

Kutaisi also serves as a gateway to ecological sights such as Prometheus Cave and Sataplia Nature Reserve. Its growing hotel industry and strategic location make it an ideal starting point for exploring Georgia's cultural and natural wonders beyond Tbilisi.



Wine tradition in Georgia and its global influence

Georgia has an ancient winemaking tradition dating back over 8,000 years, making it one of the oldest wine-producing countries. The UNESCO-recognized Kvevri winemaking technique involves fermenting wines in large underground clay jars.

Wine holds a significant place in Georgian culture, featured in social gatherings, religious ceremonies, and meals. With over five hundred local grape varieties, Georgian wines offer unique flavors and styles appreciated globally, inspiring a resurgence in traditional winemaking practices.



Developing marketing strategies for the tourism market

To succeed in Georgia's tourism market, focus on niche markets such as adventure tourism, cultural and heritage tourism, eco-tourism, ski tourism, and rural tours. Customize products and experiences to cater to the diverse tastes of travelers.

Food, MICE, Health & Wellness, and Film tourism in Georgia attract visitors seeking unique experiences. With targeted marketing, the country aims to compete in niche markets and cater to travelers' interests for a memorable visit. Destination management involves public and private efforts to develop tourism sustainably.



Governmental Role

The Georgian government, through agencies like the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development and Georgia National Tourism Administration (GNTA), develops policies and plans to guide tourism growth. GNTA serves as a marketing hub for Georgia, promoting the country both locally and internationally.

Government agencies also establish regulations and standards for tourism businesses, while investing in infrastructure projects and environmental protection to enhance tourist destinations.



Participating Private Companies

Private sector businesses in the tourism industry, such as hotels, restaurants, and tour operators, are vital in managing tourist destinations.

Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs), typically formed by tourist agencies and local government representatives, collaborate to market and promote specific destinations, manage destination brands, and plan tourism activities to enhance visitor satisfaction and economic gains.



Community Involvement

Local Communities: Local participation in destination management is essential for sustainable tourism development. Local participation in decision-making, cultural preservation and tourism planning ensures equitable distribution of tourism benefits and respect for local values and traditions.



Sustainable manufacturing processes

Georgia's destination management prioritizes environmental sustainability and cultural preservation. Conservation projects, waste management, and responsible tourism practices protect natural resources and biodiversity. Efforts to protect historical sites and traditional crafts ensure authentic cultural experiences.

Collaboration between government, private stakeholders, and local communities is essential for sustainable tourism development. Georgia aims to balance economic growth with environmental protection, cultural preservation, and community engagement to create vibrant and resilient tourist destinations.



Crisis management aspects in the tourism industry

Crisis management in tourism involves strategies to cushion the impact of natural disasters, conflicts, health issues, or unexpected events on destinations and services. The 2008 Georgia-Russia conflict led to violence, displacements, and damage, harming Georgia's tourism.

The Georgian government applied crisis management strategies, including communication, security measures, market diversification, and infrastructure rebuilding to revive the tourism industry.



Future Plans

Georgia's regional tourism plans prioritize sustainable transportation, promoting public transport and improving bike infrastructure. Encouraging the use of hybrid electric vehicles and eco-friendly transport modes is crucial.

Integrating multi-modal transport systems and educating tourists on responsible travel practices are also key initiatives for conserving natural resources and reducing carbon emissions.



Future Plans

Collaborate with stakeholders to develop sustainable transportation initiatives, fund infrastructure projects, conduct research, and advocate for policy changes. Monitor and evaluate projects to assess their impact on local tourism. Implement sustainable transport principles in tourism planning to create accessible and environmentally friendly experiences.

Focus on strategic planning and collaboration for sustainable tourism growth. Promote public transit and other sustainable transportation options. Enhance crisis management and resilience-building efforts for long-term tourism sustainability. Georgia can attract eco-friendly tourists and ensure a prosperous future through sustainable practices and responsible travel.



Thanks!

Do you have any questions?

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2024 Regional Transformation by Tourism

Renovation and Reforms Triggered by Tourism: Case of Georgia

Navigating Turbulent Waters:

Tourism Crisis Management in Georgia and Parallels with Ukraine

(Analyzing Strategies and Outcomes)

By

Nino JINTCHARADZE

Ecole Doctorale de Management

Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne

Organized by:



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Introduction to Tourism in Georgia and Ukraine



Georgia

A country at the crossroads of Europe and Asia, is known for its diverse landscapes, rich history, and cultural heritage. The tourism sector in Georgia is vital to its economy, attracting visitors with its stunning natural beauty, ancient monasteries, and vibrant cities like Tbilisi and Batumi. Tourism in Georgia has seen significant growth over the past decades, contributing substantially to GDP and employment.



Ukraine

The largest country entirely in Europe, boasts a wealth of historical landmarks, cultural festivals, and natural attractions. Key destinations include Kyiv, Lviv, and the Carpathian Mountains. Tourism is an important economic sector in Ukraine, providing jobs and boosting local economies, especially in major cities and popular tourist regions.

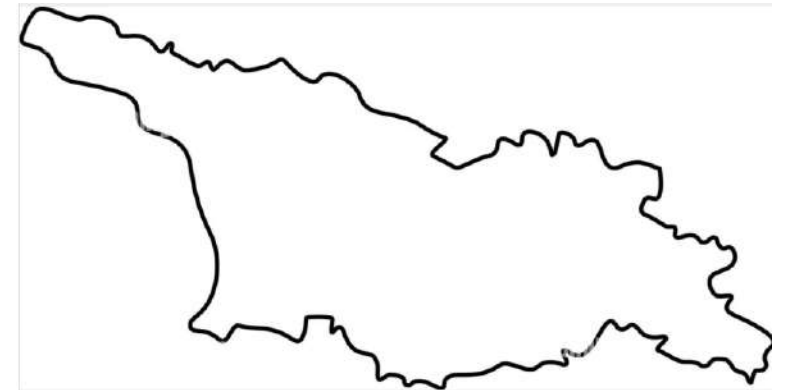
Significance of Tourism

For Georgia

Tourism in Georgia is a cornerstone of the national economy. It has provided numerous jobs, driven infrastructure development, and promoted cultural exchange. The sector's growth has helped to diversify the economy, reduce poverty, and increase foreign exchange earnings. Tourism receipts form a significant part of Georgia's GDP, underscoring its economic importance.

For Ukraine

In Ukraine, tourism is equally significant, contributing to GDP, supporting thousands of jobs, and promoting regional development. The industry helps to showcase Ukraine's cultural heritage, from its historic cities to natural landscapes, fostering a positive international image and attracting investment.



Conflicts and Political Unrest

Russo-Georgian War (2008)

The Russo-Georgian War in 2008 was a significant conflict between Georgia and Russia, centered on the breakaway regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. The war began in early August 2008 over South Ossetia.

Impact on Georgia: The conflict resulted in a significant loss of life, displacement of people, and extensive damage to infrastructure. It also severely affected Georgia's economy, particularly its tourism sector, with international arrivals and tourism revenues dropping sharply in the immediate aftermath.

Outcome: The war ended with a ceasefire agreement brokered by the European Union. Russia recognized South Ossetia and Abkhazia as independent states, a move condemned by Georgia and most of the international community.



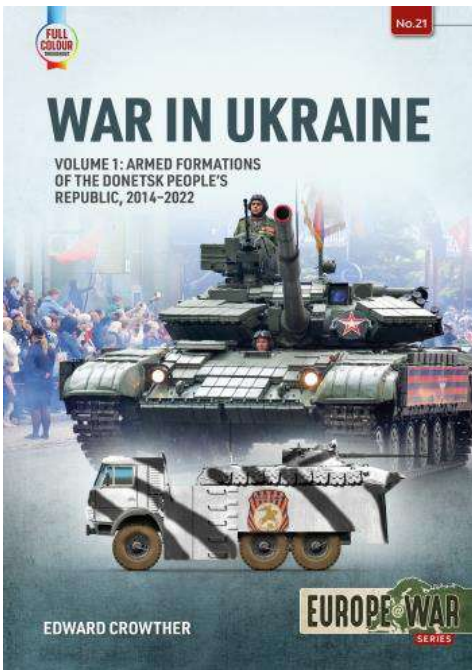
Annexation of Crimea and War in Ukraine

The ongoing conflict in Ukraine, which escalated dramatically in 2022, has its roots in the annexation of Crimea by Russia in 2014.

Annexation of Crimea (2014): In March 2014, following a disputed referendum, Russia annexed Crimea, a move widely condemned by the international community. This annexation led to sanctions against Russia and increased tensions between Russia and Western nations.

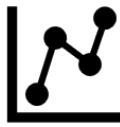
War in Ukraine (2022): In February 2022, Russia launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine, leading to widespread destruction, significant civilian casualties, and a major humanitarian crisis. The war has had devastating effects on Ukraine's economy, infrastructure, and social fabric. The conflict has displaced millions of Ukrainians and led to severe economic disruptions, including in the tourism sector, which has seen a drastic decline in visitors and revenues.

International Response: The invasion has prompted severe international condemnation and extensive sanctions against Russia. The conflict has also led to unprecedented military and humanitarian support for Ukraine from Western countries and international organizations.



Methodology

A comprehensive review of existing literature was conducted on tourism crisis management, post-conflict recovery, and the role of different stakeholders. Qualitative analysis methods such as document analysis, semi structured interviews, and observation was used to gather data on the initiatives, strategies, and outcomes of different stakeholders involvement in crisis management and recovery efforts.



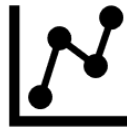
Key tourism statistics in Georgia

Before the 2008 war, Georgia's tourism industry was growing steadily. In 2007, the country received approximately 1.1 million international visitors, generating substantial revenue and supporting significant employment within the tourism sector. Tourism revenue in 2007 was around \$313 million, and the industry provided jobs to thousands of Georgians.

The 2008 war with Russia severely impacted Georgia's tourism industry. In the immediate aftermath, international arrivals dropped significantly, with numbers falling to about 1.2 million in 2008 from a projected growth trend. However, the sector began to recover by 2010, reaching 2 million international arrivals and generating about \$658 million in revenue.

Employment in tourism also saw fluctuations. Before the war, the industry was a key employer, but the conflict led to job losses. By 2010, as tourism numbers rebounded, employment in the sector began to stabilize and grow once again.

Overall, while the 2008 war disrupted Georgia's tourism industry, the country managed to recover and even thrive in the following years, demonstrating resilience and the ability to attract increasing numbers of international visitors.



Key tourism data in Ukraine

Before the war, Ukraine had been seeing a steady growth in tourism. Here are some key statistics:

1. Visitor Numbers: Before the war, Ukraine was experiencing an increase in international tourist arrivals. The country's rich cultural heritage, historical landmarks, and natural attractions such as the Carpathian Mountains and the Black Sea coastline attracted visitors from around the world.

2. Tourism Revenue: Tourism revenue was also on the rise, as more tourists visited Ukraine and spent money on accommodation, dining, transportation, and souvenirs. Major cities like Kyiv, Lviv, and Odesa were popular destinations for both domestic and international tourists, contributing significantly to the country's tourism income.

3. Employment Data: The tourism industry provided employment opportunities for a significant portion of Ukraine's workforce. Jobs in hospitality, tour guiding, transportation, and related sectors supported livelihoods for many Ukrainians.

Crisis Management Strategies in Georgia

Georgia's approach to managing tourism crises involves a multi-faceted strategy that includes robust government initiatives, proactive responses from the private sector, and active involvement of local communities. These combined efforts have enabled Georgia to recover from past crises and build a more resilient and sustainable tourism sector. By continuing to invest in infrastructure, security, and community-based tourism, Georgia aims to mitigate the impact of future crises and ensure steady growth in its tourism industry.



Government Initiatives Policy and Infrastructure Development

- 1. Investment in Infrastructure:** Post-2008, the Georgian government prioritized rebuilding and upgrading tourism infrastructure. This included improving roads, airports, and public transport to enhance accessibility and safety for tourists.
- 2. Marketing Campaigns:** The government launched international marketing campaigns to restore and enhance Georgia's image as a safe and attractive destination. These campaigns targeted diverse markets to broaden the tourism base and reduce reliance on traditional sources.
- 3. Regulatory Reforms:** Policies were introduced to streamline visa processes and reduce bureaucratic barriers for tourists and investors in the tourism sector. These reforms aimed to make travel to Georgia more convenient and attractive.

Crisis Management and Security Measures

1. Establishment of Crisis Management Units: The government set up dedicated crisis management units to respond quickly to any future disruptions. These units are responsible for coordinating with various stakeholders, including international organizations and the private sector, to manage crises effectively.

2. Safety and Security Enhancements: Investments in enhancing security at tourist hotspots and improving emergency response systems were made to assure tourists of their safety while visiting Georgia..



Private Sector Responses Adaptation and Innovation

1. Business Adaptations: Local businesses in the tourism sector adapted by diversifying their offerings, such as developing eco-tourism, adventure tourism, and cultural tourism packages. This diversification helped to attract a broader range of tourists and mitigate the impact of future crises .

2. International Partnerships: Georgian businesses formed partnerships with international tour operators and travel agencies to boost marketing efforts and improve service standards. These collaborations helped to enhance the visibility of Georgia as a tourism destination globally.

Community Involvement Grassroots Initiatives

1. Local Tourism Development: Communities played a crucial role in developing and promoting local attractions. Grassroots initiatives included creating homestays, local tour guides, and cultural festivals that showcased Georgia's heritage and traditions, enhancing the overall tourism experience.

2. Community-Based Tourism (CBT): CBT initiatives were promoted to empower local communities and distribute the economic benefits of tourism more equitably. This approach encouraged sustainable tourism practices and greater community involvement in managing tourism resources.

Education and Training

1. Capacity Building: Training programs were conducted to build the capacity of local communities in hospitality, languages, and customer service. These programs aimed to improve the quality of services offered to tourists and enhance the competitiveness of local tourism businesses.

2. Awareness Campaigns: Communities were educated about the importance of tourism and how to handle tourists respectfully and efficiently. Awareness campaigns helped foster a positive attitude towards tourists and tourism development.

Crisis Management Strategies in Ukraine

Ukraine's crisis management strategies for tourism post-2014 and during the ongoing conflict in 2022 have involved comprehensive efforts from the government, private sector, and local communities. Government initiatives focused on policy support, infrastructure development, and safety enhancements. The private sector adapted through diversification and international partnerships, while local communities actively participated in promoting sustainable tourism and supporting grassroots initiatives. These collaborative efforts aim to build a resilient tourism sector capable of withstanding future crises.



Government Initiatives Policy and Support Measures

1. Tourism Recovery Programs: The Ukrainian government implemented recovery programs aimed at revitalizing the tourism industry post-2014 annexation of Crimea and the 2022 war. These programs included financial support for affected businesses, subsidies, and grants to help them stay afloat and rebuild.

2. Infrastructure Development: Investments were made in infrastructure projects to improve accessibility and safety for tourists. This included the renovation of airports, roads, and public transport systems, especially in regions less affected by the conflict.

3. International Collaboration: The government engaged in international collaboration and partnerships with global tourism organizations to restore Ukraine's image as a tourist destination. These efforts involved joint marketing campaigns and participation in international tourism fairs and exhibitions.

Safety and Security Enhancements

1.Enhanced Security Measures: To assure tourists of their safety, the government enhanced security measures in tourist hotspots. This included increased police presence, improved emergency response systems, and regular safety audits of tourist facilities.

2.Conflict Zone Management: Clear communication and guidelines were established to inform tourists about conflict zones and ensure their safety by promoting travel to safer regions within Ukraine.

Private Sector Responses Adaptation and Diversification

1.Flexible Business Models: Local businesses adapted by offering flexible booking and cancellation policies to attract tourists despite the uncertainties caused by ongoing conflicts. Many hotels, tour operators, and airlines introduced flexible pricing models and special offers.

2.New Tourism Products: The private sector developed new tourism products such as virtual tours, ecotourism, and wellness tourism to diversify offerings and attract different segments of tourists. This approach helped mitigate the risk associated with traditional tourism markets.

Partnerships and Collaborations

1. International Partnerships: Ukrainian businesses formed partnerships with international travel agencies, online booking platforms, and global tourism organizations to enhance their reach and attract more international tourists. These collaborations also included joint marketing and promotional activities.

2. Training and Capacity Building: Businesses invested in training and capacity building for their staff to improve service quality and adapt to new tourism trends. This included language courses, hospitality training, and customer service enhancement programs.

Community Involvement

Grassroots Initiatives

1. Community-Based Tourism (CBT): Local communities engaged in community-based tourism initiatives to promote sustainable tourism and ensure that the economic benefits were distributed equitably. These initiatives included developing homestays, local guiding services, and cultural experiences.

2. Promotion of Local Attractions: Communities played a crucial role in promoting lesser-known local attractions, thereby distributing tourist traffic more evenly and reducing the pressure on traditional hotspots. This helped in creating a more resilient tourism sector that could better withstand crises.

Volunteer and NGO Involvement

1. NGO Partnerships: Local communities worked with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to promote sustainable tourism practices and support local tourism enterprises. NGOs provided training, financial support, and marketing assistance to help these businesses recover and thrive.

2. Volunteering Initiatives: Volunteering initiatives were organized to support the tourism sector, including cleaning up tourist sites, restoring infrastructure, and helping with promotional activities. These efforts helped maintain the appeal of tourist destinations and supported community morale.

Comparative Analysis of Tourism Crisis Management in Georgia and Ukraine

Similarities

Government Intervention

- **Infrastructure Investment:** Both Georgia and Ukraine invested significantly in infrastructure development post-crisis to enhance accessibility and safety for tourists. This included upgrading airports, roads, and public transport systems.
- **Marketing and Promotion:** Both countries launched international marketing campaigns to restore their images as safe and attractive tourist destinations. These efforts targeted diverse markets to broaden the tourism base and reduce reliance on traditional sources.
- **Safety Enhancements:** Enhanced security measures and improved emergency response systems were implemented to assure tourists of their safety while visiting the countries.

Community Support

- **Community-Based Tourism (CBT):** Both nations promoted CBT initiatives to empower local communities and distribute the economic benefits of tourism more equitably. This included developing homestays, local guiding services, and cultural experiences.
- **Local Promotion:** Communities played a crucial role in promoting lesser-known local attractions to distribute tourist traffic more evenly, helping create a more resilient tourism sector.

Differences

Unique Approaches

- **Georgia's Resilience and Recovery:** Georgia demonstrated significant resilience post-2008 war, with rapid recovery in tourist arrivals and revenue by 2010. This was facilitated by a focused effort on regulatory reforms, international collaborations, and diversifying tourism products, including ecotourism and adventure tourism.
- **Ukraine's Ongoing Conflict Challenges:** Ukraine faces ongoing challenges due to the continuing conflict since 2022, which has caused more profound and prolonged disruptions to its tourism industry. The government's response has included clear communication about conflict zones and a focus on safer regions, but the recovery has been slower compared to Georgia.

Levels of Success

- **Tourism Revenue and Visitor Numbers:** Post-crisis, Georgia quickly bounced back, achieving pre-war levels of tourism revenue and visitor numbers within a few years. Ukraine, however, has struggled more due to the continued instability and larger scale of the conflict, which has made a quick recovery more challenging.
- **International Partnerships:** While both countries sought international partnerships, Georgia's efforts were more successful in rapidly integrating with global tourism networks, partly due to the relatively shorter duration of its conflict and quicker stabilization.

Future Outlook for Tourism in Georgia and Ukraine

In the aftermath of war crises in Georgia and Ukraine, as well as ongoing conflicts, the future outlook for tourism in these regions will likely involve a combination of challenges and opportunities:

Post-Crisis Recovery:

- 1. Diversification of Offerings:** Both Georgia and Ukraine possess rich cultural heritage, historical sites, and natural beauty, which can be leveraged to attract tourists beyond traditional markets. Diversifying tourism offerings to include adventure tourism, ecotourism, and cultural experiences can help stimulate demand.
- 2. Marketing and Promotion:** Effective marketing campaigns highlighting safety, stability, and unique attractions will be essential to rebuild confidence among tourists. Collaborative efforts between governments, tourism boards, and private sector stakeholders will be crucial in promoting the destination globally.
- 3. Infrastructure Development:** Investing in infrastructure development, including transportation, accommodation, and tourist facilities, will be necessary to enhance accessibility and visitor experience.

Sustainable Tourism:

- 1. Preservation of Cultural and Natural Assets:** Sustainable tourism practices should prioritize the preservation of cultural heritage sites and natural environments. Implementing conservation measures and responsible tourism guidelines will help protect these assets for future generations.
- 2. Community Involvement and Benefit Sharing:** Engaging local communities in tourism development processes and ensuring equitable distribution of benefits will foster social inclusivity and support grassroots initiatives. Community-based tourism projects can empower local populations economically while promoting cultural exchange.
- 3. Environmental Conservation:** Emphasizing eco-friendly practices such as waste management, energy efficiency, and water conservation will mitigate the environmental impact of tourism activities. Encouraging sustainable transportation options and promoting biodiversity conservation will contribute to long-term resilience.

Recommendations

By implementing these recommendations, governments, businesses, and communities can work together to rebuild the tourism sector, foster resilience, and promote inclusive growth in post-crisis environments. Effective collaboration, innovation, and commitment to sustainable development will be key drivers of success in the recovery process.

For Governments:

- **Enhanced Crisis Preparedness:** Develop comprehensive crisis management plans that outline strategies for responding to emergencies, ensuring the safety of tourists and residents, and minimizing economic disruptions. Invest in training programs for tourism stakeholders and emergency response teams.
- **Better Communication Strategies:** Establish clear communication channels to disseminate accurate information to tourists, travel industry partners, and the media during crises. Utilize digital platforms, social media, and tourism websites to provide updates on safety measures, travel advisories, and destination status.

For Businesses:

- **Diversification of Tourism Offerings:** Expand product offerings to appeal to diverse market segments and adapt to changing consumer preferences. Explore niche markets such as wellness tourism, culinary tourism, and adventure travel to attract new visitors.
- **Strengthening Partnerships:** Collaborate with government agencies, tourism boards, and local communities to develop marketing campaigns, promotional events, and tourism packages. Forge partnerships with travel agencies, tour operators, and hospitality providers to enhance the overall visitor experience.

For Communities:

- **Local Involvement and Support:** Engage community members in tourism planning processes and decision-making forums to ensure their voices are heard and their concerns addressed. Promote cultural awareness and appreciation through educational programs, cultural festivals, and heritage preservation initiatives.
- **Community-Based Tourism Initiatives:** Encourage the development of community-based tourism enterprises that empower local residents to participate in tourism activities and benefit economically. Offer training and capacity-building programs to enhance hospitality skills, entrepreneurship, and sustainable tourism practices.

Conclusion

Both Georgia and Ukraine have vibrant tourism sectors that are crucial to their economies. However, conflicts like the 2008 war in Georgia and the 2022 war in Ukraine highlight the vulnerability of tourism to geopolitical crises. Despite these challenges, the resilience and strategic recovery efforts in both nations demonstrate the potential for tourism to rebound and continue contributing to economic stability and growth.

In the wake of crises in Georgia and Ukraine, as well as ongoing conflicts, the tourism sector faces challenges but also opportunities for recovery and sustainable growth. International organizations like the UNWTO, NGOs, and foreign aid have played crucial roles in supporting post-crisis recovery efforts. Key strategies for recovery include diversifying tourism offerings, enhancing infrastructure, and implementing sustainable practices. Governments, businesses, and communities must collaborate to improve crisis preparedness, communication, and support mechanisms.

Final Thoughts

Proactive and adaptive crisis management is essential for the resilience of the tourism sector. By investing in preparedness, enhancing communication strategies, and fostering collaboration, stakeholders can mitigate the impact of crises and expedite recovery. Sustainable tourism practices not only contribute to environmental conservation and community development but also enhance destination appeal and competitiveness in the long run. It is imperative for all stakeholders to prioritize resilience-building efforts to safeguard the future of the tourism industry amidst uncertain times.

Thank You!



2024 Regional Transformation by Tourism

Renovation and Reforms Triggered by Tourism: Case of Georgia

Sustainable Development of Tourism and its Positive and Negative Economic Effects

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Tamar Margiani-Assistant Professor, Caucasus International University

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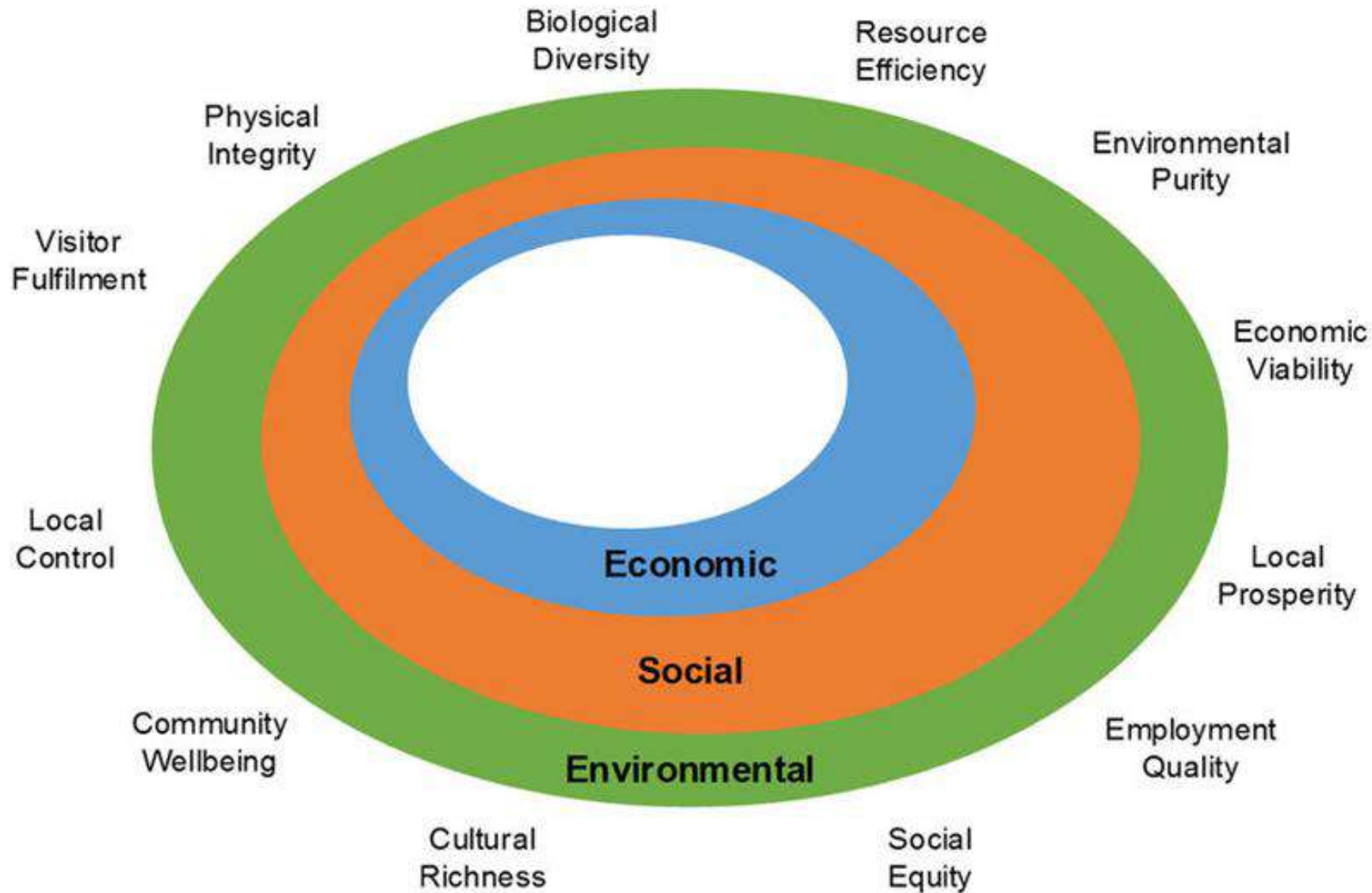
Introduction

- Modern science considers tourism as a complex socio-economic system.
- Tourism is the fundamental basis of the economy of many developed and developing countries.
- In modern conditions, it has turned into an industry of international scale, which in terms of revenues occupies the third place among the export sectors of the economy, it is behind only oil extraction and machine building.
- The growth rate of tourism is unique. In this sense, it significantly exceeds the growth rate of other sectors of the economy. In the last 50 years, the volume of world tourism has increased 35 times (from 20 million tourists in 1950 to 715 million tourists).

Sustainable development of tourism

- Sustainable tourism has several, often controversial, definitions. According to one of the definitions,
- sustainable tourism is a direction of tourism development that creates all the conditions to meet the needs of tourists, taking into account the interests of the host region or the receiving country, and at the same time allows the use of these opportunities in the future.

Framework for Sustainable Tourism



Sustainable development of tourism

- Ecological sustainability – tourism development does not cause irreversible changes in the ecosystem, and in recent years there has been widespread interest in protecting natural resources from negative impacts of tourism. Ecological sustainability serves these tasks.
- Social sustainability - promotes the consumption of tourist goods in such a way as not to cause social disharmony and inequality for both the local population and tourists and the so-called Among "aborigines".
- Economic sustainability means that the profit obtained from tourism activities in a certain segment should be sufficient to cover any necessary expenses in the field of tourism and should also become a source of income for the local population.

Positive economic effects of tourism and tourism sustainable development

The planning and development of agrotourism in Georgia should take into account three main principles of sustainable development

- ✓ ecological sustainability ensures the integrated development of basic ecological processes, biodiversity and biological resources;
- ✓ Social and cultural sustainability provides such sustainability in which people's lives, their common culture and values are protected in every way and when cultural identity is further strengthened;
- ✓ Economic sustainability ensures the economic efficiency of development, when the chosen method of using resources guarantees the preservation of these resources for future generations.

Positive economic effects of tourism and tourism sustainable development

- ✓ Sustainable tourism contributes to a better understanding of the ways in which tourism affects nature, culture and the social sphere.
- ✓ Sustainable tourism ensures a fair distribution of income and expenses. Tourism creates jobs both in the local tourism sector and in related sectors.
- ✓ Tourism leads to the stimulation of profitable domestic industries: hotels and other accommodation facilities, restaurants and public catering facilities, transport systems, folk crafts and excursion-information business.

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Positive economic effects of tourism and tourism sustainable development

- ✓ Tourism contributes to the attraction of foreign currency in the country, provides capital investments in the local economy. It also contributes to the diversification of the local economy, especially in villages where employment is seasonal and casual.
- ✓ Sustainable tourism seeks to involve all levels of society, including the local population, in the decision-making process so that tourism and other resource-consuming sectors can coexist harmoniously. Sustainable tourism involves planning and zoning, which ensures the determination of the threshold number of tourists depending on the ecosystem.

Positive economic effects of tourism and tourism sustainable development

- ✓ Tourism stimulates local basic infrastructure: transport, telecommunications and other basic systems.
- ✓ Tourism creates recreational facilities that are enjoyed by local residents as well as domestic and international tourists. For tourism, local cultural monuments, archeological excavations, protection of historical buildings are financed.
- ✓ Ecotourism promotes the productive use of non-agricultural land, which in turn allows large areas of wild flora and fauna to be preserved.
- ✓ Environmentally sustainable tourism demonstrates the importance of natural and cultural resources in the economic and social development of society and contributes to their protection.

Positive economic effects of tourism and tourism sustainable development

- ✓ Within the framework of sustainable tourism, there is control of tourism development, analysis and planned management of processes, reliable methods for controlling the state of the environment are put into practice, and quick measures are taken to eliminate existing negative events.
- ✓ In the case of proper organization of sustainable development of tourism, it can ultimately bring about sharp positive changes in various sectors of the entire region, and as a result of a chain reaction, lead to sustainable development in other sectors, as well as environmental protection, preservation of cultural and historical monuments, as well as social and economic development.

Negative economic effects of tourism and tourism sustainable development

- ✓ The negative impact on the environment as a result of tourism is not limited to the loss of attractiveness and beauty of one or another place, there are more large-scale changes. Eg: climate changes leading to reduced snow cover in ski resorts. All these events appear to be a very dangerous and irreversible process.
- ✓ In some countries, tourists ignore existing moral values. Travel companies that organize tours in such countries need to provide tourists with appropriate information in a timely manner.

Negative economic effects of tourism and tourism sustainable development

- ✓ One of the negative economic effects of tourism is the need for large numbers of less qualified labor (waiters, gardeners, cleaners, etc.) who are often paid more at the expense of tourists.
- ✓ During the development of tourism, conflicts arise in the field of use of resources such as water and land. This problem is most common in the coastal areas, where there is a large number of tourists, but this is also where the population is concentrated.

Negative economic effects of tourism and tourism sustainable development

- ✓ A rather serious sociological and economic problem of tourism development is the increase in crime (tourists have a large number of expensive things, cameras, cameras, telephones, computers, jewelry, etc.) And the local population is often in a miserable condition, which provokes robberies and more serious crimes.

Opportunities for sustainable development of tourism in Georgia

- The principles of sustainability in tourism have been promoted by MTO and the International Council of Travel and Tourism (WTC). They are reduced to ecological, economic and cultural sustainability, and a large role is also given to local councils.
- When creating the elements of the tourist infrastructure with sustainable tourism in mind, attention should be paid to many aspects, the first being the action plan, which should be characterized by a gentle attitude towards the environment. Economical use of resources, use of energy-saving technologies and many other things are to be considered when planning a long-term tourism business.

Opportunities for sustainable development of tourism in Georgia

We consider it necessary to highlight the main principles of sustainable development of tourism:

- Sustainable use of resources implies the implementation of such systems, during which it will be possible to implement water purification devices and, accordingly, secondary use of water.
- In general, materials that can be used or recycled should be used. Preference is given to the implementation of "non-paper" systems;

Opportunities for sustainable development of tourism in Georgia

- With the help of local self-government bodies, tourism should be integrated into the planning of the territory. It is necessary to plan tourist activities in such a way as to ensure the preservation and development of local traditional folk crafts, culture and folklore, and not to standardize and change its forms;
- Under equal conditions, first of all, the employment perspective of the local population should be considered. It is necessary to pay attention to specific problems and also take into account the fact that in the regions where rural tourism is developing, it is the only means of development against the background of degraded sectors of the economy;
- Responsibility for conducting and managing marketing. In order to reduce the pressure and negative impact of tourism activities on the environment and at the same time increase the positive impact on the local or national economy, it is necessary to carefully develop the marketing program, planning and advertising campaigns in compliance with all legal and normative or ethical acts;

Opportunities for sustainable development of tourism in Georgia

- The tourism industry creates jobs,
- increases income and foreign currency contributions,
- stimulates capital investments,
- creates opportunities for the development of small and large enterprises.
- It promotes the development of local, regional, national and international economic and political ties.

Opportunities for sustainable development of tourism in Georgia

- International tourism, i.e. the travel of people to foreign countries, is one of the three main directions in world trade.
- Domestic tourism, i.e. travel of citizens within one country, exceeds the volume of international tourism by 10 times, on the other hand, the amount spent by local tourists on travel is only 7 times the amount spent by international tourists.
- However, the following table shows us that in Georgia this indicator is several times lower than the amount spent by international tourists.

Opportunities for sustainable development of tourism in Georgia

Table 1. International Tourists in Georgia

Source: Geostat

YEAR	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Number of international visitors	506	91.8	118.6	327.1	428.2
Distribution of monthly average expenditure spent by inbound visitors of age 15 and older by expenditure categories, mln GEL	709.3	344.5	-	894.9	1078.7
Distribute of monthly average expenditure spent by Georgian resident visitors of age 15 and older during the visits on the territory of Georgia by expenditure categories, mln. GEL	153.5	147.1	226	248.3	278
Main purpose: Holiday, Leisure, Recreation (thousand)	280	-	-	210.2	269.1

Opportunities for sustainable development of tourism in Georgia

Today, recreational and environmental travel is a particularly growing segment of the tourism market.

The country sustainable agritourism tourism development is connected to the necessity to maintain the natural environment, also it face the goal to maintain the county historical parts cultural values on places and to acknowledge tourists about them.

Opportunities for sustainable development of tourism in Georgia

- Like any type of tourism, agritourism also requires detailed planning and effective management, even when talking about a modest number of tourists, because without advance planning they can cause a lot of damage.
- Mistakes made in tourism planning appear when the permissible limit norms of tourist flows are not taken into account, when the environment is overloaded with more tourists than it carrying capacity.

- We would like to point out that recently the Georgian authorities for the sustainable development of tourism in mountainous regions and villages Promotion has begun, which the local population through tourism It will help to improve one's livelihood
- However, it should be emphasized that that the development of tourism in Georgia looks rather chaotic; Lack of professional staff in the field of tourism and long-term Lack of planning slows down the development of tourism in the country.

Conclusion:

On the basis of the survey conducted by us, the following conclusions and recommendations should be made for the tourism sector for the purpose of sustainable development of tourism in Georgia:

- ✓ Develop a sustainable tourism development strategy and action plan.
- ✓ Determine which indicators of sustainability should be used and provide a system for monitoring and controlling current changes.
- ✓ Uniting and coordinating the efforts of all stakeholders.
- ✓ • Refinement of the existing legal base of tourism development, determination of the permissible load on the environment, determination of the passability of natural areas and establishment of rules of behavior of tourists.
- ✓ Assessment tools such as environmental tourism impact assessment, environmental management and environmental audit, development of a certification system for enterprises that share sustainable development approaches should be used.

Thus, raising the standard of living in Georgia is the main goal of the sustainable development of tourism program.

Thank you for your attention

2024 Regional Transformation by Tourism

Renovation and Reforms Triggered by Tourism: Case of Georgia

Exploring Sustainable MICE Tourism Development Opportunities in Batumi

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Introduction to Sustainable MICE Tourism in Batumi

- The notion of sustainable tourism has garnered considerable momentum in recent times as travel destinations across the globe aim to strike a balance between economic expansion and ecological and societal obligations.
- This article investigates the development prospects for MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions) tourism in Batumi, Georgia, within the framework of sustainable tourism practices.
- The seaside city of Batumi, tucked away between the Lesser Caucasus Mountains and the Black Sea, has become a popular MICE travel destination because of its exceptional fusion of contemporary infrastructure, cultural legacy, and natural beauty.

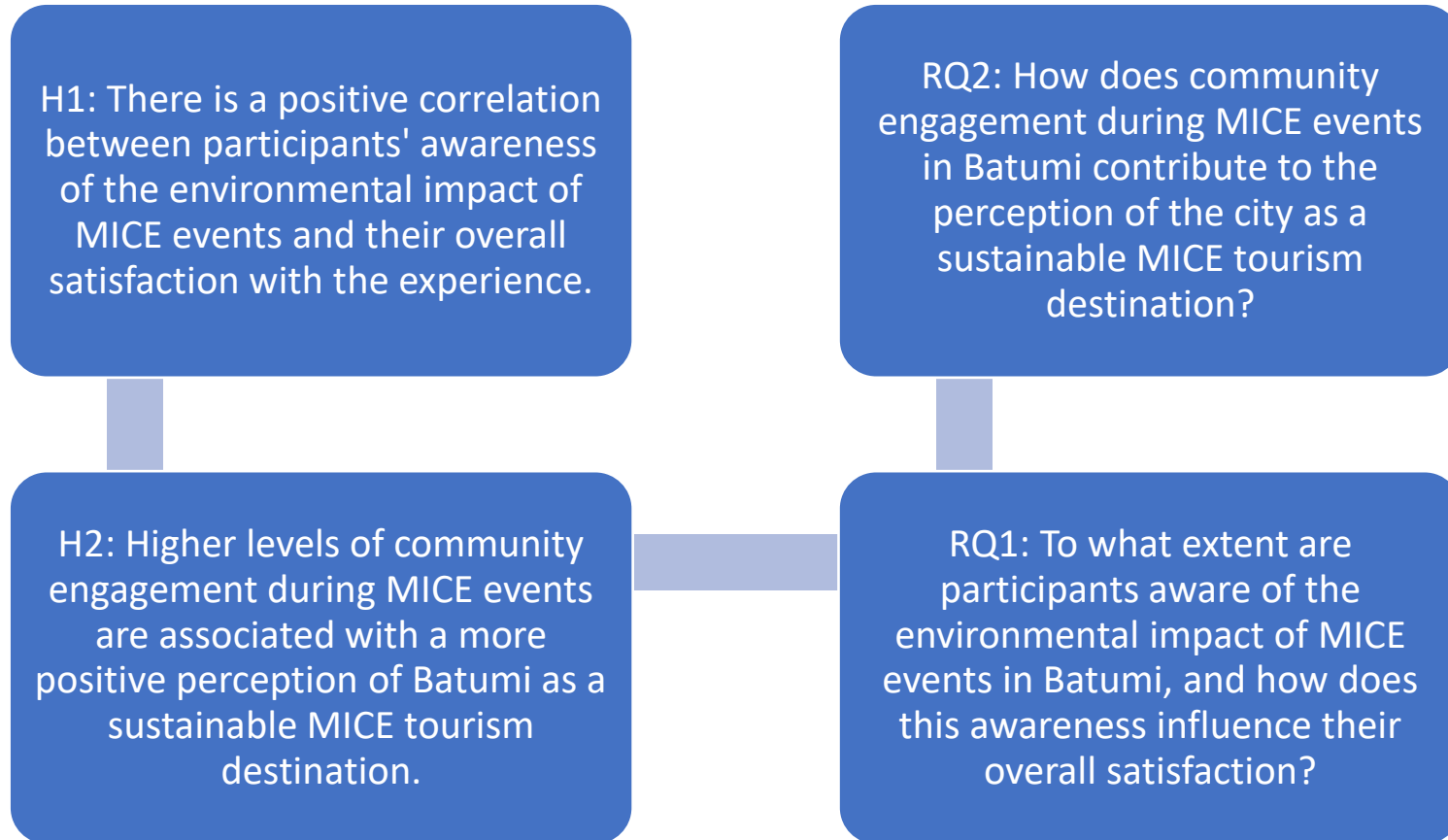
Advantages of Batumi as a Sustainable MICE Tourism Destination

- The seaside city of Batumi, tucked away between the Lesser Caucasus Mountains and the Black Sea, has become a popular MICE travel destination because of its exceptional fusion of contemporary infrastructure, cultural legacy, and natural beauty.
- Batumi's dedication to sustainable development, as seen by its initiatives to protect the environment, advance cultural heritage, and practice responsible tourism, contributes to its appeal as a MICE destination.
- Batumi boasts cutting-edge lodging choices, conference centers, and a well-developed transportation network, enhancing its attractiveness as a MICE tourism destination.

Significance of Studying Sustainable MICE Tourism in Batumi

- This study is significant because it addresses the pressing need for sustainable development in the MICE tourism sector in Batumi's tourism industry.
- The study aims to close the gap between Batumi's ambition to become a premier MICE tourism destination and the need to preserve its natural and cultural resources for coming generations.
- The results of this study have the potential to positively impact not only Batumi's immediate growth but also the global conversation on sustainable tourism practices.

Study Hypothesis and Research Questions



Literature Review

- Business tourism is a result of the development of the global economy. It was founded in the United States of America, and since 1980, it has spread to developed countries in Europe and Asia, including Japan, Singapore, and China.
- MICE tourism refers to a specialized niche within the broader tourism industry focusing on Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions or Events.
- The global Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions (MICE) tourism industry is a thriving sector contributing substantially to the global economy.
- Batumi's strategic location between the Lesser Caucasus Mountains and the Black Sea, coupled with its contemporary infrastructure, cultural richness, and natural beauty, has positioned it as an attractive destination for MICE tourism.
- This study adopts a theoretical framework grounded in the principles of sustainable tourism, community engagement, and environmental impact awareness to explore the intricacies of MICE tourism in Batumi.

Significance of Studying MICE Tourism in Batumi and Theoretical Perspectives

- An increase in the demand for the MICE industry in Georgia is expected considering several factors, including visa-free access to 96 countries, convenient logistics with European, Middle Eastern, and Asian countries, short distances within the country, unique cuisine/wine and rich natural and cultural resources.
- The Triple Bottom Line (TBL) theory, encompassing economic, environmental, and social dimensions, provides a foundational perspective for evaluating the sustainability of MICE tourism initiatives.
- Through the convergence of these theoretical perspectives, the study aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the development opportunities for sustainable MICE tourism in Batumi, shedding light on the potential benefits and challenges associated with balancing economic growth and ecological-cultural preservation.

Research Design and Methodology

This study adopts a quantitative research design to investigate the development opportunities for sustainable MICE tourism in Batumi.



The research design includes the administration of a structured questionnaire, enabling the collection of quantitative data from participants involved in or influencing MICE tourism in Batumi.



A purposive sampling technique was employed to ensure a representative sample, specifically selecting participants from various large companies in Georgia that actively utilize MICE tourism in their business activities.



In the data analysis phase, the collected responses from the 498 respondents were subjected to statistical analysis using IBM SPSS Statistics software.



Results and Discussion - Participant Demographics

The respondents, predominantly female across various age brackets, primarily comprised mid or high-level managers, with a notable absence of male respondents in the 26-35 age range.

Most participants indicated employment in large organizations, defined as those with over 500 workers, spanning diverse economic sectors.

Furthermore, MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions) tourism was prevalent among this demographic, reflecting a range of professional backgrounds and interests within the surveyed population.

Results and Discussion - Environmental Impact Awareness and Sustainability Initiatives

- The responses to the question regarding awareness of the environmental impact of MICE events in Batumi reveal a range of levels of awareness among the participants.
- In Batumi, MICE events have embraced sustainability through various initiatives, including adopting paperless or digital event materials, waste reduction and recycling, and implementing carbon offsetting programs.
- Energy-efficient lighting and equipment usage contribute to reduced energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, aligning with environmental goals.

Results and Discussion - Community Engagement and Cultural Integration

The level of community engagement during MICE events in Batumi appears to vary, with responses indicating a mixture of moderate and low levels.

In response to the question, 'Do you believe that involving local communities in MICE event planning positively impacts the overall experience?' the results indicate that a significant majority of respondents hold positive views regarding the involvement of local communities in MICE event planning.

In response to the question, 'To what extent do you think Batumi incorporates its cultural richness into MICE events?' the results reveal varied perspectives among respondents regarding integrating Batumi's cultural richness into MICE events.

Conclusion - Testing of Hypotheses

The analysis results revealed a strong positive correlation ($r = 0.8$) between participants' awareness of the environmental impact of MICE events and their overall satisfaction with the experience.

Regarding Hypothesis 2, the analysis indicated a significant association between higher levels of community engagement during MICE events and a more positive perception of Batumi as a sustainable MICE tourism destination.

Future research could explore the causal relationships between participants' awareness of environmental impact, community engagement, and their satisfaction with MICE events in more detail.

Conclusion - Implications and Recommendations

- Overall, this study's findings highlight the critical role of sustainability initiatives and community engagement in shaping participants' satisfaction with MICE events and their perceptions of destinations as sustainable tourism hubs.
- Event organizers and destination managers should prioritize sustainability efforts and foster community involvement to create more rewarding and environmentally responsible event experiences.
- In conclusion, the findings of this study underscore the importance of integrating sustainability principles and community engagement into MICE event planning and management to contribute to the sustainable development of tourism destinations like Batumi.

2024 Regional Transformation by Tourism

Renovation and Reforms Triggered by Tourism: Case of Georgia

Impact of expected climate change on Batumi tourism sector

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The tourism sector in Georgia continues to grow at the rapid paces.

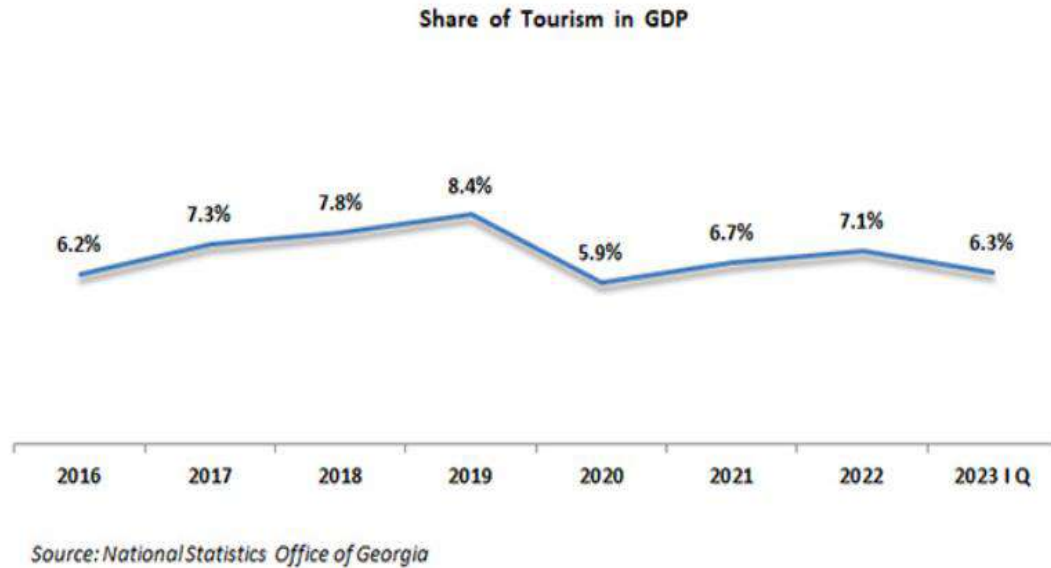


Figure 1. Share of tourism in GDP

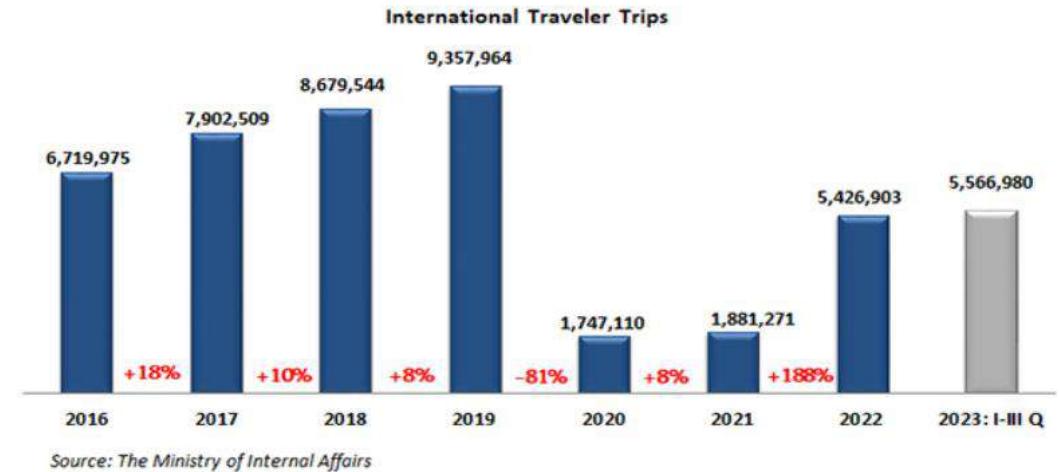


Figure 2. International Traveler Trips

The forecasts are quite optimistic, according to which the number of employees in the tourism sector, as well as the growth of income from tourism will also continue in the coming years. At the same time, it is necessary to search for new ideas and free "niches" in order for all regions to be actively involved in the economically profitable activity for the country - tourism.

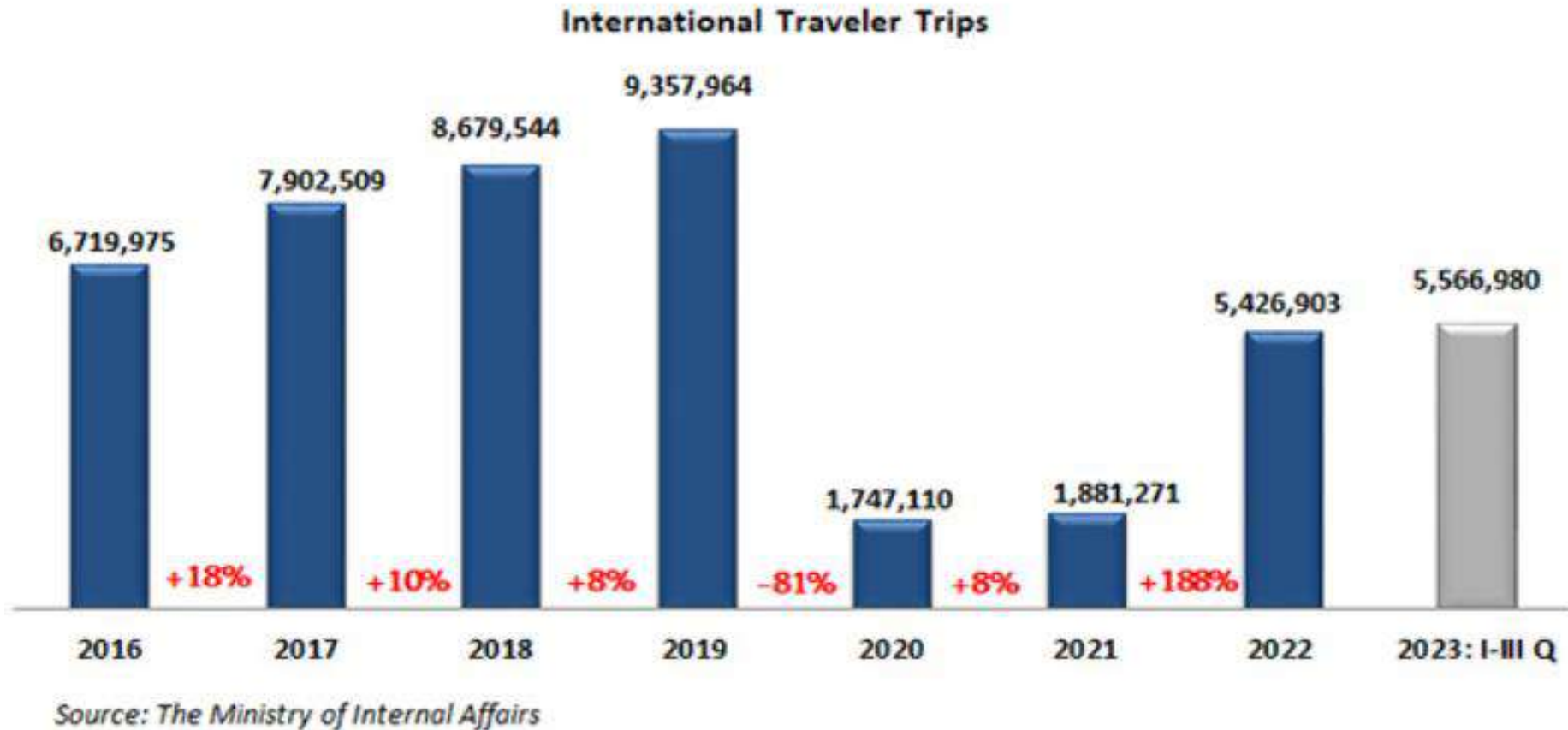


Figure 3. International tourism receipts

International traveler trips in Georgia have been growing rapidly in recent years. In 2022, they reached 5,426,903, which is 188.5% more than last year (www.gnta.ge).

Climate and Tourism

- Are very close fields and linked to many interactions.
- The impact of climate change on coastal tourism has recently received much attention in scientific works.
- Scientists focus on vulnerability, resilience, sea level rise and coastal hazards.

The development of tourism is sharply determined by safe and ecologically clean environment and climate indices of the tourism

Climate change and Coastal Tourism of Georgia

- The country should take global climate changes into account in the country's economic strategy.
- The hot weather affects the most vulnerable part of the population, who live below the poverty line and / or have certain health problems.
- Georgian scientists use TCI - Tourist Climate Index, which is a combination of seven meteorological parameters (average monthly and maximum air temperature, average and maximum relative humidity, monthly precipitation, monthly duration of sunshine, average monthly wind speed) and its categories vary - from "Impossible" to "ideal".
- To study the impact of climate change on the development of the tourism industry, the Holiday Climate Index (HCI) was developed, which is a complex climatic characteristic and its elements were identified based on various meteorological indicators.
- According to researchers, bioclimatic conditions in Georgia have not changed significantly and we should not expect any substantial changes in the future.

Batumi is amongst the trendiest European destination of 2024

- all-year-round subtropical and mild climate
- the main tourist destination of the country - 43.8% of international trips were made to Batumi and that most visited regions for holiday, leisure and recreation is Ajara- 24. 7%)



Batumi is distinguished by its remarkably green natural environment.

Problems...

- the increase in the impact of the climate change and natural threats is felt, including rising the sea levels, increasing incidence of the floods and landslides, and erosion of seashores.
- Batumi has the highest sensitivity in the country to flooding, the erosion of seacoasts and the erosion of river banks.

Resilience to the climate change and natural disasters is the most important challenge for Batumi.





Flooding in Batumi

Storm in Batumi



- Batumi does not have the plan that should ensure the sustainability of urban systems and service areas to the climate change.
- Batumi is quite sensitive to the flooding and coastal erosion, which is exacerbated by the climate change;
- To date, there is no single unified model for reflecting the mechanism of the erosion process, which would make it possible to quantitatively predict the water erosion, taking into account this or that monofactor parameter.
- The natural morphological appearance of the coastal above-water relief in Batumi territory has been significantly changed by the construction of the buildings for various purposes.
- The natural morphological appearance of the coastal embankment line has been degraded to varying degrees as a result of the human economic activity. In the last century, the inert material extraction quarries were operating on the surface of the coastal embankment line. As a result of this, separate fragments of them have been preserved instead of the joint coastal embankment line in the past.

important events and the coast of the Adjara Sea

- 1. The 800 m long berm was built on the Sarfi - Kvariati section.
- 2. The berm in front of the treatment plant continued to the runway of the airport.
- 3. According to the project of the Italians, the new berm was built from the runway of the Berma Airport to the mouth of the Mejina river.
- 4. According to the project of the Italians, "Rehabilitation of the coastal strip" was carried out from the runway of the airport to the Cape of Batumi.
- 5. The boulevard was also built, on which the beach rests.

The division of the water erosion processes into stages is mainly related to the indicator of the degree of water filling of the soil pores. It is the different interpretation of the influence of initial humidity and the mechanism of the process compared to the prevailing concept today.

The interaction of the bed and surface flow is integrally reflected in the formation of the erosion processes and the regularity of the variability of its intensity. Due to this, it is necessary to study the hydraulic regime of the surface runoff under the influence of the atmospheric precipitation and especially its role in the formation of hydromechanical and morphological parameters of flat one-dimensional flow, which is one of the main tasks of the hydraulics of the open beds in general.

The surface runoff calculation scheme is given in figure 4.

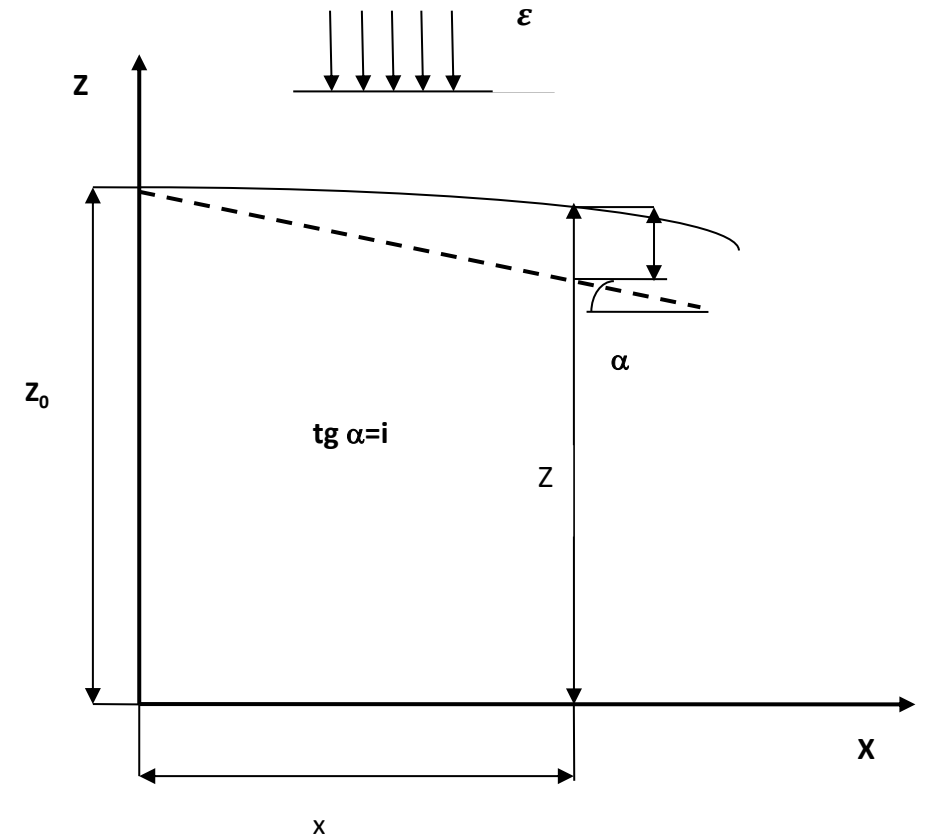


Figure 3. Surface runoff calculation scheme

In general, in the case of flat flow, the cost balance equation will be written as follows:

$$\frac{dQ}{dx} = (\varepsilon - h_{inf} - h_a)y,$$

Where: Q is Flow, from the source (watershed), in the intersection some x distance away;

$\varepsilon, h_{inf}, h_a$ - Accordingly, the calculated averaged values of the intensities of precipitation, infiltrative water absorption and evaporation in the time interval taken;

y - Width of the catchment area.

It is necessary to note that in all specific cases, the calculation model may not provide the perfect quantitative reflection of this or that factor, but in accordance with the pre-designated reliable level, it may be systematically perfected using any numerical method known in mathematics.

The specific cost of surface runoff for flat flows, in the intersection of the mileage path, is the continuous function of time together with the coordinates. This means that when we ignore the evaporation, then the cost is determined by:

$$q = \varphi(x, z, t; \varepsilon = \varepsilon(t); K = K(t))$$

Where: q is Cost per unit of the flow width;

x, z - Intersection coordinates taken;

t - Time setting;

ε and K - Accordingly, for the current moment of time.

From the point of view of the practical implementation, even trivial infiltration models are also associated with the insurmountable difficulties, although they often fail to provide the necessary results based on the physical essence of the non-established infiltration process. As for the complex multidimensional models, they are either not found at all or are rarely used in practical calculations. The main reason for this should be considered the difficulty of determining the coefficients included in the basic private derivative differential equations reflecting the process, since they are the functions of the independent parameter (in this case, the time). Because of this, it becomes necessary to determine these parameters only through the experiments, although in this case, it is rarely possible to maintain the parameter constancy even during the time period of conducting the experiments.

If we present in the calculation model only the characteristics of rain intensity and water absorption (water permeability) of the soils without any determination in determining the formation of the surface runoff, then obviously their ratio must uniquely determine the value of the main hydromechanical parameter of the surface runoff - the average speed value, and therefore the cost too.

The acceptance of such assumptions and appropriate parameterization obviously automatically affects the nature (regime) of the motion of the surface runoff. However, from the formal point of view, this cannot have any effect on the variability of the real process regime and its quantitative assessment when $\varepsilon(t)=K(t)$ e.i., when the intensities of rain and water absorption coincide in the certain interval of time, or rather are equal, then obviously the surface runoff does not occur. It can also be assumed with high probability that the accumulation of the surface water, runoff will not occur when $\varepsilon(t)<K(t)$.

Between two neighboring intersections separated by the distance dx , in a certain period of time, the seepage (infiltration) of the part of the precipitation, and transit of the other part, which gives the increase in the specific cost.

This change can be expressed as follows:

$$dq = h'_x V'_x - h_x V_x = \varepsilon dx - K dx.$$

The average speed in any intersection of the flow is determined according to Chezy:

$$V_x = \frac{87\sqrt{h_x}}{n_0} \sqrt{h_x i} = C h_x$$

Where:

$$C = \frac{87\sqrt{h_x}}{n_0}$$

With slight transformations we get:

$$h_x = \sqrt{\frac{x}{c} (\varepsilon - K)}.$$

The approach taken to describe the shape of the flow surface is based on the assumption that non-uniform motion is replaced by uniform motion. Such an assumption in itself eliminates the need to decipher the process using a differential equation, since the equation is quite easily obtained from the cost continuity condition.

$$h_x = \sqrt[5]{\frac{5}{3} ax^3 + 5bx}$$

This equation is far from reflecting the real physical picture of runoff, but it expresses much better the nonstationarity of the flow motion. Therefore, with the first rough approximation we can determine the morphometric feature h_{x_1} in any x intersection of the flow. In accordance with h_x according to the method shown above, let's determine the permissible inclination, that is, the inclination that responds to the condition of the bed not being washed away.

The quantitative assessment of the erosion is possible only by engineering method or by direct calculation using this or that formula.

conclusions

The calculation dependencies of the permissible speed proposed by different authors are characterized by the same analog structure.

If they are considered sound for the solid debris, their use for the quantitative assessment of the irrigation erosion of the soils is completely unjustified, since the specific gravity of the solid body is sharply different from the specific weight of the porous physical body, in particular, the specific weight of the waterproof aggregate of the soil.

The tendency of the soil aggregates to the occurrence of the surface-molecular effects and their formation according to the degree of water filling radically changes the marginal equilibrium conditions of the aggregates at different stages of the erosion.

We can always match the h_x flow depth determined by (Formula from last slide) with the diameter that will not be subject to the erosion and will ensure the stability of the self-washing bed, or otherwise we are given the opportunity to determine the critical non-washing speed.

Therefore, it is necessary to use the adjusted dependence of the permissible speeds for the quantitative prediction of the soil water erosion. This dependence takes into account some specifics that are caused by the wide range of physico-chemical processes taking place in the soil and ensures the relatively high reliability of the forecast of the irrigation erosion.

As we have repeatedly noted, the calculation dependencies of the permissible speed proposed by different authors are characterized by the same analog structure, we also accepted that if they are considered sound for the solid debris, their use for the quantitative assessment of the irrigation erosion of the soils is completely unjustified, since the specific gravity of the solid body is sharply different from the specific weight of the porous physical body, in particular, the specific weight of the waterproof aggregate of the soil. In addition, the tendency of the soil aggregates to the occurrence of the surface-molecular effects and their formation according to the degree of water filling radically changes the marginal equilibrium conditions of the aggregates at different stages of the erosion. We can always match the h_x flow depth determined by (Formula 16) with the diameter that will not be subject to the erosion and will ensure the stability of the self-washing bed, or otherwise we are given the opportunity to determine the critical non-washing speed.

Therefore, we can conclude that it is necessary to use the adjusted dependence of the permissible speeds for the quantitative prediction of the soil water erosion. This dependence takes into account some specifics that are caused by the wide range of physico-chemical processes taking place in the soil and ensures the relatively high reliability of the forecast of the irrigation erosion.

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Thank you for your attention

2024 Regional Transformation by Tourism

Renovation and Reforms Triggered by Tourism: Case of Georgia

The Importance of Tour Guides Training in Adjara Region (Case Study)

Dr. Tamar Karbaia
Assistant Professor

Organized by:



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Research Relevance

- Limited empirical knowledge
- Interviews conducted with 3 tour guides
- Local context



Research Topics

- The experience of the tour guides faced in Adjara Region
- Tour guides interested areas of potential professional improvement
- Tourists preferences about the service provided by their guides

Hypothesis Development

- Adjara Region is one of the most visited destinations (Georgian Tourism Association)
- Providing high quality service (Tourism Strategy of Georgia 2025)
- The role of training in enhancing job satisfaction, motivation, and performance (Noe, 2013)
- The relationship between tour guide competency and tourist satisfaction (Ninpradith, Viriyasuebphong, & Voraseyanont; Colquitt, LePine, & Noe, 2000; Arthur, Bennett, Edens, & Bel, 2003).

Research Design

Quantitative Approach

- Target group: tour guides & their costumers;
- Sample size: up to 380 respondents
- Sample selection criteria: random
- Research instruments: Self-instructed surveys
- Tool of analysis : Microsoft SPSS
- Methods of Data analysis: frequency, central tendency measurement, variation measurements, T-test, correlation analysis, regression analysis

Qualitative Approach

- Focus group
- Target group: Tour guides and their costumers
- Sample size: 30 respondents
- Sample selection criteria: nonprobability “snowball method”
- Research instrument: Discussion plan created by the author
- Transcripts were coded by hand

Research Ethics

- The respondents were sent the form of Informed Consent and were asked to sign it to approve the participation in the research after obtaining information about the research objectives.
- The research was conducted based on the research ethical standards.
- Anonymity

Research findings

- ❖ There were not big variety of entertainment opportunities due to the climate for senior tourists
- ❖ Some guides had lack of knowledge of Georgian history
- ❖ Some tourists were not able to visit certain rural destination due to their physical disability
- ❖ Some guides demonstrated lack of language competence
- ❖ Guides stated, that they will be more confident if they develop systematically their professional capacity
- ❖ Tourists stated, that they would prefer to obtain service from the licensed tour guide
- ❖ Tourists prefer to work with guides that have better

Hypothesis



Hypothesis 1

Training has influence on tour guides' level of jobs satisfaction



Hypothesis 2

Demographic characteristics have influence on tourists' level of satisfaction

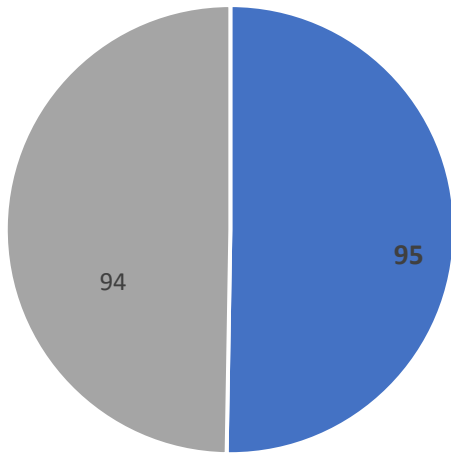
Research Instruments

- Discussion plan for the focus groups were created by the author
- The Tour guides Job satisfaction was studied by utilization of a survey (Brayfield & Rothe, 1954) with 19 research items. These criteria aims to determine whether employees experienced job satisfaction.
- Their performance was measured based on their costumers' evaluations through filling out the survey (Meng & Sirakaya-Turk, 2010).
- Training evaluation was assessed by the adapted version of the instrument introduced by Francis (Kabii, Okello, & Kipruto, 2017)

Data analysis

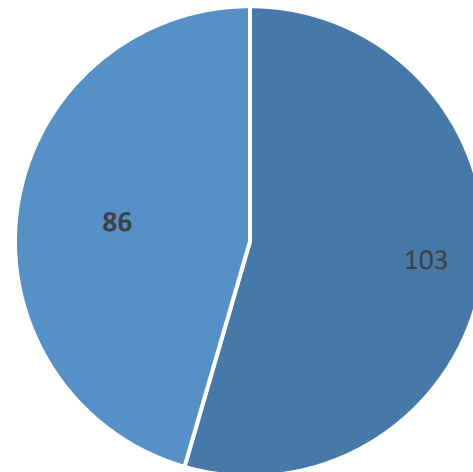
Descriptive statistics

Status



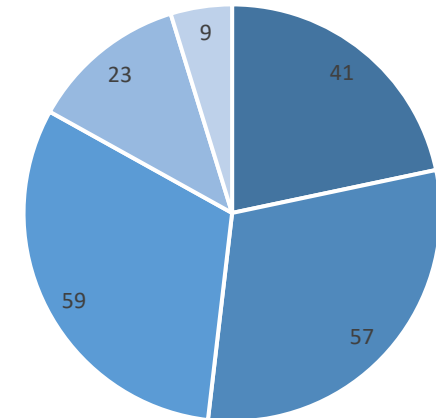
■ Agency Based guide ■ Independent guide ■ ■

Sex



■ Female ■ Male ■ ■

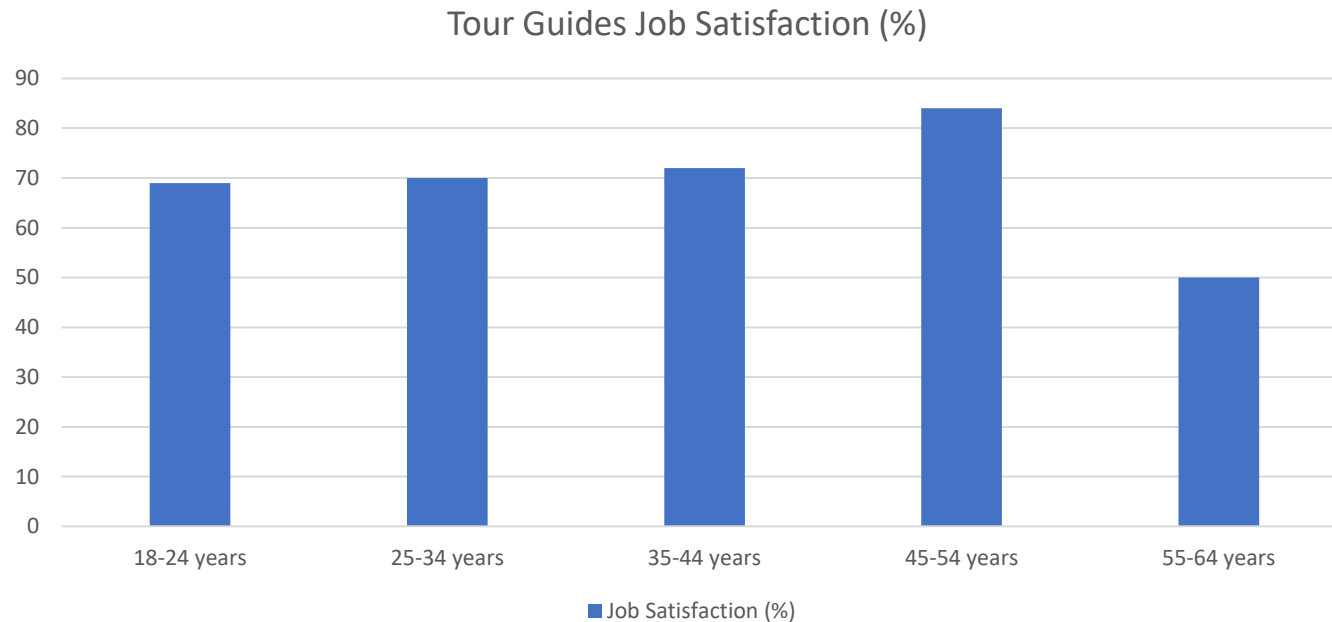
Age groups



■ 18-24 years ■ 25-34 years ■ 35-44 years ■ 45-54 years ■ 55-64 years

Data analysis

- ❖ The respondents aged 45-54 have the highest level of job satisfaction (83.65%), and respondents aged 55-64 have the lowest level of job satisfaction (50.20%).



Data analysis

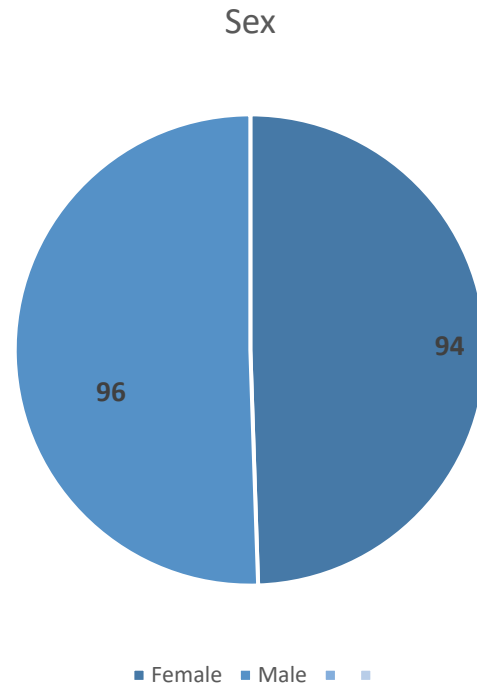
- ❖ From the 19 parameters mentioned above, we created Job Satisfaction Index, which becomes a minimum value of 0 or a maximum value of 1. The average value of the job satisfaction index was equal to: 71.46%;
- ❖ The index of job satisfaction among respondents who have undergone trainings is 75%, and the index of job satisfaction among respondents who have not undergone trainings was equal to 70%. The satisfaction index among trained respondents is 5% higher.
- ❖ More experience the guide has, the higher is the level of job satisfaction. Job satisfaction does not have an influence on gender, profession, education or on the status of the guide.

Mean	
	JS/ Job satisfaction
Q3.5 3.5. Your tenure	
2 From 2 up to 5 years	68.47%
3 From 5 up to 10 years	72.32%
4 More than 10 years	75.44%
Total	71.46%
P	0.01

Q2.1 2.1 Have you received training on tour planning and pricing?	Job satisfaction (JS)
1 Yes	75.07%
2 No	69.66%
Total	71.46%
p	0.001

Data analysis

Descriptive statistics



Data analysis

- ❖ The customer satisfaction index has a statistically significant correlation with age ($P=0.01 < 0.05$), while the correlation coefficient is negative $r=-0.197$, therefore, respondents of younger age are more satisfied.
- ❖ The average index of customer satisfaction in women is 6.2, and in men 6.19, the difference between them is not statistically significant $p=0.76 > 0.05$. Therefore, satisfaction does not differ by sex.

Table 2.4. Correlations

		Age group/
Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	-0.197
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.01
	N	190

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Data analysis

- ❖ Customer Satisfaction index in relation with type of guide is not statistically significant as $p=0.74 > 0.05$
- ❖ The lowest level (49.5%) on the scale was assigned to the “knowledge of the guide”.
- ❖ Accordingly, the index consisting of these 17 variables received a sufficiently high value of 6.19 on a 7-point scale, i.e. 77.38% of the maximum value - which is quite a high indicator

Research item	6+7 sum of evaluation percentage	mean
Knowledgeable guide	49.47%	5.53
Attending my needs promptly	66.84%	5.85
Interested in solving my problems	72.63%	5.92
Got things right first time	76.32%	6.03

Research findings

They state that their level of job satisfaction will be increased if they will be trained in the field of:

- Eco-tourism
- Language skills
- Digital skills
- Communication skills
- History and culture
- Tour planning and pricing

Research findings

There is higher level of job satisfaction for those who have undergone the trainings.

Only age influences the level of costumers' satisfaction. Younger costumers are more satisfied with their services provided by the guides.

There are less entertainment opportunities for senior tourists.

There are areas not accessible for individuals with special needs due to the infrastructural characteristics

Some guides had lack of knowledge of Georgian history

Research limitations



Sample size



Sample collection criteria



Lack of generalizability



Qualitative research instrument was created by the author



Social Desirability related bias (self-administered questionnaires)

Recommendations

- ❖ Managing the competencies of independent as well as agency-based tour guides. If we consider, that in Adjara region, there is a high demand of providing service for international tourists, it is crucial to equip guides with proper information about our history, political, cultural contexts.
- ❖ Introducing mandatory training and certification courses for guides.
- ❖ Creating database of tour guides operating in the region to provide information access about the capacity building opportunity
- ❖ Providing more diverse touristic services for senior tourists
- ❖ Providing relevant Infrastructure in rural areas to make the destinations more inclusive.

Thank you for your attention!

2024 Regional Transformation by Tourism

Renovation and Reforms Triggered by Tourism: Case of Georgia

**Wine tradition in Georgia and its global influence
on the example of the Kakheti and Adjara region**

Teona Taboridze

Assistant professor of Caucasus university

Organized by:



With support of:



Georgia - Homeland Of Wine

- The 8000-year-old tradition of making wine in Georgian Qvevri
- Archeological Heritage
- Tamada sculpture From Vani
- Deities Sculptures From Melaani



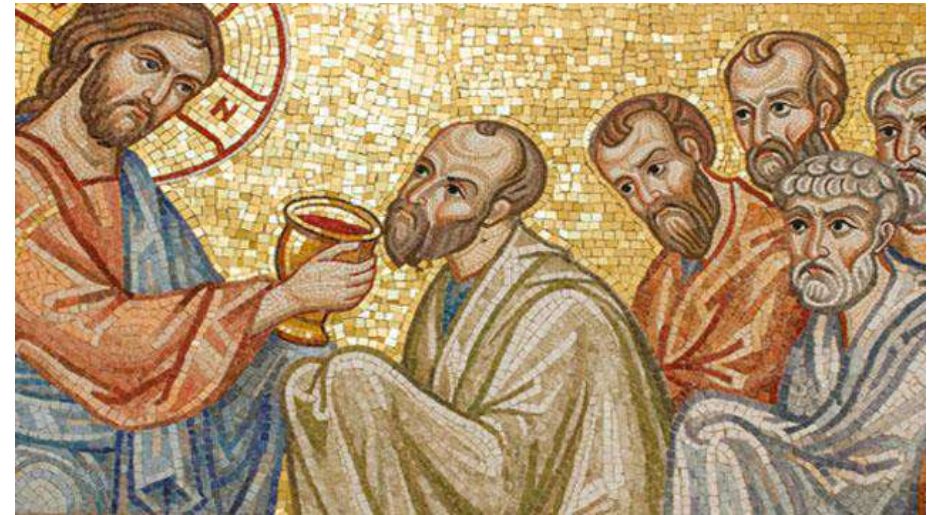
Wine culture and Qvevri - a Unique Georgian Tradition

- The qvevri - the oldest Georgian original wine vessel
- Georgian traditional winemaking technology “Qvevri wine” is unique in the world
- A Georgian man always called a vine "growing like a child"
- Qvevri wines unique color, smell, taste, aromas and tannins
- “Meqvevre”- a Qvevri maker and a special profession



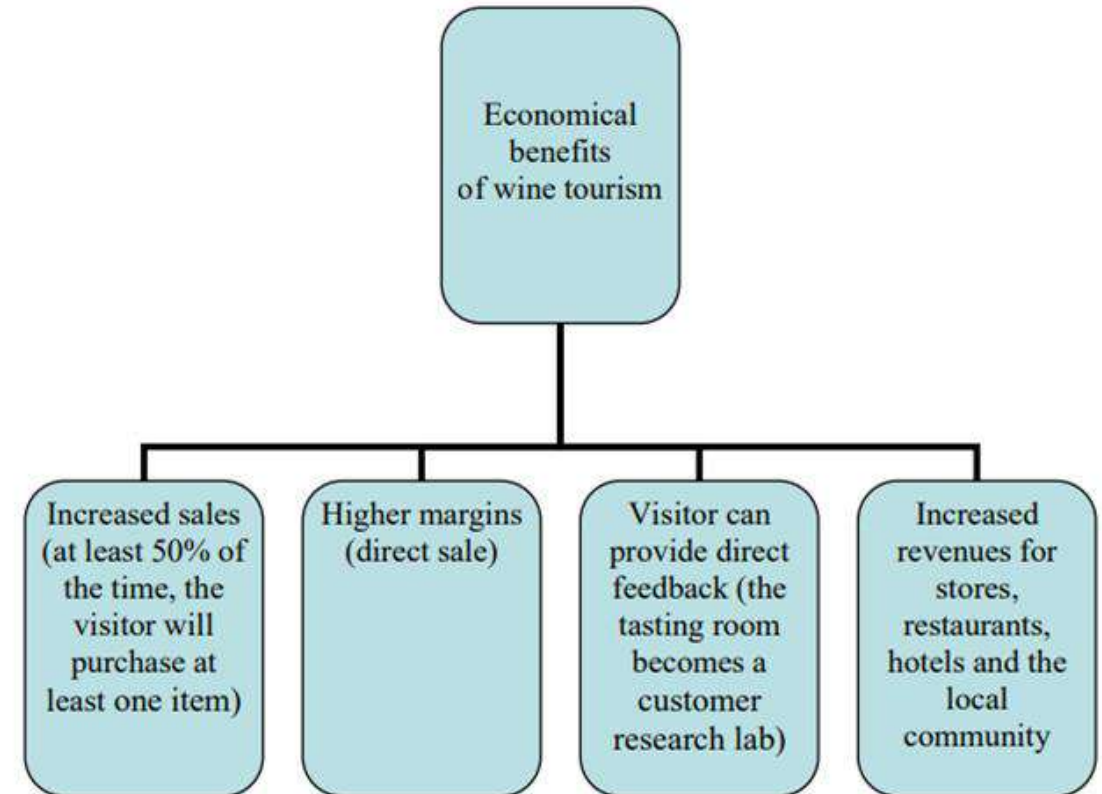
Wine as a ritual drink

- Wine is not just alcohol
- We celebrate the birth of a child with wine, and we send off the dead with wine
- Zedashe culture - even more ritualistic wine making
- Zedashe wine is a ritual, ancestral drink that cannot be given, sold or lent



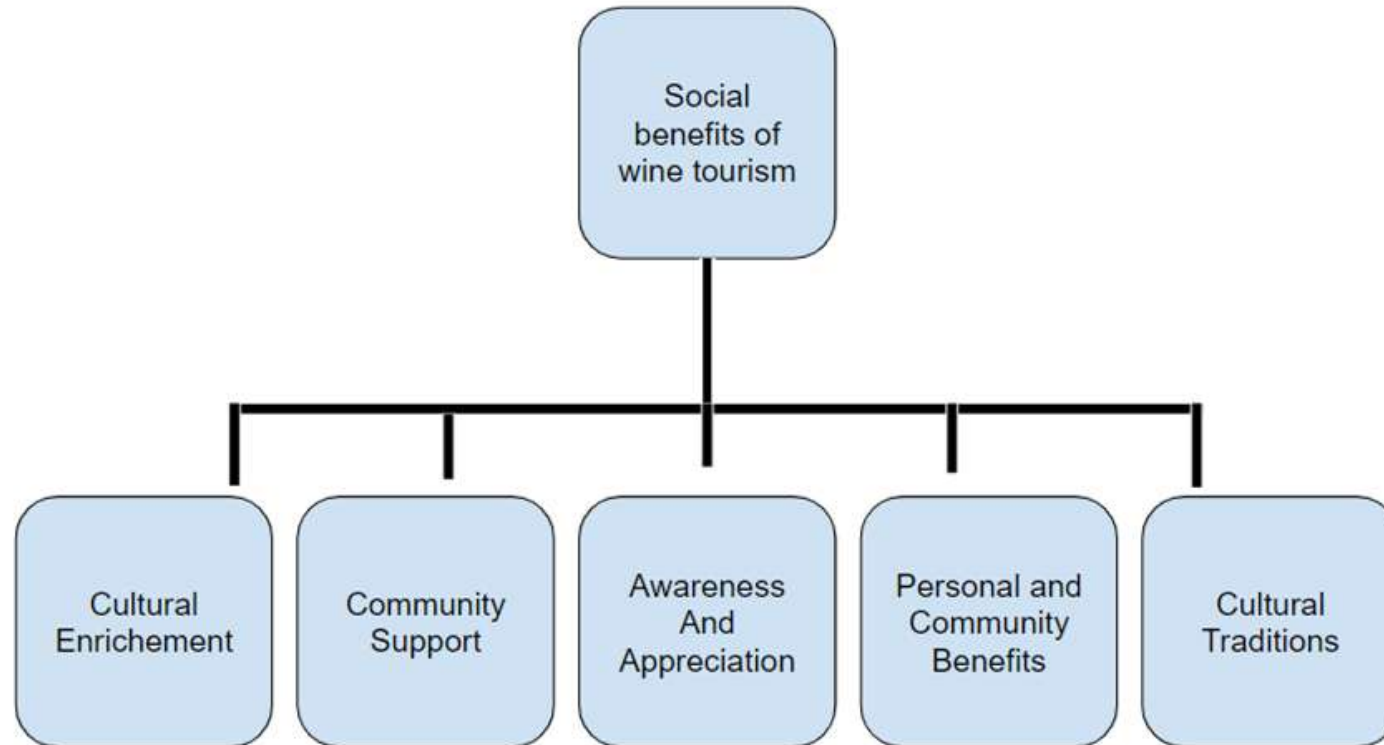
Wine Tourism economical and social impacts

- wine tourism = tourism + viticulture
- Wine tourism - a very fast growing and Diversified industry
- Wine Tourism Economical impacts:



Source: Emanuela Panke. Introduction to wine tourism. PowerPoint Presentation, Baku, 26-27th 2020, "Iter Vitis Caucasus" 1st General Assembly

Wine Tourism Social impacts



Wine tourism and culture in Kakheti Region

- Kakheti is the main winery region in Georgia
- Kakheti is home to the oldest human habitation in the Caucasus region
- grape varieties common in Kakheti - Rkatsiteli, Saperavi, Kakhuri Green and Kisi grapes
- . Most popular and specific “Amber Wine” from Kakheti Region



Wine tourism and culture in Kakheti Region

- Kakheti is the most developed region in tourism
- Kakheti 4 season touristic Destination
- Wine and Wine Tourism role The role in development processes
- Diversified tourism products of Kakheti region
- The impact of Kakhetian wine tourism on the country's economy



Wine tourism and culture in Adjara region

- Mountain wine ancient culture in Adjara Region
- Keda municipality center of Adjarian Winemaking
- The mountainous part - a special charm of the region
- The region boasts more than 50 native and introduced grape varieties
- grape varieties common in Adjara - Chkhaveri, Tsolikauri,



Wine tourism and culture in Adjara region

- Adjarian wine tourism is not just a wine tasting, it is a journey into a close connection with the ancient Adjarian culture
- Wine culture in Adjara makes a great contribution to the development of the region



Wine tourism role in sustainable development

- what is a Sustainable development?
- Wine Tourism contribution in Sustainable development
- Wine tourism and wine tourism product Pushes To develop Hotel, restaurant, shops, wineries, and local communities



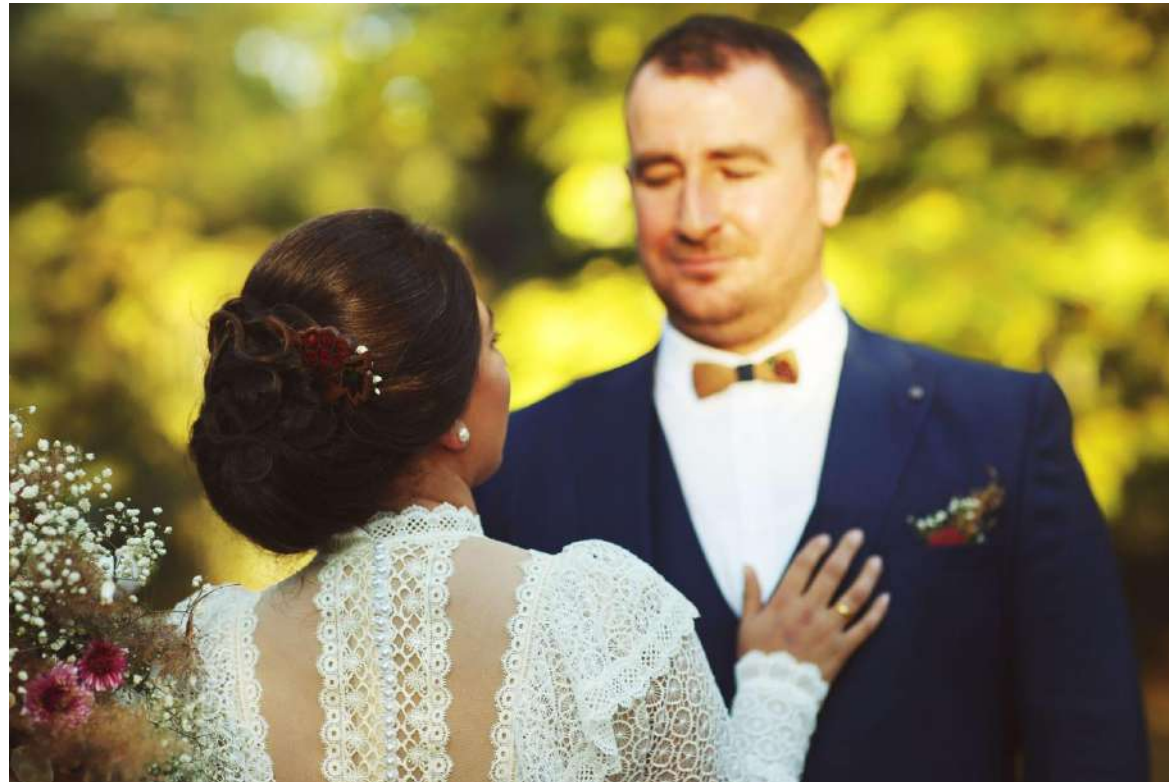
private experiences and research in Kakheti and Adjara region

- Eco Tourism Complex In kakheti Region Village Melaani
- Kisi wine and microzones In Maghraani Village
- Wine Tourism and Tourism impacts in Local Community On the example Maghraani and Melaani



Wine Brings a Happiness!

- Georgian Wine is a magical drink and bring a Personal happiness



Thank you for attantion!

“Mountainous Adjara” as a tourist attraction product analysis and opportunities

Levan Tsikarishvili

Caucasus University



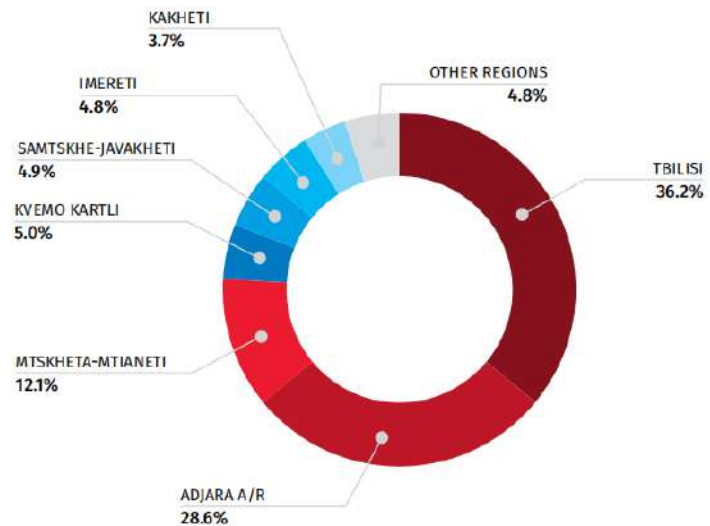
Adjara

Mountainous Adjara

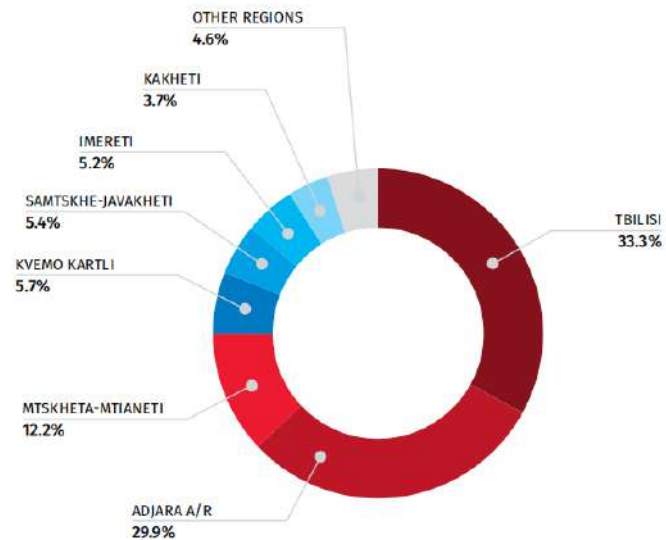




**DISTRIBUTION OF THE NUMBER OF VISITS MADE BY INBOUND VISITORS
BY THE VISITED REGIONS IN 2022 YEAR**



**DISTRIBUTION OF THE NUMBER OF VISITS MADE BY INBOUND VISITORS
BY THE VISITED REGIONS IN 2023 YEAR**

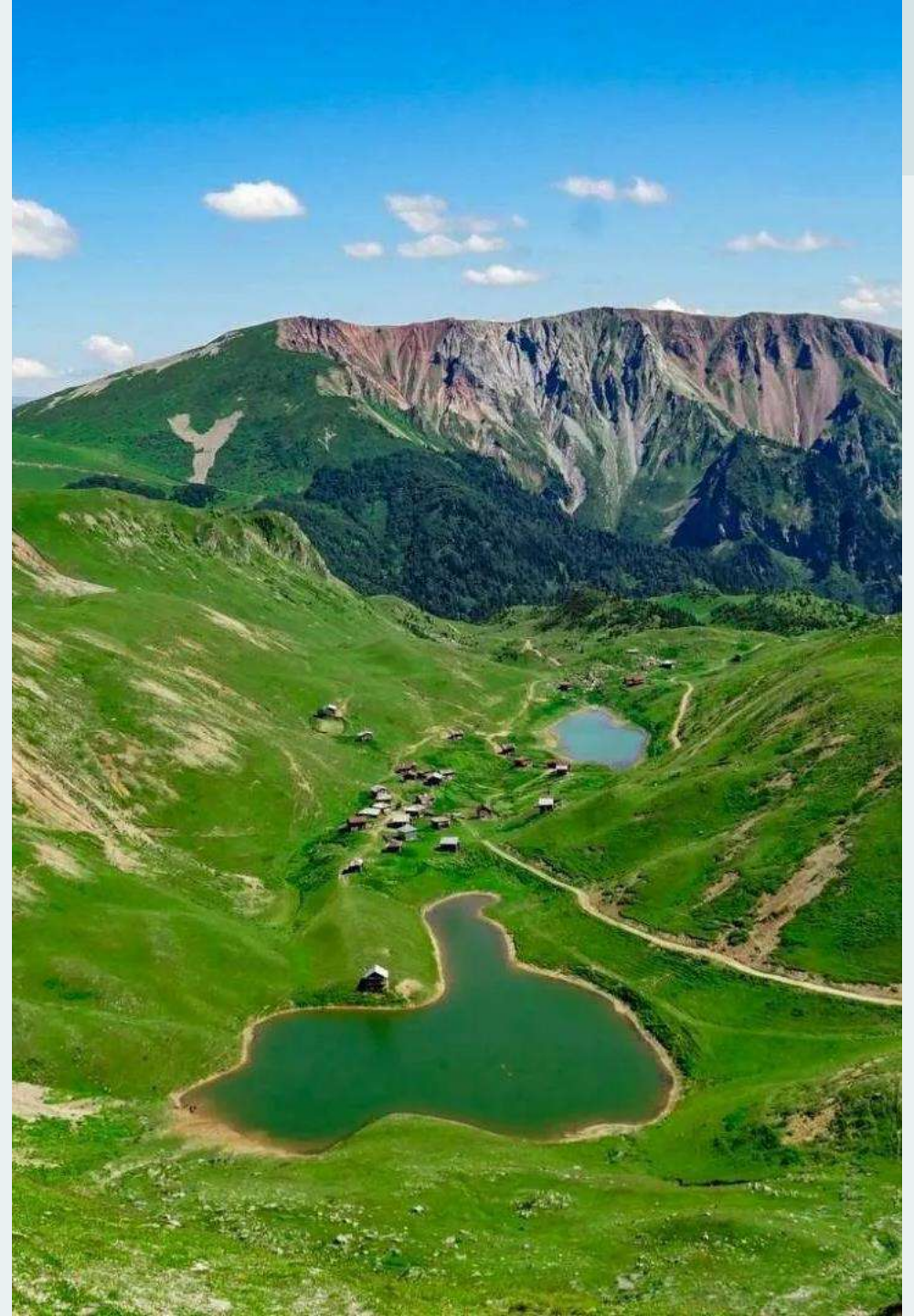




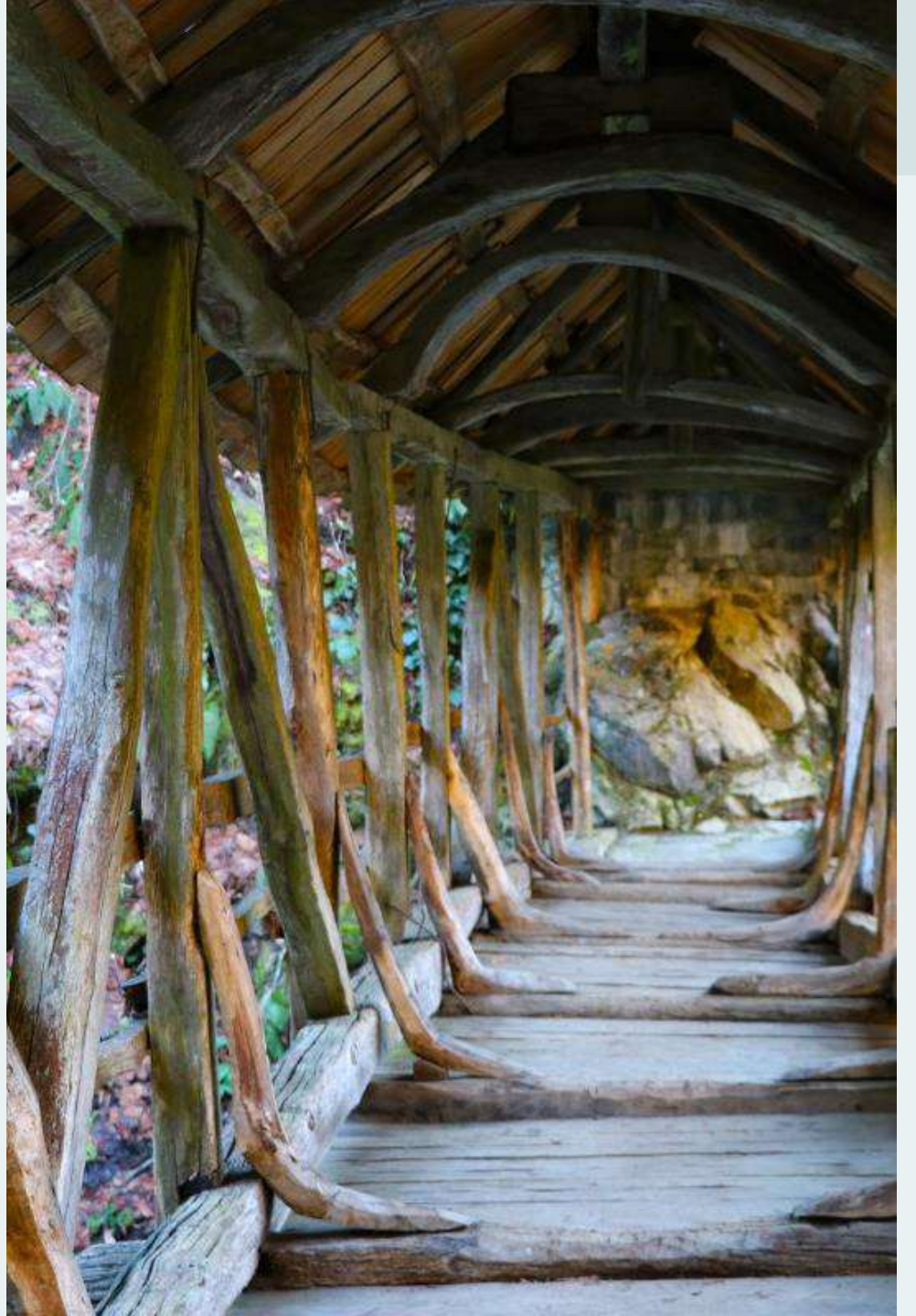
Mountainous Adjara

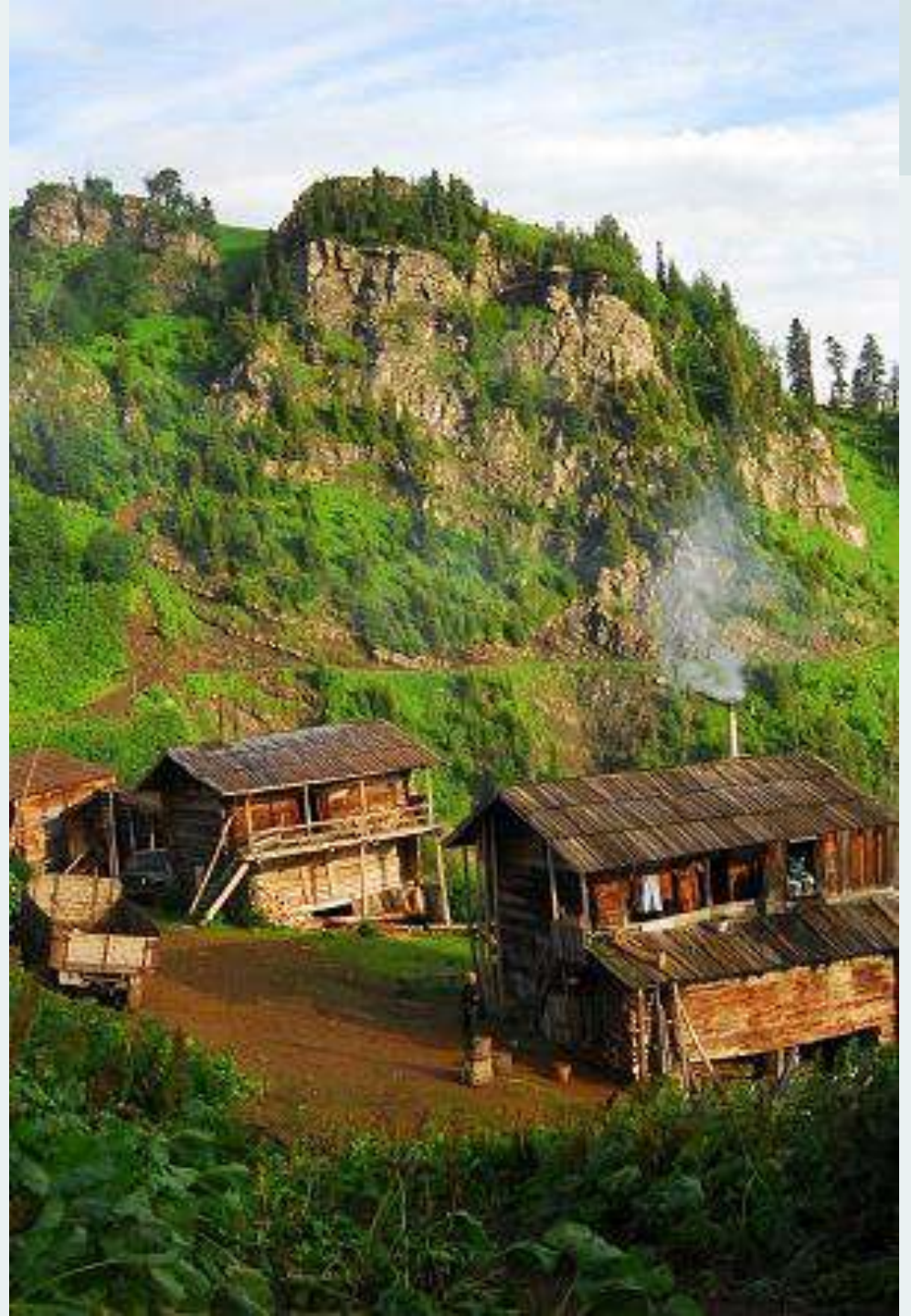
What is the significance of mountainous Adjara for the region?

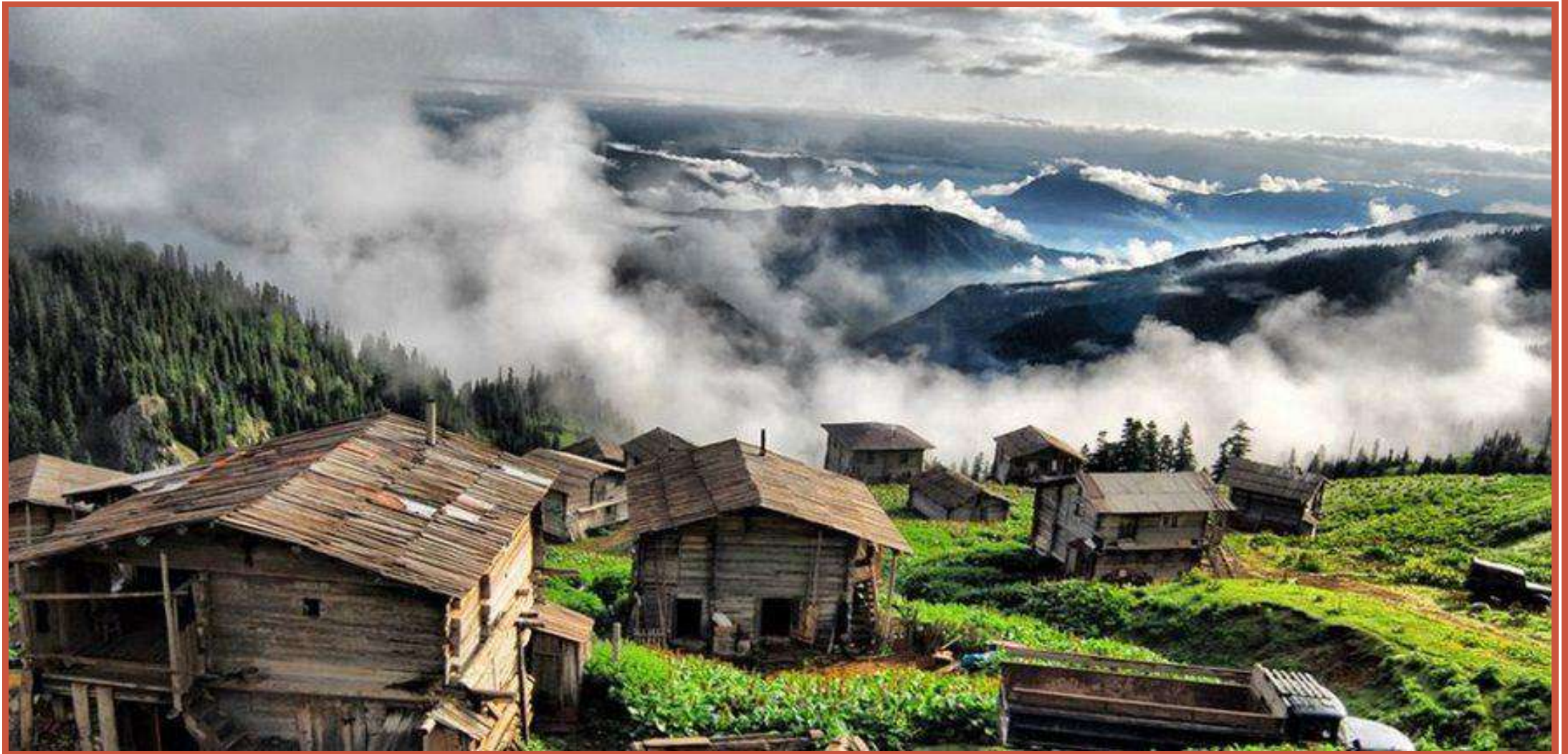
Mountainous Adjara stands out as for its diverse touristic resources

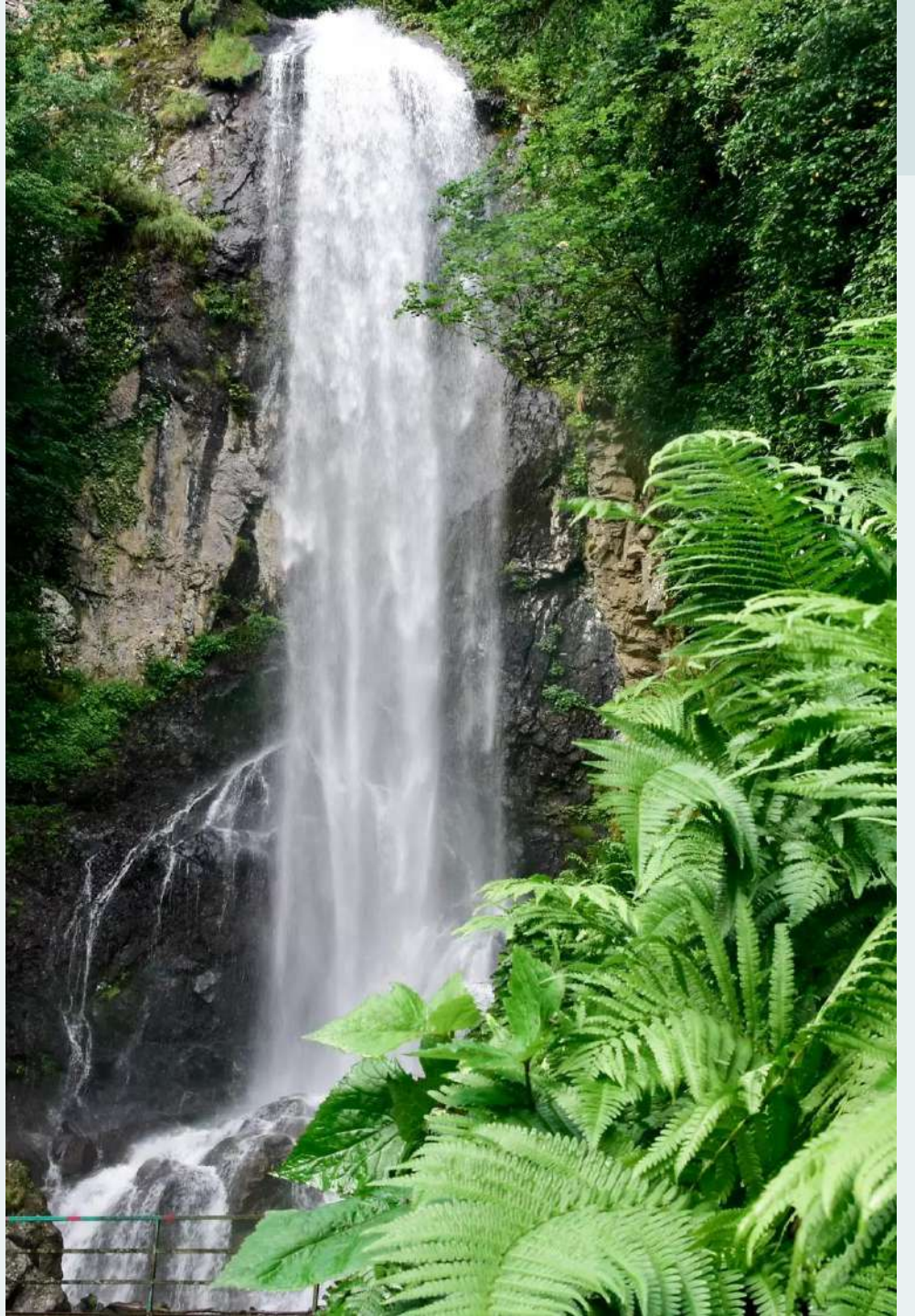


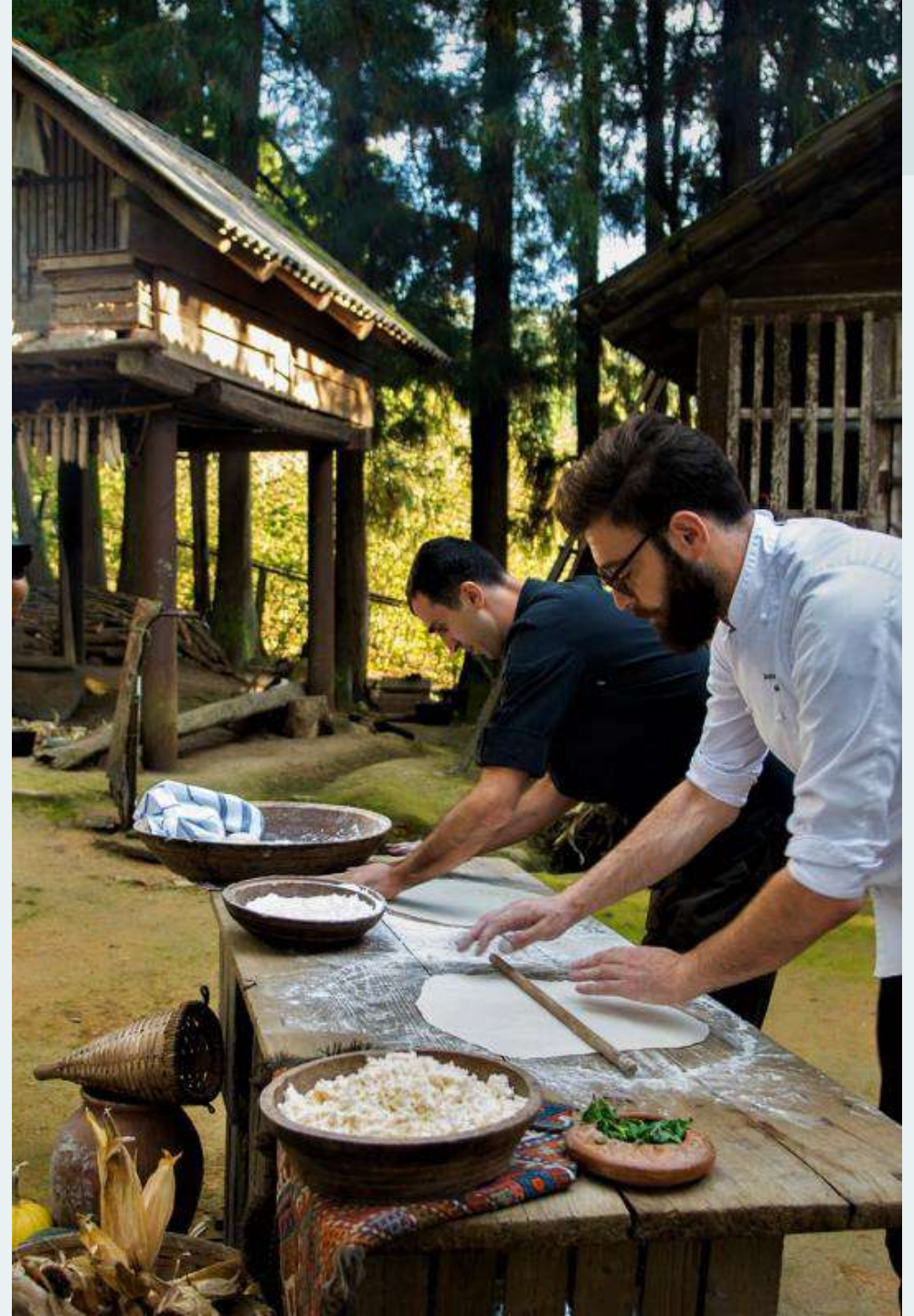




















Methodology

1. Attractiveness of the destination;
2. Accessibility;
3. Infrastructure arrangement;
4. Development potential;
5. Tourism value relative to other destinations in the region.

In 2023-2024, comprehensive in-depth interviews were conducted with individuals directly engaged in the tourism sector of the region, including up to 50 participants, primarily comprising guides and local guesthouse representatives



TRAVEL COMPANY ATSUNTA



RESEARCH CENTER OF GEORGIAN CULTURE
AND TOURISM RESOURCES

Recommendations

- Providing the region with qualified local human resources requires active participation from both the state and the private tourism sector. This involves fostering cooperation with various segments and organizing well-planned awareness and knowledge-raising events.
- Enhancing road and tourist infrastructure will increase the accessibility of destinations and enable the creation of a compelling and competitive tourist product by integrating various destinations.
- Increasing marketing efforts both locally and internationally to raise awareness of the region's tourist attraction is essential for boosting its visibility and appeal.
- In formulating a long-term strategy for planning and development, an advanced approach involves calculating sustainability indicators while considering the present condition of individual elements.
- The creation of unique and exclusive tourist offerings, stemming from the diverse characteristics of the region, can effectively mitigate challenges posed by seasonality.

Hence, leveraging the available resources, the mountainous region of Adjara presents a significant opportunity to cultivate a varied tourist offering, thus appealing to an additional segment. Simultaneously, this endeavor would enhance the potential for shaping Adjara into a comprehensive and universally appealing tourist destination

Achieving this objective requires collaboration with state agencies, the private sector, and the local community



Thank
you

