

Tourism statistics in Azerbaijan

Tourism has an impact for the economy, for the natural and built environment, for the local population at the places visited, and for the visitors themselves. Tourism statistics are necessary for designing marketing strategies, strengthening inter-institutional relations, evaluating the efficiency and effectiveness of management decisions, and measuring tourism throughout the national economy.

The data sources for tourism statistics are available in Azerbaijan are:

- statistical report form “1-tourism” (About activity of travel agencies and tour-operators)
- statistical report form “1-Hotel” (About activity of hotels and similar establishments)
- the SSC-surveys among border crossing travelers
- SSC survey of households (about domestic tourism)

Statistics of tour operators and travel agencies.

Tour operators are businesses that combine two or more travel services (e.g., transport, accommodation, meals, entertainment, sightseeing, etc.) and sell them through travel agencies or directly to final consumers as a single product (called a package tour) for a single price. Tour operators usually operate in their own name and on their own behalf. The operator initially acquires from the tourism industries different services, often a long time ahead and at specially negotiated prices, that are combined and offered as a single, complex product to customers either directly or through travel agencies.

Visitors (or potential visitors), when planning and organizing their trip, often use the services of travel agencies in order to get information on different alternatives and for making their bookings (transport, accommodation, recreation activities either packaged or individually purchased, etc.). Travel agencies operate in some ways as “retailers” of these services that are sold to the public.

Statistical report form ”1-tourism” is presented by tour operators and travel agencies (at the same time by the non-tourism establishments which have regularly and periodically tourism characteristic activities) in annual and semi-annual period., This statistical report form contains information about:

- financial and economic indicators of tour-operators and travel agencies;
- number of employees;
- number of served persons traveling on package tours within and abroad the country;
- charges of tour-operators for the services including package tours;
- cost of package tours;
- breakdown of served persons by types of accommodation and by modes of transport.

This report form filled out by enterprises in on-line mode, or present to local statistical offices. After the statistical processing of data in the report form, the final statistical tables about the activity of tourism firms are obtained.

Accommodation statistics

Overnight visitors usually require some type of accommodation to spend the night and accommodation often represents a significant share of the overall trip expenditures. An important field of tourism policy has to do with the development of hotels and other types of accommodation and tourism authorities request statistics on the type of short term accommodation used by visitors in order to forecast demand for different types of accommodation. Accommodation statistics in Azerbaijan are based on a census operation covering hotels and similar establishments providing paid accommodation. Statistical information about hotels and similar establishments provide important short term indicators for

the evaluation of domestic and inbound overnight travel, as they are generally available quickly. For obtaining data about hotels and similar establishments SSC uses the statistical report form. All entities engaged in accommodation activity have to present this report form.

The statistical report form about the activity hotels and similar establishments contains information about:

- number of accommodated persons;
- number of overnights;
- the number of rooms and beds;
- purposes of trip accommodated visitors;
- the number of inbound and domestic visitors among the accommodated persons;
- the duration of stay accommodated persons;
- financial and economic indicators of establishments.

This report form is filled out by enterprises in on-line mode or presents to local statistical offices, and they input the information to the system. Then after statistical processing general information about hotels and similar establishments are obtained.

Statistics of international and domestic tourism.

In order to obtain data about inbound and outbound tourism SSC carries out border survey. Survey is carried out at the same time in all border crossing points in two phases – in the tourist season (in June), and the other time (in November) and selective medium quantities for annual measurement are computing according to the data by two periods. The border surveys carried out among 5 percent of visitors crossing national borders by interviewing them. Surveys of foreign citizens implemented, mostly at the moment when the travelers are on departure. At the same time survey of Azerbaijan citizens implemented when they return country of residence. For the survey SSC uses a questionnaire form and the interviewer asks the questions contained in the questionnaire. They are :

- the country of residence for and the destination country
- the main purpose of trip,
- the mode of transport,
- the used accommodation establishment,
- personal characteristics.
- expenditures
- duration of stay

After the travellers survey the information in questionnaire forms are inputted by local statistical offices into computer and obtain the summarized data. During the statistical data processing, as a general aggregate for this survey is used information submitted by State Border Service. The State Border Service counts the border crossings, i.e., numbers of travellers, both into and out of Azerbaijan; the counting is comprehensive, all travellers are covered.

In reference of the results of the survey we can obtain information about number of visitors(the number of tourists and the number of same –day visitors) gender and age of visitors, number of tourists traveling by purpose of tourism trips, the types of accommodations and the modes of transport used by visitors, the number of overnights of tourists by regions of Azerbaijan Republic, total sum of expenditures by visitors and its components (accommodation, transportation, excursion, meals, shopping and etc.). The results of the observation published and sent to the commensurate state organizations.

The awareness of the economic importance of domestic tourism has grown significantly in recent years. In order to obtain information on domestic tourism the SSC of Azerbaijan Republic carried out statistical survey in August in 2013, and 0,5 percent of households were involved in the survey. The interviewer fills out the questionnaire according the answers of the households, and then inputs the information into the computer. This survey is carried out once only. As a result, the information obtained from this observation was the number of visitors

travelling by tourism purpose, age and sex of them, the number of visitors by purpose of trips, the number of overnights, the types of accommodation establishments used by visitors, the amount and nature of tourism expenditures (transportation, accommodation, culture, food, sports and entertainment, and other expenses) and etc.