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WORLD TOURISM INDICES AND TOURISM COMPETITION BETWEEN COUNTRIES

This article aims to evaluate tourism competition between countries by examining world tourism indices. Tourism indices are widely used tools to measure and compare the performance of the tourism industry. This study will discuss the Global Tourism Competitiveness Index, Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index and other important indices, explain the calculation methods of the indices and analyze the results. Sustainability, the economic contribution of tourism and future trends are also among the focuses of this article. This study will help us understand how tourism indices affect tourism competition between countries and predict future tourism trends. Major tourist destinations such as Turkey and the USA are making various efforts to promote sustainable tourism practices. This is an important step aimed at growing tourism sectors sustainably in the future. Countries such as Georgia, Azerbaijan and Iran have the potential to offer different experiences for tourists with their cultural diversity and unique traditions. These countries have growth opportunities in the field of cultural tourism. Sustainable tourism practices are important for future growth and success for major tourist destinations. A major tourist destination like the USA aims to make its tourism industry more environmentally friendly by increasing its efforts on sustainability. Iran may not have been able to fully utilize its tourism potential due to regional and international political factors. Security concerns and political instability may limit tourist interest in Iran. As a result, these five countries have different tourism potentials and each offers unique attractions. Turkey, the USA and others aim to grow their tourism sectors in the future by promoting sustainable tourism practices. The competition between the countries examined reflects the development of tourism indices and the diversity of tourist destinations.

Key words: tourism indices, tourism competition, sustainable tourism.

JEL classification: L83, Z32

Introduction. The tourism sector is an important sector that contributes significantly to a country's economic growth, cultural exchange and international relations. Tourism is increasingly taken into account as an aspect of competition between countries [7]. Tourists' preferences can affect the competitiveness of tourist destinations, and therefore tourism indices are widely used to evaluate the tourist attractions of countries.

The tourism sector's foreign exchange inflows to economies, its positive impact on the balance of payments, its contribution to employment, its linkages with other sectors and its positive contribution to income inequality are issues for policymakers to consider. However, in terms of increasing the level of development of developing economies, every foreign exchange income obtained contributes to economic development. In addition, fluctuations in exchange rates directly affect tourism revenues [8]. For these reasons, the dynamic relationship between the exchange rate and tourism indices is noteworthy. The presence of companies in the tourism sector in the financial markets can also be useful for investors in terms of portfolio diversification and risk reduction.

Background. Tourism competitiveness in the literature is summarized as the ability of a geographic region, which is integrated into the consumer group called tourists and provides services, to be competitive in the market through

the creation of value-added products resulting from the combination of tourism products. According to Hassan, tourism competitiveness is the ability of a destination (country) to excel in the market compared to its competitors by creating additional value-added products [1]. Tourism competitiveness means being a place where destination objects are optimized for residents and non-residents, offering quality, innovative, and attractive services to tourists, and gaining significant market share in the local and international tourism market.

The aim of article. This article aims to provide a basic analysis on "World Tourism Indices: Tourism Competition Between Countries". The focus of our analysis is on five important tourist destination countries such as the USA, Azerbaijan, Turkey, Iran and Georgia. These countries are considered attractive destinations for tourists due to their geographical location, cultural heritage and natural beauty. How do these five countries compete in terms of tourism indexes? What factors affect tourists' preferences? We will look for answers to these questions.

Methods. Our article will begin by examining tourism indices around the world and the calculation methods of these indices. Next, we will analyze each country's tourism performance and competition. We will discuss issues such as the rankings of the USA, Azerbaijan, Turkey, Iran and Georgia in tourism indices, their strengths and weaknesses,

environmental sustainability and economic contributions. This analysis will help us better understand the tourism competition between countries using tourism indices and help these five important tourist destination countries. It will help us shed light on its strengths and weaknesses in terms of tourism.

Information about Tourism Indices. Tourism indices are measurements used to evaluate the performance of the tourism sector and measure tourism competition between countries. These indices are created to determine the strengths and weaknesses of tourism, to analyze the competitiveness of tourist destinations and to shape tourism policies.

Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index (TTCI) is another index developed by the World Economic Forum. This index analyzes the competitiveness of countries in the tourism sector and promotes sustainable tourism. This index takes into account various factors when analyzing the competitiveness of tourist destinations and is published with the aim of promoting the development of the tourism sector. According to DIF, Tourism Sector Competitiveness Index, the factors that measure the competitiveness of the tourism sector are grouped under 4 main groups. These are [2]:

- Environmental opportunities;
- Provision of tourism policies and conditions;
- Infrastructure;
- Culture and natural resources.

TTCI includes multiple components to measure tourism competitiveness. These components include factors such as tourist appeal, sustainability, cultural resources, infrastructure, security and price competitiveness. TTCI is used to compare the tourism competitiveness of different countries. Elements such as the touristic attractions of the countries, the services they offer to tourists, their natural beauties and cultural heritage are evaluated [9].

This index promotes sustainable tourism practices. It measures environmental and social impacts and evaluates the sustainability efforts of tourist destinations. The TTCI is prepared using a wide range of data. It includes data in many areas such as the tourism sector, infrastructure, education, security and environmental factors. Every year, worldwide tourism competitiveness results are published in a report [9]. These reports analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the tourism industry and destinations.

Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index is used as an important resource in evaluating the competitiveness of tourist destinations and in developing tourism policies. This index is published in order to increase the sustainability of the tourism sector and contribute to the development of tourist destinations [10].

Tourism Price Competitiveness Index (TPCI) is a index prepared by the World Economic Forum to assess the price competitiveness of tourist destinations. This index analyzes the cost and price levels of products and services offered to tourists by tourist destinations.

TPCI measures the price competitiveness of tourist destinations. In other words, it evaluates how costly a destination is for tourists in terms of expenses such as travel, accommodation, dining, etc. This index is used to compare the price competitiveness of different countries. Tourist preferences can be influenced by a destination's price competitiveness, and countries that offer affordable and budget-friendly travel experiences can become more attractive [11]. TPCI utilizes a wide range of data to determine the prices and costs of tourist destinations. This data includes expenses related to travel, accommodation, dining, and other tourist expenditures. The World Economic Forum regularly publishes TPCI results in the form of reports. These reports provide analyses of the price competitiveness of tourist destinations and evaluate the impact of prices on the tourism sector.

The Tourism Price Competitiveness Index is an important tool for assessing whether tourist destinations offer budget-friendly and affordable travel experiences. The price factor that guides tourists' expenditures can influence the likelihood of a destination being chosen. Therefore, destinations can use this index to increase their price competitiveness [12].

The Global Peace Index (GPI) is a comprehensive measure of peace and stability around the world. It is published annually by the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP), an independent think tank. The GPI assesses the level of peace in 163 countries and regions based on a wide range of factors, including political stability, crime rates, military expenditures, and levels of conflict [13].

The GPI provides a quantitative assessment of peace, aiming to gauge the peacefulness of nations and regions. It takes into account both internal and external factors that

Table 1 – Summary of Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index characteristics

Environmental Opportunities	Provision of Tourism Policy and Terms	Infrastructure	Culture and Natural Resources
Business environment	Prioritization of travel tourism	Air Transport Infrastructure	Natural resources
Safety and security health and hygiene	International Openness	Land and Port Infrastructure	Cultural Resources and
Human Resources and workforce	price competition	Tourism services infrastructure	Business Travel
ICT Readiness	environmental sustainability		

Source: <https://www.weforum.org/reports/travel-and-tourism-development-index>

Table 2 – Tourism Price Competitiveness Index summary

Purchasing Power Parity	Fuel Price	Ticket Price	Taxes Collected	Hotel Price
the price ratio of a standard basket of goods and services in different countries	The ratio of the impact of the fuel price on road costs and tour prices	The ratio of price differences in plane tickets, bus tickets, bus tickets, ship ticket	The rate of increase in prices as a result of the impact of taxes on inputs into countries, local prices	Rate of hotel price volatility

Source: <https://www.weforum.org/reports/the-travel-tourism-competitiveness-report>

Table 3 – Summary of The Global Peace Index indicators

"The Global Peace" index	Low level of corruption – erosion of the rule of law	– Erosion of the rule of law, – Pressures on civil society and the press, – Transparency measures on policy financing – level of inclusion and participation in decision-making processes
	– Pressures on civil society and the press, – Transparency measures on policy financing	Countries that attract the attention of investors
	– level of inclusion and participation in decision-making processes	Supreme, secular, rights-protecting governments
	Healthy business environment Countries that attract the attention of investors	Achieving the welfare of the population by the fair distribution of resources in the country
	A well-functioning government High, secular, governments that protect rights	Availability and accuracy of data
	Equitable distribution of resources Achieving the well-being of the population through the equitable distribution of resources in the country	Absence of threats from any country in the country
	Free flow of data Availability and accuracy of data	High quality of human capital

Source: <https://www.weforum.org/reports>

contribute to peace or conflict. The index uses various indicators to evaluate peace, such as the presence of ongoing conflicts, levels of violent crime, political stability, and the availability of small arms. These indicators are combined to create an overall peace score for each country. Countries are ranked in the GPI from most peaceful to least peaceful. The index allows for comparisons between countries and regions, highlighting areas of concern and those that excel in maintaining peace. The GPI is used by policymakers, governments, and international organizations to identify trends in peace and conflict. It can inform decision-making and policies aimed at promoting peace and stability [14].

The GPI distinguishes between "positive peace" (the absence of violence or the presence of factors that promote peace) and "negative peace" (the absence of violence but without the presence of underlying peace-promoting factors). The GPI often highlights global trends in peace and conflict, helping to shed light on the evolving dynamics of global security. In summary, the Global Peace Index serves as a valuable tool for assessing and understanding the state of peace in the world. It contributes to discussions on conflict resolution, peacebuilding, and international relations by providing a data-driven analysis of global peace levels.

Leading Countries in Tourism Indices. Countries highlighted in tourism indices attract attention with their tourist attractions, quality services, diverse tourist experiences, and sustainable tourism practices. These countries draw the interest of tourists and become competitive tourist destinations by receiving high scores in tourism indices.

Below is a table with information about some of the countries featured in tourism indices [15].

These countries receive high tourism index scores, making them attractive destinations for tourists. This is often due to factors such as rich cultural heritage, natural beauty, affordable travel options, or luxurious vacation opportunities.

Methodology. Tourism has developed in the 20th century as one of the largest, fastest growing and most competitive sectors in the world. Many small businesses have fought back by offering low quality services at high prices. As a result, customers are also dissatisfied. In this part of the study, the selected countries were analyzed according to the indices we have disclosed. These countries were selected from the countries bordering Azerbaijan and the United States from the developed countries of the world. The coding in the table is done with numbers 1-3. 1 – weak, 2 – average, 3 – good. The table was prepared using the indicators located on the official websites of the state statistical committees and tourism agencies of the countries.

In the United States, core elements of ethics include anti-discrimination, common professional conduct, fiscal responsibility, fair labor standards, and honest marketing. In addition, the United States business environment is intolerant of all forms of corruption that require legal prosecution. In the United States, hygiene is an important part of everyday life. You may notice a difference between American hygiene standards and those in other places you've lived before. Good hygiene practices in the United

Table 4 – Some countries that stand out in tourism indices

Country	Tourism Index Score	Notable Features
Spain	High	Known for its rich cultural heritage and famous beaches. It's one of Europe's top tourist destinations.
France	High	Attracts tourists with world-famous cities like Paris, historic regions, and excellent cuisine.
Thailand	Moderate-High	Popular in Asia for its beautiful beaches, exotic culture, and affordable travel options.
New Zealand	Moderate-High	Known for its natural beauty, outdoor activities, and a commitment to sustainable tourism.
Maldives	High	Renowned as a luxury vacation destination with white sandy beaches and crystal-clear waters.
Japan	Moderate-High	Offers a diverse tourist experience with its rich culture, traditions, and modern cities.
Mexico	Moderate-High	Stands out in Latin America with its vibrant culture, historical sites, and beautiful beaches.

Source: prepared by the author

Table 5 – Analysis of tourism indices by country

TOURISM INDEXES	USA	Azerbaijan	Turkey	Iran	Georgia
TRAVEL AND TOURISM COMPETITIVENESS INDEX (TCI)					
ENVIRONMENTAL OPPORTUNITIES					
Work environment	3	3	3	1	2
Security	1	3	1	1	2
Health and Hygiene	3	3	3	2	2
Human resources	3	3	3	2	3
Information Processing Technologies	3	3	3	1	3
PROVISION OF TOURISM POLICIES AND TERMS					
Prioritization of travel tourism	3	3	3	2	3
International Openness	2	3	3	1	3
price competition	1	3	3	3	2
environmental sustainability	3	2	2	3	2
Infrastructure					
Air transport	3	2	3	3	3
Land and Port	3	2	3	3	3
Tourism services infrastructure	3	2	3	2	3
CULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES					
Natural resources	3	3	2	3	3
Cultural Resources and Business Travel	3	3	2	3	3
TRAVEL AND TOURISM DEVELOPMENT INDEX (TTDI)					
business, safety and health conditions	3	3	3	2	2
infrastructure and natural resources	3	3	2	3	3
environment, socio-economic and demand	3	2	3	3	2
TOURISM PRICE COMPETITIVENESS INDEX (TFRE)					
Purchasing Power Parity	3	2	2	3	3
Fuel Price	3	3	1	3	3
Ticket Price	1	2	2	2	2
Taxes Collected	1	3	1	2	3
Hotel Price	2	2	2	3	3
THE GLOBAL PEACE INDEX (GPI)					
The erosion of the rule of law,	3	1	2	1	2
Pressures on civil society and the press,	3	1	2	1	2
Policy funding transparency measures	3	1	2	1	2
level of inclusion and participation in decision-making processes	3	2	3	1	2
Healthy business environment	3	3	3	3	2
A government that works well	3	3	3	1	2
Equitable distribution of resources	3	1	2	3	2
Free data stream	3	3	2	1	2
Good relations with neighbors	1	1	1	1	2
High level of human capital	3	2	3	2	3
Accepting the rights of others	1	2	1	1	2

Source: prepared by the author

States include maintaining good personal hygiene and keeping your home and public areas clean, including the area around your home and workplace.

It seems logical to move on to the study of the role of human capital in the United States. Thus, at the beginning of the 21st century, human capital in the United States accounted for 77% of the total national wealth, 17% of physical (reproducible) capital (or \$28 trillion), and 6% of natural resources. Thus, high economic growth will be ensured in the country where human capital is rapidly accumulating. the experience of the United States, the country with the world's most developed information and telecommunication infrastructure, is very interesting in terms of the analysis of trends in state, budget, investment, scientific-technical and personnel policies [3].

Recent legislative innovations in the field of tourism at the federal level in the United States have not been mainly about tightening regulations, but about creating additional opportunities to stimulate tourism activity – and mainly for inbound and outbound tourism. US federal authorities follow a fairly strict and consistent line regarding the regulation of the aviation industry in order to fully protect the rights of tourists.

At the same time, the US federal authorities follow a fairly strict and consistent line regarding the regulation of the aviation industry in order to fully protect the rights of tourists. At the federal level, these matters are specifically under the jurisdiction of the Department of Transportation (DOT), which is under the Federal Aviation Administration

(FAA). The Ministry ensures that the airlines follow the rules of domestic carriage. They are quite strict and superior to the Montreal Convention. US participation in international commodity, capital and labor flows is expanding, the American economy is becoming more involved in the world economy and regional economic groupings.

Europe has overtaken the United States in terms of competition in the last 30 years. In recent decades, the American regulatory system has become more expensive, complex, less predictable, and its intrusion into business has grown markedly. Since the early 1990s, 75% of American industries (in terms of revenue and investment) have increased concentration and profits in American markets, while Europe has not. Concentration has caused prices (adjusted for wages and productivity) to rise faster in the United States than in Europe [4].

Turkey, which did not pay enough attention to the tourism sector until 1960, included the necessary measures for the development of tourism in the 5-year development plans that began to be implemented after this date. Turkey has been implementing the principles of a planned mixed economic policy since 1963. This economic policy is implemented through five-year development plans and annual programs. During the planned development periods, many measures related to the tourism sector were implemented and implemented. Initially, measures taken to meet the needs of accommodation and other establishments to meet tourism demand have changed over time according to the different needs of the Turkish tourism sector. These changes are evident when the content of the development plans is examined.

If we look at the values of the country in the tourism sector in Turkey, it seems that there is still not enough development. Although Turkey has ideal opportunities for tourism in various aspects, it can use only a part of its potential because the necessary arrangements are not made in time. The cause of this situation is related to some problems in the tourism sector [5].

In order to increase the development potential of the tourism sector, there is an aim to direct the tourism sector to the right targets and audiences based on the incentives, planning and policies implemented by the states. In this regard, the conversion of unused potential into investment in the tourism sector or the promotion and protection of entrepreneurship in the regions that remain in the background is largely the duty of the state. The state has been promoting the tourism sector since 1982 within the framework of various opportunities with the concept of protection system.

Behind the undeniable development in the tourism sector, the share of tourism incentives is very important. Today, the incentives and supports associated with the culture and tourism sector, which has become an industry, are very different, and inclusion and integrity are focused on many points. If we look at the government's incentives in this area, it seems that a significant part of it focuses on physical infrastructure solutions for tourism. However, the supports were not limited to this, it continued with various supports in many different areas such as publicity, promotion, fair participation, film production and sponsorship. Public incentives in this area are not limited to the evaluation of the country's tourism values. There are important incentives for the diversification and production of cultural products [6].

With an area of 1007990.08 km², Iran has a unique diversity in terms of cultural, ethnic, linguistic, climatic, architectural and historical features. In Iran, there are 30 sights and 74 other places and monuments registered in UNESCO in the pilot list of this international organization. Iran has burning deserts, humid forests and cold mountainous regions. Also, the presence of a number of holy Shiite shrines in this country has given Iran a good position in the field of religious tourism. Affordable costs as well as advanced medical and healthcare services in Iran have made this country one of the strongest countries to become a medical tourism center in the region and even the world. Iran is compared to countries like Egypt, Greece, India, Italy and Turkey due to its historical importance, cultural and natural glory. Iran ranks first in the world in terms of the price competitiveness of tourism. Despite the high potential of Iran's tourism industry to generate income and improve the economic situation, the indicators do not show a satisfactory situation in this area.

Georgia has great potential for the development of tourism with its natural beauty, diverse topography, pleasant climate, unique cuisine, rich culture and history. To facilitate tourism, the Georgian government has eased the visa regime, increased construction of highways, privatized amusement parks and hotels, and established limited tax incentives for tour operators. New developments across the country, including the seaside resort of Batumi; in Gudauri, Goderdzi, Bakuriani and Mestia ski resorts; and Kakheti, a wine-growing region, strengthens Georgia as an attractive tourist destination.

Tour operators in Georgia report an increase in tourists in both summer and winter, especially in adventure and cultural tourism. Despite this interest in travel to Georgia, suitable accommodation outside the capital and in the main resort areas is still scarce, as facilities are not maintained or available. The seaside resorts of Batumi and Kobuleti are developing rapidly. Foreign investment has supported the construction of high-end hotels such as Sheraton, Radisson, Biltmore, Marriott, Hilton, Best Western, Windham, Millennium and Rixos all over the country. In order to develop new tourism destinations, the government is promoting the coastal areas and the mountainous cities of Svaneti and Racha by building the necessary infrastructure and offering preferential terms to potential investors. The World Bank's road rehabilitation and construction projects aim to promote tourism by reducing travel time, increasing vehicle safety, and facilitating the movement of goods within the country. The World Bank is implementing a long-term program aimed at nature conservation, cultural heritage protection and sustainable tourism development. The State Partnership Fund and the private Georgian Joint Investment Fund (GCF) are looking at investment opportunities in tourism infrastructure and are interested in partnering with investors in these projects.

Discussion. As a result, due to different guidelines, mutual refinement was carried out according to the guidelines to which each country belongs.

According to the travel and tourism competitiveness index, according to the results of the countries, it can be seen that Azerbaijan and the USA are in the first place in terms of environmental opportunities. According to these indicators, the lowest indicator belongs to Iran.

According to the results of the travel and tourism development index, the USA, Azerbaijan and Turkey are in the

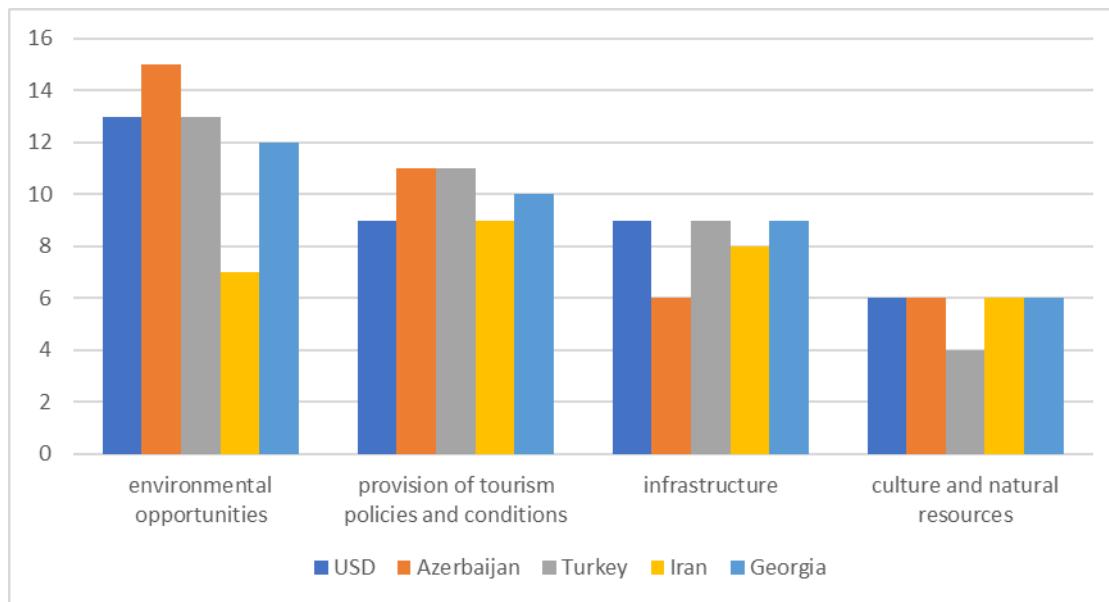


Figure 1 – Disclosure of countries according to travel and tourism competitiveness index (TcI)

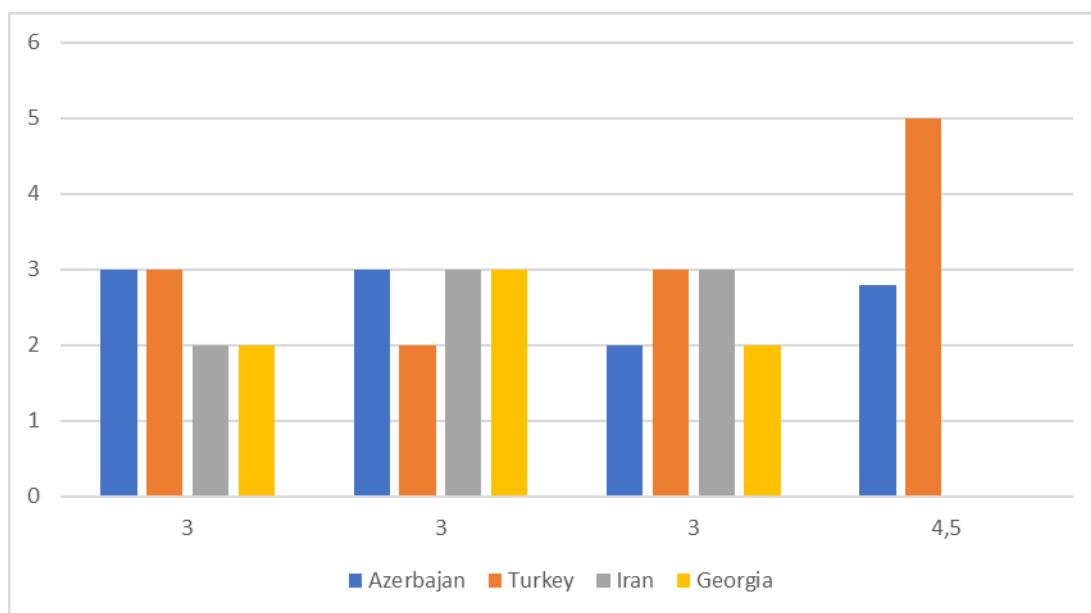


Figure 2 – Travel and tourism development index

first place. These countries are developed countries in terms of infrastructure and natural resources, environment, socio-economic and demand. Although Iran and Georgia are rich countries in terms of infrastructure and natural resources, they are lagging behind in terms of safety and health indicators.

According to the results, the United States, Iran and Georgia are in the first place in terms of purchasing power. According to the affordability of the fuel price, USA, Azerbaijan, Iran and Turkey are rated as very good. Except for the United States, every region selected for ticket prices is affordable for tourists. The best indicators of hotel prices were seen for Iran and Georgia.

According to The Global Peace Index, the United States ranks first in terms of indicators. They are simply

lacking in terms of relations with neighbors and accepting the rights of others. According to these indicators, Azerbaijan continues to improve. Iran has the lowest levels according to these indicators.

Results. Comparative analysis of Azerbaijan, Turkey, Iran and Georgia led us to the following conclusions.

Among the countries examined, Turkey generally ranks high in tourism indices. Turkey stands out as an attractive destination for tourists, especially with its rich cultural heritage, beautiful beaches, historical regions and affordable travel options. Countries such as Iran, Georgia and Azerbaijan seem to have taken steps to further develop their tourism potential. These countries have the potential to grow in tourism with their natural beauties, historical and cultural riches.

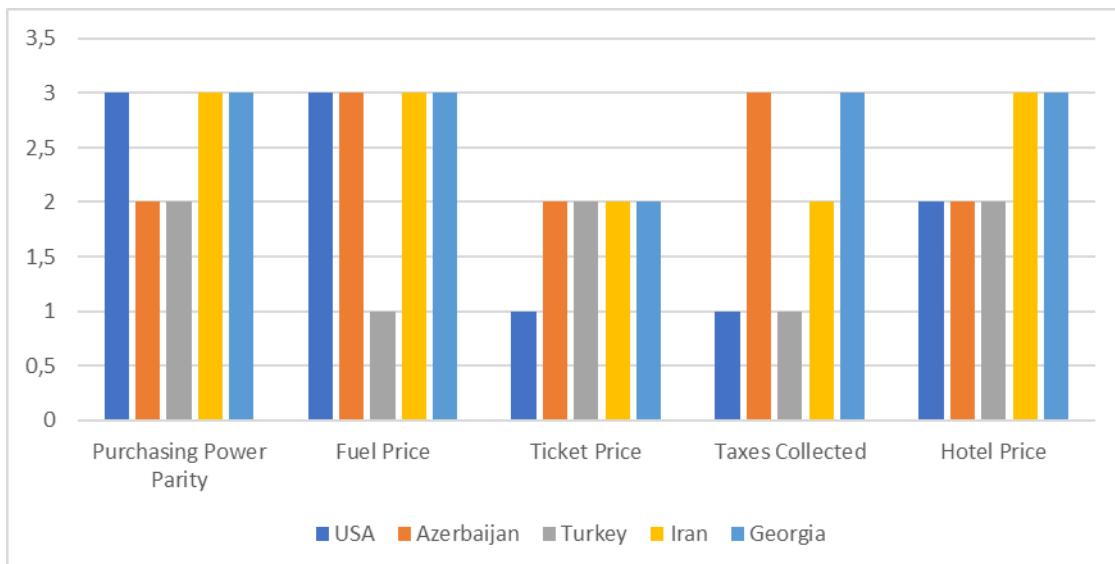


Figure 3 – Tourism price competitiveness index (Tfre)

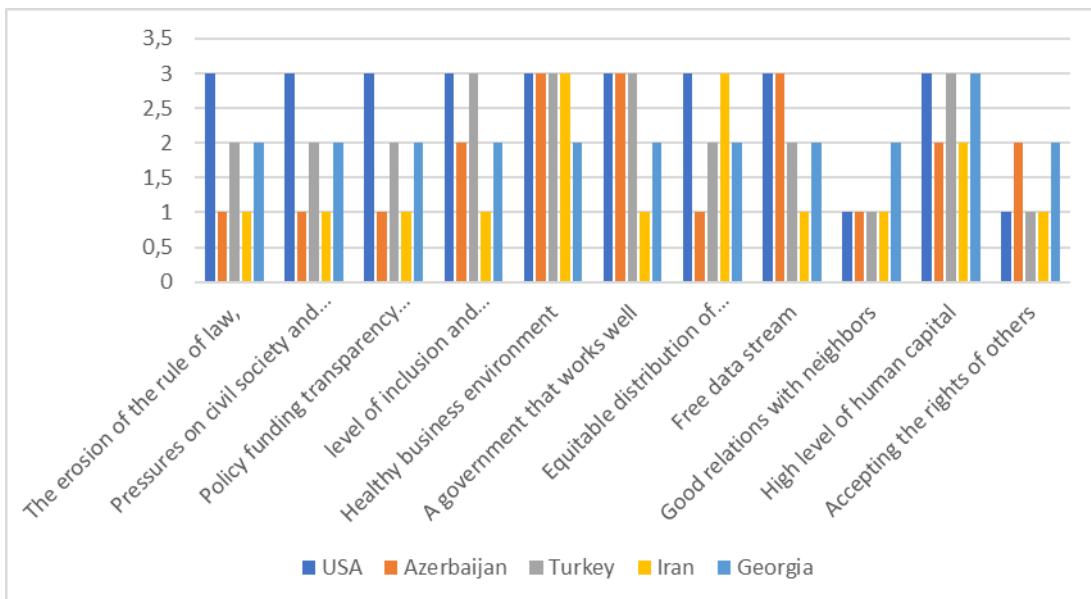


Figure 4 – The Global Peace Index (GPI)

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СВІТОВІ ТУРИСТИЧНІ ІНДЕКСИ ТА ТУРИСТИЧНА КОНКУРЕНЦІЯ МІЖ КРАЇНАМИ

Ця стаття має на меті оцінити туристичну конкуренцію між країнами шляхом дослідження світових індексів туризму. Індекси туризму – це широко використовувані інструменти для вимірювання та порівняння показників індустрії туризму. У цьому дослідженні обговорюватимуться глобальний індекс конкурентоспроможності туризму, індекс конкурентоспроможності подорожей і туризму та інші важливі індекси, пояснюються методи розрахунку індексів та аналізуються результати. Стійкість, економічний внесок туризму та майбутні тенденції також знаходяться в центрі уваги цієї статті. Це дослідження допоможе нам зрозуміти, як індекси туризму впливають на туристичну конкуренцію між країнами, і спрогнозувати майбутні тенденції. Основні туристичні напрямки, такі як Туреччина та США, докладають різноманітних зусиль для просування практики сталого туризму. Це важливий крок, спрямований на стало зростання туристичних секторів у майбутньому. Такі країни, як Грузія, Азербайджан та Іран, мають потенціал, щоб запропонувати різні враження для туристів завдяки їхньому культурному розмаїттю та унікальним традиціям. Ці країни мають можливості для зростання у сфері культурного туризму. Практики сталого туризму важливі для майбутнього зростання та успіху основних туристичних напрямків. Таке велике туристичне місце, як США, прагне зробити свою індустрію туризму більш екологічною, посиливши зусилля щодо сталого розвитку. Можливо, Іран не зміг повністю використати свій туристичний потенціал через регіональні та міжнародні політичні чинники. Проблеми безпеки та політична нестабільність можуть обмежити туристичний інтерес до Ірану. У результаті ці п'ять країн мають різний туристичний потенціал, але кожна пропонує унікальні пам'ятки. Туреччина, США та інші країни прагнуть розвивати свій туристичний сектор у майбутньому, просуваючи практики сталого туризму. Конкуренція між досліджуваними країнами відображає розвиток показників туризму та різноманітність туристичних напрямків.

Ключові слова: туристичні показники, туристична конкуренція, сталий туризм.