

The State Support to the Tourism Policy Formation Mechanism in Black Sea Basin Countries (Azerbaijan, Turkey, Russia, Georgia) and Its Impact on Sustainable Tourism Development

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Abstract—The article analyzes state support and policy mechanisms aimed at driving tourism as one of the vibrant and rapidly developing economies. State programs and long-range strategic roadmaps and previous programs execution, results and their impact on the particular countries economy have been raised during the research. This theme provides a useful framework for discussions with a wider range of stakeholders as the implications arising are of importance both for academics and practitioners engaged in hospitality and tourism development and research. The impact that tourism has on sustainable regional development in emerging markets is highly substantial. For Azerbaijan, Turkey, Georgia, and Russia, with their rich natural resources and cultural heritage, tourism can be an important basis for economic expansion, and a way to form an acceptable image of the countries as safe, open, hospitable, and complex.

Keywords—Sustainable tourism, hospitality, destination, strategic roadmap, tourism, economy, growth, state support, mechanism, policy formation, state program.

I. INTRODUCTION

OVER the decades, tourism has experienced continued growth and deepening diversification to become one of the fastest growing economic sectors in the world. "Modern tourism, which encompasses a growing amount of locations, is closely linked to growth" states the World Tourism Organization. The dynamics have made tourism an important driver of cultural and social-economic progress. [1], [2] Tourism is the world's largest and one of the emerging industries worldwide [3]. Tourism is considered as the sphere's largest employer and also as major sources of substantial foreign exchange earner to any country [4]. Tourism is one of the major resources that help development of local community through sustainable tourism practices [5]. International tourism forecast is to reach 1.8 billion tourists by 2030, [6] nearly double of the current levels. In order to reduce the negative impacts of this growth, sustainable development is essential for all stakeholders in tourism.

In order to maintain a stronger financial position for the local employees, corporate and business, sustainable tourism is critical to the financial and health care of developing countries

[7]. Sustainable tourism creates little and micro business opportunities, according to the United States International Development Agency (USAID), which supports the development and implementation of sustainable tourism initiatives throughout the world. In specific, women and young individuals can discover permanent job to lift their families out of poverty [8].

This article's purpose is to review the mechanism and support the Government of Black City Basin countries have established towards the sustainable tourism development which impacts the overall welfare and maintain the sustainability of tourism within the countries.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS

The concept of sustainability originally evolved in 1960s and its origin relates to the environmentalism. During that period people concerned at the continuing growth of industrial sector and population critically and it was perceived that these developments force to damage the environment irreversibly [9]. Sustainability is the capacity to endure [10], [11]. The term sustainability comes from Latin and enhancement meets current requirements without affecting future generations' capacity to satisfy their own requirements [12].

As per United Nations World Tourism Organisation sustainable tourism can be defined as "Any form of tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, and the environment and host communities". Sustainable tourism commonly implies applying the concepts of property development within the business enterprise industry [13]. It can also be defined as a positive approach which aims at the reduction of pressures which are created by the bonds between the tourism industry, guests, host population, and the environment [9], [14].

The 64 Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) and eight MAPS country roadmaps demonstrated that public reporting on the Sustainable Development Goals recognizes the value of tourism not only as a driver but also as an accelerator of the Sustainable Development Goals due to its crosscutting and multiplying effect on other sectors and industries [15]. The

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growing recognition and achievement of the 2030. Agenda for Tourism is an historic breakthrough which offers all governments a unique opportunity to create a sound and supportive policy foundation. In particular, tourist policymakers should be encouraged and empowered active participation in the national Sustainable Development Goals planning [15].

Despite the clear identification of tourism's potential to advance the Sustainable Development Goals, few tourism policymakers – in both developed and developing countries – seem to be currently involved in national Sustainable Development Goals planning. It is essential that the tourism authorities participate fully in the institutional mechanisms of the Sustainable Development Goals and participate actively in the formulation of national policies, strategies, plans of action and processes. Tourism policymakers must also strengthen their dialog with other ministers, the private sector as well as other concerned visitors – and their impact on other sectors and industries – for political decision makers to profit from tourism connections. Similarly, addressing the challenges and threats of tourism as identified above will require integrated policies that fully take into account tourism's crosscutting impacts on the Sustainable Development Goals [15].

Tourism's sustainable development is an economic necessity and a current trend, both of which are closely linked and interdependent. Tourism can promote sustainable development in this regard [16]: Provide opportunities for economic development and job creation, stimulate investment and support local services; Improved use of all resource categories; contribution to world peacekeeping and intercultural understanding [17].

In addition, the publication released on Perceptions of Tourism, Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change states that "sustainable tourism is developing the idea of serving the needs of present tourists and the tourist industry and at the same time, protecting the environment and the opportunities for the future". It thus provides for all the financial, social and aesthetic requirements of tourism performers to be met, for all structures that promote lives and preserve their cultural and environmental integrity, their biological diversity [18].

Sustainable growth of tourism needs the participation of all stakeholders, namely personal accountability, and teamwork and, not least, territorial coordination [17]. This should be seen in terms of the partnership for the use of funds and for shared assistance, among other operations, as part of a viable growth that is essential for its effect in the other sector to be taken into account [19]. In addition, the shared dependence on sustainability and quality is emphasized in viable tourism Quality tourism goods and locations that fulfill viable demands should be recognized and should not be concentrated solely on meeting visitor needs. Tourists are thus committed to contributing to environmental safety and conservation [20]. Sustainable tourism is thus a requirement, because it enables a competitive benefit to be achieved by preserving the value of the natural, cultural and social setting of the destination [17].

III. STATE SUPPORT AND TOURISM MECHANISM FORMATION IN TURKEY

To emphasize the importance of sustainable tourism for the whole world, the United Nations declared 2017 the "International Year for Sustainable Tourism for Development". Sustainable tourism is of crucial significance, in specific, for all kinds of tourism in Turkey. In latest years, there have been distinct good methods of viable tourism in Turkey with regard to nationally/internationally financed initiatives, research on social accountability, public and NGO companies.

The World Economic Forum's "Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Report 2017" [22] ranks Turkey 44th out of 136 analyzed countries for tourism competitiveness. According to the report, strong points of the destination are the cultural resources and business travel (16th), air transport infrastructure (14th), the tourist service infrastructure (42nd) and the international openness (50th), in particular the number of Visa required (34th). On the other hand, weakest points are country brand strategy rating (115th), attention paid to environmental sustainability (112th) and also price competitiveness (70th).

It is reported that [22] Turkey started a new strategy in tourism which consists in opening towards new markets, such as China, India, Japan, South Korea, Indonesia and Malaysia and, at the same time, diversifying products, from health to religious tourism, from winter to congress tourism. The Minister reports that [21], [22] here is a growing focus on gastronomic diversity of Turkey, and each region in conjunction with tourism boards, local governments and gastronomic associations are working hard to promote their area's offers.

A long-standing relationship with United Nations Development Program and the Ministry for Culture and Tourism since 2007 has focused on three project alliances on rural, social and winter-tourism. In order to develop processes to promote local tourism projects, the Future Lies in Tourism Support Fund is founded on achievement and lessons learned. [21].

With the support of careful planning, strategy formulation and management; negative impacts can be minimized and positive impacts can be maximized. 2017 has been declared by the United Nations as the "International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development" [23] and it is therefore opportune to consider how tourism may contribute to sustainable development of destinations in Turkey. The concept of sustainable tourism was first mentioned in 8th Five-Year Development Plan (2001-2005) in Turkey. In the 2023 Tourism Strategy also, the principle of sustainability is often cited. Nowadays especially the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism, [24], [25] Non-Government Organizations and local authorities are increasingly starting to realize the importance of sustainable tourism development. And as a developing country, studies on this subject are increasing day by day and different experiences stand out.

According to the Invest in Turkey governmental initiative, an intensely cognizant effort has been created to speculate within the commercial enterprise trade as how to foster socio-economic development throughout the country. As such, "the

Ministry of Tourism and non-governmental actors of the travel industry operate towards increasing business travel receipts by utilizing the over-all potential of numerous opportunities in this key industry" [25].

The Ministry for Tourism works with the Turkish Tourism Investor Association to boost the inflow of foreign funds, and to simplify the process. Moving forward, a number of encouragements have been designed to motivate foreign investors to have real estates in the country, ranging from upfront tax reduction schemes to access to tourism development funds and a land allocation Programme [24].

According to Invest In Turkey, "the combined efforts of the government and industry organizations have already enabled the rise of investment in new areas, such as construction of large convention and expo centers which boost convention tourism, particularly in the country's largest city, Istanbul" [26].

2023 Turkey's tourism strategy emphasizes growth in tourism operations in line with worldwide tourism and patterns in growth. The 2023 Tourism Strategy seeks to provide jobs and income to all sectors of culture by increasing tourism profits by making balanced use of and preservation of historic natural, cultural and historical resources. The organization and management of company enterprises, quality of service, sales and advancement are also important for the assistance of latest projects, such as towns and roads for businesses. At the same moment, this approach seeks to institutionalize management systems which allow different sections of the community to review and implement procedures together with Civil Society Organizations, non-public industry and indigenous players [21], [26].

There is a need to connect stakeholders and establish a virtuous circle for tourism development in order to achieve the goals of revitalizing regional economies, creating jobs, preserving local culture, developing local communities, and protecting the environmental ecosystem. For good governance, all stakeholders should be represented in the decision-making and empowered to contribute to those decisions [27].

IV. STATE SUPPORT AND TOURISM MECHANISM FORMATION IN AZERBAIJAN

The modern development of tourism has begun since 1991, when Azerbaijan gained its independence. In the first years of independence, Azerbaijan has faced numerous problems, and the indicators on almost all industries of economy have fallen. One of the factors that directly complicated the situation and directly influenced the development of tourism was Azerbaijan to suffer from military aggression and to be in war condition. The turning point in the economy has begun in 1994 with the signing of an oil contract called the "Contract of the Century" with the participation of several foreign companies. Firstly, the contract, which envisaged the development and export of the oil field, also intended the development of non-oil sectors (including tourism) with oil revenues.

The main goals of state regulation of tourism are follows: ensuring the constitutional rights of people to rest; creating of the appropriate conditions for the development of tourism; using efficiently of country's cultural potential for tourism

development. In order to achieve these goals, the government should first assess the position of tourism in the people's lives and create favorable conditions for tourism activities. These conditions must be reflected in relevant legislative and normative documents. For the purpose of creating the necessary conditions for the development of tourism in Azerbaijan and regions, regulatory and legislative acts on tourism industry include "The Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan On Tourism" (1999), "Tourism Development in the Republic of Azerbaijan in 2002-2005" (2002), "State Programs on the Development of Tourism in the Republic of Azerbaijan in 2010-2014" Azerbaijan 2020: Look into the Future" Development Concept (2012), The Strategic Roadmap for the Development of Specialized Tourism (2016). The Strategic Road Map (2016) intends to develop a tourism development strategy in the country and implement a plan of action related to it. The Strategic Roadmap includes the support of the development of the tourism sector, provision of high-quality and competitive tourism services at international and domestic markets, formulation of tourism experience in line with national values, involvement of new investment projects based on modern ideas and innovations, and interaction of relevant bodies related to the development of tourism. It is forecasted that as a result of realization of the targets for the period up to 2020, [28] the real GDP in Azerbaijan will increase directly to 293 million and indirectly 172 million AZN in 2020, and 25000 direct job opportunities will be opened by being only 35000 totally in the tourism sector. To achieve this goal, improvement of tourism infrastructure, successful promotion of local values in the international arena, formation of national tourism brands, improvement of tourism management, and human capital formation in tourism are of great importance.

In Azerbaijan the studies on tourism conducted academic researchers can be noted. The average number of entrepreneurs in the tourism sector has increased by 4.5% in the last five years [29]. In 2017, the number of tourists visiting the country increased by 3.5 times compared to 2005. The average growth rate in each period studied is approximately 111% [30].

The 2017 edition of the Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Report finds [22] that several developing and emerging economies have significantly improved their performance scores from 2015, when the previous edition was published. Indeed, 12 of the top 15 most-improved countries are developing and emerging markets, with at least one country from each of the five geographical macro-regions represented in the Report. According to the ranking of Most Improved Countries in the World Economic Forum Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report [22]. Azerbaijan was on 71st place out of 136 countries with 5.98% change in performance versus 2015 and improved its place to 13th rank since 2015 which is the highest score within 136 countries.

Azerbaijan (71st) [22], which has 13 positions in worldwide rankings, is the largest enhanced economy in 2017. Although the global shipments of Azerbaijan declined in 2015 due to a financial slowdown in the area, global shipments have been increasing since 2010 and the investment of the country in the industry has increased, with the increase in the ratings, and the

T&T industry will definitely profit in the future. The liberalization of Azerbaijan's visa system resulted in an increase in openness to Azerbaijan (77). Simultaneously, the nation has created attempts to increase its natural and cultural assets through the growth of all protected fields (83rd) and through the active promotion of verbal and intangible cultural representations (14th). Thanks to a 31st decrease in hotel rates and exchange rate changes, Azerbaijan has become a cheaper target. The comparatively secure (35th) climate, versatile workforce (20th) and health-positive (37th) circumstances in Azerbaijan are contributing to Azerbaijan's increasing attraction. Yet the competitiveness of the country's technology could be even strengthened further, by improving air transport (now 77th) with a focus on natural and cultural assets (109th and 69th respectively) [22].

The "state program on tourism growth in the Republic of Azerbaijan in 2002–2005" was adopted by Decree No. 1029 of 27 August 2002 [31], which produced favorable circumstances for tourism growth and established the basis for the inclusion of the country into the worldwide tourism industry (Azerbaijan Economic Review 20). (Azerbaijan Economic reforms Review 20). It was asked to create a strategy and intervention plan for financial growth by 2020, strategic vision until 2025, and aspirational vision after 2025 [31].

In order to attain long-term plans for tourism, Azerbaijan has described four main targets for 2020 to attain complete tourist potentials through the attraction of more global tourists ; developing regional tourism sub-sectors for domestic and regional tourists; creating a national tourism quality system to increase tourists' satisfaction. As indicated in the Review of AER 2017, it was endorsed by a decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan No 838 of 6 April 2010 on the successful implementation of prior programs, the State Program for tourism growth in the Republic of Azerbaijan in 2010 – 2014. Tourists from nearly all nations are received in Azerbaijan. The strategic tourism objectives of Azerbaijan could be developed to attract tourists from the following key sources [31], [32]:

- Azerbaijan itself (local demand from domestic tourists);
- The neighboring nations of Turkey, Iran, Georgia, Israel and Russia;
- The Gulf area of Iraq, Iraq, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Russia;
- The nations of the CIS including Belarus, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan;
- Mass tourism destinations not limited as Canada, China, the European Union, India, Japan, South Korea and the USA. [33]

In addition to above highlights on market penetration to Azerbaijan tourism it has been evaluated to impact the flow from the new destinations such as India, China, Korea and Mexico.

Azerbaijan's strategic vision for 2020 is to develop the capital into a significant touristic destination, understand touristy potential for the whole country, and establish favorable conditions and infrastructure for tourism prosperity, alongside with increasing level of guest satisfaction among tourists. The

activities that are to be implemented by 2020: Strengthening advertising and branding attempts to completely exploit current cultural-historical locations of Baku and contemporary facilities and better coordinate promotion and advocacy actions in the nation by adopting steps to encourage the implementation of the visa process for visitor preferences in various sectors and improve air co-contracting, for example by establishing streamlined and accelerated visas.; investment in personnel training programs to grow guest satisfaction and establishing top quality commercial enterprise system likewise as improving standardization and license systems within the industry [31], [32].

From a long - term perspective until 2025, Azerbaijan would leave key achievements on its way to this vision in terms of branding and marketing campaigns, airline and ground connectivity, infrastructure, tourism topics and their operation, business and vocational tourism education. [31], [32]. In tourism sector, the following priorities are estimated to achieve:

- Increase Country Gross Domestic Product in nominal terms by AZN 465 million in 2020;
- Contribute 36,600 total and 25,000 direct (tourist industry) jobs by executing on its priorities in Baku and other regions.

Six optimal targets for 2020 are identified to achieve this significant effect [31], [33]

1. Growth of nights stayed by international travelers in hotels and hotel-type accommodation facilities in Baku by the timeline to a minimum of 3.65 million from estimated 0.8 million in 2015;
2. Upturn the optimal length of stay of the travelers from 2 to 3 days;
3. Increase the number of guests accommodated in hotels and hotel-type lodging facilities in Baku from 0.5 million in 2015 to 0.9 million in 2020, and the tourists being non accommodated at hotels or other lodging facilities from 0.8 million in 2015 to 1.5 million in 2020;
4. Steadily lodge 265 thousand low-cost traveler arrivals;
5. Increase utilization rate in wellness and medical / spa facilities from current 40% (Naftalan) to 65%;
6. Attract 180 thousand visitors to attractions located along the "Silk Road" and other cultural tourism routes. [31], [32].

Strategic objectives supported by the State on tourism development are highlighted as following:

- Attain more long - term foreign tourist arrivals in Baku by establishing an efficient governance mechanism to fully exploit the tourism potential of Baku, strengthen advertising and marketing initiatives, upgrade tourism route content and keep improving tourism infrastructure;
- Optimize boundary arrival and departure to establish a desired situation in the country, improve carefully planned activity among the various parties in the tourism sector and accomplish long - term advancement by adopting support mechanisms such as tourism and leisure regions [31] ASAN Visa launch has eased the process of obtaining the Visa within 3 hours to 7 days from the time of application which used to be 21 days before arrival and obstacles with

the access to the Embassies or Consulates of the residing countries

- Evolve territorial tourism under different themes, i.e. health and wellbeing, winter / ski, cultural heritage, business, eco - tourism and rural tourism, expand Azerbaijan's tourism products and generate more visitors on a long - term basis ; achieve elevated tourism satisfaction by setting up a tourism quality system to grow the quantity and quality of tourism service factors [32].

Since April 2018 the establishment of Azerbaijan State Tourism Agency and Tourism Board of Azerbaijan had its impact in executing the range of reforms in this direction starting from setting the new brand Logo –Take Another Look Azerbaijan.

The Azerbaijan Tourism Board launched its new “Take another Look” campaign with presentation at the First Hospitality Assembly with the statement aiming at doubling up the number of tourists’ arrival to the country by 2023. [34] Azerbaijan has introduced a new online visa system to issue single-entry, 30-day e-visas to people of 81 different nationalities, including the USA, the Great Britain, Canada, New Zealand, several EU countries and the Middle East, Asia, Central and South America. Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan have also simplified their visa procedures, making it easier for international travelers to explore the entire region [32].

This scheme is perfect for those wishing to discover Central Asian ancestral Silk Road towns. Azerbaijan will also be particularly attractive for present and future years, since it will take high-profile sports events such as the Formula 1 GP in Azerbaijan, which will extend to 2023. In this regards President Ilham Aliyev has signed an order simplifying visa procedures for foreigners and stateless persons traveling to the Republic of Azerbaijan in connection with the 2019 Formula 1 Azerbaijan Grand Prix, similar to 2018.

Under the presidential order, foreign citizens and stateless persons traveling to the country in connection with the 2019 Formula 1 Azerbaijan Grand Prix may get a visa – from March 15 to May 15 – from the representative offices of the Consular Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan at international airports upon arrival) and UEFA Europe League Final in 2019 as well as UEFA 2020; Youth Olympic Forum 2019; Air Cargo Summit 2019; CANSO Global 2020; World Bank 2021 that will highlight Azerbaijan, its economy, tourism and hospitality in the world scale.

V.STATE SUPPORT AND TOURISM MECHANISM FORMATION IN GEORGIA

Development of international tourism has started in Georgia since 1995. [35] The number of tourists was increasing by 70%-80% during 2005-2007. According to the data of the Tourism and Resort Department, 983,114 tourists visited Georgia in 2006, with 1,051,769 in 2007; however, war in 2008 August reduced this figure significantly. In 2014, Georgia was among the top 50 tourist destinations listed by “National Geographic Traveler”. It underlined Georgian cuisine, wine and culture. Georgia was listed next to countries such as France, Italy, Portugal, Switzerland, Scotland, Sweden and Denmark. Aside

from this, Georgia was listed in the top 10 safest countries to travel in several international ratings. And success in international relations saw the country host the fourth meeting of the Silk Road working group [35]. The reasons for such a huge change in tourist arrivals and transforming tourism industry into the main revenue generators of the country were:

- Fast development of tourism infrastructure;
- Worldwide advertisement of tourism offerings of Georgia;
- Appointment of direct charter flights;
- Organization of different cultural activities (festivals, concerts, etc.);

Visiting places of untouched nature is becoming a more popular holiday and relaxation alternative, and Georgia has an abundance of such places, with many types of tourism-recreational resources and biodiversity of resources available in the country [35].

Many activities are being carried out to increase international tourism in Georgia. These include improving infrastructure, simplifying international travel requirements, increasing awareness of Georgia, implementing marketing activities at international and domestic markets, developing of tourism products and organizing training for better service [35]. The Georgian National Tourism Administration participated in 19 international tourism exhibitions, implemented marketing campaigns in nine target markets and conducted 46 press-tours. Several international events were held in 2015, such as the European Youth Olympiad and UEFA Super Cup match. These events increase the awareness of Georgia as a destination. In addition, it should be mentioned that in 2015, there was an increase in marketing activities, in particular, a promotional advertising campaign was run in nine target markets (Azerbaijan, Turkey, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Russia, Belarus, Hungary, Latvia, Israel), as well as on popular international channels (CNN, EURONEWS). This supports the country’s popularity across the world [35]. International arrivals in Georgia have been growing rapidly over recent years [35]. In 10 years, the amount has risen ten times, with the largest development pace in 2012 (56.9% more global visitors) over the past six years. In the last six years, it rose from 2.8 mln in 2011 to almost 7 mln by November 2017 even before the winter season has begun. Georgia, also fueled by the booming tourist sector and a democratic aviation strategy, is one of the world's fastest growing air transport economies. Vast majority of all arrivals come from low spending neighboring countries such as Russia, Azerbaijan, Turkey, Ukraine and Armenia for business or leisure purposes [35]. Georgia’s tourism development should focus on quality and diversity of the arrivals by increasing the income from tourist expenditure or length of stay in the country rather than increasing the quantity. Increasing the number of airlines, operating in the market allow for the increased frequency of local and international flights [35]. In addition, a higher level of competition and an increased amount of international direct flights (charter flights) result in lower prices. Attracting low-budget airlines helps to create a more competitive market environment and promote an increase in the number of foreign visitors [35].

The National Tourism Administration with support from the

World Bank prepared a tourism development strategy for 2015-2025 [35]. This is a 10-year vision for Georgian tourism development. According to this strategy, the focus is no longer on the number of visitors. The new strategy considers non-quantitative but qualitative increase, which means an increase of tourism products, offering interesting experiences to tourists to encourage greater numbers of high-end visitors to the country [35]. According to the new strategy, the number of tourists from the wealthier markets of Western Europe, Asia and North America should double and the amount spent by each tourist should increase from 320\$ to 365\$. According to the new strategy, the National Tourism Administration predicts increasing the number of tourists from 3.3 million to 8.4 million by 2025. [35]-[37].

The Georgian Business Association highlights five important challenges that delay tourism development: improvement of service quality; infrastructure improvement; development of tourism opportunities; improvement of natural environment and proper organization of the sector [35].

The World Economic Forum's "Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Report 2017" ranks Georgia 70th out of 136 analyzed Countries for tourism competitiveness. According to the report, strong points of the destination are business environment (22nd), safety and security (29th), health and hygiene (36th), human resources and labour market (51st), prioritization of travel and tourism (41st), environmental sustainability (42nd), Information Communication Technology readiness (57th) and the international openness (66th). On the other hand, weakest points are Air transport infrastructure including available seats, number of operating airlines (90th), Ground and Port infrastructure including quality of roads, road density, quality of port infrastructure (83rd), Tourist Service infrastructure including hotel rooms, quality of tourism infrastructure, signage, presence of major car rental companies (70th), Natural resources (106th), cultural resources and business travel including Number of world cultural heritage sites, sports stadiums, number of international associations meetings, cultural and entertainment tourism digital meeting (81st) [37], [38].

On Enabling Environment criteria Georgia with its improved score is above Azerbaijan and Russia within Eurasia continent for Business Environment (5.3), Safety and Security (6.0 the highest score). However Azerbaijan beats Georgia and Russia for Human Resources and Labour market at its 5.0 score and has above score than Georgia but equal ranking with Russia for ICT Readiness (5.0) [38], [39].

One of its primary objectives is to increase the number of international arrivals to 11 million by the Georgian National Tourism Development Strategy 2015- 2025. This is clearly feasible at the current rate. [40]-[42].

For EU, Israel and North America travelers as well as Iran, United Arab Emirates, and Saudi Arabia, Georgia was one of the fastest developed countries to reach. More than ever, it is now necessary for Georgia's main assets to be protected for a more strategic, sustainable tourism development. [40], [41], [43], [44].

The objective of this Strategic plan is to identify the main

factors that hamper inclusive economic growth in Georgia and define priority neutralization tasks [44]. The Strategy incorporates to 'circular' activities. The Strategy's objective, consequently, is not to analyze separate economic sectors, to assess their competitiveness, or to identify the specific advantages of the country. The Strategy identifies priorities for the relevant ministries, and includes the relevant costs, accountable bodies, and surveillance mechanisms in the actions plans and other relevant documentation. [43], [44]. This network will encourage formation of a professional qualification system on the national and international level; on the other hand, provide employment for the general population of Georgian in different tourist facilities. [35]

The state support on formation and improving the industry in Georgia is required to have [43], [44]:

- Proper legislation system and infrastructural arrangements
- Road-tourist and informative signs, direction to touristic sightseeing
- Human resources, training and education of the labour market
- Expansion of franchising system in tourism for better competition and price strategy
- Funding and tax legislation to eliminate the obstacles for investment
- Rural, winery, medical, wellness tourism development and recreation potential of the country in its depth
- Availability of preferential credit and flexible interest rate on credit
- Insurance system
- Upon implementation of these measures, diversification of funding instruments will be encouraged. Together with the banking sector, new financial institutions will enhance the efficiency of financial mediators and thereby enhance investment efficiency; in the long term this will improve access to finance. [44].

VI. STATE SUPPORT AND TOURISM MECHANISM FORMATION IN RUSSIAN FEDERATION

The Russian tourism industry has been experiencing impressive growth in the first decade of the twenty-first century. At the turn of the century, the Russian borders began to open, and this changed international travel opportunities for Russian citizens and increased international tourism [45]. Outbound tourism growth has been especially impressive, Turkey and Egypt being the top destinations for outbound holidays [46]. As a result, international tourism was mainly oriented towards foreign destinations, and the discrepancy between outbound and inbound expenditure was significant. For example, Turkey used to receive more than 4,400,000 Russian tourists, and Turkey's related annual income reached approximately \$10bn [47]. The number of tourists served by travel agencies increased from 2.8 million in 2002 to 7.7 million in 2008. The number of travel agencies operating in Russia has grown from 3,300 in 2002 up to more than 4,500 in 2010 [48].

Russians are seeking more balanced work-life combination and thus spend more time on leisure and tourism. This is principally true for mid-income consumers in large cities. As a

result, in the World Economic Forum (WEF) Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report, Russia placed 43rd out of 136 countries in 2017 (as compared to the 59th place out of 133 countries in 2009), with the same Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index [1] score (4.1) as for Turkey, Bulgaria, Poland, Indonesia, India and Slovenia [38].

Russia is ranked at 4.2 for Prioritization of Travel and Tourism, 2.2 for International Openness [38] when Georgia is ranked at 4.9 for Prioritization of Travel and Tourism, 3.1 for International Openness within Eurasia countries. At the same time, the WEF report marked a number of challenges, including safety and security issues, international openness, environmental sustainability, business environment and lack of transparency, particularly in the field of visa requirements for travellers from abroad [49].

The image of the country and tourist from Western countries has undergone since the revolution and civil war in Ukraine, the negative impact of Russia to the situation and return of the Crimea to Russia. For example, in 2014, the volume of tourists arriving in Russia decreased by 30-50 per cent [47], [49], [50]. However, as a counter balance, the volume of Asian travelers, especially Chinese, now visiting Russian Federation has increased sharply, which is consistent with the global trend of unprecedented growth in outbound travel from Asia [51].

Moreover, everything has changed in the preferences of Russians and in the government policy after the crash of an A321 passenger plane over Egypt's Sinai Peninsula, killing all 224 on board, and Ankara's decision to shoot down a Russian Su-24 aircraft in Syria, which led to the death of the pilot. Soon after the ban on flights to Egypt – one of the most popular vacation destinations for Russians in the past two decades – recommendations were made by Russia's federal tourism agency (Rosturism) to stop sales of holiday packages to Turkey. [52].

The Russian authorities implemented a special Programme [53]: "Development of the inbound and outbound tourism in the Russian Federation (2011-2018)" since 2011 which was resulted in changes in various areas, including city infrastructure, tourist attractions, transportation and others. [53] Nevertheless, the problem of this Programme was that the main idea was to stimulate tourism in Russia but not throughout the country – only in the most promising regions in the context of inbound and outbound tourism development [50]. Up until the second half of 2016, it was cheaper to pay \$700 for a two-week holiday in Turkey or Egypt with much better infrastructure, travel and service than in Russia. Crimea now adds a better choice, but in reality, choices internally are limited and getting there is expensive. In many cases, the people managing these funds are not so in touch with the modern world of tourism. [47], [49]. Apparently, events such as Summer Universiade in Kazan 2013, Sochi 2014 Winter Olympics, and FINA World Championships 2015 in Kazan or FIFA Football World Cup 2018 are considered worthy of huge financial investments and of course are immensely important in terms of projecting a positive image of the country.

Two main reasons may be distinguished for success of the modern Russian tourism. The first one is related to the

increasingly prominent role of the government in tourist market regulation. [47], [49] and [54] A system of measures, focused on tourist economic sector support and regulation, operates at the federal and regional level. The regulation of tourist market is carried out in all domains including regulatory, organizational, economic, scientific & educational, and social. Thus, at the end of 2012 a state-run program "Health development" was adopted, which involves sponsoring governmental health resort establishments of the country (pansionates, sanatoria, etc.). [50] Money was to be spent on both current problems solution (rehabilitation, health resort treatment, children's recreation, etc.) and capital investments to infrastructure. The amount of finance of federal budget for these goals over the term of the program (to 2020) was considered to be more than 2 bln. Dollars.

Another project had approximately 10 bln. Dollars of investments assigned. It was a government program "Development of the inbound and outbound tourism in the Russian Federation" (2011-2018) [53]. Its main idea was to stimulate tourism in Russia only in the most potential regions in the context of inbound and outbound tourism development. For this purpose it was recommended to use a cluster approach (to create two types of clusters—tourist recreational and auto tourist), and carry out financing by means of state funds and private investments. Finally, the third project running on the same principles (cluster approach and public-private partnership) has been active in Russian since 2007—special economic zones of Tourism & Recreation [55]. In the context of this project construction of tourist objects (including associated infrastructure), located in different regions of the country, is carried out. For example, it's supposed to spend more than \$200 mln of government investments for one special area within the Altai Territory alone. Tax incentives, rent privileges, free custom zone regime, partial subsidizing of interest rates of bank loans are established for the residents of specific recreation areas. [53] The similar measures were assumed in 80s of the previous century in Turkey, namely, the law "Concerning the investments in the field of Tourism" (1982) provided various preferences, particularly, concessional lending of investment projects and Value Add Tax remission with the purchase of locally manufactured equipment for tourist objects facilities [53]. Implementation of these measures allowed Turkey to turn from the obvious outsider into the one of the world leaders in the volume of inbound tourism and tourist services export for 10-15 years.

The second reason for the Russian tourism success is attributable to the new model of consumer behavior that is forming in the country. Combating poverty is no longer the main target of social policy—analysis of income and revenue structure, expenditures and consumption of households shows that survival model has ceased to be a mass model despite persisting wealth disparity [50]. It was exchanged by the model of constant development, the feature of which is high share of services expenses in population's general expenses. While in 1997 this share was 14.9%, it has reached a quarter of consumption expenditures' overall volume in recent years, and in comparison with 1992 (the year of market reforms'

beginning in Russia) it has increased thrice. [55] If we take into account that a certain part of transport and consumer services, services in the field of sport and culture is indirectly connected to tourism, then the given share reaches 7-10%. In this respect, the tourism may become one of the main drivers of new model of consumption—tourist expenditures along with education and health expenditures form absolutely different quality of human capital assets [52]-[55].

It is obvious that Russia today can hardly compete with the favorites of world tourist industry. Its main competitive advantage—natural and sociocultural contrasts, which can help in developing any kinds of tourism at any time of year—Russia uses in quite ineffective way [53]. To overcome this inefficiency Russia needs to activate its investing activities in the sphere of attraction of foreign investments, develop and expand tourist product not only for the central areas but on the regional level as well.

Green economy and sustainable development objectives are largely included in basic strategy documents, including the Concept of Long-Term Development of Russian Federation (2008), the Concept for Long-Term Socio-Economic Development of the Russian Federation through to 2020 (“Strategy 2020”) and the Basic Principles of State Environmental Development Policy of the Russian Federation through to 2030 [56].

As noted in the Concept for long term socio-economic development of the Russian Federation to 2030, approved by Government resolution No 1662-r of November 17, 2008, Russia has seen the development of several “poles” of environmental damage over the past several decades (and not only in the European part of the country). [57] The national priority of transitioning to a new, postindustrial society by 2020 requires reforming environmental policy. By 2020 there are projected to be an increase from 276.00 billion a year in 2013 to 1250 billion by 2020 in the volume of paid services to the population [59] in domestic tourism (involving travel agencies, hotels, and other identical lodging) [58].

The sustainability of a destination depends on the ability of the diverse range of stakeholders, across levels of government, business and local communities, to work together to implement suitable measurement and regulatory instruments for ensuring community- and environment-friendly outcomes [60].

VII. METHODOLOGY

The given work has had the qualitative, analysis, deduction, induction research techniques. The work is also supported by the data released by World Economic Forum on Travel and Trade Competitive report as well as National Statistics office of each country represented and presented in the research. Citation has been given from the authors who have studied the challenges per country and impact of state support to tourism formation mechanism.

We wanted to study this topic in order to analyze the support of each country to Tourism industry and their strategic approach to its development. Each country’s tourism development path was different however each of them had something in common that might give the reader hints and understanding how those

countries could benefit from mutual partnership and implement strategic program in Industry development that will maintain sustainability.

VIII. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The conducted research and analysis shows that the State Support and impact to Tourism Development allow us to set the following conclusion on activities that is vital for the Countries’ Economy and Sustainability. The research and findings allow us to expect the partnership and mutual contribution within the four countries by creating the humid conditions and environment for tourism development which will impact the economy growth and sustainability. Public-private partnership and network cooperation, based on the alignment of destination stakeholders’ interests, and alignment of destination value propositions to the changing needs and travel behavior of tourists and visitors. It is important to unveil and implement new approaches in tourism development (within the country and across the globe) that proved useful for the sustainability of regions and cities as tourism destinations.

Having said that and taking into consideration the experience of Turkey in tourism sector, mutual projects should be realized and for this purpose, the experiences of Antalya, Alanya, Kemer, and Istanbul can be used. The following actions should be taken in order to realize the joint tourism projects among Azerbaijan- Turkey-Georgia-Russia:

- Establishing joint regional tourism centers and agencies (also joining current operating centers and agencies to this project);
- Preparing partnering regional tourism development concept, defining tourism areas and including into the project;
- Realizing promotional activities in given countries in order to develop tourism in the regions and attract tourists, preparing internet sites, preparing commercial videos, brochures, catalogs (this should include brochures, internet sites and commercial videos reflecting countries potential);
- Joining local touristic agencies to this project, organizing touristic routes (holding discount campaigns by agencies);
- Redevelopment of infrastructures (highways, bridges, etc.) especially tourism markets;
- Training the personnel and developing the opportunities in communicating in foreign languages (English, Russian, etc.) and teaching them local languages (Turkish, Georgian and Azerbaijani);
- Increasing the level cultural service of employees in tourism sector and giving them trainings by experts;
- Establishing healthy tourism environment in the regions and set competitive prices;
- Protecting natural environment, fauna and flora in relation to the development of tourism;
- Simplifying the visa regime for partnering country and foreign tourists (for example, Azerbaijan Republic started online visa procedures for tourists);
- Establishing and developing the regional medical tourism centers;
- Protecting the sea water purification in sea tourism

development;

- Protecting the historical monuments and developing national craftsmanship;
- Developing mountainous and forest tourism and organizing excursions;
- Providing the investment environment and speeding up the establishment of hotels in the regions;

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