Published in the Russian Federation
Oriental Studies (Previous Name: Bulletin of the Kalmyk Institute for Humanities of the Russian Academy of Sciences)
Has been issued as a journal since 2008
ISSN: 2619-0990; E-ISSN: 2619-1008
Vol. 18, Is. 5, Pp. 1064–1080, 2025
Journal homepage: https://kigiran.elpub.ru

UDC / УДК 314.7

Tourist Migration from Former Soviet States to Thailand: Current Trends and Development Prospects

Sergey V. Ryazantsev[1, 2], *Abubakr Kh. Rakhmonov*[3], *Nikita S. Ryazantsev*[4]

Туристская миграция из постсоветских государств в Таиланд: современные тенденции и перспективы развития

Сергей Васильевич Рязанцев[1, 2], *Абубакр Хасанович Рахмонов*[3], *Никита Сергеевич Рязанцев*[4]

[1] Mahidol University, Institute for Population and Social Research (999, Phutthamonthon Sai 4 Rd., Salaya, Phutthamonthon, 73170 Nakhon Pathom, Thailand)
Corresponding Member of the RAS, Dr. Sc. (Economics), Associate Professor
[2] RUDN University (6, Miklouho-Maclay St., 117198 Moscow, Russian Federation)
Corresponding Member of the RAS, Dr. Sc. (Economics), Professor, Chief Research Associate

[1] Институт народонаселения и социальных исследований Университета Махидол (999 Пхутхамамотхон 4, Пхутхамамотхон, Салая, 73170 Накхон Патхом, Таиланд)
член-корреспондент РАН, доктор экономических наук, приглашенный профессор
[2] Российский университет дружбы народов им. Патриса Лумумбы (д. 6, ул. Миклухо-Маклая, 117198 Москва, Российская Федерация)
член-корреспондент РАН, доктор экономических наук, профессор

0000-0001-5306-8875. E-mail: riazan[at]mail.ru

[3] Mahidol University, Institute for Population and Social Research (999, Phutthamonthon Sai 4 Rd., Salaya, Phutthamonthon, 73170 Nakhon Pathom, Thailand)
PhD Student

[3] Институт народонаселения и социальных исследований Университета Махидол (999 Пхутхамамотхон 4, Пхутхамамотхон, Салая, 73170 Накхон Патхом, Таиланд)
аспирант

0000-0001-9924-5857. E-mail: abubak.93[at]mail.ru

[4] Mahidol University, Institute for Population and Social Research (999, Phutthamonthon Sai 4 Rd., Salaya, Phutthamonthon, 73170 Nakhon Pathom, Thailand)
PhD Student

[4] Институт народонаселения и социальных исследований Университета Махидол (999 Пхутхамамотхон 4, Пхутхамамотхон, Салая, 73170 Накхон Патхом, Таиланд)
аспирант

0000-0001-6835-310X. E-mail: ryazantsev080700[at]yandex.ru

Abstract. *Introduction.* The article treats tourism as a form of temporary cross-border migration and examines how visitors from former Soviet states have shaped Thailand's tourism landscape across pre-pandemic growth, the COVID-19 collapse, and a robust, uneven recovery. It focuses on how visa regimes, flight connectivity, payment channels, and geopolitical shocks condition volumes, profiles, and destinations within Thailand. *Goals.* The paper aims to identify current trends and development prospects of tourist migration from former Soviet states to Thailand; profile socio-demographic and spatial patterns; and estimate the economic contribution of key markets (notably Russia, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine). *Materials and methods.* A mixed-methods design combines quantitative analysis of official Thai tourism statistics (2014–2024, with early-2025 where available) by nationality, province and visitor profile; a targeted online survey of Russian, Kazakh and Ukrainian visitors to derive per-diem expenditure and length of stay; policy and visa document review; and macroeconomic benchmarking (GDP). A tourism-contribution formula aggregates per-capita spend over stay length and arrivals to approximate direct GDP shares. *Results.* Tourist inflows from former Soviet states collapsed in 2020–2021 and rebounded by 2023 to roughly pre-pandemic levels, with Russia remaining the bellwether, Kazakhstan emerging as the second growth pole, and Ukraine's outbound travel constrained by conflict. The age profile centers on 25–44 with a slight female majority, and travel concentrates in coastal hubs — especially Phuket and Pattaya — though independent travel is widening the footprint to secondary provinces. Estimated direct GDP effects are material — on the order of one percent driven chiefly by Russian visitors — while policy levers (visa facilitation, frictionless payments, flight capacity) and risks (sanctions, exchange-rate volatility) shape near-term prospects. Strategic recommendations include maintaining facilitative entry, diversifying origin markets, encouraging dispersal beyond saturated hubs, and embedding sustainability and risk management into destination strategy.

Keywords: tourist migration, Thailand, former Soviet states, Russia, Kazakhstan, Ukraine, visa policy, destination diversification, COVID-19, economic impact.
Acknowledgments. The reported study was granted by Mahidol University (Institute for Population and Social Research), project no. 001/2568 'Sociodemographic and Economic Aspects of Tourism from Former Soviet States to Thailand: New Trends after the COVID-19 Pandemic'.
For citation: Ryazantsev S. V., Rakhmonov A. Kh., Ryazantsev N. S. Tourist Migration from Former Soviet States to Thailand: Current Trends and Development Prospects. *Oriental Studies*. 2025. Vol. 18. Is. 5. Pp 1064–1080. (In Eng.). DOI: 10.22162/2619-0990-2025-81-5-1064-1080

Аннотация. *Введение.* Статья рассматривает туризм как форму временной трансграничной миграции и анализирует, как посетители из постсоветских государств сформировали туристский ландшафт Таиланда в периоды допандемического роста, пандемийного коллапса и последующего неравномерного восстановления. Особое внимание уделяется тому, как визовые режимы, транспортная связность (авиасообщение), платежные каналы и геополитические шоки определяют объемы, состав и внутристрановую пространственную организацию поездок. *Цель* статьи — выявить текущие тенденции и перспективы развития туристской миграции из постсоветских стран в Таиланд; профилировать социодемографические и пространственные паттерны; оценить экономический вклад ключевых рынков (прежде всего России, Казахстана и Украины). *Материалы и методы*. Применен смешанный дизайн: количественный анализ официальной туристской статистики Таиланда за 2014–2024 гг. (с учетом ранних данных 2025 г., где доступны) по гражданству, провинции и профилю посетителей; целевой онлайн-опрос российских, казахстанских и украинских туристов для оценки суточных расходов и длительности пребывания; анализ политико-правовых (визовых) документов; макроэкономическое бенчмаркинг-сопоставление с ВВП. Для аппроксимации прямой доли туризма в ВВП используется формула агрегирования: среднедушевые расходы × длительность пребывания × число прибытий. *Результаты*. Въездные потоки из постсоветских стран обрушились в 2020–2021 гг. и к 2023 г. восстановились до уровней, близких к допандемическим. Россия остается «барометром» сегмента, Казахстан формируется как второй полюс роста, тогда как выезд из

Украины ограничен конфликтом. Возрастная структура концентрируется в когорте 25–44 лет с легким преобладанием женщин; основная география — прибрежные узлы (Пхукет, Паттайя), однако рост самостоятельных поездок расширяет присутствие во вторичных провинциях. Оцененные прямые эффекты для ВВП заметны — порядка 1% за счет прежде всего российских посетителей; ближайшие перспективы определяются регуляторными рычагами (облегчение въезда, бесшовные платежи, наращивание авиемкости) и рисками (санкции, волатильность обменных курсов). Рекомендуется поддерживать режимы облегченного въезда, диверсифицировать рынки происхождения, стимулировать пространственную дисперсию потоков за пределы перегруженных хабов, а также интегрировать устойчивость и управление рисками в стратегию развития дестинаций.

Ключевые слова: туристская миграция, Таиланд, постсоветские государства, Россия, Казахстан, Украина, визовая политика, диверсификация туристских дестинаций, COVID-19, экономический вклад

Благодарность. Авторы проекта «Социально-демографические и экономические аспекты туризма из стран бывшего СССР в Таиланд: новые тенденции после пандемии COVID-19» (№ 001/2568) выражают благодарность за грант, предоставленный Институтом народонаселения и социальных исследований Университета Махидол.

Для цитирования: Рязанцев С. В., Рахмонов А. Х., Рязанцев Н. С. Туристская миграция из постсоветских государств в Таиланд: современные тенденции и перспективы развития // Oriental Studies. 2025. Т. 18. № 5. Pp. 1064–1080. DOI: 10.22162/2619-0990-2025-81-5-1064-1080

1. Introduction

Tourism is not only a leisure activity but also represents a form of temporary international migration, with travelers effectively becoming short-term migrants in their destination country [Oigenblick, Kirschenbaum 2002: 1092]. Visitors bring cultural exchange and economic impacts, and their movement is influenced by global socio-political factors much like longer-term migration [Williams, Hall 2000]. Thailand, one of the world's most visited countries (nearly 39,8 million international tourists in 2019 [Tourism in Thailand 2025]), has seen significant tourist flows from the countries of the former Soviet Union. These nations — including Russia, Kazakhstan, Ukraine, and others — have become important source markets for Thai tourism, contributing to visitor numbers, especially in the 2010s. This article examines the current trends in tourist migration from former Soviet states to Thailand and assesses development prospects for this segment of tourism. It considers tourism as a temporary migration that can yield economic benefits for Thailand, analyzes statistical trends over 2014–2024, and evaluates how geopolitical events and global crises (such as the COVID-19 pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine conflict) have affected these tourist flows. Policy contexts, particularly Thailand's visa policies toward these countries, are also reviewed to understand their influence on travel trends. Finally, the paper provides policy recommendations aimed at improving tourist inflow from these regions and maximizing the economic benefits to Thailand.

2. Literature Review

Tourism and migration are closely interlinked in mobility studies. *Tourism as Temporary Migration*: Scholars have characterized tourism as a form of temporary migration because it involves short-term relocation of individuals outside their usual environment [Oigenblick, Kirschenbaum 2002: 1098]. Williams and Hall argue that contemporary patterns of mobility blur the line between tourism and migration, as global travelers increasingly engage in repeat and long-duration visits, sometimes paving the way for more permanent moves [Williams, Hall 2000: 15]. In the context of Thailand, long-stay tourism (e.g., wintering by retirees or remote workers) further exemplifies how tourism can evolve into semi-permanent migration.

Tourism from Former Soviet States: After the dissolution of the USSR in 1991, citizens of the newly independent states experienced increasing freedom to travel abroad, leading to growth in outbound tourism. Russia emerged as a major source of international tourists by the 2000s, including to Asian destinations like Thailand. Academic studies and industry reports have noted that Russian tourists tend to seek warm-weather beach destinations during their winter months, making Thailand an attractive choice [Azhar, Udunuwara 2022: 99]. Tourists from Kazakhstan, Ukraine, and other CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) countries have followed similar patterns on a smaller scale, often facilitated by growing flight connectivity and rising incomes [Ivlieva 2016]. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Russian tourists were among the top contributors to Thailand's tourism receipts and volume [Tourist flow 2024]. However, research also indicates that geopolitical and economic fluctuations in these countries can directly impact outbound travel demand. For example, the Russian financial crisis of 2014–2015 (after the annexation of Crimea) led to a sharp depreciation of the ruble and a drop in Russian overseas travel, including to Thailand.

Impact of Crises on Tourism: Global events such as pandemics and conflicts can drastically alter tourism flows. The literature on COVID-19's impact highlights how international arrivals worldwide plummeted by over 70 % in 2020, effectively a "temporary migration freeze" [UNWTO 2021]. Thailand's case was especially dramatic: from nearly 40 million foreign visitors in 2019, arrivals dropped to under 7 million in 2020 and just a few hundred thousand in 2021 — > 98 % collapse [Thailand Tourism 2021]. This tourism shutdown is unprecedented in modern history and constitutes a forced halt to temporary migration. Geopolitical conflicts also play a role: the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict since 2022 has affected travel patterns from those countries. Russians faced with limited options in Europe have increasingly turned to "friendly" destinations like Thailand [Russian tourists flock 2023], while outbound leisure travel from Ukraine has diminished due to the conflict. These intersections of politics and tourism are a growing focus in academic and policy discussions.

Policy and Visa Regimes: Another relevant strand of literature addresses how visa policies and international relations shape tourist mobility. Easier visa access — such as visa exemptions or visas on arrival — generally correlate with higher tourist arrivals [Neumayer 2010: 177]. Thailand has gradually expanded visa-free entry to many countries as a strategy to boost tourism. Historically, travelers from most former Soviet states needed visas, but in recent years Thailand has moved to relax requirements for some of them [TAT 2025]. The efficacy of such policies in stimulating tourist inflows is well-documented, though the effects can vary by country depending on additional factors like flight availability or marketing [Gössling, Scott 2025: 17].

In summary, existing research and data underscore that tourist flows from former Soviet states to Thailand are influenced by a complex of factors: economic conditions in origin countries, global crises (pandemic, conflict), and Thailand's own policies. This study rests on these insights to provide an updated empirical analysis of 2014–2024 trends and offer policy recommendations grounded in these dynamics.

3. Methodology

This article employs a mixed-methods approach, primarily using quantitative analysis of tourism statistics alongside a review of policy documents. The core data on tourist arrivals, demographics, and distribution are drawn from the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) Intelligence Center and related official sources. The TAT Intelligence Center provides annual tourist arrival figures by nationality, as well as survey-based data on tourist characteristics. We obtained arrival data for the years 2014 through 2024 for all countries of the former USSR, as well as aggregated regional totals (in some cases 2024 data are provisional). These data are analyzed to identify trends over time and disruptions corresponding to external events.

For economic impact assessment, we adapt a methodology for estimating the contribution of migrants (in this case, tourists as short-term migrants) to GDP. Specifically, we modify the approach proposed by Martin [Martin 2007: 25] for labor migration to estimate tourism contribution (TC) to Thailand's GDP from Russian, Kazakhstani, and Ukrainian tourists. Using an online survey of tourists from these three key countries, we obtained average expenditure per day on accommodation, food, transportation, and services, as well as average length of stay (in days). We then computed total annual expenditure by multiplying these per-tourist figures by the number of tourists from each country, and compared the result to Thailand's GDP. The formula used is:

$$TC = \frac{(CTac + CTfd + CTtr + CTsr\,(ex + mg + spa + ba)) \times DS \times QT}{GDP} \times 100\%$$

where,
TC — tourism contribution
CTac — cost of tourists on accommodation
CTfd — cost of tourists on food
CTtr — cost of tourists transport
CTsr — cost of tourists on service
ex — excursions
mg — massage
spa — SPA procedure
ba — beach activity
DS — days of stay in Thailand
QT — quata of tourists in year

This yields the share of GDP contributed by tourists from a given country. We apply this to 2023 data (full year) and available 2024 and 2025 (Q2) data to gauge recent changes.

Qualitative methods include reviewing Thai government policy announcements and visa regulations (via the official e-visa portal and embassy websites) to detail the visa regimes for former USSR countries. This helps analyze how policy shifts (e.g. visa exemptions introduced) align with changes in tourist numbers. The study also incorporates secondary sources like news articles and academic commentary to contextualize the statistical trends, especially regarding the COVID-19 pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine conflict impacts.

By integrating these methods, the analysis remains data-driven while also interpreting why the observed trends occurred. In the following sections, results from the data analysis are presented, followed by a discussion and policy recommendations.

4. Results

4.1. Tourist Inflow Trends from Former USSR Countries

Thailand has long been a favored travel destination for tourists from around the world, including tourists from former USSR countries. With its tropical climate, beautiful beaches, and vibrant cultural experiences, Thailand continues to attract millions of international visitors each year.

According to the Thai Tourism Authority, the total number of tourists from all former USSR countries combined visiting Thailand each year. Several distinct phases are evident. From 2014 to 2017, total arrivals fluctuated between about 1,06 and 1,56 million, with a notable dip in 2015 followed by recovery. Arrivals then appeared to surge in 2018, reaching over 3,1 million (fig. 1), before dropping back to 1,72 million in 2019. This anomalously high 2018 figure is double the surrounding years —

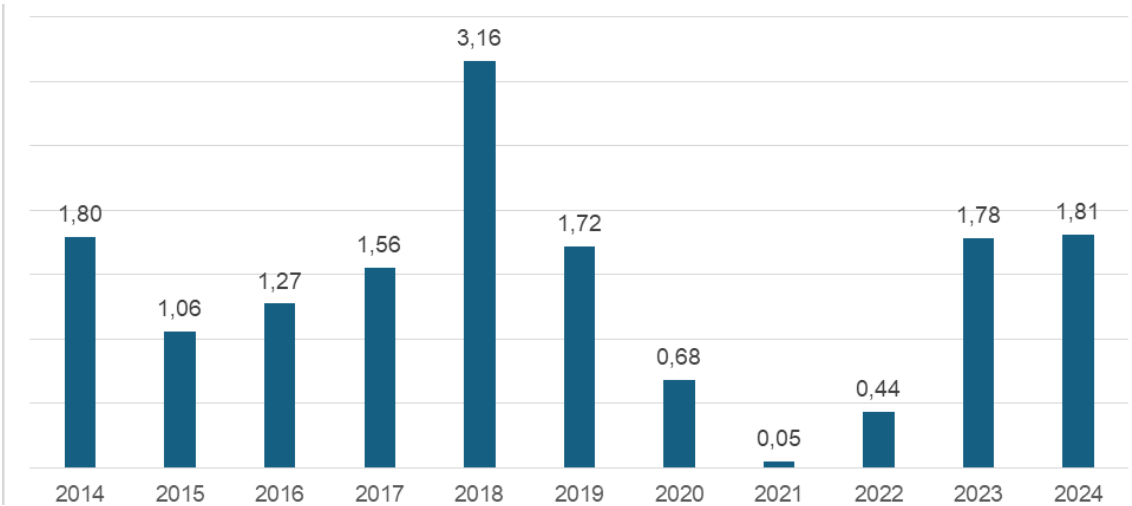

Fig. 1. Total inflow of tourists from former Soviet countries to Thailand, 2014–2024, mill. persons.
Source: [TAT 2025]

an issue we discuss shortly. The year 2019 can be seen as a pre-pandemic baseline, around 1,7 million visitors from former Soviet states [Visa policy 2025].

The impact of COVID-19 is starkly visible in 2020 and 2021. Thailand effectively closed its borders to tourism in early 2020; as a result, arrivals from these countries plummeted to ~683 thousand in 2020 and just ~46 thousand in 2021 (virtually zero) — > 95 % decrease [Visa policy 2025]. This mirrors the global collapse in travel and represents a massive disruption of tourist migration. By 2022, Thailand began a gradual reopening; around 435 thousand visitors from these countries returned that year (mostly Russians, as others were slower to resume travel). A full rebound is evident in 2023, with about 1,78 million arrivals — nearly back to the 2019 level. Preliminary 2024 data indicate a similar total (~1,81 million), suggesting stabilization and modest growth post-pandemic (tabl. 1).

In absolute terms, Russian nationals account for the vast majority of these tourists each year. For instance, in 2019 out of ~1,72 million total, about 1,48 million were Russians (over 85 %). Russia's trajectory largely shapes the overall trend. The drop in 2015 corresponds to Russia's sharp decline that year (from 1,61 million in 2014 down to 0,88 million in 2015), likely due to economic recession and a weak ruble following sanctions [Rakhmonov 2025: 168]. Russian arrivals then recovered through 2017.

The TAT-reported 2018 surge to 2,94 million Russians stands out. This figure is roughly double Russia's 2017 and 2019 numbers, and no external sources corroborate such a high jump. It is possible this 2018 number includes some re categorization or error, as other sources indicate Russian arrivals in 2018 were around 1,47 million — very similar to 2019 [Visa policy 2025]. Assuming the 2018 spike is an anomaly or data issue, the trend for Russian tourism was relatively stable around 1,3–1,5 million per year before COVID. Post-pandemic, Russians have returned in large numbers: 1,48 million in 2023 [Tourist flow 2024], and an estimated ~1,745 million in 2024. In fact, 2024 aw Russian arrivals nearly match the record set in 2013 and become the fifth-largest tourist nationality in Thailand that year [Tourist flow 2024].

Other former USSR countries contribute much smaller numbers, but some trends are notable. Ukraine had been the second-largest source in this group, rising from ~58 thousand in 2014 to ~81 thousand in 2019. Kazakhstan was third, around ~57 thousand in 2019. The Baltic states (Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia) each sent around 10–22 thousand annually pre pandemic, and other CIS countries (Belarus, Uzbekistan, etc.) were generally under ~20 thousand each in 2019. All these markets collapsed in 2020–2021, then have seen varying recovery. A standout is Kazakhstan: only ~5,5 thousand in 2021, but jumping to 172,5 thousand in 2023. This six-fold increase over 2019 is remarkable and made Kazakhstan the second largest ex-USSR source in 2023 (surpassing Ukraine). It reflects both genuine growth and possibly special factors (discussed below). Ukraine's recovery has been understandably subdued– only ~36 thousand in 2023, less than half its 2019 level — due to the conflict and related travel limitations. Belarus showed a modest rebound to ~9 thousand in 2023, still below 2019. Uzbekistan surged to ~34 thousand in 2023, a significant increase, likely aided by better connectivity and visa facilitation.

In summary, tourist inflows from former Soviet states to Thailand grew overall from 2014 to 2019 (if we set aside the outlier data point in 2018), collapsed due to COVID-19, and have largely recovered by 2023 / 2024 albeit with a new dynamic shaped by geopolitical context. The Russian market remains the bellwether — its fluctuations determine the overall trend. Meanwhile, emerging markets like Kazakhstan have shown exceptional growth recently, suggesting untapped potential. On the other hand, political instability (conflict) can dramatically suppress travel from affected countries (Ukraine) and simultaneously redirect travelers from the aggressor country (Russia) to destinations like Thailand which maintain open access.

4.2. Socio-Demographic Profile of Tourists

Thailand has been a popular travel destination for tourists former USSR countries, with

Table 1. Inflow of tourists from former Soviet countries to Thailand, by country, 2014–2024, thou. persons

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2023	2024
Russia	1 606,43	884,14	1 090,08	1 346,34	2 939,23	1 483,33	587,17	30,76	1 482,61	1 495,42
Ukraine	58,05	47,65	54,04	60,79	68,88	80,66	31,62	3,41	36,43	38,65
Kazakhstan	63,34	55,73	48,04	57,25	58,13	57,53	26,06	5,52	172,49	168,07
Estonia	16,46	16,42	18,53	22,13	22,20	22,03	10,96	2,11	14,90	14,07
Uzbekistan	13,79	15,39	18,65	19,76	18,31	20,54	6,48	0,61	34,15	37,29
Lithuania	9,96	10,75	13,93	16,93	17,60	21,25	7,95	1,24	18,68	20,33
Belarus	13,02	12,10	12,31	13,17	12,09	12,35	4,90	0,39	9,06	16,52
Latvia	6,92	8,70	9,37	10,11	10,61	11,59	3,98	0,93	9,14	9,46
Kyrgyzstan	2,66	2,55	3,06	4,53	5,36	5,07	2,82	0,08	4,73	9,01
Azerbaijan	1,61	1,83	1,42	1,73	1,83	1,87	0,42	0,07		
Armenia	1,12	1,26	1,50	1,92	1,77	1,72	0,42	0,09		
Moldova	1,43	1,21	1,26	1,24	1,25	1,01	0,34	0,07		
Georgia	0,72	0,74	0,79	0,83	0,94	1,22	0,29	0,04		
Tajikistan	0,42	0,53	0,57	0,66	0,68	0,80	0,18	0,04		

Source: [TAT 2025].

a notable trend in gender distribution. Tourists from former Soviet states in Thailand are roughly balanced between the sexes, but with a slight tilt toward female travelers overall. According to TAT data for 2016–2021, about 50–55 % of these tourists were female, while 45–50 % were male, on average (fig. 2). This pattern is somewhat counterintuitive given a stereotype of male-dominated ex-USSR travel groups, but it aligns with observations that many trips are family or couple-oriented.

In fact, the data suggest female travelers outnumber male travelers from several of these countries. For example, among Russian tourists during 2016–2021, roughly 57 % were female and 43 % male (i. e., for every 100 Russian visitors, about 57 were women) — indicating a notable female majority. Other countries like Kazakhstan and Belarus also showed a female majority in tourist composition, whereas some (e. g., Azerbaijan, Estonia) were closer to 50 / 50. This could be due to factors such as women taking more family holidays, or large numbers of young women traveling either independently or with partners. It's also possible that a number of these female "tourists" might be visiting for extended periods or informal work (e. g. hospitality or entertainment sectors in tourist areas), blurring lines between tourism and labor migration — a nuance sometimes noted anecdotally, though hard to capture in official data.

From a policy perspective, the near parity in gender suggests marketing and services in Thailand should cater equally to men and women from these source markets — for instance, shopping and wellness activities (often popular with female travelers) as well as nightlife or sports (with traditionally male clientele) are all relevant. The presence of many women travelers also underlines the importance of safety and health measures in destinations (fig. 3).

Tourists from former Soviet states tend to be adults in the young to mid-age ranges, with fewer youth and relatively few elderly. In 2020 (a year with limited travel but for which detailed age data were collected), the majority of visitors from these countries were in their 20s, 30s, and 40s. Specifically, an estimated over half were between 25 and 44 years old, roughly one quarter were under 25, and the rest were 45 or older.

The senior (65+) segment was very small. Figure 3 illustrates an example age structure: about 15 % were under 25; the largest single cohort was 25–34 (around 24 %); another ~17 % were 35–44; a significant share (perhaps 20–25 %) were 45–54; smaller proportions were 55–64; and only a few percent were 65+. This distribution is typical for long-haul leisure travel — it is predominantly working-age adults and young adults.

Many are likely traveling as couples or families (e. g., a 35-year-old couple with children would fall into these stats as two 35-44 adults and their kids might be counted in under-25). The low share of elderly tourists could be due to mobility issues and the long flight distance, as well as the fact that organized senior group tourism from these countries is less common than from Western countries.

This age profile indicates that tourism from these markets is largely composed of economically active individuals — many likely taking vacations from work or young people traveling during university breaks. The prevalence of middle-aged tourists (45–64) also suggests a segment of relatively affluent or established travelers, potentially including repeat visitors or retirees (especially Russians who spend winters in Thailand). The near absence of very old travelers means less strain on medical services, but on the flip side, Thailand could consider promoting medical or wellness tourism to older age groups in these countries as a growth area.

In summary, the socio-demographic analysis portrays visitors from former Soviet states as predominantly middle-aged or younger adults, with a slight female majority. They mirror global tourism patterns in some respects, yet the female-heavy composition is a distinctive feature. Thai tourism businesses can leverage this by tailoring experiences (e. g., more child-friendly resorts or shopping experiences known to attract female travelers) to suit the profile of these visitors.

4.3. Geographic Distribution of Tourists within Thailand

Tourists from the former USSR do not disperse evenly across Thailand; they concentrate heavily in certain destinations. The over-

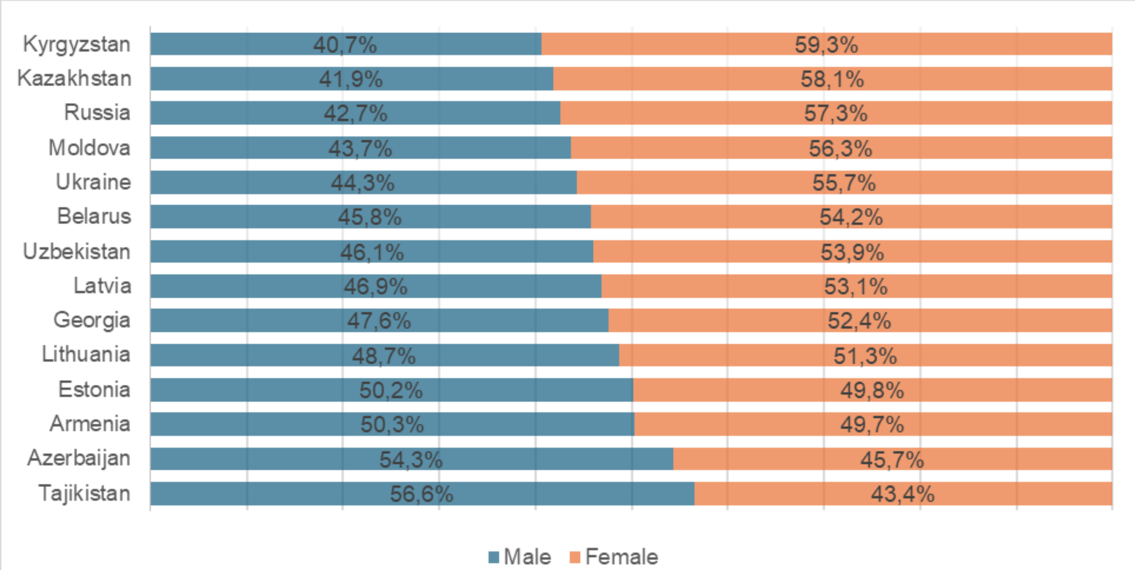

Fig. 2. Share of tourists from former Soviet countries in Thailand, by sex, 2016–2021, %. Source: [TAT 2025]

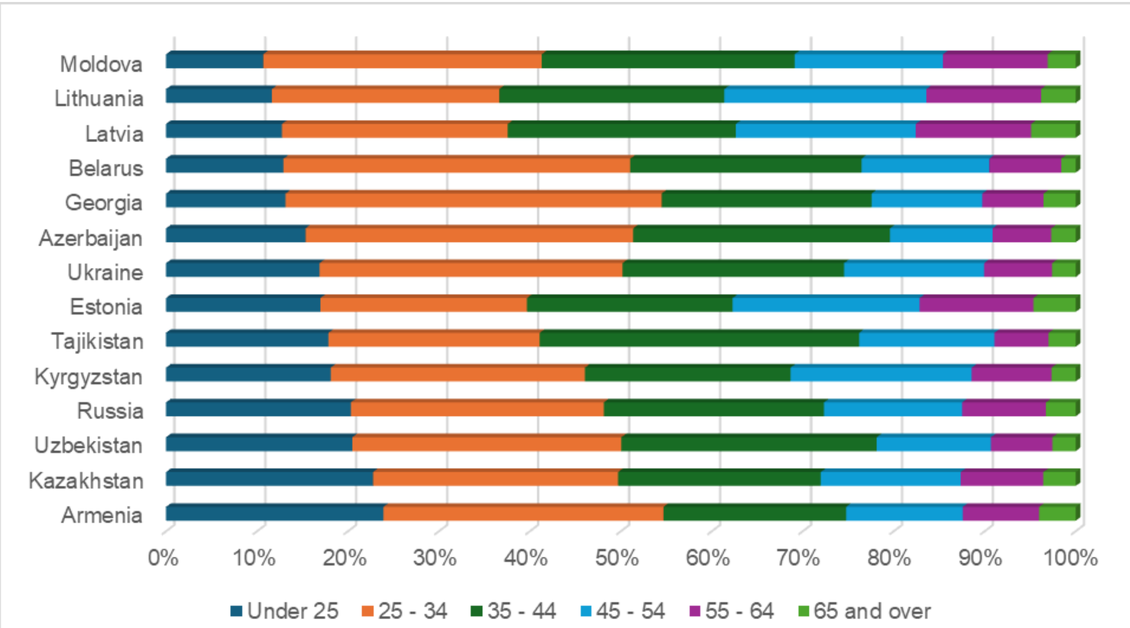

Fig. 3. Tourists from former Soviet countries in Thailand, by age, 2020, %. Source: [TAT 2025]

whelming finding is that former Soviet tourists favor a few key provinces, primarily the beach resort areas. By far the top two destinations are Phuket and Chonburi (Pattaya), followed by the Bangkok metropolitan area. According to TAT data for 2014–2020, Phuket alone accounted for roughly 42 % of all tourists from former USSR countries, and Bangkok ~44 %, with most of the remainder going to a handful of other provinces (fig. 4).

Chonburi province — home to Pattaya is likely encompassed in the Bangkok or “East” region data; TAT’s breakdown in the figure specifically named Phuket, Bangkok, and some others but not Chonburi explicitly, which may suggest that many Pattaya visitors pass through Bangkok and get counted under Bangkok; however, other sources consistently show Pattaya as a major destination for Russians.

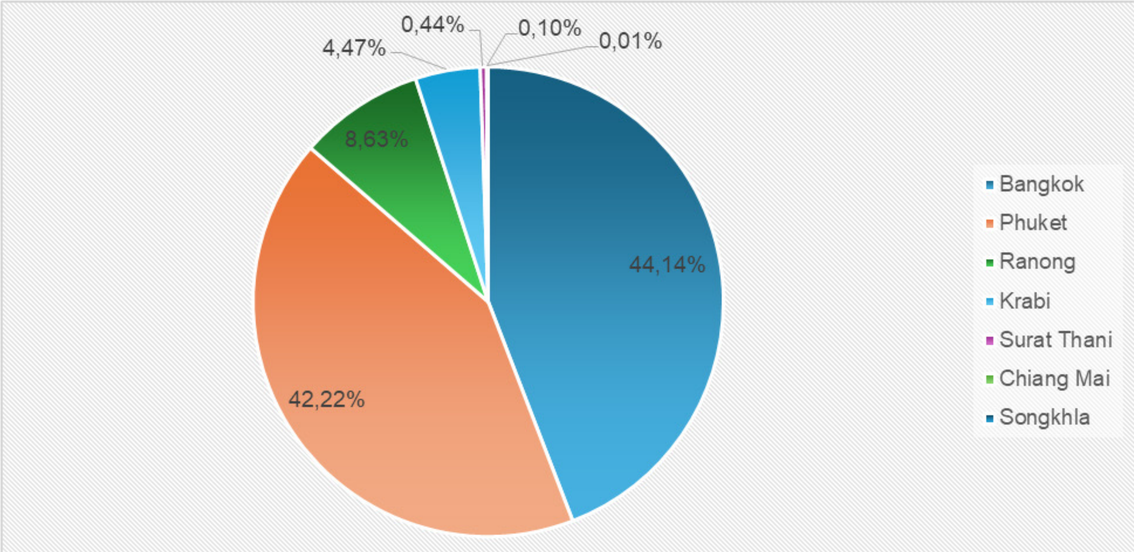

Fig. 4. Tourists from former Soviet countries, by Thai province, 2014–2020, %. Source: [TAT 2025]

Figure 4 (based on TAT's intelligence data) lists Bangkok at 44,1 % and Phuket at 42,2 %, together comprising over 86 % of former USSR tourist visits within Thailand. The next significant province was Ranong (8,6 %) — which is surprising at first glance, as Ranong is a relatively minor tourist province. This likely reflects the practice of "visa runs" in the past (whereby long-staying tourists from Russia or CIS would exit and re-enter Thailand via the Ranong-Kawthaung border to renew their stay), or possibly island trips via Ranong. Krabi accounted for about 4,5 %, likely due to spillover from Phuket and attractions like Phi Phi Islands. Other provinces like Surat Thani (which includes Koh Samui) had < 1 %, and Chiang Mai (the main northern city) had an even smaller fraction (around 0,1 %). Southern beach destinations clearly dominate.

This concentration aligns with anecdotal evidence: Russians and other ex-Soviet tourists have long favored Phuket and Pattaya as holiday spots. These locales offer warm climate, beaches, affordable accommodations, and established Russian-speaking services (restaurants, tour guides, signage). Phuket, in particular, has been a magnet; in early 2023, more than half of Russian arrivals to Thailand flew directly into Phuket [Russian tourists flock 2023]. Pattaya (Chonburi) historically also saw large numbers of Russian package tourists, enough that Russian-language storefronts and real estate offices became common there. Bangkok serves largely as an entry point or short stay for these tourists before they head to the beaches, though some do spend time in the capital for shopping and sightseeing.

When considering importance to provinces (Figure 5 perspective), tourists from former USSR countries make up a significant portion of the international visitors in certain locales. For example, in Phuket, Russians have at times been the number one tourist group; during the pandemic recovery in late 2022 and 2023, Russians comprised a very large share of Phuket's foreign tourists (e. g., in early 2023, Russians were the top source of tourists in Phuket, surpassing even traditional markets) [Russian tourists flock 2023]. In Pattaya too, Russians and Kazakhs form a visible and important segment of visitors. By contrast, in provinces like Bangkok that attract a broader mix (including many Asians and Westerners), the share of ex-USSR tourists is much smaller (on the order of a few percent of Bangkok's total foreign visitors in normal times). Nonetheless, even in Bangkok, the presence of Russian-speaking guides at temples or Russian signage at malls indicates the market's significance.

In summary, geographically, former Soviet tourists are highly concentrated in Thailand's coastal resort areas, especially Phuket (including nearby Phang Nga) and the Pattaya area. These patterns reflect the tourist preferences for seaside vacations. Secondary beach destinations (Krabi, Koh Samui area) get some spill-

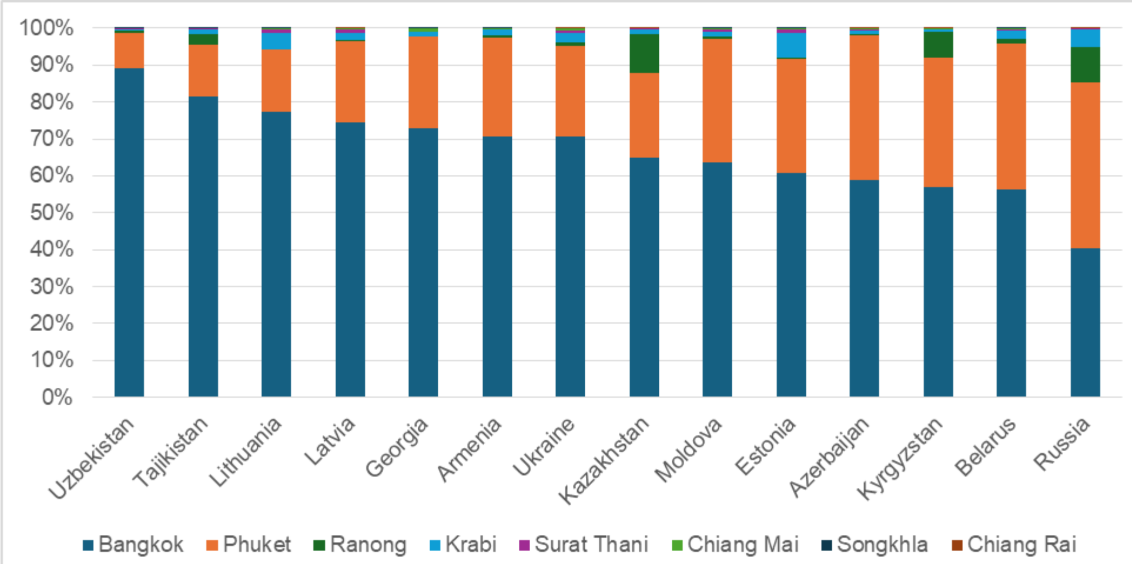

Fig. 5. Tourists from former Soviet countries, by Thai province, 2014–2020, %. Source: [TAT 2025].

over, whereas cultural or nature tourism areas (Chiang Mai, etc.) see very few visitors from these countries. This has implications for how tourism benefits are distributed in Thailand: a few provinces see most of the spending from this tourist segment. It also means these tourists can sometimes be disproportionately affected by local issues — for instance, if Phuket faces environmental or capacity challenges, that directly impacts the experience of the majority of Russian/Kazakh tourists.

4.4. Economic Contribution to Thailand's Economy

Tourism is a critical sector for Thailand's economy, contributing between 9 % and 18 % of GDP directly in recent years [Tourism in Thailand 2025]. Tourists from former Soviet states, being a sizeable group especially in the 2010s, have a tangible economic impact. This section estimates the contribution of Russian, Kazakhstani, and Ukrainian tourists to Thailand's GDP, based on their expenditure patterns and volume, for the year 2023 (with comparisons to 2024 and early 2025). These three countries are chosen because Russia, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine are the largest sources among the group and were the focus of our expenditure survey.

The methodology follows the tourism contribution (TC) formula described earlier, which sums up average spending on various items per tourist, multiplies by number of tourists and average stay, and expresses the total as a percentage of GDP. We surveyed tourists from the Russian Federation, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine to obtain their average daily expenditures on accommodation, food, transport, and services (including excursions, massages, spa treatments, beach activities) during their stay in Thailand. We also collected their average length of stay (days). These averages were then applied to the total arrival numbers (QT) for each country to estimate total spending. Finally, dividing by Thailand's GDP yields the contribution percentage.

Table 2 presents the key figures and results. It includes the average daily spending and stay, the number of tourists (in thousands) from each country for 2023, 2024, and 2025 (Q2), and the estimated total international tourism receipts generated by each country's tourists in those periods (in USD million). Using Thailand's GDP (approximately $ 515 billion in 2023, $526 billion in 2024), we then derive the TC % (tourism contribution as a share of GDP).

Russian tourists have by far the largest economic impact, due to the high volume of visitors. In 2023, approximately 1,48 million Russian tourists spent an average of 5,360 THB (~USD $ 160) per day over 11 days. This totals an estimated $ 3,64 billion USD in tourism receipts for 2023 attributable to Russian visitors. For context, that is roughly 0,7 % of

Table 2. Contribution of tourists from Russia, Kazakhstan and Ukraine to Thailand's economy in 2023–2025 (Q2 – second quarter).

Country	Average daily expenditure	DS (days of stay in Thailand)	QT (quata of tourists in year), thou. people			International tourism receipts (USD, mln)		
			2023	2024	2025-Q2	2023	2024	2025-Q2
Kazakhstan	5 650	15	1 482,6	1 745,3	1 034,8	3 642,1	4 415,4	2 732,0
Russia	5 360	11	172,5	195,1	103,2	294,8	343,4	189,6
Ukraine	5 172	13	36,4	45,0	26,3	71,0	90,2	55,1

Source: Author's calculations based on an online survey; [World Development Indicators 2025].

Thailand's GDP in 2023 (3,64 / 515) [Thailand GDP 2024b]. In 2024, with 1,745 million Russians and slightly longer stays or increased spend, the contribution rose to about $ 4,42 billion, ~0,84 % of GDP [Thailand GDP 2024a]. These figures underscore that Russian tourism is a significant contributor to Thailand's economy — nearly as much as some export industries. It's notable that the per tourist spending is substantial: many Russians stay in mid-range hotels or long-term condos, dine out frequently, and partake in excursions, thus injecting money across various local businesses.

Kazakhstani tourists, while far fewer in number (~172,500 in 2023), actually report a higher average daily spend (5,650 THB) and longer stays (15 days on average). This might reflect that Kazakh visitors often come in large family groups or for extended holidays (possibly escaping harsh winters). Despite their high per-capita spend, the total Kazakh tourist receipts in 2023 were about $ 295 million, which is only 0,06 % of GDP. By 2024, their count increased modestly to 195k, spending ~$343 million (0,065 % GDP). The Kazakh market's importance is thus growing but remains relatively small in macroeconomic terms. However, locally (in places like Pattaya or Phuket), Kazakh tourists have become quite noticeable customers for hotels and real estate in the past two years. Their high average expenditures (even exceeding Russians') suggest that promotions targeting Kazakh middle and upper classes can yield lucrative returns.

Ukrainian tourists, due to their limited numbers (36k in 2023), contributed a comparatively small $ 71 million in 2023 receipts, about 0,014 % of GDP. Even before the conflict, Ukraine's contribution was minor (with ~80k visitors in 2019 it might have been on the order of $ 150 million). In 2024, an uptick to 45k visitors yielded ~$ 90 million. These amounts, while small at the national level, still represent meaningful income for tourism sectors in certain areas. Ukrainians typically have similar spending patterns to Russians (around 5,172 THB daily, 13 days stay in our survey), so their per-person impact is healthy. Should peace return and travel resume, Ukraine has the potential to grow as a source market (their pre-conflict trajectory was upward), but currently the focus for Thailand is understandably on Russian and Kazakh visitors.

Based on the authors' calculations from an online survey, the expected contributions of tourists from Russia, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine to Thailand's GDP in 2023 and 2024 were estimated in percentage terms. The results highlight the dominant share of Russian visitors. In 2023, Russian tourism contributed roughly 0,7 % of GDP, whereas the contributions of Kazakhstan and Ukraine were negligible at the national scale. By 2024, the Russian share rose to about 0,8–0,9 % of GDP. While notable, these figures remain a small fraction of tourism's overall impact: before the pandemic, tourism accounted for roughly 17–20 % of GDP, including indirect effects [Tourism in Thailand 2025]. Collectively, tourists from former USSR countries may have contributed around 2–3 % of GDP in the late 2010s, with Russians comprising the majority. In the post-COVID period, as Chinese arrivals rebound in 2024–2025, the proportional share of Russians may decline slightly, although their absolute contribution will likely remain substantial.

It is informative to compare these contributions with those from other major tourist source countries. For instance, Chinese tourists (when ~10 million visited in 2019) contributed an estimated 2–3 % of Thailand's GDP through direct spending. Russian tourists, at ~1,7 million in 2019, likely contributed around 0,5 % of GDP that year. Thus, the calculations above showing ~0,8 % in 2024 indicate the Russian market's importance has grown (partly because Chinese numbers are still ramping up, and partly because Russians are staying longer and spending more per trip in the post-pandemic era).

In summary, while tourists from all former Soviet states provide valuable economic input, Russian tourists are economically the most significant by an order of magnitude. They bring in billions of dollars annually and form a cornerstone of Thailand's tourism revenue, especially in certain locales. Kazakhstan has emerged as a high-spending niche with room for expansion. Ukraine's current contribution is minimal due to external circumstances. These findings support a strategic focus on maintaining and growing the Russian and Kazakh markets (under appropriate risk management), as discussed in the policy section. At the same time, diversifying to attract other ex-USSR markets (when feasible) can add incremental gains.

5. Discussion

The trends observed in tourist migration from former Soviet states to Thailand highlight both the resilience and changing composition of this market. By 2023, arrivals from the region as a whole not only recovered from the COVID-19 hiatus but slightly exceeded pre-pandemic levels, underscoring strong pent-up demand. The economic impact is substantial: spending by Russian, Kazakh, and other FSU tourists contributes on the order of 1 % of Thailand's GDP, and even more in terms of the tourism sector GDP (since tourism is ~12 % of GDP in normal times). This underlines that visitors from these countries are a valuable segment for Thailand's hospitality industry, and their long stays amplify their economic contribution.

Several key points emerge from the analysis:

Dominance of Russia and Shifts Post-2022: Russia's dominance remains, but the role of Russian tourists has evolved in the context of geopolitical factors. The conflict in Ukraine (2022) and resulting sanctions [Rakhmonov 2023: 166] initially complicated Russian travel (reducing flight options and payment methods), yet Thailand saw a quick rebound of Russian visitors by late 2022 and 2023. Many Russians sought long-term stays abroad during the conflict period, and Thailand became a favored destination for temporary relocation (so-called "COVID and conflict refugees"). The data showing 1,48 million Russians in 2023 likely includes some long-stay individuals counted as multiple short-term entries. The resilience of Russian arrivals (nearly matching 2019 numbers despite conflict and economic turmoil) suggests a strong enduring demand. However, it also signals risk concentration: Thailand is increasingly reliant on a market subject to volatility. Should currency issues (e.g. a ruble collapse) or further sanctions occur, Thai tourism in places like Phuket could face sudden downturns. Diversifying to other markets or ensuring facilitative measures (like accepting Mir card payments, as Thailand has done) can mitigate this risk.

Rapid Growth of Central Asian Markets: One striking development is the surge of tourists from Kazakhstan (and to a lesser extent Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan). Kazakhstan's arrivals in 2023 were triple their 2019 level, making Kazakhstan the second-largest FSU source, surpassing Ukraine. This reflects increasing wealth and outbound travel propensity in Central Asia, better flight connectivity (e. g., direct Astana–Phuket charters), and Thailand's targeted promotions. The Thai government's decision to extend visa-free entry to Kazakh tourists in 2022–2024 further removed barriers [Thailand visa waived 2024]. We can expect Central Asian visitors to remain a growth segment, especially if tourism players tailor offerings (e.g., Russian-language services also cater to Kazakhs, many of whom speak Russian). The cultural similarity and lack of language barrier (Russian is lingua franca) mean Central Asians can be served by the same infrastructure developed for Russians. This presents an opportunity for Thai tourism to reduce reliance on Russia proper by cultivating these emerging markets.

Slow Recovery for Eastern Europe and Caucasus: By contrast, tourist numbers from the Baltic states, Caucasus (Armenia, Georgia, Azerbaijan), and Moldova are still relatively low post-COVID. These countries all face either economic challenges or lack of direct flights. For instance, direct flights play a critical role: there are few nonstop flights from those countries to Thailand, unlike from Russia or Kazakhstan. Tourists from, say, Georgia must connect via Istanbul or Dubai, increasing travel cost and time. This likely dampens growth. Visa requirements also play a role: Armenia and Belarus needing visas certainly does not help. To improve these, aviation connectivity could be expanded (perhaps charter flights from cities like Minsk, Yerevan) and visa agreements reconsidered. However, given their small population sizes, even doubling these numbers would not massively change Thailand's tourism landscape — they remain niche markets.

Seasonality and COVID Recovery Patterns: FSU tourism is highly seasonal (peak in December–March). The COVID recovery showed that once Thailand removed quarantine in late 2021, Russians were among the first to return under sandbox schemes, drawn by the warm climate during their winter. The strong 2023 figures reflect that by then travel was normalized. A note on 2022: surprisingly, our chart indicated ~435k total FSU visitors in 2022 (mostly in the latter half when entry rules eased). This partial recovery year was omitted from official table reporting, but those visitors laid the groundwork for the 2023 surge. It suggests that as soon as flights were available, the demand materialized. Tour operators in Russia and Kazakhstan ramped up packages quickly, demonstrating the tight integration of these markets with Thai tourism.

Socio-Demographic Implications: The fact that most FSU tourists are young adults and a majority are female travelers is notable for tourism marketers. It means marketing and services can be tailored: e.g., shopping, beauty and wellness (spa, massage) might be in high demand (indeed many Russian women partake in Thai spa services). Nightlife and adventure activities appeal to the 25–44 cohort. The low share of older tourists indicates an area of potential growth — with aging populations in Russia and Kazakhstan, there is a market for retiree tourism or medical tourism that Thailand could tap into if some barriers (like medical visa ease or targeted promotion) are addressed.

Geographic Concentration and Sustainability: The heavy concentration of tourists in Phuket and Pattaya raises issues about sustainable tourism and regional balance. These areas were heavily hit when FSU tourists vanished during COVID, demonstrating vulnerability. Thai tourism authorities might consider ways to diversify tourist flows to other regions — for example, promoting Chiang Mai's culture or Koh Samui's resorts to Russian-speaking tourists. Some progress was being made pre-COVID (with niche groups visiting Chiang Mai for festivals, or going to Krabi and Phang Nga provinces beyond just Phuket). Continued efforts to highlight new destinations (perhaps via Russian-language social media influencers) could spread the benefits of tourism more evenly and reduce over-reliance on Phuket/Pattaya.

Policy and Future Prospects: Thailand appears committed to wooing this market, as seen by the visa waivers and even discussions of accepting Mir cards (the Russian payment system) to facilitate spending amid sanctions. Going forward, assuming geopolitical conditions don't drastically worsen, the prospects for FSU tourism to Thailand are strong. We might project moderate growth in Russian arrivals (perhaps limited by flight capacity and economic issues at home, but still a huge pool of travelers). Central Asian arrivals are poised to grow faster, maybe even doubling over the next few years, given rising incomes and Thailand's popularity. One wildcard is China's influence — Russia's limited flight options have led many Russians to transit via hubs like Dubai or Istanbul; if more direct flights via Chinese airlines open (now that Russian carriers face restrictions), that could increase flow. Additionally, safety and health concerns (like pandemics or regional conflicts) remain potential disruptors — the lesson from COVID is that this market will bounce back quickly when given the chance, but a prolonged conflict or new pandemic could again halt travel.

6. Conclusion

Tourist migration from former Soviet states to Thailand has evolved significantly over the past decade. This comprehensive analysis showed that, after a period of growth in the mid-2010s, these tourist flows were abruptly disrupted by global and geopolitical crises — only to rebound strongly by 2023, with new patterns emerging. Russian tourists remain the dominant force, constituting the bulk of arrivals and contributing substantially to Thailand's tourism earnings (nearly 0,8 % of GDP in 2024 from Russian visitors alone). Kazakhstan has become an unexpectedly dynamic market, and with supportive policies, its travelers are now a notable presence. Ukraine's once-growing outbound tourism has been stymied by conflict, but Thailand's inclusive stance (visa waivers, etc.) lays groundwork for future recovery. Other ex Soviet nations contribute smaller but not insignificant numbers of tourists, and these too present opportunities if nurtured.

Tourism from these countries is a clear instance of temporary migration that can confer economic benefits on the host country. Tourists from the former USSR have injected billions into Thailand's economy, frequented its resorts, and in some cases effectively lived in Thailand for extended periods. This movement has also had social and cultural side-effects, from the establishment of Russian speaking enclaves in Thai tourist towns to the deepening people-to-people interactions between Thais and Eurasians.

The impacts of external events — especially the COVID-19 pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine conflict underscore how interconnected the world is, and how tourism flows can shift abruptly. Thailand's experience demonstrates resilience and adaptability: by remaining welcoming and quickly adjusting visa policies, it managed to capture redirected travel demand (e.g., Russians seeking non-Western destinations). This has partially compensated for losses elsewhere and sped up Thailand's tourism recovery.

In terms of development prospects, the outlook for tourist migration from these states to Thailand is optimistic but not without challenges. If Thailand implements the recommended policies — easing access further, ensuring safety and satisfaction, diversifying offerings, and pursuing sustainability — it can expect continued growth from markets like Russia and Kazakhstan, as well as a resurgence from Ukraine and others when conditions improve. The Thai government's proactive measures, such as the extended visa exemptions, already indicate a commitment to facilitating this sector. Moreover, ongoing infrastructure projects (like airport expansions) and marketing initiatives targeting secondary cities in Eastern Europe and Central Asia will likely bear fruit in coming years.

One should also acknowledge potential risks: reliance on a few markets means vulnerability to their economic and political swings. Thus, while Thailand should solidify its appeal to Russian and CIS tourists, it must also continue attracting a diverse range of visitors globally to maintain balance. Additionally, the concentration of these tourists in certain areas calls for mindful management to avoid overtourism and ensure local community support. The concepts of sustainable and high-quality tourism should be integrated into the development plans — focusing not just on increasing arrival numbers but on maximizing per tourist expenditure, length of stay, and repeat visitation, all within environmental limits.

In conclusion, tourism from former Soviet states represents a valuable and growing facet of Thailand's international tourism, effectively functioning as a form of recurring short-term migration. The current trends point to a robust recovery and new growth on the horizon, provided that Thailand navigates the accompanying challenges wisely. By capitalizing on the strong historical affinity (many travelers from these countries deeply appreciate Thai culture and hospitality) and by executing traveler centric policies, Thailand can strengthen its status as a preferred long-haul destination for the Russian speaking world. This will translate into sustained economic gains and deeper intercultural ties in the years to come. The recommendations outlined in this article offer a roadmap to achieve these goals, ensuring that the development prospects of this tourist migration are realized to their full potential.

Sources

Meaningful Experiences 2023 — Meaningful Experiences in Thailand. Tourism Authority of Thailand. On: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand (website). Available at: https://image.mfa.go.th/mfa/0/omYSaBhy5Y/PDF/2._Thailand_Business_Forum_TAT.pdf (accessed: 27 May 2025). (In Eng.)

Russian tourists flock 2023 — Russian tourists flock to Thailand. On: The Moscow Times. Posted on 28 July 2023. Available at: https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2023/07/28/russian-tourists-flock-to-thailand-bloomberg-a81987 (accessed: 15 March 2025). (In Eng.)

TAT 2025 — Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT). Intelligence Center (website). Available at: https://intelligencecenter.tat.or.th/ (accessed: 17 June 2025). (In Eng.)

Thailand GDP 2024a — Thailand GDP. On: Trading Economics. Available at: https://tradingeconomics.com/thailand/gdp (accessed: 23 April 2025). (In Eng.)

Thailand GDP 2024b — Thailand GDP. On: Worldometer. Available at: https://www.worldometers.info/gdp/thailand-gdp/ (accessed: 20 April 2025). (In Eng.)

Thailand Tourism 2021 — Thailand Tourism Statistics for 2021. On: InThailand.Travel. Posted on 1 July 2021. Available at: https://www.inthailand.travel/thailand-tourism-statistics-for-2021-by-country/ (accessed: 17 February 2025). (In Eng.)

Thailand visa waived 2024 — Thailand visa waived for Kazakh tourists entering Thailand. On: Thai Embassy. Posted on 31 August 2024. Available at: https://www.thaiembassy.com/thailand-visa/visa-waived-for-kazakh-tourists-entering-thailand (accessed: 21 April 2025). (In Eng.)

Tourism in Thailand 2025 — Tourism in Thailand. On: Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tourism_in_Thailand (accessed: 9 February 2025). (In Eng.)

Tourist flow 2024 — Tourist flow from Russia to Thailand up by 35 % year-on-year in January. On: TASS Russian News Agency. Posted on 4 February 2024. Available at: https://tass.com/economy/1908511 (accessed: 12 May 2025). (In Eng.)

Visa policy 2025 — Visa policy of Thailand. On: Wikipedia. Available at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Visa_policy_of_Thailand (accessed: 17 February 2025). (In Eng.)

World Development Indicators 2025 — World Development Indicators. On: World Bank DataBank. Available at: https://databank.worldbank.org/source/world-development-indicators# (accessed: 26 July 2025). (In Eng.)

UNWTO 2021 — UNWTO World Tourism Barometer. Statistical annex, May 2021. Vol. 19. Is. 3. 28 p. On: World Tourism Organization. Available at: https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/envir_e/unwto_barom21.pdf (accessed: 26 March 2025). (In Eng.)

References

Azhar, Udunuwara 2022 — *Azhar A., Udunuwara M.* Determinants of inbound travellers' motivation to select Sri Lanka as a preferred holiday destination: Perspective of Russian travellers. *South Asian Journal of Tourism and Hospitality*. 2022. Vol. 2. No. 1. Pp. 96–130. (In Eng.). DOI: 10.4038/sajth.v2i1.47

Gössling, Scott 2025 — *Gössling S., Scott D.* Tourist demand and destination development under climate change: Complexities and perspectives. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*. 2025. Vol. 33. August. Pp. 1–31. (In Eng.). DOI: 10.1080/09669582.2025.2543953

Ivlieva 2016 — Ivlieva O. V. The Curonian Spit as a tourist attraction in Lithuania. In: Ivlieva O. V. (ed.) Problems of Tourism Studies. Conference proceedings. Rostov-on-Don: Southern Federal University, 2016. Pp. 106–108. (In Russ.)

Karnasuta 2019 — *Karnasuta S.* Comparison between the decision-making process of Russian and Chinese tourists traveling to Thailand. *Journal of Thai Hospitality & Tourism*. 2019. Vol. 14. No. 1. Pp. 58–77. (In Eng.)

Martin 2007 — *Martin Ph.* The economic contribution of migrant workers to Thailand: Towards policy development. Bangkok: International Labour Office, 2007. XIV, 32 p. (In Eng.)

Neumayer 2010 — *Neumayer E.* Visa restrictions and bilateral travel. *The Professional Geographer*. 2010. Vol. 62. No. 2. Pp. 171–181. (In Eng.). DOI: 10.1080/00330121003600835

Oigenblick, Kirschenbaum 2002 — *Oigenblick L., Kirschenbaum A.* Tourism and immigration: Comparing alternative approaches. *Annals of Tourism Research*. 2002. Vol. 29. No. 4. Pp. 1086–1100. (In Eng.). DOI: 10.1016/S0160-7383(02)00023-3

Pleerux, Nardkulpat 2023 — *Pleerux N., Nardkulpat A.* Sentiment analysis of restaurant customer satisfaction during COVID-19 pandemic in Pattaya, Thailand. *Heliyon*. 2023. Vol. 9. No. 11. Article no. e22193. Pp. 1–15. (In Eng.). DOI: 10.1016/j.heliyon.2023.e22193

Rakhmonov 2023 — *Rakhmonov A. Kh.* Forced emigration from Russia 2022: Russian IT-specialists' potential for Central Asian CIS member countries. *Vestnik universiteta*. 2023. No. 7. Pp. 162–170. (In Russ.). DOI: 10.26425/1816-4277-2023-7-162-170

Rakhmonov 2025 — *Rakhmonov A. Kh.* A new direction of labor emigration from Central Asian countries to the Republic of Korea in the context of global challenges. *Vestnik universiteta*. 2025. No. 6. Pp. 162–174. (In Russ.). DOI: 10.26425/1816-4277-2025-6-162-174

Williams, Hall 2000 — *Williams A. M., Hall C. M.* Tourism and migration: New relationships between production and consumption. *Tourism Geographies*. 2000. Vol. 2. No. 1. Pp. 5–27. (In Eng.). DOI: 10.1080/146166800363420

Yingyoung, Lertputtharak 2014 — *Yingyoung T., Lertputtharak S.* Motivation factors, travel behavior and types of tourism of Russian tourists in Pattaya city. *Journal of Graduate School of Commerce–Burapha Review*. 2014. Vol. 9. No. 2. Pp. 81–96. (In Thai)