

References

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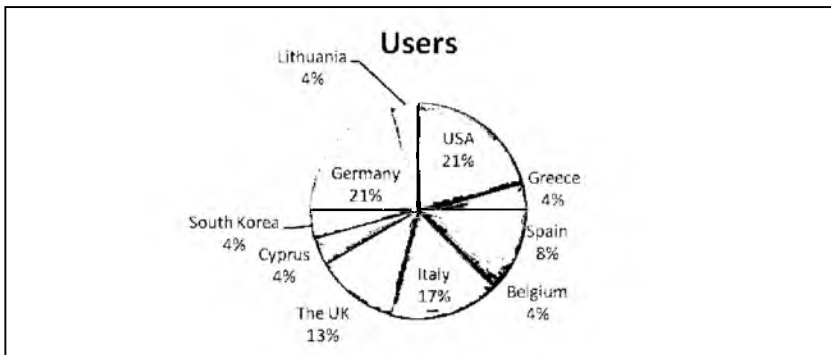
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WHAT FOREIGNERS THINK ABOUT THE VISA-FREE REGIME IN THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS

The decree of the President of Belarus No. 8 “On the establishment of a visa-free entry and exit procedure for foreign citizens” began operating in Belarus on February 12, 2017. The document establishes a visa-free entry procedure to Belarus for a period of not more than 5 days upon entry through the border crossing point at the National Border National Airport “Minsk”. Germany is the leader in the top five countries from which no visas come, followed by Poland, Italy, the United Kingdom and the United States. Depending on the country, the proportion of those arriving without visas varies from 50 to 80 percent. The document is aimed at activating the travel of businessmen, tourists, private individuals, documented with civil passports. The visa-free regime aims to attract more foreign tourists. However during its implementation a number of shortcomings were identified, which will be analyzed in this paper. As part of the study, the following sources were studied: videos (*Youtube*), reviews (*Facebook, Twitter*). 40 comments were received from foreign tourists who visited Belarus on a visa-free regime. Among the leaders on the left comments included users of countries such as the US, Germany and Italy.



The most pressing problems for foreigners are:

- high price of airline tickets;
- lack of time to inspect everything;
- weak knowledge of the population of foreign languages;
- there are not enough signs in English;
- in the evenings the streets are empty and quiet;
- there are not enough institutions with Belarusian color and original

food.

Also, this trend was revealed, among the responses on the establishment of a visa-free regime, that many tourists are ready to spend money in Belarus, but they are not included in the list.

Thus, it can be concluded that, despite the general success of introducing a visa-free regime, there are a number of problems that need to be addressed. First of all this is improving the quality of service in the tourist industry.

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TRANSIT TOURISM IN THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Modern transboundary position of the Republic of Belarus in European travel route predetermines its vital influence on economic connections of Western and Central European countries with Russia and Asian States, as well as Scandinavian countries with southern regions of Europe and Asia. Due to the above listed tendencies one can observe the appearance of a modern type of tourism: transit tourism. The notion “transit tourism” can be described as a pass of any foreign resident through the territory of one state (the Republic of Belarus) with the aim of reaching another, bordering state. Within the last five years the number of tourists, having visited our country is constantly growing.

Because of the fact that since January the 9th 2017 a visa free entry was introduced the number of tourists coming to Belarus has increased enormously. In the year our country was visited by 16 017 traveller on visa free basis. Among all the countries Germany took the leading place with 2152 tourists, the second place was taken by Poland — 1844 and the third by Italy — 1625 travellers per year [1].

But unfortunately the research shows that the potential of transport communication in Belarus as transit country is used not to its full extend. There are several reason for it: difficulties in customs organization, visa free regime conditions, the lack of developed travel infrastructure.

Nowadays a traveller from Poland or Lithuania cannot pass through the territory of Belarus on his way to Russia as transit without visa. While visa free regime works officially for residents of 80 countries for 5 days