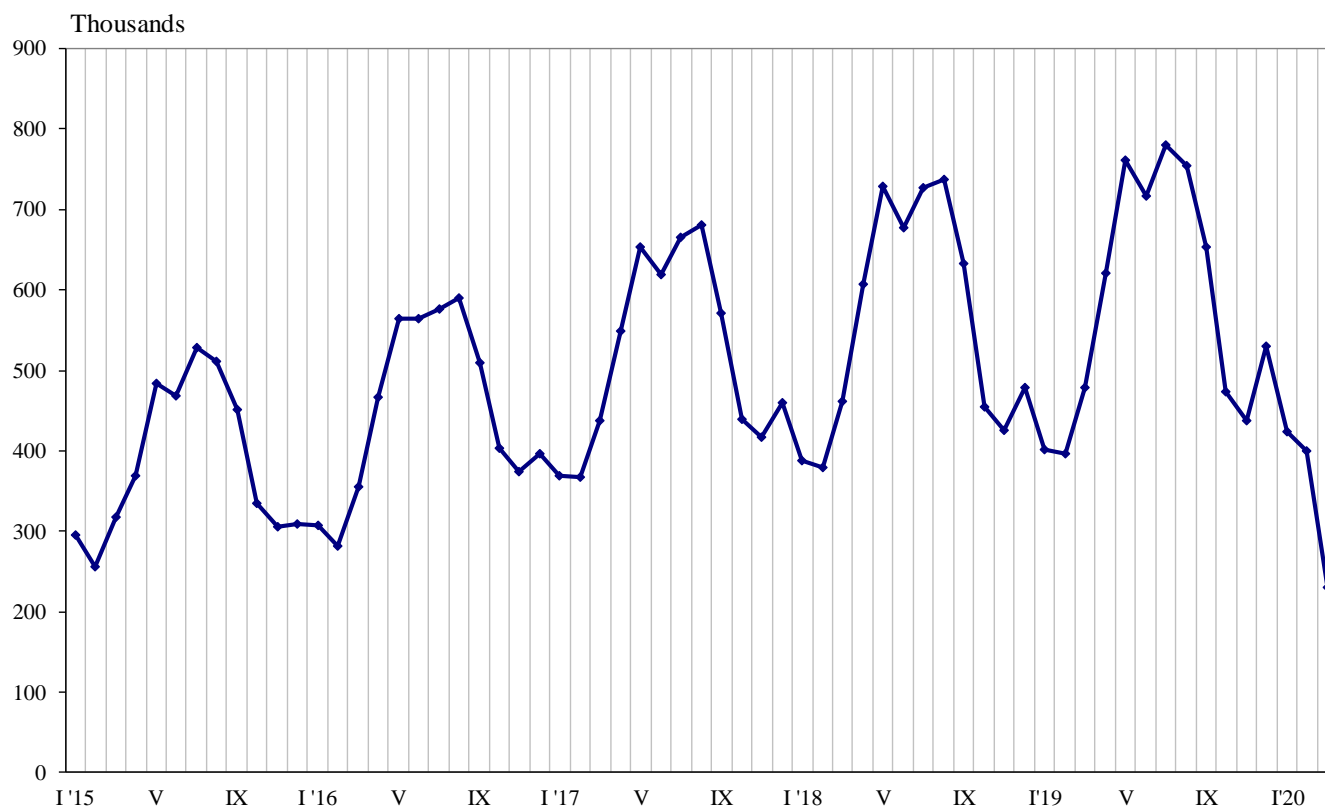


## TRIPS OF BULGARIAN RESIDENTS ABROAD AND ARRIVALS OF VISITORS FROM ABROAD TO BULGARIA IN MARCH 2020

In March 2020, a decline in the trips of Bulgarian citizens abroad and the visits of foreigners to Bulgaria was registered due to the suspension of international flights and the closure of the land borders because of the worldwide spread of the COVID-19 coronavirus.

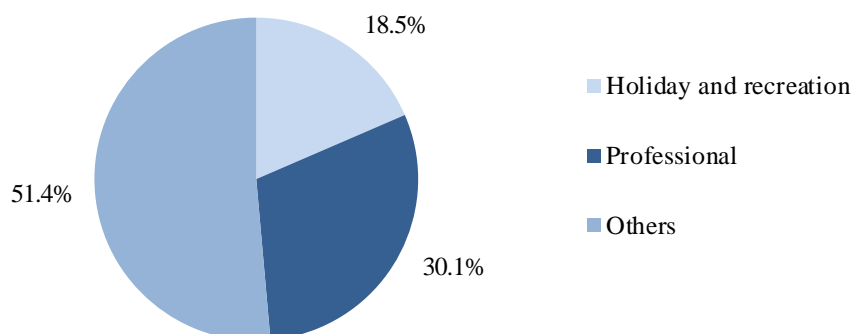
In March 2020, **the number of the trips of Bulgarian residents abroad** was 230.7 thousand (Annex, Table 1) or by 51.8% under the registered in March 2019 (Figure 1). In comparison with the same month of the previous year, a drop in the total number of the trips of Bulgarians to all observed countries was registered, as the most significant it was to: Italy - by 96.3%, Spain - by 79.9%, Serbia - by 55.9%, Germany - by 55.4%, the United Kingdom - by 53.1%, Greece - by 53.0%, Republic of North Macedonia - by 52.0%, and etc.

**Figure 1. Trips of Bulgarian residents abroad by months**



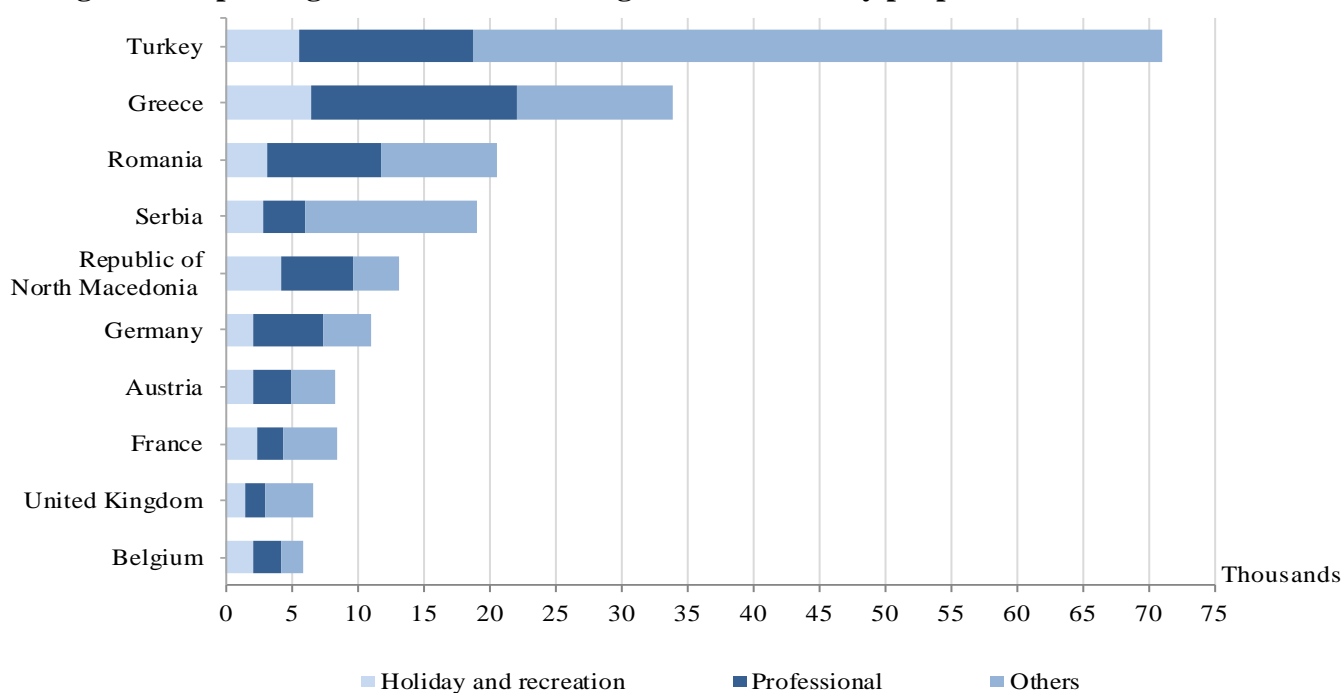
In comparison with March 2019, decreased the trips with all observed purposes was registered: 'holiday and recreation' - by 64.9%, 'professional' - by 52.1% and 'others' - by 44.0%. The trips with other purposes (as a guest, education and visit the cultural and sport events) in March 2020 composed the greatest share of the total number of trips of Bulgarian residents abroad - 51.4%, followed by those with professional purpose - 30.1%, and with holiday and recreation purposes - 18.5% (Figure 2).

**Figure 2. Structure of the trips of Bulgarian residents abroad by purpose of visit in March 2020**



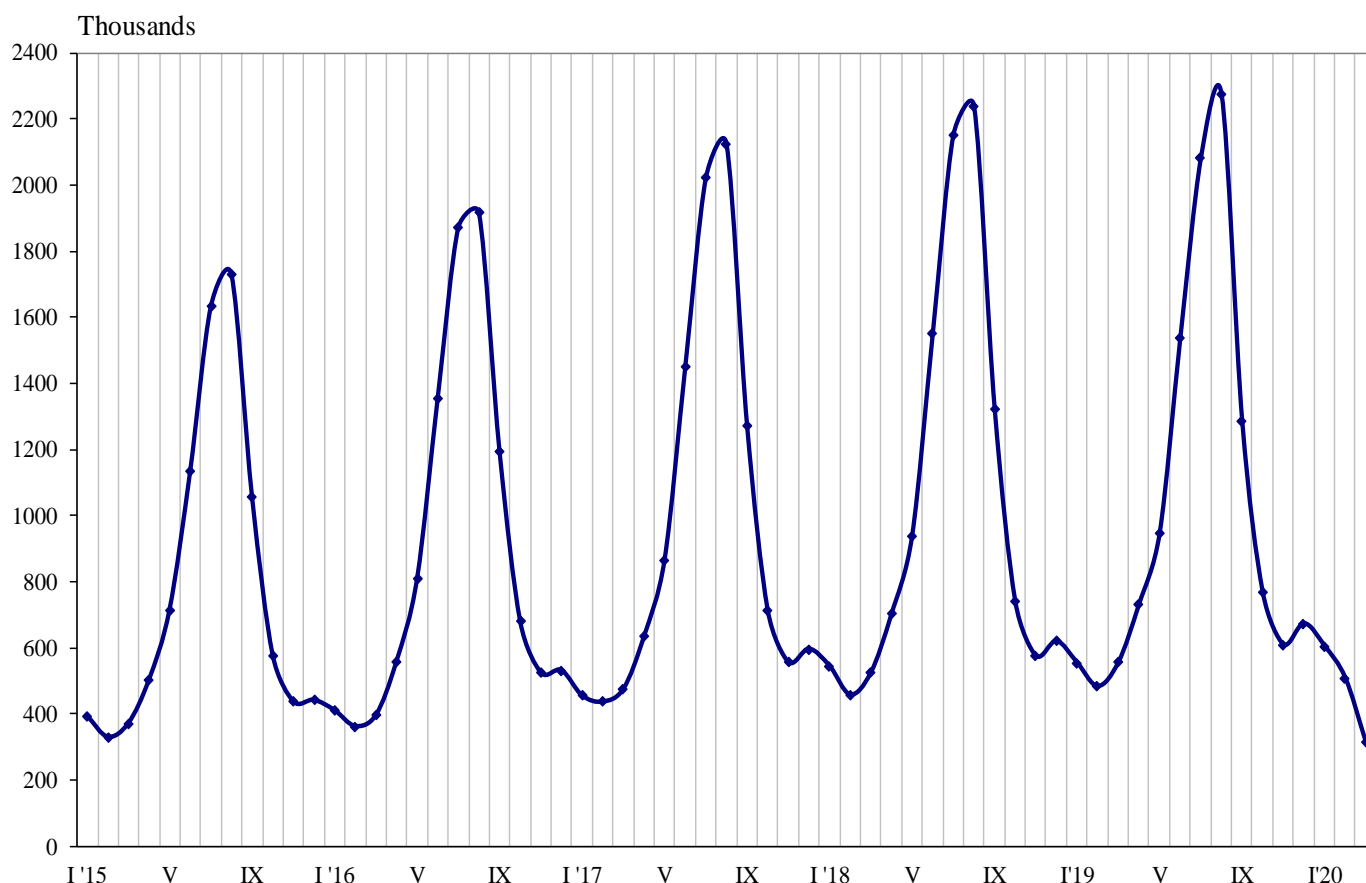
In March 2020 most trips of Bulgarian citizens were made to: Turkey - 71.1 thousand, Greece - 34.0 thousand, Romania - 20.5 thousand, Serbia - 19.1 thousand, Republic of North Macedonia - 13.1 thousand, Germany - 10.9 thousand, Austria - 8.4 thousand, France - 8.3 thousand, the United Kingdom - 6.6 thousand, Belgium - 5.9 thousand (Figure 3).

**Figure 3. Top foreign destinations for Bulgarian residents by purpose of visit in March 2020**



In March 2020, the number of arrivals of visitors from abroad to Bulgaria was 312.8 thousand (Annex, Table 2) or by 43.7% less in comparison with March 2019 (Figure 4). A decrease in the trips with all observed purposes was registered: 'holiday and recreation' - by 60.7%, 'professional' - by 45.9% and 'others' (including as guest and passing transit) - by 26.6%. Transit passes through the country were 34.7% (108.5 thousand) of all visits of foreigners to Bulgaria.

**Figure 4. Arrivals of visitors from abroad to Bulgaria by months**



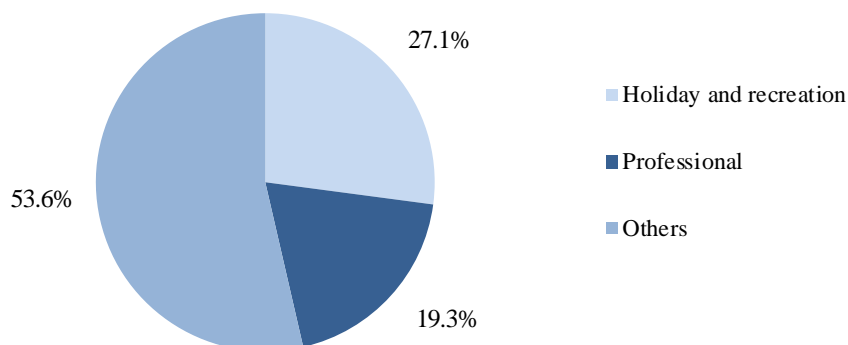
The share of visits of EU citizens was 49.7% of the total number of foreigners' visits to Bulgaria in March 2020 or by 42.0% less in comparison with the same month of the previous year. A decline was registered in the visits of citizens from all observed countries, as the highest it was from: Germany - by 55.8%, France - by 54.6%, the United Kingdom - by 45.7%, Greece - by 36.2%, Romania - by 34.6%, and etc.

The visits of foreigners in the group 'Other European countries'<sup>1</sup> decreased by 42.2%, as the highest decrease was observed in the visits of citizens of Republic of North Macedonia - by 55.8%.

In March 2020, the predominant share of the visits with other purposes - 53.6%, followed by trips with holiday and recreation purpose - 27.1%, and with professional purpose - 19.3% (Figure 5).

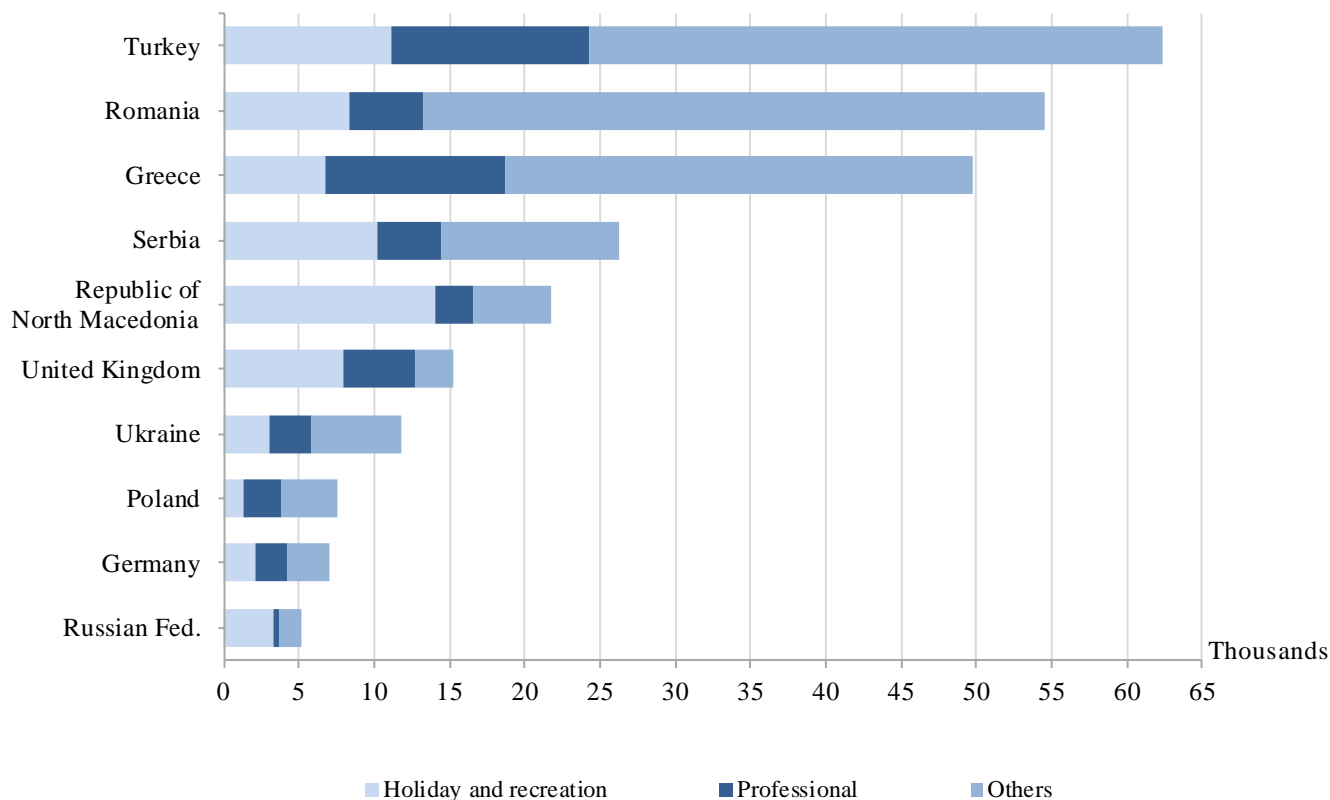
<sup>1</sup> Group 'Other European countries' includes countries in Europe outside EU.

**Figure 5. Structure of visits of foreign citizens to Bulgaria by purpose in March 2020**



In March 2020 the most visits to Bulgaria were from: Turkey - 62.5 thousand, Romania - 54.5 thousand, Greece - 49.6 thousand, Serbia - 26.3 thousand, Republic of North Macedonia - 21.8 thousand, the United Kingdom - 15.2 thousand, Ukraine - 11.8 thousand, Poland - 7.6 thousand, Germany - 7.0 thousand, Russian federation - 5.1 thousand (Figure 6).

**Figure 6. Top visits by foreigners to Bulgaria by country of residence and purpose in March 2020**



## Methodological notes

The definitions recommended by the World Tourist Organization and the Methodological manual for tourism by Eurostat are applied by the National Statistical Institute.

In accordance with these definitions **an international tourist** is any person who travels to a country other than his/her permanent residence for less than a year and whose main purpose is not doing any activity for payment in place visited.

**The purposes of visiting** a country are the following:

- Excursion, holiday or entertainment (visits to cultural or historical landmarks, sport events and other);
- Visiting friends and relatives;
- Professional purposes (business trips, participation in conferences, congresses, concluding deals, and etc.);
- Other (education, medical treatment, and etc.) purposes.

Statistical data on the trips of Bulgarian citizens travelling abroad and visits by foreigners to Bulgaria are obtained on the basis of monthly information received from the Ministry of Interior and sample survey of the National Statistical Institute among Bulgarian and foreign citizens passing through border check points.

Data on the number of the trips of the citizens of the European Union are estimated on the basis of the information obtained from the Ministry of Interior and the airport authorities. Data on the number of citizens from 'third countries' are obtained directly from the Ministry of Interior.

Data on the purposes of the trips are obtained on the basis of the NSI's regular monthly sample survey of passing Bulgarian and foreign citizens through the border check points.

Annex

Table 1

**Trips of Bulgarian residents abroad by purpose of visit  
and country of destination in March 2020**

Country of destination	Total	Purpose of visit		
		Holiday and recreation	Professional	Others
				(Number)
<b>Total</b>	<b>230690</b>	<b>42660</b>	<b>69548</b>	<b>118482</b>
<b>EU<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>118458</b>	<b>26971</b>	<b>44566</b>	<b>46921</b>
Austria	8382	2144	2924	3314
Belgium	5875	1993	2098	1784
Croatia	1504	277	281	946
Cyprus	298	-	119	179
Czech Republic	2539	981	879	679
Denmark	1685	768	235	682
Finland	290	113	125	52
France	8344	2331	1959	4054
Germany	10941	2055	5301	3585
Greece	33898	6467	15625	11806
Hungary	2904	1016	536	1352
Ireland	302	123	101	78
Italy	484	205	130	149
Malta	199	177	-	22
Netherlands	1559	732	557	270
Poland	3721	786	1453	1482
Portugal	327	220	107	-
Romania	20509	3064	8730	8715
Slovakia	2808	278	312	2218
Slovenia	1129	308	218	603
Spain	2485	1220	592	673
Sweden	1204	305	529	370
United Kingdom	6563	1357	1548	3658
Other EU countries	508	51	207	250
<b>Other European countries</b>	<b>106521</b>	<b>13200</b>	<b>23344</b>	<b>69977</b>
Norway	102	47	55	-
Republic of North Macedonia	13091	4130	5484	3477
Russian Federation	2109	477	999	633
Serbia	19073	2785	3173	13115
Switzerland	433	117	244	72
Turkey	71080	5462	13219	52399
Ukraine	633	182	170	281
<b>Other countries</b>	<b>1585</b>	<b>376</b>	<b>414</b>	<b>795</b>
Canada	315	106	117	92
Israel	551	152	76	323
USA	719	118	221	380

<sup>1</sup> Included UK data until the end of the transition period.

Table 2

Arrivals of visitors from abroad to Bulgaria  
by purpose of visit and country of origin in March 2020

(Number)

Country of origin	Total	Purpose of visit		
		Holiday and recreation	Professional	Others
<b>Total</b>	<b>312829</b>	<b>84726</b>	<b>60359</b>	<b>167744</b>
<b>EU<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>155580</b>	<b>31871</b>	<b>32610</b>	<b>91099</b>
Austria	1691	510	606	575
Belgium	1134	115	354	665
Croatia	1128	183	237	708
Cyprus	739	369	246	124
Czech Republic	1254	209	227	818
Denmark	422	141	116	165
Finland	242	129	113	-
France	2528	506	969	1053
Germany	7044	2090	2209	2745
Greece	49608	6784	11872	30952
Hungary	2457	537	491	1429
Ireland	1046	419	167	460
Italy	1771	517	409	845
Malta	112	112	-	-
Netherlands	2013	431	863	719
Poland	7576	1288	2612	3676
Portugal	378	121	108	149
Romania	54526	8289	5016	41221
Slovakia	886	139	176	571
Slovenia	314	98	133	83
Spain	1594	415	397	782
Sweden	578	163	218	197
United Kingdom	15208	7984	4753	2471
Other EU countries	1331	322	318	691
<b>Other European countries</b>	<b>128216</b>	<b>42119</b>	<b>23259</b>	<b>62838</b>
Norway	206	112	33	61
Republic of North Macedonia	21761	14034	2602	5125
Russian Federation	5143	3273	365	1505
Serbia	26337	10227	4270	11840
Switzerland	527	179	155	193
Turkey	62461	11206	13107	38148
Ukraine	11781	3088	2727	5966
<b>Other countries</b>	<b>5799</b>	<b>4793</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>735</b>
Canada	255	191	24	40
Israel	3612	3494	63	55
Japan	185	150	16	19
USA	1747	958	168	621
<b>Rest of the world</b>	<b>23234</b>	<b>5943</b>	<b>4219</b>	<b>13072</b>

<sup>1</sup> Included UK data until the end of the transition period.