

Islamic Republic of Iran
Data Collection Survey on Formulation of Tourism Development Strategy
in Northwestern Provinces

Final Report
July 2019

Japan International Cooperation Agency

International Development Center of Japan

H. I. S.

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For currency conversion where necessary, the following exchange rates in June 2019 are applied:

IRR 1 = JPY 0.0008474 (Sana rate on the last working day of May 2019)

USD 1 = JPY 109.386

Iranian calendar (PY) is used in this report in accordance with the original official statistics.

PY1393: from March 21, 2014, to March 20, 2015

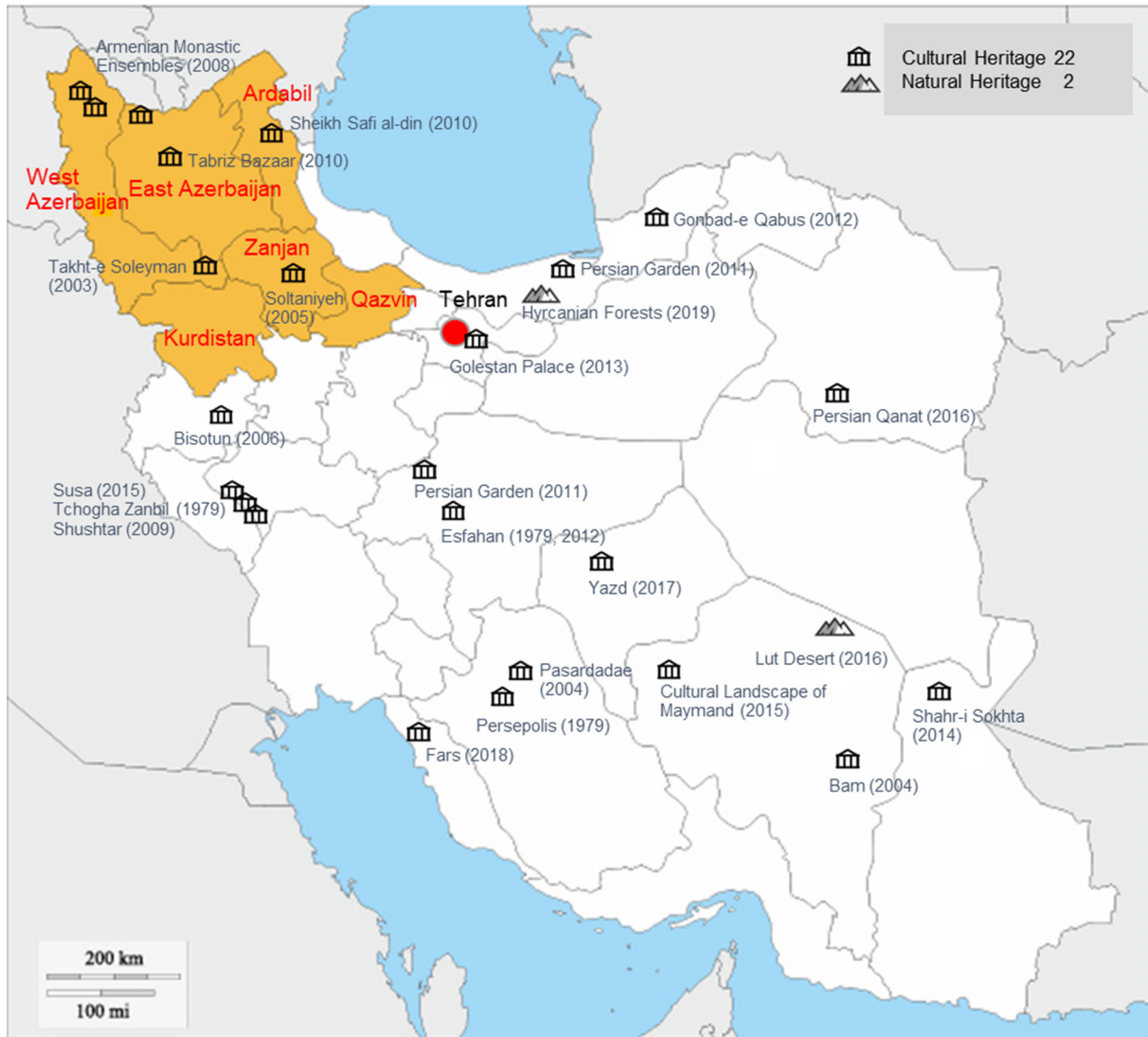
PY1394: from March 21, 2015, to March 20, 2016

PY1395: from March 21, 2016, to March 20, 2017

PY1396: from March 21, 2017, to March 20, 2018

PY1397: from March 21, 2018, to March 20, 2019

Location Map of the Survey Area



1. Official Country Name	Islamic Republic of Iran
2. Area	1,648,195 km ² * ¹
3. Population	81,162,788 (2017) * ² , Annual Growth Rate 1.096% (2017) * ²
4. Ethnic Groups	Persian, Azerbaijani, Kurdish, Arab, etc. * ¹
5. Languages	Persian, Azerbaijani, Kurdish, etc. * ¹
6. Religions	Islam (mainly Twelver Shia), Christianity, Judaism, Zoroastrianism, etc. * ¹
7. Major Industries	Oil Industry * ¹
8. GDP	USD 454,013 million (2017) * ²
9. GNI per capita	USD 5,430 (2017) (Atlas Method, Current USD) * ² USD 20,920 (2017) (PPP, Current International Dollar) * ²
10. GDP Growth	3.8% (2017) * ²
11. Consumer Price Index	337.104 (2017) * ² (2010=100)
12. Currency	Rial (IRR)
13. Life Expectancy at Birth	76.2 (2017) * ²
14. Adult Literacy Rate	85.5% (2016) * ²
15. HIV Adult Prevalence	0.1% (2017) * ²
16. Primary School Enrolment	GER 108.0% (Female 109.8%, Male 106.2%), NER 98.6% (2017) * ²
17. Unemployment	Total 12.0% (Adult Male 10.1%, Adult Female 20.1%) (ILO Model Est.) (2018) * ²

*¹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan as of June 23, 2019

*² World Development Indicators (WDI) as of June 23, 2019

Snapshots during the Field Survey (1)



Kick-off meeting was chaired by Mr. Teymouri, Deputy of Tourism, ICHHTO (11/05/19)



Meeting with ICHHTO East Azerbaijan and relevant organizations (15/05/19)



World Heritage “Tabriz Historic Bazar” (14/05/19)



“Kaboud Mosque” listed in the World Heritage Tentative List (14/05/19)



Agencies dealing with mountain climbing, outdoor, and adventure are often seen in Tabriz.



Rocky architecture in Kandovan Village (14/05/19)



St. Stephanos Church, one of the World Heritage “Armenian Monastic Ensembles” (16/05/19)



Aras Free Zone also supports establishment of Eco-museum.

Snapshots during the Field Survey (2)



Meeting with ICHHTO West Azerbaijan and relevant organizations (18/05/19)



Urmieh Museum located next to ICHHTO West Azerbaijan (18/05/19)



A world-wide known iron-age archaeological site of "Hasanlu" (18/05/19)



Excavated artifacts displayed at the museum adjacent to "Hasanlu" (18/05/19)



Sasanian Khan Takhti Inscription on the hillside (19/05/19)



Tower of Shams Tabrizi, decorated with horns (19/05/19)



St. Thaddeus, one of the World Heritage "Armenian Monastic Ensembles" (19/05/19)



"Takht-e Soleyman, the most sacred place of Zoroaster (24/05/19)

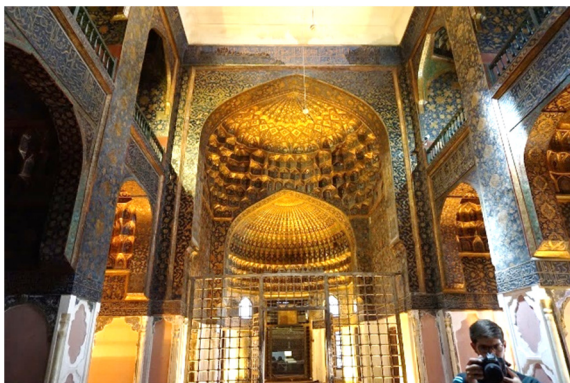
Snapshots during the Field Survey (3)



Meeting with ICHHTO Ardabil and relevant organizations (20/05/19)



World Heritage “Sheikh Safi al-Din Shrine” (20/05/19)



Interior of World Heritage “Sheikh Safi al-Din Shrine” (20/05/19)



Souvenir shops of local specialties in front of the Sheikh Safi al-Din Shrine



Mt. Sabalan (4,800 m) rises in the center of Ardabil Province



Rich nature found along the border with the Republic of Azerbaijan (20/05/19)



Many health centers found in Sarein City located at foot of Sabalan (21/05/19)



Local specialties, honey and yogurt, sold at all souvenir shops in Sarein (21/05/19)

Snapshots during the Field Survey (4)



Meeting with ICHHTO Zanjan and relevant organizations (22/05/19)



Laundry facility (Rakhshooy Khaneh) renovated for a folklore museum



Handicraft bazar developed by Zanjan City, a traditional footwear “Charoq” shop (22/05/19)



Open-top tour bus operated by Zanjan City, ECO member states' flags (22/05/19)



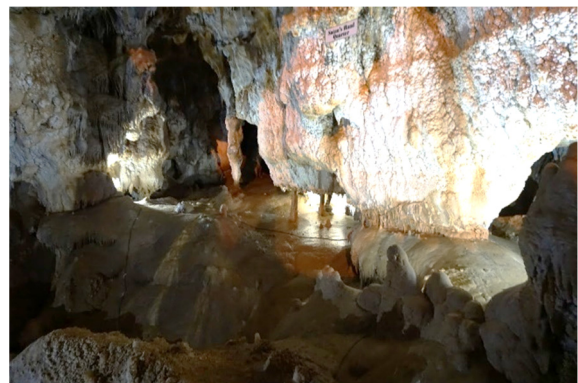
World Heritage “Soltanieh”, ancient capital of Ilkhanate (23/05/19)



Restoration works undertaken by ICHHTO staff and workers (23/05/19)



Eco-lodge started in Zanjan Province, the most developed province in the country (23/05/19)



Beautiful stalactite at Katalahkhor Cave (23/05/19)

Snapshots during the Field Survey (5)



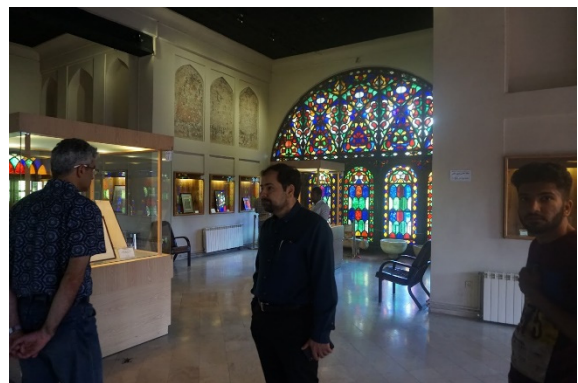
Meeting with ICHHTO Qazvin and the private sector (28/05/19)



Seljukian tombs known as Kharaghan Twin Towers (27/05/19)



Renovation of caravanserais for new job opportunities for young generation (27/05/19)



Safavid palace converted to the Calligraphy Museum (28/05/19)



Popular shopping mall converted from ancient bazar (28/05/19)



Ovan Lake located in Alamout mountains; camping is allowed (29/05/19)



World Heritage Tentative Lis "Alamout Castle" located at the top of the rock (29/05/19)



Unique eco-lodges are also found in Alamout mountains (29/05/19)

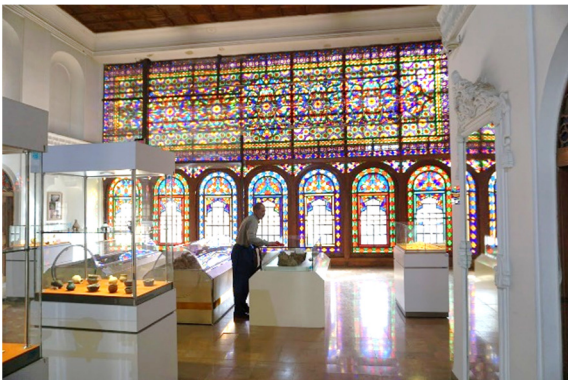
Snapshots during the Field Survey (6)



Meeting with ICHHTO Kurdistan and relevant organizations (25/05/19)



Karftoo Cave listed in the World Heritage Tentative List (24/05/19)



Sanandaj Museum with beautiful stained glass (25/05/19)



Vivid exhibition of Kurdish life at “Asef Mansion” (25/05/19)



Moshir Diwan Mansion under restoration by ICHHTO (25/05/19)



Zerbar Lake, a paradise for migratory birds, is a popular tourist site (25/05/19)



“Cultural Landscape of Uramanat” is listed in the World Heritage Tentative List (26/05/19)



Most villages in Uramanat valley built on the hillside (26/05/19)

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Final Report

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List of Abbreviations

CCIMA	Iranian Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture
DOE	Iranian Department of Environment
ECO	Economic Cooperation Organization
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EU	European Union
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FAM	Familiarization Trip or Tour
FIT	Free Individual Tourists
FP	Focal Point
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ICHHTO	Iranian Cultural Heritage, Handcrafts and Tourism Organization
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IFTGA	Iranian Federation of Tourist Guide Associations
IHA	Iran Hotel Association
IRIB	Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting
IRR	Iranian Rial (Currency)
ITOA	Iranian Tour Operator Association
JCC	Joint Coordinating Committee
JET	JICA Expert Team
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
JPY	Japanese Yen
M/M	Minutes of Meetings or Man-Month
NA	Not Applicable or Not Available
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OIC	Organization of Islamic Cooperation
PBO	Iranian Plan and Budget Organization
PY	Persian Year/ Calendar
QIC	Quarantine, Immigration, and Custom
R/D	Record of Discussions
SCI	Statistical Center of Iran
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SNS	Social Networking Service
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (Analysis)
TACI	Touring and Automobile Club of Iran
TBD	To Be Determined
TOR	Terms of Reference
TSA	Tourism Satellite Account
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlement Program
UNWTO	World Tourism Organization
VFR	Visiting Friends and Relatives (One of the purposes of travel)
WCC	World Crafts Council
WWF	World Wildlife Fund for Nature

1 Introduction

1.1 Background of the Survey

Iran is endowed with rich and diverse tourism resources, including UNESCO World Cultural Heritage sites with the greatest number in the Middle East, and natural heritage sites such as Qeshm Island. The number of foreign tourists increased from 2,938 thousand in 2010 to 5,237 thousand in 2015, resulting in 2,300 thousand increase in five years (UNWTO). The tourism revenue also increased from USD 2,438 million in 2010 to USD 3,868 million in 2015 (UNWTO). The Government of Iran puts great emphasis on the tourism industry in the sixth Five-Year-Plan (2016-2021) in expectation of contribution to job creation against extremely high unemployment rate which was more than 12% in 2017 (ILO).

On the other hand, World Economic Forum rates Iran as 93rd position among 136 countries in the world in its Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report 2017 due to weak international openness, tourism infrastructure, etc. Iran suffers from effective use of tourism resources.

In such a situation, JICA conducted “Data Collection Survey on Tourism and Cultural Heritage in Iran” between September 2017 and March 2018 to identify possible measures for improving the tourism across the country with Iranian counterparts. As a result, Iranian Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization (ICHHTO) and JICA agreed upon Tabriz and surrounding provinces to be a candidate area for future technical cooperation. Based on the agreement, the Government of Iran made a request to the Government of Japan on the formulation of tourism development strategy in Northwestern Provinces.

In response to the request from the Government of Iran, JICA decided to dispatch a Study Team to collect necessary data and information in preparation for support for the formulation of tourism development strategy in the Northwestern Provinces.

1.2 Purpose of the Survey

The purpose of the Survey is as follows:

- The Survey is conducted to collect and analyze the basic information on tourism in the Northwestern Provinces of Iran, in preparation of support for the formulation of the tourism development strategy.

1.3 Target Area of the Survey

The Survey is conducted in the following area:

- Tehran
- Northwestern Provinces (East Azerbaijan Province, West Azerbaijan Province, Ardabil Province, Zanjan Province, Qazvin Province, and Kurdistan Province)

A location map of the Target Area is attached at the beginning of the report.

2 Overview of the Target Area

2.1 History, Geography, Nature and Culture

The target area, Northwestern part of Iran, borders the Republic of Azerbaijan, Armenia, Turkey, and Iraq, and has played an important role of trade to link Europe and Asia since the prehistoric age. The Ilkhanate founded in the 13th century and the Safavid Dynasty founded in the 16th century based in this area.

The area retains the rich cultural heritage of various ethnic groups, which are the testimony of the east-west trade scattering across the current international borders. In addition, the area has abundant natural resources including Mt. Sabalan with 4,811m height and Lake Urmieh, the largest lake in Iran. There are a large number of hot springs at the foot of Mt. Sabalan, which is a volcano.

Table 2.1 Geographic Features of the Target Area

Indicators	East Azerbaijan	West Azerbaijan	Ardabil
Provincial Capital *1	Tabriz	Urmieh	Ardabil
Area (Km ²) *1	45,673	37,411	17,813
Percentage of total land area	2.8%	2.3%	1.1%
Population (2011) *2	3,724,620	3,080,576	1,248,488
Population (2016) *2	3,909,652	3,265,219	1,270,420
Rate of Increase (2011-2016) *2	0.97%	1.17%	0.35%
Population Density (per Km ²) *2	85.67	87.28	71.32
Shahrestan (District) *1	20	17	10
Bakhsh (County) *1	44	40	29
Shahr (City) *1	62	45	29
Dehestan (Village) *1	142	113	71
Number of Protected Area *1	14	7	4
Area (ha) *1	591,565	662,737	136,979
National Park *1	2	1	0
Wildlife Habitat *1	1	2	0
Protected Zone *1	10	3	2
National Natural Heritage *1	1	1	2

Zanjan	Qazvin	Kurdistan	Iran
Zanjan	Qazvin	Sanandaj	(Tehran)
21,773	15,567	29,136	1,68,777
1.3%	1.0%	1.8%	100.0%
1,015,734	1,201,565	1,493,645	75,149,669
1,057,461	1,273,761	1,603,011	80,277,428
0.81%	1.17%	1.42%	1.24%
48.57	81.82	55.02	49.29
8	6	10	429
17	19	31	1,058
21	25	30	1,287
48	46	86	2,589
3	3	5	284
244,654	119,414	191,959	17,735,085
0	0	0	31
1	0	1	46
2	3	4	169
0	0	0	38

Source: *1: SCI Statistical Yearbook PY1396 (2017), *2: SCI Census 2016

2.2 Socio-Economy

The following table shows the major socio-economic indicators of the targeted northwestern provinces of Iran.

Table 2.2 Socio-Economic Features of the Target Area

Indicators	East Azerbaijan	West Azerbaijan	Ardabil
Population (2016) *1	3,909,652	3,265,219	1,270,420
Rate of Increase (2011-2016) *2	0.97%	1.17%	0.35%
Population Density (per Km ²) *2	85.67	87.28	71.32
GDP (IRR million) *2	403,832,797	254,965,786	127,917,450
Trading Value (IRR million) *2	4,471.24	1,567.44	1,767.07
FDI (2010-2014) (USD '000) *2	279,882	39,306	20,100
Gini Coefficient (Urban Area) *2	0.34	0.26	0.27
Gini Coefficient (Rural Area) *2	0.34	0.25	0.27
Consumer Price Index (2016=100) *2	110.2	110.0	108.9
Unemployment Rate (Total) *3	10.7%	14.3%	10.4%
(Male) *3	9.8%	14.1%	10.1%
(Female) *3	14.9%	15.2%	11.3%
(Urban Total) *3	12.9%	17.8%	13.6%
(Urban Male) *3	11.3%	16.3%	12.0%
(Urban Female) *3	20.6%	24.5%	21.5%
(Rural Total) *3	6.0%	8.7%	5.4%
(Rural Male) *3	6.1%	10.2%	6.6%
(Rural Female) *3	5.4%	3.6%	2.7%
(Age 15 – 24) *3	27.3%	26.6%	25.8%
(Age 15 – 29) *3	24.9%	26.8%	23.8%

Zanjan	Qazvin	Kurdistan	Iran
1,057,461	1,273,761	1,603,011	80,277,428
0.81%	1.17%	1.42%	1.24%
48.57	81.82	55.02	49.29
138,198,206	209,570,306	116,360,485	NA
4,375.70	1,218.57	551.26	NA
228,732	117,410	14,351	17,817,993
0.28	0.29	0.30	0.37
0.25	0.29	0.26	0.34
109.0	109.1	109.4	109.6
10.4%	10.7%	13.7%	12.1%
9.8%	9.9%	11.8%	10.2%
12.9%	15.1%	22.5%	19.8%
12.8%	12.3%	15.6%	13.4%
11.1%	11.1%	12.6%	10.9%
22.6%	18.6%	32.1%	24.0%
6.4%	5.7%	9.8%	8.2%
7.6%	6.4%	10.1%	8.2%
2.3%	2.0%	8.4%	8.5%
21.3%	22.9%	36.0%	28.4%
22.3%	21.6%	31.5%	25.3%

Source: *1: SCI Census 2016, *2: MEFA Databank 2017, *3: SCI Statistical Yearbook PY1396 (2017)

As for the provincial GDP, that of East Azerbaijan is the highest, followed by West Azerbaijan and Qazvin, and Zanjan and Ardabil. The provincial GDP of Kurdistan is the lowest. This tendency is almost the same for “Trading Value” and “Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)” unless Zanjan shows higher values.

The “Gini Coefficients” in the target provinces show lower rates than the national average, although that of East Azerbaijan is the highest. It is deemed that the wealth is equitably distributed in the target provinces. There seems any disparity in the “Consumer Price Indexes” by province.

The “Unemployment Rates” tend commonly high among females in the urban area, and that of Kurdistan reaches is 32.1%, which is very high. Besides, the “Unemployment Rates” of young people aged lower than 24 indicate high. One person among three or four young people does not have a permanent job in most target provinces. The “Unemployment Rates” in the rural area are generally lower. However, the rates for males in West Azerbaijan and Kurdistan exceed 10%, which seems serious.

The Tourism Development Master Plan for Northwestern Provinces of Iran is expected to alleviate such disparity among the provinces by creating job opportunities and increasing income of residents.

3 Tourism Resources and Products

3.1 History and Culture

Human beings have settled in the target area since the prehistoric period. The area is endowed with the common historical and cultural heritage of humanity including world-wide known iron age archaeological sites such as Hasanlu, Sasanian inscriptions, the most important Zoroastrian shrine, caravanserais and bazars used for East-West trade, mausoleums and ancient cities of Ilkhanate, Safavid and Qajar dynasties, etc.

The following table summarizes major historical and cultural tourism resources and products in the target area.

Table 3.1 Major History and Culture Tourism Resources and Products in the Target Provinces

Provinces	World Heritage	World Heritage Tentative list	National Cultural Heritage/ Museums, etc.
East Azerbaijan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Armenian Monastic Ensembles of Iran (2008) Tabriz Historic Bazaar Complex (2010) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kaboud Mosque (2007) <p>Arasbaran Protected Area (Natural Heritage List) (2007)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arg-e Tabriz Kandovan Rocky Architecture Historical Castles Azerbaijan Museum Qajar Museum Iron Age Museum Measurement Museum Constitution House
West Azerbaijan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Takht-e Soleyman (2003) Armenian Monastic Ensembles of Iran (2008) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Khan Takhti Inscription Hasanlu Archaeological Site Motelleb Khan Mosque (Khoy) Shams Tabriz (Khoy) Khoy Municipality Urmieh Museum Anthropology Museum Natural History Museum Hasanlu Museum Khoy Museum
Ardabil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sheikh Safi al-Din Khanegah and Shrine Ensemble (2010) 	Sabalan (Natural Heritage List) (2007)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sheikh Amin al-Din Jebraili Shrine Ardabil Anthropology Museum
Zanjan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Soltanieh (2005) 	Salt Domes of Iran (Natural Heritage List) (2017)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zanjan Bazar and Historical City Center Chalabi Oughlou Mausoleum Dash Kasan (Dragon Temple) Archaeological Museum (Salt men Museum) Folklore Museum (Rakhshooy Khaneh)

Qazvin		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural Landscape of Alamout (2007) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dolat Khane (Former Safavid Headquarters) • Qazvin Bazar (Sa'ad Saltaneh Caravanserai) • Buin Zahra Caravanserai • Kharaghan Twin Towers • Calligraphy Museum (Chehel Sotun Palace) • Qazvin Museum • Mellat Museum
Kurdistan		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural Landscape of Uramanat (2007) • Natural-Historical Complex/ Cave of Karaftoo (2017) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional Villages of Hawraman • Palangan Village • Ziviyeh Archaeological Site • Sanandaj Museum • Asef Mansion • Moshir Divan Mansion

Source: World Heritage Center, ICHHTO Provinces

3.2 Nature and Ecotourism

The target area possesses mountains and highlands with rich nature, including 4,800 meter-class Mt. Sabalan. Clean streams, various fauna and flora, and birds found in the area are also important sources for sightseeing and ecotourism.

The following table summarizes the major nature and ecotourism resources and products in the target provinces.

Table 3.2 Major Nature and Ecotourism Resources and Products in the Target Provinces

Provinces	World Heritage Tentative List	National Parks	Natural Reserves, etc.
East Azerbaijan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arasbaran Protected Area (2007) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arasbaran Protected Area (8,923 ha) • Kantal Reserve (6,991 ha) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quri Gol Lake (Ramsar Site)
West Azerbaijan		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lake Urmieh (541,315 ha) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hasanlu Lake • Kani Barazan Wetland •
Ardabil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sabalan (2007) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sarein Hot Spring • Meshgin Shahr Hot Spring • Fandoqlu Forest
Zanjan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salt Domes of Iran (2017) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Katalahkhor Cave • Angran Protected Area
Qazvin	Cultural Landscape of Alamou (Cultural Heritage List) (2007)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alamout Mountains • Ovan Lake
Kurdistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural-Historical Complex/ Cave of Karaftoo (2017) Cultural Landscape of Uramanat (Cultural Heritage List) (2007)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Karaftoo Cave • Bijar Protected Area • Zeribar Lake

Source: World Heritage Center, DOE, ICHHTO Provinces

3.3 Traditional Handicrafts

The target area is located along important East-West trade corridors since the prehistoric period. The technology and quality of local products have been developed and sophisticated through the trade, which can be seen today.

The following table indicates the major traditional handicrafts in the target area.

Table 3.3 Major Traditional Handicrafts in the Target Provinces

Provinces	Major Traditional Handicrafts
East Azerbaijan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persian Carpets (Registered with WCC) • Leather Products • Leather Shoes
West Azerbaijan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wood Carvings • Wooden Mosaic Works • Traditional Music Instruments
Ardabil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leather Products (Bags, etc.)
Zanjan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knives and Cutlery • Charoq (Traditional Footwear) • Copper Products (Pots, Dishes, Cups, etc.)
Qazvin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional General Goods
Kurdistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kalash (Traditional Footwear) (Registered with WCC)

Source: World Crafts Council, ICHHTO Provinces

3.4 Intangible Heritage

In addition to the original Persian culture, various cultures of Azeri, Ilkhanate, Kurdish, Turkish, etc. have contacted in the target area. Nomadic culture originated from Central Asia is also observed. As a result of the exchange of diverse cultures, various and attractive intangible heritage can be seen today in the area.

The following table indicates major intangible heritage in the target area,

Table 3.4 Major Intangible Heritage in the Target Provinces

Provinces	Major Intangible Heritage
East Azerbaijan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Dishes (Kufteh Tabriz, etc.) • Sweets
West Azerbaijan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Dishes (Garlic Pickles, etc.) • Sugar Candy
Ardabil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Dishes (Ash e Doogh, Yogurt Soup, etc.) • Natural Honey • Nomadic Life Style and Tent (Yurt)
Zanjan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sweets
Qazvin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sweets
Kurdistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Dishes (Kurdish Kufteh, etc.) • Kurdish Traditional Clothes • Kurdish Music • Kurdish Folk Entertainment

Source: ICHHTO Provinces

3.5 Tourism Resource Management

Tourism Deputy of ICHHTO Province manages the tourism resources explained above in cooperation with other deputies of ICHHTO Province or relevant organizations in the province.

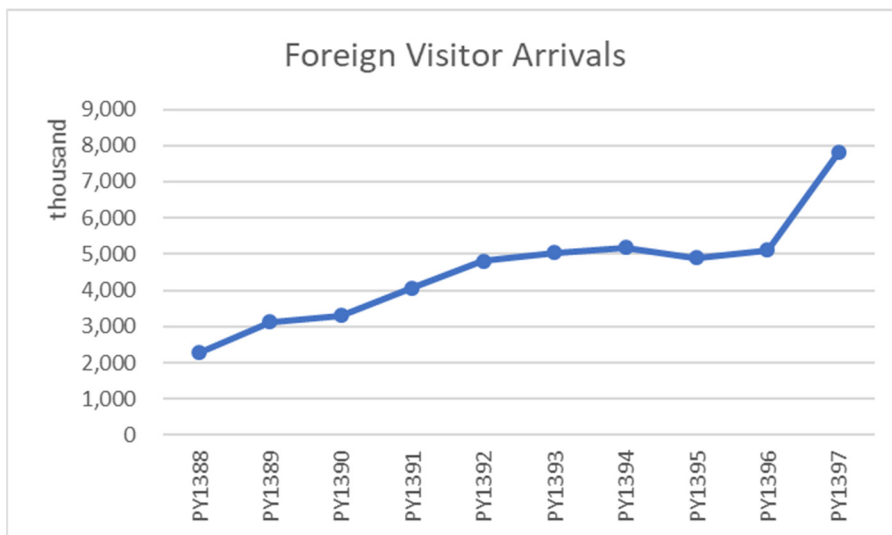
As for historical and cultural resources, including museums, Cultural Heritage Deputy of ICHHTO Province is responsible. As for natural resources and ecotourism, DOE or water management authority are responsible for the protected area and wetland, while Tourism Deputy of ICHHTO Province is responsible for the other area used for tourism purposes such as parking, camping site, shops, and WC, etc. as well as cleaning and solid waste management of the area. ICHHTO Province often sub-contract with the local cooperatives for management and operation of the site. As for handicrafts, Handicrafts Deputy of ICHHTO Province is in charge. The responsibility for intangible cultural heritage management rests different agencies depending on nature.

4 Tourism Demand

4.1 Inbound Tourists

In Iran, the number of inbound tourists is calculated monthly and annually based on the information obtained from the immigration police at all international airports and seaports as well as international border crossings. The following graph shows the trend of inbound tourist for ten years from PY1388 to PY1397.

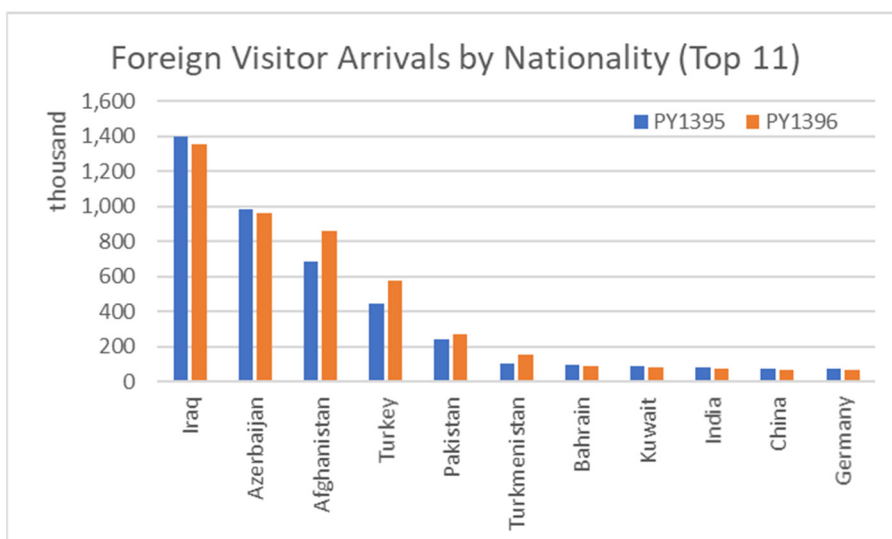
Figure 4.1 Trend of Inbound Tourists



Source: ICHHTO

The number of inbound tourists in PY1397 reached 7.8 million, with an increase of 52.5% compared to the previous year. ICHHTO found that the increase was made by the surrounding countries such as the Republic of Azerbaijan, Europe, and North and South Americas. ICHHTO deems that the reasons may include the decline of Iranian currency's value resulting in stronger price competitiveness, issuing of e-visa, relaxing the restrictions upon QIC procedure (quarantine, immigration, and custom).

Figure 4.2 Top 11 Nationalities among Inbound Tourists (PY1395 and PY1396)

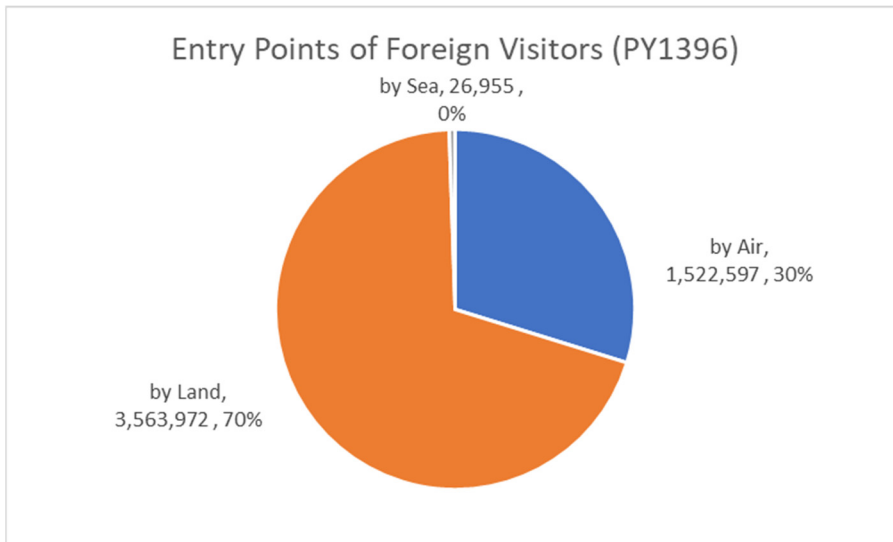


Source: ICHHTO

Although the Republic of Azerbaijan became the top source country in PY1397, the above graph indicates that three countries of Iraq, the Republic of Azerbaijan and Turkey bordering the northwestern part of Iran occupy 65% of the total inbound tourists in Iran (PY1396).

Similarly, the distribution of the entry points of the inbound tourists to Iran is as shown in the following graph: 70% of inbound tourists arrive in Iran by land and 30% by air.

Figure 4.3 Entry Points among Inbound Tourists (PY 1936)



Source: ICHHTO

East Azerbaijan Province has international border crossings with the Republic of Azerbaijan and Armenia. West Azerbaijan Province has those with Turkey (2 points) and Iraq. Ardabil Province has one with the Republic of Azerbaijan. Kurdistan Province also has two crossings with Iraq. These provinces receive not only cargo but also international and regional inbound tourists.

In particular, the border crossing at Jolfa, located in Aras Free Trade Zone, receives the second largest number of inbound tourists after Imam Khomeini International Airport in Tehran. It is necessary for the Tourism Development Master Plan for Northwestern Provinces of Iran to develop attractive tourism routes by taking into consideration the taste and interests of such international and regional tourists entering Iran by land.

4.2 Inflow Tourists in the Target Provinces

ICHHTO issues the annual statistics about the numbers of tourists in each of the targeted six northwestern provinces in Iran. However, the method and accuracy are uncertain.

According to the interview to the target ICCHTO provincial branches, the number of inflow tourists is estimated based on 1) the numbers of tourists reported by accommodation facilities, 2) the numbers of tickets sold at major tourist sites and museums, and 3) information from transportation offices including bus terminals, airports and highway management offices (particularly, during Nowruz period). In the case of ICHHTO Zanjan Province, the number is estimated based on the number of tourists at hotels, and add 60 to 70% of tickets sold at major tourist sites and museums.

Table 4.1 Numbers of Inflow Tourists in Target Provinces

Provinces		PY1393	PY1394	PY1395	PY1396
East Azerbaijan	Domestic Tourists	96,622	72,865	NA	4,200,000
	Foreign Tourists	357,841	333,786	NA	520,000
	Total	454,463	406,651	NA	4,720,000
West Azerbaijan	Domestic Tourists	193,002	291,763	NA	2,874,149
	Foreign Tourists	526,477	497,451	NA	598,213
	Total	719,479	789,214	NA	3,472,362
Ardabil	Domestic Tourists	0	2,125,000	NA	6,500,000
	Foreign Tourists	360,513	353,016	NA	405,246
	Total	360,513	2,478,016	NA	6,905,246
Zanjan	Domestic Tourists	83,992	88,210	NA	296,310
	Foreign Tourists	0	0	NA	4,309
	Total	83,992	88,210	NA	300,619
Qazvin	Domestic Tourists	254,423	815	NA	2,984,350
	Foreign Tourists	3,152	0	NA	9,470
	Total	257,575	815	NA	2,993,820
Kurdistan	Domestic Tourists	140,867	133,879	NA	195,139
	Foreign Tourists	128,209	0	NA	5,475
	Total	269,076	133,879	NA	200,614

Note: In PY1395 (2016), SCI did not issue the Statistical Yearbook due to the budgetary reason.

Source: ICHHTO Headquarters (obtained from SCI Statistical Yearbooks)

As understood from the above table, necessary data are missing in some years, and very rough estimation and target numbers are included. They are not useful for analyzing the trends and making future projection.

In this Survey, the Study Team has identified the following three data series, which help to set up the baseline data for formulation of the Tourism Master Plan as well as to make more accurate projections.

(1) Tourism Survey by Statistical Center of Iran (SCI)

Statistical Center of Iran (SCI) in cooperation with ICHHTO and the Central Bank of Iran, carries out the collection and analysis of the data in accordance with the Tourism Satellite Account (TSA) developed by UNWTO. As a part of TSA, SCI has been conducting the Tourism Survey annually by interviewing Iranian families all over the country (except 2015). The outline of the survey conducted in 2018 was as shown in the following table.

Table 4.2 Outlines of SCI Tourism Survey (PY1397)

Survey Targets	Iranian people living in Iran
Number of Samples	25,000 families across the country (about 0.1% of 24,196,035 families in Iran)
Survey Method	Face to face interview by the surveyors
Survey Items	About the trips, both outbound and domestic during three months in spring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many persons, • Where (destination and transit points), • Number of nights spent at each point, • Amount of expense by category, • Others

Source: SCI

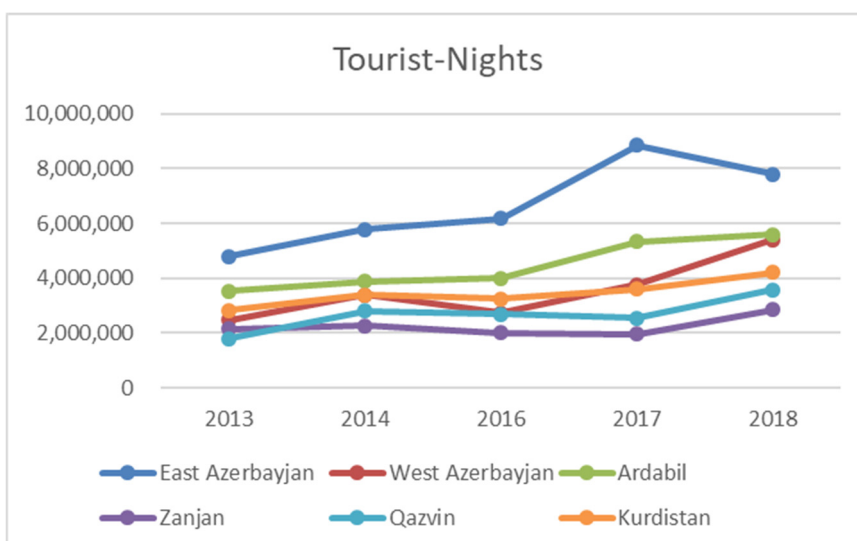
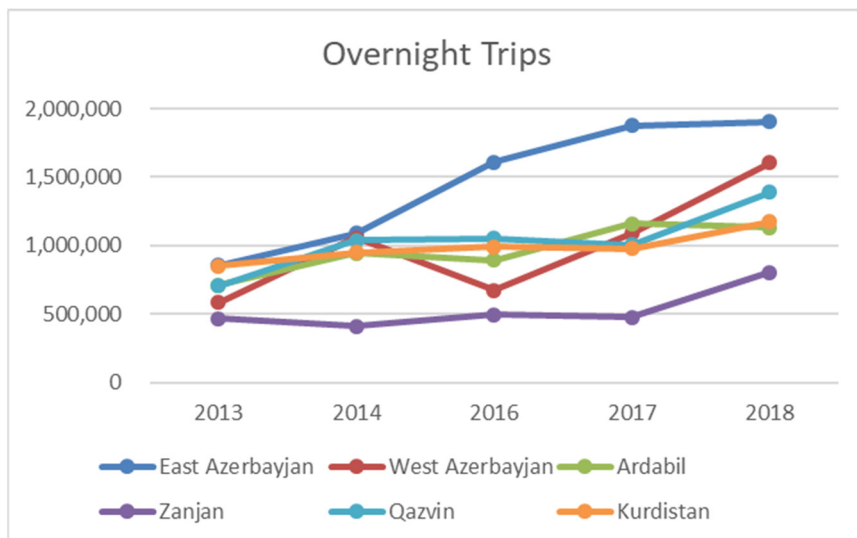
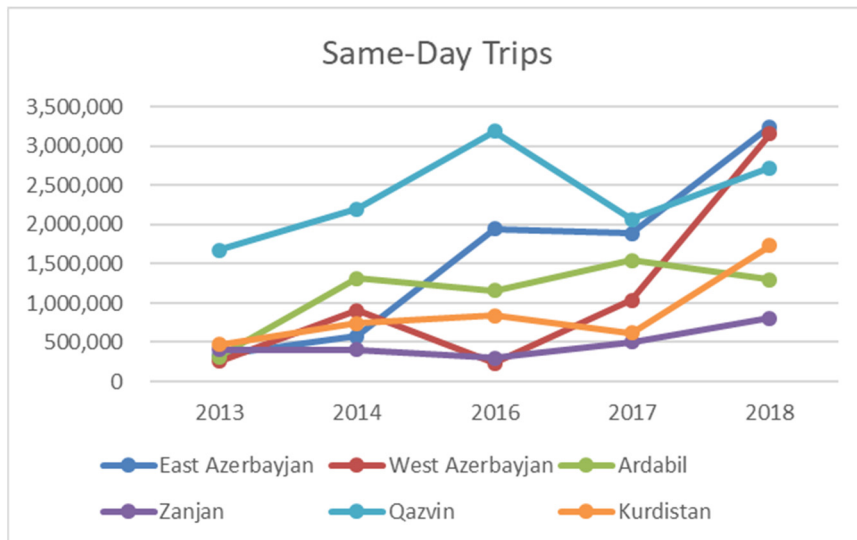
According to the survey result in 2018, Iranian people made 66,832 thousand trips without overnight and 56,265 overnight trips and spent 197,405 thousand nights during three months in spring 2018. Although the survey was not conducted in summer, fall, and winter, Iranian people, particularly students and families, tend to travel in summer as the schools are on vacation. In fall and winter, the frequency for traveling decreases.

The following graphs illustrate the trend of trips without overnight, overnight trips and tourist-nights spent in the target northwestern provinces of Iran, except for the year 2015 where SCI could not conduct the survey.

The graphs below reveal that East Azerbaijan Province has increased both the numbers of trips without overnight and overnight trips. Similarly, West Azerbaijan Province has increased both the numbers although they are fewer than those of East Azerbaijan Province. Ardabil Province can be understood as an established resort destination of rich nature. Kurdistan Province seems selected as somewhat overnight trip destination than without overnight. Qazvin Province is an established destination for tips without overnight thanks to its convenient distance from Tehran.

On the other hand, Zanjan Province seems that Iranian people regard it as a transit province judging from the lowest numbers for all of the trips without overnight, overnight trips and tourist-nights. It is necessary for Zanjan to develop itself as a tourist destination by mobilizing the historic city center of Zanjan which is under revitalization through redevelopment, and Soltanieh which is one of the World Heritage sites in Iran as well as abundant *boomgardies* which Zanjan Province innovated.

Figure 4.4 Results of SCI Tourism Survey (2013-2018)



Source: SCI

(2) Overnight Tourists Data Reported by Accommodation Facilities

Each ICHHTO Province collects daily overnight tourist data according to the method defined by ICHHTO headquarters. The overnight tourist data to be collected include four types, as indicated in the following table.

Table 4.3 Tourist Data Collected by ICHHTO Province from Accommodation Facilities

Targeted Accommodation Facilities	Hotels, Apartment hotels, Inns (Guesthouses), Eco-Lodges (Boomgardies), Camping Sites
Non-Targeted Accommodation Facilities	Homestay, Staying at Friends' House (VFR), Camping at Park or Roadside, Sleeping in Cars, etc.
Data to be reported from the Accommodation Facilities	The following daily numbers: 1. Number of Check-In Tourists (Domestic and Foreigners) 2. Number of Check-Out Tourists (Domestic and Foreigners) 3. Number of Staying Tourists (Domestic and Foreigners) 4. Number of Occupied Rooms

Note: The types of accommodation facilities targeted for the survey slightly differ from one province to another. In particular, the inclusion of eco-lodges (boomgardies) depends on each province.

Source: ICHHTO Province (East Azerbaijan)

In principal, each accommodation facility records the monthly sheet daily and reports to ICHHTO Province every 15 days. The person in charge at ICHHTO Province inputs the reported data to the database managed by ICHHTO headquarters. However, the practice was not confirmed in details during the Survey.

The overnight tourist data do not include those of same-day tourists, and those stayed at friends' house (VFR). However, the data have an objective nature and can show those of foreign tourists. Therefore, the data of the SCI survey and overnight tourist data are regarded as complementary.

The following table shows the trends of overnight tourists in each province for the past five years based on the questionnaire.

Table 4.4 Numbers of Overnight Tourists in Each Province

Provinces		PY1393	PY1394	PY1395	PY1396	PY1397
East Azerbaijan	Domestic Tourists	1,725,500	2,135,000	2,600,000	2,985,200	3,608,100
	Foreign Tourists	374,500	315,000	360,000	390,400	441,900
	Total	2,100,000	2,450,000	2,960,000	3,375,600	4,050,000
West Azerbaijan	Domestic Tourists	278,649	291,763	283,546	317,342	353,369
	Foreign Tourists	96,259	81,494	61,922	55,248	145,934
	Total	374,953	373,254	345,468	372,590	499,303
Ardabil	Domestic Tourists	NA	NA	1,626,111	2,530,558	3,329,471
	Foreign Tourists	400,000	500,000	550,000	650,000	776,000
	Total	NA	NA	2,176,111	3,180,558	4,105,471
Zanjan	Domestic Tourists	103,579	105,258	105,700	104,662	109,597
	Foreign Tourists	2,599	4,588	11,779	10,234	5,472
	Total	106,178	109,846	117,479	114,896	115,069
Qazvin	Domestic Tourists	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
	Foreign Tourists	4,245	5,152	5,360	7,520	9,850
	Total	4,245	5,152	5,360	7,520	9,850
Kurdistan	Domestic Tourists	212,969	160,188	157,480	161,998	178,477
	Foreign Tourists	20,757	14,024	9,388	5,475	12,832
	Total	233,726	174,212	166,868	167,473	191,309

Source: ICHHTO Provinces

Although a part of the data is missing, the data are more reliable than those shown in Table 4.1 as the same standard is used for collecting them. It is expected in the formulation process of the Tourism Development Master Plan for Northwestern Provinces in Iran to produce more reliable trend analysis and future projection by sitting together with the person in charge of tourism statistics at each ICHHTO Province.

(3) Numbers of Visitors at Major Tourist Sites and Museums

Besides, the numbers of tickets sold at major tourist sites and museums can also be highly reliable objective data. At most tourist sites and museums, tickets are sold for domestic and foreign tourists, respectively. It is possible to grasp both the numbers of domestic and foreign visitors. The following table shows the trends of visitors at major tourist sites and museums.

Table 4.5 Numbers of Visitors at Major Tourist Sites and Museums

Provinces		PY1393	PY1394	PY1395	PY1396	PY1397
East Azerbaijan	Saint Stephanos Church	NA	160,093	NA	NA	NA
	Azerbaijan Museum	135,930	130,393	NA	NA	103,581
	Constitution House	84,408	60,178	NA	NA	86,575
West Azerbaijan	Takht-e Soleyman	51,759	71,874	51,818	58,288	66,923
	Qara Kilisa	34,764	30,606	27,682	25,987	25,696
	Anthropology Museum	13,360	12,198	8,437	8,534	9,529
Ardabil	Culture	NA	5,156	615,451	920,678	1,104,533
	Nature	NA	12,214	1,162,802	3,020,360	3,434,754
	Man-Made	NA	8,341	534,236	1,962,299	2,909,636
Zanjan	Soltanieh Dome	116,750	1114,184	133,511	104,702	124,452
	Laundry Museum	50,858	61,115	70,270	41,724	70,092
	Salt men Museum	63,745	74,530	53,897	41,665	41,015
Qazvin	Qazvin Bazar	NA	NA	703,352	663,160	602,240
	Alamut Castle	115,330	110,540	124,320	159,212	176,500
	Qajar Hammam	86,898	57,084	64,549	118,308	121,399
Kurdistan	Asef Vaziri House	83,752	85,596	70,634	89,420	98,362
	Sanandaj Museum	19,948	12,896	29,789	26,000	30,000
	Khosro Abad Mansion	7,500	46,889	38,731	25,000	27,500

Note: Top three sites are chosen for each province. Ardabil provided the total numbers by resource type.

Source: ICHHTO Provinces

ICHHTO Provinces also collect the data for other sites and museums than those shown in the above table. The data can be useful indicators for monitoring the result of Tourism Development Master Plan for Northwestern Provinces in Iran.

5 Tourism Industry

ICHHTO manages the tourism industries through the provision of permission and monitoring. The following table indicates 16 types of tourism industries which ICHHTO has authority to permit.

Table 5.1 Tourism Industries Managed by ICHHTO

Tourism Industries Managed by ICHHTO	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hotels 2. Apartment Hotels and Pilgrim Accommodation 3. Eco-Lodges (Boomgardies) 4. Recreational Facilities 5. Camping Sites 6. Hot Spring Facilities 7. Tourist Facilities in Nature Parks 8. Tourist Facilities on Beaches 9. Tourist Restaurants along Main Roads 10. Service Areas along Main Roads 11. Restaurants in Transport Facilities (Railway Stations, Airports, etc.) 12. Shops at Border Crossing Area 13. Traditional Restaurants 14. Man-Made Tourist Sites (Amusement Parks, Zoos, Theme Parks, etc.) 15. Health Centers 16. Tour Companies (Travel Agencies, Tour Operators, etc.)
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Source: ICHHTO

Besides, ICHHTO manages tour guides through the organization of national examination and issuance of official licenses.

5.1 Hotels and Accommodation

The following table shows the distribution of accommodation in the target provinces as of June 2019.

Table 5.2 Distribution of Accommodation in the Target Provinces (PY1398=2019)

Provinces	Hotels						AH	Inn	Eco-Lodge
	5-Star	4-Star	3-Star	2-Star	1-Star	Total			
East Azerbaijan	5	4	6	10	6	31	26	72	15
West Azerbaijan	1	4	5	15	14	39	3	52	16
Ardabil	0	3	8	12	9	32	86	100	6
Zanjan	0	1	2	5	0	8	4	13	99
Qazvin	0	1	3	6	3	13	2	18	7
Kurdistan	1	1	7	10	12	31	2	24	9

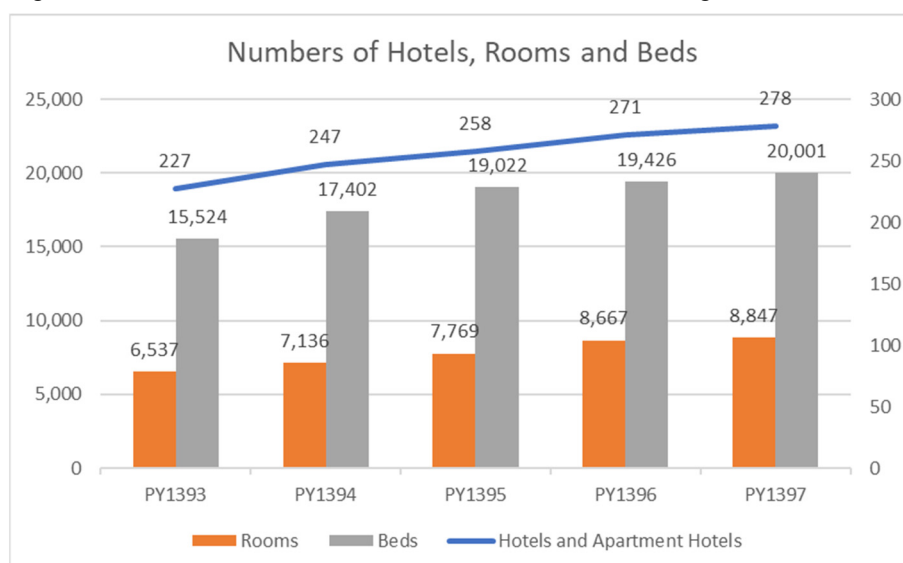
Note: AH: Apartment Hotels

Source: ICHHTO Provinces

The above table indicates that the accommodation industries are more seen in East Azerbaijan, West Azerbaijan, Ardabil and Kurdistan Provinces which are located far from the main cities such as Tehran, while fewer in Zanjan and Qazvin Provinces which tend to be passed through by travelers from Tehran. In addition, three times more apartment hotels, convenient for family travelers, are found than ordinary hotels in Ardabil Province, where hot springs are the main attraction.

The following graph illustrates the trends of hotels, rooms, and beds (including apartment hotels) during the past five years in the target area.

Figure 5.1 Trends of Hotels, Rooms, and Beds in the Target Provinces



Note: The numbers include hotels and apartment hotels, and exclude inns and eco-lodges.

Source: ICHHTO

The graph tells that the number of hotels and apartment hotels is increasing; however, the pace of increase is slowing down recently. As for the numbers of rooms and beds, the average number of beds in a room is calculated at 2.26 (PY1397). This means rooms with more than three beds (triple room or more) seem popular.

Currently, ICHHTO encourages construction and operation of eco-lodges (boomgardies) intended for the promotion of ecotourism and rural tourism by providing the owners with a bank guarantee for soft loans. As eco-lodges are based on traditional Iranian housing, guest rooms usually do not have beds. The room is used for living in the daytime, and for sleeping by laying mats on the floor in the nighttime. Eco-lodges are more friendly for Iranian family or group tours than hotels as they do not need to take into account the number of beds.

5.2 Travel Agencies and Tour Operators

According to the Iranian Act for Monitoring and Registration and Activities of Travel Agencies, the license for tour company is classified into three categories of 1) airline ticketing, 2) travel agent and 3) pilgrim tours. ICHHTO has authority to manage only the second category of travel agents.

The following table shows the distribution of travel agents in the target area as of June 2019.

Table 5.3 Distribution of Travel Agencies in the Target Provinces (PY1398=2019)

Provinces	Number of Travel Agencies	Number of Tourists per Agency*
East Azerbaijan	255	15,882
West Azerbaijan	86	5,806
Ardabil	51	80,499
Zanjan	57	2,019
Qazvin	42	235
Kurdistan	48	3,986

Note: Number of Tourists per Agency = (overnight tourists in PY1397) / (number of travel agencies)

Source: ICHHTO Provinces

According to interviews with the travel agency associations, most agencies in the target provinces run business mainly outbound tours for Iranians, and tour operation based on the contract with companies in Esfahan, Tehran, Shiraz, etc. for domestic and inbounds. There are also some agencies which receive tourists directly from major cities of Iran or abroad through internet marketing.

5.3 Restaurants

The following table shows the distribution of tourist restaurants in the target area as of June 2019.

Table 5.4 Distribution of Tourist Restaurants in the Target Provinces (PY1398=2019)

Provinces	Number of Tourist Restaurants	Number of Tourists per Restaurant*
East Azerbaijan	413	9,806
West Azerbaijan	40	12,483
Ardabil	30	136,849
Zanjan	80	1,438
Qazvin	121	81
Kurdistan	70	2,733

Note: Number of Tourists per Restaurant = (overnight tourists in PY1397) / (number of tourist restaurants)

Source: ICHHTO Provinces

There exist considerable differences in the numbers of tourists per restaurant. In the case of Qazvin Province where most travelers from Tehran stop for taking a rest, there are many restaurants targeted for tourists in the rest areas along main roads. In the case of Ardabil Province, tourist restaurants are not so many, because tourists tend to cook food at their apartment hotels or eat at ordinary restaurants in the town.

5.4 Tour Guides

The tour guide licenses are classified into three categories: 1) domestic tour guide, 2) international tour guide, and 3) specialized tour guide. The special tour guide licenses are required specific knowledge for a mountain guide, skiing guide, ecotourism guide, health tourism guide, sports guide, pilgrim guide, etc. and foreign language skill.

The applicants for tour guide license must be Iranian nationality, graduated from universities, and aged older than 22. After completing prescribed lectures, a candidate takes a written examination, followed by an oral examination in a foreign language (in case of the international tour guide), an oral examination on the special course (in case of the specialized tour guide), and finally takes a comprehensive tour guide examination. The last examination includes Iranian history, geography, architecture, cultural heritage, culture, tourism industry, folklore, and geology. ICHHTO organizes the tour guide examination two times a year.

Currently, the tour guide license is valid throughout life. ICHHTO is examining the possible introduction of periodical renewal system for improving the quality of tour guides.

The following table shows the distribution of licensed tour guides in the target provinces as of June 2019.

Table 5.5 Distribution of Licensed Tourist Guides in the Target Provinces (PY1398=2019)

Provinces	Number of Tourist Guides	Number of Tourists per Guide*
East Azerbaijan	488	8,299
West Azerbaijan	63	7,925
Ardabil	185	22,192
Zanjan	165	697
Qazvin	65	152
Kurdistan	100	1,913

Note: Number of Tourists per Guide = (overnight tourists in PY1397) / (number of tourist guides)

Source: ICHHTO Provinces

According to interviews to tour guide associations, most tour guides have side jobs although which one is the primary source of income (working at a tour operator, running eco-lodge, etc.). ICHHTO also asks them occasional jobs at tourist information centers during high season such as the Nowruz.

5.5 Human Resource Development

Each ICHHTO Province assigns a person in charge of tourism education who coordinates with local higher education institutions and vocational training centers for human resource development in tourism in the province. As for the training targeted for the employees working in the tourism services, related associations such as Hotel Association, Tour Guide Association, etc. also cooperate with ICHHTO Province.

The following table lists institutions and vocational training centers offering tourism education in the target provinces.

Table 5.6 Higher Education Institutions and Vocation Training Centers with Tourism Courses

Provinces	Higher Education Institutions, Vocation Training Centers with Tourism Courses
East Azerbaijan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tabriz University (Undergraduate and Graduate, 40 persons/ per year) • Payam Noor University (Undergraduate, 50 persons per year) • Provincial Vocational Center Short-Term Tourism Course (50 persons per year)
West Azerbaijan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applied Science University • Payam Noor University (60 persons per year)
Ardabil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payam Noor University • Azad University • Mohaqeq University • Ardabil Vocation Training Center
Zanjan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payam Noor University • Zanjan University • Vocational Training Center
Qazvin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payam Noor University • Allameh Qazvin University
Kurdistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kurdistan University • Payam Noor University • Sanandaj Vocational Training Center (20 persons per year)

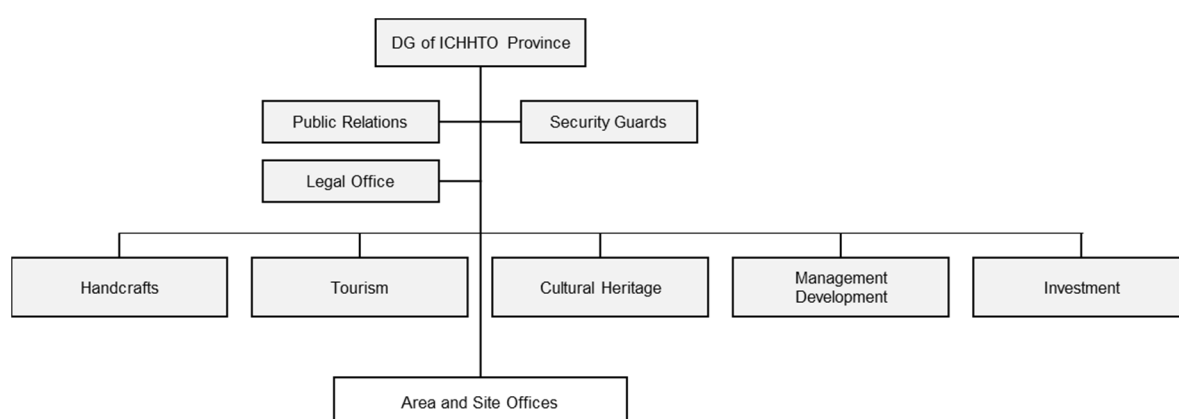
Source: ICHHTO Provinces

6 Tourism Administration and Tourism Management

6.1 Organizational Structure of ICHHTO Provinces

ICHHTO has branch offices in all 31 provinces across the country. Each of the six targeted northwestern provinces has one. As shown in the following chart, the standard organizational structure of ICHHTO Province is similar to that of headquarters, being headed by Director General, and composed of Cultural Heritage Deputy, Handicrafts Deputy, and Tourism Deputy as well as Management and Development Department and Investment Department. In addition, branch offices are set up at each city and town in the province, and tourist sites.

Figure 6.1 Organization Chart of ICHHTO Province



Source: ICHHTO Headquarters

Table 6.1 Numbers of ICHHTO Province Staff (as of June 2019)

ICHHTO Provinces	Total Number of Staff	Number of Tourism Deputy
East Azerbaijan	239	8
West Azerbaijan	168	8
Ardabil	139	10
Zanjan	230	13
Qazvin	210	6
Kurdistan	124	9

Note: The formal number of Tourism Deputy at East Azerbaijan Province is 11, missing 3 positions are vacant.

Source: ICHHTO Provinces

The total numbers of ICHHTO Province staff give an impression of adequate allocation of personnel. However, these numbers include curators and guards in museums, and managers and maintenance workers at a tourist site, etc. The numbers of staff in charge of tourism administration and management at ICHHTO Province office are somewhat limited.

It is necessary for the formulation of the Master Plan to take into account this constraint on the availability of experts at Tourism Deputy of ICHHTO Province.

6.2 Operational Budget of ICHHTO Provinces

ICHHTO Provinces receive the operation budget from both ICHHTO headquarters and the Provincial Government. Other than the personnel cost, which is entirely paid by the Provincial Government, all expense items are shared by both the parties.

Table 6.2 Operational Budget of ICHHTO Provinces

ICHHTO Province		PY1393	PY1394	PY1395	PY1396	PY1397
East Azerbaijan	Approved	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
	Allocated	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
West Azerbaijan	Approved	59,527	120,350	254,897	502,795	407,735
	Allocated	55,752	42,066	80,795	198,235	101,105
Ardabil	Approved	127,267	110,785	173,081	187,789	192,550
	Allocated	111,898	74,785	109,288	86,130	120,739
Zanjan	Approved	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
	Allocated	38,749	96,240	95,493	159,294	192,029
Qazvin	Approved	35,266	10,530	56,235	51,561	75,654
	Allocated	35,266	10,530	56,235	51,561	75,654
Kurdistan	Approved	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
	Allocated	47,206	14,373	51,595	69,410	53,645

Unit: IRR million

Source: ICHHTO Provinces

As shown in the above table, the budget allocation fluctuates considerably depending on the year. As the management budget, including personnel and running costs, is required regularly, the total budget depends on the allocation of the development budget from the Provincial Government or ICHHTO headquarters.

In addition, the gaps between the approved budgets and allocated ones are not small. This makes tourism administration and management difficult as the secured budget does not mean the secured implementation of the plan.

6.3 Tourism Marketing

Tourism marketing in each province is one of the main tasks of ICHHTO provincial branches. ICHHTO Province conducts it in cooperation with the tourism-related private sector, the Provincial Government and municipalities, mass media such as TV companies, etc.

The following table summarizes the recent marketing activities conducted by each ICHHTO Province.

Table 6.3 Recent Marketing Activities by ICHHTO Provinces

ICHHTO Provinces	Major Marketing Activities in the Past Five Years
East Azerbaijan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of tourism database • Development of province tourism website • Study and determination of the target markets • Participation in national and international tourism fairs • FAM trips for travel agencies and media • Organization of tourism and handicraft fairs • Establishment of tourist information centers with multi-lingual staff • Production of audio-visual materials and broadcasting through local and international channels
West Azerbaijan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production of tourism promotion materials in Persian, English, and Turkish • Production of tourism promotion material CD • Production of materials for introducing various tourism events • Production of postcards • Production of brochures and tourist map • Production of the guidebook in Persian and English • Production of themed tourism brochures • Support for the organization of tourism events and festivals
Ardabil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization of tourism events and festivals (22 events and festivals annually) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Events and festivals in the province (14 times) ➢ Participation in tourism fairs in Tehran and the Republic of Azerbaijan (8 times) • Production of tourism promotion materials (20 items) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Guidebook in Persian and English ➢ Tourist map ➢ Guidebook for Nowruz ➢ Brochures in Turkish
Zanjan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production of the guidebook in Persian and English • Support for developing an application introducing Zanjan City attractions
Qazvin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installation of billboards along the main roads (10 points) • Development of tourism promotion tools through SNS, etc. • Production of tourism promotion materials in Persian and English • Update of tourism website
Kurdistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization of FAM trips for promotion of ecotourism (5 times) • Development of the site for bird-watching and its promotion • Development of tourism website and e-marketing • Organization of regular tourism events and festivals

Source: ICHHTO Provinces

Although each ICHHTO Province conducts basic tourism marketing activities, almost materials obtained under the Survey do not include the publication dates and years. It is supposed that ICHHTO has difficulty in a regular update of the materials. Besides, many travel agencies in Tehran have not informed about the existence of such materials. The information has probably not reached potential tourists. It is necessary to identify not only the target market but also the communication channels to deliver the information.

On the other hand, the budget for marketing has not been sufficiently secured at each ICHHTO Province. The following table shows the trend of marketing budget in recent five years.

Table 6.4 Marketing Budget of ICHHTO Provinces

ICHHTO Provinces		PY1393	PY1394	PY1395	PY1396	PY1397
East Azerbaijan	Allocated	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
	Percentage	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
West Azerbaijan	Allocated	1,500	2,000	2,500	3,000	2,859
	Percentage	2.7%	4.8%	3.1%	1.5%	2.8%
Ardabil	Allocated	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
	Percentage	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Zanjan	Allocated	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
	Percentage	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Qazvin	Allocated	4,486	900	4,200	8,102	11,387
	Percentage	12.7%	8.5%	7.5%	15.7%	15.1%
Kurdistan	Allocated	900	1,100	1,350	1,550	2,200
	Percentage	1.9%	7.7%	2.6%	2.2%	4.1%

Unit: IRR million

Note: "Percentage" represents the share of the marketing budget in the total ICHHTO budget.

Source: ICHHTO Provinces

ICHHTO Qazvin occasionally secured the marketing budget more than 10% of the total budget. However, ICHHTO West Azerbaijan and Kurdistan receive the marketing budget of less than 5% of the total budget.

It would be preferable to shift to the e-marketing through website or SNS by minimizing the number of printed materials which are costly and difficult to manage the stock.

7 Current Situation of Tourism Development

7.1 Tourism Development Plans

The following table summarizes the current situation of tourism development plans in each of the target provinces.

Table 7.1 Situation of Tourism Development Plans

Provinces	Formulation and Implementation of Tourism Development Plans
Common for the Target Provinces	<p>The Tourism Master Plan for 2015 formulated in 2001 with support of UNWTO divided the country into seven tourism regions. The target provinces of the survey mainly belonged to “Sabalan Region” composed of East Azerbaijan, Ardabil and Zanjan Provinces. Qazvin Province belonged to “Alborz Region,” and West Azerbaijan and Kurdistan Provinces belonged to “Zagros Region.”</p> <p>The tourism development strategy for Sabalan Region was to improve the existing facilities such as mountain and health spa resorts, and urban exhibition facilities as well as to develop new products and routes according to the length of stay.</p> <p>Strengthening of the international gateway functions of Tabriz, internal gateway functions of Ardabil and Zanjan were also proposed.</p>
East Azerbaijan	<p>In 2014, with support of Tabriz University, a two-phased provincial tourism development plan for 2014-2018 and 2018-2021 was formulated, then obtained approval from the cabinet. The plan divided the province into three areas: North, Center, and South, identified 48 potential districts, and specified 52 villages to be developed. The plan made projections for visitors and hotel beds: 4.5 million domestic tourists and 0.5 million foreign tourists in 2018; 6.0 million domestic tourists and 2.0 million foreign tourists in 2021; and 14,000 beds in 2021.</p> <p>The plan included 21 mega-projects with component plans for human resource development, tourism marketing, and promotion, geoparks, ecotourism, etc. Under the 21 mega-projects, 655 tasks were identified. The plan also aimed to add two more World Heritage sites to be four in total.</p> <p>However, the result of the implementation is not clearly explained by ICHHTO Province.</p>
West Azerbaijan	<p>ICHHTO Province understands the importance of a tourism development plan for avoiding social and environmental problems. However, the plan has not been prepared yet.</p>
Ardabil	<p>In 1999, the first comprehensive tourism development plan was made. The plan focused on domestic tourism by taking into account the available resources in Ardabil. As for inbound tourism, the plan dealt with tourists from the neighboring Republic of Azerbaijan. In addition, visitors from Turkey and Europe who visit Sheikh Safi ad-Din were also taken into consideration.</p> <p>The current tourism development aims to be a highland resort with health tourism by utilizing more than 110 hot springs, winter sports, and Mt. Sabalan of 4,811m height.</p>
Zanjan	<p>Zanjan Province has started to develop a provincial tourism logo and branding. However, it has not developed a comprehensive provincial tourism development plan yet.</p> <p>On the other hand, Zanjan City has developed a development plan of Qavazang District located in the north hill of the city, including land use plan for 14 blocks for hotels and an exhibition hall. Currently, the city is advertising to investors according to the plan.</p>
Qazvin	<p>There was a plan to formulate a provincial tourism development plan for 2021-2016 by appointing a consultant. However, the plan has not been realized.</p> <p>On the other hand, Qazvin City made a redevelopment plan of former Safavid Palace and Caravanserai to make the area as a tourist district. The plan has been implemented accordingly.</p>
Kurdistan	<p>In 2008, a comprehensive provincial tourism development plan was prepared by a consultant. However, the plan has not been implemented as initially intended, except a few components implemented under the provincial development plan.</p>

Source: Each ICHHTO Province

The formulation process of tourism development plan differs from one province to another. On the other hand, the implementation of the formulated plan does not seem smooth in general. Rather, urban redevelopment projects in a limited area or private funded resort projects are more actively implemented.

As the importance of planning is commonly shared, more feasible action plans are to be developed instead of gigantic projects which require massive funding without clear feasibility.

The Tourism Development Master Plan for 2015 formulated in 2001 with support of UNWTO proposed comprehensive development strategies for the whole country and each of seven tourism regions. However, the Master Plan was only partly implemented. One of the reasons for the failure might be lack of linkage with the provincial implementation plans which formulated afterward.

7.2 Supportive Activities by Other Donors

The following table summarizes the supportive activities being carried out by other donors in the tourism sector.

Table 7.2 Supportive Activities in Tourism Sector by Other Donors

Provinces	Supportive Activities in Tourism Sector by Other Donors
Common for the Target Provinces	UNWTO has the intention to support the update of the National Tourism Development Master Plan for 2015, which was formulated in 2001. UNWTO also supports the TSA by organizing training and seminars.
East Azerbaijan	Tabriz was selected as the Capital of Islamic Tourism 2018 upon the 9th OIC tourism ministers' meeting in 2015. A joint tourism campaign "Tabriz 2018" was carried out in cooperation between the public and private cooperation. In 2016, WCC registered Tabriz as a World Crafts City. The official opening of "Tabriz 2018" was held in April 2018 with the participation of UNESCO Tehran Cluster Office.
West Azerbaijan	Dresden University in Germany has been conducting an excavation and restoration project at Takht-e Soleyman. The project supported the research facilities on site, including laboratory.
Ardabil	Under the initiative of WWF, periodical working group meetings are held in Georgia (Caucasus and the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund). Ardabil Province has participated in the meeting together with East Azerbaijan Province, West Azerbaijan Province, and Gilan Province.
Zanjan	ECO has been supporting the promotion of Silk Road tourism through the organization of food festivals. In May 2018, Zanjan organized the fifth ECO-Silk Road Food Festival with the participation of representatives from Lebanon, China and ECO member countries. In addition, Zanjan City applied to be UN-Habitat Sustainable City with support from ECO. Zanjan City makes a presentation in Geneva.
Qazvin	NA
Kurdistan	Kurdistan Province takes part in the ICHHTO-UNWTO project focused on the ecotourism and rural tourism in the western part of Iran

Source: Each ICHHTO Province, Field Survey by JICA Study Team

As shown in the above table, activities in the tourism sector by other donors are not active in the targeted northwestern provinces of Iran. In particular, there is no bilateral official assistance. Only some event-type activities by the regional or international organization for cooperation such as ECO, and excavation and restoration of archaeological sites by foreign universities are seen.

It would be efficient to take into account the activities by other donors in the Tourism Development Master Plan for securing the continuity of regional and multilateral cooperation.

7.3 Investment in Tourism Sector

According to the meeting with ICHHTO Provinces, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) is not active in the tourism sector apart from some exception such as a Turkish five-star hotel named Kaya Laleh Park Hotel in Tabriz in East Azerbaijan Province.

On the other hand, domestic investment is somewhat active, including private investment for hot spring resorts and amusement parks in Ardabil Province. Most target provinces have prepared investment packages for investors. Due to unclear feasibility, the implementation has not satisfactorily started as those in Ardabil Province.

7.4 Contribution to SDGs

According to the meeting with ICHHTO Headquarters and relevant organizations in Tehran including Department of Environment (DOE), the slogan of United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 17 goals are well understood among Iranian officials. However, SDGs are so far not mentioned or positioned in the tourism development policy and strategies of Iran.

Figure 7.1 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)



Source: UN Sustainable Development Goals Website (<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org>)

Appropriate tourism development and tourism management can contribute to almost all 17 goals of SDGs: Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere; Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages; Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls; Goal 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all; Goal 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all; Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all; Goal 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation; Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries; Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable; Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts; Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development; Goal 15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss; Goal 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels; and Goal 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.

It is essential to clarify the linkage between the Master Plan and SDGs and make the Master Plan objectively measurable vis-a-vis SDGs by designating specific indicators.

8 Recommendations

8.1 Support for Formulation of Tourism Development Master Plan

Based on the survey result, both the Japanese and Iranian sides will shape the details necessary for the formulation of the Tourism Development Master Plan for Northwestern Provinces. The following concept, purpose, and scope, as well as the workflow and organizational mechanism are prepared as bases for discussion.

(1) Concept

The target area, Northwestern part of Iran, borders the Republic of Azerbaijan, Armenia, Turkey, and Iraq, and has played an important role of trade to link Europe and Asia since the prehistoric age. The Ilkhanate founded in the 13th century and the Safavid Dynasty founded in the 16th century based in this area.

The area retains the rich cultural heritage which is the testimony of the east-west trade. Besides, the area has abundant natural resources including Mt. Sabalan with 4,811m height and Lake Urmieh, the largest lake in Iran. There are a large number of hot springs at the foot of Mt. Sabalan, which is a volcano.

The Master Plan is to contribute to the local economy with the creation of job opportunities and increase of income, in accordance with the 6th Five-Year Plan, by making the most use of tourism development potentials and resources in a sustainable manner. The Master Plan also aims at building peace through the cultural and historical exchange of different nations by attracting Iranian tourists, and regional and international tourists.

Table 8.1 Tourism Development Themes for Northwestern Iran (Examples)

Target Markets	Main Tourism Types	Socio-Economic Benefit
Neighboring Countries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pilgrim (Sheikh Safi al-Din Shrine, Armenian Monasteries, etc.) Relaxation Health Tourism Shopping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foreign Exchange Earning Job Creation, Income Generation Stabilization of Diplomacy with Neighboring Countries
Domestic Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nature and Ecotourism History and Culture Relaxation Recreation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vitalization of Local Economy Job Creation, Income Generation Alleviation of Regional Gaps
Long Haul Inbound Mainly for repeaters who have already visited "Golden Route"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> History and Culture Nature and Ecotourism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foreign Exchange Earning Job Creation, Income Generation Improved Image of Iran

Source: JICA Study Team

(2) Target Area and Target Years

The following target area and target years are proposed as examples.

Table 8.2 Target Area and Target Years for Tourism Development Master Plan (Examples)

Target Area	The Master Plan would target six provinces including East Azerbaijan Province, West Azerbaijan Province, Ardabil Province, Zanjan Province, Qazvin Province, and Kurdistan Province.
Target Years	The Master Plan would be drafted by PY1400 (2021). The Master Plan would be effective until PY1410 (2031).

Source: JICA Study Team

(3) Scope of the Master Plan

The following scope of the Tourism Development Master Plan is proposed as an example.

Table 8.3 Scope of Tourism Development Master Plan (Example)

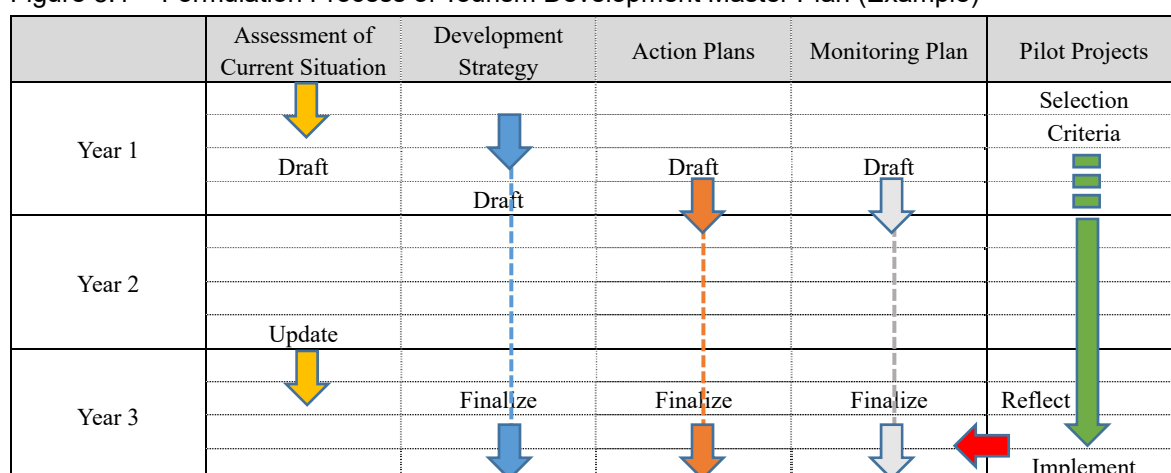
A. Assessment of Current Situation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tourism Demand (Past Trend, Market Characteristics and Typical Tour Patterns) 2. Tourism Supply (Tourism Resources and Products by Province, Tourism Facilities and Industries, Supporting Infrastructure) 3. Marketing and Promotion 4. Human Resources in Tourism 5. Environmental Consideration and Issues 6. Tourism Management (Resource Management, Business Management) 7. SWOT Analysis
B. Tourism Development Strategy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction (Target Area and Target Years, Methods and Data Sources) 2. Development Principals (Roles of Tourism in Regional Economy, Regional Strategy and Branding, Focused Development Themes, Contribution to SDGs) 3. Demand Projection (Tourists, Hotel Rooms and Beds, Human Resources) 4. Component Plans (Tourism Marketing, Tourism Management, Empowerment of Stakeholders, Human Resource Development, Tourism Facilities, and Infrastructure Development, Tourism Investment)
C. Action Plans	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tourism Marketing 2. Tourism management 3. Empowerment of Stakeholders 4. Human Resource Development 5. Tourism Facilities and Infrastructure Development 6. Tourism Investment 7. Cost Estimation and Financial Evaluation
D. Monitoring Plan	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implementation Mechanism of the Master Plan 2. Monitoring Mechanism of the Master Plan

Source: JICA Study Team

(4) Formulation Process of the Master Plan

Based on the proposed scope of the Master Plan, the following formulation process is proposed as an example.

Figure 8.1 Formulation Process of Tourism Development Master Plan (Example)



Source: JICA Study Team

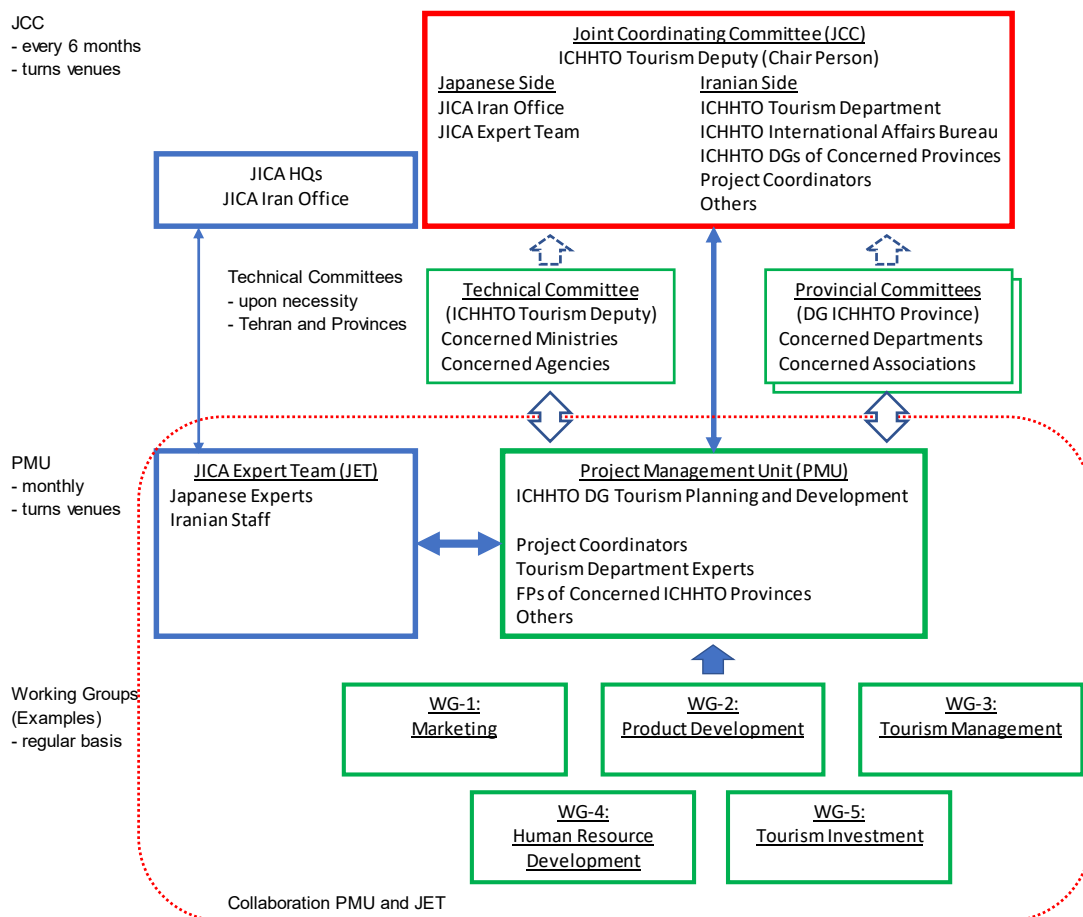
(5) Organization for Formulation and Implementation of the Master Plan

The Master Plan would include the tourism marketing approaches based on the agreed branding strategy as well as measures for common issues among the six target provinces in northwestern provinces in Iran. The organization structure for formulation of the Master Plan must have practical functions for assessing the issues of each province, for identifying the priority issues, and for securing the implementation of the formulated Master Plan and Action Plans by integrating them into provincial implementation plans.

It is proposed to form an organizational structure as illustrated below as an example, composed of a “Decision Making Committee” in cooperation with ICHHTO Headquarters and province offices, and a capable implementation team, Project Management Unit (PMU) and Working Groups.

In the JICA technical cooperation projects, a Joint Coordination Committee (JCC) composed of key members of both the Japanese and Iranian sides, is to be established as a decision-making body at the highest level of the structure.

Figure 8.2 Organization for Tourism Development Master Plan (Example)



Source: JICA Study Team

8.2 Inputs from the Japanese Side

Assuming that the above scope, workflow, and implementation structure are applied, the following inputs from the Japanese side are proposed as examples

Table 8.4 Inputs from the Japanese Side (Examples)

Type of Technical Cooperation	Technical Cooperation for Master Plan Study
Inputs from the Japanese Side	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dispatch of Japanese Expert Team 2. Sub-contract surveys by Iranian consultants or organizations (Market Survey, Tourist Survey, Social Environment Survey, etc.) 3. Counterpart Training in Japan (10 pax three times) 4. Participation in the specific training courses organized by JICA (Tourism Marketing, Ecotourism, etc.) 5. Participation in the training courses/ workshops in the third countries (e.g., Malaysia, Thailand for ecotourism, rural tourism, etc.) 6. Pilot Projects (Approximately 5 to 6 packages)

Source: JICA Study Team

9 Appendixes

Appendix 1: Implemented Survey Schedule in Iran

Appendix 2: List of Interviewees in Iran

Survey Schedule (Final)

Date	Stay	Mr. Tetsuo Isono	Ms. Ryoko Tanoue
May 07	Tue		IST-NRT (TK052) 01:40-19:10
May 08	Wed	NRT-DOH- (QR807) 22:20-05:00	ditto
May 09	Thu	Tehran DOH-IKA (QR482) 08:00-10:40	ditto
May 10	Fri	Tehran Day off (National Museum, etc.)	ditto
May 11	Sat	Tehran AM: JICA Iran Office PM: ICHHTO HQ (Deputy of Tourism)	ditto
May 12	Sun	Tehran AM: JICA Iran Office PM: ICHHTO HQ (Tourism Deputy, Int'l Affairs Bureau, Provinces)	ditto
May 13	Mon	Tehran ICHHTO HQ (Questionnaire)	ditto
May 14	Tue	Tabriz Move to E. Azerbaijan by air, Visit tourist sites	ditto
May 15	Wed	Tabriz AM: ICHHTO E. Azerbaijan PM: ICHHTO E. Azerbaijan (Planning & Investment)	ditto
May 16	Thu	Tabriz Visit tourist sites (Aras Free Trade Zone)	ditto
May 17	Fri	Tabriz Day off	ditto
May 18	Sat	Urmieh AM: ICHHTO W. Azerbaijan PM: Visit Urmieh Museum, Hasanlu, etc.	ditto
May 19	Sun	Ardabil Visit tourist sites (Qara Kilisa, Maku Free Zone, etc.)	ditto
May 20	Mon	Serejin AM: ICHHTO Ardabil PM: Visit tourist sites in Ardabil	ditto
May 21	Tue	Zanjan AM: Visit tourist sites in Ardabil, PM: Move to Zanjan	ditto
May 22	Wed	Zanjan AM: ICHHTO Zanjan PM: Visit tourist sites in Zanjan City	ditto
May 23	Thu	Zanjan Visit tourist sites in Zanjan	ditto
May 24	Fri	Sanandaj Move to Kurdistan (Visit Takht-e Soleyman, Karaftou Cave)	ditto
May 25	Sat	Sanandaj AM: ICHHTO Kurdistan PM: Visit tourist sites	ditto
May 26	Sun	Sanandaj Visit tourist sites in Kurdistan	ditto
May 27	Mon	Qazvin AM: Move to Qazvin PM: Visit tourist sites in Qazvin	ditto
May 28	Tue	Qazvin AM: Visit tourist sites PM: ICHHTO Qazvin	ditto
May 29	Wed	Qazvin Visit tourist sites in Qazvin	ditto
May 30	Thu	Tehran Move to Tehran	ditto
May 31	Fri	Tehran Day off	ditto
Jun 01	Sat	Tehran ICHHTO HQ (DEO, SCI, ITOA, etc.)	ditto
Jun 02	Sun	Tehran ICHHTO HQ (Tourism Deputy, Int'l Affairs Bureau)	ditto
Jun 03	Mon	AM: JICA Iran Office, TV Meeting PM: IKA-DOH- (QR499) 22:50-00:30	ditto
Jun 04	Tue	DOH-NRT (QR806) 01:55-17:55	ditto
Jun 05			
Jun 06		Eid Al Fitr (Jun 5-6)	
Jun 07			
Jun 08	Sat	NRT-DOH- (QR807) 22:20-05:00	ditto
Jun 09	Sun	Tehran DOH-IKA (QR482) 08:00-10:40 PM: JICA Iran Office	ditto
Jun 10	Mon	Tehran Internal Meeting	ditto
Jun 11	Tue	Tehran AM: ICHHTO (TACI, Central Bank, Marketing Dep.) PM: ICHHTO HQ (Tourism Deputy, Int'l Affairs Bureau)	ditto
Jun 12	Wed	Tehran ICHHTO HQ (Tourism Deputy, Int'l Affairs Bureau)	ditto
Jun 13	Thu	Tehran Preparation for the 2nd visit to Provinces	ditto
Jun 14	Fri	Zanjan Move to Zanjan	ditto
Jun 15	Sat	Sanandaj AM: ICHHTO Zanjan PM: Move to Kurdistan	ditto
Jun 16	Sun	Urmieh AM: ICHHTO Kurdistan PM: Move to W. Azerbaijan	ditto
Jun 17	Mon	Tabriz AM: ICHHTO W. Azerbaijan PM: Move to E. Azerbaijan	ditto
Jun 18	Tue	Ardabil AM: ICHHTO E. Azerbaijan PM: Move to Ardabil	ditto
Jun 19	Wed	Qazvin AM: ICHHTO Ardabil PM: Move to Qazvin	ditto
Jun 20	Thu	Tehran AM: ICHHTO Qazvin PM: Move to Tehran	ditto
Jun 21	Fri	Tehran Day off	ditto
Jun 22	Sat	Tehran ICHHTO	ditto
Jun 23	Sun	Tehran Documentation and internal meeting	IKA-DOH- (QR499) 22:50-00:30
Jun 24	Mon	Tehran Documentation and internal meeting	DOH-NRT (QR806) 01:55-17:55
Jun 25	Tue	Tehran Documentation and internal meeting	NRT-IST (TK053) 21:25-03:35+
Jun 26	Wed	Tehran ICHHTO, PM: JICA Iran office	-IST
Jun 27	Thu	IKA-DOH- (QR499) 22:50-00:30	
Jun 28	Fri	DOH-NRT (QR806) 01:55-17:55	

Survey Schedule (Final)

List of Interviewees

ICHHTO

HQ Tourism	Mr. Wali Teymouri Mr. Ali Reza Rahimi Mr. Seyed Mahdi Yasini Mr. Iraj Ghahremony Mr. Romina Hadipoor Mr. Ahmet Sheikhi Mr. Reza Kiafar Ms. Faranak Elyasi Ms. Sheida Kalaki Mr. Ali Pourazizi Ms. Maryam Tarsaei	Deputy of Tourism DG of Planning & Development Expert Ecotourism, Planning & Development Expert, Planning & Development Marketing Expert Tourism Expert Security Guards Tourism Expert Tourism Expert Tourism Expert PR Expert
HQ Int'l Affairs Bureau	Ms. Faezeh Behzoelsyaed Mr. Mohammad Ghasemi Ms. Niloufa Yazdi Ms. Fatemeh Ghorbani	DG of Int'l Affairs Bureau Head of Bilateral Investment Expert Expert
HQ Handicrafts	Mr. Pourang Pourrahimi	Expert
HQ Cultural Heritage	Mr. Behzad Rezaei	World Heritage Office
ICHHTO East Azerbaijan	Mr. Mortaza Abdar Mr. Farshad Rostami Mr. Hassan Ghoreiste Mr. Adel Jafari Mr. Ahad Gahramani Mr. Hamid Hassanneiad Mr. Mohammadreza Rakhsha Mr. Mohammadreza Elhawi Mr. Hasanne Zhad Mr. Meysam Golshan Khalili Mr. Mohammad Alagheh Band Mr. Javad Eimali Mr. Ramin Asbagi Mr. Hossein Esnaeili Sangoui Ms. Fatma Sariraiee Ms. Zahra Ghaffari Mr. Mehrdad Moharram Mr. Hasan Abeeli Mr. Ali Eyuazi Mr. Farhad Nemati	DG ICHHTO East Azerbaijan DDG ICHHTO East Azerbaijan (Focal Point) DDG ICHHTO East Azerbaijan Tourism Facilities and Services (Focal Point) DD, Planning & Investment Tourism Expert in charge of Eco-lodge Tourism Expert (moved from ICHHTO HQ) Handcraft Expert Security Department Expert Expert Expert Manager, ICHHTO Tabriz Manager, Tabriz Bazar Manager, Azerbaijan Museum Azerbaijan Museum Guide, Kabood Mosque Guide, Iron Age Museum Manager, Kandvan Deputy Manager, Kandvan
ICHHTO West Azerbaijan	Mr. Jalil Jabbari Ms. Rita Khezerzadeh Mr. Vedood Fakhari Ms. Nahidek Ghorbamejad Ms. Samira Hadizadeh Mr. Alizeeleh Hamzch Ms. Samira EmamJardi Mr. Mehdi Valzacleh Mr. Borzuyeh Djavani Mr. Jafar Bahramnejad	DG ICHHTO West Azerbaijan Deputy DG (Focal Point) Ecotourism Expert (Focal Point) Tourism Expert in charge of Accommodation Tourism Expert Tourism Expert in charge of Education Tourism Expert in charge of Marketing Tourism Expert in charge of Travel Agencies Cultural Heritage Expert, Restoration Handicrafts Expert

	Mr. Mohamad Bayher Shabani	Budgeting Expert
	Mr. Hasan Sepehrfrew	Security Department
	Mr. Mohammad Abdehie	Security Department
	Ms. Bigdeli	Urmieh Museum
	Mr. Shiri	Manager, Hasanlu Archaeological Site
	Mr. Bavramzadeh	Manager, Khoy
	Mr. Moharram Abdllahpour	Manager, Qara Kilisa
	Mr. Mhourablu	Manager, Maku
	Mr. Aliniya	Guide, Takht-e Soleyman
ICHHTO Ardabil	Mr. Nader Fellahi	DG ICHHTO Ardabil
	Ms. Soghra Foushi	Deputy of Tourism (Focal Point)
	Mr. Yaser Ranaiee Hassan	Deputy of Cultural Heritage
	Mr. Iman Ali Imani	Manager, ICHHTO Meshgin Shar (Focal Point)
	Mr. Jahangir Shahbazi	Second Deputy of ICHHTO Ardabil
	Mr. Mesud Lahut	Reporter
	Mr. Seyed Khalil Hoseyne	Public Relations
	Mr. Saijad Mohseni	Expert, Cultural Heritage
	Mr. Seyed Sadeg Hoseini	Education office, Cultural Heritage
	Mr. Abdolrahim Valiyari	Tourism Expert
	Mr. Yousefi	Research Office
	Mr. Seyed Mohseni	Manager, Serein
ICHHTO Zanjan	Mr. Yahya Rahmati	DG ICHHTO Zanjan
	Mr. Morteser Nazeri	Deputy DG (Focal Point)
	Mr. Abolfazl Ajaui	Tourism Expert (Focal Point)
	Mr. Jafar Eskandari	Tourism Expert
	Mr. Hosein Khamsei	Ecotourism Expert
	Mr. Seyad Md. Hassan Hosseini	Marketing Expert
	Ms. Roghaneh Moharrani	Tourism Expert
	Ms. Shiva Rezani	Budgeting Expert
	Mr. Abelfazi Afshari	Tour Guide Education
	Mr. Gholamreza Najafloo	Accommodation Supervision
	Mr. Mohammad Khani	Tourism Expert
	Mr. Zaynab Imani	Education Expert
	Ms. Zahra Mohammali	English Guide
	Mr. Asgari	Manager, Soltanieh
	Mr. Yollbas	Manager, Katalahkhor Cave
ICHHTO Qazvin	Mr. Alireza Khazaeli	DG ICHHTO Qazvin
	Mr. Alireza Zamani	Deputy DG (Focal Point)
	Ms. Shekoofa Auhasian	Deputy DG (Focal Point)
	Mr. Marzieh Jalal Irangi	Tourism Expert
	Mr. Ali Norazi	Tourism Expert
	Ms. Sara Naghchi	Tourism Expert
	Ms. Roya Khadili	Tourism Expert
	Ms. Rashtvand	Tourism Expert
	Mr. Neiati	Manager, Bouein Zahra City
	Mr. Agha Dalikewi	Archaeologist, Bouein Zahra City
	Mr. Safari	Manager, Alamut Archaeological Research Base
ICHHTO Kurdistan	Mr. Seyed Mohsn Alavi	DG ICHHTO Kurdistan
	Mr. Hamid Eskandari	Deputy DG (Focal Point)
	Mr. Yaqub Gaviryman	Tourism Expert (Focal Point)
	Mr. Awat Mokari	Ecotourism Expert

Mr. Mhammad Behravan	Security Department
Mr. Kurosh Ghaderi	Security Department
Mr. Sattar Karimi	Security Department
Ms. Shahin Rouhalahi	Statistics Expert
Ms. Naghmeh Mohammadi	Training Expert
Ms. Shahin Tisheh	Tourism Expert in charge of Travel Agecy
Mr. Rahimi	Manager, Sanadanj Museum
Mr. Sohrabi	Manager, Moshir Diwan Mansion
Mr. Vafaei	Manager, Karaftou Cave
Mr. Kahim	Manager, Dicandareh
Mr. Taheri	Manager, Sarvabari

Relevant Organizations (Public Sector)

Plan and Budget Organization (PBO)	Ms. Zahra Sadat Hosseinion	
	Ms. Somayyeh Saremi	
	Mr. Seyed Masoud Mirtaleb Ayhdam	
Department of Environment (DOE)	Mr. Iman Hadi	
Statistical Center of Iran (SCI)	Ms. Zohreh Chitsaz	Tourism Statistics
Invest in Iran	Mr. Mahadi Abbasi	
Central Bank	Ms. Shararhe Eflekhari	Data Administration Department
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Mr. Abdolah Abasszade	

Relevant Organizations (Private Sector)

Touring and Automobile Club of Iran (TACI)	Mr. Abdolreza Abaszadeh	Deputy
Iran Tour Operators Association (ITOA)	Mr. Mohammad Nikazin	Member
	Mr. Hamid Hemmati	Member
	Mr. Seyed Mohammadali Asef	Member
Iran Hotel Association (IHA)	Mr. Abbas Bidgoli	Director
	Mr. Ahmad Arkaniyan	Deputy
Iran Federation of Tourist Guide Associations (IFTGA)	Ms. Vahideh Shapuri	Member
	Mr. Ali Salek Rahimi	Member
Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (CCIMA)	Mr. Masud Shirinkalam	Tourism Group

East Azerbaijan Province

Tabriz Municipality	Mr. Yusof Asadi	Manager, Municipal Museum
Railway Company	Mr. Shapaur Arsaleeri	DG, Azerbaijan Railway Company
Tabriz TV and Radio	Mr. Mahdi Rasi	Consulate
Aras Free Trade Zone	Mr. Mehdi Abbasi	Tourism Manager
Tabriz Airport	Mr. Mohammad Ali Fazel Gharmaleki	Operation Deputy Manager

West Azerbaijan Province

West Azerbaijan Province	Mr. Habibi Torbati	Economic Affairs
	Mr. Naser Shirzadeh	Economic Affairs
	Mr. Motteza Gholizadeh	Water Office
	Mr. Hamid Renaghad	DOE
	Mr. Ahreza Loffi	DOE
Urmieh Municipality	Mr. Azhdar Hosseini	International Affairs
	Mr. Amin Salmanian	Public Relations
Urmieh Airport	Mr. Ahmad Ghlamreza	Deputy Manager
Azerbaijan Railway	Mr. Ali Reza Soleimani	Manager
Water Company	Mr. Babak Niknia	Agricultural Expert

IRIB TV West Azerbaijan	Mr. Parvn Ahmedi	Agriculture and Water Resource Expert
	Mr. Jafar Raesaee	Manager
	Mr. Hadi Jabbarokht	Reporter
Tour Guide Association	Mr. Akbar Jabbari	President
Hotel Association	Mr. Reza Sabounchi	President
Maku Free Zone	Mr. Hemzelou	Vice President in charge of Culture and Tourism

Ardabil Province

Ardabil Province	Mr. Rahim Zharfi	Foreign Affairs
	Mr. Moffateh	Foreign Affairs
	Mr. Yusef Mehdizadeh	DOE
	Mr. Morteza Balay	Culture and Islamic Guidance
	Mr. Akbar Voroud	Sports and Youth
	Mr. Yusef Baghrzadeh	Roads and Urban Development
	Mr. Reza Shirinzadeh	Transportation
Tourism Development Corp.	Mr. Ashkan Shikari	Managing Director
Ardabil Airport	Mr. Fakhradin Hashemi	Manager
Ardabil University	Mr. Mehran Asayeshi	Medical Science
Water Resource	Ms. Leila Nemati	Manager
Ardabil Municipality	Mr. Hosein Vafdoost	
Travel Agency Association	Ms. Simin Gheibi	President
	Ms. Farshi	Member
Hotel Association	Mr. Bazri	President

Zanjan Province

Zanjan Province	Mr. Masood Etaati	DG of Attraction and Protection of Investment
Zanjan Municipality	Mr. Saeid Omodi	MD of Cooperation Organization
	Mr. Daryoush Gharehdaghi	MD of Investment and Public Participation
Hotel Association	Mr. Diyako Zare	Representative
Travel Agency Association	Mr. Mohamoud Saberi	Head Manager
	Mr. Rahman Gelami	Secretary
	Mr. Saleh Rashvmand	Executive Member
Tourist Guide Association	Mr. Seyed Reza Hashemi	Executive Member, Avaye Pishgaman Institute
	Mr. Sahand Saeidi	Member
Restaurant Association	Mr. Behruz Kavadi	President
Tourism Start-Up	Ms. Somaye Kalantari	President
MEHR News Agency	Ms. Zahra Moghdami	Reporter

Qazvin Province

Qazvin Province	Mr. Farokh Zad	Vice Governor
	Mr. Ali Ansari	DD, Education and Training Administration
	Mr. Parviz Abdi	Agriculture Organization
	Ms. Akram Najafi	Rural Affairs
	Mr. Reza Gorbany	Police Department
	Mr. Asgar Gavanji	Police Department
	Mr. Hessam Mahdivon	Water Resource
	Mr. Ali Taherkhani	Industries, Mines and Trade
	Mr. Seyed Alireza Nasehniya	Management and Planning Organization
	Mr. Peyman Pirmoradi	Technical Office
	Ms. Fahimeh Lezgi	Economic Affairs and Finance Organization
Qazvin Municipality	Mr. Godratolah Fathkhani	General Manager
	Ms. Noori Chegini	Deputy

Electricity Company	Mr. Abdolhoseyn Mozafari	Environment Department
Chamber of Commerce	Mr. Yusef Enanlo	Manager
Hotel Association	Mr. Mehdi Bakhshandeh	President, CCIMA Qazvin
Restaurant Association	Mr. Ashami	President
Investment Bureau	Mr. Tivamad	President
Avai Municipality	Mr. Raghzen	Manager
	Mr. Eflekhar	Mayor
	Mr. Daraki	Manager
	Mr. Aboihasni	Engineer
Alamut Municipality	Mr. Mohammadi	Alamut Protected Zone Manager
Ovan Lake	Mr. Taher	Manager
Barayin Nature Village	Mr. Nuri	Manager
Eco-Lodge Owners	Mr. Miladi	Seven Guesthouse
	Mr. Afmadi	Eagle Castle Traditional Home and Museum

Kurdistan Province

Kurdistan Province	Mr. Shahram Maleki	Deputy Director General for Development Affairs
	Ms. Fariba Rezavi	General Manager, DOE
	Mr. Omid Bato	DOE
	Mr. Meydar Veysi	DOE
	Mr. Hoseyn Karimiyan	Manager, Management and Planning
Hotel Association	Mr. Abdolhamid Hamidi	President
Travel Agency Association	Mr. Hushang Javaheri	President
Zarivar Lake Birds Org.	Mr. Nase Vaosein	President (NGO)
Shoan Gasht Travel	Mr. Shoan	Manager, Shoan Gasht Travel Agency in Sanandaj

