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Белорусский государственный университет  
Географический факультет

# **Демографические риски XXI века**

## **(к Международному дню народонаселения)**

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## **Sustainable development of Georgian region Svaneti**

Tourism is the biggest industry in Georgia. Our country has really great potential to develop and improve tourism in a sustainable way. Of course there are too many interesting and astonishing tourism destinations but I decided to speak just about one of them-called Svaneti. In this report I will try to make your imagination about this site and its opportunities in Georgian tourism.

Svaneti is mountainous region in Western Georgia. It is divided into two parts: upper and lower Svaneti. The villages in upper Svaneti are in UNESCO cultural heritage list. Population is about 17 951 people, 11 062 – in Lower Svaneti and 6 895 – In Upper Svaneti. There lived much more people, but because of lands lack they migrated do Abkhazeti and developed there “little Svaneti”.

What about tourists? If we talk about this year, number of tourists from Russia and Ukraine is significant. Also, the quantity of western European tourists is growing, as well as the tourists from America and Japan. New customers appear also thanks to international expos as well as positive word of mouth about our country. There are two main winter resorts in Svaneti, like: Hatsvali and Tetnuldi. These ones are gradually improving and increasing, this fact will be a good opportunity for tourists not to enjoy only skiing but other activities too.

Svaneti has real opportunity to offer visitors agricultural tourism as well. They will be able to have a rest and stay in towers of Svaneti, eat natural food and take part in agricultural life. All these activities will help local residents to get jobs and additional income from tourism field. This result will be a big step to the sustainable tourism development in this region.

Svaneti is also suitable for ecotourism, family tourism and adventurous tourism. Tourists will have chance to walk in amazing nature or enjoy hunting and fishing. Professional guides will help them to have a good time.

There are several big problems against tourism development in Svaneti, like an old infrastructure and not marked ways. There is neither a landfill. This fact has a bad influence on ecology and sustainable tourism development.

If these problems are resolved, more tourists will visit our country and Svaneti will have an opportunity to become a worthy competitor of top tourist destinations all over the world.

One of the main project for future is developing and encouraging local residents to make guest houses. In fact it will be a small tourism industry, despite this, guest houses need to be planned carefully and correctly. Managing high quality service in family houses or guesthouses is impossible, if people don't know how to:

- 1) Plan and decorate accommodation for tourists.
- 2) Choose rights sightseeing, food, drink and other tourist products for every visitor.
- 3) Manage economical aspects in tourism business.
- 4) Give visitors information and guiding service.
- 5) Resolve ecological problems or just improve the existing situation.

In case of developing family houses, the residents will get income thanks to new working places, the infrastructure will be improved (hotels, guest houses, restaurants, shops, communicational services etc.) Agricultural products will be sold too and it will encourage residents in Svaneti not to migrate to another parts of Georgia and work hardly for developing region in a sustainable way.

To receive more and more tourists, government plans to:

- 1) make a skiing resort which will be opened all year long.
- 2) Make skiing ways for beginners and professionals.
- 3) Build 2 new cableways.
- 4) Remote the old cableway.

To sum up, Svaneti is one of the best resort in Georgia and I think it has real opportunity to become a worthy competitor of similar tourism destinations in the tourism market all over the world. This resort offers tourists several kinds of tourism but there is still a lot work to do and develop tourism in this region not only for one season or year, but for further future. The government and the residents are not able to reach success without each other, they should work hard together and everyone will see the pleasant result.

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