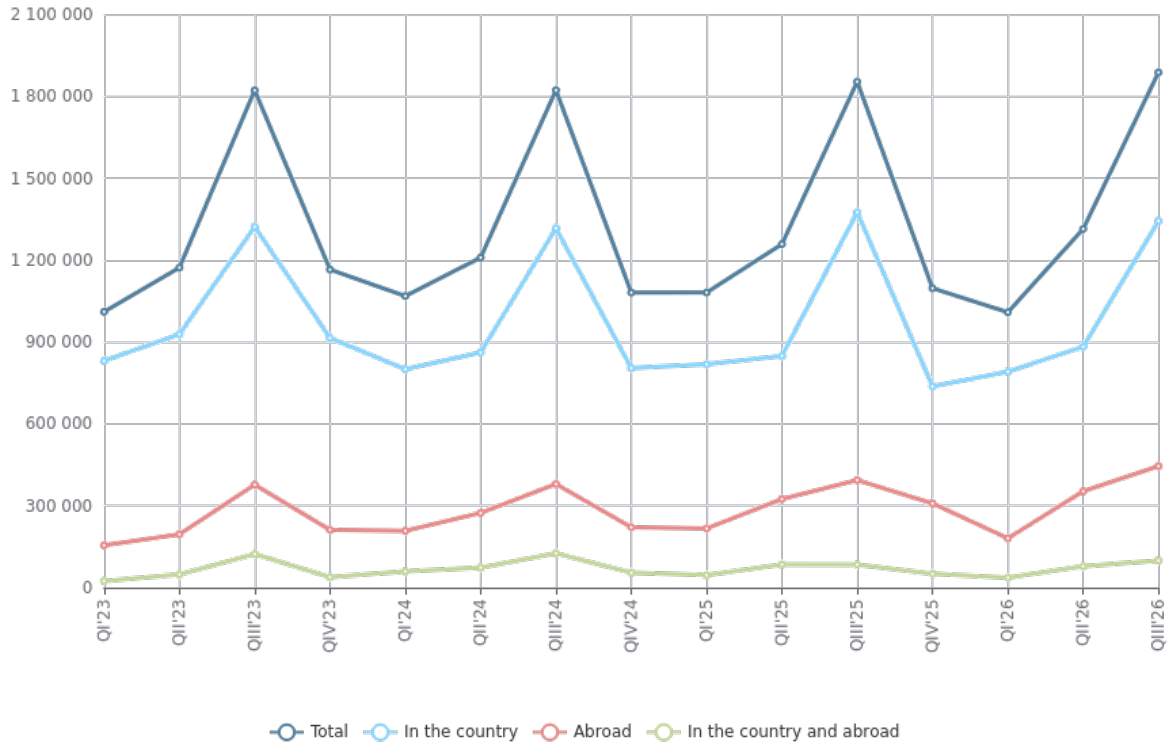
TOURIST TRIPS AND TOURISM RELATED EXPENDITURE OF THE POPULATION - THIRD QUARTER OF 2026 - PRELIMINARY DATA

In the third quarter of 2026, 1.9 million Bulgarian residents[1] made tourist trips. The majority of them - 71.2%, travelled only in the country, 23.6% - only abroad, and 5.2% - both in the country and abroad. Compared to the same quarter of 2025, the number of travelled persons aged 15 and over increased by 1.8% (Figure 1).

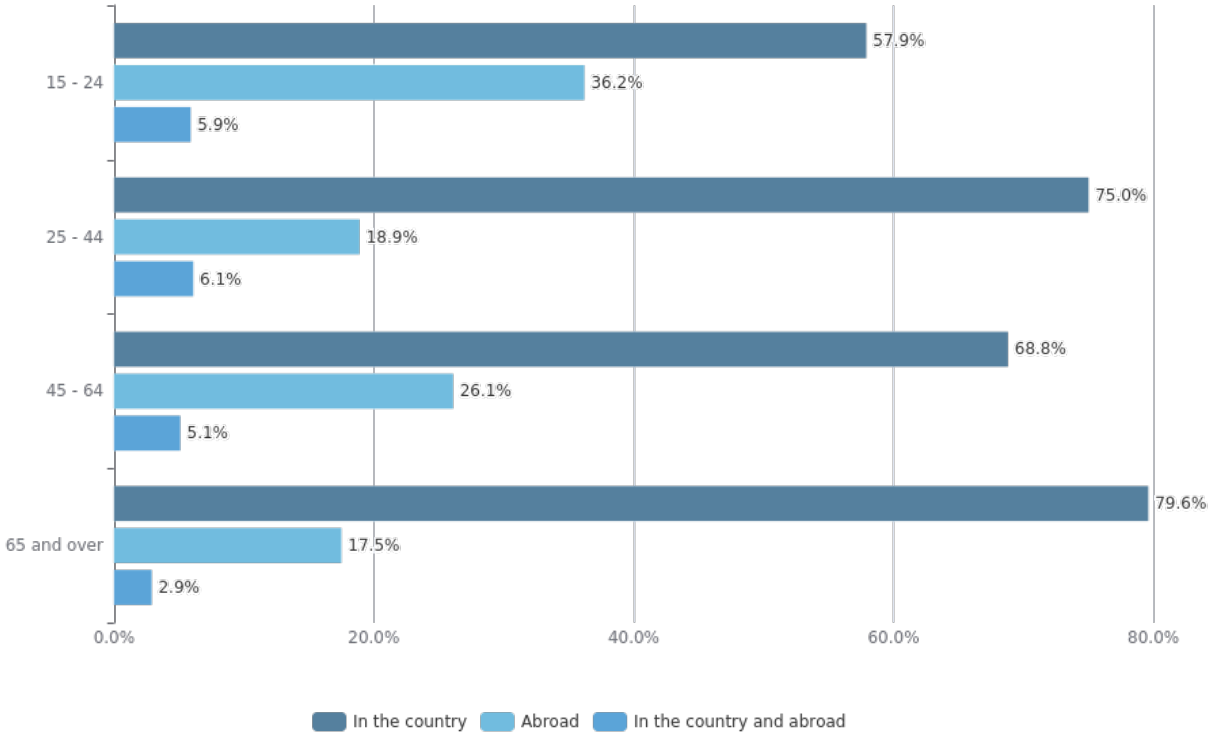
[1] The objects of the survey are the residents of 15 years of age and over.

Figure 1. Travelled persons aged 15 and over by quarters



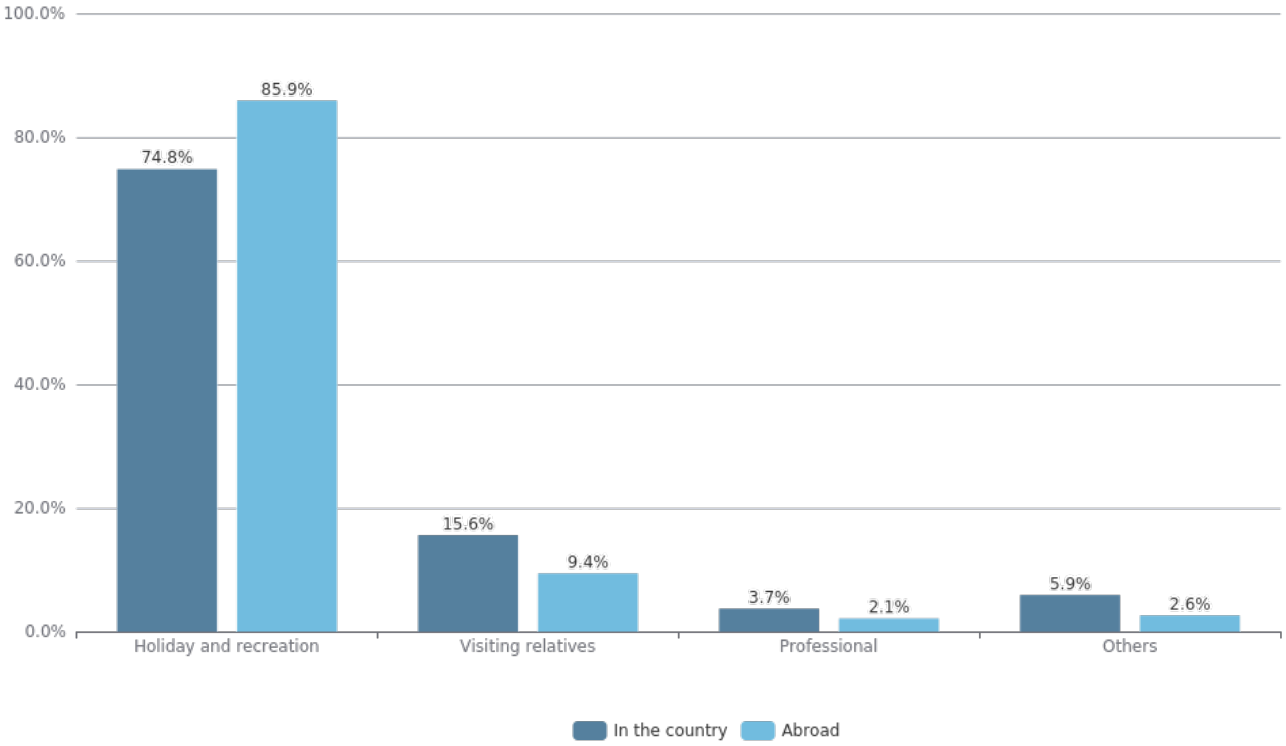
Most Bulgarian citizens who travelled were aged 25 - 44 years - 677.8 thousand, or 35.9% of all travellers. The share of trips in the country dominated in all age groups, the highest (79.6%) being the share among persons aged 65 and more years. The share of residents aged 15 - 24 who travelled abroad (36.2% of the total travellers in this group) was the highest compared to the other age groups (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Relative share of travelled persons aged 15 and over by age groups in the third quarter of 2026



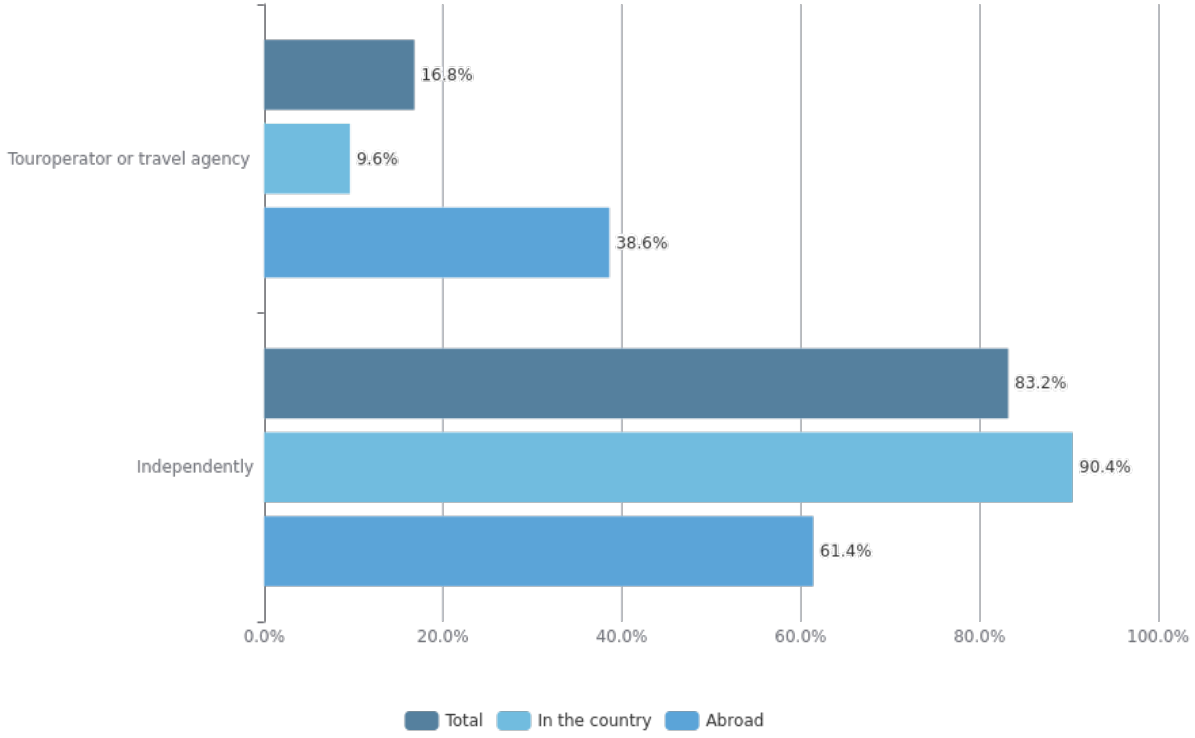
The majority of tourist trips in the country (74.8%) and abroad (85.9%) were with ‘holiday and recreation’ purpose (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Structure of the tourist trips by purposes in the country and abroad in the third quarter of 2026



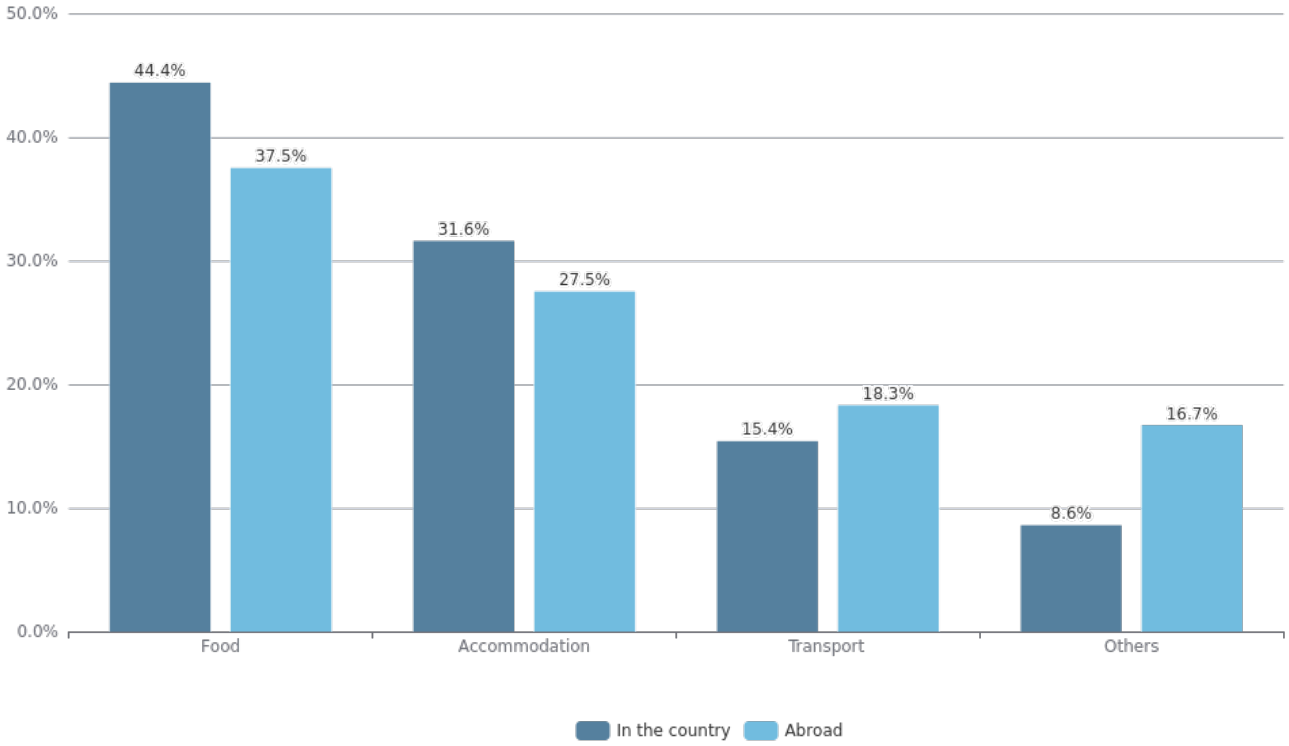
Registered as independent were 2.1 million, or 83.2% of the total number of private tourist trips. The relative share of independent trips without booking via a tour operator was 90.4% in the country and 61.4% abroad (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Relative share of tourist trips with private purpose by organization of the trip in the third quarter of 2026



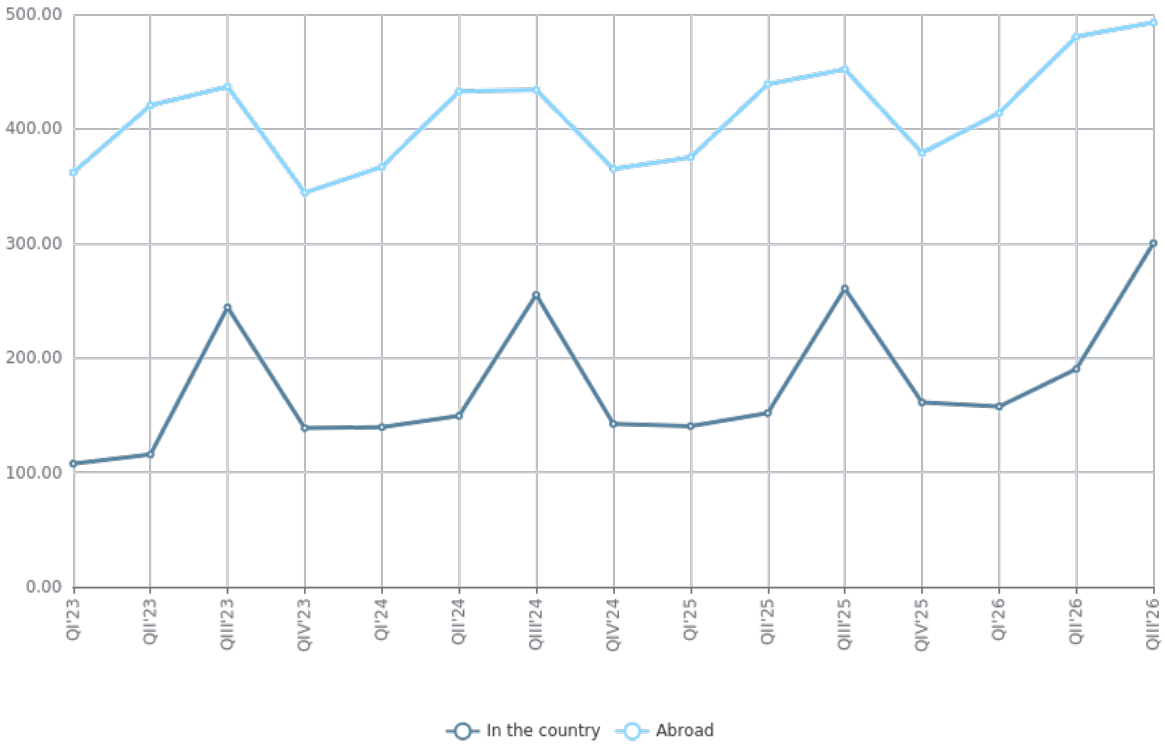
In the expenditure structure by type, with the highest relative share on domestic and outbound trips, was the expenditure on food - 44.4% and 37.5% (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Structure of the expenditure on domestic and outbound tourist trips in the third quarter of 2026



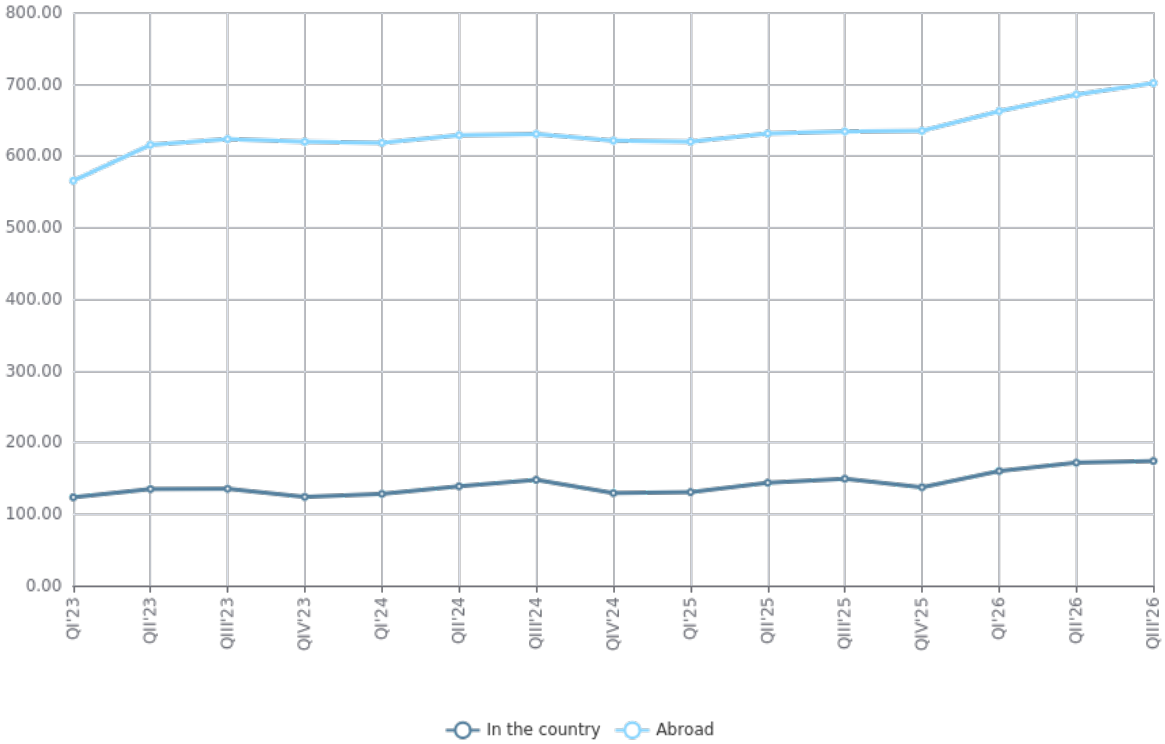
The average expenditure on private trips per person was 300.24 EUR in the country and 493.00 EUR abroad (Figure 6).

Figure 6. The average expenditure on private trips per person by quarters



At the same time, the average expenditure per person on a professional trip was 173.98 EUR in the country and 701.47 EUR abroad (Figure 7).

Figure 7. The average expenditure on professional trips per person by quarters



Methodological notes

Since 2012, the survey of the tourist trips and tourism-related expenditure of the population has been carried out in compliance with Regulation 692/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning European statistics on tourism and Commission implementing Regulation 1051/2011 implementing Regulation 692/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning European statistics on tourism, as regards the structure of the quality reports and the transmission of the data.

The survey is representative and is conducted on the basis of a households' sample in the country. The objects of the survey are residents aged 15 and older in Bulgaria. All persons aged 15 and older, members of the selected households are interviewed. For the estimation of the survey's results, current demographic data on the total population aged 15 and older by place of residence (urban/rural), sex and age groups as of the end of 2025 are used.

Tourist trips - every private or professional trip taken by people outside of the place where they live for a period no longer than one year, with a main purpose different from any activity for payment.

The tourist trips can be as follows:

Private - holidays, cultural visits and sport events, medical treatment, education, religious activities, visits of relatives and friends, and others.

Professional - business trips and deals, participation in conferences, congresses and seminars, and others.

A visitor is a traveller, taking a trip to a main destination outside his/her usual environment for no longer than one year, whose main purpose is not doing any activities for payment. People travelling daily or weekly for work, study, shopping, visiting a physician and others are excluded from the definition of a visitor.

The usual environment of a person includes places located near his/her home as well as frequently visited places. It has two aspects - the vicinity and the frequency of the visits. Places located close to the place of residence of a person are part of the usual environment, even if they are rarely visited. For example, even if the place where the villa or vacation house is located is near to home, but is rarely visited, it is part of the usual environment of a person.