

## **Characteristics of Domestic Tourism in Mongolia: Results of a Domestic Traveller Survey**

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Research into tourism in developing countries has, thus far, predominantly been focussed on the lucrative but intrusive and capricious overseas markets. However, although it is often contended that domestic tourism in developing countries is of limited economic significance, nonetheless the numbers of domestic tourists outstrip international visitors in even the most internationally popular destinations. Moreover, continued growth in the domestic and regional tourism markets within developing world destinations argues for understanding of the volume, value, profile and behaviour of domestic visitors in developing countries to be accorded greater importance by academia and government alike.

In Mongolia, residential patterns changed considerably, not only during the period of Soviet influence, but also after the introduction of the new democratic way in 1990. Society has been largely transformed from an exclusively nomadic to a nomadic-sedentary culture. Approximately one third of Mongolia's population now live and work in the capital, Ulaanbaatar. Thus, there is great potential for a large VFR and nature based domestic tourism market. The paper presents the results of a household survey of 427 domestic travellers resident in Ulaanbaatar during May 2003, which provides valuable information on the demographic and trip characteristics of domestic visitors, as well as on the spatial distribution of domestic tourism and the rating of tourism services and facilities. A comparison of these results with surveys of international visitors to Mongolia indicates that there are significant differences between the two groups on the above variables. The potential implications of these differences for tourism development policy are discussed.