

EXIT SURVEY OF VISITORS TO METRO ILOILO-GUIMARAS (August 2007)

Introduction.

As part of the Metro Iloilo Guimaras tourism situation assessment, APPI conducted an exit survey of visitors to Iloilo from August 10 to 15, 2007, at the Iloilo Airport and the Iloilo Seaport. The survey sought to collect:

- Demographic and socio-economic profiles of tourists, including their places of residence and nationality;
- Information tourist trip characteristics, e.g. length of stay, mode of accommodation, activities undertaken in the area, etc.;
- Data on visitor expenditure in the MIG area; and
- Attitudes and opinions about the quality and value of tourism facilities and services used, and perceptions of the area as a tourist destination.

Another objective of the survey was to establish baseline information on visitors to the MIG area, and pilot the use of the survey instrument for turnover to MIG tourism stakeholders. These data and instruments may provide the foundation for a regular and continuous administration of the visitor survey even after the end of this specific project.

Methodology.

Instrument. A two-page questionnaire (intended to be administered as an interview) was drafted by APPI and presented for comments to the MIG stakeholders at the 2nd Stakeholders' Consultation workshop. Comments and suggestions from the participants were then incorporated into a revised survey instrument, which was pre-tested on 30 visitors at the Iloilo Airport on August 3, 2007. Final modifications to the questions and question formats were then made based on the results of the pilot survey.

Sampling and Administration of the Survey.

The survey was administered as interviews by researchers from the University of San Agustin, under the supervision of APPI from August 10 to 15, 2007 at the Iloilo Airport and the Iloilo Seaport.

Respondents were selected through a three-stage sampling process. For the airport survey, four survey days were randomly selected from the week. Within each day, four of the 12-13 scheduled flights (two in the morning, and two late afternoon or evening flights) were then randomly selected. Interviewers were then instructed to randomly intercept respondents from among those who checked-in for the selected flights.

For surveys at the seaport, interview days were set to ensure that the three major inter-island companies providing services to Manila and Cebu were covered. The Interviewers administered the surveys one hour before the scheduled departures. Then, they transferred to the fast-craft ferry terminal to conduct another hour of surveys on visitors bound for Bacolod.

A total of 391 visitors were interviewed (respondents were screened to ensure that only non-residents of MIG were selected). Two hundred four (52.2%) valid interviews were conducted at the airport, plus another 187 (47.8%) interviews from the seaport.

Findings.

Demographic profile of respondents.

The sample had slightly more males (53.3%) than females (46.7%). Roughly 8 out of 10 respondents (81.7%) were Philippine residents, including 15 foreign nationals based in the country. Including these expatriates, there were a total of 59 foreign citizens in the survey sample. The average age of the respondents was 35.42 years, with more than three-fourths (77.2%) of the respondents aged 45 years and below.

Visitor profile.

Around three-fourths (75.2%) of the respondents were not first-time visitors to MIG. Only 24.8% were in the area for the first time.

Business (30.5%) and visit friends and relatives (30.0%) were the most frequently cited reasons for traveling to MIG. Only 14% said that they were visiting on holiday, while 7.5% were attending various meetings and conferences in the area.

In terms of primary mode of accommodation, 40.3% said that they stayed in homes of friends or relatives. An almost equal number (40.0%) stayed in hotels, with around 9.2% staying in local apartelles.

Visitor activities.

Respondents were asked what activities they engaged in during their visit to the MIG area. Dining at local restaurants was the most popular activity for both foreign and domestic tourists. Table 1 summarizes the proportions of foreign and domestic tourists engaging in the various tourist activities.

Almost a third (32.35%) of those traveling for holiday or to visit friends and relatives visited Guimaras during this trip. In addition, a little more than forty percent (41.76%) of these respondents also visited other places in Iloilo Province and Panay Island outside the MIG area.

Table 1. Participation in Tourist Activities.

	Foreign	Filipino	Overall
Dine at local restaurant	78%	59%	62%
Sightseeing	56%	44%	46%
Shopping for other products	34%	35%	35%
Swimming	37%	14%	18%
Shopping for arts and crafts	29%	14%	17%
Visits to heritage churches	20%	21%	21%
Business	7%	18%	16%
Visit to local communities	8%	8%	8%
Hiking	7%	3%	4%
Visits to heritage houses	7%	6%	6%
Visit to farms	10%	2%	4%
Attend convention	2%	12%	10%
Go on retreat	3%	2%	2%
Research	3%	6%	6%
Attend festival	2%	1%	1%

Visitor Spending in the MIG area.

Respondents were asked to estimate the amount of money they spent on various expenditure items during their visit to Iloilo. Adjusted for extreme values (outliers), average spending, per day, by visitors to the MIG area is as follows:

Hotel accommodations	1,625.61
Food and beverage	1,328.23
Transportation	1,433.19
Shopping	1,085.84
Overall daily expenditures	3,988.16

The figure for total daily expenditure does not correspond to the total of the individual cost items because the number of respondents for each of these items varies. Compared to national expenditure data, the results for transportation are much higher. We suspect that many respondents included the cost of transportation into MIG (air or sea). This should be corrected in future surveys, so as to specify that this should cover local transportation only.

Evaluation of MIG as a Tourist Destination.

The respondents were asked to evaluate Metro Iloilo-Guimaras on a range of destination elements. On a 5-point scale, where 1 meant, "strongly disagree" and 5 meant "strongly agree", respondents indicated the degree to which they agreed with the statements that MIG is better on each of the factors than other destinations in the Visayas. Table 2 summarizes the average ratings for each factor. Higher ratings indicate stronger agreement that MIG is superior on that factor.

Table 2. Evaluation of MIG as a Tourist Destination

FACTOR	Average Rating
Friendliness of Ilonggos	4.39
Restaurant prices	3.84
Quality of restaurant services	3.80
Quality of restaurant facilities	3.74
Quality of hotel services	3.74
Quality of hotel facilities	3.72
Cultural and historical attractions	3.71
Natural attractions	3.66
Quality of sea transportation	3.61
Variety of souvenir items	3.59
Better value than other Visayan destinations	3.57
Quality of souvenir items	3.57
Price of souvenir items	3.53
Cleanliness of public facilities	3.34
Quality of land transportation	3.18

In addition to these factors, respondents were also asked to indicate their overall satisfaction with the visit, on a five-point “very dissatisfied” to “very satisfied” scale. Around 86% said that they were satisfied or very satisfied with their visit. Only two percent indicated any degree of dissatisfaction.

When asked whether they wished to return to MIG or whether they would recommend MIG to friends as a tourism destination:

- 376 (96.2%) said that they would like to return to MIG sometime soon
- 352 (91.7%) said that they would recommend MIG to friends

Image of Metro Iloilo and Guimaras as Destinations.

The respondents were asked what first came to mind when they heard the words “Iloilo” and “Guimaras”.

The most prominent images of Guimaras are related to mangoes and to beach resorts. Forty-five percent (44.9%) of the valid responses mentioned mangoes while forty-two percent were about beaches and resorts in relation to Guimaras. Only ten percent mentioned the oil spill.

On the question for Iloilo, the most frequently mentioned images were the Dinagyang festival, food, and the Ilonggo culture (including the people and language). However, there was less consensus on these images as for Guimaras. The Dinagyang was the most-mentioned Iloilo icon, but that was by only 28.18% of the valid responses. Another 22.76% associated Iloilo with food, native delicacies and local restaurants. Finally, about two in five (18.8%) mentioned something about the “*malambing*” people and language.