

MODERN SCIENCE

MODERNÍ VĚDA

№ 10 - 2020

scientific journal

vědecký časopis

Prague Praha

MODERN SCIENCE - MODERNÍ VĚDA

№ 10 - 2020

Incorporated in
Czech Republic
MK 53506/2013 OMA

Evidenční číslo
České Republika
MK 53506/2013 OMA

Founder
*The East European Center of Fundamental
Researches*
Main office: Stepanska 29/59
110 00, Prague 1, Czech Republic

Zakladatel
*Východoevropské centrum základního
výzkumu*
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Address of release
Modern Science
Stepanska 629/59
110 00, Praha 1
Czech Republic

Adresa redakce
Moderní věda
Stepanska 629/59
110 00, Praha 1
Česká Republika

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ISSN 2336-498X. - Scholar Google. - eLIBRARY.RU (PIHLI)

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Tourism, resorts, recreation - Cestovní ruch, letoviska, rekreace

REALIZATION OF THE POTENTIAL OF UKRAINE IN THE EUROPEAN TOURIST SERVICES MARKET

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Annotation. The article determines the essence and structure of tourism potential, shows the directions of its realization. Ukraine's place in the European tourist services market is determined. The cluster analysis of the European tourist services market by the components of the Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index is conducted. The directions of intensification of the use of potential of Ukraine in the process of ensuring its European integration activity are determined.

Key words: tourism potential, realization of tourism potential, tourist service, tourist services market, competitiveness of tourism sector, European tourist services market.

Introduction and setting of the problem. A necessary condition for the tourism sector development is the availability of tourism potential, the realization of which largely determines the level of socio-economic development of the country and ensuring the welfare of society. The geographical location and strategic course of Ukraine towards European integration create favorable opportunities for promoting its tourism product on the European market. However, in the conditions of fierce global competition, despite the significant tourism potential, Ukraine positions itself in the global and European market of tourist services quite modestly, acting mostly as a supplier of tourists to these markets. In this regard, the problem of assessing the realization of the potential of Ukraine in the European tourist services market and finding ways to intensify the promotion of the national tourist product, increase the attractiveness of our country as a tourist area becomes especially relevant.

Analysis of recent research and publications. Issues of tourism development are in the center of attention of many domestic scientists. Among the latest scientific works close to our topic, it is worth noting the article by O.M. Kuzmak and O.I.Kuzmak [3], which is devoted to improving the quality of tourist services in terms of European requirements. In the article by K.V. Osypenko [4] the directions of integration of the national tourism industry of Ukraine to the European tourist region are determined, the key one of which is the development of the documentary base of tourism. D.I. Basyuk, T.Y. Prymak and N.V. Poguda [1] study the European experience in terms of the formation of sustainable development and the possibility of using foreign practices in the implementation of tourism on the principles of sustainability in Ukraine. N.O.Stepanenko [10] considers the current state of Ukrainian tourism, as well as the peculiarities of its development in terms of European integration, etc.

At the same time, insufficient attention is paid to the problem of realization of the potential of Ukraine in the European tourist services market, there are many unsolved problems of theoretical and applicable nature, the extent and complexity of which require continued scientific research.

The purpose of the article is to study the theoretical and practical aspects of realization of the potential of Ukraine in the European tourist services market and to substantiate ways to intensify its use.

Main results of the research. In the scientific literature, until today there is no generally accepted professional interpretation of the concept of “tourism potential”, it is often used as a commonly used, obvious term. In our opinion, it is worth to agree with the definition of tourism potential as a set of natural, cultural, historical and socio-economic prerequisites for the organization of tourism in a particular area [5]. However, the tourism potential should be considered in a narrow and broad sense. In the narrow sense, in our opinion, it is a set of tourist resources that can meet the spiritual needs of tourists, promote the recovery and development of their physical strength. However, in order to carry out activities in the sphere of tourism, in addition to tourist resources, infrastructure (both general and tourist) is also needed. Therefore, in a broad sense, we understand the tourism potential as a set of tourist resources and infrastructure of the tourism sector.

Tourist resources include natural and recreational, historical, cultural and socio-economic resources owned by the country. Natural resources include geographical location, climate, condition and ecological characteristics of natural landscapes; the presence of rare species of flora and fauna; opportunities for hunting and fishing, etc. Cultural and historical resources are historical and cultural monuments; museums; places of famous historical events; objects of religious and cult pilgrimage, language traditions, mentality, hospitality, customs, etc. [6]. Organizational and economic resources include procurement, labor, information, management, etc.

The infrastructure of the tourism sector includes transport infrastructure; placement infrastructure; food infrastructure; leisure and entertainment infrastructure; utilities (water supply, sewerage, etc.); information support; specialized infrastructure (tour operators, travel agencies, etc.).

Tourism potential is a complex system with an appropriate structure, existing connections and interdependencies. We suggest to consider the tourism potential structure as a unity of potentials, which is shown on Fig.1.

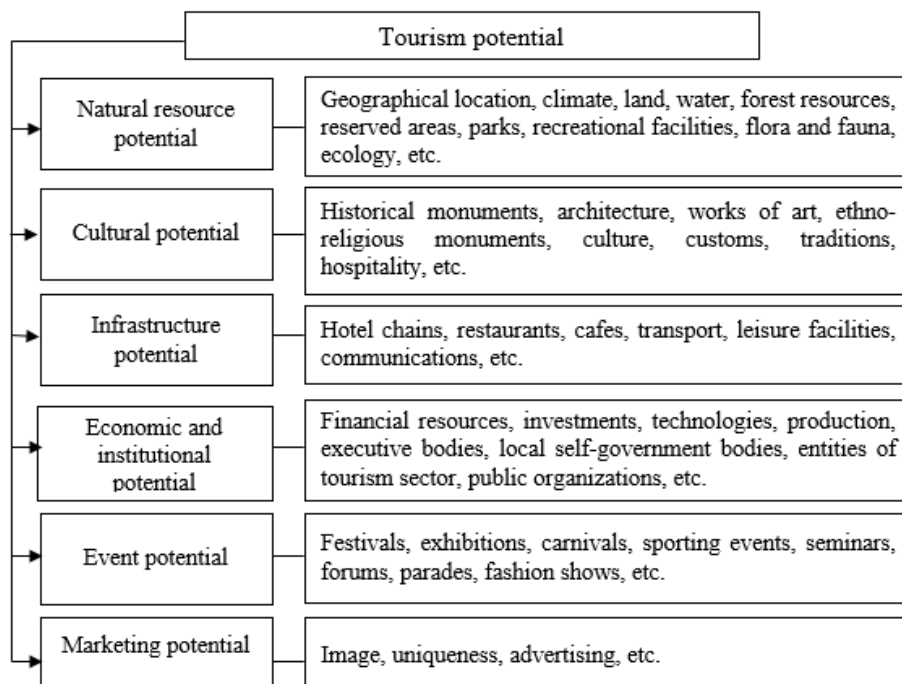


Fig.1. Tourism potential structure

Source: systematized by the authors

The effectiveness of the use (realization) of tourism potential depends on the quality of the resource management system at the level of economic entities and territorial formations, as well as on its ability to respond to changes in environmental conditions. In addition, an important role in the realization of tourism potential is played by state policy on tourism development.

The realization of potential takes place in economic, social and innovative areas, which allow to reveal its role in the economy (Fig. 2).

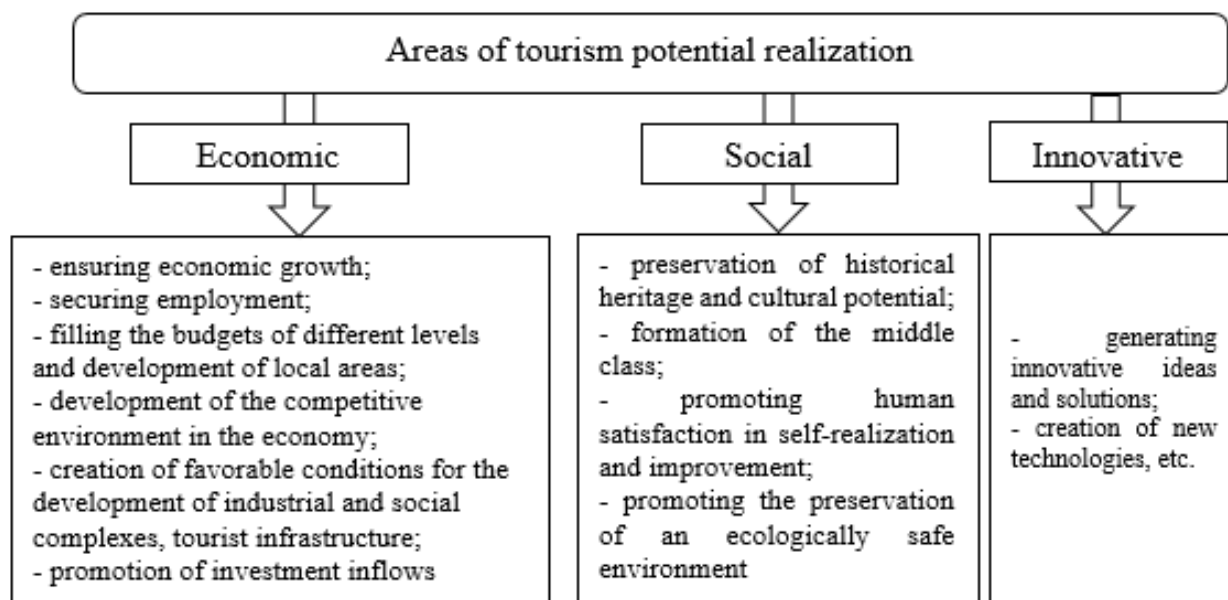


Fig. 2. Areas of tourism potential realization

Source: systematized by the authors

The result of the realization of tourism potential is a tourist service. Based on the study, we define the tourist service as a set of actions formed from the services of

transportation, accommodation, nutrition, recreation, entertainment and others aimed at meeting the needs of the consumer (tourist). In a broad sense – this is all that the tourist uses during the trip (when changing his place of stay) and that can meet his needs.

The tourist service reaches the consumer through the market. The aggregation of the existing scientific approaches to the definition of the “market of tourist services” allowed to define this category as economic relations between buyers (demand holders) and sellers (suppliers) regarding the movement of tourist services and money.

The European market of tourist services is currently one of the largest segments of the world market, both in terms of tourist arrivals and revenue from international tourism. According to the World Tourism Organization (WTO), in 2018 51% of the 1.4 billion international arrivals in the world is in Europe (709.99 million). In 2018 European countries were visited by 5.5% more tourists than in 2017 and by 46% more than in 2010. 39% of the 1.7 trillion dollars profits from the export of world tourist services belong to European countries (570.46 billion dollars). In 2018 international tourism brought European countries revenues by 9.8% more than in 2017 and by 34.9% more than in 2010 [13].

The European region is a leader in the rating by the Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index, with six European countries being in top-10. This is due to the high level of development of tourist services infrastructure, health care and hygiene; especially due to the Schengen area, which provides a high degree of international openness and integration.

Europe dominant position in international tourism is ensured by the fact that almost 85% of its foreign tourism is created as a result of tourist exchange between European countries and only 15% – due to arrivals from other regions. The development of tourism in Europe is facilitated by geographical proximity of countries, developed network of transport communications, close economic, cultural and ethnic ties, unique tourist resources, and highly developed tourism industry [2, p.67].

Most European countries are traditionally tourist, have a good tourist image, long-lasting traditions of high-quality tourist servicing, and are widely using marketing tools to promote travel services. However, there are still some problems in the European region, in particular, not all countries have cultural resources, give priority to tourism and respond to new trends [7].

At the end of the last century, new players appeared in the European market of tourist services, namely, the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, including Ukraine. Despite the fact that the Law of Ukraine “On Tourism”, adopted in 1995, states that the country declares tourism as one of the priority areas of national culture and economy development and creates conditions for tourism [8], and the diversity of tourist resources allows to develop many types of inbound tourism (cultural and cognitive, medical and health, sports, skiing, business, ecological, rural, etc.), in 2018 the share of Ukraine in the European market of inbound tourism was just 2.0%, and

in the all-European revenue from tourism activity only 0.3%. Instead, in 2010, these figures were 4.4% and 0.9%, respectively [11].

In terms of the number of foreign tourists, in 2018 Ukraine ranked a decent (14th) place among European countries, despite its decrease (Fig. 3).

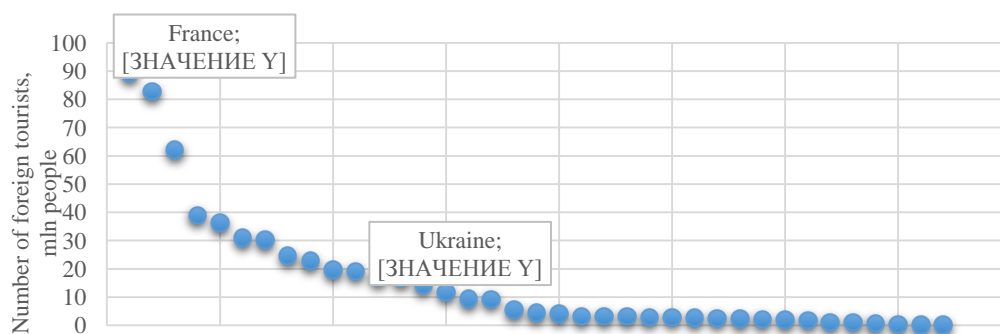


Fig.3. Place of Ukraine among European countries in terms of the number of foreign tourists

Source: prepared based on the data [12]

The most popular country in the world and Europe remains France, which in 2018 was visited by 89.4 million tourists. Only 14.2 million people came to Ukraine, which is by 1.5% less than in 2017 and by 33% less than in 2010.

In terms of revenues from international tourism, in 2018 Ukraine ranked 32nd among 40 European countries (Fig. 4). This indicator is very low, although it slightly increased (by 15.1%) compared to 2017, but it decreased by 61.7% compared to 2010.

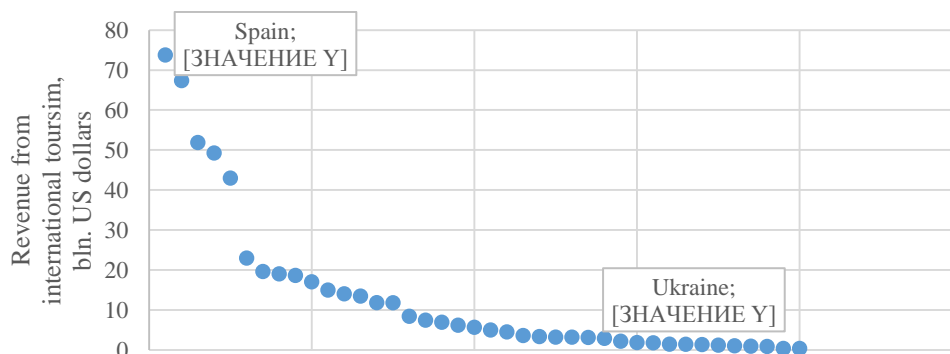


Fig. 4. Place of Ukraine among European countries in terms of revenues from international tourism

Source: prepared based on the data [12]

In the rating of tourist competitiveness of the countries of the world Ukraine ranks rather low. Thus, in accordance with the report on the competitiveness of travel and tourism in 2019, Ukraine ranked 78th in terms of attractiveness for tourists (3.7 points out of 7 possible). Although our country managed to rise by 10 positions compared to the same report in 2017 (88th place with an index of 3.5), its position corresponds to the position in 2007 (78th place with an index of 3.89) [9].

According to the results of the cluster analysis, which was conducted by the components of the Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index using the software STATISTIKA 13.3, the European market of tourist services was divided into 6 groups (clusters) (Fig. 5 and Table 1).

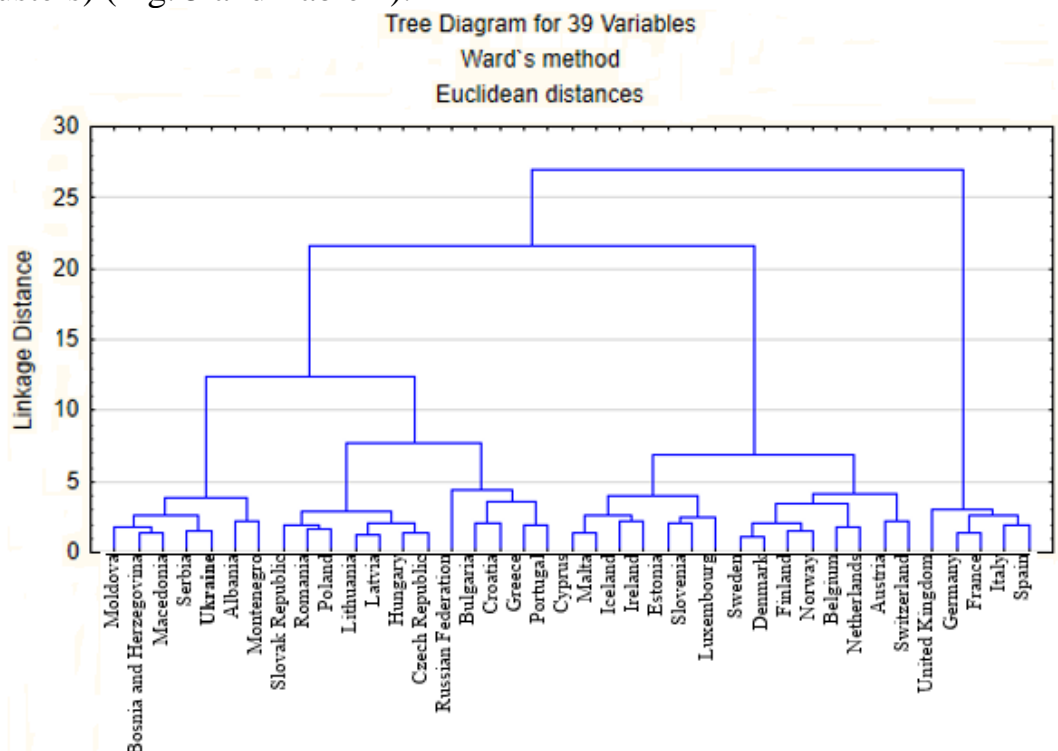


Fig.5. Dendrogram of European countries by the components of Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index according to the respective report of 2019
Source: prepared by the authors based on the data [11]

Table 1

Main clusters of European region

1 cluster	2 cluster	3 cluster	4 cluster	5 cluster	6 cluster
Montenegro	Czech Republic	Portugal	Luxembourg	Switzerland	Spain
Albania	Hungary	Greece	Slovenia	Austria	Italy
Ukraine	Latvia	Croatia	Estonia	Netherlands	France
Serbia	Lithuania	Bulgaria	Ireland	Belgium	Germany
Macedonia	Poland	Russian Federation	Iceland	Norway	United Kingdom
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Romania		Malta	Finland	
Moldova	Slovak Republic		Cyprus	Denmark	
				Sweden	

Source: prepared by the authors based on dendrogram on fig.5

Ukraine joined the group together with Montenegro, Albania, Serbia, Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova. This group includes the countries with the lowest utilization of their tourism potential. The only exception is the price

competitiveness of the tourism industry, which has the best situation in this cluster. The main characteristics of the formed clusters by the consolidated indicators of the Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index are presented in table 2, where the best positions of clusters according to the studied indicators are highlighted in bold italics.

According to Table 2, the countries of the 6th cluster have the strongest positions in six of 14 groups of indicators, including: cultural resources and business travel, tourist service infrastructure, ground and port infrastructure, air transport infrastructure, natural resources, international openness. The countries of the 5th cluster are the leaders in terms of information and communication technology infrastructure, environmental sustainability and business environment. The countries of the 4th cluster are ahead of others in terms of safety and security, prioritization of travel and tourism. The countries of the 2nd cluster are the leaders in health and hygiene indicators. The countries of the 3rd cluster have no leader positions.

The countries of the 2nd cluster are the most homogeneous, as most indicators have the lowest values of standard deviations. The most inhomogeneous group is the group of countries of the 3rd and 5th clusters, where standard deviations for many indicators have the highest values.

The conducted SWOT-analysis (Table 3) confirms the opinion that along with the strengths, the country has a sufficient number of weaknesses that slow down the development of the tourism sector. Opportunities are associated with the hope of improving the economic situation in the country, which will improve the investment climate, business environment, and, consequently, create favorable conditions for the revitalization of small and medium-sized businesses, including tourism. The latter will support expansion of the range of tourism products to meet a wider range of European consumers.

Table 2

Main characteristics of the formed clusters

	1 cluster	2 cluster	3 cluster	4 cluster	5 cluster	6 cluster
N	7	7	5	7	8	5
Business Environment						
Average	4,114286	4,414286	4,220000	5,100000	5,362500	4,900000
Statistical deviation	0,384831	0,203540	0,370135	0,424264	0,413824	0,714143
Safety and Security						
Average	5,400000	5,842857	5,620000	6,142857	6,112500	5,780000
Statistical deviation	0,321455	0,190238	0,496991	0,207020	0,318198	0,216795
Health and Hygiene						
Average	5,842857	6,485714	6,440000	6,128571	6,437500	6,360000
Statistical deviation	0,411733	0,323669	0,296648	0,281154	0,255999	0,439318
Human Resources and Labour Market						
Average	4,571429	4,800000	4,700000	5,171429	5,512500	5,160000
Statistical deviation	0,381725	0,216025	0,393700	0,281154	0,164208	0,444972
ICT Readiness						
Average	4,757143	5,528571	5,280000	5,928571	6,212500	5,880000
Statistical deviation	0,282000	0,205866	0,130384	0,287021	0,203101	0,258844

Natural Resources						
Average	2,242857	2,814286	3,880000	2,900000	3,200000	4,620000
Statistical deviation	0,423703	0,445079	0,342053	0,577350	0,520988	0,356371
Cultural Resources and Business Travel						
Average	1,428571	2,057143	3,200000	1,785714	2,812500	6,420000
Statistical deviation	0,292770	0,605137	0,781025	0,498092	0,608129	0,476445
Prioritization of Travel & Tourism						
Average	4,242857	4414286	5,060000	5,657143	4,962500	5,140000
Statistical deviation	0,559336	0,338765	0,568331	0,499524	0,437321	0,439318
International Openness						
Average	2,785714	4,042857	3,720000	4,057143	4,137500	4,140000
Statistical deviation	0,545981	0,127242	0,858487	0,340867	0,140789	0,511658
Price Competitiveness						
Average	5,657143	5,542857	5,300000	4,771429	4,425000	4,340000
Statistical deviation	0,250713	0,171825	0,418330	0,573627	0,361544	0,676757
Environmental Sustainability						
Average	4,228571	4,628571	4,560000	4,928571	5,487500	4,960000
Statistical deviation	0,368394	0,262769	0,391152	0,558911	0,375832	0,444972
Air Transport Infrastructure						
Average	2,442857	2,957143	4,080000	3,700000	4,812500	4,860000
Statistical deviation	0,427618	0,568205	0,909395	0,914695	0,511126	0,296648
Ground and Port Infrastructure						
Average	2,871429	4,171429	3,680000	4,642857	5,162500	5,320000
Statistical deviation	0,335233	0,534522	0,420714	0,464963	0,768928	0,396232
Tourist Service Infrastructure						
Average	4,057143	4,628571	5,820000	5,671429	5,287500	6,060000
Statistical deviation	0,769972	0,287021	1,028105	0,242997	0,749166	0,336155

Source: calculated and prepared by the authors based on the data [11]

As for the threats, they are due to the fact that the state, unfortunately, has not made significant changes in the investment and business climate during the years of independence. High tax rates, complicated, confusing and unstable tax system, insufficient growth of household income limit the opportunities to use the tourism potential.

The low level of realization of the tourism potential of Ukraine is caused, first of all, by insufficient development of the tourist infrastructure, transport routes, inefficiency of the state policy; lack of an attractive tourist image of the country; irrational use of tourist resources.

Table 3

SWOT-analysis matrix of tourism potential of Ukraine

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - favorable geopolitical position; - availability of sufficient natural resources (forests, mountains, reservoirs, beaches), peculiarity of natural landscapes, the presence of flora and fauna; - availability of sufficient and unique cultural and historical resources; - favorable climatic conditions (moderate temperature in summer for the development of summer tourism, as well as the presence of snow in winter and moderate temperature for the development of winter tourism); - availability of tourist infrastructure; - opportunities for the development of ecological, medical and health tourism (the presence of a variety of sanatorium and resort facilities, unique natural and medical facilities); - reasonable prices for European tourists; - quality of railway infrastructure; - density of railways; - sufficient number of ATMs for currency exchange by foreign tourists; - sufficient number of airlines; - time required to open a business; - cost of starting a business 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - insufficient level of development of the network and objects of tourist infrastructure (significant physical and moral deterioration of the material base of tourism, insufficient number of hotels and other means of accommodation of modern level of comfort, their non-compliance with European standards); - low quality of roads; - insufficiently qualified personnel of the tourist sphere; - low investment activity (lack of domestic and foreign investment); - not very attractive image of the country for consumers; - backwardness in innovation processes; - low level of compliance with environmental legislation; - low efficiency of marketing and advertising activities to attract tourists; - low priority of tourism development for the government; - weak tourism management culture; - unsatisfactory security status; - inefficiency of marketing policy to promote Ukrainian tourist product on the European market; - insufficient advertising and information support or absence of information at all in European countries about various places in Ukraine
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - improving the investment climate; - improving the business environment and revitalizing small and medium-sized businesses; - rapid market growth; - confidence in the rival regions; - expansion (differentiation) of the range of products (tours, hotel services) to meet a wider range of consumers, which will allow access to new tourism markets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - deterioration of the investment and business climate; - unfavorable tax policy in the sphere of tourism by the state; - changing needs and tastes of tourists-consumers; - slow market growth; - increase of sales of similar tours or services offered by competing regions and countries

Source: Systematized by the authors

The main directions of intensification of the realization of the potential of Ukraine are: formation of a positive image of Ukraine as an attractive territory for recreation; creation of a single database on tourist resources and their location in

Ukraine; improvement and modification of the domestic tourism product; communication of information on national traditions, crafts and handicrafts, museums and expositions; modernization of tourist facilities; improvement and development of tourist infrastructure; improving the quality of staff training in the tourism sector, able to provide tourists with services; ensuring the level of service in accordance with European and international standards; search and presentation of new tourist routes and programs; developing tours that would include full service of tourists starting from travel and till nutrition; improving the quality of domestic tourist services to European standards; attracting investments for tourism development; ensuring security in the provision of tourist services; high-quality information support of the tourism sector, wide use of various types of advertising, etc. However, it should be noted that these tasks can be solved only with the help of financial and information support of the state with the active interaction of all entities of tourism sector at the macro and micro levels.

In order to form a stable effective demand for national tourist services and customer loyalty of European tourists, it is necessary to study their needs and requirements as much as possible. When developing a tourism product for European tourists, it should be considered that as a result of the growing share of the elderly population in European countries, the demand for a tourism product intended for the so-called “mature” segment of the tourism market is growing. These tourists show a demand for better and more expensive tourist services; their demand is characterized by slight seasonal fluctuations.

At the same time, the youngest tourists tend to visit more remote recreation areas and be satisfied with a moderate level of comfort during the travel. They are less interested in the so-called “vacation packages”, which are usually purchased from travel agencies. This category of travelers actively uses new technologies and online services predominantly, as well as opportunities for sharing.

Conclusions. Having a strong tourism potential, Ukraine today is not able to take leading positions in the European market. The study shows that our country is among the European cluster with the lowest indicators.

In order to integrate into the European tourism sector, first it is necessary to stabilize the economic and political environment, to resolve military and regional conflicts within Ukraine. At the same time, it is necessary to work on transforming the domestic tourist product into a competitive one, improving and modifying it. The improvement of the policy for promoting this product on the European and world market of tourist services is not less important.

Guidelines for the development of Ukrainian tourism industry, increasing its competitiveness should be high standards of tourist services in most European countries, that experience should be studied and used, as well as marketing and promotional activities aimed at forming the tourist attractiveness of our country.

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