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GEOGRAPHY AND TRENDS OF DEVELOPING ETHNIC FESTIVAL TOURISM IN THE UKRAINIAN PART OF THE CARPATHIAN EUROREGION

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Abstract

Ethnic festivals are the motive basis as well as a resource of tourism, hence they are the object of studying the geography of tourism. Their development is of great importance for the region, results in new tourist destinations and growth of income in the countryside. The statistics proves that more and more tourists are coming to the region due to ethnic festivals. The number of ethnic festivals is increasing and their geography is expanding. Over 2000 - 2011 (in the pre-crises period of the state’s development) the number of ethnic festivals in the Ukrainian part of the Carpathian Euroregion grew from 55 to 228. About 100 new popular tourist destinations appeared in the tourist map. The article describes geographic, ethno-cultural and organizational principles of ethnic festival tourism development in the Carpathian region of Ukraine.

Key words: ethnic tourism, festival, ethnic festival tourism, regional development, geography of ethnic festivals.

INTRODUCTION

After Ukraine stopped being part of the USSR, since 1991 prominent cultural figures have been advocating the accession of the state to international cultural organizations and, in particular, to the CIOFF (International Council of Organizations of Folklore Festivals and Folk Arts, an Official Partner of UNESCO). Ukraine became an official member of the CIOFF in September 1996. However the first Ukrainian ethnic festival under the CIOFF protection was held in 1994 in Lutsk - International Ukrainian-Polish Festival “Polissia Summer with Folklore”. More than a thousand people who are bearers of “live” ethno-cultural heritage of the province were attracted to participate in the campaign. In subsequent years, Ukraine became known for the following international folklore festivals under the CIOFF protection: Slavic Folklore Festival “Kolyada”

(Rivne, 1995), festivals of traditional folk culture “Pokut” (Kharkiv, 1996), “Drevlyanski dzerela” (Rivne 1998) and others. In the 2000s due to arranging the international ethnic festival “Ethnovyr” regularly, geography of its participants and its extent Lviv gained the status of the capital of ethnic festival tourism under the CIOFF protection in the Ukrainian part of the Carpathian Euroregion.

An important goal of multiethnic (international) festivals of folk art, in accordance with the principles of the CIOFF, is strengthening peace, understanding and friendship between nations and states, promoting racial and ethnic mutual tolerance and mutual enrichment in the field of folk art and culture, amateur art development and preservation of folklore heritage of humanity (CIOFF, 2012).

In the twentieth century under conditions of aggressive globalization absorption of authentic cultures ethnic festivals take precedence among the modern means of preservation, revival and promotion of cultural and artistic heritage. This statement is supported by both competent experts and scientists (cultural studies experts, art historians, folklorists, ethnographers and others), and known cultural and political figures. For example, in all his recent speeches and publications the CIOFF President K. Berhholm postulates the idea that “International Folk Festivals are one of the most effective methods of protection, preservation and dissemination of traditional culture” (Guidelines for CIOFF, 2003, p. 2).

Ethnic festivals are a motive basis and resource of ethnic festival tourism, and therefore, the object of studying the geography of tourism. Development of ethnic festivals in the western part of Ukraine has intensified after the integration of its four administrative regions into the Carpathian Euroregion and building up common strategy of sustainable culture and cultural tourism development.

METHODS, DATA AND TOOLS FOR STUDYING ETHNIC FESTIVAL TOURISM

Theoretical and methodological issues of geography of event tourism (and more exactly – of solely festival tourism) have been covered in detail in works of geographers, starting from the 80s of the last century. As a result, today there are thousands of books and articles in professional

journals of this field. In our study we relied on theoretical statements, methods, principles and tools for studying ethnic festival tourism of the following scientists: B. Boniface and C. Cooper (2005), M. Hall and S. Page (2006), A. M. Lew BV Hall (2008), E. Fouberg (2012) and others.

All modern approaches to formulating terms and concepts “Cultural Heritage”, “Ethnic Diversity”, “Cultural Tourism”, “Ethnic Tourism”, “Event Tourism”, “Festival Tourism”, as well as theoretical principles of their study have been recently summarized in J. T. Dallen’s (2011) substantial work. The author of the book explores many of the most pertinent issues on heritage, arts, festivals, indigenous, ethnic and experiential cultural tourism in urban and rural environments alike.

The Hungarian researcher Melanie Smith considers ethnographic tourism as one of the most important processes in the sphere of cultural tourism and its increasing globalization in existing as well as in emerging destinations of the world (Smith 2009). While exploring the inter-relationships between the cultural and tourism sectors, local people and tourists, the book also provides suggestions for more effective and mutually beneficial collaboration. We used her interdisciplinary approach which combines studying ethnic festival destination geography and management of localized cultural products and innovative attractions.

For the Ukrainian part of the Carpathian Euroregion a shift of emphasis from the discourse of authenticity to the process of authenticating ethnic festival tourism is important. The theoretical principles and tools of such a research approach are the most profoundly presented in the book by a Chinese scientist P. F. Xie “Authenticating Ethnic Tourism” (2011).

Global, regional and local strategic principles about the role of festival tourism for the sustainable development are presented in the book by H. W. Faulkner, G. Moscardo, E. Laws “Tourism in the twenty-first century : reflections on experience” (2000), in the work by David Picard and Mike Robinson “Remaking Worlds: Festivals, Tourism and Change” (2006 pp. 1–31), as well as in the book by L. Rowntree “Globalization and Diversity: Geography of a Changing World” (2007). International Perspectives of Festivals and Events includes a broad range of

research, case studies and examples from well-known scholars in the field – Jane Ali-Knight, Alan Fyall, Martin Robertson, Adele Ladkin – to form a unified volume that informs of the current status of festivals and events around the world (ALI-KNIGHT, J., FYALL, A., ROBERTSON, M., LADKIN A. 2009) and others.

R. Prentice and V. Andersen in their work “Festival as creative destination” (2003), Kelley A. McCinchey and Barbara A. Carmichael in their work “The Role and Meaning of Place in Cultural Festival Visitor Experiences” (2010 pp. 59–80), as well as Chris Gibson and John Connell in their work “Festival Places” (2011) emphasize the importance of considering local peculiarities of specific places as festival tourism destinations and the expediency of studying local ethnic features.

The most modern theoretical approaches to studying innovation in festivals, destination and event image, cultural events and national identity, religious festival experiences, effective management and marketing of events are summarized in the work “Event Tourism and Cultural Tourism” (Dwyer, L., Wickens, E. 2013).

We have used methodological principles of research of the inter-relationship between tourism and ethnic diversity and the role of ethnic festival tourism in preserving ethnic diversity offered by the authors of the book “Tourism, Ethnic Diversity and the City” (Rath 2007).

Theoretical and methodological backgrounds of the geographical study of ethnic festival tourism in Ukraine have been developed since the 90-ies of the XX-th century. Among the publications of the last years the event tourism geography researches have been paid special attention to in a number of works: O. Bejdyk (2001), I. Smal (2004), M. Rutynskyi (2008, 2011). However, there are extremely few geographical works devoted directly to festival tourism in Ukraine. That is, scientific interpretation of the festival process "lags behind" the practice of developing festival process in the country.

Sources and methods of collecting information:

- Our own observations when ethnic festivals are being held;
- Information from archives of the local ethnic public organizations;

- Interviews with over 50 administrators in charge of implementing festival programs in the studied region.

Processing of the initial data was done according to the latest recommendations of the leading experts in studying Event Tourism and Cultural Tourism (Dwyer, L., Wickens, E. 2013).

To evaluate the economic effect of ethnic festival tourism for sustainable local economic development the principles offered by D. O'Sullivan and M. Jackson (2002 pp. 325–342), D. Felsenstein and A. Fleischier (2003 pp. 385–392) were used.

To evaluate overall prospects of ethnic festival tourism in the Ukrainian part of the Carpathian Euroregion we used the methodological approaches and recommendations of the professors Li Yang and Geoffrey Wall in their research on planning for ethnic tourism by exploring the status and enhancement of planning strategies for ethnic tourism development (Yang, L., Wall, G. 2014).

RESULTS

Since 2000 in the Ukrainian part of the Carpathian Euroregion a great variety of festivals have been held. The significant area of the festival specialization in the region is the theater and the cinema, jazz, contemporary music and art and many others. They attract mainly domestic tourists and a small number of foreign ones. Now the organizers are placing more and more emphasis on ethnic-oriented mass events - mass open-air summer festivals with a distinct ethnic component, tourists staying for several days in the festival site, the conditions being most comfortable for their direct communication with the bearers of living authentic spiritual culture, crafts and applied arts.

It is clear that the development of just this type of entertainment is of great importance not only for the region but also for the country as a whole. Establishing the infrastructure of this sphere causes development of the region, increases income in rural areas and small towns, distant from the administrative center and traditional recreation areas.

In developed countries with established traditions of ethnic cultural event-tourism and properly equipped infrastructure where people live well, nearly every town and even every village

have a festival of their own to attract tourists, funds and just for their own pleasure.

For comparison and consideration we give the following fact: May 5, on Freedom Day in the Netherlands, which is officially celebrated, there are 15 festivals. But this is, firstly, the country that occupies territory smaller than the Ukrainian regions of the Carpathian Euroregion, and secondly, they are not festivals of a local type, but really great holidays with worldwide headlines. Ukraine is still far from it, but it is that level of development and territorial diversification of festival events that Ukrainians should strive for. In Europe ethnic musical festivals are an obligatory component of a democratic and modern society. They are the bearers of freedom, creativity and patriotism.

To choose the best strategic direction for tourism development in the region, one must take into account all potentially important factors, especially its geographical location and ecological territory phenomenon. The future socio-economic model of the Carpathian region should be economically profitable for Ukraine and consistent with the interests of the adjacent areas of foreign countries. It is the international experience that confirms that the effective direction of developing mountain regions is developing various forms of recreation and tourism.

Ethnic festivals of the Ukrainian part of the Carpathian Euroregion are divided into three types:

a) ethnic (folklore) festivals – take place in the form of demonstrating cultural heritage of the nation. For example: International Hutsul Festival, International Bojko Festival “Bojkivska Vatra”, “Lemko Vatra”, “Kolomyika”, “Trembity Call to Synevyr”, “Hutsul bryndzja”, “Polissia Summer with Folklore”;

b) traditional festivals and holidays – take place traditionally and are authentic customs of a certain nation, for example, Sorochintsky Fair, “Seeing off Livestock Farmers to Mountain Valleys”, “Harvest Festivals”, celebrating Midsummer or Christmas cycle ritual actions;

c) ethnic cultural festivals – combine presentations of authentic and contemporary culture of the ethnic community or multiple communities (e.g., “A Country of Dreams” in Kyiv or festival of

national cultures “Bukova vit”” in Chernivtsi).

Arrangement of ethnic festival tourism of the region is affected by the following factors: natural, cultural and historical, ethno-demographic, socio-economic, environmental and biomedical, political, social and psychological, material and technological.

Analysis of geographic, economic and ecological factors indicates that the area of the Carpathian region has a unique chance to become a peculiar tourist ground, where through effective economic policies regional, state and international interests will mutually benefit.

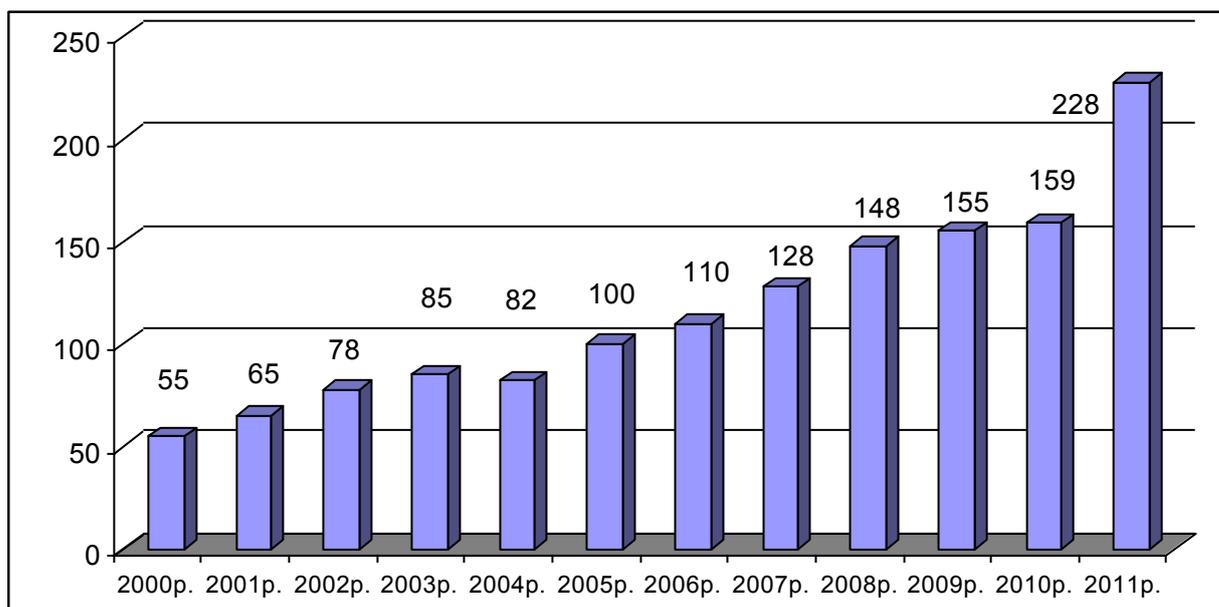


Fig. 1. Dynamics of growth of the number of ethnic festivals in the Ukrainian part of the Carpathian Euroregion from 2000 till 2011 (before the political crisis in the state and Ukrainian-Russian war).

Factors affecting the origin and development of ethnic festival tourism in the Ukrainian part of the Carpathian Euroregion:

- Growing interest of both Ukrainian and foreign tourists;
- Picturesque Carpathian region;
- Traditional celebrations of local communities and ethnic groups that can be transferred into a format of mass action;
- Local cuisine;

- Recognition of ethnic festival tourism as a priority direction of tourism by the regional and local authorities;

- Favorable national and local government policy;

In table 1 we described the structure of tourist product of Carpathian ethnic festivals which is important for socio-geographical analysis of their competitive advantages.

Tab. 1. Tourist product of ethnic festival tourism in the Ukrainian part of the Carpathian Euroregion and its components.

Components of tourist product	Peculiarities
Place	Centre of ethnographic area
Season	Usually in summer and autumn
Accommodation	Hotels (rarely); Guest households (rural green tourism or agro-tourism); With local residents; Campground.
Food	Restaurants (rarely); Local cuisine in guest households; Picnics.
Transfer	Is provided by the organizers (rarely); Arranged journeys to the destination; Journey on one's own.
Animation	At any taste and wallet; Depending on ethnic festival (various master-classes, musical and folk actions); Very intense program.
Attractions	Of natural and artificial origin; Locals; Local customs and traditions; Dishes; etc.
Excursions	Professional guides –(rarely); Locals

So, by 2013 every year over 280 various mass events that can be classified as “ethnic festival” had taken place in the Ukrainian part of the Carpathian Euroregion. However most ethnic festivals take place in the regional centres – Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk, Chernivtsi and Uzhhorod – 59 % of all ethnic festivals of the region. This tendency can be explained by many factors, namely: better infrastructure, adapted to the demands of mass tourist streams, wider range of possibilities to attract sponsors, higher popularity with tourists etc.

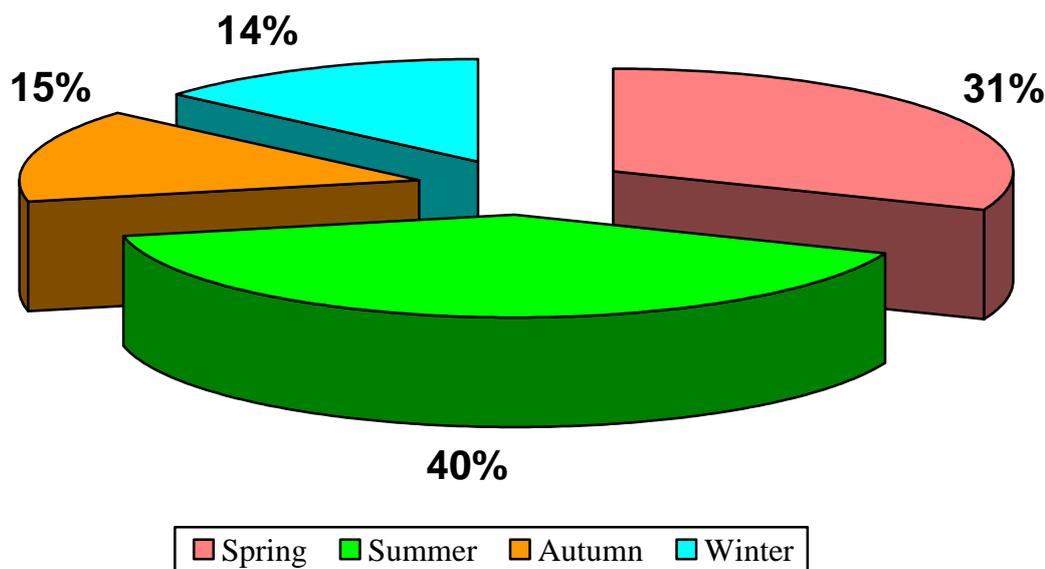


Fig. 2. Structure of Ethnic Festivals of the Region by Seasons.

Another trend revealed due to our research, is that a significant number of ethnic festivals falls on spring and summer, namely 31% and 40% respectively. Winter period is not in demand among the organizers of the various events, so only 14% fall on winter period. This can be explained by the fact that ethnic festival is mostly an open-air event and to organize it at a temperature lower than -10 – -20 ° C when it is snowing is not advisable.

Ethnic festival duration varies from one day to one month (for example “Summer in the Market” in Lviv lasts for a month). But the most popular are “day-off events” – that is, for two or three days. 41% of all ethnic festivals in the region correspond to these time characteristics. It happens because just such a term attracts most tourists. If organizers allocate less time for an ethnic festival, tourists from afar are not eager to go there, and if more, they are unable to participate in all its activities because they are busy at work.

Geography of ethnic festival tourism in the Ukrainian part of the Carpathian Euroregion, despite unfavorable situation in recent years, is constantly diversifying. Since 2000, about a hundred of new popular ethnic festival tourist destinations have come into being in the region.

The main centers of traditional Ukrainian culture include: Kolomiya, Kosiv, Rachiv (Hutsul handicrafts and folk art), Kosmach (Easter eggs painting), Sheshory, Kolomiya (artistic weaving) Izky (basket weaving), Kolomyia (decorative painting), Pistyn' (pottery) and others. In some destinations ethnic tourists can acquaint themselves with the rituals, customs, folk architecture and agricultural devices of other ethnics of Ukraine: Slovaks, Hungarians, Romanians, Czechs (Transcarpathia), Moldavians (Bukovina), Poles (Lviv Region).

The most famous and mass ethnic festivals in the Carpathians are: Worldwide Boiko Festyny "From Clean Sources" (Turka), "Bojkivska Vatra" (Dolyna), "Bojkivska Drohobychina" (Nahuyevychi), "Carpathia" (Lviv and Truskavets), "Easter in Kosmach" (Kosmach), "I like the Carpathians" (Slavske), "Bells of Lemkivshchina" (Monastyrok), "Pidkamin'" (Pidkamin'), "Lviv – Capital of Handicrafts" and "Bells of Pokrova" (Lviv), "Carpathian Fair" (Ivano-Frankivsk), international Hutsul festivals of 1991-2012 and others.

Ethnic festivals of national cultures also enjoy popularity: festival of Slovak folk song and dance (Serednye), festival of ethnic music "Taistra Chuhaistra" (Lviv), festival of Romanian folk art (Bila Tserkva), Ukrainian-Slovaks-Czech folklore festival "Kolochavske Echo of Terebovlya Valley" (Kolochava), festival of national cultures "Bukova vit'" (Chernivtsi), festival of world cultures "Etnovyr" (Lviv), minority cultures festival "Melodies of Salt Lakes" (vil. Solotvyno) and others.

Festivals-holidays (action) dedicated to traditional religious and ritual events of the Ukrainian calendar are distinguished as objects of ethnic tourism pilgrimage: "Easter in Kosmach"; "Oh, Let the Earth Rejoice", "Great Kolyada", "Christmas Star Flash", "Festival of Verтеps", "Great Hayivka"; "Saint Nicholas Presents a Holiday" and others.

Gastronomic festivals give rise to increased interest of tourists: the main "highlight" of which is presenting national cuisine and tasting certain dishes, drinks. Among them: "Borshch'yiv" (Borshchiv), festival of potato pancakes (Korosten), coffee festival (Lviv), "Honey Festival" (in more than two dozen villages and towns of Ukraine), holiday of "Bojko Honey" (Dolyna), tea

festival (Zolochiv), “Hutsulska Brynza” (Rahiv), “Verhovynske Salo” (Mizhhiria), “Hutsulska Turnip” (Lazenschyna), “Dough-nut Holiday” (Lviv), “Berlybansky Banosh” (Kostylyvtsi), “Chervene Wine” (Mukachevo), wine festival (Berehovo), chocolate festival (Lviv) and others.

Festivals of historical reconstruction reproducing (by the concept of “living history”) certain historic events and periods, organically combining historical reconstruction of ethno-cultural activities and sporting events are worth attracting attention of noteworthy supporters of local history. Among the most popular with tourists are the festivals of medieval culture “Tu Stan” (Urych); “Ancient Lviv” (Lviv) and others.

Vocational and craft ethnic festivals are of special interest to ethnic tourists: international festival of straw art “Snip” (Lutsk); wine-makers event-festival “Chervene Wine” (Uzhhorod), beekeepers' holiday “Boiko Honey Feast” (Drohobych); bakers' holiday: Bread Holiday (Lviv); brewers festival “Lviv Beer” (Lviv); hutnyk international symposium “Lviv – the Hutnyk Capital”; shepherd's holiday “Seeing Off to the Mountain Valley”, “Mountain Valley Summer” (Rakhiv district, Verkhovyna district); international festival of blacksmiths “Castle Gate” (Lviv); festival of blacksmiths “Hamor” (Lysycheve, Transcarpathia); festival-congress of Easter egg painters (Kosmach, Kolomyja district); festival of fishermen (Kalne, Mukachevo district); logger's holiday (Synevir NP, Transcarpathia) and others.

CONCLUSION

The introduction of a number of new ethnic festivals in small tourist-ethnographic centers of the Carpathian region of Ukraine will contribute to the revival of tourism and to overcoming social and economic problems of the region, deepening the awareness of this region and its ethnic history.

A balanced regional cultural policy considering specific territorial and geopolitical advantages of each region is a pre- condition of Ukraine's integration into the European community. The analysis of geographic, economic and ecological factors indicates that the area of the Ukrainian part of the Carpathian Euroregion has a unique chance to become a peculiar tourist ground, where through effective economic policies regional, state and international interests of our state can be

beneficially combined.

The festival movement changes the country from the inside by stimulating internal tourism and giving way to young talents. For creative individuals (musicians, folk artists, amateur folklore groups, etc.) it is the only way to introduce themselves to the public, and almost the only way to show them their art. Young people aged 18-25 are the most promising segment of ethnic festival tourism, as this segment prefers cheap travel with not very high level of comfort and active leisure time. This segment of potential customers makes about 16% of the total population of the region. By the results of our survey, this category accounts for 84% of the guests sample group who were interviewed in 2010-2012 and who came to summer ethnic festivals in the Ukrainian part of the Carpathian Euroregion. According to our survey, we can follow the trend: 8% of respondents visit 3-5 festivals a year, 24% visit less than 3 events, and more than 10 festivals was visited by only 8% of respondents.

Ethnic festival is a socio-geographic phenomenon that is an indicator of a sustainable development of local communities. And the more they will be, the better. It is important that each of these events should find its genre niche and should be comfortable, attractive for both participants and guests. While planning future actions of event tourism effective festival management should be based on natural and ethno-cultural diversity of the Ukrainian part of the Carpathian Euroregion. They will promote interest in local culture and encourage the promotion of cultural and ethnographic potential of the territory.

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