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Tourism and Recreation Potential: Assessment and Role in Increasing the Competitiveness of Territories

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ABSTRACT

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The purpose of the study is to provide theoretical and methodological justification for approaches to assessing the tourism and recreational potential of territories and to determine their role in ensuring the competitiveness of territories and regional development. The main components of the tourism and recreational potential of territories have been identified. A review analysis of the main methods for measuring the tourism and recreational potential of territories has been carried out. Strategic vectors for the development of the tourism and recreational potential of territories have been proposed, which are based on infrastructure development, development and promotion of tourism products, human potential development, nature protection, the pursuit of sustainable development, inter-sectoral cooperation, and analytical and statistical support for the tourism and recreation sector. Conceptual approaches to assessing the tourism and recreational potential of territories have been improved by systematizing their structural components and substantiating their role in forming the competitive advantages of regions. Strategic vectors for the development of the tourist and recreational potential of territories are proposed. The emphasis is on the need to combine and comprehensively apply approaches to the assessment and management of the development of the tourist and recreational sphere as components of territorial competitiveness and regional socio-economic development. The practical value of the study lies in the possibility of using its results to develop and adjust regional development strategies, taking into account the existing tourist and recreational potential and its impact on the competitiveness of territories or the development of programs for the sustainable development of the tourist sector at the national or regional levels. The results of the study can also be the basis for the formation of effective management decisions in the field of spatial planning and the development of tourism infrastructure, and can be used when assessing the level of development of the tourist and recreational potential of territories or monitoring the dynamics of its changes, which will also contribute to achieving a multiplier effect of territorial development.



KEYWORDS

tourism, tourism and recreation potential, recreation, competitiveness of territories, tourism infrastructure, development strategy, natural and recreational resources, tourism resources, regional development.



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Туристично-рекреаційний потенціал: оцінка та роль в підвищенні конкурентоспроможності територій

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СТАТТЯ	АНОТАЦІЯ
Дослідницька DOI: 10.70651/3083-6018/2026.1.05 Отримана: 26.11.2025 р. Прийнята: 29.12.2025 р. Опублікована: 10.01.2026 р. Авторське право © 2026 автора  Цей твір ліцензовано на умовах Ліцензії Creative Commons «Із Зазначенням Авторства – Некомерційна 4.0 Міжнародна» (CC BY-NC 4.0).	Метою дослідження є теоретико-методологічне обґрунтування підходів до оцінювання туристично-рекреаційного потенціалу територій та визначення його ролі у забезпеченні конкурентоспроможності територій й регіональному розвитку. Ідентифіковано основні компоненти туристично-рекреаційного потенціалу територій. Здійснено оглядовий аналіз основних методик вимірювання туристично-рекреаційного потенціалу територій. Запропоновано стратегічні вектори розвитку туристично-рекреаційного потенціалу територій, які базуються на інфраструктурному розвитку, розробці та просуванні туристичних продуктів, розвитку людського потенціалу, охороні природи, прагненні до сталого розвитку, міжсекторальній співпраці та аналітичному й статистичному забезпеченні сфери туризму та рекреації. Удосконалено концептуальні підходи до оцінювання туристично-рекреаційного потенціалу територій шляхом систематизації його структурних компонентів та обґрунтування їхньої ролі у формуванні конкурентних переваг регіонів. Запропоновано стратегічні вектори розвитку туристично-рекреаційного потенціалу територій. Акцентовано на необхідності поєднання та комплексного застосування підходів до оцінки та управління розвитком туристично-рекреаційної сфери як компоненти територіальної конкурентоспроможності та регіонального соціально-економічного розвитку. Практична цінність дослідження полягає в можливості використання його результатів для розробки й коригування регіональних стратегій розвитку з урахуванням наявного туристично-рекреаційного потенціалу та його впливу на конкурентоспроможність територій або розробки програм сталого розвитку туристичної сфери на національному або регіональному рівнях. Результати дослідження також можуть бути базисом для формування ефективних управлінських рішень у сфері просторового планування й розвитку туристичної інфраструктури, використовуватись при оцінюванні рівня розвитку туристично-рекреаційного потенціалу територій або моніторингу динаміки його змін, що також сприятиме досягненню мультиплікативного ефекту територіального розвитку.



КЛЮЧОВІ СЛОВА

туризм, туристично-рекреаційний потенціал, рекреація, конкурентоспроможність територій, туристична інфраструктура, стратегія розвитку, природно-рекреаційні ресурси, туристичні ресурси, регіональний розвиток.

1. Introduction

Tourist and recreational potential are important factors in increasing the competitiveness of territories, as it provides socio-economic development, intensify entrepreneurial activity, contribute to the creation of new jobs and attract investments. The development of tourism stimulates the modernization of infrastructure, in particular transport, hotel and restaurant and information and communication, which has a positive impact on the quality of life of the population. Thanks to its unique natural, historical, cultural and recreational resources, the territory forms its own tourist brand and increases its attractiveness for both domestic and external consumers. Tourism also contributes to the preservation of cultural heritage, the development of creative industries and the provision of sustainable local development. Thus, the active use of tourist and recreational potential not only determines economic growth, but also forms long-term competitive advantages of territories in the interregional and global environment.

2. Literature Review

Tourist and recreational potential are the object of attention of a significant number of researchers and scientists.

The study of the authors [16] considers the main theoretical aspects of managing the development of the recreational and tourist potential of the regions of Ukraine. The authors' team [23] investigated the potential of tourist and recreational clusters in the European space, and in the work [33], attention is paid to the issues of historical prerequisites for the formation of the tourist and recreational sector of Ukraine and its development in the era of sustainable multimodal mobility.

The current state of the tourism industry in Ukraine is discussed in the source [1], and the scientist L. Bondarenko [2] pays attention to the international experience in the development of tourist regions. The authors [35] systematize the tools for realizing the potential for the development of the tourist complex at the regional level, and in the study [5] outline trends, problems and opportunities for the development of domestic Ukrainian tourism during the war period. Researcher M. S. Gedin [4] paid attention to the methodological foundations of assessing the tourist potential of Ukraine in the context of European integration, and the authors [7] investigated the issues of managing the tourist potential of regions on the basis of the formation of tourist destinations. Researcher Y. Honcharenko [8] considered the factors of development of the national tourism industry in the context of overcoming the consequences of the pandemic, and H. V. Horin [9] proposed a systematization of methodological approaches to determining the essence of the concept of "recreational and tourist potential of the region".

Methodological approaches to the study of tourist and recreational potential are outlined in the works [3; 15]. In particular, the authors [3] carried out an ABC-XYZ-analysis of the regions of Ukraine by profitability/level of risk of the tourism industry, and M. V. Kyfor [15] analyzed the seasonality and variability of tourist flows on the example of the western regions of Ukraine.

The study [13] raises the problems of tourism development in the era of political and economic reforms and the war in Ukraine. Researcher O. P. Korotun [12] considers the domestic tourism product as a direction for the development of the region's tourism potential, and the authors [14] analyze the potential of Ukraine in the context of international tourism. Researcher H. V. Mashika [17] chose the tourist and economic potential of the Carpathian region as the focus of attention. Scientist H. I. Mykhailichenko [21] raises the topic of assessment and innovative development of tourism potential. The team of authors [22] investigates the problems of strategies for the development of the tourism business in Ukraine in the context of geopolitical instability, and the authors [22] analyze the challenges and opportunities of the Ukrainian tourism market.

The assessment of the tourist and recreational potential of the region is comprehensively outlined in the work [6], and the researcher S. Pavliuk [24] examines the state of development of the tourism industry in the conditions of war and the prospects for recovery. The authors I. M. Pysarevskyi and K. K. Meleshko [26] focus on the tourist and recreational potential as an element of the competitiveness of territories.

The assessment of the development of national tourism from the point of view of sustainability and inclusiveness is devoted to the research of the authors' team [25], and methodological and applied aspects of the recreational and tourist potential of multifunctional territories are comprehensively considered in the monograph [11]. Researchers V. Samoday and Zh. Levkovska [27] outlined the characteristic features of the tourist potential of Ukraine.

Researchers M. I. Senkiv and V. S. Tserklevych [28] analyze the prerequisites for the development of accessible tourism for all in the European Union, and scientist I. V. Skubiy [31] investigates the tourist potential of places of historical memory in Ukraine. The authors [32] outline the post-crisis aspects of the development and state regulation of the tourism potential of Ukraine.

The collective monograph [18] raises the problems of military challenges, global changes and innovative solutions in the tourism and recreational sphere in Ukraine. Scientist D. Tyurina [34] raises the problems of the functioning of the tourism market in Ukraine in today's conditions, and the representative of the tour operator Join UP! I. Mosulezna [20], from the position of a practitioner, talks about travel planning and the current state of the industry from the point of view of the tourism business.

A team of researchers [10] proposes strategies for economic adaptation of the tourist and recreational sphere of Ukraine to the international tourism market. Scientist T. V. Shelemetieva [29] studies the tourist and recreational potential as the basis for tourism development, and the authors [30] analyze the essence and factors influencing the tourist and recreational potential of the region. Prospects of rural "green" tourism as a catalyst for the development of the local economy. The research of the authors' team is devoted [31].

3. Problem Statement

The purpose of the study is to theoretically and methodologically substantiate approaches to assessing the tourist and recreational potential of territories and determining its role in ensuring the competitiveness of territories and regional development.

4. Methods and Materials

The research methodology is based on a systematic approach to the analysis of the tourist and recreational potential of territories, which involves a combination of theoretical and methodological review, structural and functional analysis and generalization of strategic directions of development. The study uses methods of comparative analysis, logical generalization and typology, which made it possible to identify the main components of tourist and recreational potential. To analyze the available methods of capacity assessment, the method of critical review of scientific sources and practical recommendations was applied. The proposed strategic vectors of development are based on the integration of the results of content analysis, practical experience of individual territories and the principles of sustainable development. Elements of SWOT analysis are also used to identify strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats in the development of the tourism and recreational sphere.

5. Results and Discussion

Tourist and recreational potential (TRP) are a set of natural, cultural, historical, socio-economic and infrastructural resources that can be used for the development of tourism and recreation. Its comprehensive assessment allows you to identify the competitive advantages of the territory, form strategic directions of its socio-economic growth and increase the attractiveness for investors and tourists. In modern conditions, the effective use of TRP contributes to the diversification of the regional economy, the development of small and medium-sized businesses, the creation of new jobs and the strengthening of social cohesion.

Researcher D. Tyurina [34], considering the current state and problems of the tourism market in Ukraine, notes that tourism, acting as one of the most profitable types of business in the world, is one of the most important sources of budget formation. leads to the harmonization of relations between different countries and peoples, which plays an important role in overcoming social problems [34].

Scientist L. Bondarenko [2] notes that tourism is based on the mutual use of the potential of the territory and production factors of various industries, generating an interesting product based on a combination of goods, services and impressions. It is necessary to agree with her position that “the international development of tourist regions is ensured primarily by the application of the concept of sustainable tourism development, which is based on the rational use of natural resources, their renewability and, thanks to this, the possibility of long-term use, including by subsequent generations. Regulation and support from the state also play an important role, because it is the state that can most rationally, for the benefit of citizens, choose and support the directions of tourism development, direct the necessary financial resources” [2].

The authors of the work [18] note that “the tourism and recreational sector of Ukraine is facing serious challenges, but they open up new opportunities for transformation and development. It is important to adapt to modern conditions through the introduction of innovative approaches, active digitalization, the development of domestic tourism and the sustainable use of ecological, historical and cultural resources”. At the same time, “Ukraine’s integration into the global processes of tourism development should take place through the introduction of modern trends that meet international standards of digital technologies and innovative approaches to the management and growth of tourism and recreational products” [18].

Considering the tourist and recreational potential from the standpoint of influencing the competitiveness of the territory, we can fully agree with the opinion of scientists [26] that “increasing the level of competitiveness of territories is determined primarily by the capabilities of the local economy and the ability of economic and social entities to form and use certain competitive advantages. The disclosure of the theoretical and methodological basis of the tourist and recreational potential, its functions and role in society requires a thorough analysis and reference to historical origins. The basis for the development of tourist and recreational functions, undoubtedly, is an element that attracts interest – this is the tourist potential, which can be characterized as the most important determining factor in the development of tourism and increasing the competitiveness of territories” [26].

As noted by T. Shelemetieva [29], the tourist and recreational potential is a system of closely interrelated natural and material resources, which in interaction can create certain products or services. The level of this potential increases with the increase of each individual resource. The use of tourist and recreational resources – such as natural, medical and health, cultural, historical and entertainment objects – contributes to the development of tourist and recreational activities. strengthens the potential of both the state as a whole and individual region, due to the receipt of funds from the provision of tourist, health and recreational services to internal and external consumers, and also creates conditions for the effective functioning of capital and its recovery [29].

The team of authors [30] proposes to interpret the tourist potential as the ability of a destination to form and implement a certain amount of tourist services and material goods that will be in demand and meet the needs of tourists and recreationists. Collateral generates a tourist product, acting in the market as a supply party. At the same time, it is advisable to distinguish the management system at the level of destination into strategic and operational components: in the subsystem of strategic destination management, the tourist potential of the region acts as a target parameter, and in the subsystem of operational management, the volume of the tourist product. The level of tourist potential in this case can be determined by four factors: a set of elements of supply from the destination; current demand for tourist services of the destination; competitive environment and expected trends in tourism development [30].

Researcher M. S. Gedin [4] emphasizes that “the use of natural, medical, health, cultural, historical and other resources can increase the potential of the region due to the receipt of funds from tourist, health and recreational services for consumers. In fact, each region, based on the analysis of tourist resources, creates a tourist potential corresponding to the ability of tourist entities to use the tourist resources of the region. The tourist potential contributes to the attractiveness of the territory for tourists, and the regions contribute to the promising tourist development”. We can also agree with his position that “the assessment of tourism potential is an important prerequisite for planning the tourism industry on a national and regional scale, optimizing the spatial and economic organization of territorial tourist and recreational complexes. Without objective assessment data, it is difficult to attract investors to the development of tourism”. At the same time, according to the researcher, “the main reasons for Ukraine’s significant lagging behind in terms of the contribution of the tourism and recreational sphere

to GDP, both from the leading countries in the tourism market and from countries close to our country in terms of development, are the negative impact of socio-political, financial and economic instability, as well as a rather low actual level of priority of the tourism and recreational sphere for the government and local governments in the process of integrated development national and regional economic systems" [4].

So, summing up the above scientific views, it can be noted that the tourist and recreational potential of the territory is a set of natural, cultural, historical, socio-economic and infrastructural resources that can be used for the organization of tourism and recreation. Its components can be roughly divided into several main groups (Fig. 1).

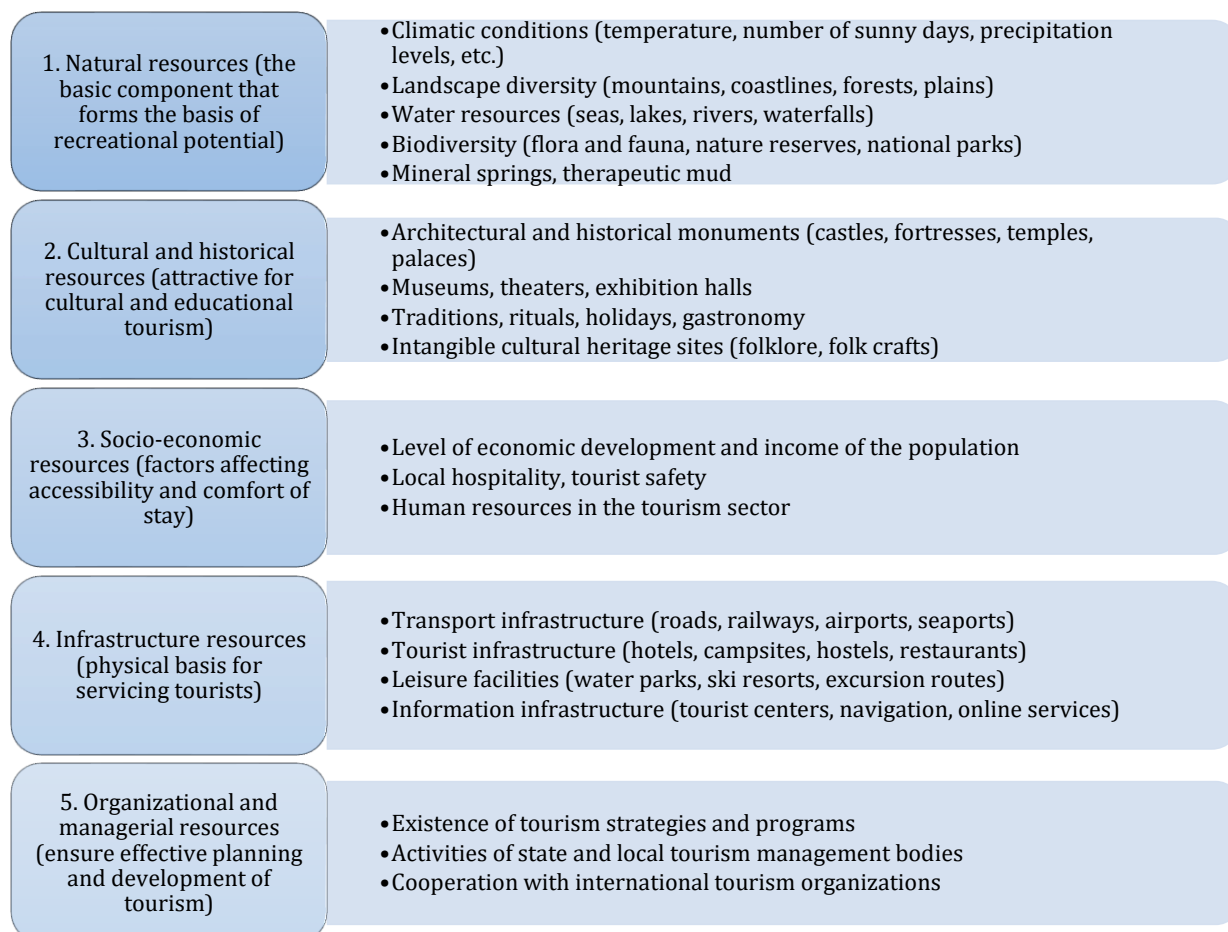


Figure 1. The main components of the tourist and recreational potential of the territories

Source: Developed by the author.

The components of tourist and recreational potential are closely interrelated. Their balanced development creates conditions for the formation of a competitive tourist product and an attractive tourist image of the territory.

From the position of H. I. Mykhailichenko, "tourism potential is both a resource and a reserve of innovative growth with a high level of popularity and accessibility" [21]. At the same time, "a sustainable product of destinations can be implemented as an innovative one under the conditions of a combination of events of an event nature and excellent tourism infrastructure; The tourist potential of different countries has its own price, which can be manipulated, increasing the value and significance of the objects visited, the level of service, and the popularity of the tourist brand" [21].

Considering the tourist and recreational potential of Ukraine, the researchers [27] emphasize that "the tourist potential of Ukraine is quite attractive, with a resort area offering many places for recreation and sanatorium complexes throughout the year, which attracts tourists. The country has ideal climatic and natural conditions, as well as a rich historical heritage with monasteries, fortresses, historic cities and museums, which attracts consumers of the tourism industry. The analysis of the tourist and recreational potential of Ukraine indicates the availability of various resources and a favorable geopolitical position for the development of the tourism sector" [27].

The authors [22] note that Ukraine has significant potential for the growth of the tourism market, as there is a large area for creating the necessary infrastructure and significant consumer demand from the population. However, the situation is uncertain and it is difficult to predict what the future holds for the market.

Researcher Y. Honcharenko [8] also notes that “objectively, Ukraine is a state with significant tourism potential and has all the prerequisites for the intensive development of tourist flows, as a result of which it can occupy an important place in the international tourism market, provided that the negative factors influencing the functioning of the industry are overcome. However, the development of the tourism industry depends on a complex of favorable and inhibiting factors” [8]. At the same time, personal and behavioral factors play a key role in the tourism industry, since it is the motivation of the trip, which meets the expectations of the tourist, that determines their choice. With the growth of financial opportunities, the influence of psychological motives on the choice of destination and format of recreation increases. Since the idea of the quality of a tourist product is formed during and after a trip, it cannot be the main incentive for its beginning. However, based on experience, the tourist forms an idea of the desired vacation, which affects their further decisions. Thus, psychological factors, along with financial capabilities and the availability of free time, significantly affect the choice of a tourist product and the development of the tourism industry as a whole [8].

The influence of personal and behavioral factors is also confirmed in the work [10], where, considering the specifics of the domestic recreational infrastructure and the mentality of our recreational demand, the authors conclude that in Ukraine and in neighboring countries, the bulk are recreationists and only a small part are tourists who move in space for pleasure and knowledge.

As noted by the authors of the work [6], the tourist and recreational potential of the region covers a set of interrelated parts, among which there are natural resources, historical, cultural and infrastructural components. Although each of them functions relatively independently, together they form a single, interdependent system that underlies tourist and recreational activities. This potential serves as a foundation for the development of tourism and recreation, but it is not active in itself and must be purposefully engaged in order to achieve the desired social and economic results. It is possible to assess both the general level of tourist and recreational potential and its individual elements. In this context, potential can be measured as an interval estimate (for example, annual volume) or as an aggregate indicator over a period corresponding to the average cycle of its recovery. For the analysis and evaluation of individual components, it is advisable to use expert methods, a point system, factor analysis and rating comparisons [6].

The authors [33] analyze the history of the formation of the tourism and recreation sector of Ukraine in the context of world trends using such scientific methods as literary, historical, chronological, diachronic (the method of division into periods), a systematic approach, inventory and content analysis, which allowed them to comprehensively investigate and highlight the main historical stages of tourism and recreation development. They note that the formation of tourism and recreation in different geographical regions of Ukraine had certain features, substantiate the historical aspects of the development of the tourism and recreation sector as a factor of European integration of Ukraine, and also determine the current directions of development of the tourism and recreation sector in the context of European integration processes in Ukraine [33].

The authors [23], considering the peculiarities of the formation of the regional potential of tourist and recreational clusters of the European Union Member States, they propose a methodological paradigm for the formation of the potential of tourist and recreational clusters and a methodology for its assessment, based on the taxonomy of tools and components that significantly expand the network of the tourism and recreational industry, and use methods of hierarchical classification [23].

Therefore, based on the analysis of the positions of scientists, the tourism potential of Ukraine can be measured in several key areas, including the assessment of available resources, infrastructure and economic indicators. These indicators allow you to assess both the current state and the prospects for the development of the tourism industry in the country. It is important to take into account that the assessment of tourist potential is a complex process that requires a combination of various methods and indicators, the basis of which is reflected in Fig. 2. The techniques shown in Fig. 2 are usually applied comprehensively, complementing each other, which provides a more accurate and informed assessment of the potential. Resource (component) analysis involves the identification, description and classification of available natural, cultural, historical and socio-economic resources of the territory that

can be used in tourism and recreation. Integral assessment is based on the use of point or index scales, where each type of resource or infrastructure is evaluated according to certain criteria, after which a consolidated indicator of tourist potential is calculated.

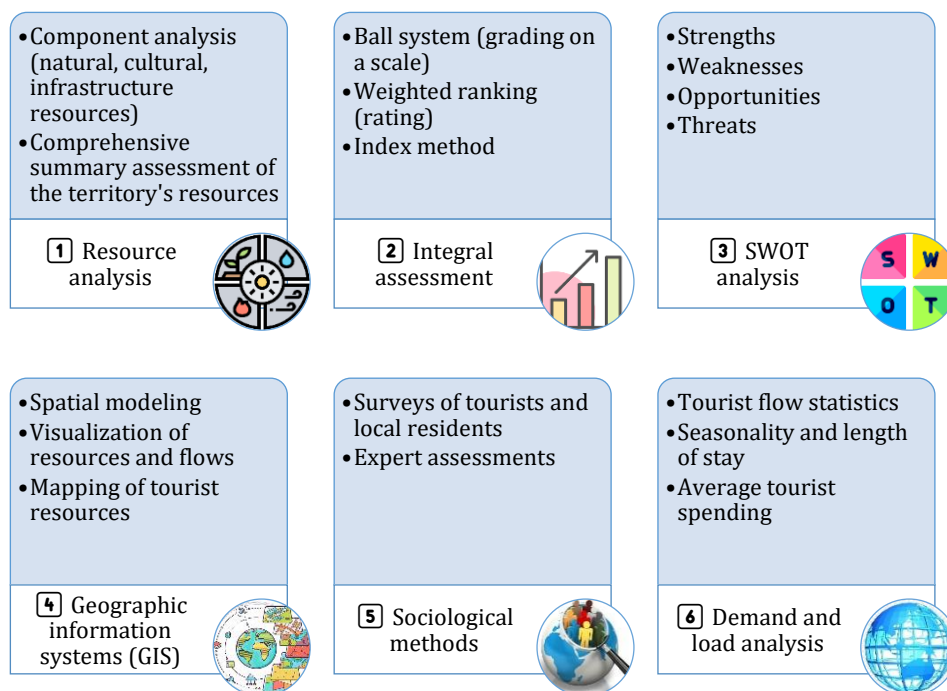


Figure 2. Basic methods for measuring the tourist and recreational potential of territories

Source: Developed by the author.

SWOT analysis allows you to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the territory, as well as opportunities and threats for tourism development, which allows you to make informed strategic decisions. Geographic information methods (GIS) use cartographic data and spatial analysis to visualize resources, tourist routes, infrastructure, and spatial relationships. Sociological methods include surveys of tourists, residents and experts in order to find out the level of satisfaction, needs, expectations and perception of the territory as a tourist product. The analysis of demand and load is based on statistical data on the number of tourists, length of stay, seasonality, cost structure and allows you to assess the actual use of the territory's potential.

In the context of seasonality, it is also necessary to note the study of M. V. Kifor [15], who notes that "seasonality is a phenomenon characteristic of most regions of the country. This can affect the management of human resources in tourism, the profitability of the tourism economy, and the supply and demand of services. Hence, the need to minimize seasonality in tourism, for example, through new tourist investments and the development of resort tourism. The unevenness of the tourist flow is especially pronounced in the western regions of Ukraine, where the number of tourists in summer is 3–4 times higher than in winter (except for ski resorts), and the number of overnight stays is even 5–7 times higher" [15].

The assessment of the tourist and recreational potential of territories can be expanded with the help of PEST analysis, ABC analysis and XYZ analysis, since these methods are often used in economic and strategic planning, so they have their justified application in tourism. Methodologically interesting in this regard is the work of the authors [3], where the scientists propose to group the regions of Ukraine by profitability (income from the provision of tourist services) using ABC analysis, and by the level of risk of the tourism industry – XYZ-analysis. According to the scientists, in the regional context, it is Ivano-Frankivsk, Lviv, and Odesa regions that are the regions with the highest values of income from the provision of tourist services and an average level of risk, which is acceptable for forecasting and drawing up strategic or operational plans for the development of the tourism industry of these regions [3].

In combination, these methods allow you to evaluate not only resources, but also the efficiency of their use, environmental conditions and the behavior of tourists over time, which makes the analysis of the potential of the territory as holistic as possible.

Researchers T. Krasnodied and T. Popova [14] conclude that “quantitative indicators of tourism activity in the country indicate the multidirectionality of trends in the field of tourism and, accordingly, the presence of certain problematic aspects. For example, a low interest of a foreign tourist in traveling to Ukraine or an average level of development of tourist infrastructure. Under such conditions, the competitiveness of Ukrainian tourist destinations as objects of the world market of tourist services is doubtful, and the main types of tourism will remain outbound and domestic. At the same time, foreign trade in the main tourist services will have an import-dependent vector” [14].

The analysis of trends in the development of domestic tourism in Ukraine, starting from 2023, indicates an increase in interest in travel to the Carpathian region and to the Black Sea resorts. The Carpathians, unlike the coastal areas, practically did not suffer destruction as a result of hostilities, which made it possible to maintain the tourist infrastructure of the region in a relatively stable state. Due to a decrease in the solvency of the population. A significant part of potential tourists, in particular residents of the central and eastern regions of the country, due to the deterioration of the economic situation and changes in consumer behavior patterns, are not able to financially provide a good rest in mountainous areas, especially during peak load periods, when prices for tourist services can double compared to the off-season. At the same time, the summer tourist season of 2024 in the city of Odesa showed quite high activity rates: most hotels were filled, and the demand for recreation remained consistently high, despite the existing security threats. This indicates the adaptability and resilience of the tourist market of the southern region to the conditions of the crisis period [1].

Considering the tourist and recreational potential of the Carpathian region, researcher H. V. Mashika [17] notes that the strategic goal of tourism development in the Carpathian region is to create a national tourist product competitive in the domestic and world markets, expand domestic and increase the volume of inbound tourism, ensure on this basis the integrated development of resort areas and tourist centers, taking into account socio-economic interests population, preservation and restoration of natural territories and historical and cultural heritage. At the same time, the model of the impact of tourism on the socio-economic development of the Carpathian region is formed based on such elements as an increase in tourist flows, an increase in the income of hotel and restaurant enterprises and tourist enterprises, an increase in the income of the population, a decrease in the level of poverty and an improvement in social living conditions, an increase in the need for labor and a decrease in unemployment, which in turn will lead to an increase in tax revenues, an increase in the investment attractiveness of the region, improvement of transport infrastructure and GRP growth [17].

Thus, researchers [18] note that in the context of the decentralization reform, rural “green” (ecological) tourism is considered a promising direction for the development of the local economy with high recreational and tourist potential. At the same time, the nature reserve fund, in particular, regional landscape parks and other protected areas, can serve as a basis for the sustainable functioning of this type of tourism. This necessitates improving the infrastructure of such territories, increasing the role of financial incentive mechanisms, as well as increasing the importance of strategic planning, in particular through the updating of local tourism strategies [18].

At the same time, there are several barriers to the effective use of recreational and tourism potential, including insufficient infrastructure, weak integration of tourism into regional policy, and limited financial and human resources. Therefore, it is important to introduce an integrated approach to the planning and implementation of tourism strategies based on the principles of sustainable development, partnership between the state, business and community, as well as active marketing of tourist areas.

According to D. Azovskyi, “traumatized infrastructure, instability in demand and personnel shortage - all this negatively affects the speed of recovery. In addition, a significant part of Ukrainians who were forced to leave due to the war have not yet returned to the country, which also complicates the development of domestic tourism” [1].

The need to identify strategic vectors for the development of tourist and recreational potential of territories is due to the need for purposeful, effective and long-term management of resources, taking into account the specifics of each region. This approach allows us to form a coherent vision of spatial development that integrates the economic, social, environmental and cultural aspects of tourism. Identifying priority areas makes it possible to concentrate efforts and resources on the most promising segments that have the potential to become growth drivers – for example, rural green tourism, cultural and educational routes, or medical tourism.

For example, rural tourism is becoming more and more widespread as a type of economic activity, mainly for households located in ecologically clean areas. However, Ukraine is one of the outsiders in terms of tourism due to several recent events, which create a not very attractive image of the country, imperfection of legislation, lack of effective actions of the authorities and insufficient desire to invest in the development of tourism. And proper funds are not invested in their restoration. This situation threatens the ecosystem, the preservation of ethno-cultural values and the development of tourism potential. At the same time, the importance of environmental protection and the creation of ecologically clean places for tourism are becoming more important in developed countries. There is no government support for ecologically clean tourism in Ukraine [25].

Also, clearly defined strategic vectors of development can be the basis for the formation of regional policies for stimulating tourism, developing support programs, attracting investments and partnerships between government agencies, business and community. Without a clear strategic orientation, the development of tourist and recreational potential can be fragmented, ineffective and accompanied by risks of overloading territories, loss of authenticity, or irrational use of resources. Thus, strategic planning is a key tool for the formation of a competitive, balanced and sustainable tourism environment at the regional level. The main strategic vectors of development of the tourist and recreational potential of territories are proposed in Fig. 3.

Scientists [35] emphasize that “strategic directions of development of the domestic tourist complex should first of all take into account those competitive advantages that already today allow the formation of economic specialization in accordance with the available natural resources, human resources, institutional and organizational potential. Therefore, priority should be given to the further development of tourism and recreation, which provide a significant level of employment, as well as contribute to increasing revenues to the budgets of various levels and building up entrepreneurial potential at the local level” [35].

As the authors note [7], “today the priority direction of administration of tourist destinations that are being formed in Ukraine is the introduction of integrated management. This approach can combine all components into a single integral system, which will contribute to the production and sale of high-quality tourist services”. At the same time, according to the authors, the integrated management of tourist destinations should be aimed at solving such tasks as preserving and increasing the existing tourist potential of a particular region, providing state and local authorities with conditions for organizing tourist services, and organizing and maintaining political and economic ties between tourist entities involved in the process of serving tourists [7].

The authors N. Habchak and S. Habchak [5] also note that domestic tourism has undergone certain changes, in particular, there is a narrowing of the time frame for planning a trip by tourists, recreation by a small number of people, the popularity of sanatorium tours, and a summer weekend for two for a period of 3 days. At the same time, according to the authors, the recovery of the tourism industry of Ukraine is critically slow. However, at present, the development of urban tourism and specialized children’s recreation [5].

One of the key problems currently faced by tourism entities – in particular tour operators and entrepreneurs in the hospitality industry – is the rapid increase in the cost of services, which is largely due to the critical situation in the country’s energy sector. There has been a significant reduction in the number of professionally trained employees who are able to effectively perform tasks in the areas of service, hotel management, tour operator activities and administrative support. This creates serious personnel challenges for hoteliers, restaurateurs and travel companies [1].

However, as Iryna Mosulezna, managing director of the tour operator Join UP, notes, currently, “in terms of pricing policy, sometimes, for example, Turkey can be cheaper than Ukraine. After all, we have reduced seasonality, smaller volumes, and the cost of servicing a tourist to provide him with a vacation may be higher than in another country. But, let’s be honest, our hotels also use border crossing restrictions” [20]. “But our hospitality still lives in the present, without thinking a little ahead. That is, our hotels, unfortunately, do not offer an early booking system”, says the specialist [20].

Another problem that has become more acute in recent years is the barrier-free nature of Ukrainian tourism. Unfortunately, the domestic tourism industry is still far from barrier-free recreation. To make travel accessible to everyone without restrictions in Ukraine, active participation and cooperation of all stakeholders is required: the state and local communities, tour operators, travel agents, resorts, hotels, entertainment complexes, catering establishments and other related leisure

services, transport companies, etc. Real changes at the level of the industry, and not individual cases, can be achieved only in a bundle, when everyone at their own level and within their competencies will do everything necessary for this. According to industry practitioners, currently, “rooms for people with disabilities are available in large hotels. Small hotels, unfortunately, not everyone can afford the appropriate adaptation, but they do everything possible to improve the conditions, always warning about all the features. Some sanatoriums and hotels were partially repurposed as rehabilitation ones” [20].



Figure 3. Strategic vectors of development of the tourist and recreational potential of territories

Source: Developed by the author.

The authors [28] also raise the topic of accessible tourism and the creation of accessible tourism resources and draw attention to the role of universal design principles for accessible tourism for all. Accessible tourism for all means that any tourism product should be developed regardless of age, gender and ability, without additional costs for customers with disabilities and special access requirements. Applicable only to people with limited mobility and focusing on physical access to transport and buildings, as well as access to information, the concept of universal design emphasizes the creation of the same conditions that are convenient for all users. Accessible tourism for all forms a significant contribution to the achievement of most sustainable development goals. Among the prerequisites for

the development of accessible tourism for all in the European Union: current legislation and accessibility standards at the global, European and national levels, an aging population and an increase in the number of people with disabilities. In Ukraine, there is a problem of lack of standards for the accessibility of tourist facilities and services, so it is important to study the experience of the European Union and ensure adapted implementation to local requirements [28].

A team of researchers [25] in this direction proposed a new approach of “solidarity tourism” as a specific type of inclusive tourism, which is a process of cooperation between different participants in the tourism industry. Solidarity tourism means that rural households that are not fully involved in tourism services, as soon as they get the opportunity to intensify their activities in this area, focusing their service on people with special needs. In this case, it is achieved “double benefit” in an inclusive environment: on the one hand, employment and tourism income are provided in rural households as a continuation and diversification of agricultural activities, and on the other hand, the quality of tourism services is provided to persons with special needs. The inclusiveness of tourism services in Ukraine is more related to the inclusion of a wide range of rural households in the tourism sector than to the accessibility of such services for people with special needs and disabilities. The institutional sector of households has surpassed that of the non-financial corporation sector in providing temporary accommodation and food [25].

Researcher S. Pavliuk [24], predicting the development of the tourism sector in Ukraine, notes that tourism “has not only economic potential, but also social potential, helping in the processes of rehabilitation and psychological recovery. Investments in infrastructure development and the latest technologies, restoration of cultural and natural monuments, as well as the development of programs to support domestic tourism – all this will be an important step in attracting both Ukrainian and international tourists”. Therefore, it is worthy of attention to the development of active tourist destinations and the creation of new unique tourist products that will meet modern needs [24].

For national tourism, security, initiative, and the ability to adapt and study their own business in the context of new realities are now becoming key benchmarks. Ensuring the safety and comfort of tourists, as well as the ability to quickly respond to changes, allows travel companies not only to survive difficulties but also to build strategies for further growth in the face of geopolitical instability. Cooperation between the state, business and the public are important to form a recovery strategy and support for tourism, which can catalyze economic recovery and socio-cultural development in post-war conditions [36].

Summing up, it can be noted that the results obtained are correlated with the work of researchers [13], which also considers the trends in the progressive development of tourism in Ukraine due to the improvement of transport infrastructure, information and communication environment, and the choice of the European vector of development. However, the authors’ conclusion that it is soon advisable to constantly receive financial support from the state, to provide legal assistance to tourism entities, as well as in this sense, it is difficult to develop domestic and inbound tourism [13] in this sense.

It is also advisable to note the connection between the results of the study and the position expressed in the paper [10], which emphasizes that the main emphasis in the tourism policy of Ukraine has been and remains the orientation towards the recreationist. It is this circumstance that explains the weak development of domestic and foreign tourism, the lack of appropriate infrastructure and the unobtrusiveness of tourist services in our country, the dominance of flows from the near abroad [10].

An interesting approach to the problems of tourist and recreational potential is presented in the work [16], where the authors consider the main theoretical aspects of managing the development of the recreational and tourist potential of the regions of Ukraine in the context of modern challenges. Also, these authors draw attention to the need to study the tourist and recreational potential in the context of a systematic approach as a complex dynamic system and note the importance of state support, the use of administrative tools for the development of recreational and tourism potential based on taking into account the interests of local and regional organizations and institutions in the field of tourism, as well as the use of a cluster approach in the management of recreational and tourism potential. In this sense, the results obtained can be a logical addition to the above-mentioned work, since they summarize modern approaches to the assessment of tourist and recreational potential and form the main vectors that should be taken into account in the development of local strategies and will contribute to increasing the competitiveness of territories and regions.

6. Conclusions

Tourist and recreational potential are important factors in the formation of the competitiveness of territories, as it ensures the growth of economic activity, the development of entrepreneurship, the creation of new jobs and the attraction of investments. At the same time, the effective use of this potential requires its comprehensive and objective assessment, taking into account natural, historical, cultural, socio-economic and infrastructural components. Such an assessment is the basis for the development of purposeful strategies for the development of tourism and recreation, taking into account the specifics of the territory and its unique resources. The implementation of strategies allows you to form a positive image of the region, develop a tourist brand, modernize infrastructure and improve the quality of life of the population. As a result, this contributes to a long-term increase in the competitiveness of territories at the regional, national and international levels due to the rational use of tourist and recreational potential.

Special attention to the issue of using the national tourist and recreational potential in modern conditions requires attention to the issue of security, which remains a priority for tourists, especially foreign ones. The level of real and perceived risks directly affects the decision to visit certain regions. It is the provision of security that is the primary condition for restoring the trust of tourists and further development of the tourism sector. Especially important in this context is the implementation of measures to demine territories and clear them of explosive objects, which should be one of the priorities in the process of post-war restoration of tourist infrastructure.

At the same time, despite the existing difficulties, there are positive trends in the development of domestic tourism and the growth of the role of tourist and recreational potential in ensuring the competitiveness of certain territories. To ensure sustainable growth of the industry, a prerequisite is the active participation of the state in the process of infrastructure modernization, the implementation of programs to support entrepreneurship in the tourism sector, and the stimulation of investment activity. Such measures will contribute to the restoration of the competitiveness of Ukrainian tourism and the multiplier effect on related spheres of the socio-economic life of society.

Despite the complexity of the approach to the analysis of the tourist and recreational potential of territories, the study has a number of limitations that may affect the universality of the conclusions obtained. The overview nature of the analysis of methods for assessing tourist and recreational potential does not allow for a full-fledged empirical verification of the effectiveness of specific tools in different socio-economic and geographical (regional) contexts. Also, the strategic vectors for the development of tourism and recreational potential, although they cover key areas – infrastructure, human capital, sustainable development, intersectoral interaction – remain conceptual and require further detailing in specific regional cases, expert assessment of quantitative performance indicators and implementation mechanisms. A significant challenge at the moment is the limited availability of up-to-date statistical data in the field of tourism and recreation, which does not allow the full construction of dynamic development models and makes it impossible to fully forecast trends on a national scale. Thus, the outlined limitations create the basis for further in-depth research in the direction of regional modeling, empirical assessments and practical approbation of the proposed approaches.

Prospects for further research in the field of assessment and strategic development of the tourist and recreational potential of territories can be associated primarily with the need for in-depth empirical analysis at the level of individual regions or communities, taking into account their socio-economic, natural, geographical and cultural specifics. The development of adaptive models for assessing tourist and recreational potential, which would combine quantitative indicators (resource availability, tourist flows, investment attractiveness) with qualitative characteristics (image and branding of territories, local identity, tourist satisfaction), is also considered relevant. Further research should focus on the mechanisms for the implementation of strategic vectors of development, in particular, the development of models for sustainable management of tourist destinations, as well as on the study of the impact of external factors (consequences of war, climate change, global crises) on the transformation of tourist and recreational potential.

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