

ADVENTURE TOURISM IN UKRAINE: CURRENT TRENDS AND DIRECTIONS OF THE EUROPEAN EXPERIENCE IMPLEMENTATION



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Abstract. Annual increase of the number of those who prefer active adventure travels in Ukraine. Especially high part of combined excursion trips, where sightseeing excursions, or stationary rest are combined with active goings out in the mountains, rafting, skiing, etc. The modern trends in development of adventure tourism in Ukraine are analyzed. The authors investigated and systematized various types of adventure tourism, regions of adventure tours, demand and proposal for these types of trips identified the problems of their development. It is necessary to do the important step in the field of adventure tourism in Ukraine. It is the introduction of international standards in to practice, to realize a proper system of insurance of tours that will increase the quality and safety of services and it will increase revenues to local budgets.

Keywords: *adventure tourism, active tourism, climbing, sky diving, marathon, ultramarathon, jeeping, trail running, rafting.*

Introduction

One of the trends of the modern tourist industry is not only increase of requirements for the level of after-sales service and comfort of living conditions, but also to the saturation of the travel program, which allows a person to relax from everyday weekdays, to get new impressions, emotions, sometimes extreme characters. There is constant increase of the industry of extreme

types of entertainment and sports, providing active leisure in the world. The adventure trips take a significant place in the structure of active recreation. One can understand non-standard trips, most often in to exotic natural landscapes, adventure types of activity, such as (climbing, mountain climbing, diving, skydiving, etc.), associated with physical activity or using non-traditional vehicles in international terminology under the name adventure tours.

Ukraine is not an exception to global trends. The situation with the corona virus pandemic in the world, restriction of entry into other countries led to increase of domestic tourism in separate sectors, and the adventure tours of small groups in to the natural environment have become even more popular. Small 2-3 days mountain hiking in the Ukrainian Carpathians, river rafting, cycling of various regions of Ukraine and others have a great demand.

Literature review. Studying approaches, regarding the concept "adventure tourism" in scientific publications of Ukrainian scientists, allows us to conclude that it is no unanimous opinion on interpretation of this term. The Law of Ukraine "On Tourism" brings it in the list of types of tourism without a proper explanation of the content (Law of Ukraine, 1995, Article 4). Very often this type of tourism is combined, and sometimes identified with the concepts "active tourism", "ecological tourism", "sports tourism", but this niche tourism has its characteristic differences related to traveling. Thus, P. Putsenteylo defines adventure tourism as a specific type of rest, which provides tourists with impressions both from an attractive place and non-standard activity. In the structure of this tourism, he allocates such three types as: marching expeditions, safari-tours (hunting, fishing, catching butterflies, etc.) and sea travels (yachting) (Putsenteylo, 2007, p. 56). Scientist F. Shandor proposes some similar approaches in his publications. He considers adventure tourism as a kind of tourism associated with physical activity and organization of non-standard tours to exotic and clean natural reservations and includes unusual journeys, non-traditional vehicles, and pedestrian expeditions, safari-tours, yachting (Shandor, 2013, p. 261). Shandor also notes that adventure tours are: "Journeys related to active means of conveyance and recreation in nature" (Shandor, 2013, p. 24).

P. Koval and H. Andrieieva, analyzing various approaches, give the following definition of this term: "Adventure tourism is a journey to obtain physical activity, adrenaline, unique, unavailable experiences for most people. At the same time, one can distinguish its types according to technologically organizational features: sports (boating, hiking, mountaineering, skiing, cycling); extreme (boating, air, mountaineering, hiking, exotic); caving; hunting, safari; sports fishing, etc." (Koval, Andrieieva, 2018, p. 33). The authors draw attention to the fact that adventure tours are specific, unique, non-standard, non-mass. Suitable, in our opinion, it is significant that statements of the authors concerning uniqueness of adventure journeys can be provided by such factors as: geography of trips, specific type of activity, physical activity.

Determining the sector of adventure journeys the Adventure Travel Trade Association (ATTA) believes that adventure tourism contains three main components for traveler: 1) physical activity, 2) a connection to nature and the environment and 3) an immersive cultural experience. (ATTA, 2013, p. 2). Participation in such journeys requires some physical and technical training, the presence of highly skilled escort, which minimizes risks in difficult situations.

Atta is the largest international organization that unites various concerned parties in the sector of adventure tourism, including destinations, operators, agents, tourist clothing manufacturers and inventory, as well as non-governmental organizations. Mission ATTA is to empower the global travel community to protect natural and cultural capital while creating economic value that benefits both trade members and destinations (Official site ATTA, 2021).

An extraordinary important international document that regulates the activities in the field of adventure tourism is the Travel Guide Standard, issued by the Atta in February 2021. This document is reviewed and supplemented every five years, taking into account world trends in the market of adventure tourism services. Adventure travel is extremely diverse in terms of geography, cultural context and types of activities. The following five competencies have been identified by guides and adventure travel experts around the world as essential for adventure travel guides regardless of geography or activities: 1) Sustainability; 2) Technical Skills; 3) Safety and Risk Management; 4) Customer Service and Group Management; 5) Natural and Cultural History Interpretation. This document describes and provides examples to illustrate each of these five core competencies (ATTA, 2021, p.5).

The **purpose** of the article is to analyze the current state of development of adventure tourism in Ukraine, to identify the key issues and to offer measures to optimize development of this sector of tourist activities, taking into account international experience.

Research methodology. The following methods are used during preparation of the publication: comparative-geographical descriptions, statistical methods, synthesis and analysis, generalization of information, separate marketing methods for research of tourist products of adventure tourism. The authors analyze own observations conducted during adventure journeys (years-long rock climbing tours in the Ukrainian Carpathians and other mountain systems of the world, rafting and boating the rivers Cheremosh, Prut, Horyn, Sluch), as well as participation in adventure marathons.

Research results. The authors of this study think that it is possible to distinguish four main categories of tourism in accordance with the method of organizing adventure tours in Ukraine:

1. *Amateur tourist tours of individual groups or persons.* These include any tours: hiking, rock climbing, cycling, skiing, boating, rafting and etc. The geography of such tours is extremely wide, and it is difficult to determine a real number of participants in such trips due to the lack of any registration. However, own observations show that the largest share of independent tours – many-day long summer mountain tracking trips by Ukrainian Carpathians, since the territory is characterized by exotic landscapes, and the journeys themselves do not require expensive technical equipment, or special skills. The segment of independent adventure tours associated with hunting or fishing is in the second place. The share of other types of independent tourist travels is insignificant.

2. *Commercial adventure tours.* This category has a slightly wider range of adventure trips, since they provide professionals who have necessary specialized tourist equipment, have technical skills for organizing such tours. As in the previous case, it is the largest number of excursion active tours in the Carpathians, although most of them are only partially comply with the criteria of adventure tourism, because they provide radial one-day rock climbing to separate mountain peaks, rather than offer full adventure travels. The highest peak of the Ukrainian Carpathians - Hoverla, Pip Ivan, Petros, Khomiak, Hymba, Bbelyka Blyznytsia, etc. are characterized with the greatest popularity.

The tourist firms and tourist clubs specializing in more extreme adventure tours, for example: "Ture" (Ternopil), "Extreme Guide" (Odessa), "Dykyi Tur (Wild Tour)" (Kyiv), "Tour Club Kuluar", etc. began to appear at the Ukrainian market the last score of years. Among their proposals are tours from one to six days, which involves hiking of full value, cycling, rafting, yachting, caving, winter rock climbing to the top, summer and winter training with mountaineering. It is necessary to indicate that such tours can not be budgetary due to their organization, as well as the high cost of special tourist equipment. Examples of separate adventure tours and their prices are presented in the Table 1.

Table 1.

Many Day-Long Commercial Adventure Tours as an Example of Separate Travel Companies in Ukraine

Kinds of Journeys	Duration (in days)	Price (2021) in UAH (≈in Euro)
Travel Agency "Ture"		
Mountain Hiking, Tracking, Rafting by the Chornyi Cheremosh, Horse Riding	2	1990 (62)
	3	3390 (105)
	5	4800 (149)
Rafting by the Dnister (catamaran, canoe, kayak)	2	1950 (61)
	3	3100 (96)
Mountain Hike with Sammit Ascent of Ukrainian Carpathian	6	3590 (111)
Travel Agency "Dykyi Tur" ("Wild Tour")		
Rafting by the Southern Buh (the Myhiia Rapids)	2	1850 (57)
Rafting by the Dnister	3	3300 (103)
Kayaking by Low Island in the Lower Reaches (Kherson Region)	2	2250 (70)
Rafting by the Chornyi and Bilyi Cheremosh	2	2050-2500 (64-78)
	3	3000-4000 (93-124)
Rafting by the Desna	2	1800 (56)

	3	2100 (65-78)
Rafting by the Teteriv (Zhytomyr Region)	2	1750-2000 (54-62)
	3	2500 (78)
Travel Agency "Extreme Guide"		
Rock climbing in Canyon Buky	2	2900 (90)
Winter Mountaineering School in Carpathian Mountains (city of Spytsi)	4	5200 (162)
Tourist Club "Ternopil"		
Speleoexcursions	2	1080 (34)
Winter Mountaineering Seminar in Carpathian Mountains	4	3350 (104)
Freeride at Chornohorskyi Massif of Carpathian Mountains	3	2260 (70)
Boating Seminar (the Chornyi Cheremosh)	4	3810 (118)
Bike Tour by the Valley of the Dnister	3	1900 (59)

Note: created by the author as a result of the sources analysis [11-14].

3. Commercial types of recreational activity and competitions of adventure character on the basis of tourist complexes or individual tourist centers, etc. Development of adventure activity, extreme sports on the basis of tourist complexes, or centers is an effective way to involve an additional number of tourists, both in the main tourist season and beyond. To do it, the tourist complexes prepare special tracks for mountain bik, organize sports and adventure competitions with overcoming natural and artificial obstacles, offer trips by four-wheelers, gliding, flying on the vapor, sky surfing, sky jumping, ballooning, diving, etc. Particularly wide range of such services can be obtained on the basis of ski mountain complexes of Ukrainian Carpathians ("Bukovel", "Slavske", "Pylypets", "Polonina Krasia", "Drahobrat") and during a rest on the coast of the Black and Azov seas. Separate types of classes are related to large cities, or historical and cultural centers. Thus, ballooning is popular in localities of Kiev, Lviv, Dnipro, Zaporizhzhia, as well as above the city of Kamianets-Podilskyi, due to their large number of historical fortification and uniqueness of the natural landscape of the city, separated by a deep canyon of the Smotrych. Commercial ballooning is quite expensive. The cost of 1 hour of flight for 2 persons in Ukraine is 250 euros and above.

4. Non-profit adventure racing, competitions, marathons and ultramarathons. This type of adventure tours arose relatively recently, but it develops quite rapidly. Partly such adventure competitions are an alternative to the championships and cups of Ukraine on sports tourism, which, due to lack of funding among the adult population, are practically not carried out. So, the All-Ukrainian hiking competition "By the Paths of Heroes" is held in the Carpathian region from 2000. The organizer of such competitions was the All-Ukrainian Scout Organization "Plast". In addition to passing tourist routes of different distances and performing certain technical sports tourist tasks, such measures attract attention to the historical places of the Carpathians. The main points on the route are the scenes of the fighting of Ukrainian Sich Shots, UIA (Ukrainian Insurgent Army) soldiers, and etc. Annually the event has separate historical topics.

Something different measures are adventure racing, passing in trail running style (it is sports discipline, which includes race by highlands). Such types of competitions have become part of world sports and culture. The following types of competitions are held annually in Ukraine only in the Carpathian region: Gorgany race, Goverla race, Skornohora night Marathon, Chornohora Sky Marathon, Track Incognita. All of them have different distances and certain differences of their organization. The most technically complicated is Horhany race, which includes running, orienteering, movement outside the tourist routes, passing technical distances. Such an event has been going for more than 10 years and attract to 600 participants annually. For conducting competitions, the chain of mountains of Horhany are selected, which have large areas of sophisticated slopes with mountain crook-stem forests, rocky scattering and etc.

To carry out such events, one can use not only mountain landscapes of Ukraine, but also forested and swamped areas of the Polissia Lowland and Small Polissia, Bicycle Marathon "Poliska Sich", Ostroh trail ("Hell race"), a complex relief of the Dnister Canyon (Dnister challenge race, Bike Path, Landscapes of the Dnipro valley (Wet Hills), sand semi-desert territories of Oleshkivtsi sands in Kherson region (Wild Desert Ultratrail).

Common for all types of adventure racing is that they are held at the expense of the arrangement fees of participants. The cost of the arrangement fee is an average of 18-35 euros per person and

depends on the term of registration. The bulk of funds goes to organization of distances, transfer of equipment, advertising gifts and prizes for participants. In addition, measures take place under the aegis of certain tourist firms, shops of tourist equipment promoting their products or services at the tourism market of Ukraine.

Moreover, hiking, boating, cycling, there are also lovers of extreme races in the mountains and off-road riding on cars (Jeeping), four-wheel bikes. Among unprofessional adventure tours by cars, four-wheel bikes and other motorcycles and power products are popular "Carpathians Trofi".

Discussion of research results. Despite the rapid growth in the field of adventure tourism in Ukraine, we have distinguished three main key issues:

- more than 2/3 of all adventure commercial tours are carried out by firms, or individual persons who do not have an appropriate juridical registration as a subject of tourist activity;
- Ukraine has not a guide's certification system and it does not allow to check the competence of the organizers of adventure tours;
- despite the high level of injuries, most adventure tours are carried out without execution of insurance policies that cover the risks associated with organization of active recreation.

With the introduction of Ukraine in 2008 to the WTO (World Trade Organization), the state has undertaken concerning conducting its standards in accordance with international and European standards in all sectors of economy, including in certain sectors of the tourist industry. Especially, at the state level, several standards were introduced by the government. These standards control the sphere of adventure tourism and correspond to international and European standards, in particular:

- "Adventure tourism. Security management systems. Requirements" (DSTU ISO 21101:2016);
- "Adventure tourism. Leaders. Personal competence" (DSTU ISO / TR 21102:2016);
- "Adventure tourism. Information for participants" (DSTU ISO 21103:2016);
- "Tourist services. Tourist signs of active tourism. Classification, description and rules of application" (DSTU 7450:2013).

The introduction of international standards became an important step, but it did not solve problems, and their implementation, especially in the sector of adventure tourism almost does not occur, as:

- Most international standards in the sphere of tourism in Ukraine are adopted without translation to the state language. In the process of translation, individual principles may not have unambiguous interpretation. In addition, international standards are often general, and separate issues require detailing, taking into account national peculiarities;

- The state has no funding for propagation of these standards, and the subjects of the tourist market have no motivation in acquisition of expensive standards (each of the standards costs about 200 euros) in a foreign language;

- The significant part of tourist routes, in particular in the Carpathian region, was marked (including various grant funds) to the adoption of state standards for route signs. Accordingly, the means for resigning a few thousand kilometers of tourist paths are absent.

Conclusions

Taking into account the above-mentioned problems in this sphere of tourism, the state body of self-government, in particular, the State Tourism Development Agency of Ukraine, public institutions, such as the National Sports Tourist Organization of Ukraine, the Federation of Sports Tourism of Ukraine and others, as well as educational institutions, should facilitate to implementation of the following measures:

1. To complete translation of standards in the sphere of tourism into state language and to develop detailed methodical instructions according to their application;
2. To ensure the maximum propagation of the requirements to the standards among the participants of the tourist process;
3. To develop programs and to introduce voluntary certification of guides in the sphere of adventure tourism in accordance with the international standards, because it will increase the professional competence of travel organizers and will contribute to minimizing risks for the life and health of travel participants.
4. Strengthening the role of public institutions, associations in development of active types of tourism and increasing their security.

5. Establishing cooperation between participants of the tourist process and insurance companies in formation of highly specialized tariff packages with insurance of certain types of active recreation and extreme tourism or sports.

Regulation of the adventure tourism market will enable to guarantee additional ways of the state budget replenishment, will contribute to a higher level of service provision and observance of safety measures in the sphere of this type of activity.

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