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**RECREATIONAL TOURISM IN THE BORDER REGIONS:  
DANUBE REGION CASE OF STUDY**

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*The paper is devoted to the issues of creation and development of the tourist and recreational sector of the Danube trans-boundary region. Was defited the role of the tourist sector in the national economy and cross-border regions are determined. Reserched the structure of the target program for the development of cross-border tourism, the main prerequisites for the creation of cross-border tourist clusters, the main problems of development were formulated and fixed.*

**Keywords:** *Low Danube region, Odessa region, Tulcea region, Ukrainian-Romanian cross-border region, cross-border region recreation, European regional cooperation.*

**РЕКРЕАЦІЙНИЙ ТУРИЗМ ТРАНСКОРДОННИХ РЕГІОНІВ:  
ТЕРИТОРІЯ ПРИДУНАВЬЯ**

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*В даний час Європейський Союз переживає безпрецедентний за своїм значенням процес ретериторіалізації в контексті інтеграції в Європейський Союз. Центральною у цьому процесі є реалізація різних схем транскордонного співробітництва, широко відомих як «Концепція Єврорегіонів», до яких належить й регіон «Нижній Дунай», що досліджується.*

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Статтю присвячено питанням формування та розвитку туристично-рекреаційної сфери Придунайського транскордонного регіону (розглядається Ізмаїльський район Одеської області, Україна й жудець Тулча, Румунія). Визначено сутність та роль туристичної сфери в національній економіці та транскордонних регіонах. Досліджено змістовну структуру цільової програми розвитку транскордонного туризму, основні передумови для створення транскордонних туристичних кластерів, зазначені основні проблеми розвитку туристичної галузі. Єврорегіональна концепція, а також кооперація в формі міжнародної уніфікації туристичного законодавства базується на співпраці урядів країн і громадянського суспільства на базі взаємних економічних та політичних інтересів окремих територій. Відповідно до цієї концепції, майбутня Європа трактується не як територія окремих суверенних європейських держав, але як Європа регіонів, що мають спільний історико-етнографічний фон, значні економічні інтереси і бізнес-зв'язки на міжнародному рівні. В роботі визначено пріоритетні напрямки взаємодії України і Румунії в туристично-рекреаційному контексті, які б стимулювали розвиток зазначеної Концепції в сфері туризму і рекреації. Це дослідження має на меті визначити, які саме сфери транскордонного туристичного співробітництва можуть сприяти розвитку та процвітанню внутрішньому розвитку Європейського Союзу та його регіональних партнерів в Єврозоні «Нижній Дунай», зокрема на території українського Придунав'я.

**Ключові слова:** регіон нижнього Дунаю, Одеська область, жудець Тулча, українсько-румунський прикордонний регіон, відпочинок на прикордонних територіях, європейське регіональне співробітництво.

#### РЕКРЕАЦИОННЫЙ ТУРИЗМ ТРАНСГРАНИЧНЫХ РЕГИОНОВ: ТЕРРИТОРИЯ ПРИДУНАВЬЯ

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Статья посвящена вопросам формирования и развития туристско-рекреационной сферы Придунайского трансграничного региона. Определена сущность и роль туристической сферы в национальной экономике и трансграничных регионах. Исследована содержательная структура целевой программы развития трансграничного туризма, основные предпосылки для создания трансграничных туристических кластеров, указаны основные проблемы развития.

**Ключевые слова:** регион нижнего Дуная, Одесская область, жудец Тулча, украинский-румунский пограничный регион, отдых на приграничных территориях, европейское региональное сотрудничество.

**Problem statement.** The development of regional recreational tourism in the context of cross-border cooperation is an extremely important task not only of a national scale, but also of interest to our neighboring countries. The territory of the Ukrainian Danube is a unique complex of diverse natural and cultural/historical objects, the combination of which causes the formation of a huge number of many types of natural and recreational resources. This region occupies one of the leading places in tourism potential and its natural, historical and cultural resources, which can stimulate considerable interest among domestic and foreign tourists.

In the sector of cross-border tourism cooperation, today there are significant issues related to problems of national low regulation of interregional relations, as well as local approaches to their implementation. For example, the regulatory framework of Romania, as our closest Danube neighbor, and Ukraine, have significant differences in the low regulation of interregional and cross-border cooperation, both at the level of laws and by-laws acts.

The focus of this paper – is the conditions for the progressive development of the recreational and tourist industry in the region and the form of effective use of the tourist and recreational potential of the Danube for the development of tourism products based on the strategic management and interaction of large, medium and small businesses and the attraction of domestic-ukrainian and foreign investments.

**Recent research and publications analysis.** All existing problems of recreation can be considered from the point of view of the different science sectors: geography, ecology, enterprise

economics, regional economy, transport technology and systems, etc. Sometimes, the issues of the problems of recreation of transboundary regions are considered as the problems of international law and political science.

The analysis of some tourist products in regional markets, in particular the theme of the Danube cruises, is devoted to papers (Dragin, Dragin & Plavsa, 2007), (Ploner, 2009). The regional cross-border cooperation between Croatia and Serbia in aspect of the investment effectiveness in the tourism industry described at (Vujko, A., & Gajic, 2014). Ecotourism problems of the Danube Delta study in the articles of European authors (Hall, 1993), (Montanari, Williams & Allan M, 1995), (Turnock, 2002), (Assche, & Teampau, 2012), (Văidianu, Paraschiv & Saghin, 2015), (Pavel-Nedeia & Dona 2017), etc. The prospects of rural tourism in the context of the ecotourism of the Slovak-Hungarian border were investigated in (Jakubcova, Grezo & Petrovic, 2015).

Ukrainian scientists also studied the issues found of cross-border tourist cooperation of Ukraine with EU countries (Shevchenko-Marsel & Rusyna, 2007), (Nelin, 2014), (Bil, 2008), (Bielievtseva, 2006).

**The goal of this article.** The study aims to analyze the objective basis for the development of trans-boundary tourism in Ukraine-Romania cooperation (in the context of the Odessa region, Ukraine/Tulcea, Romania) as a phenomenon of social life and object of scientific knowledge.

**The basic results and their justification.** The recreational tourism is a potentially investment-attractive type of economic activity within the Ukrainian-Romanian transborder region (Zakarpat-

tia, Ivano-Frankivsk, Chernivtsi and Odesa regions). However, today, the level of implementation of its potential remains low and, moreover, there are every reason to assert the disbalance of it's development in Ukraine and Romania, which are due in the first place to differences in institutional provision due to:

- significant differences in the organizational, economic and legal regulation of tourism in Ukraine and Romania;

- insufficient cooperation between individual Ukrainian and Romanian tourist organizations;

- differences in priorities and programming of cross-border tourism development at the state and regional level.

The current development of cross-border tourism, which is based on the main elements – touristic steam volumes, integration, social/economic type significantly influenced the dynamics of the tourism market and led to consider tourism as a social and economic phenomenon. The development of tourism industry in Ukraine, which would successfully integrate into international tourist relations, is one of the leading areas for the structural adjustment of the country's economy. Favorable conditions for the formation of a national market for competitive tourism services should be created by the state on the basis of new economic mechanisms in an open economy (Hontarzhivs'ka, 2008).

In December 2015, the Romania-Ukraine Program was prepared and approved the European Neighborhood Instrument (ENI). According to this document, in the period 2014-2020, the European Union will finance the Joint Operational Program (JOP) Romania –

Ukraine 2014-2020. The general objective of the Romania-Ukraine Joint Operational Programme is to enhance the economic development and to improve the quality of life of the people in the programme area through joint investments in education, economic development, culture, infrastructure and health while ensuring the safety and security of the citizens in the two countries

According to JOP 2014-2020, the varied relief, the geographical positioning, the varied flora and fauna, and the cultural heritage of the area are key components that can form the base for developing the tourism infrastructure and services. The area benefits from over 1070 natural protected areas of national and international importance and numerous historic sites. These are important points of attraction for national and international tourists, as proven by the number of overnight stays.

In the Romania-Ukraine core eligible area the most important and utilized navigable route is the Danube, and its three arms unravelling in Tulcea County: Chilia, Sulina and Sfântul Gheorghe.

However, the traffic on the Danube is fairly limited due to the underdevelopment of the navigable canals, in spite of the direct link to the Danube Delta, the possible connectivity with Galați and Tulcea ports, and the link with the Black Sea, which could open more opportunities in terms of international freight and passenger traffic.

The most important ports in the core eligible touristic area are Tulcea river/sea port, Sulina, Chilia and Sfântul Gheorghe in Romania, and Izmail, Reni, Ust-Dunaisk in Ukraine. To the Romanian side two more large ports contribute to the economic environment of the

area: Brăila and Galați, located in the neighbouring counties. Galați and Tulcea are the two main ports on the Danube as these ensure the linkage between the river and the Black Sea and the inter-modal change between means of transport (naval-road-rail).

One of the major issues regarding border crossing between Romania and Ukraine is represented by the limitations in this respect of the Southern area of the core eligible area, i.e. Tulcea County – Odessa Oblast. Due to the geographical specificities of the area and the relief characteristic of the Danube Delta there are no borders crossing points between the two states. As a result, the Romania-Ukraine border crossing traffic has to be rerouted via Republic of Moldova, through the Galați-Giurgiulești-

ti border crossing point, while entrance into Ukraine can be made through several points, the closest in terms of distance being Giurgiulești-Reni and Vulcănești-Vino-gradovka border crossing points. This detour increases traveling times with significant impacts on economic activities, as well as supplementary complications in terms of international transit law.

Program territories (figure) consist of:

- Romania: Baia-Mare, Satu-Mare, Suceava, Botoșani and Tulcea;
- Ukraine: Ivano-Frankivsk, Transcarpathian, Chernivtsi, Odessa.

EU funding for this program is 60 mln. euro.



*Core area of the paper (Source: www.mdrap.ro)*

Looking at the geography and characteristics of human settlements it should be mentioned that the positioning of large rural areas between the main urban centres, having limited access to

services and amenities characteristic to urban areas. This factor negatively affects the accessibility to tourism, health-care or social assistance services, mostly for the rural area (tabl. 1).

Table 1

*Strengths and weaknesses of touristic cooperation  
in trans-border Ukraine-Romania border*

Strengths	Weaknesses
New and undiscovered area with significant recreational and balneological resources;	Extremely different topography across the Low Danube (Județul Tulcea and Odessa region);
Complex hydrographic network: many lakes and estuaries, important rivers and Danube together with its Delta;	Large unpopulated areas and rural areas, especially in the areas of Județul Tulcea and Odessa region;
Presence of the powerful urban pole of Odessa-city;	Large urbanization gaps between the main urban centres;
Possibilities of diversification of the tourist services market: green, ecological, gastronomic, ethnographic, medical, on organization and holding of business events, event tourism;	Mountainous areas and the natural deltas hinder urban and infrastructure development;
Various relief forms as: mountains, hills, plains presenting advantages for agricultural and tourism development;	Lack of a holistic systemic state policy of development and tourist support of the industry, low level of information support of tourism activity;
Important urban centres of both sides of the border concentrating a large urban population;	Urban population ratio under the national average in Județul Tulcea and Odessa region;
The Ukrainian regions have a positive natural increase ratio of population;	The Romanian counties are confronted with a negative natural increase ratio of the population;
Developed agriculture, forestry, fishing and food industry activities, strong potential for tourism in general and agro-tourism in special;	The main economic activities have low value added (agriculture, fishing, trade and tourism related services);
Numerous cultural and natural elements.	Pollution (domestic, industrial).

Recreation region-forming centers of the Odessa region, which adjoin the state border with Romania, are concentrated in three towns: Izmail, Kilia and Reni districts. In the monograph (Honcharenko, 2014) mentioned area classified to the 5A group, is designated «Reni-Kilia region, Low Danube» and is

characterized as a favorable, aesthetic-recreational-excursion, climatic-balneological, high recreational and man-made load, and secondary development of recreational infrastructure. These include such villages: v. Ok-samytnе, v. Vladychen', v. Krynychne, v. Kosa, v. Kotlovyna, v. Lymans'ke, v. Nahirne, v. Plavni, v. Novosil's'ke, v. Nova Nekrasivka,



v. Ozerne, v. Suvorovs'ke, v. Vasylivka, v. Prymors'ke. There are 77 restoration points (hotels, sanatorium and spa establishments, children's recreation facilities) and 4 recreational areas (hunting and fishing farms, state forest hunting grounds, etc.) in this zone.

The peculiarity of the touristic-excursion potential of the Danube Odesa region is determined by numerous monuments of various times with well-known historical and cultural reserves, monuments and museums. These are the world-famous Ukrainian Venice – the Vilkovo town, fortresses, monuments of religious architecture in the cities of Odessa, Izmail, Reni, Kilia.

The Reni-Kilia border region is a complex landscape and recreational region (LRR) of ecological, historical and ethnographic and religious areas of recreational activity, with the elements of health and watersport recreation activity.

**Conclusions.** In general, the border-region of the Ukrainian Danube is considered as a landscape-recreational center, the specialization of which is focused on the medical-health and historical-cognitive direction. The recreational area is focused on the implementation of full recreational cycles and on «weekend tours» for the local population in the form of hunting/fishing recreation. Promising areas for the development of recreation are health and wellness (Primors'ke village), ecological (Green tourism) tourism within protected areas (The Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve «Ostriv Zmiyinyy», «Izmayil's'ki Ostrovy» – Small Daler, Great Daler and Tataru, wetlands lands of international importance), rural hunting tourism (lakes Yalpug-Kugur-lui, Cahul, Kytai). Perspective directions are also: historical, ethnographic (the city of Izmail, a number of settlements of the Ismayil region), religious tourism (Lipovansky churches near Vilkovo).

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