

Tetiana But,
Ph.D. in Economics, Associate Professor, research associate of the Department of Recreation and Tourism, Faculty of Informatics and management,
University of Hradec Kralove, Czech Republic

Ivan But,
student of higher educational institution of Bachelor's level, specialty 242 Tourism and recreation
National University «Zaporizhzhia Polytechnic»

UKRAINE IN THE GLOBAL TOURISM MARKET

In 2021, Ukraine was ranked 54th in the World Competitiveness Rankings among 64 countries. For comparison, in 2017 Ukraine was ranked 60th, in 2019 - 78th. At the same time, the availability of mobile communications ranks Ukraine 36th [1]. These figures are indicators of areas of decline in the competitive attractiveness of Ukraine's tourism business.

In 2023, the ranking was topped by European countries: Switzerland was first, Sweden was second, Denmark was third, and the Netherlands was fourth. In turn, Singapore, which was the first in 2019 and 2020, was ranked fifth. The determining factors of competitiveness were the availability of innovation, digitalisation, supportive policies and social cohesion.

The World Competitiveness Report is based on 333 competitiveness criteria selected through extensive research using economic literature, international, national and regional sources, as well as feedback from business, government and academia. The criteria are regularly reviewed and updated as new theories, research and data emerge and as the global economy evolves [2].

The World Competitiveness Index takes into account a wide range of statistics: unemployment, GDP, public spending on healthcare and education, social indicators, globalisation and corruption. This information is divided into four categories: economic performance, infrastructure, government efficiency and business efficiency.

The strong economic recovery after the most acute phase of the COVID-19 pandemic has played a key role, as has the recovery of the travel industry. From an economic point of view, the pandemic is over, but economic inflation in Europe is a concern. One of the important lessons learned across countries is that inflationary pressures have a greater impact on the tourism business and, therefore, on the competitiveness of national economies.

From a global perspective, the challenges that have the greatest impact on the competitiveness of countries to a greater or lesser extent include different national policies to combat COVID (zero-tolerance policies as opposed to "COVID opt-out" policies) and Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Russia and Ukraine were not assessed in the 2023 edition due to the limited reliability of the data collected [2].

Such indicators are indicative of areas of decline in the competitive attractiveness of Ukraine's tourism sector.

Today, it is difficult to predict the further development of the tourism industry in Ukraine for the following reasons: it is not known when the hostilities in Ukraine will end and it is not known how quickly the destroyed infrastructure in the country will be rebuilt and restored, which in turn depends on the availability of funding for the restoration of the destroyed infrastructure. It should not be forgotten that the flow of tourists to Ukraine is possible only if there is complete security within the country and such security is recognised internationally. However, among other things, we can say that in the post-war period, Ukraine should further develop those main destinations that were popular before the military aggression and improve its problem areas.

Ukraine is located in Eastern Europe, which means that it has many competitors in terms of territory: Spain, France, Germany, which reduce the flow of tourists.

However, Ukraine has become known worldwide for its heroic resistance to Russian aggression, which in a way shapes its image and thus will potentially be attractive to tourists. Greater demand for tourism services in Ukraine may also be caused by open borders in the

European Union and Ukraine's progress as a member state towards the EU community. To identify potential ways to increase Ukraine's competitive advantages in the global tourism market in the post-war period, it is advisable to rely on the data of the Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index in 2019, namely those indicators that had the highest scores.

According to [3], the existing competitive advantages of Ukraine that can attract the attention of foreign tourists, according to the World Tourism Organisation, are the price competitiveness of the tourism business, the availability of cultural attractions and attractive places for tourists. Typical examples include: "Rynok Square in Lviv, Palanok Castle in Mukachevo, Tunnel of Love, Synevir Lake, Lutsk Castle, Bilhorod-Dnistrovskyi Fortress, Shatsk Lakes, Ancient Tustan, Dovbush Rocks, Stone Grave, Askania Nova Reserve, Antonii Caves and Ancient Chernihiv, among others. Foreign tourists may also be interested in the restored and restored cultural sites in various Ukrainian cities that were most severely damaged by the Russian occupiers, including the Drama Theatre in Mariupol, Central Freedom Square and the building of the Karazin Kharkiv National University in Kharkiv, many cultural monuments in Chernihiv and Sumy regions. Also, the attention of foreign tourists may be drawn to the broken military equipment of the Russian army, which is placed as exhibits on the streets in the Pechersk district of Kyiv and was brought from "hot spots" in different regions of Ukraine, including the cities of Vyzhhorod, Bucha, Irpin, Gostomel.

Among the set of competitive advantages for the formation of competitiveness of various types of tourism in Ukraine in the post-war period, the following should be highlighted: entertainment, educational, cognitive, sports, health and wellness, ecotourism.

However, all of this is possible only if the hostilities cease and the infrastructure is quickly restored, which is still being discussed. To this end, the Government of Ukraine has approved the "Programme for the Restoration of Ukraine", which defines the procedure for granting subventions for projects to restore destroyed or damaged infrastructure in nine regions affected by the hostilities (Luhansk, Donetsk, Odesa, Kherson, Zaporizhzhia, Kyiv, Kharkiv, Poltava, and Dnipro regions) [3]. Potential sources of assistance include funds from international institutions (World Bank, International Monetary Fund, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, European Investment Bank, etc.), confiscated Russian assets and current Russian oil and gas revenues [4].

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