

International Tourism as a Tool of European Integration within Eastern European Countries

Turystyka międzynarodowa jako narzędzie integracji europejskiej w krajach Europy Wschodniej

Anatoliy Parfinenko*, Olena Yevtushenko, Iryna Panova,
Polina Podlepina, Maksym Onatskyi

*V.N. Karazin Kharkiv National University,
Department of Travel Business and Regional Studies, 4 Svobody Sq.,
61000 Kharkiv, Ukraine
E-mail (Corresponding Author): parfinenko@karazin.ua*

Abstract

The article is devoted to researching the links between European integration processes and the development of national markets for tourist services. Particular attention was paid to the situation in international tourism in those countries that integrated with the EU in 2004 and 2007. In addition, the article discusses the main modern types of international tourism, as well as factors affecting its development. Finally, attention was also paid to identifying promising directions for the development of international tourism in Eastern European countries – potential candidates for accession to the EU (Republic of Moldova and Ukraine).

Key words: European Union, European integration, international tourism, international tourist flows, inbound tourism, forms of international tourism, prospects for international tourism

Słowa kluczowe: Unia Europejska, integracja, turystyka międzynarodowa, międzynarodowy ruch turystyczny, turystyka przyjazdowa, perspektywy turystyki międzynarodowej

Introduction

Integration processes have always been and remain the most important tools for shaping the image of modern Europe. Strong foreign policy ties, economic partnership, diplomatic relations, scientific and technical cooperation. All this is the basis for the success of modern European countries. At the same time, despite the fact that the structure of the European Union as a whole can be considered formed, integration and disintegration (unfortunately) still continue. On the issue of disintegration, the rather ambiguous situation with Brexit should be noted, which potentially poses more threats than benefits for the United Kingdom. On the other hand, we see the motives behind the expansion of the European Union to the East.

Some of the Eastern European countries are now on the way to European integration and, in turn, are of certain interest to the European community. Moreover, such joint work to prepare for integration is already underway. It is not only about adopting reforms or framework laws, without which integration is impossible by definition, not about the derivation and maintenance of macroeconomic indicators to the level acceptable to the European Union, but various kinds of cooperation in different sectors of the national economy. However, not everything is so simple and unambiguous here either. Obviously, the countries of Eastern Europe, which are not members of the European Union, find it very difficult to compete with enterprises operating in accordance with European standards (Tatsyi et al., 2010). Moreover, it is difficult for them to compete not only on the external but also on the internal market. Therefore, it is too early to talk about full-fledged competition in the branches of heavy and light engineering, light and food industries, the agro-industrial complex in the field of high technologies.

At the same time, in our opinion, there is a rather specific sector of the national economy, which not only can develop in parallel (within the process of integration), not only can create powerful incoming and outgoing international financial flows. By one way or another, can indirectly stimulate the development of other sectors (Petrov

& Serdyuk, 2008; Prokopenko et al., 2019). We consider international tourism to be such an area. International tourism has given a powerful impetus to the development of almost all economies among the active European Union member states as well as countries that are also considering the possibility of European integration.

Today the French Republic, the Kingdom of Spain, the Italian Republic, the Hellenic Republic, the Portuguese Republic as well as the Republic of Malta, Republic of Cyprus have become real centers of recreational tourism, which makes it possible to develop both small and large businesses in these countries (Yaroshenko et al., 2018; Havierniková et al., 2017). Furthermore, countries such as Montenegro and the Turkish Republic receive great financial benefits from European tourists.

There are, indeed, some problems in this area. The particular interest for the development of international tourism introduces not the entire territory of the country but only certain of its regions. For example, due to the fact that Turkey has been a candidate for EU membership since 1999, the number of tourists who annually visit its territory has grown 4.5 times over 20 years (Number of international visitors..., 2021). More interestingly, the share of the total contribution of international tourism to Turkey's GDP in 1999 was 7.4%, and in 2001 it was already 15.5% (Turkey – Tourism..., 2021). Accordingly, the direction towards European integration yields colossal results for the development of tourism. At the same time, we know about the problems in this country. Economic development in Turkey is catastrophically uneven. Jobs exist mainly in tourist regions and are seasonal. Infrastructure is being built and also modernized in tourism centers.

We consider this situation unacceptable for the countries-potential members of the European Union since we see their potential not only in the field of recreational tourism but also in its other forms. From these foundations, we consider the determination of the main cooperation forms between the European Union and the countries of Eastern Europe, which would give the maximum economic effect, at least for the main territory of the country, an extremely urgent and important scientific problem.

Purpose of the article is to determine the role of European integration processes in Eastern Europe and highlight promising forms of international tourism, which would maximize the mutual economic effect of such cooperation.

Materials and methods

We decided to divide our research into 3 blocks.

Block 1. First, we decided to trace the connection between the dynamics of foreign tourists and the period of the country's de facto integration into the European Union. For this purpose, we decided to take 2 periods for research:

- 2004 enlargement of the European Union. The result of which was the entry into this economic and political union of the following countries: Hungary, Republic of Estonia, Republic of Cyprus, Republic of Latvia, Republic of Lithuania, Republic of Malta, Republic of Poland, Slovak Republic, Republic of Slovenia and the Czech Republic.
- 2007 enlargement of the European Union. This time, the structure of the European Union was replenished with the following countries: the Republic of Bulgaria and Romania.

In addition, in this case, we decided to use the hypothesis method. At the same time, **a hypothesis** was formed that: European integration processes have a quick positive effect on the dynamics of inbound tourism. In order to test this hypothesis, we posed a number of questions (Figure 1).

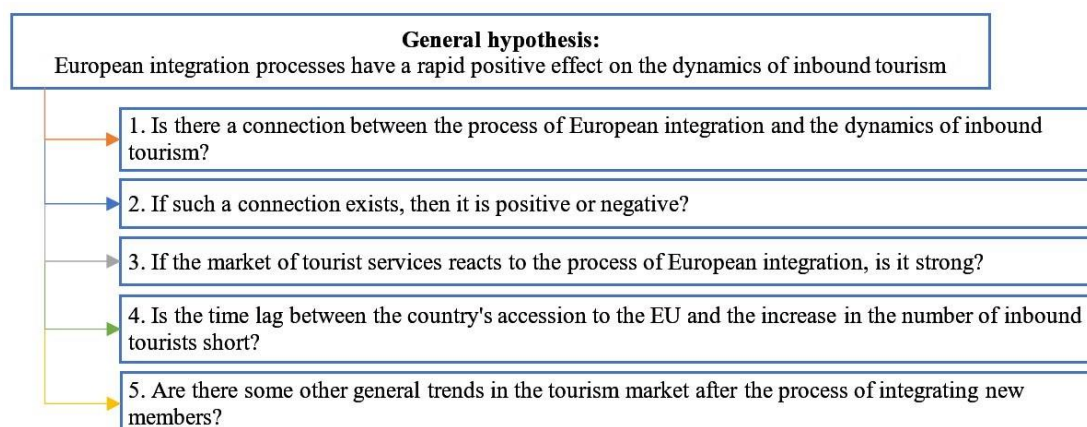


Figure 1. Questions that we set up before our research in order to test the hypothesis put forward (Authors' research)

As could be seen from Figure 1, we posed 5 questions to test the hypothesis. We propose to evaluate its validity according to the following principle (Table 1). We deliberately excluded from our research another rather curious task: *Is there a connection between the tourist specialization of a country, the process of its integration into the EU and the dynamics of inbound tourism?* We have raised this issue as a separate one since, in our opinion, it does not correlate with the goals of the hypothesis put forward. Therefore, this question should be set as the main goal

of a separate study. However, we will try to offer certain conclusions. Further, when considering Block 2, we will conventionally call this question *Question 7*.

Table 1. The principle of determining the reliability of the advanced hypothesis (Authors' development).

		Question					Result
		1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	
Variant	1	Ne-gative	Negative	Negative	Negative	Negative	The hypothesis is totally invalid
	2	Positive	Negative	Negative	Negative	Negative	The hypothesis is generally invalid
	3	Positive	Positive	Negative	Negative	Negative	Very low quality of the hypothesis put forward
	4	Positive	Positive	Positive	Negative	Negative	Low quality of the hypothesis put forward
	5	Positive	Positive	Positive	Positive	Negative	High validity in the hypothesis
	6	Positive	Positive	Positive	Positive	Positive	The hypothesis is completely valid

To search for such connections and in order to check the hypothesis formed, we decided to analyze the growth rate in the dynamics of growth in inbound tourism to the countries, which were entered to EU in 2004 and 2007 (Table 2). In addition, we've been compared the results obtained with the dynamics of Ukraine and Moldova.

Table 2. The growth rate of inbound tourism in the countries admitted to the European Union during its expansion in 2004 and 2007, %, authors' research based on (Number of inbound overnight tourists..., 2021; Estonia, 2020; Hungary – Number of arrivals, 2021; International tourism..., 2021; Latvia, 2021; Poland – Arrivals of non-resident tourists..., 2021; Number of arrivals in tourist accommodation..., 2019; Slovak Republic..., 2017; Number of arrivals..., 2020; Tourism in Slovakia, 2021; Estonia, 2021; European Union, 2021).

		2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
2004 enlargement of the European Union																			
1.	Estonia	0.7	3.8	0.5	2.4	3.2	4.0	2.6	0.2	14.0	12.3	2.0	14.6	1.2	-1.9	4.3	3.4	-1.8	1.2
2.	Hungary	3.5	-1.0	8.0	6.6	5.9	2.8	0.4	2.7	-1.8	3.5	5.5	0.1	5.4	5.1	9.4	3.9	4.9	6.5
3.	Cyprus	-12.2	-3.2	2.6	7.2	-1.1	1.6	-1.5	-9.9	3.4	7.2	0.3	-0.3	-2.6	8.7	18.2	14.1	7.3	2.3
4.	Latvia	11.5	9.9	23.9	21.2	22.6	12.0	5.5	-14.0	6.7	9.8	0.6	4.5	7.3	9.5	-0.7	13.7	0.6	7.3
5.	Lithuania	-4.7	-9.1	6.3	3.3	3.6	2.8	4.9	-10.3	1.8	10.6	10.5	5.7	-0.9	-3.2	5.4	5.0	9.4	0.6
6.	Malta	3.1	2.0	-5.6	3.9	2.5	13.3	6.3	-12.2	12.9	5.6	4.7	0.3	7.4	10.2	8.8	13.6	9.8	8.9
7.	Poland	-17.4	2.7	18.8	4.3	0.8	1.7	-9.5	-10.2	8.4	4.1	10.9	7.3	2.0	5.4	3.5	4.1	2.6	3.0
8.	Slovenia	6.8	5.5	9.2	3.7	4.0	8.3	11.8	-6.8	12.3	9.1	6.3	5.3	6.9	13.0	12.4	17.5	10.9	6.3
9.	Slovakia	19.0	4.8	6.1	76.1	24.7	5.5	7.7	-17.0	0.7	5.1	5.5	7.2	-7.8	16.1	15.4	7.1	3.7	14.2
10.	Czechia	0.9	5.2	18.4	3.9	1.4	-9.9	-3.4	6.6	-5.8	4.0	12.9	2.3	3.2	9.0	9.8	6.7	4.5	3.1
2007 enlargement of the European Union																			
1.	Romania	-2.9	16.7	18.0	-11.5	3.4	27.9	14.8	-14.5	-1.0	1.5	4.3	1.0	5.3	10.5	9.6	6.9	7.3	9.3
2.	Bulgaria	9.0	12.2	11.9	4.3	3.0	3.0	10.4	-7.7	6.4	4.0	1.8	3.7	2.4	-1.0	13.8	9.4	6.7	1.5
Not members of the European Union. Countries of Eastern Europe																			
1.	Ukraine	7.7	18.5	22.6	10.3	6.0	20.5	10.2	-16.6	0.3	1.7	2.1	3.8	-49.2	-1.5	5.4	6.2	-1.6	-4.4
2.	Moldova	12.5	16.7	228.6	-2.9	-6.0	11.1	4.3	-17.8	6.7	17.2	18.7	7.4	-1.8	0.5	28.2	19.8	10.3	8.7
Total for the European Union																			
EU *		3,7	1,7	5,3	3,1	4,7	1,7	-0,8	-3,0	1,8	4,9	2,2	3,2	3,2	3,3	4,1	4,7	3,1	3,4

* for the European Union, we took data on the number of domestic tourists. As we wanted to clarify how the new members are contributing to the development of tourism in general.

Let us explain the logic behind how Table 2 is built:

- each number is a relative indicator that was obtained by calculating the growth rate using the following formula (Karpenko, 2019):

$$Gr(\%) = \frac{Y_c}{Y_p} \times 100, \quad (1)$$

where

Y_c – data for the current year, in units

Y_p – data for the previous year, in units

- the basis for the calculation was the statistics of inbound tourism to each of the countries, in units (number of arrivals);
- highlighting is only relevant for rows. Since it shows how much the growth rate of inbound tourism changes every year. At the same time, the dark green color corresponds to the highest growth rate for the entire sample per country. Consequently, dark red corresponds to the lowest tempo
- also, it is necessary to explain why we have chosen only Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova among the countries of Eastern Europe. Firstly, these countries are not members of the EU; therefore, it makes sense to

study the consequences for tourism during and after their European integration. Secondly, these are the countries that, in principle, strive for European integration. Since Ukraine signed an Association Agreement with the EU in 2014 (EU-Ukraine relations, 2021), the Republic of Moldova signed an Association Agreement with the EU in 2016 (Full entry into force..., 2016).

For the purposes of our research, we took into account exactly inbound tourism. Inbound tourism, in our opinion, is:

- stimulating the development of the country's infrastructure as a whole;
- development of new tourist routes and tourism goals;
- development of related industries within the national economy;
- the inflow of foreign exchange resources into the country's economy.

At the same time, outbound tourism largely depends on the macroeconomic situation in the country itself. In truth, a country that is going to enter or has already entered the EU is obliged to maintain target macroeconomic benchmarks (inflation rate, stability of the national currency), as well as political and social aspects at an acceptable level for the European Community. Not all of this can be achieved at the same time. Accordingly, outbound tourism, and specifically its dynamic growth, is a matter of comparably long prospect.

Results

Analyzing the data in Table 2, we came to the following conclusions according to the list of our questions distinguished in Figure 1 in order to check the hypothesis put forward:

1st and the widest question. The accession of countries to the European Union as a whole has a positive impact on the dynamics of inbound tourism to the countries – its new members. Moreover, for some of them, it is quite tangible. In this aspect, the following countries should be characterized:

- Significantly, the Republic of Latvia is a leader among the growth in the rate of inbound tourism – The growth rate of inbound tourism in the year of this country's accession to the EU increased by almost 2.5 times (from 9.9% for 2002-2003 to 23.5% for 2003-2004). The growth rate of 21-22% continued for another 2 years.
- Hungary generally had a negative pace – a decline, before joining the EU (-1%). However, after that, she received a positive denomination: 8% for 2003-2004.
- The Republic of Poland and the Czech Republic represent quite a familiar situation. Before joining the EU, they showed a low but positive growth rate of inbound tourism: 2.7% and 5.3% in 2002-2003, respectively, but increased this rate to more than 18% in 2003-2004.
- A rather curious situation can be characterized for the Republic of Cyprus. Its tourism industry reacted to the country's accession to the EU with a lag of 1 year – 2.6% in the year of accession and 7.2% the following year.
- The same situation is with the Republic of Malta. However, in the year of entry, it demonstrated a 5.6% reduction in inbound tourism, but the following year, this rate was already positive and amounted to 3.9%. In this aspect, it should be noted the Republic of Estonia, the statistics of the growth of inbound tourism which is very similar to the situation in Malta.

Separately, it is worth noting the situation with the countries that entered the European Union in 2007:

- The Republic of Bulgaria. Its inbound tourism industry reacted with growth with a lag of 1 year, from 3% in the year of entry to 10% the following year.
- Romanian inbound tourism has shown a significant increase in dynamics already in the year of EU accession. For the year, Romania received almost 28% more foreign tourists than last year.

The situation with the tourism within European Union, in general, is showing us quite an ambiguous situation. On the one hand, we see the increasing dynamics of domestic tourism after entering of new members (The EU accepted 5.3% of tourists more in 2004 than a year before). On the other hand, indeed, 5.3% is an insignificant increase in tourism, and it can be easily explained by other reasons (redistribution of tourist flows in the EU itself and the market situation).

The dynamics of tourism in 2007, after the next stage of expansion, looks even worse. This growth is characterized by only 1.7%, which, in addition, was exacerbated by the decline in the next two years.

It is indicative that for Ukraine, both years under consideration (2004 and 2007) are characterized by a significant increase in inbound tourism 22.6% and 20.5%, respectively. Moreover, these years differ significantly in growth rates with both subsequent and previous years. In the Republic of Moldova, the situation is generally the same. However, it is worth pointing out that in 2004, the inflow of inbound tourism to this country doubled.

2nd question. Analyzing the data presented in Table 1, we can make an unequivocal conclusion that the effect is positive, at least for 1-1.5 years after entry. It is evidenced by statistics for all new EU members that joined it in 2004 and 2007. For the EU as a whole, this effect can hardly be considered positive since it is obvious that the pace of tourism will decrease slightly in the following years. However, such a decrease (on 30-40 thousand tourists) with a total number of 650 million can be considered within the margin of error.

3rd question. From the obtained analysis, we see that the growth dynamics of inbound tourism is not only positive but also quite strong. Nevertheless, there is one nuance here. The dynamics of inbound tourism increases sharply either in the year of entry or in the next year. Further, the rates are leveled, made flatter.

4th question. We understand that this issue is inextricably linked with the previous ones and is largely based on them. At the same time, it formulates the problem in a slightly different way. Suppose the previous questions spoke about the fact of interconnection, its character and strength. Then this question considers the reaction time of the tourism market is such a fundamental event in the history of an integrated country. Accordingly, the integrating countries need to prepare their infrastructure for a sharp increase in the number of tourists arriving in the year of obtaining EU membership and next year. If they do not take advantage of this short period and do not earn the status of a tourist center, it will be much more challenging to achieve this in the future.

5th question. Here we can say that there are general trends in international tourism in the integration processes in addition to the periods of EU enlargement. Here we can say that there are general trends in international tourism in integration processes in addition to the periods of EU enlargement. It is evidenced by the results of the tourism sector between the EU members in the period 2008-2009. We see a sharp drop in tourist flows in 2009 (this is due to the aggravation of the consequences of the 2007 global financial crisis). On average, for the countries that joined the EU in 2004 and 2007, the decline is about 10%. However, here we can also note the existence of a lag (approximately 1-1.5 years) for individual countries. For example, if the drop in inbound tourism in the Republic of Slovakia, according to the results of 2009, was 17%, after which the growth began. That tourism to the Czech Republic in 2009 increased by 6%, after which it decreased by 5.8% in 2010.

The decline in the countries that joined the EU in 2004 and 2007 in the tourism sector in 2009-2010 changed to a slow-growth trend. However, it can also be considered a general trend. Conclusions which we've made based on assumed questions:

1st question. The link between European integration and the dynamics of inbound tourism to the new member states generally exists. It is evidenced by the statistical data on the years of their entry. However, at the same time, this conclusion is blurred by the dynamics of growth in tourism to Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova, which at that time did not even have an association agreement. In addition, we see that the situation with the growth of tourist flows in the EU itself during this period cannot be considered significant. Therefore, we will assume that the answer to this question is positive.

2nd question. All countries that have joined the European Union receive positive dynamics in terms of inbound tourism. Accordingly, we consider the answer to this question positive.

3rd question. The fact of the country's accession to the European Union has a serious impact on the increase in tourist flows. Moreover, this increase occurs several times. Therefore, the answer to this question can also be considered positive.

4th question. Analysis shows that this lag is not just short; it is extra short. It is explained by the excitement of citizens of other included in the European Union countries. A new member country means new tourist destinations. It, in particular, forms the sharp increase in tourist flows that we analyzed within the previous questions. Moreover, according to the dynamics of the growth of inbound tourism for 2-3 years after integration, the efficiency of the tourism industry, the quality of its infrastructure, the diversity of tourist destinations can be judged. The answer to this question is also considered positive.

5th question. This question confirms the correctness of the conclusions we made in the previous questions. We see that European integration has a fast, strong, but rather a short impact on the international tourism of the integrated countries. In addition, we see that since tourism is harmonized within the EU, the negative changes in the financial and economic climate in the world have a parity effect on these countries. It could be considered a negative fact. However, at the same time, tourism begins its growth also on a parity basis. Not so much and not so fast, but we have confirmed this fact. Therefore, we will also consider the answer to this question positive.

Based on the data obtained during the analysis and the conclusions that we made on their basis, we can assess the correctness of our hypothesis (Table 3). The result of testing the hypothesis is put forward in Figure 1.

Table 3. The result of testing the hypothesis put forward earlier (Authors' development)

		Question					Result
		1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	
Variant	6	Positive	Positive	Positive	Positive	Positive	The hypothesis is completely valid

We see that all the answers to the 6 questions posed are positive. It means that the hypothesis put forward by us is fully confirmed and valid and that there is a link between European integration and the dynamics of the tourism market in countries that are integrating with the EU. This connection is positive, strong and rapid.

Block 2. At this stage, we decided to pay more attention to the forms of international tourism that is developing today in European countries and to determine the centers of tourist flows concentration. An additional task here we set ourselves is to find at least indirect answers to Question 7, while outlining the directions of further research.

For starters, it should be noted that the tourism market has always been very volatile. It is facilitated by many factors, among which it is worth noting:

- policy and opportunities in the field of tourism of leading countries.
- integration processes;
- the macroeconomic situation in the world, as well as in its regions and countries;
- dynamics of the social tension centers;
- aggravation and development of global problems.

In this aspect, if each of these factors (except for the last) more affects this area in the form of redistribution of tourist flows and not a change in total volumes. The last among them, which is the aggravation and development of global problems, directly impacts the volume of tourism. In order to confirm this conclusion, we present statistics on the global volume of international tourism (Figure 2). In Figure 2, we see that the dynamics of world tourism as a whole is growing, but there are clear periods of decline that correspond to global financial and economic trends:

- The crisis can explain the decline in tourism dynamics in the world in 2003 – the *dot-com bubble*, which occurred in the United States in 2000-2002 (A revealing look..., 2018).
- A certain decrease occurred in 2009 as well, as a result of the reaction to the aggravation of the consequences of the global financial crisis of 2007-2008.

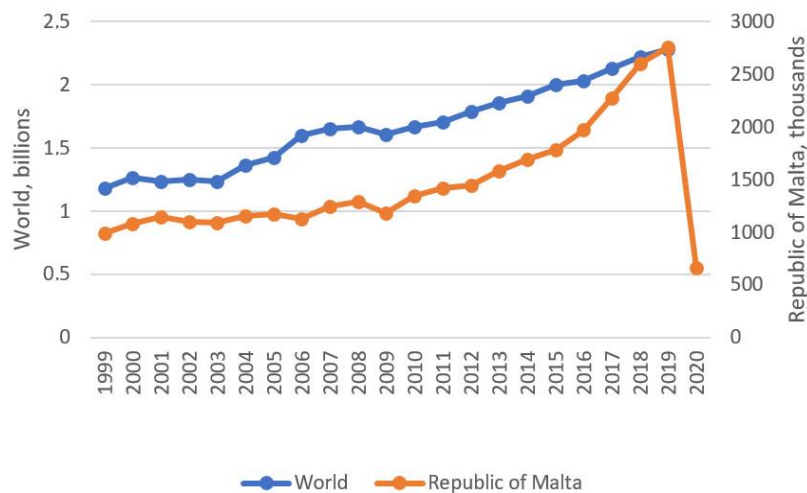


Figure 2. Dynamics of international tourism in the World (Authors' development based on (International tourism..., 2021a; Number of inbound overnight tourists..., 2021)

In addition, we were quite curious for us to add to Figure 2 data on the dynamics of inbound tourism in the Republic of Malta. We did this due to the fact that it is one among few countries that have published reliable data on the results of the tourism business in 2020 – the year of the COVID-19 pandemic. Comparing the resulting graph, we see that the data of these two numerical series completely coincide in dynamics and differ only in volumes. Today, the world is still calculating the exact figures for losses in 2020; however, it can be argued with confidence that the drop occurred several times compared to 2019 (The number of inbound tourists to the Republic of Malta in 2020 decreased by 4 times compared to 2019).

All these data lead to the fact that the process of the formation of a new international tourism market is taking place in the world today. New both in terms of content and directions. Consequently, the countries of Eastern Europe striving for European integration, such as Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova, now have the opportunity to declare themselves as new centers of tourism. However, here the question remains: what forms of international tourism to develop and what to offer a more demanding foreign tourist after 2021? According to data of 2019, the most popular tourist centers in the EU were (Explore Travel Trends..., 2021):

- French Republic – 86.9 million visitors;
- Kingdom of Spain – 81.8 million visitors;
- Italian Republic – 58.3 million visitors;
- United Kingdom – 37.7 million visitors (EU membership was terminated at midnight from January 31 to February 1, 2020) (Brexit..., 2021);
- The Federal Republic of Germany – 37.5 million visitors;
- The Republic of Austria – 29.5 million visitors;
- Hellenic Republic (Greece) – 27.2 million visitors;
- Portuguese Republic – 21.2 million visitors.

To a greater or lesser extent, the represented countries are not only European but also world centers in the spheres: Adventure Tourism; Beach Tourism; Cultural Tourism; Eco Tourism; Health Tourism; Working Tourism. Therefore, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine need to compete with the countries that are full members of the European Union. Therefore, the determination of promising forms of development of international tourism in these countries will be devoted to Block 3.

The second problem we posed for solving in Block 2 was the search for indirect conclusions on *Question 7* regarding the countries entering the European Union. To solve this problem, it is necessary to return to the data in Table 2 and build causal relationships based on the available data. Unfortunately, Eurostat, the World Bank, as well as other auto-prestigious sources (National Statistical Organizations) systematize mainly statistical information for countries as a whole, without breaking it down into separate industries. However, even the available data is sufficient to confirm the fact that there is no direct connection between the country's specializations in tourism, the process of its European integration and the synergistic influence of these factors on the tourism dynamics.

In support of this, we will put forward the findings of the analysis presented in Box 1, as well as the following facts by type of tourism (Taking into account the sample from Table 2):

1. Adventure Tourism. Tourism for adrenaline, tourism for fun and risk. All represented countries are characterized by it. It can be rafting on mountain rivers, survival in the forests, climbing mountains, fields on paragliders, racing on sports cars and other. Therefore, this type of modern tourism cannot serve as a decisive factor.
2. Cultural Tourism. Historical monuments, various sights, iconic places, architecture, folk art. All this exists in all countries. Of course, certain cultures are more attractive to foreign tourists, some to a lesser extent, but this form cannot be decisive.
3. Health Tourism. Healthcare today is a vital motive for travel and tourism. All represented countries, integrated into the EU in 2004 and 2007, have medicine at the level of European standards. However, in general, they cannot be considered fundamental centers for the development of medicine. For example, the Federal Republic of Germany, the French Republic and Scandinavian countries are considered centers of medicine not only in Europe but throughout the world.

However, this type of tourism does not necessarily mean some kind of treatment. It might just be rehabilitation. In this aspect, natural resources, like the climate, of each country can be useful for certain purposes. Therefore, these factors are also not the national advantages in this aspect.

4. Eco Tourism. Life without the benefits of modern digital society: without electricity, without modern gadgets, without cars and cities – in a natural environment. Possibly in any of these countries. Everything depends only on the tastes of each tourist, his travel experience. It is also not a decisive form.
5. Working Tourism. Quite a specific branch of modern tourism. It is traveling to other countries to find temporary work. This problem is typical for all countries in general (to a degree of separation). It is especially true for countries that are joining the union with more developed countries. In this case, all countries that joined the EU in 2004 and 2007 and which are members of the Eurozone, according to the IMF, should be considered developed countries (World Economic outlook, 2021). However, labor migration from non-Eurozone countries to Eurozone countries does exist. At the same time, this has almost no effect on statistics. For example, Romania and the Republic of Bulgaria show the same rates of inbound tourism as the Eurozone countries that joined the EU in 2004.
6. Beach Tourism. It is recreation near the sea – swimming, tanning, development and the hotel and restaurant business concentrated in certain points. This form of international tourism is the most striking for the purposes of our study.

We propose to focus especially on beach tourism. Since such tourism, for objective geographic reasons, cannot be equally characteristic of countries. Some of them (the Hellenic Republic, the Republic of Malta, the Republic of Cyprus) have the opportunity to develop this form of tourism actively. Others do not have such opportunities. However, returning to the statistics, we will issue:

On the one hand: The Republic of Cyprus with an increase in tourism in the year of entry at the level of 2.6% (7.2 – in the next); The Republic of Malta with a 5.6% decline in 2004, which was not offset by the growth in the following year: 3.9%.

On the other hand: Hungary is generally landlocked with tourism growth of 8% in the year of accession (growth continued further); The Republic of Poland and the Republic of Latvia with growth in 2004 at the level of 18.8% and 23.9%, respectively.

It should be noted that the average water temperature in the Baltic Sea in July near Gdansk is 18.9°C, near Riga 18.4°C (Baltic Sea water temperature in July, 2021). Moreover, the water temperature in the Mediterranean Sea in July near Paphos (Republic of Cyprus) is 28.3°C (Mediterranean Sea water temperature in July, 2021). The conditions for the development of beach tourism are obviously different.

Based on these facts and statistics, we conclude that the country's tourism specialization does not significantly impact the dynamics of inbound tourism in the process of its European integration.

Several more conclusions can be drawn from this:

Firstly, there is no and cannot exist a universal form of tourism that would provide an unambiguous increase in European tourists to a country that is integrating into the EU.

Secondly, success in international tourism can provide the country with any of its forms. However, this conclusion is valid only if the country itself and its infrastructure are ready for its development.

Block 3. Determination of promising forms of international tourism that would stimulate the European integration processes in the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine.

First, The Republic of Moldova. Despite the natural resource's diversity, the economic and geographical position of this country has serious disadvantage – lack of access to the sea. It would give opportunities for the development of international beach tourism. Therefore, it objectively does not have the opportunity to develop international beach tourism.

In addition, the country's territory is not crossed by the Carpathians, so the development of mountain recreational tourism on the hilly plains is not possible. Ancient European cities (Chisinau, Balti, Orhei), medieval settlements (Old Orhei), resorts on the rivers (Vadul-lui-Voda), monasteries, the largest wine cellars in Europe (Malye Milesti, Cricova) are of tourist interest. All this, in fact, forms the basis of the country's tourism industry (Attractions Moldova, 2021).

In addition, the Republic of Moldova is considered one of the poorest European countries. For comparison, GDP per capita, according to the World Bank, in the Republic of Moldova in 2019 was \$4494, while in the Czech Republic \$23.489, in the Republic of Poland \$15694, in the Republic of Bulgaria \$9829 (GDP per capita..., 2021). All this means that today, the country does not have internal financial reserves for the rapid development of tourism on a republican scale. Based on these facts, we believe that at the moment this country as well as its private business should be concentrated on the development of the spheres of:

1. Investment tourism. Not a classical economic category. By it, we propose to understand the attraction of investors to visit the country's territory. The purpose of such visits should be to demonstrate those opportunities and infrastructure that may be of interest to international tourist flows. With the creation of an appropriate investment climate at the legislative level, the country will gain access to financial resources, as well as the experience of developing tourism in Europe.
2. Wine tourism. The Republic of Moldova is known for its vineyards and wine-making traditions. The consumption of wine (as well as alcohol in general) products in Europe is traditionally quite high. Therefore, instead of simple wine export to European countries, the country can stimulate private companies to design special wine tours. This industry will pull up others as well: hotel and entertainment, gaming, catering, banking, and other representatives of the service sector.
3. Beach tourism on rivers. Despite the fact that the natural resources in this country are not so attractive for the sophisticated European tourist, there are still opportunities for their commercial use. The largest rivers possible for developing resorts in this country can be considered: Dniester (with its tributaries – Byk, Botna, Ikel, Reut) and Prut. The Danube, in this aspect, is not so attractive. The hotel business development in luxury regions on the river banks can also be considered a promising area for attracting foreign tourists.

The second discussed country is Ukraine. Ukraine has the richest and most diverse natural resources, which, coupled with a large territory, can create an outstanding international tourism potential. All the forms of tourism considered above, both widespread and those that we proposed for the Republic of Moldova, can be developed in Ukraine as well. At the same time, the difficult economic situation, as well as voluntary actions in the East of the country, predetermine the dynamics of inbound tourism. According to statistics, we see that after 2014, the number of foreign tourists is only falling.

However, this is not the only reason that the types of foreign tourism that are classical for Europe cannot be considered promising in Ukraine. As each among the classic types of tourism generates oncoming tourist flows from Ukraine itself. Competition in this aspect is very ambiguous. Since we see statistics of inbound tourism to Ukraine (in 2019, it amounted to 13.7 million people) and statistics of outbound tourism from Ukraine, in 2019 29.4 million people (International tourism..., 2021b). From these positions, we see the prospects for the development of tourism in those industries that, on the one hand, would be attractive for foreign tourists, and secondly, possible for implementation in Ukraine or collaboration between the EU and Ukraine. As part of such initiatives, we want to propose the following directions:

1. Trade union international tourism projects. Despite the fact that the economic situation in Ukraine as a whole tends to improve, the purchasing power of Ukrainian citizens continues to be at a level that excludes ample travel opportunities. It is especially true of the public sector, in which the employee's annual income is quite low.
Trade union international tourism projects can be considered promising in this aspect. We proposed to understand them as tours organized according to a clearly established schedule, route, estimate and paid in part: by the employee himself; by the trade union foundation; by subventions from the state budget; in the long term – by the host side.

Such tours can also be thematic – for representatives of certain professions: pilots, railroad workers, teachers, doctors, police and fire officers, utility workers and others. It will combine tourist and professional value – the opportunity to relax, see other countries and learn from foreign experiences.

Indeed, we must provide the European side with responsive tourism opportunities for its citizens. Therefore, such a mechanism cannot be considered positive solely for building up statistics in inbound tourism. Nevertheless, this is necessary for tourism purposes in general and the provision of tourism opportunities, particularly for the development of recreation and professional interests.

We consider the development of such tours extremely relevant and necessary in modern Ukrainian realities from these positions.

2. Urban tourism. Today, among European citizens, there is significant popularity for visiting large and significant industrial enterprises and their infrastructure, power plants (primarily hydroelectric power plants), abandoned zones and cities, museums built on former military facilities. All this exists in Ukraine and can develop by leaps and bounds. Among the abandoned cities, it should be noted: Kyiv region – Pripjat, Lyubech-1, Poliske; Cherkasy region – Orbita; Zaporizhzhia region – Stepnogirsk; Kirovograd region – Dolinske, Tsukroviriv (Seven abandoned cities of Ukraine..., 2021).

In case of quarries we may indicate Quarries in Kryvyi Rih as well as in Kirovograd, Kharkiv, Zhytomyr regions etc. are huge workings that will be interesting to visit for many European tourists.

Among hydroelectric power plants let's point out at Dnieper and Dniester cascades of hydroelectric power plants headed by Dnipro HPP. These are not only outstanding enterprises but also monumental structures, a miracle of engineering.

The Chernobyl exclusion zone as a whole is extremely interesting for foreign tourists. Therefore, more active development of the tourism industry in this place would also bring a serious additional contribution to the inbound tourism of Ukraine.

In case of former military facilities let's mention Pobuzke Museum of Strategic Missile Forces (Kirovograd Region). The largest military monument with collected unique exhibits, a demonstrator of functioning underground base and original hulls of intercontinental ballistic missiles (Strategic missile forces museum in Ukraine..., 2021).

In fact, there are a lot of such objects throughout Ukraine and, in our opinion, they represent a huge potential for the development of inbound tourism.

3. Space tourism. The most promising industry for the development of international tourism, as well as international scientific and technical cooperation.

Ukraine has a unique *Yuzhmash* enterprise specializing in the production of Zenit launch vehicles. Moreover, the company has experience of international cooperation in the programs *Sea Launch*, *Land Launch*, etc. (Yuzhmash, 2021). At the same time, today in Ukraine not a single project on space tourism is being implemented in general and with the European Union in particular.

The development of space tourism in cooperation with the European Space Agency will give a new round in the construction of bilateral political and economic relations *Ukraine-EU*, serve as a basis for the development of hundreds of enterprises on the Ukrainian territory. It, in turn, will create tens of thousands of new jobs and stimulate the development of the country's economy as a whole. It will also be another strategic step on Ukraine's path to European integration.

Nevertheless, despite the conclusions and proposals that we have identified for the development of foreign tourism for the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, this does not mean abandoning its other, more classical forms. However, the market laws are not shaken, which means that for a worthy entry into the European Union, these countries must prepare their infrastructure for new realities and offer the demanding European tourist truly unique opportunities.

The global crisis in the tourism, caused by the COVID-19 in 2020, has led to an increase in domestic tourism. According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the pandemic decreased the number of international travel by 74% (one billion people) year on year in 2020. For example, the market has fallen even more in Ukraine – by 88%, and such a tendency continues. The number of tourists who came to Ukraine decreased by 9% in 2021 and amounted to just over 3 million people compared to 13.7 million in 2019. It is enough to draw the following comparison in order to understand how immense is the scale of the catastrophe. The global financial and economic crisis led to a decrease in international tourist traffic by only 4% (60 million international tourists) in 2009.

At the same time, travelers began to explore much more within their countries due to closed borders and numerous restrictions. Domestic tourism in Italy, for example, reached the highest levels of all time in the summer of 2021. The increased demand for Ukrainian resorts is still holding on, as summer 2021 showed. However, a decline is expected since countries are gradually opening, and restrictions are becoming less severe.

Vaccination against COVID-19 has taken on a global scale since 2021, and the situation with tourism has, consequently, improved in all areas as vaccinated people could cross borders. Each country has established its entry rules for tourists. Thus, a tourist must have a vaccination passport or a negative test for COVID-19 or spend some

time in observation, etc. Even though there are innovations in tourism, many were able to integrate into this system, thereby increasing the flow of tourists and improving the economic performance of different countries (Stezhko et al., 2020). Moreover, not less important is that the modified Omicron has turned out to be not as contagious and deadly as the original virus. In addition to this, vaccination and immunity are becoming important factors for countering the pandemic.

Conclusions

Making a general outline of the integration transformations associated with the European Union, we can conclude that such a fundamental process for each country will seriously impact the national tourism sector. In our research, we fully proved the hypothesis that the connection between the European integration processes and the development of national tourism markets does not just exist. However, it is also strong (several times change, compared to the pre-integration period). The reaction of the markets of new members is very rapid (lag is 1-1.5 years from the year of integration) and transient (the positive effect lasts for 2-3 years from integration).

Based on the collected statistical data on the inbound tourism of the countries that joined the EU in 2004 and 2007, we proved that in 2-3 years, the market of each of these countries becomes *Solidary* with the common tourism market in the EU. It is evidenced not only by the parity decline in the industry at the turn of 2009-2010 (the aftermath of the 2007-2008 global financial crisis), but also by the solidarity rise – at the same pace and at the same time intervals. Special attention in the article was paid to identifying the main influencing factors on the development of international tourism. Among them, we highlighted the factor *aggravation and development of global problems*. The global financial and economic crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic have an incomparably greater impact on the sphere than, for example, the macroeconomic situation in the country. The authors of this article have taken into account that the integration time fell under the pandemic and certain restrictions. However, the situation has become much better since 2021 due to the world's exit from the pandemic period through vaccination and gaining natural immunity.

Additionally, we have proved that there is no connection between the European integration of the country, the rate of inbound tourism development on the one hand, and its tourist specificity on the other. It has been proven that in this aspect, factors of a different kind have a special role. We set the task of identifying these factors for further research. We devoted a separate block in the article to define the prospects for foreign tourism development in Eastern European countries. We included the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine in this group since only these countries from Eastern Europe have strategic guidelines for European integration. We proposed the development of investment tourism, wine tourism, as well as beach tourism on rivers as a promising way of developing international tourism for the Republic of Moldova. For Ukraine, we proposed creating international tourist trade union tours, the development of urban tourism, as well as space tourism.

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