

## Tourist Functions of Large Cities (Case Study: Kharkiv City, Ukraine)

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### Abstract

The present paper aimed to investigate the notion of "city", "urban space", and the "urban tourism". An example of a large city presents main elements of a structural-logical scheme for a geospatial research on the tourist market. Main functions of city were analyzed, in particular, the tourist function of a large city with modern signs of tourism development in Kharkiv city. The research indicated dynamics of number of tourists from Kharkiv region according to the tourism activity during 2000-2016 and dynamics for number of tourism activity in Kharkiv region for during 2011-2016. Kharkiv is a city where is expected to be a metropolis and "smart city". The research presented prior directions of tourist development in Kharkiv, and revealed main problems of the tourism development in the city. It highlighted main tasks for putting Kharkiv at the international and national levels as an attractive city for tourists.

**Keywords:** City; urban space; Function of city; Tourism; Urban tourism; Grouping tourist cities; Socio-cultural component of a tourist city.



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### 1. Introduction

Modern cities are now developing in the current concepts and trends for achieving the world's sustainable development, a high standard of living, the presence of identity, and attractiveness of developing unique tourist destinations, and the creation of appropriate competitive conditions for improving their socio-economic development. Unlike reducing roles of states in the globalization process, the importance and roles of cities are still increasing. The global aspect of tourism processes makes some components of cities' activities on the tourism market more intense. Under such conditions, weakening the state control over the regional level becomes the main strategic direction of the tourism development in cities (Ashworth, 1989).

Urban tourism is a significant important global form of tourism. Tourists visit facilities and contribute to the economic, infrastructural and cultural development of cities. Tourists also use large amounts of urban objects and their services, thereby creating a significant load on infrastructures. Most settlements are not specifically built for tourists; hence, the rational use of tourists and recreational resources of most tourist cities are significantly important. The overload of central region, where crowds of tourists complicate the movement of the streets, is the main problem arising from increased number of tourists in cities. The lack of planning for tourist movement by local authorities and self-government bodies is the main issue. Therefore, theoretical and practical studies should be conducted on characteristics of the urban tourism development in European and Ukrainian cities (Ashworth and Stephen, 2011) (Husnutdinov *et al.*, 2017) (Edwards *et al.*, 2008).

Many large cities are tourist destinations, distribution centres, and key tourism sources because of their large population and unique environment as well as important status and function in the national urban system (Gan and Bao, 2003). Given this situation, large cities must create awareness and brand image for their tourism resources to effectively segment, target, and attract potential customers. The present paper aimed to investigate the notion of "city", "urban space", and the "urban tourism" because tourism in the cities is not just an economic activity, it influences on the image of the city and the local inhabitants' everyday lives.

### 2. Methods

It is suitable to question about functions of a city, in particular, the tourist function of cities and the development of urban tourism in terms of geography, sociology, urban planning, economics, etc. The present study was conducted on the tourism in large cities and three paradigms: 1) a system that allows establishing a solution for problems using system concepts (scheme, component, element, structure, function, and organization); 2) procedural paradigm that reproduces logical and sequential changes of phenomena and forms of its organization; and 3) chorological paradigm that allows distinguishing spatial relationships and interactions.

The research on the tourist service market is a scientific and practical task based on a certain methodology. It combines methods, techniques, procedures and research operations in a hierarchical system with the purpose of finding the most optimal ways for solving problems.

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The selection of a system-structural analysis was the basic method of research (because of analyzing functions of elements in a system) that allowed subjects of market activities to structure the tourist service market, and identify inter-component, territorial and organizational-managerial interrelations, their nature, types, and forms (González and Antúnez, 2016).

The methodology of tourism research in cities should correspond to the essence of tourism as a social phenomenon with its inherent multi-component, structuring, and non-rigid hierarchy and poly-functionality of elements in a system. This method should reflect multidimensional activities of tourism in accordance with specifics of each component of the tourism industry, characteristics of domestic and international trade in tourist services, and characteristics of the tourism consumption according on the research scale (Villalobos Jose Vicente, 2018) (Liszewski, 2014) (Mezentsev *et al.*, 2017).

### 3. Result and Discussion

It is necessary to determine what the city space and city are in order to understand the research subject, in particular the tourist function of city. (Rudenko, 2015) argues that the urban space is a part of a geographical area that is different in terms of organization and landscape structure characterized by non-agricultural activity of a person, and has a formal legal status. In other words, the urban space is characterized by organizations, functionality and sociality. The urban space is thus identified by urbanized space as the result of a multidimensional urbanization process (Sofichuk, 2017).

The Polish economist, (Theuns, 2008) explained in his scientific work "Globalization, tourism and cities: Pros and cons": In the urban space, it is important to highlight the tourist space, which is a functional excellent subspace of general geographic space consisting of natural elements, the constant influence of human activity, cultural and economic environment as well as the social environment as a result of territorial functioning at global, regional and local levels (Zmyslony, 2011).

Law (2002) emphasize that functions of cities are creating and may change during their development, and they affect the adjacent territory. They can in turn determine main features of city. For instance, they can affect the planning structure, transportation, technical and social infrastructure, tourism, cultural development, population, etc.

Investigating functions of cities, (Pearce, 1998) specifies that the functional profile of a city is divided into mono-functional (with the domination of a functional specialization) and multi-functional (several functional specializations) aspects. Most modern cities including all large cities are multifunctional. The larger the city, the higher the degree of diversification of its activities, and the greater the number of socio-economic activity subjects who are involved in the implementation of its city functions. If the function forms a single enterprise for mono-functional cities, cities with diversified structure enterprises create an entire set of functions (Shoval and Raveh, 2004).

Modern changes of the urban tourism are associated with many factors such as an increase in the proportion of the urban population in the population structure of a region and a country as a whole, the use of the latest technologies in travel planning and booking, transportation, the information network development, lifestyle changes, and the population mobility.

The main criteria for tourist cities are architectural complexes, exhibition, museums, various events, hotels and transportation services as well as many shops and leisure facilities.

Tourist cities are divided into two groups.

The first group consists of cities where the tourism fulfills the city-forming function. This group typically includes small cities. They are mono-functional characterized by a narrow specialization and a non-diversified economy depending on the tourism. For such tourist cities, there is a characteristic orientation towards tourist consumers of relevant categories for certain types of tourism activities. The socio-economic component of a tourist city depends on processes and phenomena in the global and local tourism market. It is important for cities to maintain a tourist image, work on brands of city, and constantly attract tourists. Most of the population is involved in the sphere of service – transport infrastructure, hospitality and food, trade, excursions, etc. Local self-government bodies should work on regulation of tourism activities in cities.

The second group consists of cities where the presence of a tourist distance does not fulfill the city-forming function, in other words, such cities are multifunctional. These include all major cities and metropolises where the tourism is not the only, but one of many specialization areas. Compared to the first group, these cities have important advantages even with negative changes in the tourism market. A diversified economy avoids the crisis or minimizes its consequences. Such cities are attractive for different groups of tourists who are different in age, income levels, travel destination, and so on. Such cities can offer a relatively large variety of tourist products and services. If the tourist is a central figure in a mono-functional city, it creates a settlement and the whole city life is concentrated on it, and then the rest of cities become more autonomous. The tourist gets an opportunity to feel like a resident to visit same places like the natives and plunge into their color and culture.

Speaking about the current trends in the development of tourist cities, it should be noted that changing tourists' interests in tourist products, and the "curiosity to everything" have become quite popular, and borders between traditional tourist and non-tourist territories are blurring. The tourist image of a city goes beyond the specially constructed scene of traditional tourist objects (center, ancient monuments, architectural structures, etc.). Tourists are interested in authentic "non-tourist" places such as sleeping areas, industrial zones or other places that allow you feeling cities and know about local residents' roles. Tourists are also willing to visit public spaces where you can be acquainted more closely with cities and their inhabitants. Furthermore, the concept of "tourist" has become negative, artificial, uninteresting and unoriginal among tourists. Numerous travel forums, Internet publications, communities,

and travel companies form their own systems of "non-tourist attractions" that focus on attracting travelers. Their key features target a local resident, not a tourist (e.g. it can be "local foods", "an area where you will not meet tourists", etc.). Consequently, such places will eventually become tourist sites (Richards and Wilson, 2006).

In addition to the economic component, the tourism is a socio-cultural phenomenon. It promotes a rapid cultural exchange, which is manifested in increasing demand for relevant services, national goods, brands, styles and fashion. However, the excessive amount and large population of holidaymakers can negatively affect the social behavior of both tourists and the local population. This is due to the weakened moral and ethical principles leading to the emergence of various social problems (Timothy and Wall, 1995).

The socio-cultural component of a tourist city is characterized by the transformation of the human behavior, which may be complemented by national peculiarities of carriers in certain cultures of other individuals. Such a tourist urban space is created during visiting different cultures, under favorable stay conditions and can become an attractive force and contribute to the increase of tourist population (Hayllar, 2010).

The concentration of most historical and cultural tourist attractions in Kharkiv is in the center of city. However, unlike Lviv, the center of city is almost large; and tourists are mainly in several long streets (Sumy and Pushkin streets). Therefore, it contributes to the dispersion of tourists in large areas, the lack of concentration of the crowd, etc.

About 54 % of the population is concentrated in Kharkiv. In 2016, Kharkiv had a population of 1,450 thousand people. It is the second large city in the state after Kiev and the eighth in Eastern Europe. About 68% of its population is employed. Over the past decades, the city has had an increasing concentration of social, cultural, economic and information capital, modern forms of economic activity, innovative, creative and managerial potential, and has a favorable transportation and a high potential for developing tourist infrastructures (Murphy *et al.*, 2011).

Studies should analyze the urbanism of Kharkiv in the future for the status of this metropolis. However, it should be noted that this metropolis is not just an economically active city with a high level of competitiveness, innovative investment potential, and successful development of financial, commercial, human and information resources, but it must have a modern economic structure that is oriented on modern spheres of human activities, and have main characteristics of a "smart city" to develop the service sector, and a perfect infrastructure to be competitive not only at the state level, but also at the global level (Warzynska, 1974).

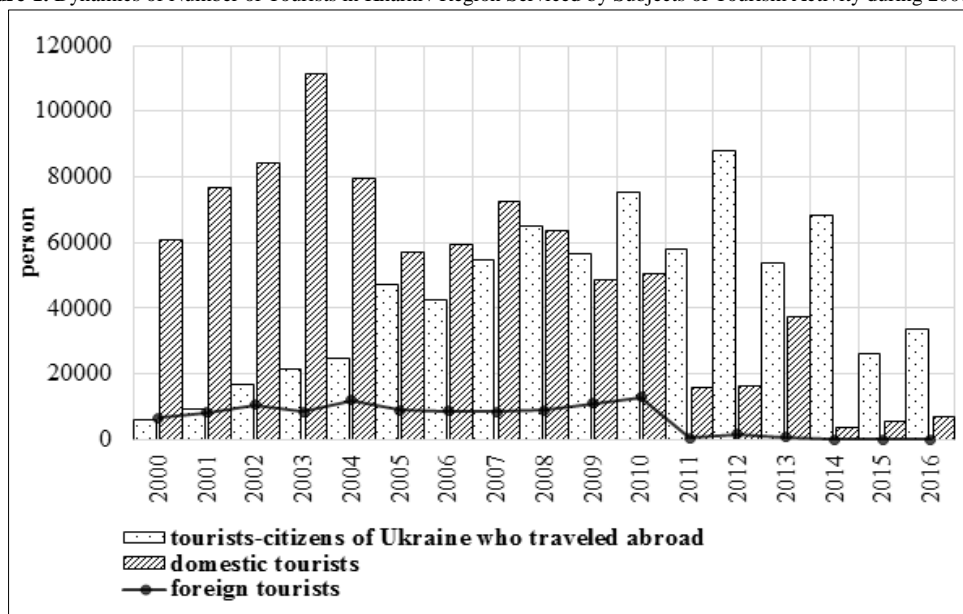
Furthermore, a high level of life quality, indices namely the assessment of urban economy and territory improvement, trade assessment, heating, garbage collection, green zone, street lighting, development of transport infrastructure among regions of Ukraine characterize Kharkiv. According to the City Development Strategy by 2020, Kharkiv should become a large European green city with a unique architecture with comfortable and safe living conditions for an educated population working in innovation and creative sectors of the economy. It can be argued that Kharkiv acts as the administrative, historical, cultural, and industrial, sports and business center in the national tourist market, and it is a priori direction of development in the region tourism.

The biggest development in the Kharkiv region can be acquired by the following cases (O'Reilly, 1986):

- Business tourism (is the most promising for the city). Business tourism includes a political component (visits, congresses, forums, conferences); scientific component (congresses, seminars, symposiums, expeditions, forums, conferences); commercial component (exhibitions, fairs); professional component (business trips, sports, tours); and public component (meetings, sessions);
- historical and cultural tourism based on a sightseeing interest in monuments and memorable places, heritage, museums, etc.;
- Shopping (trade);
- Event tourism (musical festivals– «Impulse Fest», Ethno Drum, football events – Shakhtar matches in the Ukrainian Premier League, Champions League with the participation of national team of Ukraine, etc.);
- Health-improvement tourism which is created by a large number of specialized medical institutions of the Academy of Sciences of Ukraine with highly qualified specialists.

The reorientation to the information-creative city is the prior direction of Kharkiv development to become the great tourist city of Eastern Europe. According to the definition of local governments, such changes can be facilitated by the availability of higher education institutions with high European standards, a large number of historical and cultural monuments as well as modern tourist establishments. In particular, the tourist base of city is represented by the following institutions: 5 higher educational establishments train tourism specialists; 32 museums; 39 theaters; more than 10 cinemas; more than 25 galleries; planetarium; zoo; eco-parks; aquariums; circuses; Maxim Gorky Central Park for Culture and Recreation; 2 water parks; about 60 religious institutions; 9 stadiums; 10 skiing bases; 9 rock climbers; 16 rental sports equipment; 9 covered rollers; more than 90 hotels and hostels; "Radmir-Expo" presentation and exhibition center; and 100 conference rooms. The interest and high level of work of local self-government bodies in the development of the local tourism industry is confirmed by the presence of the Tourist Council under Kharkiv city mayor's control, the current Strategy for the development of tourism in the city, and the function of tourist brand «Kharkiv smart city» as an important factor in the development of urban tourism.

Figure-1. Dynamics of Number of Tourists in Kharkiv Region Serviced by Subjects of Tourism Activity during 2000-2016

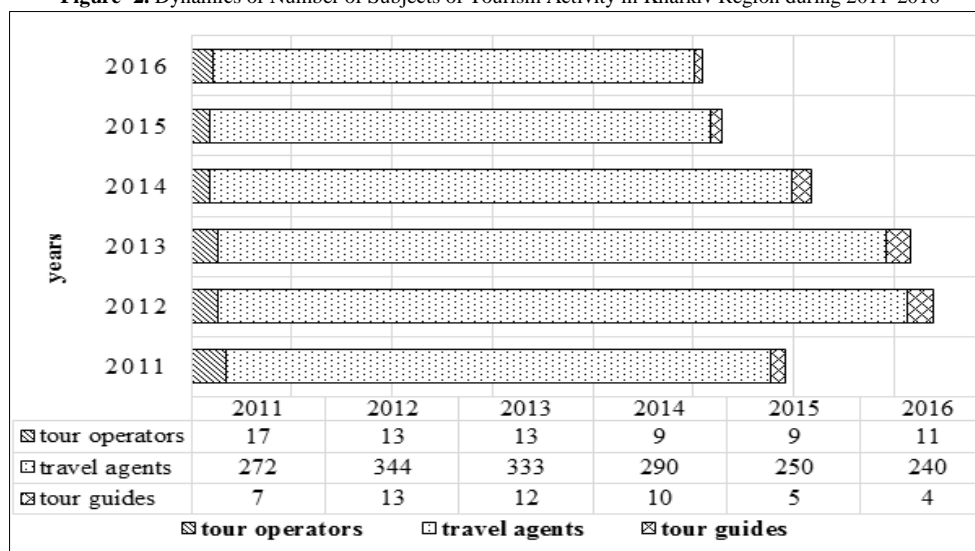


According to dynamics of number of visitors of Kharkiv region serviced by tourists, it is possible to note that the prevailing number of tourists from local residents residing abroad is significantly lower than the number of domestic and foreign tourists in the region as a whole (Figure 1). In other words, it characterizes the reorientation of the tourist service market when roles of tour operators, agents and travel agencies are significantly reducing and tourists prefer to travel independently.

The rate of presence in the city is rather low, which is typical for individual cities, regions and Ukraine as a whole, since 95% of tourists, who visited Ukraine in 2016, travelled there with «personal goals», 2% for «transit», 1.3% for «tourism», 1.1% for «other goals», and 0.2% for «official purposes» [Official site of the State Statistics Service of Ukraine].

There were 255 tourist activities in Kharkiv region in 2016 including 240 travel agents, 11 tour operators and 4 tourists who carried out excursions (Figure 2).

Figure- 2. Dynamics of Number of Subjects of Tourism Activity in Kharkiv Region during 2011-2016



Dynamics of number of tourists in this region confirms the tendency to reduced role of tour operators and agents for planning a tourist trip. For most regions, their services are used by tourists for foreign recreation (e.g. in the «all inclusive» format in Turkey with 60% of all summer tourist vouchers, or Egypt with 80% of all tourist vouchers in winter).

An analysis of domestic tourism services, which were provided by tourist entities of Kharkiv region, indicated that most of them provide outbound tourism services. 33% of firms offer rest and sightseeing tours to Ukraine including skiing in the Carpathians and rest on the shores of Azov and Black Seas (this activity is often seasonal). Less than 10% of tourists offer direct excursions to the city and region, and the treatment in sanatoria.

The main problems of tourism development in Kharkiv are as follows:

- Lack of consistent state and regional tourism policy;

- Weak attention to the development of certain types of tourism that need to orient the tourist market (industrial, cognitive, educational, sports tourism, etc.);
- The predominant orientation of tour operators and travel agencies for the outbound tourism;
- The low awareness of tourists and residents about the tourism and relevant services and goods;
- Insufficient coordination of tourism enterprises and relevant industries.
- Based on the analysis of the current tourism situation in Kharkiv, the main existing problems in the industry, and the Article of the City Development Strategy until 2020, we can identify main tasks in positioning Kharkiv at the international and national levels as an attractive tourist destination:
- Assistance in the comprehensive provision of information to tourists and transit passengers concerning cultural establishments, amusements, and recreation places in the city;
- Developing the cognitive, educational, sports, business and leisure tourism;
- Developing a system of hostels and campsites for cyclists and tourists;
- Supporting the self-organization and interaction between subjects of tourism activity;
- Developing tours by «weekend» tour operators focusing on local tourist attractions;
- Developing the festival movement to popularize the city.

The development of cognitive, educational, sports, business and entertainment tourism in Kharkiv is almost promising, and there is a need to improve the level of awareness in tourists and the local population about existing tourist attractions, exhibitions, and events of various directions in the city. It is also important to support the interaction of local travel companies and local authorities as well as the popularization of local tourist products.

## 4. Conclusion

It is very important to conduct the theoretical and practical research on peculiarities of the urban tourism development. Since now, most large cities are multifunctional; and the tourism is one of their most important functions. Most tourist attractions are creating in cities, and thus the city tourism is considering an important form of the world's tourism. The tourism development in cities contributes to the economic, infrastructural, social, investment, environmental and cultural development. Similarly, the unregulated use of the city's tourist resources and significant tourist flows can cause a significant load on the city and its historical and cultural monuments, and infrastructure. This increases the association of research with the tourist function of large cities.

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