

V. Dankanych,

PhD student of the Department of Economy and Finance, Mukachevo State University

ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0003-5719-0343>

V. Hoblyk,

Doctor of Economic Sciences, Professor, Mukachevo State University

ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1830-3491>

DOI: 10.32702/2306-6814.2026.1.33

TOURISM AND RECREATION SECTOR AS A FACTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN MOUNTAIN REGIONS

В. А. Данканич,

аспірант кафедри економіки та фінансів, Мукачівський державний університет

В. В. Гоблик,

д. е. н., професор, Мукачівський державний університет

ТУРИСТИЧНО-РЕКРЕАЦІЙНА СФЕРА ЯК ФАКТОР ЕКОНОМІЧНОГО РОЗВИТКУ ГІРСЬКИХ РАЙОНІВ

The study aims to determine the role of the tourism and recreation sector as a factor of economic development in the mountainous regions of Ukraine and to develop recommendations for strengthening the local economy (through the creation of new jobs, the preservation of cultural and natural heritage, and the improvement of the socio-economic well-being of the population). The study highlights that the tourism and recreation sector is a crucial component of the region's economic system, generating additional income, creating jobs, and fostering entrepreneurial development. Based on the research results, the potential for using these impacts to develop various models of economic growth in mountainous regions is demonstrated, in particular, the multiplier effect model, the socio-economic stabilization model, the cultural and ecological development model, and the integrated planning and partnership model. It is stated that the models of the tourism and recreation sector's influence on the economy of mountainous regions are shaped by the priority directions of local development, their interconnectedness, and the formats of strategic measures applied. It is illustrated that the model aimed at generating a multiplier effect in the economies of mountainous regions focuses on attracting investments into the tourism and recreation sector, which ensures income growth in related industries. It is demonstrated that the model of socio-economic stabilization is oriented toward the development of tourism and recreation activities linked to local resources and traditional employment. This contributes to retaining the population, especially young people, and reducing migration and demographic risks. It is also shown that the cultural and ecological development model is oriented toward preserving cultural heritage and promoting local traditions. Priority is given to types of tourism connected with the history, crafts, and arts of the mountainous region. This supports the development of local culture and increases the area's attractiveness to visitors. Furthermore, it is demonstrated that the model of integrated planning and partnership involves the joint efforts of government bodies, local communities, and businesses in implementing comprehensive tourism and recreation projects. This ensures sustainable economic development of the region and strengthens its social infrastructure. The research results indicate that the tourism and recreation sector can serve as an effective tool for the comprehensive economic, social, and cultural development of mountainous regions, provided that priority directions are defined and strategic measures are applied in an integrated manner.

Метою дослідження є визначення ролі туристично-рекреаційної сфери як чинника економічного розвитку гірських районів України та розробка рекомендацій щодо посилення локальної економіки (через створення нових робочих місць, збереження культурної та природної спадщини, а також покращення соціально-економічного стану населення). У межах дослідження звернено увагу на те, що туристично-рекреаційна сфера є важливою складовою економічної системи регіону, що забезпечує створення додаткових доходів, робочих місць та стимулює розвиток підприємництва. За результатами дослідження доведені можливості використання окреслених впливів для формування різних моделей економічного розвитку гірських районів, зокрема: моделі мультиплікаційного ефекту; моделі соціально-економічної стабілізації; моделі культурно-екологічного розвитку; моделі інтегрованого планування та партнерства. Констатовано, що окреслені моделі впливу туристично-рекреаційної сфери на економіку гірських районів формуються залежно від пріоритетних напрямків локального розвитку, інтегральності цих напрямків та форматів застосовуваних стратегічних заходів. Проілюстровано, що модель із формування мультиплікаційного ефекту в економіці гірських районів спрямована на залучення таких інвестицій у туристично-рекреаційну сферу, що забезпечують зростання доходів у суміжних галузях. Доведено, що модель соціально-економічної стабілізації розвитку гірських районів спрямована на розвиток туризму та рекреації, пов'язаних з місцевими ресурсами та традиційною зайнятістю. Це сприяє утриманню населення, особливо молоді, зменшенню міграції та демографічних ризиків. Доведено, що модель культурно-екологічного розвитку орієнтована на збереження культурної спадщини та популяризацію місцевих традицій. Пріоритетним є розвиток туризму, пов'язаного з історією, ремеслами та мистецтвом гірського регіону. Це сприяє розвитку локальної культури та підвищенню привабливості району для відвідувачів. Доведено, що модель інтегрованого планування та партнерства передбачає об'єднання зусиль державних органів, місцевих громад та бізнесу для реалізації комплексних туристичних та рекреаційних проєктів. Це забезпечує сталий економічний розвиток району та зміцнення соціальної інфраструктури. Результати дослідження засвідчують, що туристично-рекреаційна сфера може виступати ефективним інструментом комплексного економічного, соціального та культурного розвитку гірських районів за умови визначення пріоритетних напрямків і інтегрованого застосування стратегічних заходів.

Key words: multiplier effect; promotion of local traditions; socio-economic stabilization; tourism; development of related industries; improvement of the marketing system.

Ключові слова: мультиплікаційний ефект; популяризація місцевих традицій; соціально-економічна стабілізація; туризм; розвиток суміжних галузей; удосконалення системи маркетингу.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Despite their natural and cultural potential (which in theory could create preconditions for the development of various economic sectors [2—3]), the mountainous regions of Ukraine face a crisis economic situation, characterized by high unemployment, youth outmigration, degradation of traditional industries, and low household income levels. Annual data from the State Statistics Service of Ukraine confirm that these crisis trends intensify as population density decreases, infrastructure deteriorates (which exacerbates the problems caused by remoteness from economic centers), and socio-economic risks remain high.

Under such conditions, the search for models to stimulate the development of local economies in mountainous regions becomes particularly relevant. As demonstrated by studies of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the United

Nations Tourism Organization (UN Tourism, formerly UNWTO), one such model is the development of tourism and recreation, as it creates opportunities not only for generating new jobs and increasing household incomes, but also for restoring social and economic infrastructure, preserving cultural heritage, and protecting natural resources. According to UN Tourism, tourism in mountain areas has a multiplier effect, as it stimulates the development of related sectors — from transport and hospitality to the production of local goods and handicrafts.

However, it should be noted that for the tourism and recreation sector to serve as an effective instrument for the economic revival of mountainous areas, a comprehensive approach combining strategic planning, state support, and active involvement of local communities is essential. This includes the integrated development of multifunctional infrastructure, improvement of regional tourism product marketing, enhancement of skills in the

Table 1. Social effects of tourism and recreation development in the mountain regions of Ukraine

Impact aspect	Description of the effect of tourism and recreation development	Examples of implementation in the mountainous regions of Ukraine
Retention of young people in their home regions	Tourism and recreation create new jobs and opportunities for self-employment, motivating young people to stay in their native regions.	Youth startups in ecotourism and hospitality (guided tours, sports equipment rental, small hotels in the Carpathians); training programs and internships in the tourism sector
Reduction of demographic decline risk	Tourism and recreation contribute to regional economic stability and infrastructure improvement, reducing population outflow and attracting new residents.	Seasonal and permanent jobs at Bukovel, Dragobrat resorts; development of local businesses (handicrafts, farm products)
Increase in cultural awareness among the population	Promotion of local traditions and cultural heritage through tourism and recreation projects.	Ethnographic festivals, traditional craft workshops, guided tours of historical and architectural landmarks
Increase in environmental awareness among the population	Tourism encourages the protection of natural resources and the development of environmentally responsible practices.	Eco-tours, national parks (Carpathian National Nature Park, Skole Beskydy), creation of conservation trails, implementation of sustainable tourism ruleio

Source: created by the authors based on [4; 6—7].

hospitality sector, and the adoption of modern technologies for managing tourist flows. Without such measures, the tourism and recreation potential of mountain regions risks remaining underutilized, while the economic challenges may continue to deepen.

ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

Research on the tourism and recreation sector as a driver of economic development in mountainous areas has been conducted by Biletska N., Holovko O., Lemak V. [2], Mashtaler O., Hutsul T., Maslyhan O., Cheban Yu., and Tsymbalistova O. [5]. These scholars systematically examine how the tourism and recreation sector can enhance the economic potential of mountainous regions, emphasizing the need for an integrated approach to planning tourism products, developing infrastructure to accommodate visitors, fostering local entrepreneurship, and preserving natural and cultural heritage.

Furthermore, these researchers stress that, in order to develop practical recommendations for overcoming economic crises and ensuring sustainable development of local communities, it is crucial to utilize tourism potential effectively. This approach not only stimulates economic growth in mountain regions but also promotes social stability, strengthens the region's positive image, and encourages population retention-particularly among young people-in their home areas.

FORMULATION OF THE ARTICLE'S OBJECTIVES

The aim of the study is to identify the role of the tourism and recreation sector as a factor in the economic development of Ukraine's mountainous regions and to develop recommendations for enhancing its effectiveness in stimulating the local economy (through the creation of new jobs, the preservation of cultural and natural heritage,

and the improvement of the socio-economic well-being of the population).

THE PAPER MAIN BODY

Within the framework of the study, the authors draw attention to the fact that a mountain region is a territory characterized not only by specific natural conditions (high relief, challenging climate, particular soil cover and hydrological features), but also by a complicated socio-economic development due to the unique living conditions and specific nature of economic activity [2—3]. In Ukraine, mountain regions include high-altitude areas with low population density, limited transport and engineering infrastructure, and exposure to natural hazards such as avalanches, mudflows, landslides, floods, and soil erosion risks.

The distinction of the term "mountain region" in national scientific and administrative practice is justified not by its inherent characteristics, but rather by the need for a comprehensive approach to regional planning, the development of targeted socio-economic programs, and the adaptation of public administration policies to the specific conditions of these territories [3]. In fact, the very delineation of such areas from others should enable government authorities to more effectively account for the features of the natural environment and socio-demographic factors when influencing the potential of the local economy and when making strategic decisions regarding their development.

Within the framework of the outlined study, we concur with the opinion of Maslyhan O. O. and Kulinich T. V. [6] that the tourism and recreation sector represents the most effective model of economic development for mountainous areas, as it generates additional sources of income for the population, contributes to job creation, and stimulates the development of related industries (transport, hotel and restaurant business, production of local goods and crafts).

Table 2. Key directions for enhancing the effectiveness of economic development in mountainous areas

Direction of development of mountainous areas	Key types of strategic actions for development	Impact on local economic stimulation models
Infrastructure development	Modernization of roads, crossings, and public parking facilities. Construction and renovation of hotels, recreational, and tourism infrastructure. Development of tourist routes, information centers, and recreational areas.	Creates a multiplier effect by attracting investment, stimulates related industries, and increases the region's overall accessibility and tourism appeal.
Support for small and medium-sized businesses	Grant programs for homestead owners and small hotels Support for local producers and artisans Development of farms and eco-oriented services	Strengthens local entrepreneurship, supports job creation, boosts local incomes, and promotes economic diversification.
Development of cultural and natural heritage	Organizing festivals, fairs, and workshops. Establishing and expanding protected areas and eco-trails. Promoting traditional culture, crafts, and local cuisine.	Supports the development of a cultural and ecological growth model, enhances tourism appeal, and ensures the preservation of traditions and natural resources.
Socio-economic support for the population	Creating new jobs in tourism and related sectors. Developing education and improving skills in the hospitality industry. Ensuring access to quality healthcare and social services.	Ensures socio-economic stability by reducing outmigration, improving the population's well-being, and strengthening the region's human resource potential.

Source: created by the authors based on [1–2; 4; 7].

In addition to its economic impact, the development of tourism and recreation (as two interconnected spheres) in mountain regions promotes social stability, particularly by retaining young people, reducing the risks of demographic decline, and enhancing the cultural and environmental awareness of the local population (see Table 1).

According to research by Biletska N., Holovko O., and Lemak V. [1], tourism and recreational activities in mountainous regions have a multiplicative effect, as each investment in this sector generates additional economic and social benefits, including improved infrastructure, preservation of cultural heritage, and stimulation of local entrepreneurship. For instance, investments in the development of tourist infrastructure in the Carpathians—such as building hotels, establishing rental points for skiing and sports equipment, and creating tourist routes and excursion programs—have contributed to higher incomes for the local population, the creation of new jobs, and the growth of related sectors, including the food industry, crafts, and transport. In the Kosiv and Verkhovyna districts, the organization of ethnographic and cultural festivals helps preserve folk traditions and crafts while simultaneously attracting tourists and generating additional income for local communities.

To make the tourism and recreation sector an effective driver of economic development in mountainous regions, it is essential to implement a comprehensive set of targeted measures that integrate economic, social, cultural, and environmental priorities. The key directions for enhancing economic development in mountainous areas include [3; 6–7]:

— Systematic modernization of transportation networks, as well as the construction and renovation of hotels, recreational facilities, tourist routes, and information centers.

— Support for small and medium-sized enterprises in hospitality, traditional crafts, the food industry, and environmentally oriented services.

— Organization of festivals, workshops, and cultural events; creation of protected natural areas and eco-tourism routes; and promotion of national traditions and authentic cultural heritage.

— Creation of new jobs, ensuring stable income opportunities, encouraging youth engagement and retention in the region, and improving the quality of education and healthcare services.

Given the diversity of these directions (see Table 2), their combined application can shape various models for stimulating the local economy, as each development pathway influences different components of mountainous territories—including infrastructure, the economy, social development, culture, and the environment.

It can be noted that, depending on which direction outlined in the table is prioritized, the formats of the strategic measures applied and their integration, specific models of impact on local economic development emerge in a given mountain region. Among these, we have identified the following models: the multiplier effect model, the socio-economic stabilization model, the cultural and ecological development model, and the integrated planning and partnership model.

In a model aimed at generating a multiplier effect in the economy of mountainous regions, investments are promoted not only in tourism and recreation but also in related sectors such as transportation, hotels and restaurants, and traditional crafts (e.g., pottery, woodcarving, blacksmithing, basket weaving, and more). This approach helps expand the region's economic base, stimulate entrepreneurship, and increase local employment. Investment in one sector generates additional demand in others, reinforcing economic interactions and boosting local incomes. As a result, a self-sustaining cycle of economic development emerges, with tourist flows acting as a catalyst for broader economic activity and higher public revenues.

Within a model aimed at the socio-economic stabilization of mountainous regions, tourism and recreation are priority sectors, as they help retain the local population—especially young people—reduce migration outflows, and mitigate demographic risks. This includes types of tourism that are closely connected to local resources, lifestyles, and traditional occupations in mountain areas, such as rural (green) tourism, classic ecotourism, agritourism (farm tourism), and active or adventure tourism. These forms of tourism are particularly effective in creating local jobs, keeping young people in the region, and curbing migration.

Within the model focused on cultural and ecological development, the priority area of activity is tourism and recreation, which helps preserve cultural heritage and promote local traditions. This involves types of tourism directly linked to the region's cultural traditions and history, crafts, and arts, such as historical tourism, ecotourism with a cultural component, culinary tourism, and art tourism.

Within the model focused on integrated planning and partnership, efforts are coordinated among government agencies, local communities, and businesses in mountain regions to implement comprehensive projects in tourism and recreation, ensuring the sustainability of economic development and social infrastructure. This includes partnerships such as tourism clusters and proto-clusters, public-private partnerships, and similar collaborative initiatives.

CONCLUSIONS

The study highlights that the tourism and recreation sector is an important component of a region's economic system, generating additional income, creating jobs, and stimulating entrepreneurship. Accordingly, it concludes that the impacts of the tourism and recreation sector can be leveraged to form different models of economic development for mountainous areas. It is noted that these models of influence depend on the priority development directions, the degree of integration, and the formats of the strategic measures applied. Among the identified models are the multiplier effect model, the socio-economic stabilization model, the cultural and ecological development model, and the integrated planning and partnership model.

It has been demonstrated that the multiplier effect model in the economy of mountainous regions focuses on attracting investments into the tourism and recreation sector, which in turn drives income growth in related industries.

It has also been shown that the socio-economic stabilization model for the development of mountainous regions is aimed at promoting tourism and recreation linked to local resources and traditional occupations. This supports the retention of the population, particularly young people, and helps reduce migration and demographic risks.

It has been demonstrated that the cultural and ecological development model focuses on the preservation of cultural heritage and the promotion of local traditions. Its priority is the development of tourism and recreation connected to the history, crafts, and arts of the mountainous region. This contributes to the growth of local culture and enhances the region's appeal to visitors.

It has also been shown that the integrated planning and partnership model involves the coordination of efforts among government agencies, local communities, and businesses to implement comprehensive tourism and recreation projects. This ensures sustainable economic development of the region and strengthens social infrastructure.

The study's results indicate that the tourism and recreation sector can serve as an effective tool for the comprehensive economic, social, and cultural development of mountainous regions, provided that priority areas are clearly defined and strategic measures are applied in an integrated manner.

Література:

1. Білецька, Н., Головка, О., Лемак, В. (2024). Сучасні концепції розвитку туристичних та ресторанних кластерів гірських територій. *Економічний простір*, 2024. № 191. С. 40—45.
2. Делятинчук А.І. Розвиток гірських територій України як складова стратегії єс для карпатського регіону. *Публічне урядування*, 2024. №. 1 (38). С. 25—31.
3. Кравців В. С., Жук П. В. Розвиток гірських територій України у парадигмі європейського досвіду. *Економіка України*. 2018. № 5. С. 61—72.
4. Королович О.О., Ліба Н. С. Диверсифікація економіки гірських територій: сучасні підходи. *Ефективна економіка*. 2024. Вип. № 8. <http://nauka.com.ua/index.php/ee/article/view/4422> (Дата звернення 4.09.2024).
5. Машталер О., Гуцул Т., Маслиган О., Чебан Ю., Цимбалістова О. Кластери в стратегії економічного розвитку України та її регіонів. *Financial and Credit Activity Problems of Theory and Practice*, 2023. No 3 (50). С. 320—329.
6. Маслиган О.О., Кулініч Т. В. Стратегії гармонійного розвитку як засоби мінімізації локальних проблем гірських населених пунктів. *Інвестиції: практика та досвід*. 2024. № 16. <https://www.nayka.com.ua/index.php/investplan/article/view/4360>
7. Mashika H., Zelic V., Kiziun A., Maslyhan R. et al. Services sphere cluster management: virtualization and methodological aspects: monohrafiya. Odesa: KUPRIENKO S.V., 2023, 131 p.

References:

1. Biletska, N., Holovko, O., and Lemak, V. (2024), "Modern concepts of development of tourist and restaurant clusters of mountainous areas", *Ekonomicznyy prostir* vol. 191, pp. 40—45.
2. Delyatinchuk, A.I. (2024), "Development of the mountain territories of Ukraine as a component of the EU strategy for the Carpathian region", *Publichne uryaduvannya*, vol. 1 (38), pp. 25—31.
3. Kravtsiv, V. S., and Zhuk, P. V. (2018), "Development of mountainous areas of Ukraine in the paradigm of European experience", *Ekonomika Ukrayiny*, vol. 5, pp. 61—72.
4. Korolovych O.O., Liba N. S. (2024), "Diversification of the economy of mountainous areas: modern approaches", *Efektivna ekonomika*, vol. 8. available at: <http://nayka.com.ua/index.php/ee/article/view/4422> (Accessed 4.09.2024).
5. Mashtaler, O., Hutsul, T., Maslyhan, O., Cheban, Yu., and Tsymbalistova, O. (2023), "Clusters in the strategy of economic development of Ukraine and its regions", *Financial and Credit Activity Problems of Theory and Practice*, vol. 3 (50), pp. 320—329.
6. Maslygan, O.O., and Kulinich, T.V. (2024), "Harmonious development strategies as means of minimizing local problems of mountain settlements", *Investments: practice and experience*, vol. 16. <https://doi.org/10.32702/2306-6814.2024.16>
7. Mashika, H., Zelic, V., Kiziun, A., and Maslyhan, R. et al. (2023), *Services sphere cluster management: virtualization and methodological aspects*: KUPRIENKO S.V., Odesa, Ukraine.

Стаття надійшла до редакції 12.12.2025 р.