

Komitet Przestrzennego Zagospodarowania Kraju Polskiej Akademii Nauk
Zeszyt 269, rok 2018, s. 59-74

Marta Malska

Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, Faculty of Geography, Department of Tourism,
41, Doroshenka Street, Lviv, 79000, Ukraine;
e-mail: malskym-malskym@ukr.net

Lidiya Dubis

Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, Faculty of Geography,
Department of Geomorphology, 41, Doroshenka Street, Lviv, 79000, Ukraine
The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin,
The Faculty of Mathematics, Informatics and Landscape, Department of Landscape Ecology,
1 H, Konstantynów Street, Lublin, 20-708, Poland;
e-mail: lida.dubis@gmail.com

Yuriy Zinko

Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, Faculty of Geography, Department of Tourism,
41, Doroshenka Street, Lviv, 79000, Ukraine;
e-mail: zinkoyuriy@gmail.com

CLUSTER AND CLUSTER INITIATIVES OF RURAL TOURISM IN UKRAINE

Abstract: The article deals with the issue of formation and functioning of rural tourism clusters in Ukraine. Here, formation of cluster structures in rural tourism is at its initial stage. Analysis of existing clusters resulted in their classification into groups based on the criterion of specialization: lodging and food (farmsteads), agritourist and local history tourism clusters. Analysis of the main research models for the creation and analysis of rural tourism clusters functioning has been performed. A multilevel universal model of the rural tourism clusters with basic structural levels (basic, af-

filiate and accompanying) has been proposed for scientific and practical purposes. This model was used to form two cluster initiatives in the ethnographic region of the Ukrainian Carpathians – in the Boykivshchyna. The need to use foreign experience in rural tourism cluster research has been emphasized.

Keywords: Clusters, cluster initiatives, multilevel universal model of the rural tourism cluster, rural tourism, Ukraine.

JEL codes: Z320, R120.

Introduction

Rural tourism is considered to be a priority type of tourism in Ukrainian legislation in the context of the revival and socioeconomic development of rural areas. In Ukraine, rural tourism had certain traditions of development in the 20th century: recreation in the homes of Carpathian villagers at the beginning of the 20th century and stay in villages near sea and mountain recreational centres in the 60-80-s of the 20th century. During the last decade, rural tourism in Ukraine demonstrates a broad spectrum of forms and the broadening of territorial development, embracing almost all regions of the country. The most popular tourist activities on rural territories include short- and long-term recreation in private homes and cottages, qualified tourism (alpine skiing, hiking and boating), cultural (ethnographic) and natural (ecological) tourism. Such forms of rural tourism as agritourism based on villages and farms, culinary tourism with wine and cheese routes and participation in culinary festivals, as well as visits to Cossack farms and historical objects on rural territories are being developed. Sacral objects (especially wooden churches), traditional rural buildings and cultural landscape, rural mode of life and traditions, local fests as well as proximity to natural resources (woods and water) are main attractions of Ukrainian rural tourism. To provide lodging services, private homes (>70%), cottages and cottage settlements as well as rural holiday homes, hotels and hotel complexes with places to eat (“kolyby”, pubs and living-yards) are used. Lodging in old traditional houses is extremely popular. From a spatial perspective, rural homes have a dispersed character of location in the centres of rural tourism and agritouristic destinations.

In recent decades, rural tourism in Ukraine has been taking important steps to promote its proposals to national and international tourist markets. It is based on private agri-cottages in different regions of Ukraine. The most

developed centres of rural tourism and agritouristic destinations are located in the Carpathian region (Zakarpattia, Ivano-Frankivsk, L'viv and Chernivtsi regions), on the Black and Azov seas coasts, the Dnieper territory, on Polissia and the Podillia Uplands. In particular, there are more than 2500 rural homes and cottages in four Carpathian regions, where the number of beds ranges from 3 to 25, with 7-9 beds on average. The most basic services in Carpathian rural homes include lodging, homemade food, water health treatments, rent of alpine skiing equipment and organization of excursions.

At the same time, rural tourism of the country faces the organizational-economic and marketing challenges of a competitive tourist market. Lack of organizational unity, insufficient development of the basic and auxiliary infrastructure, low standard of service and insufficient information and advertising activity in promoting products and services – these are the problems of the rural tourism. Under today's conditions, implementation of innovative projects aimed at improving and promoting products and localities, including those related to the formation of cluster structures, is relevant for rural tourism.

Tourism and Resorts Development Strategy until 2026 identified the tourist clusters creation as the priority organizational and infrastructure activities. The history of the formation and functioning of these innovative territorial structures in the rural area dates back to a few decades ago. Clusters and cluster initiatives in rural tourism in Ukraine are at an early stage of their development in most cases. It is important to study the conceptual foundations for the formation of clusters, their structure and functioning. In this context, it is important to classify the existing rural tourism clusters by the nature of specialization and product orientation. For research and practical purposes, it is relevant to develop models for the formation and best functioning of these clusters.

In the present study, attempts were made to typify rural tourism cluster structures and develop a universal structural and functional model using foreign [Porter 1993; Majewski 2000; Sznajder, Przezbórska 2006; Kamińska 2015, Kamińska, Wilk-Grzywna 2016, Barcicki *et al.* 2017, Roman 2013] and domestic [Horishevskiy *et al.* 2003; Zinko *et al.* 2008; Zinko *et al.* 2009; Hrycku-Andriyesh 2010; Lytvyn, Nek 2013; Milashovs'ka, Goblyk-Markovych 2013; Malska *et al.* 2015; Zinko *et al.* 2018] scientific research developments. Classification of functioning clusters was carried out for the territory of Ukraine, while the universal model was tested for the formation of clusters in the Carpathian region. In the implementation of research tasks, methods for inventorying cluster structure components, software-targeted modeling and structural-comparative analysis were widely used. The work was carried out

within the framework of the project of the Rural Green Tourism Development Union “Rural green tourism – from divided farmsteads to territorial clusters” which was supported by the UNDP Ukraine Project Strengthening Small and Medium Enterprises Business Membership Organizations and the USAID Project Agriculture and Rural Development Support.

1. Types and models of clusters of rural tourism (RT) in Ukraine

Organization of tourist clusters. According to the definition of Porter [1993], a classical scholar in economic theory, clusters are geographic concentrations of interconnected companies, specialized suppliers, service providers, firms in relevant industries and organizations associated with their activities (e.g., universities, agencies and trade associations) in certain areas, which compete and, simultaneously, work together.

The formation of a cluster occurs naturally, but the process of accelerating its development requires focused efforts, namely – launching and developing a cluster initiative. A cluster is characterized by three mandatory characteristics [*Phenomen klasteru...* 2012]: 1) specialization: smart-specialization, idea; 2) network: interconnections, interaction; 3) geographical concentration: place, location. To develop clusters, a “triple helix” is required: business; power; academy (science and education).

Tourist clusters include groups of enterprises, concentrated within a certain territory, which share tourist resources, specialized tourist infrastructure, local labour markets, and conduct joint marketing, advertising and informational activities [Roman 2013]. Tourist clusters are organized on the basis of hospitality facilities, centres for the development of specialized tourism or certain tourist destinations.

When describing tourist clusters, much attention is paid to the analysis of their specialization (smart-specialization), structure and functions of its participants and the features of their interaction. It is also important to display a list of tourist products and services, and peculiarities of marketing activities [Roman 2013].

The cluster idea in tourism industry was implemented in Ukraine still at the beginning of the 21st century. In this country, clusters started to form based on well-known tourist centres, e.g.: Kamianets-Podilskyi tourist cluster which develops educational tourism, provides accommodation and catering services, organizes festivals and fairs; Lviv Tourist Alliance, which promotes Lviv on domestic and international tourist markets and acts to improve competitive-

ness of tourist services and infrastructure of the city. There are proposals on the formation of clusters of resort (balneological and skiing) and agritourist areas, and on the development of their models – for certain regions [Hrycku-Andriyesh 2010; Milashovs'ka, Goblyk-Markovych 2013].

Approaches to the organization of rural tourism (RT) clusters and their components. An RT cluster can be defined as a group of interconnected enterprises, institutions and organizations in the sphere of tourism and hospitality (accommodation, food) and other related industries (transport and communication, education, culture, commerce, health care, etc.), local authorities and public associations that interact and complement each other when developing a complex green tourism product area [Lytvyn, Nek 2013].

The experience of establishing and functioning of rural tourism clusters abroad shows that their activities are based on the provision of lodging and catering services and on the organization of thematic, educational, recreational and agritourist activities. For their successful functioning, it is important to create offers, products and services grounded in the resources, attractions and traditions of the countryside. The well-known clusters “Wine, gastronomy and tourism” in Greece, the rural cluster in Northern Scotland, the “Pottery Circle” cluster in Poland and others have their distinct smart specialization, which allows them to compete successfully on the national and international tourist markets [Roman 2013].

Main types of RT clusters in Ukraine. Local tourism, as well as research and methodological contributions of rural tourism experts [Zinko *et al.* 2009; Vasilyev *et al.* 2017], have shown that three types of clusters that have their own smart specialization are functioning in Ukraine. Based on the criteria related to the smart-specialization of clusters and cluster initiatives, their following types can be distinguished:

- *lodging and food (farmstead) RT cluster* is based on the combined activity of farmsteads and lodging and food providers. Its main services are accommodation, food and leisure.
- *agritourist RT cluster*, which is based on agricultural enterprises (farms, households) with production associated with a variety of food products (livestock, horticulture). In these farms, recreational and tourist services are additional. The projects of clusters here are mainly concentrated on the development of tourist infrastructure and tourist services.
- *local history tourism RT cluster*, which is just beginning to operate in Ukraine, is connected with the offer of a tourist product related to tourist attractions in the region. It combines historical objects, cultural institutions and accommodation, and represents a local product.

Lodging and food (farmstead) RT cluster was first implemented in Khmelnytskyi at the beginning of 2002. On the initiative of the “Stara Volyn” NGO, the “Oberih” cluster brought together 60 representatives of the agricultural sector (the village of Grytsiv, Khmelnytskyi region). The core of the cluster was made by 10 farmsteads, which were able to provide lodging and gastronomic services to about two hundred tourists.

The study of the structure of this cluster [Vasilyev *et al.* 2017] has shown that it was based, in addition to rural dwellings, on catering services, network of shopping centres, cultural and educational establishments, as well as on local government bodies. The main agritourist activities in the cluster include: local lore excursions, master classes of local craftsmen and folk entertainments. Over the fifteen-year period of the cluster development, there has been an increase in the amount of cluster participants, expansion of workplaces, and an increase in the number of tourists served. During this period, the comfort level of housing has improved.

In terms of research and methodology, the experience of the “Oberih” cluster was generalized in an organizational structure model [*ibidem*]. In this model, there are 4 (structural) units – main participants (hotel owners, educational institutions, public organizations, medical institutions), institutions of the regional and local levels (associations, bodies of state power and self-government) and institutions of the national level (the Union of Rural Tourism, Entrepreneurs’ Union, universities, research institutions), international organizations and donors. Their interaction in the model was implemented through an executive body – the committee of the cluster. This model has a pronounced inventory character, which shows the grouping of key participants.

Agritourism RT cluster. The priority of its introduction is grounded in the inexhaustible resource potential, as there are significant opportunities in Ukraine for the development of clusters of this type (the second model) based on existing farms and private households.

For example, with the state support (Ministry of agricultural policy of Ukraine and Odessa Regional State Administration), the agri-ecological and recreational “Frumushyka-Nova” cluster (Tarutyne district) is functioning. The core of this cluster are agricultural (sheep breeding, pedigree stock-breeding, viticulture) and processing (cheese, wine products and honey) enterprises and a recreation and tourism complex. The complex is represented by attractions, lodging and food: the historical village of the 19th-early 20th centuries (an open-air museum of local lore), zoo, guest houses, hotel, tavern, conference hall, and health and recreation facilities. The excursions to the pheasant and sheep farms and to the zoo are provided. Other offered tourist and recrea-

tion activities include fishing, hunting, photo safari and business meetings. The cluster focuses on the local, regional, national and international levels of cooperation in the main areas of activities. The methodological aspect of the “Frumushyka-Nova” cluster’s activities is visualized in the model of an agroecological cluster [Vasilyev *et al.* 2017]. This model has a concentric structure with several centres: the core with an agricultural complex, a complex of products processing and a recreational and tourist complex; the district level (suppliers, subcontractors); national and international levels. For the core, the main areas of activities and recreational and tourist services are indicated in a special additional block.

The cluster initiative “Horbohory” (Pustomyty district, Lviv region) is another example of the successful implementation of the cluster of an agritourist type. It was initiated by the Department of Agri-industrial Complex of Lviv Regional State Administration and local farms of livestock specialization. The recreational and tourist component of the cluster envisages the development of farmsteads for tourist services, elaboration of tourist routes and organization of folk festivals (for example, the “Good Traditions of Galicia” Agritourism Fair).

Local history tourism RT cluster is primarily based on the diverse attraction of rural regions of Ukraine and on the use of their accommodation and food facilities. The “Picturesque Berezhanshchyna,” cluster initiatives of the Chyhyryn district and “Gogol places in Poltava region” are examples of such clusters.

The “Picturesque Berezhanshchyna” cluster, created in 2007, aims at the development of rural tourism in Berezhany district (Ternopil region), organization of events promoting the region, organization of cultural events and presentation of the region at national and international exhibitions and fairs [Vasilyev *et al.* 2017].

The cluster initiative in Chyhyryn district, implemented by the “Tourist Movement of Chyhyrynshchyna” NGO involves historical museums (Chyhyryn, Subotyn, Kamyanka), sacral objects and historical monuments, which form the basis of cultural and excursion offers. Rich historical and cultural heritage is complemented by lodging and food facilities: green farm houses, restaurant and hotel complexes, museum, ethnographic, educational and entertainment complexes. [Vasilyev *et al.* 2017].

The “Gogol Places of Poltava Region” tourist and recreational cluster started to be implemented by the regional union of local history experts in 2008 on the initiative of the regional council. The main proposal of this cluster was the development of an excursion route, which included prominent places associated with the name of M.V. Gogol – Poltava, Myrhorod, Dykanka, Velyki

Sorochinty and Gogolevo. With the use of budget funds, historical and cultural monuments were repaired and a recreation area was established [*ibidem*].

For this type of rural tourism clusters, appropriate structural and functional models with graphic representation have not yet been developed. Tourist attractions should be the core of such models.

2. Development of models of rural tourism clusters in Ukraine

The issue of developing models of rural tourism clusters is rather debatable in Ukraine. Among the organizational and functional models of rural tourism clusters, the following types have been distinguished: conceptual, of general participant structure, clusters of different hierarchical level (locality, region) and functional structural ones.

In particular, in the study of Lytvyn and Nek [2013], the conceptual structure of business entities is represented by the following set: entrepreneurs – owners of rural homes, trade and service facilities, catering, a shop producing souvenirs, entrepreneurs providing transport services, travel agencies, local authorities, health and educational institutions. In this structural model, entities are considered to be equivalent, without being divided into certain hierarchical levels according to their significance in the cluster's functioning.

Structural and functional models of the proposed tourist cluster for the Transcarpathian [Milashovs'ka, Goblyk-Markovych 2013] and Chernivtsi [Hrycku-Andriyesh 2010] administrative regions show that authors envisage, as the main subjects of the cluster, accommodation facilities, agricultural producers, catering, transport enterprises, tourism management bodies in the region and educational institutions. The effect of their interaction should result in the creation of a tourist product of the region. In these proposed regional models of rural tourism clusters, interaction is important both at the regional level and among the main actors of this specialized association.

The most common models are the structural functional schemes of existing cluster initiatives in various regions of Ukraine (West, South, East), which were previously analyzed. The study of this type of models [Vasilyev *et al.* 2017], that is, existing clusters and cluster initiatives, has allowed the authors of this paper to offer their typology based on the criterion of smart-specialization.

The below models of RT clusters and cluster initiatives in Ukraine are based on the structure of the participants, specific types of their interaction and smart-specializations. Organizational functional disadvantages of these types of models include: lack of differentiation of participants according to their functions (leading, affiliate, secondary), insufficient emphasis on the resource and

infrastructure basis of clusters (tourist attractions and material base), as well as the lack of definition of the main vectors and specific participants of interaction.

Multilevel universal model of RT cluster: For implementation of cluster initiatives on rural tourism with due regard for the actual state of activity of the subjects of the clusterization process in rural areas of Ukraine, we proposed a multilevel, universal structural and functional model of the rural tourism cluster. This model provides for the allocation of the main hierarchical levels of the cluster subjects (basic, affiliate, accompanying) with their resource support and the main levels of interaction (inter-level, intra-level). The presented multilevel universal model of cluster formation was tested by the example of cluster initiatives in the Ukrainian Carpathians (the ethnographic region of Boykivshchyna). In terms of content, this universal model envisages three main levels:

- *Basic level* – defines specialization (key idea) of the cluster and includes its main subjects (owners of rural homes, providers of agritourism services, agricultural enterprises) and tourist attractions of the area (natural, historical, cultural, socioeconomic). The interaction between actors at this level can be manifested through the development of agritourist networks, local agritourist products, provision of tourists with traditional food and local agricultural products.
- *Affiliate level* – can be represented in the cluster by partner structures aimed at the comprehensive provision of tourist services in the countryside. They usually provide additional services (traditional and alternative transportation, organization of leisure and local festivals, services for participants interested in active, educational, recreational and gastronomic tourism).
- *Accompanying level* – in the cluster of rural tourism it is associated with organizations and structures that facilitate the development of the cluster and promote its services on the market (self-government and government agencies, research and educational institutions, information and advertising centres, investment campaigns). The organizational formation of the cluster and its material and financial support through the implementation of projects within the framework of regional, national and international programs depends on this level.

This universal model of the rural tourism cluster with its main content components can be visualized in the form of appropriate concentres (Fig. 1). The basic level of the rural tourism cluster can be represented as an internal concentre (core) in the graphic model. The constituents of this concentre are providers of basic services and maintenance of the main tourist attractions of the area.

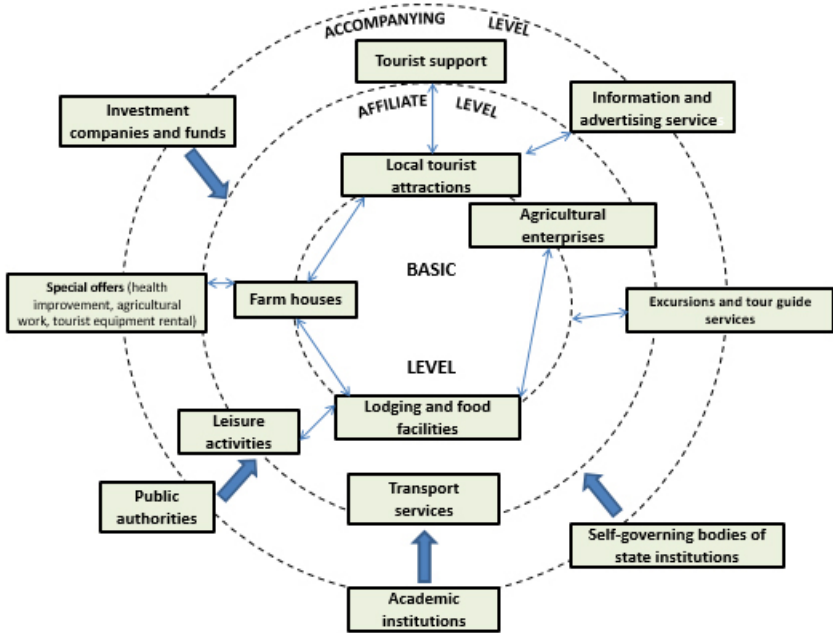


Figure 1. Multilevel universal model of the rural tourism cluster

Source: Own work of authors.

The following intermediate concentric graphically represents partner structures that provide additional services for tourists in the countryside. It is important for them to cooperate with the basic subjects of the cluster of the internal concentric.

In the graphical model of the cluster, the organizations and structures that support activities of the cluster are graphically represented by a peripheral concentric. For the accompanying level, the relationships between partners and entities providing core and complementary services in the cluster are important.

Implementation of cluster initiatives in the Carpathian region (Boykivshchyna region). Boykivshchyna is an original natural and ethnographic area of the Ukrainian Carpathians and Prykarpattia, located far from the routes of mass tourism leading to Yaremche district, the winter capital of Ukrainian tourism – Bukovel resort and popular tourist destinations of Chornohory and Goryany. For Ukrainian and foreign tourists, this region is not much known and

visited. The newly formed clusters – the “Boykivsky Gazdy” ethno-ecological tourist cluster (Skole district of Lviv region) and the “Hospitable Boykivska Dolynshchyna” agri-ecotourist cluster (Dolyna district of Ivano-Frankivsk region) – aim at promoting tourism in this ethnographic region. Their development was based on the use of the multi-level universal model of the RT cluster suggested by the authors.

The “Boykivsky Gazdy” ethno-ecological tourist cluster. The idea of a cluster initiative on rural tourism in Skole district has become possible within the framework of the “Rural green tourism – from divided farmsteads to territorial clusters” of the Rural and Green Tourism Association which was supported by the UNDP project in Ukraine entitled “Strengthening of business associations of small and medium enterprises” and the USAID Project “Agrarian and Rural Development Support Programme.” The idea of the cluster development was supported by the association of rural homes owners of Skole and neighbouring villages (northern part of Skole district). This territory of the cluster initiative has a significant potential for the development of rural tourism, which will ensure its specialization and will serve as an alternative to ski specialization in the southern part of the region (Slavske and Plai ski centres).

The idea of the cluster consists in voluntary joining of efforts of all interested parties in rural tourism to create a new tourist product in Skole district. *The purpose* of the cluster is to focus on the development of ethnographic, ecological and recreational tourism based on cooperation between farm houses and mini-hotels, catering, manufacturers of traditional and environmental products, amateur folk groups, and nature and history protection institutions.

The territory of the cluster initiative covers the northern and central parts of Skole district, where the majority of villages and the district centre of Skole provide rural tourism services on the basis of private rural homes, cottages, mini-hotels, and hotel and restaurant complexes. In the last decades, cooperation is being established there between nongovernmental bodies, catering facilities, producers of traditional and environmental products, folklore ensembles, nature conservation and cultural institutions, and public organizations to develop new products and a spectrum of services. This cooperation has become the basis of the cluster of rural tourism as an effective tool for promoting the territory in the tourist market. As a result of meetings and consultations, priority was given to the development of attractions and services related to ethnographic, ecological and leisure activities, that is, to a local product of the cluster. As to its specialization, the cluster belongs to lodging and food (farm houses) type with an ecological and ethnographic product (Photos 1-6).



Photo 1. Old Boyko house and its owners
 Source: Photo by V. Pryndak.



Photo 2. Hotel complex "Shvahry" in the village of Oriavchyk
 Source: Photo by O. Ilkiv.



Photo 3. Folklore evening in the "Kalyna" recreational complex in the village of Tukhlia
 Source: Photo by I. Tymotsko.



Photo 4. Participants of the "Boykivsky Gazdy" cluster at the World Boyko Festival in the town of Turka
 Source: Photo by T. Zinkevych.



Photo 5. Herd of aurochs in the "Skolivsky Beskydy" National Park
 Source: Photo by V. Pryndak.



Photo 6. Ecological produce of the "Beskyd" trademark
 Source: Photo by V. Pryndak.

In terms of the market potential of the “Boykivski Gazdy” rural tourism cluster, it was necessary to identify its main participants in qualitative and quantitative aspects and the main types of tourist activities according to the proposed model. The *basic level* of the cluster is made up of the owners of farmsteads, cottages, and hotel and restaurant complexes. The *affiliate level* of the cluster is represented by the producers of traditional and environmental products, craftsmen, ethno-folk ensembles, as well as by business people providing transport, excursions and additional services. An important part of this level of the cluster “Boykivski Gazdy” is formed by the providers of services, related to excursions, environmental protection (the “Skolivski Beskydy” national park) and history and culture (“Tustan” State Historical and Architectural Reserve), as well as travel agencies of Lviv. The *accompanying level* of the cluster includes local self-government bodies (district and village councils), state bodies (departments of tourism and agri-industrial complexes of district state administrations, district employment centre), a number of public organizations (Association of Entrepreneurs of Skole district, “Impulse” training and production complex, the Agency for Regional Development, local branch of the Rural Green Tourism Association), and educational institutions (the Stryi Agrarian College, Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, Lviv Institute of Economics and Tourism, Bydgoszcz Economic University (Poland)). The total number of cluster participants was 43 in the beginning of 2018.

The marketing profile of the cluster is shaped by the following offers: rest in traditional Boyko farm houses; eating traditional Boyko dishes; tasting and purchasing ecological produce of the mountain region; participation in traditional entertainments and holidays; local festivals; local souvenirs, visiting folk craftsmen and master classes; rehabilitation and rejuvenation according to the recipes of folk medicine (bathing in vats, apitherapy, phyto-tea); trips to the protected areas of the “Skolevski Beskydy” National Park (mountain valleys, virgin forests, waterfalls, rocks, caves, aurochs); learning the history of Boyko ethnical group and visiting the unique wooden rock fortress “Tustan”; practicing various types of active tourism: skiing, trekking, equestrian and water tourism, bicycling.

“Hospitable Boykivska Dolynshchyna” agri-ecotourist cluster. Dolyna district is known due to the Vyhoda-Mizun forest narrow-gauge railway, which provides excursions. In 2017, the “Spadshchyna” narrow-gauge railway museum with an up-to-date ecological and regional exhibition was opened. At the same time, the Vyhoda tourist area is characterized by active development of the farm houses network. Currently, there are 5 farmsteads (basic level) offering lodging, food and leisure services. The local centre of rural tourism has

developed thematic and local lore routes for visitors. Specialized institutions of regional cuisine (taverns, honey shops), souvenir shops, points of selling local produce (honey products, Carpathian teas, confitures) are successfully functioning as a affiliate level.

This cluster initiative will contribute to the development of the following tourist activities: rest in rural homes, ecological tourism (narrow-gauge railway trips and eco-educational classes at the “Spadshchyna” Museum), gastronomic tourism with visits to the places with traditional Boyko cuisine, active forms of tourism – pedestrian, cycling and horse riding. The cooperation of the cluster participants will allow developing a program for tourists staying in this region, which will be designed for different groups of clients (family, educational, or active tourism). The promotion of the offers of the cluster in the domestic and international tourist markets should become an important part of its activities.

Conclusions

The development of clusters and cluster initiatives of rural tourism in Ukraine is nowadays at an early stage. The transition of the activities of isolated owners of agricultural lands to territorially united structures, such as clusters, requires appropriate organizational and methodological support. Currently, the number of active clusters and cluster initiatives of rural tourism in Ukraine is about 10. In 2018, two new clusters were created in the Ukrainian Carpathians – “Boykivski Gazdy” (Scole district in Lviv region – 43 participants) and “Hospitable Boykivska Dolynshchyna” (Dolyna district, Ivano-Frankivsk region – 22 participants). In the south of the Black Sea region, the “Frumushyka-Nova” agri-ecological and recreational cluster (Tarutine district, Odesa region) has acquired an official status with appropriate registration of the same name non-governmental organization.

Investigation of existing clusters and cluster initiatives in rural tourism has shown that owners of agricultural lands (farmers and entrepreneurs), public organizations, state structures and local self-government bodies play a key role in their formation and functioning. As the research has indicated, cluster structures in rural tourism have a pronounced smart-specialization, and according to this criterion, three main groups can be singled out: lodging and food (farm houses), agri-tourist and local history ones. Based on the type of the offered product of rural tourism, they can be divided into agriecological, ethnographic, recreational, and ecotourist groups. The latter can serve as a basis for the brand of a particular cluster of rural tourism.

Research on the issues of rural tourism clusters concerns their formation on the conceptual and regional local levels. At the same time, a significant amount of the research and methodological recommendations deal with the analysis of the structure and functioning of existing clusters and cluster initiatives of rural tourism. In most cases, the results of these studies are presented in the form of conceptual, structural, and functional models with content and graphic components.

Proceeding from the generalization of the analysis of research methodological approaches to the formation and functioning of clusters of rural tourism in Ukraine, the authors of this paper have proposed a multi-level universal model of rural tourism with the possibilities of using it in the practice of rural tourism clustering. Its main idea consists in providing an optimal structure of the main groups of participants (basic, affiliate, accompanying) and in organizing the interaction of major clusters and actors. The presented model was tested during the development of cluster initiatives of rural tourism in the ethnographic region of the Ukrainian Carpathians – “Boykivski Gazdy” (Skole district of Lviv region) and “Hospitable Boykivska Dolynshchyna” (Dolyna district of Ivano-Frankivsk region).

Overall, the problems of the formation and functioning of clusters of rural tourism require a more comprehensive research and widespread use of international research findings and practical experience.

References

- Barcicki M., Gałuszka G., Kamińska W., Wilk-Grzywna M., 2017, *Funkcjonowanie i zasięg oddziaływania przestrzennego klastra „Uzdrowiska świętokrzyskie*. Biuletyn KPZK PAN, z. 267: 133-162.
- Horishevskiy P., Vasilyev V., Zinko Yu., 2003, *Silskyy zelenyy turizm: organizaciya nadannia poslug gostynnosti*. Misto NV, Ivano-Frankivsk.
- Hrycku-Andriyesh Yu., 2010, *Perspektyvy stvorennia klasteru silskogo turizmu v Chernivetskiy oblasti*. [Electronic resource] – Available from: [http://www.rusnauka.com/9_DN_2010/Economics/62121.doc.htm].
- Kamińska W., (red.), 2015, *Innowacyjność w turystyce wiejskiej a nowe możliwości zatrudnienia na obszarach wiejskich*. Studia KPZK PAN, t. CLXII, Warszawa.
- Kamińska W., Wilk-Grzywna M., (red.) 2016, *Miejsce turystyki wiejskiej we współczesnej geospodarce*. Studia KPZK PAN, t. CLXXII, Warszawa.
- Lytvyn I., Nek M., 2013, *Problemy ta perspektyvy rozvytku silskogo zelenogo turizmu w regioni*. Regional Economy Journal (2). Dolishniy Institute of Regional Research of NAS of Ukraine.

- Majewski J., 2000, *Agroturystyka to też biznes*. Fundacja Wspomagania Wsi, Warszawa.
- Malska M., Zinko Yu., Horishevskiy P., 2015, *Silskyy turizm v Karpatskomu regioni: suchasnyy stan i perspektyvy rozvytku* [w:] *Region – 2015: strategiya optimalnogo rozvytku*. Kharkivskyy Nacionalnyy Universytet im. V. Karazina, Kharkiv.
- Milashovs'ka O., Goblyk-Markovych N., 2013, *Model turystychnogo klasteru Zakarpatskoyi oblasti*. Naukovyy visnyk NLTU (23.2.), L'viv.
- Phenomen klasteru: anomalni biznes-dolyny*, 2012, Kyiv-Mohyla Business School, Kyiv.
- Porter M., 1993, *Miezhdunarodnaya konkurencyya*. Miezhdunarodnyye otnosheniya, Moskva.
- Roman M., 2013, *Klustry jako forma wspóldziałania w działalności turystycznej* / Michał Roman. — Elektronnyy resurs. — Rezhim dostupu: [http://www.zif.wzr.pl/pim/2013_1_3_22.pdf].
- Sznajder M., Przezbórska L., 2006, *Agroturystyka*. PWE, Warszawa.
- Vasilyev V., Gafurova O., Zinko Yu., Rutynskiy M., Shpenyk T., Tovt M., 2017, *Silskiy zelenyy turizm – vid rozyednanykh sadyb do terytorialnykh klasteriv*. Vyd. Spilky Silskogo Zelenogo Turyzmu, Kyiv.
- Zinko Yu., Horishevckiy P., Petryshyn M., Vasykyev V., Gundiak O., 2008, *Marketingovi doslidzhennia silskogo turyzmu v Karpatskomu regioni*. Naukovyy visnyk Nacionalnogo agrarnogo universytetu (124). Lviv.
- Zinko Yu., Vasykyev V., Horishevckiy P., Rutynskiy M., 2009, *Svitovyy dosvid organizatsiyi silskogo turyzmu: metodychni rekomendatsiyi*. Vydavnistvo Spilky Silskogo Zelenogo Turyzmu, Odesa.
- Zinko Yu., Malska M., Solski M., 2018, *Klastery silskogo turyzmu Ukrainy i Polshchi* [w:] *Cili stakogo rozvytku tretioho tysiacholittia: vyklyky dla universytetiv nauk pro zytтя*. National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine, Kyiv.