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## Efficiency of Tourism Operators' and Tourism Agents' Activities in the Market of Tourist Services of Ukraine

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### Abstract:

The article examines the effectiveness of tour operators and agents in the tourist services in Ukraine market based on the vouchers cost dependence on their sales volume to the population and the number of tourists served. The necessity to use such methods as correlation-regression analysis and adjusted least squares to evaluate the efficiency of these legal entities in the tourist services market is substantiated. The method of analysis of the operating environment has been used in the study of the positions of the regions of Ukraine where legal entities operate in the market of tourist services, which allowed by the number of tourist vouchers and tourists served to determine the directions of development of legal entities that allowed in its turn travel agents and tour operators to attract tourists and sell tourist vouchers to the population.

It is revealed the direction of the modern market of tourist services development and according to it the effective development direction of the market of tourist services of Ukraine owing to activity of travel agents. The necessity of maximum coincidence of these directions is proved, while for travel agents in the regions of Ukraine there is no such coincidence. It is proposed to change the positions of the regions where these entities operate in an effective direction of the operating environment by reducing the cost of vouchers and increase tourism activity, as the study identified a number of areas where tourists pay higher vouchers cost than the national average. As the result of the environment of tour operators operation analysis in the regions of Ukraine, a special position in the Kharkiv region has been revealed, as one that allows to assess the effectiveness of these entities in all other regions of the country. A much larger organization in the tourist services market of tour operators is proved in comparison with travel agents, as the positions in the respective regions are currently in the direction of effective development with the exception of Ternopil, Khmelnytsky and Chernivtsi regions. Conclusions are made on the need to develop all business entities in the market of travel services, in particular to provide benefits from the travel agents activities.

**Keywords:** travel agents; tour operators; market of tourist services; economic efficiency; the cost of vouchers; tourists volume; the volume of tourist vouchers sold to the population.

**JEL Classification:** D61; Q56; Z32.



## Introduction

The tourism development in Ukraine is one of the most promising areas of socio-economic growth, which can be ensured by the intensification of activities and high efficiency of tourist services market. The legal entities activities in the market of tourist services in Ukraine are represented by tour operators and travel agencies. Tour operators are directly producers of a tourist product in the form of creating a tourist service, providing journey and accommodation. Travel agents act as intermediaries between the tour operator and the consumer. Their purpose is to receive commissions for the tourist services provision in the market. Besides, tour operators can work with the consumer directly without travel agents.

Regardless of the peculiarities of tour operators and travel agents, the main principle of effective functioning of the market of tourist services is to achieve the following goals: maximization the number of tourists who agree to travel; maximization the sales of tourist vouchers to the population; optimization of the cost of tourist vouchers sold to the population.

## 1. Literature Review

A number of scientists such as Kolosinska M. (2018), Kovaliov V. (2017) investigated the theoretical and methodological principles of forming a strategy for tourism entities integrated development and the effectiveness of their activities in the context of transformational changes in the economy of Ukraine. Some authors like Kozak Y., Derkach T., and Huz D. (2019) considered the components of strategies to ensure the effectiveness of tourism entities, and namely: the economic security strategy; financial strategy; investment strategy; innovation strategy; information strategy. Such scientists as But T., Pulina T. and Zaytseva V. (2020) and Shcherbakova N. (2018) identify priority areas for implementing the strategy of tourism services market in Ukraine: increasing the competitiveness of regions and strengthening their resource potential, ensuring human resources development and interregional cooperation.

A number of scientists studied the potential and competitiveness of tourism in the regions of Ukraine. Kovalchuk Y., Furman I., Humenyuk H. and Kucher A. (2020) conducted a study of the potential and opportunities for tourism development in the regions of Ukraine in the modern context, using the analysis method of the functioning environment. The authors acknowledged that twelve regions of Ukraine have a high potential for tourism development, but the other thirteen have not had sufficient income from tourism services to cover labor and operating costs, which indicates the search for new methods in strategic and operational planning of tourism in Ukraine and improving the efficiency of the tourism business (Kozak *et al.* 2019). Kovalov B., Burlakova I., and Voronenko V. (2017) found in their studies that in 88% of the regions of Ukraine there is a positive trend of changes in the competitiveness index of travel and tourism, which negatively affects the efficiency of tour operators and agents. Mazaraki A., Boiko M., Bosovska M., Vedmid N., and Okhrimenko A. (2018) emphasize in their research on the national tourist system formation in Ukraine.

Kolosinska M., Petrashchak O., Kolosynskyi I. and Katana A. (2018) proposed a method for assessing the competitiveness of tourism, which indicated a significant number of available positive factors for the effective tourism development. The positive point is the significant level of competition among travel agents, the presence of major segments of the tourism market and providing tourism with national resources. Sofiichuk K. (2018) has researched the theoretical basis of risks in tourism and the dynamics of tourist profits and the number of tourist enterprises based on research; it has been developed a model of risk management in tourism. Ivanov S., Gavrulina M., Webster C. and Ralko V. (2017) emphasize in their research the negative impact of political instability on the efficiency of the tourism industry.

At the same time, despite the significant amount of research in the field of tourism, the problem of economic efficiency of tour operators and agents in the market of tourism services in Ukraine remains insufficiently solved.

## 2. Methodology

The purpose of the study is to identify the economic efficiency of tour operators and agents in the market of tourist services in Ukraine, which revealed opportunities to reduce the cost of tourist vouchers and increase the volume of sold vouchers and served tourists.

The study uses a combination of parametric and nonparametric methods of analysis, including correlation-regression, the method of analysis of the operating environment, the method of adjusted least squares to build the positions of regions of Ukraine in the market of tourist services, where tour operators and agents operate.

The research methodology involved its implementation according to the following algorithm:

1. Calculation of the coefficients of return on the cost of tourist vouchers sold to the population by travel agents and tour operators on the number of tourist vouchers and tourists served by regions of Ukraine.

2. Carrying out of the correlation-regression analysis on revealing of dependence between return of cost of the vouchers sold to the population by travel agents and tour operators on quantity of served tourists and return of cost of vouchers on quantity of the realized tourist vouchers that allowed to reveal high density of communication between these indicators.

3. Analysis of the operating environment, which revealed the impossibility of building a line of technical efficiency in the regions of Ukraine to assess the level of inefficiency in the market of tourist services.

4. Implementation of the analysis using the method of adjusted least squares, which allowed to assess the areas of travel agents to build a line of technical efficiency, and tour operators to justify the impact on the environment of the position of the Kharkiv region.

5. It is proposed measures to increase the efficiency of travel agents in accordance with the trends of modern development of the tourist services market.

6. The sufficiency and regularity of development of tour operators in the regions of Ukraine according to the tendencies of the tourist services market are substantiated.

### 3. Results and Discussion

The method of analysis of the operating environment (Farrell's model) (Farrell 1957) is the most acceptable method of assessing the effectiveness of legal entities in the tourist services market. In our case, we propose to use the scheme of calculating the coefficients of return on the cost of tourist vouchers sold by travel agents and tour operators on the number of tourist vouchers and tourists (Table1) similar to Farrell's example of the ratio of capital and labor costs to sales.

Table 1. Coefficients of return on the cost of tourist vouchers sold to the population by travel agents and tour operators by the number of tourist vouchers and served tourists by regions of Ukraine in 2018 (number of tourist vouchers and served tourists per 1000 UAH value of tourist vouchers sold to the population).

Region	Travel agents		Tour operators	
	$X_1 / Y$	$X_2 / Y$	$X_1 / Y$	$X_2 / Y$
Vinnitsya	0,127	0,071	0,442	0,231
Volyn	0,08	0,047	0,188	0,119
Dnipropetrovsk	0,061	0,034	0,06	0,047
Donetsk	0,105	0,074	0,153	0,089
Zhytomyr	0,086	0,053	0,799	0,246
Transcarpathian	0,066	0,037	0,264	0,128
Zaporizhya	0,078	0,042	0,218	0,14
Ivano-Frankivsk	0,094	0,056	0,13	0,128
Kyiv	0,072	0,032	0,047	0,022
Kirovograd	0,076	0,039	-	-
Luhansk	0,184	0,174	-	-
L'viv	0,082	0,069	0,094	0,249
Mykolaiv	0,054	0,036	0,076	0,05
Odessa	0,056	0,038	0,212	0,205
Poltava	0,06	0,041	-	-
Rivne	0,07	0,042	0,069	0,069
Sumy	0,077	0,048	0,06	0,051
Ternopil	0,073	0,037	1,192	0,627
Kharkiv	0,072	0,044	0,016	0,013
Kherson	0,151	0,13	0,231	0,231
Khmelnitsky	0,122	0,085	1,286	1,286
Cherkasy	0,076	0,033	0,104	0,059
Chernivtsi	0,101	0,042	0,564	0,278
Chernihiv	0,061	0,03	0,093	0,036
City of Kyiv	0,1	0,046	0,086	0,04

Source: author's calculations-based data on the State Statistics Service of Ukraine.

Farrell's model was originally used to calculate the effectiveness of businesses under natural monopolies, but further improvements have allowed it to be more widely used in marketing research. The peculiarity of the

method of analysis of the operating environment is its universality, which allows you to use its principles for different sectors of the economy, economic activities, regardless of the studied indicators (Sakhno *et al.* 2019a, Sakhno *et al.* 2019b, Sakhno *et al.* 2019c, Sakhno *et al.* 2020a, Sakhno *et al.* 2020b, Sakhno *et al.* 2020c). So, Horban H., Petrovska I., Kucher A., Diuk A. (2020) used this method to study the effectiveness of the tourism entities functioning in the regions of Ukraine.

Thus, X1 - the number of tourists served by travel agents or tour operators in Ukraine in 2018.

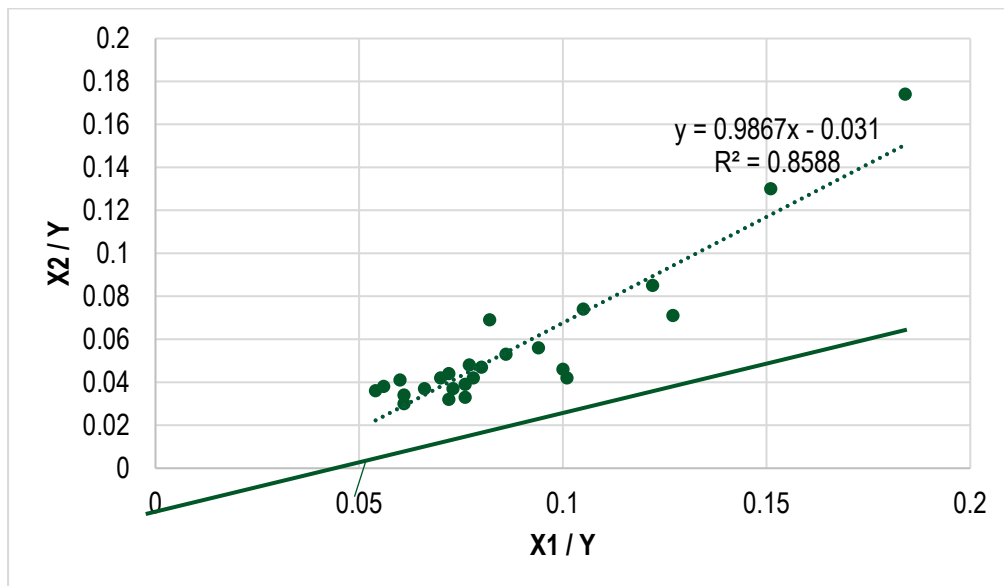
X2 - the number of tourist vouchers sold to the population by travel agents or tour operators in Ukraine in 2018.

Y - the cost of tourist vouchers sold to the population by travel agents or tour operators in Ukraine (thousand UAH) during 2018.

The coefficients are calculated on the basis of data from the State Statistics Service of Ukraine on tourism in Ukraine in 2018.

Based on the results of Table 1 for travel agents, we have built according to the Farrell's model the environment of functioning of these business entities and have determined the direction of development in order to attract tourists and the sale of tourist vouchers to the population in 2018 in the regions of Ukraine (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Determining the direction of development of legal entities (travel agents) in order to attract tourists and the sale of tourist vouchers to the population in 2018 in the regions of Ukraine.



Source: own composition on the basis data of the State Statistics Service of Ukraine.

Correlation-regression analysis revealed a high bond density (correlation coefficient equals to 0.93). The regression equation  $y = -0.031 + 0.9867x$  ( $x = X1 / Y$ ) shows the condition for achieving zero ( $y = X2 / Y = 0$ ) is  $x = 0.0314$ .

However, based on the features of the trend line and regression equation, it is impossible to determine the positions that ensure the efficiency of the tourism market of Ukraine and the directions of its further development, as the value of 0.0314 can be achieved by many combinations between the number of tourists served by travel agents to the population of tourist vouchers by travel agents. Moreover, the continuation of the regression line allows to determine the boundaries of its intersection with the abscissa and perpendicular from position 11 (Luhansk region), which characterize not the efficiency of economic entities in the market of tourist services, but the limit constraints of parametric dependence  $X2 / Y$  on  $X1 / Y$ .

In addition, the high density of communication does not allow to fully apply the method of analysis of the operating environment, as there are only two positions that can form a line of technical efficiency - 13 (Mykolaiv region) and 24 (Chernihiv region). Considering the above parameters, we propose to design a line of technical efficiency by applying the method of adjusted least squares.

To fulfil this, we draw two lines from the origin passing through the positions of the regions of minimum value (23 - Chernivtsi region) and maximum value (11 - Luhansk region). Thus, the triangle 0-11-112 is the direction of the modern market development of tourist services of Ukraine during 2018. The trend of this



development is aimed at the beginning of the coordinates, which indicates the possibility of reducing tourist vouchers cost.

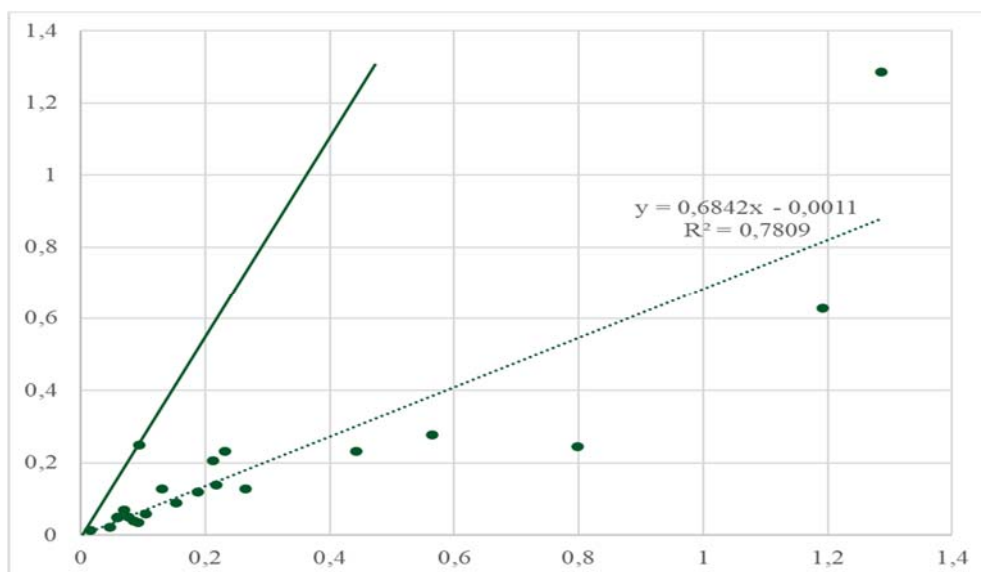
If we extend the segment of the technical efficiency line (length 13-24) to the intersection with lines 0-11 and 0-112, we obtain a hypothetical technical efficiency line 111-13-24-231. Accordingly, the triangle 0-111-231 is the direction of effective development of the market of tourist services of Ukraine in 2018. The tendency to achieve efficiency is aimed at the beginning of the coordinates - increasing the number of tourists, the volume of trips sold by travel agents, and the narrowing of the space at the beginning of the coordinates indicates "directional efficiency", where it may not be a line of technical efficiency (in this case, its existence is a design calculation for the future), and the direction to zero (reducing vouchers cost). As a result, instead of the technical efficiency line, the position of the region that is technically effective for other regions of Ukraine can be used in the case of its location near the origin.

The trend line allows to analyze the position of the regions of Ukraine in combination with two border lines on the activities of travel agents in the market of tourist services within the areas 111-11-113-24 and 232-112-113. Note position 11 (Luhansk region) as a certain exception, which explains the peculiarities of the situation in the whole market. In this area the lowest cost of tourist vouchers, but the least of them were sold to the population and tourists were sent.

Positions of regions located within the area 111-11-113-24 are regions where vouchers are bought at a higher price compared to the whole of Ukraine and in which the majority of tourists are served: Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, Transcarpathian, L'viv, Odessa, Poltava, Rivne, Sumy, Kharkiv, Kherson. The positions of regions within the area of 232-112-113 are regions where, on the contrary, vouchers are purchased at a lower cost compared to the whole of Ukraine and where a minority of tourists are served.

Similarly to travel agents, tour operators (Table 1), we will build according to the Farrell's model of the environment of these entities and determine the direction of development to attract tourists and tourist trips to the population in 2018 in the regions of Ukraine (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Determining the direction of development of legal entities (tour operators) to attract tourists and the sale of tourist vouchers to the population in 2018 in the regions of Ukraine.



Source: own composition on the basis data of the State Statistics Service of Ukraine.

Kharkiv region (position 19) is technically efficient in relation to all regions of Ukraine where tour operators operate. Attention is drawn to the high density of regions positions in the triangle 19 (Kharkiv region) - 12 (L'viv region) - 5 (Zhytomyr region), which determines the direction of the modern market development of tourist services of Ukraine during 2018.

Thus, it can be concluded that there is no direction of effective development of the tourist services market in Ukraine, as position 19 (Kharkiv region) is as close as possible to the origin. The activity of tour operators in the tourist services domestic market is a guarantee of development and effective provision of the optimal tours cost and maximum tourists attraction.

Exceptions are only three areas outside the triangle area 19-12-5: Ternopil, Khmelnytsky and Chernivtsi.

## Conclusion

The development of the tourist services market in the regions of Ukraine is mainly due to the tour operators' activities, which allows to significantly reduce the tours cost and attract new customers. Therefore, the trends in the development of the tourist services market in relation to the tour operators' activities coincide with the trends of their effective functioning in the regions of the state.

Travel agents' activity in the market of tourist services of Ukraine is not optimal. As a result of the study, improved positions on their functioning in some regions, in particular Luhansk region (two positions) and Chernivtsi region (two positions) have been proposed. Based on mentioned above, the direction of tourist services modern market development of Ukraine is outlined based on the possibility of the efficiency of travel agents achieving by reducing the tours cost and increasing the number of tourists. The research results can be used in planning tour operators and agents activities in the market of tourist services in Ukraine.

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