

ЕКОНОМІКО-СОЦІАЛЬНІ ВІДНОСИНИ В ГАЛУЗІ ФІЗИЧНОЇ КУЛЬТУРИ ТА СФЕРІ ОБСЛУГОВУВАННЯ

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FROM MINING CENTER TO SPA AND RESORT (A HISTORICAL AND ECONOMICAL CASE STUDY OF TRANSFORMATION IN TRUSKAVETS)

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In the setting of ongoing full-scale military aggression, the tourism and recreation industry of Ukraine has suffered substantial losses, including plummeting demand and landslide job cuts. The inevitable reshaping of Ukraine's economic landscape in the future aftermath of war is likely to involve newer developments in the existing recreational and tourist destinations and even the raise of new ones. The recreational options in Lviv Oblast, Ukraine have been traditionally underutilized even in the pre-war period. This is why scientific visions for the future of spa and resort business in this unique geographical and health industry setting appear strategically important from both economic and social perspectives [1].

To explore how the successful case of Truskavets, which has successfully transitioned from once thriving but later decadent mining center to a renowned spa and resort destination with an explosive growth in the 1980–1990s, can benefit in development of existing and creation of new recreational areas in Ukraine.

According to the Law of Ukraine “On the special economic zone of tourist-recreational type “Kurortopolis Truskavets”” the current version dated February, 17, 2006, the tourist, spa and recreational businesses in the town enjoy tailored tax benefits and other preferences. However, this was not historically the first precedent when a “special economic zone” was created in Truskavets. The first mention of such privilege dates back to 1533 when King Sigismund I the Old of Poland decided to reduce several of the taxes and levies with the deliberate intent to boost the economic standing of the region. The strategy has turned out successful, and it was not long before the entire Sub-Carpathian Rus' region, including Truskavets, has become a strategic salt extraction region of Europe. Thus, it continued until late XVIII – early XIX century when a failed attempt at nationalization by the new Austrian authorities has essentially destroyed the once exuberant industry [4].

The year 1827 marks the date when the spa and resort Truskavets was officially founded, although initially in a humble form of literally several hydrotherapy baths. In 1836, a dedicated building was erected for the balneotherapy institution,

and formal physico-chemical analyses of mineral water from several sources in Truskavets have been conducted and published by Teodor Torosiewicz, a renowned pharmacist and chemist of the time. The balneotherapy spa and mineral water resort in Truskavets continued its sustained development through the late XIX – early XX century. However, it witnessed truly explosive growth after 1911, when a joint stock company led by Rajmund Jarosz took full control of the urban resort. Electrification and railroad communications were the primary focus of new owners, which was completed in as early as 1912. Although the new exponential development was cut short by the outbreak of World War I, Rajmund Jarosz was not planning on giving up, and by mid- to late 1920s the resort has reached its pre-war performance indicators. In 1930, an artificial mineral water lake was constructed in Pomirky woods near Truskavets. In the 1930s, the number of guests at the spa and resort reached a then astonishing figure of 17,000 guests per year [3].

In the years after the devastating World War II, Truskavets continued its development. With construction of new multistorey sanatoria buildings, the resort city reached its all-time highest capacity of 350,000 guests per year in 1985. After Ukraine regained its independence in 1991, Truskavets continued its development in a free-market setting, with many comfortable hotels, villas and recreation centers constructed, and infrastructure dramatically improved [2].

Even in the socially and culturally remote setting of late Medieval-Renaissance period it can be seen that converting privately owned industries into state-run corporations rarely produces benign economic outcomes. This can be contrasted with the history of spa and resort in Truskavets, where vibrant private initiative and enthusiasm has yielded astonishing qualitative and quantitative results even in the face of desolation caused by World War I. The above historical reports on the development of Truskavets balneotherapy resort demonstrate an interesting economic and historical pattern: the decline of mining industry in a particular region is often followed by the emergence of flourishing health resort and recreation industry. This may be an inspiration for certain regions of Ukraine that will face the need of reformatting their economies and social infrastructures in the future.

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