

**УДК: 316.42:364-78(477.87)**

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**SOCIAL ADAPTATION AND REHABILITATION  
OF THE POPULATION IN UKRAINE'S REAR REGIONS:  
CHALLENGES AND DEVELOPMENT DIRECTIONS  
(CASE STUDY OF THE ZAKARPATTIA REGION)**

Recreational and tourism activities, both at the global and regional levels, represent one of the leading sectors of economic activity, contributing significantly to the economic growth of territories. The presence of natural recreational resources, along with historical and cultural heritage sites within a given area, creates essential prerequisites for the development of an effective recreational-tourism complex capable of providing stable income for the local population [2, 9].

The full-scale invasion of Ukraine has significantly altered both the statistical indicators and the operational dynamics of the recreational and tourism sector in the Zakarpattia region. This shift is largely driven by the massive displacement of the population towards the western, safer regions of the country as well as beyond its borders.

Today, the recreation and tourism sector faces new challenges associated with the urgent need for social adaptation and medico-psychological rehabilitation of individuals affected by the war. This group includes those with injuries and amputations, as well as individuals whose physical and psychological conditions have markedly deteriorated-military personnel, volunteers, and civilians alike. In this context, the effective

utilization of balneological resources for the treatment and recovery of war-affected persons has become particularly critical.

In the organization of modern recreational and tourism activities aimed at establishing a system of rehabilitation services, key roles are played by so-called tourism entities-enterprises, institutions, organizations, licensed individuals, and others [10, 11]. These include not only travel agencies, tour operators, and tourist complexes, but also hotels, campgrounds, motels, guesthouses, food service enterprises, transportation providers, cultural institutions, sports facilities, and others that ensure the reception, servicing, and transportation of tourists [4].

Transcarpathia possesses significant potential for the development of rehabilitation practices due to its natural recreational resources. The region hosts resort and therapeutic zones characterized by unique natural health factors and historical-cultural sites, making it suitable for organizing rest, treatment, and tourism activities, including the integration of psychological and psychotherapeutic services [3, 5].

A distinctive feature of the balneological sector and healthcare facilities in Transcarpathia is the unique composition of thermal waters with specific chemical properties. However, to fully realize the rehabilitation functions of these establishments, it is essential that their infrastructure includes medical centers or departments equipped with modern specialized technology, appropriate diagnostic capabilities, and the capacity to prescribe the optimal type of therapeutic water and treatment methods [6, 7].

Currently, such services are provided by complexes like “Derenivska Kupil”, “Thermal-Star”, “Teplitsia”, “Borzhava”, and “Harmony” etc. These and other facilities are also equipped with baths, spa centers, massage rooms, and recreational areas, including spaces designed for children, which significantly enhance comfort and diversify the range of services offered. This comprehensive infrastructure positively impacts the quality of patient rehabilitation [6].

Given the above, the potential of the recreational sector in Zakarpattia should be considered not only from an economic perspective

but also as a resource for fulfilling social functions, particularly rehabilitation practices for populations affected by the war.

Social adaptation and rehabilitation of the population in wartime conditions are extremely complex processes encompassing a wide range of challenges. Mass displacement creates difficulties related to housing, medical assistance, and meeting basic needs, all of which complicate the adaptation process. The heightened levels of stress and trauma necessitate specialized psychological support, which remains limited due to a shortage of qualified professionals in this field.

Due to the threat of active hostilities and temporary occupation, many residents of the southern and eastern regions were forced to relocate to the western regions of Ukraine. As a result, by early 2024, the total number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Ukraine reached 4.9 million, all of whom have faced significant financial, domestic, and psychological challenges [1, 8]. Zakarpattia region is among the leading recipients of migration flows caused by Russian aggression, despite being the farthest from active combat zones. As of early 2023, approximately 156,000 IDPs were officially registered in the region [1, 8]. However, according to unofficial data from mobile operators, their total number is estimated at around 400,000 [1, 8]. Internally displaced persons have endured substantial psychological pressure due to overwhelming and critical circumstances, including threats to their life and health, thus necessitating social protection and support.

Financial difficulties, stemming from the reallocation of the state budget towards defense needs, significantly limit the capacity to implement effective adaptation and rehabilitation programs. The lack of coordinated collaboration among government authorities, civil society organizations, and volunteers results in inefficient resource utilization. Furthermore, the high levels of social stigma and discrimination faced by individuals requiring assistance hinder their integration into society. Ensuring social adaptation and rehabilitation of the population amidst armed conflict is a complex and multifaceted challenge.

Zakarpattia Oblast ranks among the leading regions in terms of the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs), whose population is estimated to range between 150,000 and 400,000. A significant proportion of these individuals currently face unemployment, loss of housing, financial instability, and severe psychological stress.

The insufficient level of awareness regarding available programs and services substantially diminishes the effectiveness of adaptation efforts. Additional challenges arise for families with members requiring rehabilitation, as limited state support exacerbates their socio-economic difficulties.

Moreover, inadequate attention to the psychological dimension of the rehabilitation process negatively impacts the overall efficacy of adaptation measures, reducing both their immediate outcomes and long-term effects.

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