
POPOVYCH S.I.,
Candidate of Historical Sciences,
Head of Tourism Department,
National University
of Physical Education and Sports of
Ukraine,
Kyiv, Ukraine

CURRENT STATE AND PERSPECTIVES OF LEADING TOURISM HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN UKRAINE

The article describes the current state of higher tourism educational institutions in Ukraine. There have been analysed entrance campaigns for the period of 2014-2016 which were conducted by leading higher educational institutions training specialists in specialty 242 "Tourism" at the first (Bachelor) level of higher education. It has been found out that a number of tourism universities is increasing with every passing year. It has led to the oversupply of training opportunities for school-leavers and permanent inability of universities to fulfil the licensed admission order. Some ways-out which have effectively been introduced at National University of Physical Culture and Sport of Ukraine are offered, particularly a close liaison between pedagogues and tourism labourers, students' vocational practice and internship in all years of study, optimization of entrance and admission commission activity, promotion events.

Key words: tourism education, bachelor, Ukraine, trends, entering campaign, recommendations.

У статті описано сучасний стан вищих навчальних закладів туристичного профілю в Україні. Проаналізовано вступні кампанії 2014–2016 рр., проведені провідними вищими навчальними закладами, що здійснюють підготовку фахівців за спеціальністю 242 "Туризм", зокрема на першому (бакалаврському) ступені вищої освіти. Визначено тенденції на ринку туристичних освітніх послуг; з'ясовано причини, що їх обумовили: зростання чисельності таких ВНЗ, перевищення пропозиції над попитом, хронічне невиконання ліцензованих обсягів прийому. Запропоновано

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деякі механізми усунення негативних процесів у вітчизняній системі вищої туристичної освіти, апробовані у Національному університеті фізичного виховання і спорту України: співпраця з працедавцями туристичної сфери, збільшення обсягу практики студентів, оптимізація прийомної кампанії, урізноманітнення методів профорієнтаційної роботи.

Ключові слова: туристична освіта, бакалаврат, Україна, тенденції, вступна кампанія, рекомендації.

В статье описано современное состояние высших учебных заведений туристского профиля в Украине. Проанализированы вступительные кампании 2014-201 гг., проведенные ведущими высшими учебными заведениями, готовящими специалистов по специальности 242 «Туризм», а именно на первой (бакалаврской) ступени высшего образования. Определены тенденции на рынке туристских образовательных услуг и причины, их обусловившие: рост количества таких ВУЗов, превышение предложения над спросом, хроническое невыполнение лицензированных объемов приема. Предложены некоторые механизмы устранения негативных процессов в отечественной системе высшего туристского образования, успешно апробированные в Национальном университете физического воспитания и спорта Украины: сотрудничество с работодателями туристской сферы, увеличение объема практики студентов, оптимизация приемной кампании, диверсификация методов профориентации.

Ключевые слова: туристское образование, бакалаврат, Украина, тенденции, вступительная кампания, рекомендации.

Introduction. The popularity of tourist education in Ukraine is increasing with every passing year [1]. There are some acknowledged general reasons for it: the increasing demand for tourist services in the world and in Ukraine, the availability of job places in different tourism sectors which can suit any taste. Even in spite of the military action in the east of the country and economic difficulties, the younger generation is striving for travelling and is eager to get tourism education which can help consolidate peace in the country and enhance the socio-economic situation

and increase the quality of population's life. Tourism in Ukraine is developing and has good preconditions to be further developed. To achieve it, well-educated tourism staff is a must. Realizing it, higher educational institutions began to open training programs oriented for tourism. The growing number of them in the last 10 years reflects the popularity increase of tourism specialty. According to Statistical Data Bulletin of Ukraine, in 2008 there were 86 higher educational establishments with tourism training programs. In 2013 their number grew up to 100 and in 2016 there were 106

[2]. The fast widening of the range of tourism universities has led to a number of problems which should be adequately settled.

Literature review. Various problems and questions are touched: For instance, the problems in professional tourism training at all levels of tourism education system in Ukraine, in particular in universities, colleges and vocational schools [3]. Close to it, there is the question of major elements of tourism staff training in Ukraine and their comparison with the world's tendencies [4]. Besides, the ideas of foreign researchers in training highly-qualified tourist personnel and the ways to adapt and introduce them in Ukrainian teaching practice are under consideration of tourism education researchers [5]. Among other problems there are:

- the importance of practice and internship in educating students for tourism profession [6];
- the current status of higher tourism education in Ukraine and the list of problems the universities face with [7].

The last item deserves the special attention as the research devoted to this question contains the results of analysis for only one year – 2013. It is not enough to trace the trends. Moreover, it is advisable to check how the situation in tourism education market has changed and if the described tendencies have been still on.

In general, all the reviewed publications only describe the current state of Ukrainian tourism education market as it is. They do not offer the ways-out from the situation which urgently demands some actions to be undertaken.

The idea of “learning of competitiveness and competitiveness in learning” [8] outlines the strategic approach in tourism education. When applying it to the conducted research, it is necessary to speak about university competitiveness.

It means to find out the ways for Ukrainian universities how to stay competitive and how to fulfil the licensed admission volume order under the circumstances.

Aim and objectives. The aim of the article is to analyse the campaign of entering leading higher educational institutions in Ukraine to the specialty 242 “Tourism” during the definite period.

To achieve the aim, the following objectives are set:

- to select the statistical data from the official sites for the analysis;
- to identify the trends in tourism educational market;
- to work out the prospective recommendations for the universities in order to stay in the market.

Methodology of conducting the research. In the article the accent is done on education only in specialty 242 “Tourism” (Bachelor Degree) both day-time and extra-mural learning formats. The choice of entrance campaign is conditioned by the fact that the Bachelor level in tourism education is “the most massive” [7].

The analysis covers leading universities, academies and institutes where the training of future tourism staff is performed in the mentioned direction. It appeared that among 15 top Ukrainian universities which train future tourism staff, 7 of them are located in Kyiv. They can be considered “the main players in the field” of higher tourism education [7]. Hence, it may be concluded that the analysis of leading tourism higher institutions will reflect the trends in higher tourism education in Ukraine. The analysis covers 3 consecutive years from 2014 to 2016 included.

All data were taken from the official site in admission campaign of the Ministry of Science and Education of Ukraine which called “Information System

Konkurs” for 2014, 2015 and 2016 years. Some figures were also taken from the State Statistics Service of Ukraine [9; 10] and official sites of the mentioned universities. The following methods were applied:

- literature review;
- statistical data;
- analysis and synthesis of the obtained results;
- graphical presentation.

Literature review helps to find out about the topics other researchers have looked at and the questions which are left outside the researchers’ attention. In other words, it assists in “contextualizing own research in the line with the best practices” [11].

The use of statistical methods enabled “to identify statistically significant results” [11] in performing the analysis of tourism education market in Ukraine, that is to trace the dynamics of changes in the entrance campaign to tourism specialty and to specify the trends in tourism education market in Ukraine.

The scientific methods of analysis and synthesis which “always go hand in hand

and complement one another” [12, 21] were used throughout all the research in reviewing the literature on the problem, in critical thinking of the statistical data and in presenting graphically the results of the research.

Methods of presenting data in graphical form highlighted the results of the conducted research which would otherwise require lengthy explanation or complex tables in describing the trends in tourism education in Ukraine.

Research results. Currently in Kyiv there are 21 higher educational institutions where the training in specialty 242 “Tourism” is performed, 13 ones are state-owned. In general, Ukraine has 106 higher educational establishments which train future tourism employees in this specialty. Thus, Kyiv occupies 22 % of the tourism education market share in Ukraine and the main trends in tourism higher education can be traced. In 2015 there were 20 educational institutions including 12 state-owned. In 2014 there were 17, 9 of them being state-owned.

Fig.1 represents the increase in the number of Kyiv universities which train

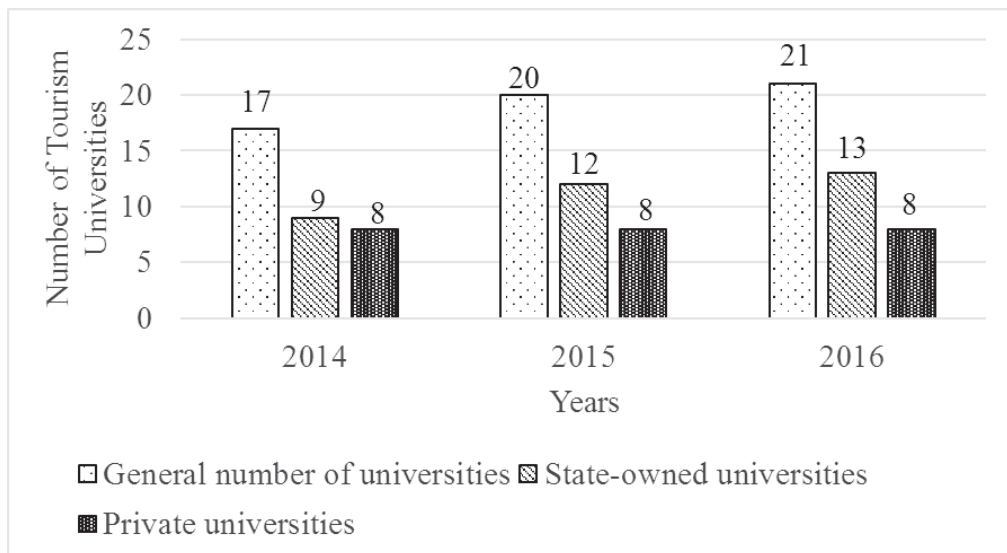


Fig. 1. Number of Tourism Higher Educational Institutions in Kyiv

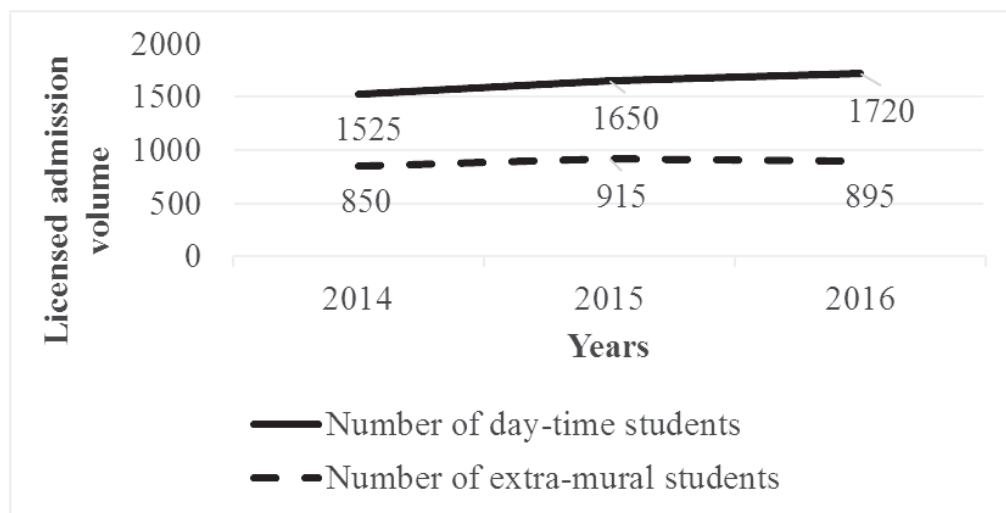


Fig. 2. Licensed Admission Volume for 3 years at day-time and extra-mural departments in Kyiv Tourism Higher Educational Establishments

the future tourism employees. For this period there appeared 5 new places where school leavers can have their high education diploma in Tourism. The first column shows it. The third columns represent the private-owned establishments, they are 8 in number. The figure is fixed while the increase was done thanks to the state-owned universities which are depicted by the second columns.

In 2014 the licensed admission volume of Kyiv tourism universities was 1525 students for 17 universities for day-time learning. In 2015 it rose by 125 places and amounted 1650. The following year it is 1720, the difference during the investigated years is 195 places. It means that for the last 3 years there was a rise in licensed admission volume by 11,3 %.

At the same time the extra-mural departments of these universities have the permit to accept and train students in Tourism specialty with the following volumes. In 2014 it was 850 places, the next year – 915 persons and in 2016 – 895 ones. Unlike the steady rise in the day-time studying, there was a fluctuation in

extra-mural places. At first, a rise by 65 places (7,6 %) and then a slight reduction – 20 places which made up 2,2 %.

It may be interesting to trace the degree of fulfilling the licensed admission volume by Kyiv universities, i.e. to compare the allowed and expected numbers with the real amount of students who chose this specialty. The data from the system “Konkurs” shows that in 2014, 692 students were admitted to the university tourism study at day-time department and 171 persons became extra-mural department students. In 2015 the amount of day-time students was 638 and 108 people became extra-mural students. 696 school-leavers became the daytime students and 65 people at the extra-mural department (Fig. 3, 4).

The same trend can be seen with the extra-mural departments. The licensed volume is not fulfilled. Moreover, the number of students dropped from 171 in 2014 to 65 students in 2016.

The large dissonance between the expected and real numbers of students is seen. Calculating it in per cent, there

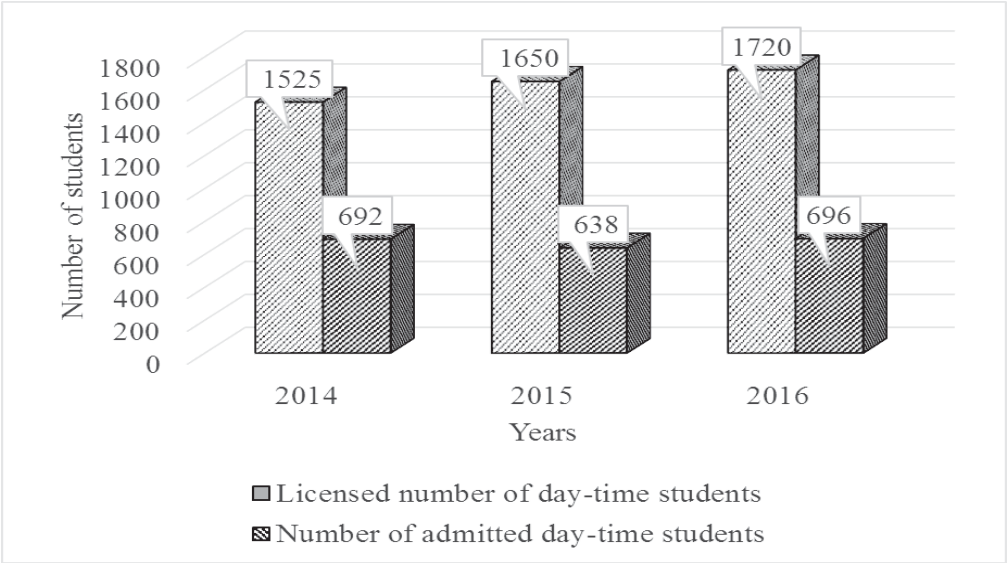


Fig. 3. The Correlation Between the Licensed Admission Volume and the Number of Admitted Day-Time Students

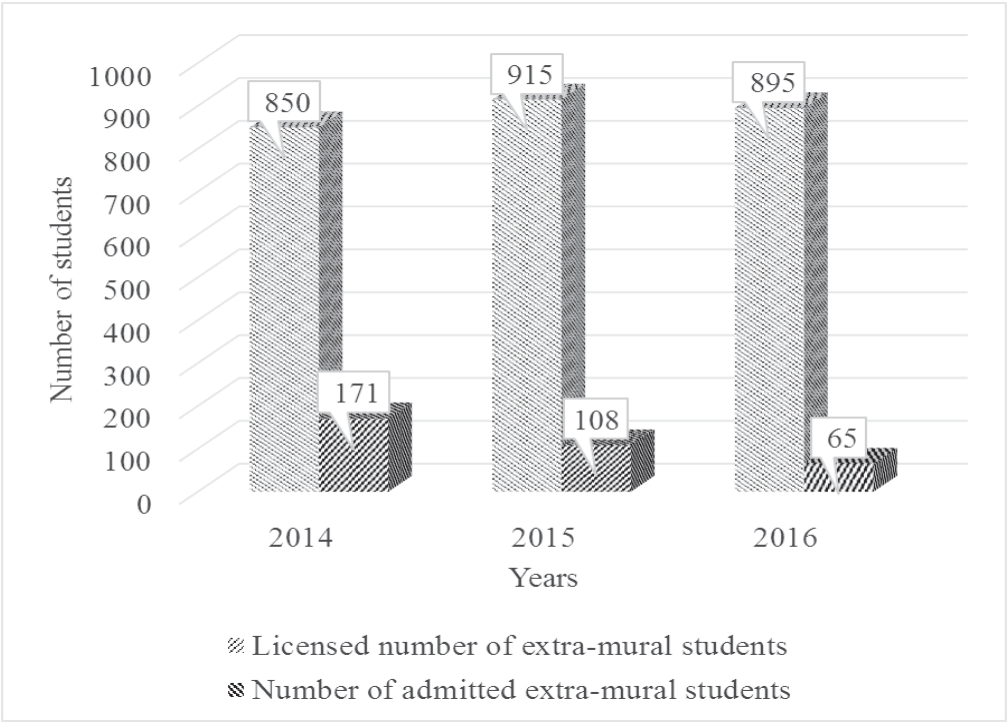


Fig. 4. The Correlation Between the Licensed Admission Volume and the Number of Admitted Extra-Mural Students

Table 1
The Degree of Fulfilling the Licensed Admission Volume of Day-Time Students

	2014	2015	2016
Licensed admission volume	1525	1650	1720
Number of admitted students (day-time)	692	638	696
Degree of fulfilling (in %)	45 %	39 %	40 %

Table 2
The Degree of Fulfilling the Licensed Admission Volume of Extra-Mural Students

	2014	2015	2016
Licensed admission volume	850	915	895
Number of admitted students (extra-mural)	171	108	65
Degree of fulfilling (in %)	20 %	12 %	7 %

is such a picture. In 2014 Kyiv tourism universities had 45 % of day-time students from the allowed and expected amount and 20 % at extra-mural departments. In 2015 the numbers were 39 % and 12 %. 2016 showed 40 % and 7 % respectively (Table 1, Table 2). These figures represent the negative tendency of inability of Kyiv universities to fulfil the licensed admission volume.

The negative trend did not stop even with the state help. The Ministry

of Science and Education increased substantially the budget places in Tourism specialty (when students study free of charge and receive the monthly scholarship). Its share in different years is shown in Fig. 5.

In 2014 the amount of budget places in Tourism specialty was 125, in 2015 it slightly grew and became 137 places. In 2016 215 students had the chance to study free. In general, it grew up by 58 %.

Thus, there is a contradiction between

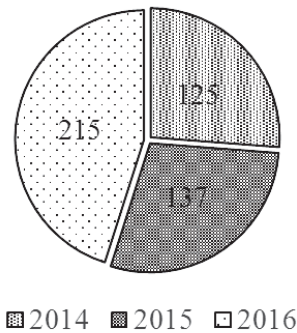


Fig. 5. The Share of the State-Ordered Places in Licensed Admission Volume of Day-Time Students

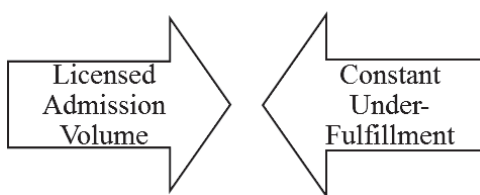


Fig. 6. The Contradiction Between the Increasing Licensed Admission Volume and Its Constant Under-Fulfilment by Universities

the increase of the licensed admission volume and the number of students who are admitted to the Tourism specialty in Kyiv universities (Fig. 6).

All the reported data prove that there is a tough competition in educational services market for tourism industry in Ukraine. The contradiction between the tendency of increasing licensed admission volume and its steady under-fulfilment by the universities intensifies the competition and stipulates the objective threat to higher educational establishments in tourism specialty. And the increase of the budget places only deepens the problem. In this situation, Kyiv tourism universities face with the challenges that should be settled immediately.

Discussion. The tendency of increasing the number of universities which are engaged in training tourism employees takes place only in the state-owned educational institutions. The number of private institutions do not change. On the one hand, it shows that the state realizes the importance of tourism as an economic sector which needs well-prepared staff. On the other hand, the increase has led to the negative trend. The licensed volume continues to be significantly under-fulfilled. The striking figures prove the permanent inability of Kyiv universities to admit the amount of students of both departments which correspond to the expected ones.

There may be several reasons for that.

Firstly, because of various political, socio-economic and demographic factors. *Secondly*, the cardinal changes in domestic and world tourism. For instance, a segment of independent travellers is increasing. According to the ITB, 10 % of Europeans prefer to travel on their own. In Ukraine this figure is much higher: 20–25 % of Ukrainians travel independently [13]. This tendency resulted in the decrease of the job places for students with Tourism Diploma. *Thirdly*, a range of tourist companies among which are travel agencies and tour operators that have been on Ukrainian tourism market for long, became bankrupts due to the economic crisis, military situation in the country. *And finally*, the most possible major reason, in words by Ukrainian scholar O. Liubitseva [1], is that “every member of the tourist market develops autonomously and not communicate with others”. It means that there is no liaison and clear communication and authority lines between pedagogues and tourism labourers, universities, public administration and potential tourism job providers. In other words, the market does not regulate the necessary amount of the future tourism specialists which resulted in exceeding of the supply over the demand.

It is becoming a threat to the potential first-year students who are afraid to enter this specialty and who consider the jobs in tourism not to be perspective in the labour market.

Another reason is that the offer exceeds the demand, that is the number of universities and their offers are too much for higher tourism education market in Ukraine. Moreover, as it was mentioned above, demographic factors also influence this inability of universities. According to the Ministry of Science and Education of Ukraine, in 2016 there were 210,000 school-leavers, that is 20,000 people less in comparison with the previous year. And 10 years ago, the amount of school-leavers was over 500,000 persons [9].

The expediency of increasing the number of students in this specialty is rather disputable. Though universities grow their opportunity to train future tourism employees, the real numbers of those who entered the universities greatly differ from the expected ones. In this situation, in order to stay in the higher educational market, the universities have to operatively react the negative trends and work out the appropriate measures.

There are some ways the universities can apply. One of the most effective is the introduction of new categories to train within Tourism specialty. Thus, according to the Classificatory of Professions in force DK 003:2010 [14], there are the following professions related to Tourism specialty:

- 3340 Instructor-Methodist in Tourism;
- 3414 Excursion Leader;
- 3414 Instructor of Health and Sport Tourism (in types of tourism).

The analysis of the universities curricula proves that not a single university in Ukraine trains students for these professions at Bachelor's degree. It can be explained that, *first of all*, there are no qualified scientific and pedagogic staff who are able to provide the high-quality learning process. So it is necessary to

train the appropriate pedagogical staff. Besides, there is still the risk of under-fulfilment of licensed admission volume for these specialties, as well.

Another way out for tourism universities is the introduction of a number of Master's Degree Programmes in various tourism-related specialties. It will give the university graduates with Bachelor Degree an opportunity to continue their professionalization and to acquire one of the following professions (according to Classificatory of Professions DK 003:2010 [14]):

- 2444.2 – Guide – interpreter;
- 2481.2 – Excursionologist;
- 2481.2 – Tourismologist.

In addition, the close relations with the prospective labourers in tourism industry have to be established and developed. The student's vocational practice and their internship in senior courses can help to strengthen them. It means that universities can become flexible in defining how many future tourism specialists they have to train and if they are required in the labour market.

Besides, the university tourism curriculum has to contain the majority of practical- and vocationally-oriented disciplines which help students to acquire the required skills for tourism industry.

One more recommendation is connected with the optimization of the activity of entrance and admission commission at higher educational establishments. When potential students come to the university, the members of the mentioned commission have to explain the peculiarities of the future profession, show the advantages of studying at the particular university, invite the school-leavers to various promotion events held at the university, for example for Open-Door Days, educational trade-fairs, festivals of trades and professions and so on.

In general, tourism universities should organize a well-thought promotion campaign among the school-leavers and their parents using all possible ways to attract the potential students for tourism specialties at institutes, universities and academies in Ukraine. For this, it is advisable to show the advantages of tourism jobs through vocationally-oriented conversations at schools and pre-university training of school-leavers.

These recommendations are being introduced in practice as a pilot project at National University of Physical Education and Sports of Ukraine. The university has a powerful scientific, learning and methodological potential and cutting-of-edge material and technical provision. In some years it is expected to make the university the leading educational establishment in Ukraine that train specialists for tourism industry. The first steps have already been done and the first results have been obtained. If to compare the fulfilment of the licensed admission volume in 2014 (it was only 58%), a great progress is seen. According to Information System "Konkurs", for 2 consecutive years (2015 and 2016) National University of Physical Education and Sports of Ukraine fulfilled the licensed admission volume by 100 % [10], being the single tourism university in Kyiv with the ideal result.

Conclusion. In the process of analysing the campaign of entering higher educational institutions in Ukraine, particularly in Kyiv, to the

specialty 242 "Tourism", the following conclusions have been obtained:

The popularity of tourism specialty in Ukraine has caused the emerge of excessive number of higher educational establishments which train specialists for tourism industry. The reasons for that are: the popularity of the profession, a great amount of jobs to any taste, the willingness to travel, excellent preconditions for developing tourism.

The analysis of the data taken from the official sites of the Ministry of Science and Education of Ukraine proved the fact that these reasons resulted in the excess of supply over the demand in the tourism-related industry labour market and in the increase of competition among the educational establishments.

Due to these trends, the tourism personnel training universities, institutes and academies became permanently unable to fulfil the licensed admission volume. The licensed admission volume of day-time students in Kyiv universities, which constitute the major part in Ukrainian tourism education market, is underdone by less than half and the situation with extra-mural students is almost catastrophic.

To survive in such circumstances and stay in the market, universities have to do cardinal steps. There have been worked out a number of recommendations which were implemented in the practice at National University of Physical Education and Sports of Ukraine and appeared to be effective.

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Popovych S.I.,

Candidate of Historical Sciences, Head of Tourism Department, National University of Physical Education and Sports of Ukraine, Kyiv, Ukraine

E-mail: popovich.59@ukr.net

ID ORCID 0000-0002-6158-9782

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