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ПІСЛЯВОЄННЕ ВІДНОВЛЕННЯ ТУРИЗМУ НА ОСНОВІ СТАЛОГО РОЗВИТКУ: КЕЙС ЗАСТОСУВАННЯ ETIS У КУЦУРУБСЬКІЙ ТЕРИТОРІАЛЬНІЙ ГРОМАДІ

Мета дослідження: Оцінити перспективи сталого туризму у повоєнному відновленні територіальної громади Куцуруб шляхом застосування Європейської системи туристичних індикаторів (ETIS).

Методи: Порівняльний аналіз даних релевантних профілю ETIS, огляд наукових публікацій, аналіз вторинних даних з урядових та місцевих джерел.

Результати: Різноманітні природні, культурні та соціальні активи, включаючи, але не обмежуючись, Національний історико-археологічний заповідник «Ольбія», Південний Буг, річка Інгул та Бузько-Інгульський лиман, зазнають наслідків військових дій та окупації. Застосування ETIS дозволяє систематизувати активи та узагальнити показники стану туризму в громаді станом на 2024-2025 роки. Розробка профілю КТС розширює уявлення про доступні ресурси та перспективи диверсифікації туристичних продуктів, орієнтованих на сталий розвиток. Результати пропонують вектори для післявоєнного відновлення, що охоплюють рекреаційну та культурну діяльність, науку та археологію, природний (включаючи підводний), сільський та екологічний туризм, з потенціалом для подій та творчої діяльності, пов'язаної з туризмом нематеріальної культурної спадщини. Аналіз попередніх стратегій підкреслює необхідність подальшого впровадження ETIS та посилення політики та планування для «зелених» та «блакитних» рішень для захисту культурної спадщини та біорізноманіття, адаптації до зміни клімату та суміжних сфер, за підтримки продуманих комунікаційних стратегій та цифровізації.

Наукова новизна: Інтеграція ETIS з підходами до післявоєнного відновлення в межах територіальної громади України, з акцентом на перспективи розвитку сталого туризму.

Актуальність: Надає новаторський практичний приклад використання європейських інструментів для планування сталого туризму на основі фактичних даних у постконфліктних регіонах, враховуючи управлінський, економічний, соціальний, культурний та екологічний впливи.

Практичне значення: Результати дослідження надають розуміння рішень щодо адаптації європейських інструментів до післявоєнного відновлення туризму в Україні. Результати інформують місцеві органи влади про систематизований та узагальнений стан туристичних активів і продуктів, а також рекомендують майбутні рішення та кроки для розробки політики та планування.

Ключові слова: сталий розвиток; ETIS; післявоєнне відновлення; планування туризму; Куцуруб, територіальна громада

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SUSTAINABILITY-BASED POST-WAR TOURISM RECOVERY: CASE OF THE ETIS APPLICATION IN KUTSURUB TERRITORIAL COMMUNITY (MYKOLAIV OBLAST)

Research objective: To assess the perspectives of sustainable tourism in the post-war recovery of Kutsurub Territorial Community (KTC) through the application of the European Tourism Indicators System (ETIS).

Methods: Comparative analysis of data relevant to the ETIS profile, review of scientific publications, analysis of secondary data from government and local sources.

Results: Diverse natural, cultural, and social assets - including but not limited to the Olbia National Historical and Archaeological Reserve, the Southern Bug, the Inhul rivers, and the Bug-Inhul estuary - suffer consequences of military actions and occupation. Applying ETIS allows for the systematization of assets and the generalization of indicators on the state of tourism in the community as of 2024-2025. Working out the KTC's profile widens the view of the resources available and the prospects for diversifying tourism products within a sustainability-focused framework. The findings suggest vectors for post-war recovery, embracing recreational and cultural activities, science and archeological, nature-friendly (including underwater), rural and eco-tourism, with potential for events and creative activities involving intangible cultural heritage tourism. The inventory of earlier strategies underscores the need to implement ETIS further and to strengthen policies and planning for green and blue solutions to cultural heritage and biodiversity protection, climate change adaptation, and related areas, supported by thoughtful communication strategies and digitalization.

Scientific novelty: Integration of ETIS with post-war recovery approaches within a Ukrainian territorial community, highlighting the sustainable tourism development prospects.

Relevance: Provides a pioneering practical example of using European tools for evidence-based planning of sustainable tourism in post-conflict regions, considering managerial, economic, social, cultural, and environmental impacts.

Practical Significance: The findings provide decision-making insights for adapting European tools to Ukraine's tourism post-war recovery. Results inform local authorities on the systematized and generalized situation of tourism assets and products, and recommend future solutions and steps for policy-making and planning.

Keywords: Sustainability; ETIS; post-war recovery; tourism planning; Kutsurub, territorial community

Problem Statement. Post-war recovery in Ukraine requires balanced economic, environmental, and social goals integrated in a strategic approach to sustainable development. Unique coastal, ecological, and cultural assets form the basis for tourism-led regional development in the Kutsurub Territorial Community (KTC), located in the Mykolaiv region of Ukraine. Military actions and occupation, infrastructure damage threaten both natural and cultural resources and challenge the prospects of sustainable post-war recovery. The European Tourism Indicators System (ETIS) provides a framework for assessing and monitoring sustainable destination development. This study explores how ETIS can inform recovery strategies while leveraging the community's assets.

Analysis of Research and Publications. The ETIS framework of quantitative and qualitative indicators enables the integrated assessment of sustainability in tourism (European Commission, 2016). While the application of ETIS at the destination level varies, practice suggests its relevance to policy-making objectives (Gasparini & Marotti, 2023). Recent research demonstrates the interdependence between sustainability focus and post-conflict reconstruction (Belotti, 2024).

The importance of sustainability and community-based tourism for the recovery of tourism and territorial communities under current conditions requires adaptation and broad application of internationally developed solutions in Ukraine (Kiptenko & Motuzenko, 2022; Yermachenko et al., 2024). The initial ETIS profiling of some Ukrainian destinations and communities (Kiptenko, 2023) suggests a general lack of systemic data and understanding of integral European approaches to destinations and the development of tourism-based communities. While pre-war and ongoing research provides detailed information on tourism and recreation in the Mykolaiv oblast (Chykaliuk, 2007; Lytvak, 2020; Patrusheva et al., 2020; Oliynyk, 2023; and others), the focus on territorial communities and European integration tasks leaves room for new research framed in this context.

European project the TOURAL "Multidimensional model of tourism verticals driving the sustainable balanced growth among rural & remote grids and urban clusters of rural regions, fostering macro-regional cooperation" (Toural, n.d.) involves the area of the KTC and serves to disseminate and implement strategies for tourism recovery through local partnerships, capacity building, and integrated environmental and cultural management (NECU, n.d.). Among the others, the ETIS application constituted the relevance and need for this research and its outcomes presentation.

Research Objective and Tasks. The context of Ukraine's path to European integration emphasizes the need for practical steps towards a green transition, which are facing ongoing challenges due to the war. In light of the above circumstances, we aimed to evaluate the European Tourism Indicators System (ETIS) application to ground future solutions for KTC's sustainable tourism in the post-war recovery.

The tasks to reach the objective included profiling assets (natural, cultural, and infrastructural) relevant to tourism development. In addition, we checked the availability of indicators to evaluate

environmental, socio-cultural, and economic sustainability relevant to ETIS. Further, we considered the available KTC’s strategic and planning documents to summarize the findings of the profiling and indicators collected, and to provide actionable recommendations for community-based tourism development.

Key Findings. The ETIS profile allows to systematize the general characteristics of tourism in the KTC based on its location and key tourism assets.

The overview profile’s part (Table 1) positions the 12 southern Ukrainian villages of the KTC in the coastal zone of the Mykolaiv region, on the right (northwestern) bank of the Dnipro-Bug estuary. The community, somewhat distant from the country's capital (545 km, 7 hours 30 minutes by road), offers diverse resources for recreational and cultural activities, science and archeological, nature-friendly, rural (including underwater), and eco-tourism, with potential for events and creative activities involving intangible cultural heritage (Figure 1).

Table 1.

Overview part of ETIS profile for Kutsurub Territorial Community

Destination:		Kutsurub territorial community	
Country:		Ukraine	
Destination boundary:		Mykolaivska oblast	
Destination category		rural	
Location:		Overview:	
Description	Distance from the national capital city (km)	Main types of tourism and most popular activities	Top five most popular tourist attractions (including environmental and cultural)
KTC (12 villages) is located in southern Ukraine, in the coastal zone of Mykolaiv region, on the right (northwestern) bank of the Dnieper-Bug estuary.	545 km (7 hours 30 minutes by road)	recreational and cultural, scientific and archaeological, nature-friendly, rural and eco-tourism, including the potential for events and creative activities involving the intangible cultural heritage	1. Olbia National Reserve 2. St. Ilyin Church (Parutyne village); 3. Lake Solonets; 4. Adzygol spit; 5. Natural estuarine coasts
Geography	Dominant habitats	Level of biodiversity	Weather pattern:
KTC area ~758,54 km ² . The territory is mostly flat, steppe zone with fertile southern black soils suitable for agriculture; the coast of the Dnieper-Bug estuary forms southern and eastern borders with several internal estuary bays and salt lakes; favourable conditions for recreation and tourism in the coastal and steppe landscapes.	Farmland: dominant landscape – over 85–90% of the area (fields, pastures, hayfields). Sand/shingle beach: narrow strip of coastal beaches of the Dnieper-Bug estuary, several kilometers of the coast – appr. 1% Forest/Woodland: appr. 2% Wetland: appr. 5% -10% (coastal, estuarine)	Rather high; peculiar natural conditions that differ from typical plain areas with rare biotopes and species: a combination of virgin and steppes, salt marshes, field shelterbelts, old beams, and coastal zones of the Dnieper-Bug estuary with Emerald and Ramsar protected areas of international importance	Moderately continental climate, with hot, dry summers and mild, little-snowy winters. The average annual air temperature is +11... +11.5 °C (climate-data.org). The hottest month is July (average temperature about +23°C, maximums up to +35°C), the coldest is January (average about -2°C, minimums up to -20°C). Annual precipitation is about 470 mm (Climate Data, n.d.), with a maximum in summer (thunderstorms, showers) and a minimum in winter. Climatic conditions are favorable for recreation: a long swimming season (June–September) and mostly clear weather in summer. At the same time, the region is affected by strong northern and eastern winds, which cause blizzards in winter and droughts in summer.

The information resources and field experience (pre-, during the war) suggest that five key (most popular) attractions include the National Historical and Archaeological Reserve "Olvia" (Olbia), St. Illinska (Saint Elijah) Church in Parutyne village; Lake Solonets, Adzygol Spit and lighthouse, coastal and estuarial landscapes of Dnipro-Bug with Emerald and Ramsar protected areas of international importance. The profiling inventories of attractions allowed for the revelation of the potential assets for tourism products combining natural and historical sites of Dnipro cliff, Cataline nature reserve, Bienkovi plavni (Chaus&Kozlovskiy, n.d., Visicom, n.d.), Adzhygol, Olbia Chora, the Tract of a Hundred Graves, adjacent locations of the national nature park Biloberezhzhia Sviatoslava ('White beaches of Sviatoslav'), Kinburn Peninsula, Berezan Island, landscape park "Tendrivska Kosa", etc. In addition, the recent increase in attention to intangible cultural heritage has highlighted the potential of Tavria painting, which was

included in the National Register of Intangible Cultural Heritage this year, as a means to diversify tourism products (Titurenko, 2025).

Socio-economic characteristics indicate that the KTC is a 100% rural community of about 8,000 inhabitants (pre-war) and a population density of about 10 persons per km². Meanwhile, in the central village Kutsurub, the above parameter constitutes 29,63 inhabitants per km². The rural, spacious nature of the area itself is already an asset and a basis for the development of tourist activities in the format of slow tourism, which corresponds to sustainability principles.



Figure 1. The fragment of a tourist map highlighting the location, transportation routes and attractions of the KTC within Black Sea coast (Ukraine) [Green Tourism, n.d.; Official Kutsurub, n.d., Kutsurub rural region, n.d.]

The war has disrupted transport logistics through the airport in Mykolaiv (the regional center); however, it is still working by rail. The Roads T-15-18 and T1513 connect the center of the community - Kutsurub - to Mykolaiv (the oblast center) via Ochakiv, taking about 80 minutes by car for approximately 75 km. Ochakiv (8 km) – an administrative district center - has the potential for future tourism flow services at the seaport linked to Odesa (144 km). The danger of shelling restricts safe travel nowadays, particularly along the coastal T1507 road. Based on pre-war experience, the tourism development in KTC could rely on ferry connection from the city of Ochakiv to Kinburnska Spit (for tourists on the beach and in the NNP Biloberezhzhia Sviatoslava). In addition, the road infrastructure needs restoration and modernization to improve accessibility to the distant and remote locations for recreation and tourism. We also suggest considering the potential of private entrepreneurial activities in transfer services (by roads and water) for planning the post-war tourism development.

Open-source data and information collected from community members indicated that pre-war tourism (2021) totaled about 25-30 thousand visitors. The primary attraction was the Olbia National Historical and Archaeological Reserve. The latter attracted primarily same-day visitors from Odesa, Ochakiv, and other neighboring destinations, as well as teams of archaeologists with more extended stays. Not same-day visitors - mostly Ukrainian - reached this area on their own by car or by rail-bus connection with transfers. The location, close to the seaport of Odessa and the river port of Kherson, which in the past were points for river-sea cruises, did not work for tourist logistics to KTC, except for individual cases of private yachts

The underdeveloped accommodation infrastructure in the community included several small boarding houses, recreation centers, and rural estates, each with limited capacity. The more impressive is the lack of catering facilities, including cafes, restaurants, and taverns, available pre-war, basically in Kutsurub and Parutyne.

At the same time, the KTC had remarkable scores in entrepreneurial activity, with 66 registered agricultural farms (grains, sunflowers, etc.) (Directory, n.d.). Their potential for future agritourism development could follow the good practice of gastro- and ethno-tourism by visiting family farms and wineries. In particular, the family winery “Olvio Nuvo” (in the village of Parutyne) combines wine tasting

with outdoor recreation. The farmsteads could also adapt the experience of the ethno-manor “Suzir’ya Stepu” nearby Mykolaiv (Shevtsova, 2025) by promoting cultural values, treating guests to dishes prepared according to ancient recipes, the local homemade borscht, fragrant pies, aromatic herbal tea, trying their hands at pottery, weaving, or wood carving, and touching the true art of Ukrainian culture and style of life.

Table 2.

The ETIS Indicators of Kutsurub Territorial Community

Section	Criteria	Indicator Ref. #	Indicator	Monitoring	Unit of Measure	Destination Results
A. Destination management	A.1 Sustainable Tourism Management in Tourism Enterprises	A.1.1	Hotel numbers with certification for environmental measures-eco label	No	Number of hotels	0
		A.1.2	Number of beaches with blue flag	No	Number of beaches	0
	A.2 Visitor Satisfaction	A.2.1	Percentage of tourists and same day visitors that are satisfied with their overall experience in the destination (people with 5-star rating)	Yes	%	75
B. Economic Value	B.1 Tourism Flow (volume & value) at the Destination	B.1.1	Number of tourist nights per month	Yes	Number of nights	750
	B.2 Tourism Enterprise(s) Performance	B.2.1	Average length of stay of tourists (nights)	Yes	Number of nights	3
		B.2.2	Occupancy rate in commercial accommodation establishments in high season	Yes	%	80
		B.2.3	Occupancy rate in commercial accommodation establishments in middle season	Yes	%	50
		B.2.4	Occupancy rate in commercial accommodation establishments in off-season	Yes	%	40
B.3 Quantity and Quality of Employment	B.3.1	Direct tourism employment as percentage of total employment in the destination	Yes	%	20	
C. Social and Cultural Impact	C.1 Community/Social Impact	C.1.1	Number of tourists per 100 residents	Yes	Number of tourists	300
	C.2 Health and Safety	C.2.1	Level of safety (low/medium/high)	Yes	(low/medium/high)	high
		C.3.1	Percentage of commercial accommodation establishments participating in recognised accessibility information schemes	Yes	%	25
	C.3 Inclusion/Accessibility	C.3.2	Percentage of public transport that is accessible to people with disabilities and with specific access requirements	Yes	%	5
		C.3.3	Percentage of tourist attractions that are accessible to people with disabilities and/or participating in recognised accessibility information schemes	Yes	%	50
		C.4 Protecting and Enhancing Cultural Heritage, Local Identity and cultural Assets	C.4.1	Number of the destination’s events that are not traditional/cultural relevant (ex. music concerts, athletic events)	Yes	Number of events
	C.4.2		Number of the destination’s events that are focused on traditional/local culture and heritage	Yes	Number of events	15
D. Environmental Impact	D.1 Reducing Transport Impact	D.1.1	Number of green transport means from and to the destination	No	Number of means	0
		D.1.2	Types of green transport means from and to the destination	No	Types of means	-
	D.2 Climate Change	D.2.1	Number of tourism accommodation and attraction infrastructure located in cultural heritage protected areas	Yes	Number of infrastructures	5
		D.2.2	Number of tourism accommodation and attraction infrastructure located in natura protected areas	Yes	Number of infrastructures	1
	D.3 Solid Waste Management	D.3.1	Waste production non tourist period	Yes	kg	175000
		D.3.2	Waste production tourist period	Yes	kg	150000
D.4 Landscape and Biodiversity Management	D.4.1	Percentage of local enterprises in the tourism sector actively supporting protection, conservation, and management of local biodiversity and landscapes.	Yes	%	80	

Another opportunity, revealed within our studies, foresees to enforce the creative potential of the Bakhtov manor (Vereshchaka, 2019). The revival of festivals launched before the war (Official Kutsurub, n.d.) suggests even more prospects for supporting creative elements in the environmental, cultural and social sustainability path of tourism in the KTC, involving original songs, Greek culture, and tourist recreation ("Olvia"), historical reconstruction and historical medieval battle ("Olvia Cup"), Carp Festival in the village of Ivanivka under the slogan "Save the environment - it is our future!", festival of arts ("Kutsurub inspires - unites talents"), ecological regatta named after Sergey Shapovalov ("Kinburn Spit Cup"), rural green tourism ("Olviofest"), all-Ukrainian festival of theatrical art ("From Hypanis to Borysthenes"), etc.

Information collected indicates that the primary consumers of tourism services were:

- History lovers, archaeologists, ecologists, scientists, adventure seekers, etc.;
- Clients motivated by scientific (historical, archaeological, ecological, and educational), cultural, creative, rural, gastronomic, and wine tourism;
- Visitors who prefer diverse recreational activities: hiking, yachting, water sports, and tasting craft wines and cheeses, etc.

In addition to the profile, ETIS covers diverse indicators to shape the monitoring framework. Our pilot study allowed to clarify data availability and fix the starting point of systemizing them for future tourism evidence-based planning while ensuring long-term sustainability (Table 2.)

Table 3.
Strategies and policies relevant to sustainable tourism in KTC (continuation)

Indicator	Result	Available opportunities
The destination has an organization (eg. DMO) dedicated to its overall management.	No	There is a community "resource and information center" (RIC) that organizes festivals and events to promote tourism (for example, "Carp Festival"). The Community Development Strategy until 2026 provided for the formalization of the tourism cluster as a public organization; NGO "Kinbum" could play a core role in shaping (Living Lab) cooperation and uniting stakeholders.
The destination has a current sustainable tourism strategy/action plan with an agreed monitoring and evaluation process.	No	The overall Community Development Strategy until 2026 includes tourism as a direction, but neither a plan nor a mechanism for monitoring and evaluating sustainable tourism practices are available in the documents. ETIS profiling and Living Lab experiences within the TOURAL project could serve this purpose.
The destination has a current sustainable communication strategy or plan.	No	Available websites and social media (in particular of RIC, community, NGO "Kutsurub" and Toural project) platform the possibility to solve the issue.
The destination has a current policy or plan to protect cultural heritage.	Yes	The approved "Program for the Development of Culture, Art and Protection of Cultural Heritage of Kutsurubskaya TC for 2019–2022" defined priority tasks for the preservation of monuments and the development of culture in the community. The outcomes of ETIS profiling and Living Lab activities initiated within the TOURAL project could contribute to the improvement in the following (post-war) planning period.
The destination has a current climate change adaptation strategy or plan.	No	Developed Climate Change Adaptation Strategy for Mykolaiv oblast could ground future steps in KTC planning for post-war recovery.
The destination has a current biodiversity management and monitoring plan.	No	The overall Community Development Strategy until 2026 foresees steps to establish an ecological network and to monitor environmental conditions to preserve landscapes and biodiversity. Future improvements and separate planning for biodiversity management could go hand in hand with the design of the community's post-war recovery policy.
The destination has policies in place that require tourism enterprises to minimise light and noise pollution.	No	These issues are part of developing a community plan aligned with the Climate Change Adaptation Strategy for Mykolaiv oblast.
Percentage of the destination (area in km ²) that is recognised as a protected area.		Approximately 0,21% - the local landscape reserve "Katalynsky" (16042 km ²), on the border with the Radsadivskaya communities. Count for the neighboring regional landscape park Kinburnskaya Kosa and the National Nature Reserve a Biloberezhzhia Sviatoslava.

We recommend to use the above considerations in future strategies and planning for tourism in the area, based on the information (Official Kutsurub, n.d., Kutsurub rural region, n.d.) summarized in the KTS ETIS profile (Table 3.). The current situation shows the urgency of improvements needed in different aspects, specifically planning for climate change adaptation and biodiversity, communications and digital promotion, overall management of community-based tourism and relevant policies.

The profiling explorations suggested the prospects for the unique – green and blue - tourism offers of the KTC, as follows: Olvia Archaeological Reserve and reproductions of ancient settlements, nature

tours, including bird watching and trips during the flowering period of Olvia cockscombs, visits to a wind power plant, a rapana plant, the “Olvio Nuvo” winery, Bakhtov House, etc.

Thus, we recommend diversifying the pre-war tourism proposal of the community by the development of green and blue (Blue Tourism, n.d.) offers, including underwater activities, naturopathy-yoga, meditations - Adzhyhol, Olbia, etc., gastronomy and culinary tourism - Almus, DeLRapana, etc., artistic plein airs and esoteric journeys - Bakhtovy, the Tavrian painting, rural agro-tourism - Almus, Olvio Nuo, farmsteads, etc.

Taking into account the favorable natural conditions and quiet rural environment, the KTC could and should consider offers for silver segment and rehabilitation of military personnel and people with post-traumatic syndrome.

Conclusion. Applying ETIS at the community level expanded the asset inventory and measured several key aspects of tourism, including management, economic value, social and cultural impacts, and environmental effects. Through ETIS profiling, communities like Kutsurub can pinpoint strengths, weaknesses, and priorities for post-war recovery while promoting long-term sustainability—both green and blue. Developing underwater activities, naturopathy and yoga, meditation, gastronomy and culinary tourism, artistic plein-air events, esoteric journeys, and rural agrotourism could diversify the community's pre-war tourism offerings. Green and blue practices could reinforce the sustainability of post-war tourism recovery through slow tourism. They could provide opportunities for the silver segment, as well as for rehabilitating military personnel and individuals with post-traumatic stress disorder. Policy and planning based on ETIS implementation in KTC require ongoing monitoring of indicators and tangible improvements in the protection of cultural heritage and biodiversity, climate change adaptation, management, and innovations in offerings and marketing, including digitalization.

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