

УДК [338.48-61:796"2012"] : 338.481.2

**TOURIST CAPACITY OF MINSK IN THE RUN-UP TO THE WORLD ICE
HOCKEY CHAMPIONSHIP OF 2014**
(on the basis of the analysis of electronic mass media)

Uladzimir Lukievich

*Brest State University named A. S. Pushkin,
41/203, Mickievich Str., Brest, Belarus, 224016, tel. +375 162 211573,
e-mail: lucul@interia.pl*

In this article the author considers a system of social relations which is formed on the basis of the interaction of a number of elected social phenomena in particular: sports, electronic media and tourism. On the basis of generalization of the factual material provided on the Internet conclusions are drawn concerning preliminary results of the largest sport events and related to them infrastructure as well as suggestions for closer correlation between sport, electronic mass media and tourism in a short term.

Key words: sport, electronic media, tourism.

Preface

Every year a great number of events that are directly connected with sport take place in the world. The most important events such as the Olympic Games, World Championships and European Cup and other competitions attract media attention. Hockey gains certain popularity among the followers of sport. So, for example, the next World Championship in ice hockey is to be held in the period from 9 to 25 May 2014 in Minsk (Belarus). According to preliminary estimates of the Organizing Committee the capital of Belarus is expected to host more than 20 million people, about 530 of them will make the players, around 200 will make the judges and representatives of international and national federations, over 500 will make the journalists, and foreign tourists and fans belong to the rest [6]. The preparation of the project and the competition for the right to host the World Championship in Belarus has costed \$ 350,000. In May 8, 2009 in Berne, Switzerland, on a congress of the International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) the application of Belarus was supported by 75 delegates, Hungary received 24 votes, Latvia and the Ukraine – 3 [7].

In modern times every high-level sport event is accompanied by an appropriate advertising campaign which includes a number of mandatory criteria on which success (especially financial) of any competition depends. Today thanks to the development of high information technology it is unimaginable to hold events of such a rank as the World Championship without its internet constituents. European Football Championship 2012 which was held simultaneously in Poland and the Ukraine has demonstrated it clearly. Almost all the issues concerning the organization and the program of the competition, including purchase of tickets, travel, food and sport fans' lodging could be resolved via

Internet. It is obvious that organizers of the World Championship 2014 in Minsk had to use the experience and practice of their western and southern neighbors. At the same time the Organizing Committee had a time margin to highlight the progress of preparations for the tournament in the media systematically, especially on the Internet, so that the potential sport fans were aware of the competition program and could come to the championship to see the hockey games personally. It is natural that this competition is directly linked to the concept «sports tourism» and includes a statement and solution of such issues as a drive to the venue of the tournament, room and board, ticket prices and cultural program. Analysis of publications and researches in this area is hampered by little study of these topics although some scholars touch the problem indirectly at some extend. For example, A. Manko and O. Kushnirchuk-Stavnycha draw attention to the fact that the European Football Championship 2012 in the Ukraine has largely intensified formation of the tourism infrastructure of the country and covered all the spheres of social, economic, political, cultural and scientific life. Such a large-scale event as EURO–2012 is sure to take its place in the informational space on the Internet [1, p. 227]. Analyzing the Ukraine’s preparations for the football EURO championship, I. Smirnov concentrates on the issues of advertising, in particular the placement of the products on television [2, p. 265]. It is safe to say that the EURO–2012 was also felt on the Internet at a large extent. Finally, the author himself has linked the role of the Internet sources with major sport and tourism elements more than once [3, p. 340–345].

Therefore, the aim of the article may be stated as follows: to identify the impact of the electronic media on the tourist interest to sport competitions as well as to identify the dynamics and ways the information is transmitted to sport fans who appear to be potential consumers of services in the field of sport and tourism. EURO-2012 in Poland and in the Ukraine can serve as a starting point and IIHF World Championship 2014 in Belarus can be a kind of extrapolation and interpretation of the process.

Principal (The main part)

The preliminary budget of the World Championship 2014 in Minsk will be around €12 million. It includes expenses of the promotion and organization of the tournament. First of all here go the advertising costs, accommodation of the participants of the championship, lease of sport and other necessary facilities and areas, and the World Championship directorates’ wages [8]. Moreover, significant financial resources should be spent on fulfillment of measures for the development of transport and social infrastructure of Minsk, what would require BYR11,24 trillion or about €944,5 million. The city plan provides the qualitative improvement and quantitative increase in hotel infrastructure, commercial services, sphere of catering, transport communication network upgrades. It is also planned to build 14 hotels of 3 thousand seats, a number of halls of residence where during the period of the championship guests will be put up and in addition it is planned to set in operation 6 road interchanges [6].

Getting to the venue should not cause problems. Minsk is placed quite conveniently to reach for Belarusian hockey fans and supporters from abroad. There is an airport of international class, highly developed railway and car communication in the capital of Belarus. The bulk of foreigners is expected from Russia and the Ukraine, primarily because citizens of these countries do not need visa. Basic standards are calculated for

them. Customs services of Belarus and that of the Ukraine have even signed a special memorandum of cooperation during the World Cup in 2014 [15]. In addition, fans who will provide an electronic ticket will be able to visit the country without visa. But that doesn't apply to the participants of the championship [11].

Accommodation and meals are always under scrupulous control of all people concerned. A list of secure placement facilities is compiled in order to receive a planned number of guests. Under the most pessimistic prediction of the construction of new hotels the list will allow to host 20 thousand people at a time. It is also expected to use 12 student dormitories, which will be available at that time owing to a shift school schedule and adjustment of the study program by the Ministry of Education. In whole, when all the ongoing investors' projects are finished, more than 30 thousand places will be provided. Another important question for potential tourists is pricing policy. Payment for a single bedroom accommodation in a hotel such as the «Europe» is €245, in the «Crown Plaza» is €245 or a common room in «Jubilejnaja» is €70. An apartment to rent in Minsk for 24 hours may be available for around €50 [10]. Recently, there has been a tendency to create a system of hostels. However, taking into account that they're few in number, this aspect may not be taken into consideration in this segment of service. Although the hotel market in Minsk prepares for boom. There are 34 projects in various stages of implementation and construction readiness in the city, but 12–15 projects out of this number will actually be completed before the 2014 World Cup [16]. Preventing possible problems in the sector, the head of the directorate of the tournament, the chairman of the Belarusian Ice Hockey Federation Jauhien Vorsin informed the public at a press conference that an appeal to hockey fans and its supporters will be published on the website of Federation to host gratis fans from other countries [9].

Table 1

Category ticket and contents*

№	Category ticket	Contents
1.	Event Ticket	A ticket for all the matches on one of the arenas of the tournament (including finals): 34 matches on «Minsk-Arena» or 30 matches on «Čyžoŭka Arena»
2.	Group Round Ticket	A ticket for all the matches of the preliminary stage on one of the arenas of the tournament (28 matches)
3.	Day Tickets BY	An offer to citizens of Belarus, which allows to visit 2 games on weekdays or 3 games on the weekend on one of the arenas
4.	Final Round Ticket	A ticket to the finals of the tournament (only on the «Minsk-Arena»), 6 games
5.	Day-Ticket	A ticket for one game day, 2 games on weekdays or 3 matches on the weekend
6.	Single Game Ticket	A ticket for one match

* Source: processed on the basis of [5].

Table 2

Category tourist package and contents

№	Category tourist package	Contents
1.	VIP-Package	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - basic services: accommodation in the best Minsk hotels 4–5*, a ticket or package tickets for matches (tickets for the center stands stage A and B), a visit to the zone VIP-hospitality (restaurant) ice arenas, a transfer from the hotels to the ice arenas; - additional services: excursions, private transfers, etc.
2.	Family Package	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - for couples with children (a discount for child's accommodation and tickets up to 50 %) variants with accommodation and no accommodation are possible; - basic service: accommodation (package with accommodation), tickets or ticket packages for the matches and entertainment program for children for an hour before the beginning of the match; - additional services: excursions, private transfers, etc.
3.	Fan Package	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - basic services: accommodation in fan village and in hotels of Minsk, a ticket or package tickets for matches; - additional services: excursions, private transfers, etc.
4.	Student Package	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a loyalty program for students is included (discount for accommodation and tickets up to 50 %), variants without accommodation are possible (one-day program) and with accommodation (two-days program); - basic services: accommodation (package with accommodation) in a fan village or in hostels of Minsk, a ticket or a ticket package for the morning and/or afternoon matches, visit to the hospitality area (disco, concert hall) in a fan village; - additional services: excursions, meals, etc.
5.	Hockey for Kids (school groups)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a loyalty program is included (discount for accommodation and tickets up to 50 %), variants without accommodation (one-day program) and with accommodation (two-days program); - basic services: accommodation in a fan village or in the hostels of Minsk (package with accommodation), a ticket or package tickets for the morning and/or afternoon matches, meals, excursions, entertainment for children for an hour before the beginning of the match.
6.	Corporate Package	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a loyalty program for groups of employees of enterprises and organizations of the Republic of Belarus is included (discount for accommodation and tickets up to 25 %), variants without accommodation are possible (one-day program) and with accommodation (two-days program); - basic services: accommodation (package with accommodation) in a fan village or hostels of Minsk, a ticket or package tickets for the morning and/or afternoon matches, excursions; - additional services: food, etc.

* Source: processed on the basis of [5].

Another important question for tourists is that of nutrition. In the run-up to the World Championship in 2014 one should expect to pay €7 and more for dinner, although there are exceptions [11]. However, in general, according to a well-known expert in the sphere of cooking, Doctor of Historical Sciences Aleś Biely restaurant area of Belarus is conceptually immature, there is no unity in it, and if hopes of a massive influx of tourists comes true, it will be hard to feed the guests with Belarusian cuisine only. Restaurateurs have still not chosen 8–12 dishes of traditional Belarusian cuisine that could be included in the guide books [13].

Ticket price is the most important element of any high-level sport competition. The organizers have worked out a ticket program which says that the average ticket price will make up €26,3, i.e. starting from €6 to matches of the preliminary stage and to €250 for the finals of the tournament [4]. Ticket prices for some games will vary and depend on the rating of the participating teams as well as on the time of the beginning of the match. Tournament organizers suggest a price differentiation according to the division in groups which is as follows.

Potential hockey fans will certainly be interested in the tour packages developed by marketing Cup service management as the packages cater to almost all social strata.

Combination of sport with cultural and entertainment programs with excursions certainly looks attractive, especially if we take into account that in this environment dominate young people who love sports and who will try to diversify their pastime. By the way, during the European Football Championship in Poland and in the Ukraine in 2012 many fans have claimed that sport component of the championship should go with cultural and leisure constituents.

The development of such details considering the ticket prices and tourist packages was an important element for the organizers of the championship. It is due to fact that this element is the one to guarantee profits from competitions, so all the possible efforts of the Directorate of the tournament were applied here to ensure packed stands [9].

Factually, dress rehearsal for the World Championship 2014 in Minsk was a planetary championship in cycling, which also took place in Minsk on February 20–24, 2013. It is possible to say that the championship was held at a fairly high sport level. But speaking about the attendant factors of the competition opinions have divided. For example, the participants of the championship give rise to complaints about the uniformity and quality of food. Hotel rooms were small and there were old TV-sets and old furniture, the rooms were not always clean. Often problems in communication arose because local population didn't know English. According to estimates of the organizers of the championship a little more than a hundred tourists came from abroad. At the close of the championship on the «Minsk-Arena», where matches are scheduled in the upcoming hockey tournament, there were only two functioning toilets. Visitors of the «Minsk-Arena» had also problems with nutrition due to long queues at service stations, journalists in their turn have complained about the problem of the Internet access [13].

Conclusions

Analysis of the electronic media on the eve of the World Championship 2014 in ice hockey in Minsk makes possible to illustrate a series of findings of the upcoming sport forum at least in three points of view.

Organizing this tournament the management of the championship sets a goal to attract 20 thousand fans in order to gain profits. Facilities of accommodation, system of public catering and cultural program are oriented on this number. However, it is obvious that to the beginning of the competition new hotels construction program will not be completed, the availability of low-cost housing is limited, so now attempts are made to place visitors in the voluntary families of citizens of Minsk.

On the eve of the championship the average hockey fan will follow the information which relates to the tournament itself as well as to its venue. Belarus' image in the world is interpreted rather peculiar so tourist boom is unlikely to happen.

The World Hockey Championship 2014 held in Minsk coincides in time with the holding of the Olympic Winter Games in Sochi. It is therefore likely that the majority of sport fans will give preference to the Olympic Games. The qualitative composition of participants of tournament in Minsk can also be quite different than that of Sochi where top teams of the world will play. In the long run second and third national teams will come to Minsk. Another important factor is the political moment because there were repeated attempts of appeals to the international community to boycott the competitions in Minsk.

Thereby, the World Championship 2014 in ice hockey scheduled in Minsk faces some problems in tourism perspective associated with economic, political, sport and other aspects. It is quite possible that financially it will be rather unprofitable, politically problematic and sport untenable.

LIST OF REFERENCES

1. *Манько А.* Здобутки та втрати туристичного бізнесу після завершення фіналу чемпіонату Європи з футболу 2012 року / А. Манько, О. Кушнірчук-Ставнича // Вісник Львівського університету. – 2013. – (Серія географічна; вип. 43, ч. 1. – С. 227–232.
2. *Смирнов І.* Промоційно-маркетингова політика України в контексті підготовки та проведення Євро-2012 / І. Смирнов // Вісник Львівського університету. – 2013. – (Серія географічна; вип. 43, ч. 1). – С. 259–267.
3. *Lukievič U.* The analysis of functioning of tourist branch in Poland and Ukraine during carrying out EURO-2012 on the basis of the given electronic mass media / U. Lukievič // Visnyk of the Lviv University. 2013. – P. 340–345. – Series Geography; Issue 43, part 1).
4. Билеты на матчи ЧМ-2014 по хоккею должны появиться в продаже в августе-сентябре 2013-го [Электронный ресурс]. – Режим доступа : <http://hockey2014.by/news/664>. – Дата доступа: 18.07.2013.
5. Билеты на ЧМ-2014 будут стоить от 6 евро [Электронный ресурс]. – Режим доступа : <http://sport.tut.by/news/355756.html>. – Дата доступа: 18.07.2013.
6. Более Br11,2 трлн потребуется на подготовку инфраструктуры Минска к чемпионату мира по хоккею-2014 [Электронный ресурс]. – Режим доступа : <http://sport.tut.by/news/hockey/233685.html>. – Дата доступа: 16.07.2013.
7. Борьба за право провести чемпионат мира по хоккею-2014 году обошлась Беларуси в \$350 тысяч [Электронный ресурс]. – Режим доступа : <http://news.tut.by/sport/137410.html>. – Дата доступа: 16.07.2013.
8. Бюджет чемпионата мира по хоккею 2014 года в Минске составит около 12 млн. евро [Электронный ресурс]. – Режим доступа : <http://sport.tut.by/news/hockey/291564.html>. – Дата доступа: 16.07.2013.

9. Ворсин: У нас хапае месцаў для размяшчэння 20 тысяч заўязтараў ЧС-2014 [Электронный ресурс]. – Режим доступа : <http://nn.by/?c=ar&i=112513>. – Дата доступа: 11.07.2013.

10. Гостиницы Минска: за два года до чемпионата мира по хоккею [Электронный ресурс]. – Режим доступа : <http://news.tut.by/society/279399.html>. – Дата доступа: 19.03.2012.

11. МВД составит список лиц, которые смогут без виз приехать на ЧМ-2014 по хоккею в Беларуси [Электронный ресурс]. – Режим доступа : <http://news.tut.by/society/321762.html>. – Дата доступа: 16.07.2013.

12. Обед по расписанию: 8 столовых Минска [Электронный ресурс]. – Режим доступа : <http://citydog.by/post/stolovye-minska/>. – Дата доступа: 17.07.2013.

13. Репетиция ЧМ-2014. Чего не хватало спортсменам, туристам и журналистам на чемпионате мира по велотреку в Минске? [Электронный ресурс]. – Режим доступа : <http://news.tut.by/society/336493.html>. – Дата доступа: 16.07.2013.

14. Ресторанная система Беларуси не готова к чемпионату мира по хоккею 2014 года [Электронный ресурс]. – Режим доступа : <http://news.tut.by/economics/295584.html>. – Дата доступа: 16.07.2013.

15. Хоккей. Таможенные органы Беларуси и Украины подписали меморандум о взаимодействии на чемпионате мира-2014 [Электронный ресурс]. – Режим доступа : <http://www.pressball.by/news/hockey/137484>. – Дата доступа: 18.06.2013.

16. Эксперт: Минск к чемпионату мира получит всего половину заявленных отелей, причем только в категории 4-5 звезд [Электронный ресурс]. – Режим доступа : <http://news.tut.by/economics/343934.html>. – Дата доступа: 15.04.2013.

Article received by the editorial board 01.08.2013

Accepted for printing 25.08. 2013

ТУРИСТИЧНИЙ ПОТЕНЦІАЛ МІНСЬКА НАПЕРЕДОДНІ ЧЕМПІОНАТУ СВІТУ З ХОКЕЮ 2014 РОКУ (на основі аналізу електронних засобів масової інформації)

Володимир Люкевіч

*Брестський державний університет імені О. С. Пушкіна,
вул. Міцкевича, 41 / 203, м. Брест, Білорусь, 224016, тел. +375 162 211573,
e-mail: lucul@interia.pl*

Розглянуто таку систему суспільних відносин, яка формується на підставі взаємодії обраної низки соціальних феноменів, зокрема: спорт, електронні засоби масової інформації та туризм. У результаті узагальнення фактологічного матеріалу, який розміщується в інтернет-просторі, зроблено висновки щодо попередніх підсумків проведення найбільших спортивних змагань та супутньої їм інфраструктури, а також висловлено припущення щодо тіснішого взаємозв'язку спорту, електронних мас-медіа і туризму в найближчій перспективі. Спортивний туризм як один із найдинамічніших напрямів у розвитку туристичного бізнесу, є доволі привабливим для широкого кола різних соціальних верств. Використання Інтернету як засобу комунікації в процесі підготовки до проведення міжнародних спортивних змагань різного рангу сприяє формуванню їхнього позитивного (або негативного) іміджу.

Такий підхід нерідко є основним критерієм фінансової успішності або невдачі. Поєднання спортивних і туристичних елементів, завдяки необмеженим можливостям електронних засобів масової інформації, дає змогу створювати якісно нову сферу послуг для споживачів у досліджуваній системі суспільних відносин.

Ключові слова: спорт, електронні засоби масової інформації, туризм.

ТУРИСТСКИЙ ПОТЕНЦИАЛ МИНСКА В ПРЕДДВЕРИИ ЧЕМПИОНАТА МИРА ПО ХОККЕЮ 2014 ГОДА (на основе анализа электронных средств массовой информации)

Владимир Люкевич

*Брестский государственный университет имени А. С. Пушкина,
ул. Мицкевича, 41/203, г. Брест, Беларусь, 224016, тел. +375 162 211573,
e-mail: lucul@interia.pl*

Рассмотрена такая система общественных отношений, которая формируется на основании взаимодействия избранного ряда социальных феноменов, в частности: спорт, электронные средства массовой информации и туризм. В результате обобщения фактологического материала, который размещается в интернет-пространстве, сделаны выводы относительно предварительных итогов проведения крупнейших спортивных соревнований и сопутствующей им инфраструктуры, а также высказаны предположения о более тесной взаимосвязи спорта, электронных масс-медиа и туризма в ближайшей перспективе. Спортивный туризм, как одно из наиболее динамичных направлений в развитии туристического бизнеса, является в высокой степени привлекательным для широкого круга различных социальных слоёв. Использование Интернета в качестве средства коммуникации в процессе подготовки к проведению международных спортивных соревнований различного ранга способствует формированию их позитивного (или негативного) имиджа. Такой подход нередко является основным критерием финансовой успешности или неудачи. Сочетание спортивных и туристических элементов, благодаря неограниченным возможностям электронных средств массовой информации, позволяет создавать качественно новую сферу услуг для потребителей в данной системе общественных отношений.

Ключевые слова: спорт, электронные средства массовой информации, туризм.