Geographical indications and traditional products as the basis of enogastronomic tourism: significance for the development of rural communities (on the example of Italy)

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Abstract. This article is dedicated to exploring geographical indications and traditional products as the foundation for the development of gastronomic tourism and their collective impact on the development of rural communities. Italy has been chosen as the research subject – one of the world’s most popular tourist destinations, a country with the highest number of registered geographical indications, and a well-established tradition of rural tourism. Analyzing Italy’s experience regarding the contribution of traditional products and geographical indications to the development of national tourism and the economy of rural communities and the state as a whole allows for assessing Ukraine’s development vectors in this field. Based on the analysis of bibliographic databases, the significant relevance of such research is evident. Despite some publicity, there are relatively few publications on this topic in Ukrainian scientific journals. In contrast, English-language publications cover geographical indications, gastronomic, and wine tourism much more extensively both thematically and territorially. The research relies on periodicals of relevant international organizations, public associations, etc. Analysis of the World Intellectual Property Organization’s annual reports revealed that over 90% of the world’s geographical indications in recent years fall into the categories of «wines and spirits» and «agricultural products and foods». Regarding Italy, statistical data from the World Tourism Organization confirmed its stable position in global tourism (fifth place in tourist arrivals and receipts for the last decade or more) and a surplus growth in the tourism balance (19 billion USD in 2019), leading the UN WTO to characterize it as a «country of powerful growth». Recent publications from the World Tourism Organization noted significant recovery rates of international tourism in Italy in the post-pandemic period. According to Coldiretti, the national confederation of agricultural, fishing, agri-food, and environmental sectors in Italy, the projected contribution to the country’s economy in 2023 exceeds 30 billion euros from national and foreign tourists who increasingly choose to vacation in rural areas. This trend is attributed to Italy’s leadership in gastronomic and wine tourism, with over 5,000 traditional product names and 838 products and wines protected by geographical indications (as of 2023, according to the Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Forestry of Italy), as well as the immense potential of agrotourism. The article also highlights the significant role played by the representation of Italy’s unique agro-landscapes as cultural landscapes of UNESCO World Heritage, FAO World Agricultural Heritage (GIAHS project), etc., in the development of rural communities.

The analysis and overview of the current implementation of the system of geographical indications and guaranteed traditional features in Ukraine allowed for identifying certain strategic directions for applying Italian experience in Ukrainian territories.

Keywords: geographical indications, traditional products, tourism, rural, agricultural, landscape
Introduction

Analysis of open databases shows that despite considerable attention, gastronomic (enogastronomic) tourism is not a highly popular topic for scientific research in Ukraine. Over the past 5 years, only about 20 articles have been published, with 14 of them appearing in category B journals. The most popular research areas include the interconnections between gastronomic tourism and tourist destinations, specific issues related to the popularization of gastronomic tourism, gastronomic tourism as a cultural trend and a component of Ukraine’s brand, and its development in specific regions of Ukraine. However, publications on the role of gastronomic tourism in the socio-economic development of territories, with some exceptions (e.g., Korkuna, Nykyha, & Pidvalna, 2020; Paska, Holovechuk, Harasymchuk, 2022), are practically nonexistent.

The issue of geographical indications, their role in gastronomic tourism, and their participation in agricultural production have been even less explored. Only a few publications are worthy of attention, including those that explore the mechanism of geographical indications of products as a potential for the innovative development of the tourism industry (Zakharchyn, 2020) and the impact of geographical indications on the development of gastronomic tourism in a region (Dashchuk, 2022).

A significant event in this field was the International Scientific and Practical Conference «Development of Gastronomic Tourism in Ukraine: Status, Challenges, and Opportunities for the Implementation of European Experience» in 2019. It addressed important issues such as supporting the development of the geographical indications system in Ukraine (Savio, 2019), the potential of geographical indications as objects of tourist attraction (Prohoda, 2019), specific aspects of the development of gastronomic tourism in rural areas (Liptuga, 2019; Zlobina, 2019), and others.

In English-language publications, the number of articles dedicated to geographical indications is in the tens of thousands across various subject areas, while the topics related to gastronomic tourism are covered in around 1,500 publications, and wine tourism in 2,800 publications over the last 10 years. Notably, the term «enogastronomic tourism» is rarely used globally, with only about 15 publications in the last decade.

Regarding the thematic focus of the research, works related to quality assurance of specific products using geographical indications (e.g., cocoa, alcoholic beverages, meat), the connection between geographical indications and global climate change, and the impact on landscape preservation (García-Hernández, Ruiz-Fernández, Rodríguez-Gutiérrez, 2022), the impact of geographical indications on agriculture and rural development (Takayama, Norito, Nakanishi, Ito, 2021; Cei, Stefani, Defrancesco, Lombardi, 2018), and geographical indications as a mechanism for preserving agrobiodiversity and their connection with terroirs (Coggins, Malone, Stockmann, Possell, McBratney, 2019) have been explored.

A significant contribution to this issue seems to be the collective monograph «Case Studies in the Traditional Food Sector», where a separate section is dedicated to the role of traditional products in valorizing food production and promoting socio-economic development in countries and regions (Antonelli, Viagianò, 2018).

Ключові слова: географічні зазначення, традиційні продукти, туризм, сільський, сільськогосподарський, ландшафт
The relationships between gastronomic/enogastronomic and wine tourism protected geographical indications, and the concept of traditional products is not well-established. Publications mainly discuss the connections between these forms of tourism and street food, agritourism, cycling tourism, the role of gastronomy and winemaking in the development of tourism, the restaurant industry as a factor in gastronomic tourism, strategies for wine tourism development, and the interaction between wine and tourism businesses.

In conclusion, the impact of eno- and gastronomic tourism and traditional products and geographical indications, as its foundation, on rural territories remains inadequately studied.

However, the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) emphasizes the role of geographical indications in the development of producers and communities. Specifically, they highlight that, based on sound business management, geographical indications can provide benefits to producers not only in the long term, related to strengthening the brand and gaining competitive advantages but also significant financial gains: increasing the added value of products and expanding export opportunities (WIPO geindications, 2023).

Essentially, the entire system of geographical indications is directly related to agricultural production. As evident from data presented in the World Intellectual Property Indicators from 2018 to 2022, summarized in Table 1 and Figure 1, approximately 90% of geographical indications are in some way connected to rural areas (such as grape production, agricultural production, and, to a significant extent, traditional crafts).

Considering the relatively recent history of culinary tourism and the formation of the system of protected geographical indications for traditional food products in Ukraine, studying the experience of European Union countries, especially those with established systems of geographical indications as a component of quality schemes, is particularly relevant. The EU’s system of geographical indications protects the names of products originating from specific regions and having defined qualities or a reputation associated with the territory of production. It includes Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) and Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) for food and wine products, as well as Geographical Indication (GI) for spirits (Geographical Indications and Quality Schemes Explained, 2023).

Therefore, in this publication, Italy has been chosen as the object of study – one of the world’s most

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<th>Table 1. Geographical indications in force by product categories</th>
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<td><strong>Product categories</strong></td>
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<td>Wines and spirits</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agricultural products</td>
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<td>Handicrafts</td>
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<td>Services</td>
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<td>Others/unknown</td>
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*Source: World Intellectual Property Indicators, 2018-2022*

![Fig. 1. Distribution of geographical indications by categories, % of their global volume (based on WIPO data, 2018-2022)](image-url)
popular tourist destinations, a country with the highest number of registered geographical indications and a well-established tradition of rural tourism (Italian: Agriturismo).

In this context, it is worth noting some terminological differences. In Ukrainian practice, various terms related to tourism in rural areas are used. However, it is challenging to find established, legislatively defined interpretations that are integrated. For example, the Law «On Tourism» mentions rural tourism without providing a specific definition, and there is no mention of the widely used term «rural green tourism». This leads to a certain terminological ambiguity. On the other hand, the analysis of sources shows that the term «Agriturismo», widely used in Italy, corresponds to the concept of rural tourism in English-language sources (including UN WTO, for example, Tourism and Rural Development, 2023) and does not contradict the concept of rural tourism in the context in which it is applied in publications by the National Tourist Organization of Ukraine (NTOU).

The aim of the research is to characterize Italy’s experience in contributing traditional products and geographical indications to the development of national tourism, especially enogastronomic tourism, at both the level of rural communities and the country as a whole, to find examples applicable to Ukraine. The objective is to examine the current state and development trends in this field within our country.

Materials and methods

The research presented in this publication is based on the analysis of open informational sources, including the examination of bibliographic databases such as OUCI for publications in Ukrainian journals and Sciencedirect for English-language publications. Statistical data were sourced from periodicals of relevant international organizations, including the World Tourism Organization (UN WTO), the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), as well as the Ministry of Agricultural, Food and Forestry Policies of Italy (MiPAFF), local community associations in Italy, and others. This allowed for the determination of Italy’s position in the global tourism landscape and an analysis of the impact of geographical indications and the production of traditional products on the development of rural areas in Italy. The study indicates limited access to up-to-date statistical information of an open nature regarding the development of local businesses based on the production of traditional products and/or associated with the implementation of local crafts. Therefore, the investigation into the impact of geographical indications on the development of rural communities relies on methods of comparative analysis, visualization, and a general description of open statistical data. The characterization of the current state of implementing the system of protected geographical indications and identifying specific strategic directions for applying Italian experience in Ukraine was achieved through SWOT analysis and guided by the fundamental provisions of Ukrainian laws supporting protected geographical indications, data from the Ukrainian National Intellectual Property and Innovations Office (UKRNOIP), publications by the National Tourist Organization of Ukraine (NTOU), and relevant public organizations.

Results and analysis

The publication «International Tourism Highlights, 2020 Edition» allowed for an assessment of the situation in the global market of international tourism in the «pre-pandemic» period. Despite the financial crisis of 2008 and the shocks in 2019 associated with the collapse of the Thomas Cook Group and several low-cost airlines in Europe, the international tourism industry showed steady growth in receipts between 2009 and 2019 (54%), exceeding the growth of the global GDP (44%). As of 2019, and for many years before, international tourism ranks third (after the fuel sector and the chemical industry) as the world’s export sector. The total export of international tourism reached 1.7 trillion US dollars in 2019 (WTO, 2021).

Italy is among the top countries with the largest surplus in the tourism balance in 2019 – 19 billion US dollars (seventh place). It is also among the top five most popular destinations globally, with 64.5 million arrivals and 49.6 billion US dollars in tourism receipts (Table 2). Overall, the UN WTO positively assesses the state of Italy’s tourism industry, characterizing it as a country of «particularly robust growth» for several consecutive years, alongside Portugal, Greece, and Malta.

The latest data presented by UN WTO in the publication «International Tourism Highlights, 2023 Edition – The impact of COVID-19 on tourism (2020–2022)» showed that the recovery of Italy’s tourism industry in the post-COVID period is progressing at a relatively rapid pace (Figure 2). The National Confederation Coldiretti is engaged in researching the role of gastronomic tourism in the development of rural areas in Italy, as well as forecasting the effectiveness of implementing geographical indications. Coldiretti is a non-profit organization representing agricultural enterprises, companies, direct producers, cooperatives,
associations, and any other groups, organizations, and entities working in agriculture, fisheries, agri-food, environmental sectors, and rural areas at national, European, and international levels.

Therefore, according to Coldiretti’s estimates, the contribution to Italy’s economy in 2023, solely from food expenditures, will exceed 30 billion euros, considering both Italian and foreign tourists who increasingly choose rural areas for «culinary vacations». This demonstrates the enormous historical and cultural value of the national gastronomic and wine heritage, which has gained extraordinary popularity throughout the country, and its valorization provides «...a broad spectrum of opportunities for economic development and employment growth». Furthermore, such a situation serves as a significant lever for promoting «made in Italy» food products on the global market: according to Coldiretti’s estimates, the value of such products reached a record level of 60 billion euros in 2022 (Coldiretti, 2023).

Thus, the study of sources allows us to assert that Italy is a global leader in the field of gastronomic and wine tourism. The foundation of this segment of Italy’s tourism market consists of 5,450 unique products – specialties produced according to traditional rules, with at least a 25-year production tradition in the regions. According to the Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Forestry (Ministero dell‘agricoltura, della sovranità alimentare e delle foreste, MiPAFF), Italy has the highest number of agri-food products with protected designations of origin and geographical indications recognized by the European Union. This list continues to expand: as of 2022, 320 products in the DOP/IGP category and 415 DOC/DOCG wines were recognized, while in 2023, this number increased to 838 products, making Italy unique in Europe and the world. Geographical indications in Italy form an entire network system, uniting about 200,000 operators in the agri-food sector within 285 consortia, according to MiPAFF (eAmbrosia, 2023; Coldiretti, 2023; DOP, IGP. La qualità nei territori, 2023).

Italy’s leadership in the organic agriculture sector in Europe is sustained by approximately 86,000 organic farms, 25,000 farmhouses preserving the secrets of peasant cuisine for generations, and 10,000 farmers engaged in direct sales through the Campagna Amica foundation (Coldiretti, 2023). Numerous initiatives for the valorization, support, and promotion of protected traditional products also receive significant support, ranging from gastronomic festivals to wine routes. An integral part of this process is the significant potential of Italian agritourism: according to Coldiretti, 25,400 local agritourism enterprises can offer 294,000 beds and 532,000 dining places. Despite the increasing

<p>| Table 2. Characteristics of international tourism in Italy (according to the data from International Tourism Highlights, WTO, 2016-2023) |</p>
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<td>International tourist arrivals,</td>
<td>47.704</td>
<td>48.576</td>
<td>50.732</td>
<td>52.372</td>
<td>58.253</td>
<td>61.567</td>
<td>64.513</td>
<td>25.190</td>
<td>26.888</td>
<td>49.811</td>
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<td>International tourism receipts,</td>
<td>43.912</td>
<td>45.488</td>
<td>39.449</td>
<td>40.246</td>
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<td>49.262</td>
<td>49.596</td>
<td>19.797</td>
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Source: International Tourism Highlights, WTO, 2016-2023

Fig. 2. Trends in the development of international tourism in Italy (based on data from UN WTO, 2016-2023)
number of innovative tour products for cycling tourism, ecological tourism, nostalgic tourism, and educational tourism, guests of farmhouses value the opportunity to rediscover the «tastes of the past» transmitted from generation to generation the most. It is precisely the ability to preserve the traditions of food and wine unchanged over an extended period that attracts an increasing number of tourists to Italy’s rural areas.

The proposition of enogastronomic tour products is of particular significance for small settlements with a population of less than five thousand inhabitants, where 92% of typical national products are produced. It is noteworthy that not only individual farmers but also agricultural companies strive to preserve indigenous and historical cultures in their activities.

Ettore Prandini, president of Coldiretti, emphasized in his statement that examples of traditional food and wine are treasures, genuine works of art meticulously preserved by generations of farmers, and they must be protected from the risks of homologation and counterfeiting.

The Italian food basket and the selection of everyday food products are formed by items with both national and pan-European geographical indications: DOC, DOCG, DOP, IGT, and IGP. This includes practically all cheeses, wines, meat products, some vegetables, and fruits (such as Sicilian tomatoes or strawberries from the Basilicata region). Traditional products are an obligatory part of the festive table, such as cotechino and traditional lentil dishes on New Year’s Eve, in addition to traditional Italian sparkling wine. Of course, grapes are also essential, and according to tradition, one must eat at least 12 berries – one for each month of the year. According to Coldiretti’s research, there is a rapid decline in the inclination to consume foreign exotic fruits in the country (down to 34% of consumers). 92% of citizens will bring Italian products to a party: 53% of consumers do so primarily because they find them tastier, and 39% because they consider supporting national producers and the economy a priority (Coldiretti, 2022).

In reality, the connection between the production of traditional products and enogastronomic tourism is even more profound. Sustainable agricultural practices in Italy for an extended period have contributed to the preservation of the uniqueness of landscapes, recognized by UNESCO as exceptionally valuable agro-production and cultural landscapes simultaneously. Among Italy’s 8 cultural heritage objects in the «cultural landscape» category, two are related to viticulture: the Vineyard Landscape of Piedmont: Langhe-Roero and Monferrato and Colline del Prosecco di Conegliano e Valdobbiadene. In the rest – terraced vineyards, fruit orchards, and pastures are integral components of the cultural landscape, such as Costiera Amalfitana or the gardens and olive groves of the Medici Villas and Gardens in Tuscany (Cultural Landscapes, 2023).

Additionally, Italy hosts two FAO Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) objects: Olive Groves of the Slopes between Assisi and Spoleto and Soave Traditional Vineyards (Europe and Central Asia, 2023). The rural region of Soave, identified by FAO as a unique agro-economic system, whose wines are known worldwide, provides income for over 3,000 families over 200 years. The traditional method of cultivating vineyards, «Pergola Veronese», is a distinctive feature of the landscapes of this region. Two autochthonous varieties grow practically only in this region in the world: Garganega and Trebbiano di Soave, representing ancient vines known since Roman times (Soave, 2023).

The connection of these cultural objects with protected geographical indications is direct. In these territories of global cultural and agricultural heritage, in the corresponding wine regions marked with DOCG and DOC, Nebbiolo grapes are used to produce world-famous Barolo and Barbaresco wines (Vineyard Landscape of Piedmont: Langhe-Roero and Monferrato), Glera grapes are grown for the highest quality Prosecco (Colline del Prosecco di Conegliano e Valdobbiadene), and Soave wine is produced in the area that received European Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) as early as 1968 (Soave Traditional Vineyards).

Traditional rural landscapes form the basis of several Council of Europe Cultural Routes, including «Routes of the Olive Tree» and «Iter Vitis – Les Chemins de la Vigne», of which Italy is one of the participating countries (Cultural Routes, 2023). Such routes are an exclusive tool for rural territory development as they are part of shaping the region’s tourism image, promoting economic diversification, and contributing to the socio-economic development of communities as a whole.

In Italy, the Iter Vitis route connects 34 municipalities in different regions of the country. The route is based on the idea that the landscape is the most important factor for getting acquainted with the territory and the main element of its attractiveness. The culture of viticulture and wine, as well as the wine-producing landscape, is interpreted as the material and non-material heritage of the community, an integral component of the history of the territory. Thus, this represents a new type of journey that enhances the offerings of wine tourism by popularizing the great variety of European oenological territories and land-
scapes (Iter Vitis, 2023). This, and similar routes, constitute a new and promising direction for the development of wine tourism that goes beyond mere tastings.

The production of traditional products marked with protected geographical indications and their special connection to the territory is directly linked to traditional and environmentally sustainable agro-cultural practices and the formation of corresponding agro-production landscapes, considered components of cultural heritage. Extrapolating from global and European experience, one can speak about the necessity of identifying specific objects of protection in Ukraine – cultural landscapes of objects of national agricultural heritage corresponding to the first three registered geographical indications in our country: Hutsul sheep cheese, Hutsul cow cheese, and Melitopol cherry (2020). These geographical indications are one of the results of the implementation of the EU project «Support to the development of the geographical indications system in Ukraine».

Therefore, an effective mechanism for integrating geographical indications and traditional products into the «producer-tourism» system is the network of special routes known as Wine Roads, Taste Roads, and Wine and Taste Roads. Specifically, Wine Roads can be found in France, Italy, Spain, Georgia, South Africa, Argentina, and Canada (Quebec), where they form the basis of activities related to wine tourism, not just as a union of local producers but as a powerful driver of transformations within territories and communities.

Starting in 2019, a process of creating similar routes has been underway in Ukraine: Wine and Taste Road of Ukrainian Bessarabia, Taste Road of the Carpathians, Wine and Taste Road of Zakarpattia, Roads of Wine and Taste of Kherson Region, Roads of Wine and Taste of Kyiv Region. The formation of some of them is based on geographical indications, such as Hutsul sheep cheese and Hutsul cow cheese for the Taste Roads of the Carpathians.

The implementation of relevant provisions of the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the European Union and the development of the national legal support system for protected geographical indications have invigorated the process of submitting applications for industrial property objects in the category of «geographical indications»: 6 applications in 2019, 7 in 2021, as opposed to three applications in 2018 (Annual report 2022, 2023).

The process of expanding the list of protected geographical indications is ongoing: Kherson Watermelon, Honey of Zakarpattia/Zakarpattia Honey, Frumushyka Lamb Meat/Frumushyka Lamb, as well as geographical indications Yalpug, Zakarpattia/Zakarpattia Wine, Pridunaiska Bessarabia, Shabag, Valley of Frumushyka (for wines) are waiting for the national registration.

Currently, work on implementing the GI system continues within the framework of the EU4Small-Farms project – Institutional and Political Reform for Small-Scale Agriculture, financed by the EU and focused, among other things, on engaging GIs and enogastronomic tourism as tools for rural development: «geographical indications and enogastronomic tourism contribute to the sustainability, inclusiveness, and competitiveness of the agricultural sector». In Ukraine, the formation of a list of guaranteed traditional specialties (TSG) has been initiated.

The basis for expanding the national GI system could be «The Ark of Taste in Ukraine», which includes, among other things, unique food products characteristic of Ukraine and produced for at least one generation (30 years). Such products generally correspond to the category of «traditional guaranteed specialty» as per EU regulations (Geographical indications and quality schemes explained, 2023), as well as the Law of Ukraine «On Features of Legal Protection of Geographical Indications for Agricultural Products and Foodstuffs, Protection of Rights and Application of Quality Schemes, including Traditional Guaranteed Specialties for Agricultural Products and Foodstuffs» (2022). The developers claim that local products included in the Ark of Taste are considered the basis for the future sustainable and independent food system of Ukraine (Zocchi, D.M., Motuzenko, O., Stryamets, N., Fontefrancesco, M.F., Sõukand, R., & Pieroni, A., 2022). A significant portion of dishes from the Ark of Taste has already been included in the National List of Intangible Cultural Heritage Elements of Ukraine (Crimean meat pie et ayaclak, Ivano-Frankivs’k pie, ritual bread for the day of St. George) as elements of gastronomic heritage. Moreover, certain livestock breeds are directly related to the production of products with geographical indications, such as the Ukrainian Carpathian sheep breed, whose milk is used to produce Hutsul sheep cheese.

Additionally, agro-production landscapes where native varieties are preserved (Novak and Telti-Kuruk grapes, Lemon pear, Opishnya plum Ugor), traditional Ukrainian breeds roam freely, and special agricultural raw materials are produced for traditional food products, such as the Black Sea southern Bessarabian goat cheese, whose unique taste qualities are formed by the milk of goats grazing in a unique biocenosis – the Black Sea steppe rich in wormwood and wild cereals. The unique agro-production system formed by
generations of farmers and fishermen in the Ukrainian Danube Delta (Vylkove) is particularly notable. All of this will contribute to the preservation of agricultural biodiversity, sustainable farming practices, and socio-economic growth in rural communities.

This is precisely what the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) emphasizes. In the program document «Linking people, places, and products. A guide for promoting quality linked to geographical origin and sustainable Geographical Indications» (2010), it is highlighted that establishing a connection between local producers, the region of their farming, and the products they produce by assigning a rural product an indication of its place of origin – a geographical indication – can be considered one of the approaches to enhancing the sustainability of rural areas and communities worldwide.

In our time, establishing these connections: products – production traditions – territory – rural population, holds manifold significance. On one hand, it is a heritage that can be preserved through the application of geographical indications. On the other hand, these products themselves are gaining increasing market value due to growing consumer interest in the quality of products, determined by their geographical origin and local traditions, leading to the valorization of food products and everything associated with them. This, in turn, gradually fosters interest among both individual producers and large farming associations in sustainable farming practices, focused on preserving agricultural biodiversity, promoting traditional Ukrainian varieties and breeds, adhering to principles of organic farming, etc., to ensure the appropriate quality of products (raw materials) for the production of high-value products and beverages: protected geographical indications and guaranteed traditional specialties, which form the basis for the development of gastronomic and wine (eno-) tourism.

An analysis of various sources has shown that Italy actively utilizes all possible tools to attract tourists to rural regions. The tools for valorizing local products are diverse, but at the initial stage, it involves creating added value through their registration as protected geographical indications or guaranteed traditional specialties. Subsequently, incorporating them into tourist excursions and routes (Wine and Taste Roads, tasting tours, etc.) transforms local products into well-known attractions for tourism, both within the framework of enogastronomic tourism and event-based (festivals). The formed gastronomic brand becomes an integral component of the tourist image of a settlement, locality, region, creating a lasting associative connection.

Thus, evaluating the potential prospects for the development of geographical indications and traditional products and their impact on the development of rural areas and communities in Ukraine, particularly through gastronomic tourism, strong and weak aspects of this process, opportunities, and potential threats can be identified.

Of course, at present, the main threats are associated with the military aggression of the Russian Federation and the related physical losses of bearers of traditional gastronomic heritage, contamination of significant areas of agricultural land, destruction of agricultural infrastructure, especially in the region of cultivation of the renowned Kherson Watermelons, and the geographical indication «Melitopol Cherry». Vineyards in the southern part of Ukraine have also suffered. For instance, the Winery of Prince Trubetskoy, now Stoic Winery, has experienced looting of its wine collection, damage to production facilities, and landmining of vineyards. Significant losses are related to the occupation of the territory of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, where, during the period 2009-2013, registered indications of origin for wines included: Novyi Svit, Sonačna Dolyna, Maharach, Zolota Balka, Megalom, and Balaklava (Vidomosti derzhavnoho reiestru, 2023). Two of them (Sonačna Dolyna, Novyi Svit) are covered by the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU. Additionally, it is worth mentioning the Carpathians, where there is a potential threat to traditional grazing areas due to the expansion of ski resorts, tourist centers, etc. However, this does not preclude the further development of the registration process for geographical indications in the country, as it is a voluntary process that does not require the involvement of local budgets. Therefore, at present, visible threats from state structures are absent.

In this case, strengths include significant agricultural resources (a climate favorable for the cultivation of many crops, extensive areas of fertile soil), preserved traditions of farming and production of unique food products, for example, in the Carpathians, giving rise to protected geographical indications such as «Hutsul sheep cheese» and «Hutsul cow cheese». There is a substantial list of gastronomic heritage, some elements of which are included in the list of intangible cultural heritage of Ukraine, documented in the «Ark of Taste of Ukraine», and active participation of small producers united by the enogastronomic network of the Roads of Wine and Taste of Ukraine. Members of the public organization «The Roads of Wine and Taste of Kyiv Region», from the first days of the war, assisted community members affected by
military aggression, and are involved in the restoration of the region’s territory after the occupation.

The process of registering protected geographical indications continues, with the consideration of new nominees. Work is underway to form a national list of guaranteed traditional specialties. New associations of producers are being established. For example, the Public Association «Association of Grape Growers, Winemakers, and Distillers of Zakarpattia», registered in May 2022, is actively working on the registration of the geographical indication «Wines of the Silver Land».

As for weaknesses, one can highlight the lack of systematic educational activities among small producers regarding the creation of traditional products and the associated potential benefits. There is a low level of satisfaction with the constantly growing need for educational events among rural farmers who want to contribute to the creation of enogastronomic tourism products, and so on.

Development opportunities appear promising and are currently linked to the activities of the EU4SmallFarms project in Ukraine and the promotion of the concept of protected geographical indications (PGIs) and enogastronomic tourism as tools for rural development. The legal support system for protected geographical indications in our country, primarily represented by the Laws of Ukraine «On the Legal Protection of Geographical Indications» (1999, amended in 2019), «On the Features of Legal Protection of Geographical Indications for Agricultural Products and Foodstuffs, Protection of Rights and Application of Quality Schemes, including Guaranteed Traditional Specialties for Agricultural Products and Foodstuffs» (2022), «On the Geographical Indications of Alcoholic Beverages» (2022), and a series of subordinate acts, has been established. Therefore, it can be argued that the system of protected geographical indications established in Ukraine, similar to EU quality schemes, is a reliable foundation for the interest of both individual producers and associations of producers in registering geographical indications. In the perspective, as evidenced by European experience, this leads to an increase in the number of economic entities without additional expenditures from budgets at all levels and accelerates the pace of economic growth in rural communities.

Conclusions

Therefore, Italy’s experience demonstrates that the use of protected geographical indications, as a system contributing to the preservation of traditional food production, certifies their quality, establishes a unique connection with the production territory, promotes the valorization of agricultural products, and simultaneously serves as a stable foundation for the development of gastronomic tourism and economic prosperity in rural communities.

The implementation of geographical indications is based on the understanding that this system has both direct economic benefits, such as the revival of local production and increased employment opportunities, and additional cumulative effects for rural communities. It serves as an incentive for preserving cultural heritage, including both the products themselves and the traditions of their production and consumption. It also supports the preservation of traditional farming practices, contributing to the development of local infrastructure and the emergence of new facilities related to the production of local products and gastronomic tourism. Additionally, the development of local businesses in the production of traditional products can stimulate the revival of traditional crafts, potentially expanding the list of protected geographical indications within this category.

Currently, Ukraine has established a legislatively stable system of protected geographical indications, like EU quality schemes. This provides legal support for the further development of geographical indications and traditional guaranteed specialties, serving as a foundation for encouraging individual agricultural producers to produce traditional products and rural communities to revive gastronomic heritage and create a unique enogastronomic tourism product. It is worth noting that this process is cyclical: the development of enogastronomic tourism and tourists’ interest in acquiring unique local products stimulate members of rural communities to further improve gastrotouristic products and producers to expand production while maintaining the quality of products – traditional guaranteed specialties and geographical indications.

Based on this, in the future, more attention should be given to educational activities among agricultural producers, conducting educational events in rural communities dedicated to the preservation of gastronomic heritage, the production of traditional products, and the associated potential benefits.

A promising direction for scientific research is seen in substantiating the protection of a specific category of cultural landscapes – objects of agricultural heritage associated with existing and potential geographical indications, traditional guaranteed specialties, preserved authentic grape varieties, fruits, etc.
References


