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CHANGE MANAGEMENT AS A TOOL FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM ORGANIZATIONS IN UKRAINE IN THE CONTEXT OF EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

Introduction. The development of the tourism industry is one of the strategic priorities of Ukraine's economic growth and its integration into the European economic and institutional space. Tourism contributes to employment, regional development, and fiscal revenues, while simultaneously performing an important socio-cultural function by supporting intercultural dialogue, preserving cultural heritage, and shaping a positive international image of the country. At the global level, tourism is increasingly viewed as a component of sustainable development, closely linked to innovation, digital transformation, and institutional modernization.

In recent years, tourism organizations worldwide have been operating under conditions of heightened uncertainty caused by systemic shocks, including the COVID-19 pandemic, geopolitical instability, and disruptions in international mobility. These challenges have intensified the need for adaptive management approaches capable of ensuring organizational resilience, continuity of operations, and long-term sustainability. In this context, change management has become a key managerial tool enabling tourism organizations to respond to external turbulence, restructure business processes, and align their activities with evolving market demands and regulatory frameworks.

For Ukraine, these challenges are further complicated by the consequences of the full-scale war, which has significantly affected tourism infrastructure, labor markets, investment flows, and consumer behavior. At the same time, the process of European integration creates new institutional and economic requirements for tourism organizations, including compliance with EU standards in service quality, governance, digitalization, environmental responsibility, and stakeholder engagement. This dual pressure – crisis recovery and European

integration - places change management at the center of strategic decision-making in the tourism sector.

Despite the growing body of international research on sustainable tourism development and change management, the application of these approaches to tourism organizations in transition and post-conflict economies remains insufficiently explored. In particular, there is a need for comprehensive analysis of how change management tools can support the sustainable development of tourism organizations in Ukraine, enhance their adaptability, and facilitate convergence with European management practices. Addressing this problem is of high practical relevance, as it contributes to the formulation of effective managerial solutions for post-war recovery, regional revitalization, and the integration of Ukraine into the European tourism market.

Analysis of Recent Research and Publications.

Scientific discussion on organizational change is grounded in classical and contemporary approaches. K. Lewin conceptualized change as a dynamic process of shifting «social equilibria», which established the foundational logic of managing transitions through sequential phases and highlighted the role of group dynamics in sustaining or resisting change [1]. Building on these theoretical premises, J. P. Kotter developed a managerial framework for leading organizational transformation, emphasizing leadership, vision-driven communication, and institutionalization of new practices as prerequisites for stable change outcomes [2].

More recent studies emphasize that change management is increasingly shaped by turbulence, complexity, and uncertainty. A. Smith, D. Jones, and B. Brown examine the challenges of managing change in complex environments, stressing that traditional linear approaches often fail under multi-factor disruptions and



that organizations require flexible strategies, continuous learning, and rapid decision cycles [3]. C. Williams focuses on the role of leadership in change management, demonstrating that leadership capabilities—particularly communication, trust-building, and stakeholder alignment—significantly influence the success of transformations and the sustainability of results [4].

Ukrainian research further develops these ideas through the lens of agile and enterprise-level transformation. O. V. Tarasiuk substantiates the conceptual foundations of agile change management, arguing that adaptability, iterative implementation, and responsiveness to external signals increase organizational resilience and improve performance under uncertainty [5]. M. Buriak and O. Makovoz propose a methodological view of agile change management as a tool for organizational transformation, emphasizing process redesign, managerial flexibility, and the integration of modern management instruments as drivers of competitiveness [6]. At the enterprise level, M. Budnik and Ya. Ivanova systematize approaches and models of change management, identifying their applicability depending on organizational context, resource constraints, and the scale of transformation [7]. M. Averkina and A. Matvieiev (2024) provide a comparative analysis of change management models, highlighting differences in logic, implementation stages, and managerial focus, which supports informed model selection for practical use [8].

Despite the relevance of these contributions, the application of change management as a tool for sustainable development of tourism organizations in Ukraine remains insufficiently elaborated. Most available studies are either generic or focused on enterprise transformation without sector-specific operationalization for tourism, where service quality, customer trust, seasonality, and destination dependence strongly shape managerial decisions. Moreover, the combined shock of the COVID-19 pandemic and the full-scale war created an extreme context in which tourism organizations face simultaneous human capital losses, financial constraints, and the need to reorient toward domestic demand while aligning with European integration requirements. Therefore, further research is needed to clarify how change management frameworks and agile instruments can be adapted to the tourism sector in Ukraine to support resilience, sustainable recovery, and convergence with EU-oriented management practices.

Purpose of the Article. Given the insufficiently developed evidence on how change management can be operationalized as a practical tool for sustainable development of tourism organizations in Ukraine under European integration and crisis-related disruptions, this article aims to conceptualize and assess the role of change management in strengthening organizational sustainability and resilience, and to define priority change directions that support post-war recovery and alignment with EU-oriented governance and market requirements.

Research results. According to contemporary tourism and change management concepts, the modern

tourist increasingly combines the demand for comfort, safety, and convenience with an interest in authentic, innovative, and experience-based travel. This coexistence of functional expectations and experiential motivations shapes the structure of tourism demand and directly influences managerial decision-making within tourism organizations. As a result, tourism enterprises are required to continuously adapt their business models, service design, and communication strategies in order to maintain competitiveness and ensure sustainable development.

International tourism plays a significant role in globalization processes by fostering cultural interaction, knowledge exchange, and long-term interpersonal and institutional connections. Travel is no longer perceived solely as a form of leisure or exploration but increasingly functions as a channel for the dissemination of values, social norms, and sustainable practices. In this context, tourism organizations operate at the intersection of economic performance and socio-cultural responsibility, which reinforces the importance of change management as a tool for balancing market efficiency with long-term sustainability goals.

The period of 2020–2023 was characterized by unprecedented volatility in the global tourism industry caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent phases of gradual recovery. Tourism, as one of the most globally integrated sectors of the economy, experienced the sharpest decline in modern statistical history: international tourist arrivals decreased almost fourfold, while financial losses reached trillions of US dollars worldwide. These shocks exposed structural vulnerabilities of tourism systems and highlighted the limited preparedness of many organizations for large-scale external disruptions.

At the same time, the crisis period became a critical stress test for the adaptive capacity and resilience of the tourism sector. The gradual recovery observed in 2022–2023, reflected in the restoration of international tourist flows and improvement of financial indicators, demonstrates the sector's ability to respond to global challenges through organizational transformation, digitalization, and strategic reorientation. These trends confirm that effective change management enables tourism organizations to restore operational stability, redesign value propositions, and align their development trajectories with sustainability principles and European integration requirements (Table 1).

Table 1. Global Tourism Development Trends, 2020–2023

Year	International Arrivals (bn)	Tourism Revenues (trn USD)	% till 2019 Level
2019	1,5	1,5	100
2020	0,38	0,2	26
2021	0,45	0,35	32
2022	0,97	0,8	65
2023	1,27	1,2	84

Source: compiled by the authors based on [10-11]

The analysis of global tourism development trends in 2020–2023 demonstrates that, despite the unprecedented collapse in 2020, the tourism industry exhibited a significant capacity for adaptation and recovery. International tourist arrivals declined to only 26% of the 2019 level in 2020, reflecting the immediate impact of global mobility restrictions and uncertainty. However, the gradual increase in arrivals and tourism revenues during 2021–2023 indicates a systematic recovery process supported by organizational transformation, digitalization, and flexible management responses.

By 2023, international tourist arrivals reached 84% of the pre-crisis level, while tourism revenues recovered at a comparable pace, highlighting the sector's resilience and its ability to restore economic performance under prolonged external pressure. These trends confirm that effective change management plays a critical role in enabling tourism organizations to restructure operations, diversify markets, and align services with changing consumer expectations, thereby supporting sustainable development at the global level.

The observed global recovery dynamics provide an essential analytical background for assessing the situation in Ukraine, where tourism organizations faced more complex crisis conditions due to the combined impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the full-scale war. Unlike the global average, Ukrainian tourism recovery has been shaped by deeper structural disruptions, which increases the relevance of change management as a strategic tool for organizational sustainability and European integration. Therefore, to further examine the specific features of adaptation and recovery in the national context, it is necessary to analyze key performance indicators of Ukrainian tourism enterprises for 2020–2023 (Table 2).

Table 2. Key Performance Indicators of Tourism Enterprises in Ukraine, 2020–2023

Indicator	2020	2021	2022	2023
The amount of employees in hotels/restaurants in thousand	101,3	84,5	84,4	61,5
The amount of employees in entertainment sector, thousand	26,8	25,7	28,0	24,7
Sales of hotel/restaurant services, mln UAH	8050,8	5573,7	10559,2	8441,7
Balance of accommodation and food enterprises, mln UAH	48679,0	57873,0	54249,8	53483,6

Source: compiled by the authors based on [10-11]

The indicators presented in Table 2 reflect the dynamics of human resources, service volumes, and financial performance of tourism-related enterprises in Ukraine during 2020–2023. The data clearly demonstrate the combined impact of external shocks and managerial responses, revealing both structural losses and emerging adaptive mechanisms within the sector.

The most critical changes occurred in employment levels. In the hotel and restaurant sector, the number of

employees decreased from more than 101 thousand in 2020 to 61.5 thousand in 2023, indicating a substantial loss of human capital and long-term pressure on service quality and organizational sustainability. This trend reflects forced staff reductions, migration of qualified personnel, and the overall contraction of business activity. In contrast, employment in the entertainment and recreation sector showed less pronounced fluctuations, suggesting higher adaptive flexibility and comparatively stronger recovery potential.

Financial indicators also demonstrated significant volatility. In 2021, sales of hotel and restaurant services declined by almost one third compared to 2020, reflecting the prolonged impact of pandemic-related restrictions. However, in 2022 sales volumes more than doubled, exceeding the 2020 level, which indicates rapid managerial adaptation, restructuring of service portfolios, and reorientation toward domestic tourism demand. As noted by C. Williams, leadership and managerial flexibility are decisive factors for maintaining organizational stability under conditions of heightened uncertainty. At the same time, the balance of accommodation and food service enterprises peaked in 2021 and gradually declined thereafter, highlighting persistent difficulties in maintaining long-term financial stability [4].

Overall, the observed dynamics confirm that change management became a key factor in ensuring the survival and partial stabilization of tourism organizations in Ukraine. From 2020 to 2023, the sector developed under extraordinary conditions that required large-scale managerial transformations. This conclusion is consistent with the findings of M. Budnik and Ya. Ivanova and M. Averkina and A. Matvieiev, who emphasize that the effectiveness of change management models depends on the scale of disruption and sector-specific characteristics [7-8].

Human resource management emerged as one of the most vulnerable areas. The loss of qualified staff, labor migration, and staff reductions compelled tourism organizations to revise HR policies and introduce flexible employment arrangements, including seasonal contracts, part-time work, and remote formats. According to O. V. Tarasiuk, agile change management provides a framework for responding to labor market instability, while M. Buriak and O. Makovoz identify workforce flexibility and competency development as critical instruments of organizational resilience [5-6].

Digitalization played a decisive role as a tool for sustainable development during the crisis period. Prior to 2020, digital platforms, mobile applications, and CRM systems were often treated as complementary services; under crisis conditions, they became core mechanisms for maintaining business continuity. This supports the arguments of O. V. Tarasiuk and C. Williams that digital transformation should be integrated into strategic change management processes rather than implemented as isolated technological initiatives [4-5].

Marketing transformations were equally important. The inability to rely on international tourist flows led to

domestic tourism becoming the main support resource, with its share increasing to 65–70%. Such reorientation required the redesign of marketing strategies and service portfolios, which corresponds to adaptive change management approaches described by M. Budnik and Ya. Ivanova and further systematized by M. Averkina and A. Matvieiev [7-8].

The financial and economic situation remained difficult. The decline in revenues in 2021 highlighted the sector's vulnerability, but in 2022 service volumes in the hotel and restaurant sector increased by more than one-third, reflecting successful adaptation strategies. Nevertheless, the decline in enterprise balances in 2023 indicates limited resources and insufficient state support. Unlike EU countries that implemented large-scale compensation programs, Ukrainian enterprises largely relied on their own resources.

In this context, Romania's experience is particularly valuable. After joining the EU in 2007, Romania implemented comprehensive change management in tourism, modernized infrastructure, developed resort regions, and introduced the «Holiday Vouchers» program to stimulate domestic demand. The government also invested in tourism digitalization by creating national online platforms. This experience is highly relevant for Ukraine, where stimulating domestic demand and developing digital services can form the foundation of post-war recovery.

State policy and the European integration course also played a significant role in change management. Harmonization of statistics and management practices with EU standards created a basis for sector development. The implementation of EU Regulation № 692/2011 on tourism statistics ensured compatibility with European indicators, while the adoption of the European Tourism Indicator System (ETIS) supports sustainable destination development.

In the post-war recovery context, tourism has the potential to become a key driver of Ukraine's economy and international integration. Priority areas of change management include infrastructure modernization, domestic tourism development, active digital transformation, and positive international image building. At the same time, domestic tourism will play an important social role in restoring national identity and supporting population rehabilitation [9].

Digital services will remain an important factor of competitiveness. The use of mobile applications, electronic booking platforms, CRM systems, and smart tourism tools will promote personalization of tourism products, improve service quality, and integrate Ukraine into the international tourism market [12]. Cultural diplomacy will also play an important role: participation in international forums and exhibitions, promotion of Ukraine's historical and cultural heritage and natural potential will create additional opportunities for establishing a positive image of Ukraine as a safe and attractive destination.

Thus, the development of Ukrainian tourism organizations in 2020–2023 demonstrates a complex but promising transformation process. Change management has become a key condition for survival and adaptation and should form the basis for sustainable recovery and European integration.

Building on the identified trends and international experience, the sustainable development of tourism organizations in Ukraine requires a structured and systemic approach to change management. Fragmented or reactive decisions, although effective in the short term, are insufficient to ensure long-term stability and convergence with European tourism markets. Therefore, change management should be institutionalized as a continuous process that integrates strategic, organizational, technological, and human resource dimensions [13].

Based on the results of the analysis, a conceptual model of change management for tourism organizations in Ukraine can be proposed. This model is grounded in four interrelated pillars: strategic adaptation, organizational transformation, digital integration, and stakeholder engagement. Strategic adaptation involves aligning organizational goals with post-war recovery priorities and European integration requirements, including compliance with EU service quality standards, sustainability principles, and destination governance frameworks [9]. Organizational transformation focuses on re-designing internal structures, business processes, and decision-making mechanisms to enhance flexibility and resilience.

Digital integration constitutes a core element of the proposed model, as digital technologies act as both an enabler of operational efficiency and a driver of sustainable development. The systematic implementation of CRM systems, data-driven marketing tools, online booking platforms, and smart tourism solutions allows tourism organizations to better understand consumer behavior, optimize resource allocation, and personalize tourism products. Importantly, digitalization also facilitates transparency and accountability, which are essential for integration into European tourism networks [15].

Stakeholder engagement represents the fourth pillar of effective change management. Sustainable tourism development requires coordinated interaction among businesses, local communities, public authorities, and international partners. Strengthening public-private partnerships, involving local communities in destination management, and cooperating with European tourism institutions can significantly enhance the adaptive capacity of Ukrainian tourism organizations. In this regard, the European integration process provides not only regulatory benchmarks but also access to best practices, financial instruments, and collaborative platforms [17].

From a sustainability perspective, change management should also incorporate environmental and social dimensions. Energy efficiency, responsible use of natural resources, inclusive employment practices, and sup-

port for cultural heritage preservation are increasingly important factors of competitiveness in the European tourism market. Integrating these elements into managerial decision-making allows tourism organizations to move beyond crisis survival toward long-term value creation.

Overall, the continuation of change management reforms in the tourism sector is a prerequisite for transforming crisis-induced challenges into development opportunities. The Ukrainian experience of 2020–2023 demonstrates that even under extreme conditions, tourism organizations are capable of adaptation and innovation. However, to ensure sustainable development and successful European integration, these transformations must be consolidated within a coherent change management framework that balances economic efficiency, social responsibility, and strategic resilience.

Conclusions. In the perspective of post-war recovery, Ukraine's tourism sector can become a driver of economic growth, regional revitalization, and deeper European integration. The results obtained confirm that change management should be treated not only as a crisis-response mechanism, but as a practical tool for sustainable development that strengthens organizational

resilience, improves resource efficiency, and supports service quality and stakeholder trust.

Priority areas of change management should include modernization of tourism infrastructure, strengthening domestic tourism as a socio-economic resource, accelerated digital transformation (CRM, online platforms, data-driven marketing, smart tourism solutions), development of public–private partnerships, and systematic destination governance aligned with EU approaches. In addition, European integration requires convergence with EU-oriented standards of management, statistics, and sustainability monitoring, including the wider use of indicator-based frameworks for destination management (e.g., ETIS) and transparent performance tracking.

The experience of EU countries, particularly Romania, confirms the feasibility of a comprehensive change approach that combines institutional support, digitalization, and demand-stimulation instruments. Therefore, embedding change management into strategic planning and operational processes of tourism organizations should form the foundation for sustainable sector development and serve as a key factor for Ukraine's integration into the European tourism space.

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Pushak Ya., Pidhirna V., Zybareva O. Change management as a tool for sustainable development of tourism organizations in Ukraine in the context of European integration

The development of the tourism sector is one of the key factors of economic growth and Ukraine's integration into the European space. Tourism performs not only an economic but also a socio-cultural function, contributing to the formation of a positive national image and the promotion of intercultural dialogue. In the context of the crisis challenges of recent years - the COVID-19 pandemic and the full-scale war - issues of effective management and change management in tourism organization have become particularly relevant. The purpose of the article is to analyze the characteristics of adaptation processes in Ukrainian tourism organizations during 2020–2023, identify key directions of transformation, and determine prospects for further development in the context of European integration.

The paper outlines the theoretical foundations of change management presented in the works of foreign and domestic scholars (K. Lewin, J. Kotter, Z. Bauman, J. Baudrillard, J. Urry, V. Kyfiak, O. Liubitseva, etc.). It is noted that the modern tourist combines the desire for comfort and safety with the need for new experiences, which creates a balance between authenticity and convenience and influences the managerial strategies of tourism companies. A statistical analysis of tourism development is presented: in 2020, international arrivals declined by 74%; in 2022–2023, recovery reached 65–84% of the 2019 level. In Ukraine, in 2023, employment in the hotel and restaurant sector decreased to 61.5 thousand persons, while the balance of enterprises declined by more than UAH 4 billion compared to 2021.

The article demonstrates that the key adaptation mechanisms included digitalization (online platforms, CRM systems, mobile applications), reorientation toward domestic tourism (its share increased to 65–70%), marketing innovations, human resource transformations, and flexible employment models. At the same time, unresolved problems were identified: workforce losses, insufficient financial support for small and medium-sized enterprises, and a weak institutional framework. In the post-war recovery perspective, priority areas of change management include infrastructure modernization, development of domestic tourism as an economic and social resource, digital transformation, and the formation of a positive international image of the state. The experience of EU countries, particularly Romania, proves the effectiveness of integrated strategies that combine institutional support, public-private partnerships, and innovative management practices.

Keywords: management, tourism, sustainable tourism, change management, European integration, digitalization, sustainable development, marketing tools.

Пушак Я., Підгірна В., Зибарева О. Управління змінами як інструмент сталого розвитку туристичних організацій України в умовах європейської інтеграції

Розвиток туристичного сектору є важливим чинником економічного зростання та європейської інтеграції України. В умовах кризових викликів останніх років, зумовлених пандемією COVID-19 та повномасштабною війною, особливої актуальності набуває управління змінами в туристичних організаціях. Метою статті є аналіз адаптаційних процесів у туристичних організаціях України у 2020–2023 рр., визначення ключових напрямів трансформацій і перспектив сталого розвитку в умовах європейської інтеграції. Дослідження показує, що цифровізація, переорієнтація на внутрішній туризм, кадрові та організаційні зміни стали основними інструментами забезпечення стійкості підприємств і організацій.

Ключові слова: менеджмент, туризм, сталий туризм, управління змінами, європейська інтеграція, цифровізація, сталий розвиток, маркетингові інструменти.