



## Article

# Directions for Improving Organizational and Economic Mechanisms to Ensure Sustainable Development of Tour Operator Activities

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**Abstract:** this study analyzes the organizational and economic mechanisms for developing tour operator activities in Uzbekistan from both theoretical and practical perspectives. As tourism has become one of the priority strategic sectors of the national economy in recent years, the need to increase the efficiency of the tour operator system, introduce innovative management mechanisms, and modernize the industry based on digital technologies has been substantiated. The research has systematized the organizational and economic mechanisms for developing tour operator activities in Uzbekistan and developed a model based on their mutual integration. The essence of the economic and organizational models developed in the study is to enhance sustainable growth, competitiveness, and investment attractiveness in the tour operator sector through the harmonization of state policy, private sector resources, and international standards. The practical implementation of this model will serve to create new jobs in the tourism sector, expand export potential, and diversify the regional economy.

**Keywords:** tour operator, organizational mechanisms, economic mechanisms, digital tourism, public-private partnership, innovative management, sustainable development.

## 1. Introduction

Tour operator activities are situated at the heart of the tourism value chain, acting as intermediaries between transport and accommodation, cultural services and culture management with a final consumer aimed touristic product. Consequently, the performance of tour operators in developing and transition economies has a crucial impact on tourism exports, generating new jobs and balanced regional development that can help make the national tourism system more competitive. As tourism has been steadily transforming into an impetus for economic modernization, a strategic development area comes to strengthen the process of institutional and financial foundations of tour operator activities.[1]

Over the last few years, Uzbekistan has defined a tourism sector as one of priorities for sustainable economic development. These sectoral expansions came about due to large-scale reforms in liberalization, infrastructure development, and open-market integration.

But beyond positive dynamics, there are structural challenges. These include inadequate coordination among institutions, lack of access to long-term financing, administrative obstacles, divergent regional development and relatively low level of digitisation. In addition, high demand elasticity of tourism, seasonality, vulnerability to

**Citation:** Salimovich, T. A. Directions For Improving Organizational And Economic Mechanisms To Ensure Sustainable Development Of Tour Operator Activities. American Journal of Economics and Business Management 2026, 9(3), 33-42

Received: 10<sup>th</sup> Des 2025

Revised: 11<sup>th</sup> Jan 2026

Accepted: 15<sup>th</sup> Feb 2026

Published: 04<sup>th</sup> Mar 2026



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external shocks and reliance on cultural and historical resources bring the need for adaptive and resilient management mechanisms.[2]

World experience shows that sustainable development of tour operator activities can be achieved only with the integration of organizational reforms and economic stimulation. Digital platforms, public-private partnerships, cluster approaches and better risk management systems, with diversified financing mechanisms are becoming widely acknowledged as vital instruments for competitiveness improvement. However, adaptations of these mechanisms specific to the institutional and economic context of Uzbekistan have not been sufficiently researched.[3]

"The aim of this study is to create the most effective organizational and economic mechanisms for sustainable development tour operator activities in the Republic of Uzbekistan. It is meant to organize essential tools, formulate holistic development models, and build up recommendations for policies which will combine the state policy with potential of the private sector and index international standards in a way that ensures long-run sustainability of the sector.

## 2. Methodology

To this end, the study uses a qualitative-analytical approach that combines theoretical generalization with comparative analysis and systems modeling. A literature review of academic literature on tourism economics and tour operator management was performed to identify global best practices. Hence, an institutional analysis of Uzbekistan's tourism governance framework was conducted for diagnosing structural gaps and reform needs.[4]

Mechanisms were classified into organizational and economic categories to analyze their interdependence using a systems approach. With structural-functional analysis, institutional financial and operational instruments were identified. Based on this exploratory research conceptual modeling techniques were used to develop an integrated economic and organizational development frameworks.[5]

Taking the aforementioned factors into consideration, as a result of our research, we have developed organizational and economic mechanisms for advancing tour operator activities in Uzbekistan (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Organizational and economic mechanisms for developing tour operator activities in Uzbekistan.

| No. | Organizational mechanisms                                                         | No. | Economic mechanisms                                                                                         |
|-----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1   | Developing a unified national registry database for tour operator activities      | 1   | Implementation of preferential credit lines for effective operation of tour operators                       |
| 2   | Simplifying licensing and certification procedures                                | 2   | Reduction of value-added tax rate on tourism services                                                       |
| 3   | Establishing regional tourism clusters                                            | 3   | Allocation of special state subsidies to tour operators                                                     |
| 4   | Implementing public-private partnerships through a single "Tourism Agency"        | 4   | Introduction of tax incentives for foreign investments                                                      |
| 5   | Introducing the "Smart Tourism" digital platform for tour operators               | 5   | Development and implementation of grant programs for tour operators' activities (ecotourism, halal tourism) |
| 6   | Creating a portfolio of state-partnered tourism infrastructure projects           | 6   | Introduction of package discounts with local transport companies and hotels                                 |
| 7   | Establishing an Innovative Association of Tour Operators                          | 7   | Development of financial incentive schemes for exported tour packages                                       |
| 8   | Enhancing the material and technical resources of regional tourism offices        | 8   | Enhancement of insurance mechanisms                                                                         |
| 9   | Developing personnel training and retraining programs                             | 9   | Provision of financial support to tour operators for participation in international fairs                   |
| 10  | Consistently continuing the implementation of international tourism standards     | 10  | Establishment of state-guaranteed credit insurance                                                          |
| 11  | Organizing national branding and marketing campaigns                              | 11  | Development of tax benefits for tour packages attracting foreign tourists                                   |
| 12  | Launching the "Eco Tour Operator" initiative                                      | 12  | Financing of projects promoting green tourism                                                               |
| 13  | Coordinating tourism routes across regions                                        | 13  | Offering loans to engage local population in tourism business                                               |
| 14  | Further strengthening cooperation with international tourism organizations        | 14  | Active attraction of investments in tourism infrastructure                                                  |
| 15  | Establishing specialized "One Stop Service" centers for tour operators            | 15  | Formation of public-private financing mechanisms through the "UzTourism Fund"                               |
| 16  | Implementing a tourist flow management system based on artificial intelligence    | 16  | Allocation of subsidies to support online booking systems                                                   |
| 17  | Regularly fostering cooperation and collaboration among tour operators            | 17  | Provision of currency conversion benefits for tour operators exporting services                             |
| 18  | Conducting an inventory of regional tourism resources                             | 18  | Development of bank guarantee mechanisms for tourism services                                               |
| 19  | Providing more active support for tourism through research and innovation centers | 19  | Providing venture capital to startups in the tourism sector                                                 |
| 20  | Implementing virtual tourism centers and cutting-edge technologies                | 20  | Financing of tourism projects based on public-private partnership                                           |

Additionally, as a result of our research, we developed a model for enhancing the economic mechanisms of tour operator activities (Figure 1).

The theoretical foundation of the model is based on the tour operator sector's high sensitivity to external influences, characterized by factors such as high demand elasticity, seasonality, regional specificity, and reliance on unique cultural and historical resources. When the tourism market cannot effectively self-regulate, it is managed through addressing information asymmetry, high initial costs directed towards investment and infrastructure, environmental externalities, and effective mechanisms between the public and private sectors, while eliminating shortcomings. The main hypothesis proposed involves developing a targeted state support mechanism and actively attracting investments to the tour operator sector through diversified funding sources and corresponding economic instruments. This approach prioritizes the creation of new jobs and stimulation of regional development, ultimately ensuring sustainable economic growth.[6]

State support encompasses three main aspects. Firstly, it involves temporary tax incentives for initial investments, small tour operators, and projects focused on ecotourism or halal tourism. Secondly, it creates a favorable investment climate by simplifying licensing procedures and providing assistance with infrastructure, including roads, airports, and power grids. Thirdly, through a stable financial policy, it enables the stimulation of exports and ensures effective management of foreign currency funds. [7]

Furthermore, the allocation of grants and subsidies by the state serves to support innovative tourism projects. Financial assistance is particularly crucial for creating digital platforms, developing online booking systems, and enhancing marketing activities. Expanding public-private partnership mechanisms will enable faster implementation of large-scale infrastructure projects. Moreover, supporting personnel training and professional development programs will lead to improved service quality in the tourism sector. The formation of tourism clusters in the regions will foster local entrepreneurship and generate new job opportunities. Improving the legislative framework and implementing a transparent monitoring system will strengthen investor confidence. Consequently, the comprehensive support measures provided by the state will lay the foundation for sustainable and competitive development of the tourism industry.[8]

### 3. Results

#### 3.1 Organizational Mechanisms

The study organizes twenty organizational mechanisms, such as:

- Establishment of a consolidated national registry database;
- Simplification of licensing and certification;
- Establishment of regional tourism clusters;
- Establishment of a central co-ordination body;
- Launch of Smart Tourism<sup>7</sup> digital systems;
- Development of One-Stop Service centers;
- Use of AI-based tourist flow management;
- Strengthening professional associations;
- Personnel training and retraining programs;
- Adoption of international quality standards.

These mechanisms aim at better institutional coordination, improve transparency, lead to digital transformation and enhance the quality of services offered.

#### 3.2 Economic Mechanisms

The study points to key financial instruments:

- Preferential credit lines;
- VAT reductions;
- State subsidies and grant programs;

- Tax incentives for foreign investment;
- Export-oriented financial incentives;
- Public-private partnership financing;
- Insurance and guarantee mechanisms;
- Investment in travel and tourism startups.

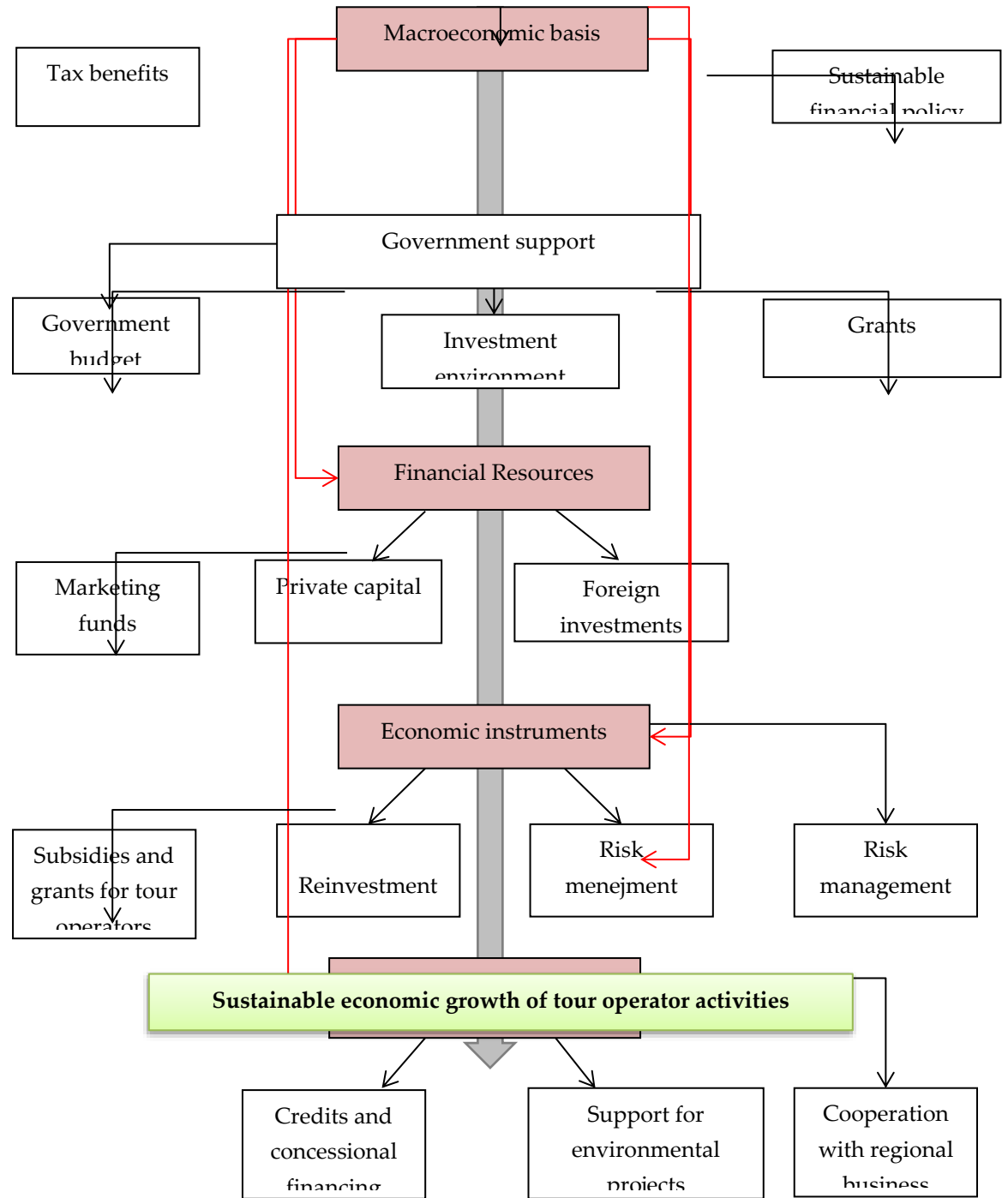
These tools are designed to make investments more attractive, limit financial risk, and encourage innovation.

### 3.3 Integrated Economic Model

This economic model brings together the state budget funds, private capital, foreign investments and international financial resources. Key building blocks are tax incentives, grants, a reinvestment mechanism, risk management systems and sustainable financial policy. [8] The model proposes diversified sources of funding together with targeted support from state to promote long-term sectoral growth.[9]

### 3.4 Organizational Model

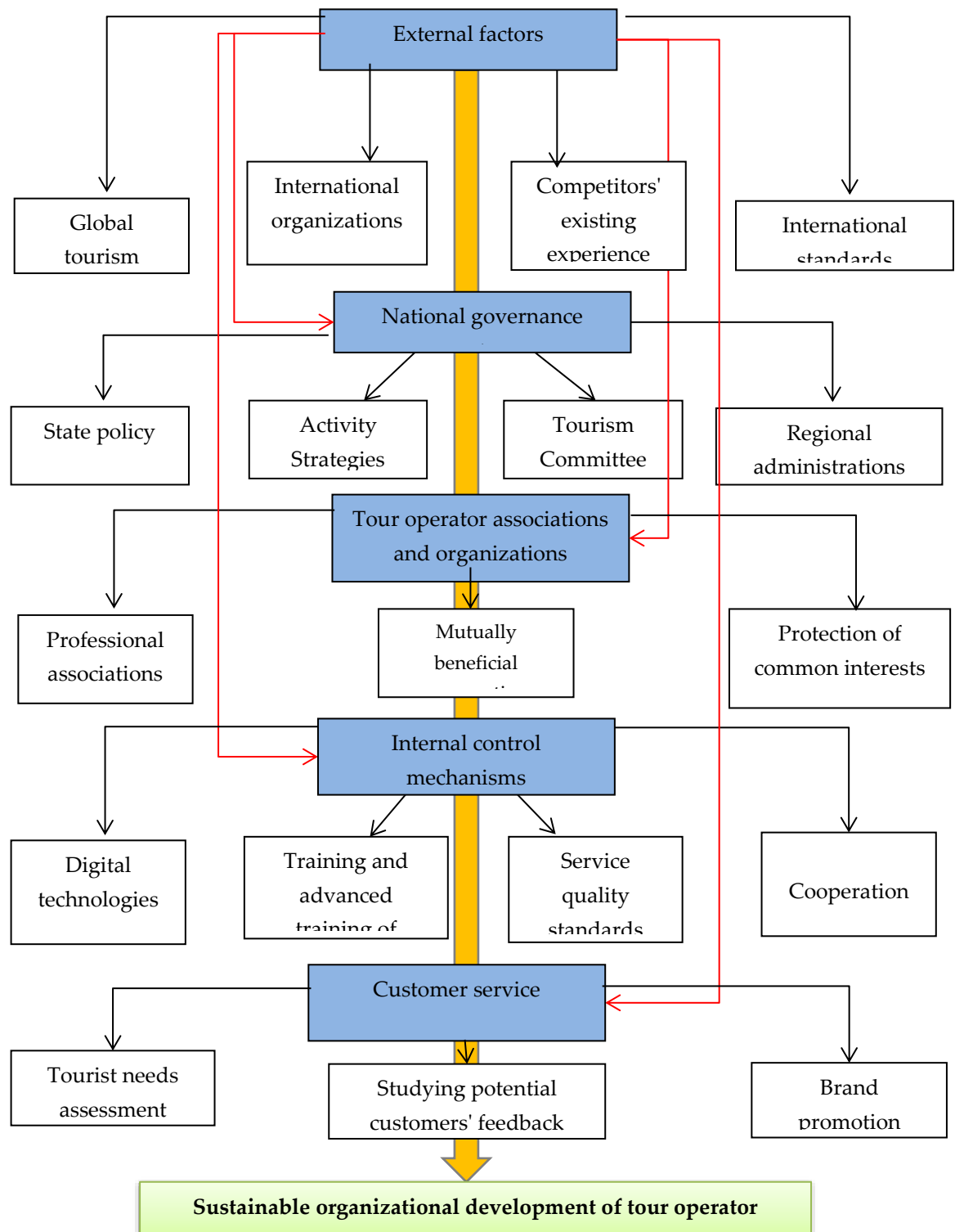
This organizational model matches external factors (global trends, digitalization, international standards) with the internal control systems of management. It focuses on digital transformation, quality control, cluster cooperation and customer-oriented strategies as pillars of sustainable organisational development.



**Figure 1.** Model for improving the economic mechanisms of tour operator activities

Financial sources include the state budget - grants and special assistance programs; private capital, foreign investments, as well as funds allocated by international organizations and development banks. In our opinion, state guarantees and credit collaterals will attract more private investments, while grants will further accelerate the initiation of projects.[10]

Considering that economic initiatives should have an organizational basis, as a result of our research, we have developed a model for improving the organizational mechanisms of tour operator activities (Figure 2).



**Figure 2.** Model for improving the organizational mechanisms of tour operator activities

The model for improving the organizational mechanisms of tour operator activities is primarily based on the harmonization of external factors, the national management system, and internal management mechanisms, as well as effective communication with clients. In this model, external factors play a crucial role, including global tourism trends, international standards, competitors and new technologies, as well as state policies and activities of regional authorities. These important factors require tour operators to adapt their organizational activities to the external environment. For instance, at a time when digital tourism and sustainability-based services are becoming widespread in the global market, local tour operators must also demonstrate the necessity to operate in accordance with these requirements.[11]

Internal management mechanisms are considered the key factor in the effective organization of tour operators' activities. The main directions in this regard include extensive use of digital technologies, improving employee qualifications, implementing service quality standards, and cooperating with other business entities within tourism clusters.[12] We believe that internal efficiency can be enhanced by providing services quickly and in short timeframes through modern IT platforms, analyzing customer needs based on artificial intelligence, or strengthening rigorous control over service quality based on international certifications.[13]

The final stage of the model focuses on direct interaction with clients, which we believe is the most crucial part of the organizational mechanisms. Regular assessment of customer needs, segmentation of tourist demand, and subsequent development of new tour products ensure the tour operator's activities remain adaptable to market demands. Furthermore, firstly, analyzing potential clients' feedback and monitoring online reviews and social media helps improve service quality. Secondly, developing and promoting a national and regional brand image in the international market strengthens long-term, reliable, and mutually beneficial relationships with clients.[14]

#### 4. Discussion

The findings demonstrate that sustainable development of tour operator activities requires synchronized implementation of organizational reforms and economic incentives. Institutional simplification without financial support limits effectiveness, while financial instruments without structural modernization reduce efficiency. Therefore, systemic integration is essential.

State support should function as a catalyst by providing temporary tax incentives, infrastructure development, and regulatory transparency. Long-term sustainability depends on digital transformation, cluster-based cooperation, service quality enhancement, and risk diversification.

Projected outcomes include significant growth in tourism exports, increased contribution to GDP, job creation, strengthened regional economies, and improved environmental sustainability.[15]

As a result of the implementation of the mechanisms proposed by the author, by 2030, an increase in the export of tourism services by 2.5-3 times, a significant increase in the share of tour operator activities in the gross domestic product, the creation of more than 100 thousand new jobs in the regions, a significant increase in the income of the local population and further acceleration of regional economic development, ensuring environmental balance based on the principles of sustainable tourism, and many other similar positive results will be achieved..

The research results demonstrated that the organizational and economic mechanisms for developing tour operator activities can be systematically and



comprehensively improved. Based on the obtained data and developed models, it can be concluded that to make tour operator activities more effective in Uzbekistan, it is necessary to widely implement innovative approaches, digital technologies, principles of ecological and halal tourism, as well as financial incentives. The main findings of the study indicate that state support mechanisms, tax and credit benefits, grants, and subsidies contribute to the sustainable growth of the tourism sector by stimulating private sector investment. Additionally, regional competitiveness and local economic potential will be enhanced through regional tourism clusters and centers.

## 5. Conclusion

In this study, we considered the directions of development of organizational and economic mechanisms for ensuring the sustainable development of tour operator activities in Uzbekistan. Results indicate that systematic thoughtfulness on the integration of institutional reforms, financial instruments, and modern management approaches underpins long-term sectoral stability outcomes. At the same time, institutional changes (digitalisation, simplification of licensing), forming tourism clusters and introduction of international quality standards are organizational improvements to form a structural base for effective operation of tour operators. On the other hand, economic ways such as tax benefits, preferential credit lines, grants, subsidies and financing with the help of public-private partnerships increase the attractiveness of investments and lower operational risks.

The integrated models put forward by the legislation also demonstrate a need to harmonize state policy, private sector engagement, and international best practices. Sustainable development of tour operator activities cannot be achieved solely through administrative reforms or independent financial support(21) but requires a coordinated implementation of both dimensions. The interaction and interrelation between the governance institutions, business entities and region stakeholders strengthen competitiveness, activates innovations and expands tourism export potential.

In general, the study shows that complex modernization of organizational-economic mechanisms will serve the solution of problems connected with creation of workplaces in touristic sphere, diversification and resilience on a global scale.

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