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CONTENTS

SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN THE MECHANISM OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SOCIAL FUNCTION OF THE MODERN STATE.....	6
<i>Bielova Myroslava, Farcash Ioan-Mircea</i>	
THE FIGHT AGAINST CYBERCRIME IN THE CONDITIONS OF THE WAR IN UKRAINE.....	12
<i>Bodnar-Petrovska Olha</i>	
SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP AS A MODERN INSTITUTE OF BUSINESS AND HUMAN INTERACTION.....	24
<i>Byelov Dmytro</i>	
RESTRICTIONS ON THE RIGHT TO CONCLUDE A PEACEFUL AGREEMENT IN THE CIVIL PROCEDURE OF POST-STATE STATES: COMPARATIVE LEGAL ASPECT OF RESEARCH.....	30
<i>Buletsa Sibilla, Fennysh Vasyl, Yurash Ivan</i>	
PROBLEMATIC ISSUES OF TEMPORARY PLACEMENT OF CHILDREN IN THE RUSSIAN-UKRAINIAN WAR.....	47
<i>Briukhovetska Maryna</i>	
FEATURES OF STRUCTURAL TRANSFORMATION OF RAILWAY TRANSPORT BASED ON THE PRINCIPLES OF MARKETING MANAGEMENT.....	56
<i>Charkina Tetyana, Zadoya Vyacheslav</i>	
DOCTRINAL APPROACHES TO DEFINING THE CONCEPT OF CYBERCRIME AND ITS MAIN FEATURES.....	66
<i>Dumchykov Mykhailo</i>	
INTERNATIONAL LEGAL STANDARDS FOR COMBATING FRAUD IN THE FIELD OF COMPUTER INFORMATION.....	76
<i>Dumchykov Mykhailo</i>	
BASIC PRINCIPLES OF LEGAL REGULATION OF COMPETITION IN THE EU.....	83
<i>Grechkivskyi Vadym</i>	
MYPHOPOETIC STRATEGIES OF NOVELS BY DARA KORNIY “LORD OF THE CLOUDS” AND BY STEPHENIE MEYER “TWILIGHT”	87
<i>Gurduz Andriy</i>	

WAR IN UKRAINE AND THE ROLE OF INTERNATIONAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN ENSURING INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION OF STATES IN THE FIELD OF HEALTH CARE.....	98
<i>Homonay Vasyl</i>	
THE MOST COMMON ICONOGRAPHIC PLOTS OF V.M. VASNETSOV IN THE PROGRAMS OF PAINTING ORTHODOX CHURCHES IN THE EAST OF UKRAINE AT THE END OF THE 20th – BEGINNING OF THE 21st CENTURY.....	105
<i>Khlystun Yuliia</i>	
HUMAN RIGHTS BEYOND THE IRON CURTAIN: CONCEPTION OF SOVEREIGNTY AND INTERNATIONAL LAW.....	116
<i>Napolitano Marianna</i>	
ACCUMULATION OF SOCIAL CAPITAL AND CONSOLIDATION OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE CONDITIONS OF GREAT SOCIAL SHOCKS (EXPERIENCE OF UKRAINE IN THE RUSSIAN-UKRAINIAN WAR).....	126
<i>Nechitailo Iryna</i>	
DIRECT MODEL OF INDIGENOUS REPRESENTATION: THE CASE OF MĀORI.....	137
<i>Opanasenko Anton</i>	
MODERN UNDERSTANDING OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW AND HUMAN RIGHTS PROTECTION.....	150
<i>Pavlovska Nataliia</i>	
ÉDUCATION LINGUISTIQUE ET PATRIOTIQUE DES ÉLÈVES DANS LES CLASSES SUR LA LANGUE UKRAINIENNE COMME LANGUE ÉTRANGÈRE : MÉTHODOLOGIE DE FORMATION DE LA COMPÉTENCE LINGUISTIQUE ET CULTURELLE.....	157
<i>Romantchouk Svitlana</i>	
CONCEPTS AND TYPES OF INDEPENDENCE OF A JUDGE ACCORDING TO THE LEGISLATION OF UKRAINE.....	167
<i>Savytska Natalia</i>	
EXECUTION OF PROPERTY PUNISHMENTS BY LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES IN UKRAINE.....	175
<i>Stupnyk Yaroslav, Martsenyshyn Iurii, Hetsko Mykhaylo, Matsola Antonina</i>	

**CATALAN INDEPENDENCE REFERENDUM:
POWER OF UNIONISTS OR INDEPENDENTS?.....181**
Sheketa Mariana, Stetsyuk Natalia

**CRIMINAL LEGAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SUBJECT
OF ILLEGAL USE WITH THE PURPOSE
OF OBTAINING PROFITS FROM HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE,
CHARITABLE DONATIONS OR FREE ASSISTANCE.....190**
Shapovalova Nataliya

**UKRAINIAN TERRITORIES UNDER OCCUPATION –
EVENTS, COLLABORATIONISM, MANAGEMENT.....198**
Shmanatov Mykyta

**COMMUNICATION BETWEEN CIVIL SOCIETY AND
THE JUDICIARY IN THE CONTEXT OF FOREIGN EXPERIENCE.....211**
Udovyka Larysa, Cherpovytska Inna

**FORMATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE KYIV CITY COUNCIL
AS A LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT BODY.....222**
T. Havrylenko

FEATURES OF STRUCTURAL TRANSFORMATION OF RAILWAY TRANSPORT BASED ON THE PRINCIPLES OF MARKETING MANAGEMENT

Charkina Tetyana¹,

Zadoya Vyacheslav²

Annotation. It is established that despite the critical importance of railway transport for the national economy and society, in recent years the railway company has been in a state of deep crisis. It is revealed that the gradual aging and extremely unsatisfactory technical condition of the railway infrastructure and rolling stock level the ability of the railway company to carry out high-quality and safe railway transportation, lead to a gradual loss of customers and the share of railway transport in the market of transport and logistics services, destabilizing the company's work and reducing the opportunities for its financial and economic recovery and innovative and technical revival. It is proved that in order to ensure innovative growth and competitiveness of railway transport in the market of transport and logistics services, it is necessary to activate the processes of its structural transformation by applying modern effective tools for implementing innovative changes at the enterprise. The processes of reforming the railway industry are investigated and the planned reformation changes and deadlines for their implementation do not correspond to the actual pace of implementation of structural transformations in railway transport. The expediency of structural transformation of railway transport based on the principles of marketing management as a proactive enterprise management style is proved, which ensures the formation and expansion of dynamic competitive advantages, taking into account internal and external changes in the operating environment by managing communications with potential market participants to create a competitive advantage, in particular personnel, partners and consumers. The key aspects of the structural transformation of railway transport based

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on the principles of marketing management are revealed. It is indicated that the formation of a marketing management system for railway transport should be carried out in several stages: the first stage is to analyze, evaluate and monitor the marketing environment; the second stage is to develop a marketing management system; the third stage is to ensure monitoring and adjustment of the marketing management system.

Key words: railway transport, systemic crisis, structural transformation, marketing management, communications management.

Formulation of the problem. In such a difficult time for the country, railway transport became one of the first to protect the interests of society and the lives of the population. Since the beginning of the war, JSC “Ukrzaliznytsia” has transported almost 4 million people and more than 100,000 tons of humanitarian cargo with free evacuation trains. Railway transport also plays an important role in supporting the stable operation of Ukrainian enterprises by serving the needs of cargo transportation and the relocation of their production facilities.

However, despite the critical importance of railway transport for the national economy and society, the railway company has been in a state of deep crisis in recent years. Gradual aging and the extremely unsatisfactory technical condition of the railway infrastructure and rolling stock reduce the railway company’s ability to provide high-quality and safe railway transport, leading to a gradual loss of customers and the share of railway transport in the market of transport and logistics services, destabilizing the company’s work and reducing the opportunities for its financial economic improvement and innovative and technical revival.

In such conditions, in order to restore lost transportation and throughput capacity, ensure innovative growth and competitiveness of railway transport in the market of transport and logistics services, it is advisable to activate the processes of its structural transformation by applying modern effective tools for implementing innovative changes at the enterprise.

Analysis of recent research and publications. Domestic scientists pay active attention to the study of the problems of railway transport development. The expediency of implementing reformation changes is emphasized by a wide range of scientists, including: O. Pshinko, Yu. Barash, V. Dykan, H. Eitutis, Yu. Yelagin, N. Kalycheva, M. Korin, L. Marceniuk, V. Ovchinnikova, M. Oklander, I. Tokmakova, T. Charkina et al. [1–11]. In particular, a team of scientists led by O. Pshinko has detailed the issue of managing freight cars of operating companies in the context of the reforming railway transport in Ukraine [1]. V. Dykan and O. Yelagina analyze the peculiarities of reforming the national transport system, including railway transport [3]. Y. Barash and T. Charkina studied the models of railway transport reform in Europe [2]. The issue of reforming railway transport is thoroughly discussed in the scientific works of H. Eitutis. In particular, in the scientific publication [4], scientists proposed the restructuring of railways based on the branch and regional management model. In turn, certain marketing aspects of railway transport reform are disclosed in the monographic work of M. Oklander and I. Zharska [9]. However, paying tribute to the theoretical and practical value of the research of these scientists, it is necessary to point out the need to study the pace and effectiveness of reform processes in the railway industry, to determine the directions of the structural transformation of railway transport and effective tools for the activation of reformation changes.

Setting objectives. The purpose of the article is to study the effectiveness of the implementation of reform transformations in the railway industry and to determine the priority directions and effective tools of the structural transformation of railway transport in the aspect of implementing a customer-oriented policy by global transport and logistics companies.

Presenting main material. Statistical and analytical reporting on the activities of the railway company indicates high wear and tear of rolling stock and railway infrastructure, a low level of digital equipment of the main assets of railway transport, the deterioration of the quality of railway transport, and, as a result, the gradual loss of customers and the share of railway transport in the market of transport and logistics services, the deterioration of the financial performance of the railway company and other problems, which hinder the stable functioning of railway transport and limit its opportunities for innovative growth in the long term.

The audit conducted by the Accounting Chamber testifies to ineffective management of state assets, as well as improper use and disposal of state-owned objects. In particular, the audit established that the causes of almost 12 billion UAH in losses of Ukrzaliznytsia in 2020 were: non-fulfillment of the revenue plan from freight transportation – more than 11 billion UAH; planned unreasonable indicators of income from the sale of non-core assets – more than 7 billion UAH; non-adjustment of the company's actual expenses to the received income and diversion of funds for loan servicing expenses – more than 3 billion UAH; an increase in costs due to the growth of exchange rate differences is more than 5 billion UAH. In addition, 417 million UAH is directed to the payment of fines and financial sanctions (for the execution of court decisions); another almost 1 million UAH were spent on the maintenance of objects of unfinished construction [12].

The existence of a number of systemic problems in the railway industry is confirmed by the audit conducted by the Temporary Investigative Commission of the Verkhovna Rada, the results of which reflect the state of a deep systemic crisis in the industry and indicate that the key reasons for this state of affairs are the influence of financial and industrial groups and, as a result, lack of independence in decision-making by bodies management of the company, the corruption of the management bodies of the joint-stock company and the lack of effective control by law enforcement agencies. In turn, the suspension of reforms in the industry, non-fulfillment of presidential decrees, government acts and the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU led to the centralization of processes and inefficient management of the company's structure [13].

However, despite the importance of implementing reformation changes, their practical implementation dragged on for many years. In particular, the starting point is the approval in 2006 of the Concept of the State Program for the Reform of Railway Transport, the main provisions of which later became the basis of the State Target Program for the Reform of Railway Transport for 2010–2015, adopted in December 2009. Despite the importance of the timely implementation of such a program, already in October 2011, changes were made to its content and the implementation period was extended until 2019. The specified program planned to reform the railway industry in three stages: 1) 2010–2012 – formation of the legislative basis, creation of a company, implementation of the mechanism for distribution of financial

flows by types of economic activity; 2) 2013–2015 – formation of vertically integrated production and technological system of railway transport, improvement of tariff policy and provision of free pricing in competitive market sectors, creation of organizational and legal conditions for the functioning of private operating companies of passenger transportation, etc.; 3) 2016–2019 – elimination of cross-subsidization of passenger transportation, formation of local railways owning infrastructure facilities and rolling stock, development of a network of logistics complexes, warehouse and distribution terminals, etc. [14].

Real changes in the direction of reforming the railway industry began in February 2012 with the adoption of the Law of Ukraine “On the peculiarities of the formation of a joint-stock company of public railway transport”, which determined the legal, economic and organizational principles for the implementation of the reform of corporate management of the railway industry [15]. The legislative changes carried out during this period also related to the separation of the functions of the state and the economic management of the railway industry [16]. In June 2014, the process of formation of PJSC “Ukrzaliznytsia”, inventory and assessment of enterprise property, approval of partnership status, etc. was started. Subsequently, the assets of six railways and about 40 enterprises were merged into PJSC “Ukrzaliznytsia”, which began operating in December 2015.

The urgent need to accelerate reformation changes in the railway industry and to define strategic initiatives for its development determined the expediency of developing the Strategic Plan for the Development of Railway Transport for the period until 2020, taking into account the requirement to define options for strategies for changing the business model of Ukrainian railways, taking into account the need to attract significant investments in the restoration of infrastructure and rolling stock, as well as the integration of Ukrainian railways with EU railway systems [17].

After the implementation of the mentioned legislative changes, already in the second half of 2016, there was a plan to create a cargo transportation operator UZ Cargo. This and other initiatives were reflected in the Development Strategy of PJSC “Ukrzaliznytsia” for 2017–2021 presented in May 2017, which was primarily intended to stimulate the implementation of the target business model of the company’s development, based on five business verticals: freight transportation and logistics, passenger transportation, infrastructure, traction services, production and service. In particular, in the cargo sector, in addition to the traditional ones, it is planned to create separate companies of terminal services, forwarding and contact logistics, intermodal transportation, as well as a company that will deal with transportation outside Ukraine. In the passenger sector, in addition to the Passenger Company and the Ukrainian High-Speed Railway Company, six regional companies for suburban transportation and a station company are planned to be created in 2018. The strategy also provided for the creation of a separate traction rolling stock operator company [18]. The implementation of such an initiative was supposed to contribute to the growth of the company’s share of the transportation market, increase its profitability, increase the speed of cargo delivery and passenger transportation, and generally improve the quality of customer service, increase wages and social security of employees.

Despite the fact that five years are needed for the full implementation of the defined strategy, already in April 2019, the board of JSC “Ukrzaliznytsia” developed the

Railway Transport Development Strategy for the period 2019–2023. In terms of strategic goals and objectives, many experts pointed out the similarity of the respective strategic documents and, accordingly, a tendency to further delay the implementation of the reformation changes was noted, since no significant steps in the direction of the implementation of the reforms took place.

In order to speed up the processes of reforming the industry, at the end of 2019, the Plan of measures for reforming railway transport was adopted, which clearly defines the list of tasks, the structures responsible for their implementation, and the deadlines for the implementation of the relevant measures. According to the specified document, the reform process should be completed by the end of 2023, which will result in an effectively functioning competitive railway company and an open competitive market of railway transportation. However, to date, most of the tasks remain unfulfilled and to this day the legislative basis for the implementation of reform processes has not been created, the procedures for the interaction of verticals in the field of organization of transportation, repair and maintenance of traction rolling stock have not been developed, and the centralization of the functions of the infrastructure vertical: the management of tracks and structures; electrification and power supply industries; automation and telecommunications industries; traffic management, etc. have not been carried out [12]. Tasks due to expire at the end of 2022 are currently under threat of non-fulfillment. In particular, legal entities of cargo and passenger carriers and railway infrastructure operators, as well as wagon repair and locomotive repair companies were to be formed.

In this sense, it should be noted that in January 2021, the Ministry of Infrastructure of Ukraine announced the start of the implementation of structural reforms in railway transport by approving the new organizational structure of the company in accordance with European directives and creating the transportation operator “UZ Cargo” and the infrastructure operator “UZ Infra”. However, already at the beginning of February 2021, the implementation of the reform was suspended by the Supervisory Board of the joint-stock company.

Taking into account the importance of the integration of domestic railway transport into the European transport system, it should be pointed out the lack of progress in terms of the association of railway transport with the EU. In October 2022, in accordance with the Association Agreement with the EU, a set of measures to reform railway transport aimed at separating the functions of infrastructure management and transportation should be fully implemented, in particular, the organizational and financial separation of the infrastructure operator and the carrier within the company, the creation of wagon companies, development and approval of a plan of measures to eliminate cross-subsidization, etc. However, as of the end of 2021, it was not possible to implement any of the measures planned in this direction.

The reform of railway transport acquires special significance in the aspect of the post-war reconstruction of Ukraine. Acting as a key element of the transport system and a powerful driver of the growth of the Ukrainian economy, railway transport will contribute to the generation of revenues for the budget, the creation of new jobs, the improvement of export sales of products by domestic enterprises, the qualitative satisfaction of society’s mobility needs, etc. In view of the above,

it is appropriate to determine the directions of the structural transformation of railway transport on the basis of marketing management as a proactive style of enterprise management, which ensures the formation and increase of dynamic competitive advantages taking into account internal and external changes in the operating environment (Fig. 1).

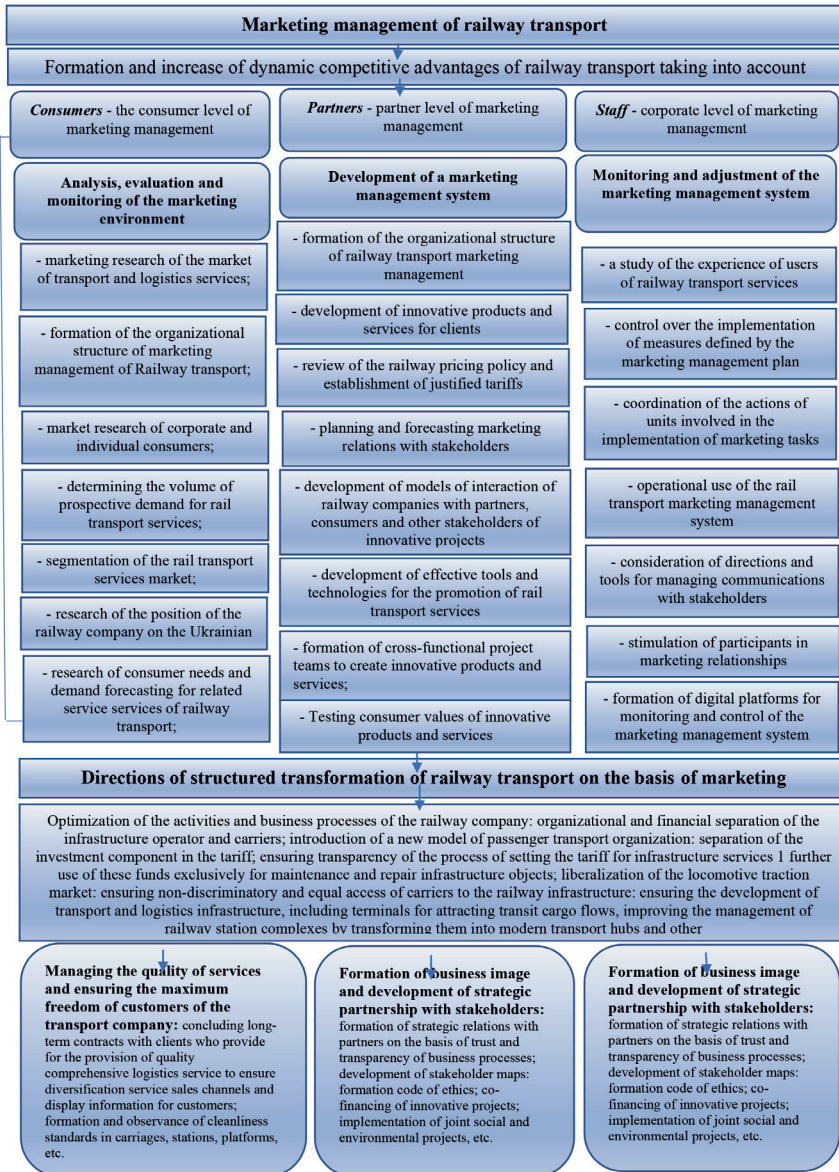


Fig. 1. Features of the structural transformation of railway transport on the basis of marketing management (developed by: V. Zadoya)

It is possible to implement the above mentioned by actively influencing the process of railway communication management with potential market participants to create a competitive advantage, in particular, personnel (corporate level of marketing management), partners (partnership) and consumers (consumer).

The formation of the railway transport marketing management system should be carried out in several stages:

the first stage is to carry out analysis, evaluation and monitoring of the marketing environment, which includes: marketing research of the market of transport and logistics services; analysis of the marketing environment of the functioning of railway transport; market research of corporate and individual consumers; determining the volume of prospective demand for rail transport services; segmentation of the rail transport services market; research of the railway company's position on the Ukrainian and global market of transport and logistics services; research of consumer needs and demand forecasting for related services of railway transport, etc.;

the second stage is the development of the marketing management system, which includes: the formation of the organizational structure of marketing management of railway transport; development of innovative products and services for customers; review of the railway pricing policy and establishment of justified tariffs; planning and forecasting of marketing relationships with stakeholders; development of models of interaction of the railway company with partners, consumers and other stakeholders of innovative projects; development of effective tools and technologies for the promotion of railway transport services; the formation of cross-functional project teams creating innovative products and services; testing consumer values of innovative products and services, etc.;

the third stage is ensuring monitoring and adjustment of the marketing management system, which includes: research on the experience of consumers of railway transport services; control over the implementation of measures defined by the marketing management plan; coordination of the actions of units involved in the implementation of marketing tasks; operational adjustment of the railway transport marketing management system; review of directions and tools for managing communications with stakeholders; stimulation of participants in marketing relationships; formation of digital platforms for monitoring and control of the rail transport marketing management system, etc.

Regarding the directions of structural transformation of railway transport on the basis of marketing management, first of all, attention should be paid to the optimization of activities and business processes of the railway company, which will create a basis for the successful implementation of important transformational changes. In this direction, the organizational and financial separation of the infrastructure operator and carriers should be implemented, a new model of the organization of passenger transportation should be introduced with the aim of ending the practice of cross-subsidization with freight transportation, the investment component of the tariff should be separated, the process of setting the tariff for infrastructure services and the further use of these funds exclusively for maintenance and repair of infrastructure facilities, improve the management of railway station complexes by transforming them into modern tailor HUBs, etc.

The format of the railway company's relations with customers also needs significant changes through comprehensive customer orientation, maximum satisfaction of existing and anticipation of new needs, creation of value for the consumer. Since the participants of the market of transport and logistics services evaluate the work of the transport monopolist extremely negatively (61% are convinced that the company's activities are "negative" or "extremely negative", and only 15% evaluate the efforts of the state carrier as "good" [19]) it is extremely necessary to return lost customers and win the loyalty of new customers. In this direction, it is necessary to implement effective measures aimed at quality management and customer satisfaction of the railway company, in particular by concluding long-term contracts with customers, which provide for the provision of high-quality comprehensive logistics services to the last one, ensuring the diversification of service sales channels and displaying information for customers, forming and observing standards cleanliness in carriages, stations and platforms, etc.

It is impossible to ensure a change in the attitude of customers towards the railway company and their return to the use of railway transport services without an appropriate level of investment in the renewal of rolling stock and railway infrastructure. Many years of underinvestment in the industry led to the establishment of a significant number of speed restrictions or even bans on traffic on certain sections of the railway network. At the same time, it should be noted that limited financial resources did not allow Ukraine to modernize the main railway corridors in accordance with EU standards and, accordingly, take advantage of the potential for increasing transit transportation.

The railway company's communication system with partners also needs revision. In the direction of forming a business image and developing a strategic partnership with stakeholders, it is necessary to: form strategic relations with partners based on trust and transparency of business processes, develop stakeholder maps, form a code of ethics, ensure co-financing of innovative projects and the implementation of social and environmental projects shared with partners, etc.

In turn, it is possible to ensure the social development of the railway company, manage the motivation and involvement of personnel by developing a personnel strategy and a professional code of ethics, forming social packages taking into account the needs and values of the personnel; compliance with standards of conditions and labor protection, implementation of housing and youth policy programs, formation of programs for professional growth, adaptation and motivation of personnel, etc.

It is the implementation of the structural transformation of railway transport on the basis of marketing management that will allow the railway company to achieve the intended goals of increasing demand for railway transport services, increasing profits and improving the financial and economic situation, ensuring innovative growth and competitiveness of railway transport in the market of transport and logistics services.

Conclusions. In order to ensure the innovative growth and competitiveness of railway transport in the market of transport and logistics services, it is necessary to activate the processes of its structural transformation through the use of modern effective tools for implementing innovative changes at the enterprise. The processes of reforming the railway industry were studied and the incon-

sistency of the planned reform changes and the terms of their implementation with the actual pace of implementation of structural transformations in railway transport was established. The expediency of the structural transformation of railway transport on the basis of marketing management as a proactive style of enterprise management, which ensures the formation and growth of dynamic competitive advantages taking into account internal and external changes in the operating environment by managing communications with stakeholders, has been proven. The key aspects of the structural transformation of railway transport on the basis of marketing management are disclosed.

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