



Article

Leadership in uncertain times and economic transformations

Iryna Markovych^{1*}, Mykhailo Ioffe², Olena Krasnyak³, Oksana Kulhanik³, Inna Semenets-Orlova⁴

¹Department of Economics and Finance, Faculty of Economics and Management, Ternopil Ivan Puluj National Technical University, 46001, Ternopil, Ukraine

²Department of Public Administration, Tourism and Hotel and Restaurant Business, V. I. Vernadsky Taurida National University, 01042, Kyiv, Ukraine

³Department of Innovation Economics and Digital Technologies, Faculty of Economics, Management and Law, Vinnytsia Institute of Trade and Economics, State University of Trade and Economics, 21050, Vinnytsia, Ukraine

⁴Department of Public Administration, Interregional Academy of Personnel Management; Center for Postgraduate Education, Kyiv Institute of the National Guard of Ukraine, 03039, Kyiv, Ukraine

*Corresponding author: Iryna Markovych, serhbat@ukr.net

CITATION

Markovych I, Ioffe M, Krasnyak O, et al. Leadership in uncertain times and economic transformations. *Human Resources Management and Services*. 2026; 8(4): 5978. <https://doi.org/10.18282/hrms5978>

COPYRIGHT



Copyright © 2026 by author(s).
Human Resources Management and Services
is published by Piscomed Publishing Pte. Ltd.
This work is licensed under the Creative
Commons Attribution (CC BY) license.
<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

Abstract: The relevance of the study is due to the growing importance of leadership competencies in times of crisis, high uncertainty, and continuous transformations characteristic of transitional economies. In such environments, organizations face heightened uncertainty, making the search for effective management strategies essential for ensuring sustainability, resilience, and innovative development. The purpose of the study is to identify key leadership competencies and to characterize their influence on organizational development in transitional economic contexts. The object of the research is the management practices of middle and top managers of Ukrainian enterprises. The methodology is based on a survey of 186 respondents conducted in a mixed online and offline format using an author-developed structured questionnaire that incorporated adapted items from validated scales. The instrument assessed emotional intelligence, communicative tolerance, adaptability, and strategic thinking. The study employed a renewable longitudinal panel design involving repeated waves of data collection and partial renewal of the sample composition during 2022–2024. The results demonstrate that emotional intelligence and adaptability represent the strongest competencies of Ukrainian managers, supporting high motivation levels and rapid responses to emerging challenges. In contrast, communicative tolerance and strategic thinking were less developed and require targeted improvement. Adaptability (+8.29% over 2022–2024) showed the greatest growth, indicating an increased ability to change. Communicative tolerance grew the least (+4.27% over 2022–2024), indicating the need to develop dialogue and openness to different views.

Keywords: communicative tolerance; emotional intelligence; adaptability; strategic thinking; leadership competencies; transitional economies; organizational resilience; innovative development

1. Introduction

In today's world, characterized by a high level of turbulence, political and economic instability, as well as large-scale global challenges, the problem of effective leadership is of particular importance. Transitional economies, including Ukraine, face the need to quickly adapt to new conditions, transform management practices and develop strategies that can ensure not only the survival of organizations but also their long-term development. In times of crisis and high uncertainty, it is the quality of management and the ability of leaders to mobilize resources that determine the level of resilience of both individual

enterprises and entire social systems. In recent years, scientific research has been actively aimed at identifying a set of competencies that allow managers to act effectively in situations of uncertainty. Researchers emphasize the importance of developing emotional intelligence, adaptability, communicative tolerance, and strategic thinking, as these qualities form the basis for the effective functioning of organizations in crisis conditions (Aquino et al., 2025; Singh et al., 2023). At the same time, a significant part of the literature analyzes the phenomena of crisis and transformational leadership, emphasizing the role of psychological support for teams, the ability to innovate and the formation of a culture of trust (Artinger et al., 2025; Schiuma et al., 2024). At the same time, despite the development of theoretical approaches, there are still many “white spots” in the problem. In particular, there is a lack of research on how individual leadership competencies interact in the complex organizational contexts of institutional challenges and dynamic changes inherent in transition economies. Most studies describe general models, but there is a lack of empirical evidence that takes into account the local Ukrainian context, differences in organizational cultures, and the specifics of management in crisis (Opatska et al., 2024; Shevtsova et al., 2025). It is this gap that necessitates a comprehensive study of the practical manifestation of key leadership competencies in real organizations operating in a state of uncertainty. This study focuses on leadership competencies within organizational and managerial contexts, while external geopolitical or security factors are considered only as background environmental conditions and are not subject to in-depth analysis.

Thus, the purpose of this study is to identify key leadership competencies and their impact on organizational resilience and innovative development in transitional economies. To achieve the goal, the following research questions were formulated:

1. What level of development of emotional intelligence, adaptability, communicative tolerance and strategic thinking do Ukrainian managers demonstrate in 2022–2024?
2. How are these competencies related to organizational resilience and innovative development of enterprises?

Accordingly, the hypotheses are tested:

- 1) Emotional intelligence and adaptability are positively correlated with organizational resilience.
- 2) Communicative tolerance and strategic thinking are positively correlated with innovative development.
- 3) The cumulative impact of the four competencies is a significant predictor of innovative development of enterprises.

2. Literature review

The theoretical basis of the study is the concept of emotional intelligence, the theory of adaptive leadership, as well as models of strategic leadership developed within the framework of the resource approach. These classical theories set the coordinate system in which modern empirical studies gain completeness.

Current research emphasizes that effective leadership in the face of uncertainty requires the integration of interpersonal and intrapersonal competencies, such as emotional intelligence, psychological security, and leader authenticity (Artinger et al., 2025; Salameh-Ayanian et al., 2025). Scholars pay considerable attention to adaptive and strategic leadership, which provides organizations with the ability to respond flexibly to challenges and formulate long-term strategies (Shliakhetko et al., 2024; Krap et al., 2024). A separate area of research is the study of crisis leadership and management in emergency situations. Research shows that the ability of leaders to combine determination

with empathy and support for staff is a key factor in the resilience of organizations (Ramli et al., 2022; Stender et al., 2024). At the same time, in the national context of transitional economies, in particular in Ukraine, emphasis is placed on the management culture transformation, the formation of new models' interaction, as well as the impact of prolonged crises on the image of a leader (Shchepetynykova & Oleksiienko, 2024; Zelenin, 2023).

Global studies emphasize the importance of a transformational approach that promotes innovation and digital change in business, as well as the development of competencies to achieve sustainability and competitiveness (Schiuma et al., 2024; Ishaq et al., 2024; Ruwanika & Massyn, 2024; Muringa & Shava, 2025). Other works highlight the role of management practices in highly dynamic environments and the need for leaders with a comprehensive vision who are able to work with uncertainty at the global and local levels (Gottfredson & Crane, 2025; Miescu, 2023; Khaw et al., 2022; Seitz, 2023). The experience of Central and Eastern Europe is also significant, where the increasing internationalization of leadership practices and integration into global institutional networks creates new requirements for managerial competencies. In turn, Ukrainian research proves the importance of combining strategic vision with crisis management practices to ensure the stability and development of organizations in turbulent conditions (Linville & Kliuchnikov, 2021; Lopushniak et al., 2023).

Continuing, it should be noted that some studies reveal the role of emotional leadership in maintaining a high level of employee motivation and maintaining business viability during pandemics and crises (Ramli et al., 2022; Salameh-Ayanian et al., 2025). At the same time, studies on labor organization in Ukraine and financial management highlights the difficulty of combining strategic planning with responding to uncertainty (Lopushniak et al., 2023; Rasshyvalov et al., 2024). In the political and international dimensions, leadership is considered in the context of governance, international relations, and the formation of the global image of leaders in crisis situations (Sedelius et al., 2024; Seitz, 2023).

Researchers also draw attention to coaching as a tool for developing management skills in crisis environments, which emphasizes the importance of personal work on leadership qualities (Zelenin, 2023; Hbur & Biloshkurska, 2025). In a broader context, studies on learning and retraining in special economic zones and organizations' responses to change reveal the importance of leaders' ability to continuously improve themselves and maintain innovative dynamics (Muringa & Shava, 2025; Khaw et al., 2022). Research in the area of global economic shocks emphasizes the need for leaders who are able to coordinate local strategies with global trends (Miescu, 2023; Nekhai et al., 2024). Finally, the analysis of leadership change practices in Ukraine shows that the reform of managerial traditions and the modernization of institutional practices remain among the key challenges in the transformation processes (Linville & Kliuchnikov, 2021; Shchepetynykova & Oleksiienko, 2024). Additionally, studies emphasize that complex environments require leaders with a comprehensive vision, and the transnationalization of leadership practices in Central and Eastern Europe is shaping new standards of governance (Gottfredson & Crane, 2025; Alekseieva et al., 2023).

Together, these studies create a comprehensive picture of leadership in transitional economies, but the problems of integrating intercultural dimensions into competence development and creating long-term mechanisms for training a new generation of leaders for uncertain conditions remain unresolved.

The main thematic areas of contemporary research on leadership under uncertainty are systematized in **Table 1**. The summary shows that most works focus on individual competencies, while their systemic impact in transitional economies is insufficiently studied.

Table 1. Main areas of research on leadership in uncertainty

Direction	Key authors	Main focus	Limitation
Emotional and transformational leadership	Aquino et al. (2025), Schiuma et al. (2024)	Psychological safety, authenticity	Lack of analysis in transition economies
Adaptive leadership	Chughtai et al. (2023), Sott & Bender (2025)	Flexibility, crisis response	Insufficient attention to long-term planning
Crisis leadership	Opatska et al. (2024), Shevtsova et al. (2025)	Determination, staff support	Local context, small samples
Strategic leadership	Singh et al. (2023), Kebede et al. (2024)	Long-term vision, innovation	There is little empirical evidence in transition economies.
Integrated models	Missing	N/A	It is this gap that our study fills.

Note: systematized by the author.

Critical analysis reveals a contradiction between supporters of adaptive leadership, who emphasize immediate response, and adherents of a strategic approach, who advocate the priority of long-term goals. However, in transitional economies, these two focuses are not mutually exclusive: an effective leader must simultaneously demonstrate adaptability and strategic thinking, relying on emotional intelligence and communicative tolerance. The literature lacks a model that would consider these four competencies as a single system capable of explaining both short- and long-term organizational performance under uncertainty. This is the gap that our study is designed to fill.

3. Materials and methods

The materials and methods of the study were based on an empirical survey conducted in 2022 among middle and senior managers of industrial, educational and business organizations in Kyiv, Lviv and Dnipropetrovsk regions of Ukraine; the sample included 112 respondents (directors, top managers, department heads) with experience in managing in turbulent and crisis-driven changes.

In 2023–2024, the sample was expanded to 186 respondents by attracting additional participants from the same regions and industries. Thus, the total size of the renewable longitudinal panel over three waves is 186 managers, of whom 112 were interviewed in the first stage. The full data set ($n = 186$) was used in further analysis, and the results of the pilot stage were taken into account when interpreting the reliability of the measurements.

The sample was formed by purposive sampling with elements of stratification by region and industry affiliation of enterprises (industry, education, and services). The inclusion criteria were: managerial experience of at least three years, employment at enterprises operating in a transitional economy. The overall response rate was 74.3%. The retention rate between waves was approximately 78%. To minimize the potential impact of attrition, a targeted replacement procedure was used to select participants with the most similar professional characteristics. Descriptive statistics analysis revealed no significant differences between the original and updated parts of the sample in terms of age, managerial experience, gender, and industry ($p > 0.05$).

The survey was conducted in a mixed format (in person and online); to ensure longitudinal consistency, the same respondents were invited to participate in all three waves, however, in the event of individual withdrawal, new participants with identical characteristics were recruited (renewable panel). All participants provided informed consent to participate in the study.

The study was implemented using a renewable longitudinal panel design, which combines repeated waves of data collection with a partial renewal of the

sample composition. The base group consisted of 112 managers interviewed in 2022. During the subsequent waves (2023–2024), all previous respondents were invited to participate again. In cases of refusal or inability to participate again, they were replaced by new participants who met the same inclusion criteria (industry, managerial experience, position level and region). This approach allowed us to maintain the representativeness of the sample throughout the study, although the results obtained should be interpreted as the results of a renewable panel, rather than a classic closed longitudinal cohort.

Therefore, the design involved partial sample renewal between waves, so all results obtained should be interpreted as those of a renewable longitudinal panel, rather than a classic fixed cohort.

The survey was conducted in a mixed format (online and offline), which allowed to expand access to participants and increase the reliability of the data obtained. To collect information, the study used an author-designed structured questionnaire (**Appendix A**) incorporating adapted items from validated instruments, including the Emotional Intelligence Scale (EQ-i 2.0), the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale, and the Innovation Climate Scale. The items were adapted to the Ukrainian organizational context and reviewed by experts for content validity.

The questionnaire was developed by the authors as a structured questionnaire. Block 1 (emotional intelligence) contained adapted EQ-i 2.0 items; Block 2 (adaptability) was based on the adaptive leadership competency model; Block 3 (communicative tolerance) was based on the adapted Boyko scale; Block 5 (organizational resilience) was based on the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale; Block 6 (innovative development) was based on the Innovation Climate Scale. Block 4 (strategic thinking) was developed by the authors based on an analysis of the scientific literature. The final version of the questionnaire was formed after expert verification of content validity and a pilot survey; Cronbach's alpha values for all scales exceeded 0.7.

The choice of these four competencies is due to their central role in modern models of leadership in conditions of uncertainty. Emotional intelligence is considered a basic resource for supporting the psychological stability of teams (Goleman, 1995); adaptability is a key characteristic of leaders who are able to act in an environment of turbulence (Heifetz, 1994); communicative tolerance ensures constructive dialogue in multicultural and conflict situations; strategic thinking connects short-term anti-crisis measures with long-term goals. Taken together, these four competencies form a balanced profile of a leader in a transitional economy.

4. Results

The results indicate differences in the levels of examined leadership competencies among managers. **Table 2** summarizes the main characteristics and expected organizational effects of the four competencies assessed in this study: emotional intelligence, communicative tolerance, adaptability, and strategic thinking.

Table 2. Key competencies of leaders for crisis management

Competence	Characteristics	Expected effect for the organization
Emotional intelligence	The ability to recognize one's own emotions and those of others, manage them, and create an atmosphere of trust.	Increasing employee motivation, reducing the level of conflict, maintaining emotional stability.
Communicative tolerance	Openness to different points of view, the ability to conduct a dialog, and avoid prejudice in interaction.	Creating a favorable environment for cooperation and collective decision-making.

Continued table:

Competence	Characteristics	Expected effect for the organization
Adaptability	Flexibility in changing management approaches, ability to respond quickly to new challenges and circumstances.	Ensuring the viability of the organization in the face of turbulence and uncertainty.
Strategic thinking	The ability to predict risks and opportunities, to form a long-term vision of development.	Balancing short- and long-term decisions, effective resource management.

Note: created by the author based on (Aquino et al., 2025; Artinger et al., 2025; Chughtai et al., 2023; Singh et al., 2023; Shevtsova et al., 2025; Shevchenko et al., 2023; Arsawan et al., 2024).

Empirical data from three waves showed that the highest average values in 2022–2024 were for emotional intelligence (3.95–4.12) and adaptability (3.74–4.05), while communicative tolerance (3.28–3.42) and strategic thinking (3.41–3.54) were consistently lower. All indicators showed positive dynamics, but the largest total increase was recorded for adaptability (+8.29%), and the smallest for communicative tolerance (+4.27%).

All longitudinal analyses in this study are based on a rolling panel design with three repeated waves of data collection (2022, 2023, and 2024) and partial sample renewal between waves. In the case where a participant from a previous wave could not be re-interviewed, a new participant with equivalent professional characteristics was recruited using a targeted replacement procedure. Therefore, the dynamics presented show repeated cross-sectional observations with a preserved core group, rather than a single fixed cohort. Such a design can investigate changes in leadership competencies and organizational outcomes over time while maintaining the representativeness of the selection between waves.

The methodological foundations for studying leadership practices in transitional economies are formed at the intersection of several scientific disciplines, which necessitates the use of an interdisciplinary approach. Modern studies emphasize that leadership in unstable socio-economic systems cannot be understood only within the framework of management science.

The analysis was conducted using data collected across three waves during 2022–2024, allowing examination of changes in leadership competencies and organizational outcomes over time within a renewable longitudinal panel design.

In order to systematize these approaches, **Table 3** shows the main methodological principles of the study of leadership practices in transitional economies, which reflect the interdisciplinary nature of the study of the problem.

Table 3. Methodological foundations for studying leadership practices in transitional economies

Methodological approach	Main characteristics	Expected result for the study
Psychological	Analysis of individual qualities of a leader, emotional intelligence, motivational attitudes.	Identification of personal factors that contribute to effective management in conditions of uncertainty.
Sociological	Study of interpersonal relations, communications, organizational culture.	Understanding of collective mechanisms of interaction and formation of social capital.
Economic	Use of econometric models, analysis of productivity and impact of innovations.	Assessment of the role of leadership in ensuring the resilience and competitiveness of organizations.
Political science	Study of models of state and corporate governance in the context of transitivity.	Analysis of the interaction between government and business in crisis situations.
Educational and pedagogical	Developing strategies for building leadership competencies through educational programs.	Training a new generation of leaders capable of innovation and flexible management.
Institutional and cultural	Studying the specifics of institutional transformation and the modernization of governance practices.	Formation of a new approach to leadership, taking into account local cultural and historical peculiarities.

Note: created by the author on the basis of (Kebede et al., 2024; Ruwanika & Massyn, 2024; Ishaq et al., 2024; Shchepetynykova & Oleksiyenko, 2024; Opatska et al., 2024; Sedelius et al., 2024).

Summarizing, it can be argued that an interdisciplinary approach to the study of leadership practices allows integrating different scientific perspectives for a more complete understanding of this multifaceted phenomenon. It provides researchers not only with the tools to analyze the personal and organizational characteristics of leaders, but also makes it possible to assess their impact on broader socio-economic processes. In transitional economies, this approach is especially important, as it is the combination of psychological, social, economic, and political factors that determines the effectiveness of management strategies. This makes the interdisciplinary methodology not an auxiliary, but a key tool for studying modern leadership.

In 2022–2024, a combined study of leadership competencies and their impact on organizational resilience and innovative development of enterprises in the transitional economy of Ukraine was conducted. The sample included 186 middle and senior managers from three regions (Kyiv, Lviv, and Dnipro regions), of whom 58% were men and 42% were women; the average age was 41.7 years. Validated scales were used for measurement: Emotional Intelligence Scale (EQ-i 2.0), Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale, and Innovation Climate Scale. Correlation and regression analysis were used to test the hypothesis. Cronbach's alpha for all scales was > 0.7 , which confirmed their internal consistency. The average indicators of competencies and organizational results (2022–2024) are presented in **Table 4**.

Table 4. Average indicators of competencies and organizational results (2022–2024)

Indicator	2022	2023	2024	Δ 2022–2024
Emotional intelligence	3.95	4.08	4.12	+0.17
Adaptability	3.74	3.91	4.05	+0.31
Communicative tolerance	3.28	3.36	3.42	+0.14
Strategic thinking	3.41	3.49	3.54	+0.13
Organizational resilience	3.72	3.85	3.98	+0.26
Innovative development	3.61	3.68	3.86	+0.25

Note: author's own research (2022–2024).

The dynamics of the development of key leadership competencies and organizational results in 2022–2024 showed a gradual increase in most indicators. Adaptability and organizational resilience have increased most significantly, indicating the ability of managers to respond quickly uncertain conditions and maintain the effectiveness of organizations in a transitional economy. Emotional intelligence has also shown a steady increase, which is consistent with the tendency to strengthen interpersonal interaction in conditions of uncertainty. Comparative data are shown in **Figure 1**.

As can be seen from **Figure 1**, all the studied competencies show positive dynamics during 2022–2024. However, for a deeper understanding of the relationships between them and organizational results, it is advisable to turn to correlation analysis. The results are summarized in **Table 5**, which reflects the strength and direction of the relationship between individual managerial competencies and key performance indicators of organizations.

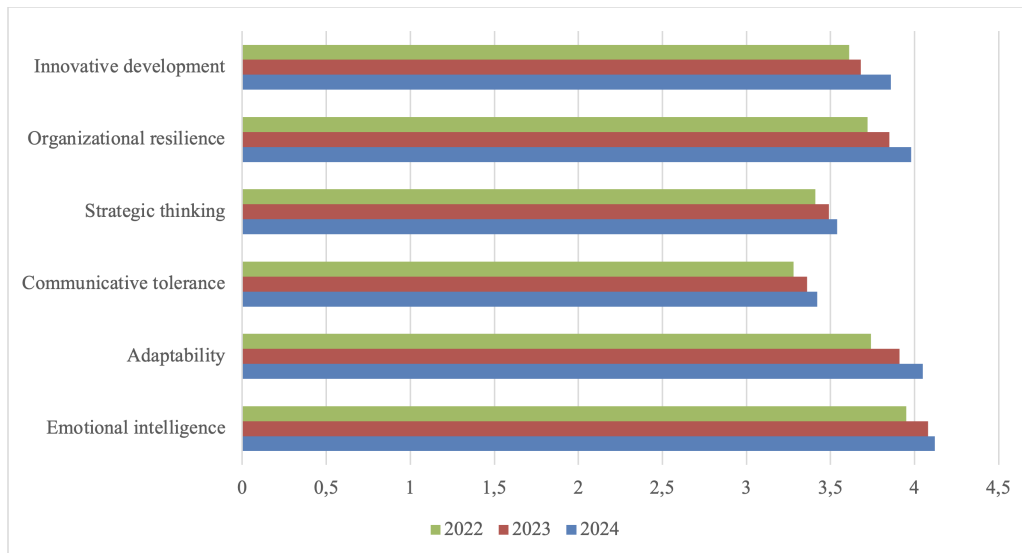


Figure 1. Dynamics of average values of leadership competencies and organizational results in 2022–2024

Table 5. Correlation matrix of competencies and organizational results

Indicators	EI	Adapt.	CT	Strat. thinking	Organizational resilience	Innovation
Emotional intelligence (EI)	1	0.54**	0.46**	0.51**	0.61**	0.49**
Adaptability (Adapt.)		1	0.39*	0.44**	0.52**	0.58**
Communicative tolerance (CT)			1	0.41*	0.37*	0.35*
Strategic thinking				1	0.43**	0.47**
Organizational resilience					1	0.55**
Innovative development						1

Notes: The “*” and “**” indicate the level of statistical significance of the coefficients: $p < 0.05$ (one asterisk) and $p < 0.01$ (two asterisks). This means that the probability of obtaining such results by chance is less than 5% and 1%, respectively.

Correlation analysis showed the presence of statistically significant positive relationships between most of the studied competencies and organizational indicators. The highest correlation coefficients were recorded between emotional intelligence and organizational resilience ($r = 0.61$; $p < 0.01$), as well as between adaptability and innovative development ($r = 0.58$; $p < 0.01$). For communicative tolerance, moderate positive correlations with indicators of organizational activity were obtained.

The results of multiple linear regression showed that the statistically significant predictors of innovative development are emotional intelligence ($\beta = 0.31$; $p < 0.001$), adaptability ($\beta = 0.28$; $p = 0.001$) and strategic thinking ($\beta = 0.15$; $p = 0.034$). For communicative tolerance, no statistically significant effect was found ($p = 0.156$). The coefficient of determination of the model was $R^2 = 0.42$, which indicates that the model explained 42% of the variation in the indicator of innovative development. Detailed results of multiple linear regression are given in **Table 6**.

Table 6. Results of regression analysis (dependent variable –innovative development)

Predictor	β	SE	t	p
Emotional intelligence	0.31	0.07	4.43	< 0.001
Adaptability	0.28	0.08	3.50	0.001

Continued table:

Predictor	β	SE	t	p
Communicative tolerance	0.10	0.07	1.43	0.156
Strategic thinking	0.15	0.07	2.14	0.034
$R^2 = 0.42$; $F(4, 181) = 32.8$; $p < 0.001$				

Note: author's own research.

As can be seen, emotional intelligence and adaptability are significant predictors, while communicative tolerance does not reach statistical significance, which is consistent with the previously discussed correlations.

Additional subgroup analysis revealed no statistically significant differences in the level of competencies between men and women (t-test, $p > 0.05$). However, managers with more than 10 years of experience demonstrated higher indicators of strategic thinking ($M = 3.68$) compared to their younger colleagues ($M = 3.41$, $p = 0.02$). Industry specificity also turned out to be significant: in industry, adaptability was slightly lower than in the service sector ($p = 0.04$). These results indicate the need for differentiated leadership development programs.

The identified differences among leadership competencies provide a basis for further discussion of possible managerial implications. First, it is necessary to create programs for the development of emotional intelligence, as this competence allows leaders to maintain the psychological stability of teams in times of crisis. Emotion management training, empathy development, and non-violent communication skills can significantly increase trust within organizations and reduce the risk of conflict (Salameh-Ayanian et al., 2025).

Secondly, it is important to strengthen communicative tolerance. For this purpose, it is recommended to introduce intercultural trainings, training in facilitation techniques, and the development of constructive dialogue skills. This is especially important for companies that are actively integrating into international markets and dealing with multinational teams. Improving the level of communication culture will help reduce tensions in interaction and promote greater team cohesion (Chughtai et al., 2023).

Thirdly, it is worthwhile to purposefully develop the adaptability of managers. This involves creating training simulations, business games, and scenarios where managers practice the skills to respond quickly to changing external conditions. The use of flexible management methodologies (agile, lean) in daily practice allows to create a culture focused on rapidly restructuring strategies in response to the challenges of a transitional economy (Sott & Bender, 2025).

Fourth, strategic thinking should become an integral part of the managerial development system. Long-term educational programs aimed at analyzing trends, predicting risks, and developing scenarios for the development of organizations should be implemented. In practical terms, this can be realized through mentoring and coaching, when experienced managers pass on knowledge about strategic decisions to young managers. In this way, the ability to combine short-term tasks with a long-term vision is formed (Singh et al., 2023).

The combination of emotional intelligence, tolerant communication, adaptability, and strategic thinking creates the foundation for increasing the resilience of organizations and their ability to innovate in transitional economies.

5. Discussion

As shown in the literature review, modern scientific approaches integrate psychological, organizational, and socio-economic concepts of leadership, which creates a basis for interpreting the empirical data we obtained.

Based on the results obtained, it is advisable to: 1) introduce mandatory emotional intelligence training for middle managers working in crisis industries; 2) develop training modules on communicative tolerance, including simulations of intercultural negotiations; 3) integrate facilitation sessions on strategic visioning into corporate leadership development programs; 4) create a platform for exchanging best practices in adaptive management at the level of industry associations to support the innovative development of enterprises.

The results obtained indicate that the strongest statistical relationships were found between emotional intelligence and organizational resilience, as well as between adaptability and innovative development (Aquino et al., 2025; Chughtai et al., 2023). At the same time, the lack of a statistically significant effect of communicative tolerance in the regression model can be explained by the peculiarities of management practices in transitional economies, where more hierarchical models of interaction dominate. That is why the development of communicative competencies should be considered as a promising direction for improving management practices (Shchepetynykova & Oleksienko, 2024; Singh et al., 2023).

For a comprehensive analysis, it is necessary to integrate the tools of psychology, sociology, economics, political science, and educational studies (Kebede et al., 2024; Shchepetynykova & Oleksienko, 2024). This approach allows us to take into account the multidimensionality of the leadership phenomenon, which combines individual qualities, organizational practices, and the external institutional environment.

An important component of the interdisciplinary methodology is the use of qualitative and quantitative research methods. The combination of empirical data (surveys, interviews, and case studies) with econometric analysis, organizational behavior modeling, and political process analysis allows for a more comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of leadership practices (Ruwanika & Massyn, 2024; Ishaq et al., 2024). In addition, the study of leadership under extreme crisis conditions is becoming increasingly important, especially in the context of Ukraine, where management practices combine strategic vision with a response to uncertainty (Opatska et al., 2024; Sedelius et al., 2024). This leads to the emergence of new methodological tools based on the analysis of resilience, adaptive management, and institutional transformation.

Some scholars believe that the main factor of success in the face of uncertainty is authentic and transformational leadership, which creates an atmosphere of psychological security and supports the innovation of organizations (Artinger et al., 2025; Schiuma et al., 2024). Instead, other researchers emphasize crisis and strategic leadership, where determination and the ability to make unpopular but necessary decisions come to the fore (Opatska et al., 2024; Shevtsova et al., 2025). Our data demonstrates a combination of these approaches: respondents showed high scores on emotional intelligence (which is consistent with the concepts of emotional and transformational leadership), but also showed a lack of communicative openness and strategic thinking, which are critical for long-term stability. Some works emphasize that adaptability is the main resource of leaders in transition economies, as it allows them to respond quickly to challenges (Sott & Bender, 2025; Kebede et al., 2024). The results confirm this position, as this competency showed the largest increase in the sample (+8.29%). However, other authors point out that without proper development of strategic thinking, adaptability can turn into a situational response that does not guarantee long-term development (Gottfredson & Crane, 2025; Miescu, 2023). This indicates a contradiction of views and calls for a comprehensive vision that combines short-term flexibility with long-term forecasting.

Our hypothesis that the development of leadership competencies is a

key factor in ensuring organizational resilience and innovative development in transitional economies was generally confirmed: high levels of emotional intelligence and adaptability of respondents correlate with the findings of previous studies. At the same time, the identified gaps in communicative tolerance and strategic thinking confirm the need for their targeted development through educational and training programs (Ramli et al., 2022; Zelenin, 2023).

Based on the results obtained, it can be recommended:

- 1) to introduce mandatory emotional intelligence training for middle managers working in crisis industries;
- 2) to develop modules on communicative tolerance, including simulations of intercultural negotiations;
- 3) to integrate facilitation sessions on strategic visioning into corporate leadership development programs;
- 4) to create a platform for exchanging best practices in adaptive management at the level of industry associations, which will contribute to the innovative development of enterprises.

It is worth acknowledging a number of limitations of this study. First, the use of self-reports carries the risk of social desirability bias and overestimation, although the anonymity of the procedure minimizes this risk. Second, although the data were collected over a three-year period, due to partial sample renewal across waves, the findings should be interpreted as reflecting a renewable longitudinal panel design rather than a fully fixed cohort study. Third, the analysis does not include control variables at the enterprise level (size, industry), which could clarify the contribution of leadership competencies. Finally, the geographical limitation of the selection of three regions of Ukraine allows for generalization. The results suggest a way to reconcile the dichotomy between adaptive (short-term) and strategic (long-term) leadership noted in the literature. The balanced profile we found – high adaptability and emotional intelligence with moderate strategic thinking – suggests that in transitional economies, leaders spontaneously build a “bridge” between immediate crisis responses and elements of foresight. The challenge is to make this bridge stronger through targeted training without weakening either pillar. Further research should take into account the intercultural dimension, a wider range of organizational contexts, and apply comparative analysis with the experience of other countries to form a more holistic model of leadership development in transitional economies.

6. Conclusion

This study takes a step towards building an integrated leadership model for transitional economies, arguing that the combination of emotional intelligence, adaptability, communicative tolerance, and strategic thinking forms a balanced profile that simultaneously supports organizational resilience and innovative development. Comparison of expected and actual results confirmed the hypothesis about the priority of these competencies, but at the same time revealed a novelty in emphasizing the imbalance between short-term flexibility and long-term forecasting. The practical significance of the findings lies in the possibility of using them to develop training programs aimed at developing comprehensive management skills for managers of different levels. The limitations of the study include the geographical limitation of the sample and the analysis of only four key competencies, which requires further expansion of the methodology. In the future, it is advisable to conduct intercultural studies to compare the Ukrainian experience with the practices of other transitional economies, as well as a deeper analysis of the impact of crisis factors and uncertainty on changing the structure of leadership competencies. Further research could be aimed at creating integrated models of leadership training that combine adaptability, strategic vision, and a

culture of dialogue, ensuring not only the survival of organizations but also their long-term competitiveness in a globalized environment.

Author contributions: Conceptualization, IM and MI; methodology, IM; software, OK; validation, IM, OK and IS; formal analysis, IM; investigation, IM; resources, MI; data curation, OK; writing –original draft preparation, IM; writing –review and editing, MI, OK and IS; visualization, OK; supervision, IS and IO; project administration, IM. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Funding: This research was not funded.

Conflict of interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

References

- [1] Alekseeva, K., Maletych, M., Ptashchenko, O., Baranova, O., & Buryk, Z. (2023). State business support programs in wartime conditions. *Economic Affairs*, 68(1s), 231–242. <https://doi.org/10.46852/0424-2513.1s.2023.26>
- [2] Aquino, M. K. A., Bumacod, A. M., Calapine, A. G., Yaco, J. M. T., Dimailig, M. L., Amores, A. P., & Francisco, J. (2025). Interpersonal and intrapersonal leadership competencies: An interpretative phenomenological analysis on effective leadership strategies. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 16, 1553620. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2025.1553620>
- [3] Arsawan, I. W. E., Suhartanto, D., Koval, V., Tralo, I., Demenko, V., & Azizah, A. (2024). Enhancing the circular economy business model towards sustainable business performance: Moderating the role of environmental dynamism. *Journal of Infrastructure, Policy and Development*, 8(5), 3321. <https://doi.org/10.24294/jipd.v8i5.3321>
- [4] Artinger, F. M., Marx-Fleck, S., Junker, N. M., Gigerenzer, G., Artinger, S., & van Dick, R. (2025). Coping with uncertainty: The interaction of psychological safety and authentic leadership in their effects on defensive decision making. *Journal of Business Research*, 190, 115240. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2025.115240>
- [5] Chughtai, M. S., Syed, F., Naseer, S., & Chinchilla, N. (2024). Role of adaptive leadership in learning organizations to boost organizational innovations with change self-efficacy. *Current Psychology*, 43, 27262–27281. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-023-04669-z>
- [6] Gottfredson, R., & Crane, B. (2026). Navigating complex environments requires complex leaders. *Business Horizons*. 69(3): 419-432. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bushor.2025.06.002>
- [7] Hbur, Z., & Biloshkurska, N. (2025). The role of transformational leadership in fostering organizational innovation. *Public Management and Policy*, 1(5), 39–46. <https://doi.org/10.70651/3041-2498/2025.1.05>
- [8] Ishaq, M. I., Sarwar, H., Aftab, J., Franzoni, S., & Raza, A. (2024). Accomplishing sustainable performance through leaders' competencies, green entrepreneurial orientation, and innovation in an emerging economy: Moderating role of institutional support. *Business Strategy and the Environment*, 33(2), 1515–1532. <https://doi.org/10.1002/bse.3557>
- [9] Kebede, D. A., Werke, S. Z., & Kebede, T. A. (2024). Strategic leadership practices in emerging economies: a systematic review and empirical investigation. *Cogent Business & Management*, 11(1), 2418425. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311975.2024.2418425>
- [10] Khaw, K. W., Alnoor, A., Al-Abrow, H., Tiberius, V., Ganesan, Y., & Atshan, N. A. (2023). Reactions towards organizational change: A systematic literature review. *Current Psychology*, 42, 19137–19160. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-022-03070-6>
- [11] Krav, A., Bataiev, S., Bobro, N., Kozub, V., & Hlevatska, N. (2024). Examination of digital advancements: Their influence on contemporary corporate management methods and approaches. *Multidisciplinary Reviews*, 7, 26. <https://doi.org/10.31893/multirev.2024spe026>
- [12] Linville, M., & Kliuchnikov, A. (2021). A model for understanding and changing the practice of leadership in Ukraine. *Business Ethics and Leadership*, 5(4), 17–31. [https://doi.org/10.21272/bel.5\(4\).17-31.2021](https://doi.org/10.21272/bel.5(4).17-31.2021)
- [13] Lopushniak, H., Poplavska, O., Danylevych, N., Kostyshyna, T., & Raupov, R. (2023). Organization of labor under conditions of uncertainty: The case of Ukraine. *Problems and Perspectives in Management*, 21(2), 294–308. [https://doi.org/10.21511/ppm.21\(2\).2023.30](https://doi.org/10.21511/ppm.21(2).2023.30)
- [14] Miescu, M. S. (2023). Uncertainty shocks in emerging economies: A global to local approach for identification. *European Economic Review*, 154, 104437. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eurocorev.2023.104437>
- [15] Muringa, T. P., & Shava, E. (2025). 'Learning and Unlearning': Core Leadership Competencies for Driving Success in Special Economic Zones in South Africa. *Social Sciences*, 14(2), 88. <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci14020088>
- [16] Nekhai, V., Melnyk, Y., Vyshnivska, B., Bilyk, O., Akimova, L., & Akimov, O. (2024). Economic consequences of geopolitical conflicts for the development of territorial communities in the context of economic and national security of Ukraine. *Economic Affairs (New Delhi)*, 69(1), 551–563. <https://doi.org/10.46852/0424-2513.2.2024.17>
- [17] Opatska, S., Johansen, W., & Gordon, A. V. (2024). Business crisis management in wartime: Insights from Ukraine. *Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management*, 32(1), e12513. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-5973.12513>
- [18] Ramli, K., Spigel, B., Williams, N., Mawson, S., & Jack, S. (2023). Managing through a crisis: emotional leadership strategies of high-growth entrepreneurs during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, 35(1–2), 24–48. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08985626.2022.2143905>
- [19] Rasshyvalov, D., Portnov, Y., Sigaieva, T., Alboshchii, O., & Rozumnyi, O. (2024). Navigating geopolitical risks: Implications for global supply chain management. *Multidisciplinary Reviews*, 7, 2024spe017. <https://doi.org/10.31893/multirev.2024spe017>

- [20] Ruwanika, E. Q. F., & Massyn, L. (2024). A leadership competence framework for sustainable development in the manufacturing industry in a developing country context: the bicycle metaphor. *Cogent Business & Management*, 11(1), 2364849. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311975.2024.2364849>
- [21] Salameh-Ayanian, M., Lakkis, P., Jabbour Al Maalouf, N., & Makki, M. (2025). Leading Through Uncertainty: How Transformational and Transactional Leadership Shape Employee Satisfaction and Performance in Lebanese NGOs. *Administrative Sciences*, 15(5), 172. <https://doi.org/10.3390/admsci15050172>
- [22] Schiuma, G., Santarsiero, F., Carlucci, D., & Jarrar, Y. (2024). Transformative leadership competencies for organizational digital transformation. *Business Horizons*, 67(4), 425–437. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bushor.2024.04.004>
- [23] Sedelius, T., Mashtaler, O., & Raunio, T. (2024). Semi-presidentialism and war: executive leadership models in Ukraine during Zelenskyi's presidency. *East European Politics*, 40(4), 658–683. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21599165.2024.2369978>
- [24] Seitz, S. M. (2023). Letting sleeping bears lie: Ukraine's cautious approach to uncertainty before the war. *Contemporary Security Policy*, 44(4), 530–543. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13523260.2023.2257966>
- [25] Shchepetynykova, L., & Oleksiyenko, A. V. (2024). What comes after post-Soviet? Towards a new concept of de-Sovietization in higher education and research. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 106, 103014. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2024.103014>
- [26] Shevtsova, O., Madestam, J., & Westerberg, A. I. (2025). Leadership during the war: Perceptions of ideal leadership among public leaders in Ukraine. *International Journal of Public Leadership*, 21(2), 109–122. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJPL-11-2024-0136>
- [27] Shevchenko, I., Lysak, O., Shyshak, A. Z., Mazur, I., Korotun, M., & Nestor, V. (2023). Digital economy in a global context: world experience. *International Journal of Professional Business Review: Int. J. Prof. Bus. Rev.*, 8(4), 11. <https://doi.org/10.26668/businessreview/2023.v8i4.1551>
- [28] Shliakhetko, V., Petrukha, N., Krupa, V., Berest, I., & Baran, I. (2024). Security issues in the formation and competition for human capital in the context of destabilisation of the European labour market. *International Journal of Services, Economics and Management*, 15(6), 677–695. <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJSEM.2024.10063835>
- [29] Singh, A., Lim, W. M., Jha, S., Kumar, S., & Ciasullo, M. V. (2023). The state of the art of strategic leadership. *Journal of Business Research*, 158, 113676. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2023.113676>
- [30] Sott, M. K., & Bender, M. S. (2025). The Role of Adaptive Leadership in Times of Crisis: A Systematic Review and Conceptual Framework. *Merits*, 5(1), 2. <https://doi.org/10.3390/merits5010002>
- [31] Stender, S., Bulkot, O., Iastremska, O., Saienko, V., & Pereguda, Y. (2024). Digital transformation of the national economy of Ukraine: challenges and opportunities. *Financial and Credit Activity Problems of Theory and Practice*, 2(55), 333–345. <https://doi.org/10.55643/fcaptp.2.55.2024.4328>
- [32] Zelenin, V. (2023). Coaching in the development of leadership qualities of heads of Ukrainian business organizations in the conditions of war. *International Journal of Professional Business Review*, 8(5): e01774. <https://doi.org/10.26668/businessreview/2023.v8i5.1774>

Appendix A

Questionnaire for respondents

Instructions:

Please rate the following statements on a scale from 1 to 5, where:

1 –completely disagree, 2 –rather disagree, 3 –difficult to answer, 4 –rather agree, 5 –completely agree.

Block 1. Emotional intelligence (EQ-i 2.0, adapted version)

1. I am aware of my own emotions when making important decisions.
2. I can easily recognize the emotions of other people in a work situation.
3. I am able to control my emotional reactions in stressful situations.
4. I can motivate myself even in crisis circumstances.
5. I create an atmosphere of trust in the team.

Block 2. Adaptability (based on the Adaptive Leadership Competencies model)

6. I respond quickly to changes in the environment.
7. I can easily adapt management approaches to new conditions.
8. I am able to find alternative solutions in unforeseen situations.
9. I support a culture of constant change and innovation in the team.
10. I consider the crisis as an opportunity for organizational development.

Block 3. Communicative tolerance (adapted Boyko scale)

11. I am open to different points of view even in case of disagreement.
12. I avoid biased attitudes towards employees.
13. I facilitate constructive dialog during conflicts.
14. I am ready to listen to my subordinates, even if their suggestions contradict my own.
15. I respect cultural and social differences in the team.

Block 4. Strategic thinking

16. I predict possible risks before making decisions.
17. I form a long-term vision of the organization's development.
18. I take into account global trends when planning activities.
19. I am able to combine short-term goals with long-term goals.
20. I develop several development scenarios for the organization.

Block 5. Organizational resilience (Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale, adapted version)

21. Our organization remains effective even in times of crisis.
22. We mobilize resources quickly in crisis situations.
23. We are able to recover from setbacks and continue to develop.
24. Our organization has effective crisis management systems.
25. We know how to keep our team motivated even in difficult conditions.

Block 6. Innovative development (Innovation Climate Scale, adapted version)

26. Our organization supports employee initiatives.
27. We actively introduce new technologies and practices.
28. Management encourages experimentation and innovative solutions.
29. We have the resources to implement innovative projects.
30. Innovation is considered a key factor in our competitiveness.

Social and demographic issues

Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Other

Age: ____ years

Position: ☐ Director/top manager ☐ Head of department ☐ Other

Management experience: ____ years

Region: ☐ Kyiv ☐ Lviv ☐ Dnipro ☐ Other