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INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITY: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR UKRAINE

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Piankova O., Ralko O., Lugova K.,

Nazarova M., Rula O.

INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITY: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR UKRAINE

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Authors:
Piankova Oksana – Ph.D. (in Economics), Associate Professor of International Management Department, State University of Trade and Economics, ORCID: http://orcid.org/0000-0002-7491-6543
Ralko Oleksandra – Ph.D. (in Economics), Associate Professor of Administrative Management and International Activity Department, National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine, ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3634-6770
Lugova Kateryna – Master's student at the Albert Ludwig University of Freiburg, majoring in Business Administration with a specialization in Public and Non-Profit Management, ORCID: http://orcid.org/0000-0001-8549-3024
Nazarova Mariia – Master's student at State University of Trade and Economics
Rula Oleksandra – Bachelor's student at State University of Trade and Economics, ORCID: http://orcid.org/0000-0002-6520-0340

Reviewers:
Basuyk Dariya – Dr.hab. (in Economics), Professor of Administrative Management and International Activity Department, National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine ,ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7935-1094
Kolesnyk Maksym – Ph.D. (in Economics), Associate Professor of Enterprises International Activity Department, The State University "Kyiv Aviation Institute" ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0814-4220

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SUMMARY

The monograph is devoted to challenges and opportunities in international activity for Ukrainian business. In the modern economy, international activity serves as both a catalyst for national development and a test of economic resilience. For Ukraine, whose economy depends significantly on exports - particularly agricultural and industrial products - international engagement represents a central way for growth, modernization, and integration into global value chains. However, the rapidly changing international environment presents a complex combination of challenges and opportunities that require adaptive strategies, institutional flexibility, and innovative approaches to economic management.

The first chapter of this monograph is devoted to crisis management frameworks for export-oriented enterprises: challenges and solutions. The ongoing geopolitical instability, shifting trade alliances, and recurring global crises have underscored the necessity of effective crisis management in export-oriented enterprises. Ukrainian business must operate within conditions of heightened uncertainty, ranging from disrupted logistics and currency volatility to market access restrictions. In this context, crisis management is not merely a defensive tool, but a strategic capability that enables enterprises to anticipate risks, ensure operational continuity, and seize emerging market opportunities. Strengthening managerial competence, improving financial resilience, and fostering strategic adaptability are therefore essential to maintaining competitiveness within the global market.

The second chapter of this monograph is devoted to women's export-oriented entrepreneurship: the economic front. Another vital dimension of Ukraine’s international activity is the growing significance of women’s export-oriented entrepreneurship. Women entrepreneurs have increasingly become agents of innovation, diversification, and sustainable development, particularly within agriculture and small and medium-sized enterprises. Their active participation contributes to social inclusion, employment generation, and community resilience - factors that collectively enhance Ukraine’s economic stability.

The third chapter of this monograph is devoted to international activity in the context of trade wars: opportunities and challenges for Ukraine. The escalation of trade wars and protectionist policies has also redefined the structure of global commerce, compelling Ukraine to reassess its trade priorities and explore new partnerships. While such conflicts disrupt traditional export routes and create market instability, they simultaneously open opportunities for diversification toward Asia, Africa, and other emerging regions. By reorienting its trade strategy, improving logistics infrastructure, and enhancing product competitiveness, Ukraine can transform global uncertainty into a platform for innovation and expansion.

The forth chapter of this monograph is devoted to international activity of agricultural enterprises in Ukraine. At the heart of Ukraine's international engagement lies the agricultural sector, a cornerstone of both national and global food security. Ukrainian agricultural enterprises continue to demonstrate remarkable resilience despite conflict-related disruptions and logistical challenges. Through diversification of export products, adoption of digital technologies, and participation in international cooperation initiatives, the sector is gradually transitioning from a resource-based model to one grounded in innovation and sustainability. This transformation not only enhances Ukraine's competitiveness but also contributes to achieving broader global objectives related to sustainable food systems and climate adaptation.

Keywords: crisis management, export-oriented enterprises, women's export-oriented entrepreneurship, international activity, agricultural enterprises, trade wars.

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INTRODUCTION

Researching international business activity at the country level is essential for understanding the multifaceted ways in which cross-border trade, foreign direct investment, technological diffusion, and participation in global value chains influence national competitiveness, structural modernization, and long-term economic growth. For Ukraine, such research is particularly important given the country's ongoing integration with the EU, its strategic role in global agricultural and industrial markets, and the need to strengthen economic resilience amid wartime disruptions and geopolitical instability. It illuminates how external economic relations shape productivity dynamics, labour market development, innovation capacity, and the strategic positioning of Ukraine within the global economic system, while also revealing vulnerabilities related to trade blockades, shifting logistics routes, and dependence on specific foreign markets. On this analytical foundation, the Ukrainian government can formulate coherent and evidence-based strategies aimed at strengthening export potential, diversifying markets, fostering high-value-added production, enhancing investment attractiveness, and building a more adaptable, resilient, and globally integrated national economy.

The phenomenon of crisis management has thus acquired exceptional significance for Ukrainian enterprises engaged in international economic activity, particularly in the context of heightened geopolitical instability and profound structural transformations in global markets. In an era defined by unpredictable political conflicts, recurrent security threats, economic sanctions, volatile consumer demand, and intensifying environmental and logistical risks, the development and implementation of effective crisis management strategies have become indispensable for preserving competitiveness, operational stability, and long-term viability. For export-oriented enterprises, the capacity to anticipate emerging risks, diversify market geography, secure alternative supply chains, and swiftly adjust to rapidly changing trade regulations and transportation conditions determines not only immediate business performance, but also the potential for sustained growth and strategic development. Within this framework, crisis management extends far beyond reactive decision-making and encompasses a wide spectrum of proactive measures, including strategic planning grounded in scenario modelling, the creation of financial safety buffers, comprehensive forecasting of economic and geopolitical risks, and the cultivation of organizational flexibility capable of ensuring uninterrupted functioning under adverse conditions. These components collectively enable enterprises to reduce their vulnerability to external shocks, maintain their participation in global value chains, and reinforce their strategic position in international markets. For Ukrainian businesses operating under the pressures of war and global uncertainty, crisis management becomes not merely a managerial tool but a critical precondition for resilience, adaptability, and the preservation of international economic integration.

At the same time, the intensification of global trade wars and the growing prevalence of protectionist measures have substantially reshaped the architecture of international economic relations, creating a complex mix of challenges and new strategic openings for Ukraine's international activity. Escalating trade conflicts among major global economic powers - most notably the United States, China, and the European Union - have disrupted established supply chains, reconfigured global demand patterns, and increased uncertainty within world markets. These geopolitical and economic tensions have forced Ukrainian enterprises to reassess their traditional trade orientations, seek out alternative market niches, and strengthen cooperation with new trade partners in order to reduce dependence on any single economic bloc. For Ukraine, such instability poses significant risks to the predictability and continuity of export operations, particularly in key sectors such as agriculture, metallurgy, and manufacturing, which rely heavily on access to foreign markets. Nevertheless, these disruptions simultaneously present favourable conditions for expanding Ukraine's presence in rapidly developing regions, including Southeast and South Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, and the Middle East, where demand for food products, raw materials, and technological goods is steadily increasing. The successful exploitation of these emerging opportunities depends largely on the ability of Ukrainian enterprises to implement adaptive crisis-management mechanisms, diversify export portfolios, and effectively navigate fluctuating trade regulations and competitive environments. Equally decisive is the role of governmental institutions in supporting export-oriented businesses through diplomatic engagement, trade facilitation, and integration into international platforms that enhance market access. Strengthened state support—combined with private-sector agility—can help Ukraine position itself more favourably within evolving global value chains and mitigate the negative effects of intensified trade rivalries. Ultimately, the capacity to align national export strategies with the rapidly changing realities of global trade will determine Ukraine’s long-term competitiveness and resilience within the international economic system.

An increasingly important and transformative dimension of Ukraine’s integration into the global economy is the rise of women’s export-oriented entrepreneurship, which has become a vital contributor to the country’s international competitiveness, especially under the extraordinary conditions created by russia’s full-scale war. Women-led enterprises are assuming a growing role in export diversification, technological innovation, and the development of sustainable business models, thereby strengthening Ukraine’s capacity to withstand external shocks and maintain economic activity despite wartime disruptions. Their expanding participation enhances the resilience and adaptability of the national economy by promoting inclusive growth, reinforcing social cohesion, and stimulating new forms of economic creativity in sectors ranging from agriculture and food processing to information technologies, creative industries, and professional services. The war has amplified the significance of women’s entrepreneurial leadership: in many communities, women have become primary economic actors due to displacement, mobilization of male workforce, and the need to rebuild local production systems under conditions of uncertainty. At the same time, female entrepreneurs are contributing actively to the reconfiguration of Ukraine’s export geography by entering new markets, participating in international acceleration programs, and integrating into global value chains that support the country’s economic recovery. Their engagement demonstrates not only personal resilience, but also the strategic importance of leveraging women's economic potential in times of national crisis. Nonetheless, women-led enterprises continue to face structural and systemic barriers that limit their activity. These obstacles include constrained access to financial resources - intensified further by wartime credit risks - insufficient infrastructure, limited availability of training in business practices, and restricted entry into networks of suppliers, investors, and buyers. For many women, additional burdens such as care responsibilities, displacement, and security challenges impose further limitations on entrepreneurial activity during the war. Promoting women's active involvement in economic life is therefore not only a matter of achieving gender equality, but also a strategic economic priority for Ukraine. Expanding support mechanisms - such as targeted financing, export promotion programs, digital trade tools, and international partnerships - can significantly enhance the contribution of women-led enterprises to national reconstruction and global integration. In this context, empowering women in entrepreneurship becomes a key element of Ukraine's broader strategy to strengthen economic resilience, diversify international trade, and position itself more competitively within the post-war global economy.

The international activity of agricultural enterprises in Ukraine has become increasingly multifaceted, encompassing not only traditional commodity exports, but also the adoption of advanced technologies, participation in global supply chains, and cooperation with international organizations. Ukrainian agricultural enterprises are diversifying their export portfolios, introducing high-value-added products, and investing in processing industries that strengthen their competitive advantages. In addition, partnerships with international investors and trade alliances with the European Union and other global actors are enabling Ukrainian enterprises to integrate more deeply into the world economy. Nevertheless, the ongoing conflict with russia, disruptions in the Black Sea trade routes, and the pressures of global trade realignments continue to test the resilience of Ukraine's agricultural export system. Export-oriented enterprises, particularly those operating in agriculture, serve as critical drivers of economic growth, employment, and innovation. For Ukraine, whose economy is deeply integrated into global trade networks, the agricultural sector occupies a strategic position, contributing substantially to national income and forming the backbone of its export potential. The country's fertile soil, favorable climate conditions, and accumulated expertise in crop production have established Ukraine as one of the leading suppliers of grains, oilseeds, and other agricultural commodities to the world market. However, the increasingly volatile global environment - marked by geopolitical tensions, trade wars, and supply chain disruptions - poses significant challenges to the stability and long-term sustainability of these export-oriented enterprises.

In this context, the intersection of crisis management, women's entrepreneurship, international activity shaped by ongoing trade wars, and the development of agricultural enterprises constitutes a multifaceted and strategically important field of analysis for Ukraine's economic trajectory. These dimensions do not operate in isolation; rather, they form an interconnected system in which pressures or advancements in one sphere reverberate across others. The ability of enterprises to navigate crises is directly linked to the structure of global markets, the inclusiveness of entrepreneurial ecosystems, and the competitiveness of core sectors such as agriculture. Likewise, the participation of women in export-oriented entrepreneurship contributes not only to greater social equity but also to expanding the country's export diversification and strengthening its long-term economic adaptability - factors that become especially critical under the dual conditions of war and global economic fragmentation.

Understanding the interdependence among these factors is essential for constructing a comprehensive framework of economic resilience and competitiveness for Ukraine. Crisis management mechanisms enhance the capacity of enterprises to withstand logistical disruptions, price volatility, and geopolitical risks. Women's entrepreneurial activity introduces new business models, fosters innovative approaches to market expansion, and strengthens community-level economic recovery, particularly in regions affected by military aggression. International activity, when strategically oriented toward diversifying markets and reducing dependency on vulnerable trade routes, mitigates the adverse effects of global trade wars while unlocking new opportunities in emerging markets. The agricultural sector - long a cornerstone of Ukraine's export structure - requires continuous technological upgrading, institutional support, and international market access to maintain its position in the global food system during and after wartime disruptions.

Strengthening crisis management capabilities, supporting women-led entrepreneurial initiatives, diversifying Ukraine's export geography, and enhancing the technological and institutional capacity of agricultural enterprises are therefore integral components of a sustainable strategy for Ukraine's integration into the global economy. Implementing these measures fosters greater economic stability, accelerates post-war reconstruction, and enhances the country's ability to respond to external shocks. Collectively, these processes contribute to reinforcing Ukraine's role as a leading and reliable participant in international markets, while simultaneously building a resilient and adaptive economic system capable of sustaining growth amid prolonged uncertainty and global transformation.

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Chapter 1. Crisis management frameworks for export-oriented enterprises: challenges and solutions

The activities of any business entity are influenced by a multitude of determinants that can potentially cause a crisis situation that can worsen its performance. Therefore, the high probability of a crisis occurring at an export-oriented enterprise necessitates the implementation of specialized crisis management.

For effective crisis management in practice, analysis methods are used that allow for the assessment of risks, financial condition, and forecasting of future development trends with minimal costs, and a number of crisis management methods are applied.

The problem of crisis management is the subject of research by many scientists, and a number of works by domestic and foreign economists are devoted to this issue, primarily V.R. Sidenko, Yu.G. Kozak, N.M. Tiurina, N.S. Karvatskaia, T.V. Nazarchuk, K.O. Batsura, T.O. Pogorelova, B.S. Vatchenko, R.S. Sharanova, O.V. Yurinec, and others [1-21].

The relevance of anti-crisis management issues for domestic enterprises, especially export-oriented ones, is extremely high, since its approaches can be used to determine which methods from the anti-crisis management arsenal will be needed by a particular enterprise.

Any enterprise engaged in international trade outside its country is considered an exporter. In general, exporting enterprises are enterprises that specialize in exporting goods or services to international markets [1]. They cooperate with manufacturers, suppliers, distributors, and other enterprises to sell their products or services abroad.

Exporting companies can be involved in all aspects of the export process, including production, packaging, delivery, and customs clearance. They must be highly skilled in researching foreign markets, translation, and legal support, and be able to quickly navigate complex situations and crises in international trade.

Export activity, as a type of foreign economic activity, is an indisputable factor in the success of industrial enterprises. Export operations are an important prerequisite for expanding sales markets, increasing production volumes, and improving product quality, which also creates a favorable basis for strengthening the competitive position of an enterprise in the domestic market [2].

The size of exporting companies can vary from small enterprises focused on market niches to large transnational corporations with a global presence. Some exporting enterprises may specialize in specific industries, such as technology or agriculture, while others may offer a wide range of products and services.

The success of exporting companies depends on their ability to identify and exploit opportunities in foreign markets, respond quickly to crises, and manage the logistical and regulatory challenges of international trade. Effective communication and cultural sensitivity are also important skills that export companies must possess, as they must overcome mental and language barriers, be flexible, and take into account the peculiarities of doing business in different countries.

Companies planning to start operating in a foreign market must meet a number of criteria, depending on the market they are considering, as the markets of the European Union and, for example, the Asian region are completely different, with varying degrees of complexity of penetration and the demands of potential customers. Before starting the process of entering a particular international market, it is recommended to research the criteria for the goods to be sold, the market niche, and have answers to a number of questions that are likely to be of interest to potential partners. These include

1. Is the product already successful in the domestic market or in other countries?

2. Does the company have sufficient human, time, financial, and legal resources?

3. Does the company have a comprehensive financial/marketing/business plan with clearly defined goals for supporting exports to foreign markets?

4. Does the company have a specific strategy for exporting the product to the selected market?

5. Does the company have the potential and experience to adapt its product to cultural preferences or different technical standards? [3]

Exporting companies can also participate in international trade through various means, such as exporting, licensing, franchising, joint ventures, and foreign direct investment. Each method has its advantages and disadvantages, and the choice of mode depends on the company's resources, objectives, and risk appetite.

Exporting companies must comply with various rules and standards established by both exporting and importing countries. When entering the international market, customs barriers, tariffs, and other trade restrictions established by countries participating in international trade can often be a risk factor. Product safety standards, labeling requirements, and intellectual property laws are also important factors. Exporting companies must ensure that their products or services comply with these regulations and standards to avoid fines and legal disputes. Effective market research and localization strategies are important for exporting companies to successfully enter and compete in foreign markets.

However, exporting companies enjoy significant benefits, such as:

– Increased demand for goods many potential consumers are located outside the exporter's country, and entering international markets provides access to these consumers, thereby expanding the business;

– International markets are becoming more accessible to both producers and consumers the internet, improved logistics channels, free trade agreements, e-commerce, and other factors are making exports more accessible and open, and this applies not only to giant companies but also to small ones that are just starting their activities;

– Profitability increases exporting can be profitable for businesses of all sizes. On average, sales grow faster, more jobs are created, and employees earn more than in companies that only operate in the domestic market.

– Increased competitive advantage companies that export their products occupy new market niches, thereby not only creating competition for companies in the importing country, but also increasing their own penetration of the niche and offering consumers even higher quality products or services.

– Reduced risks most exporting companies find it easier to overcome internal fluctuations in the economy of their country of origin and are more likely to remain in business even after significant crises [4].

Exporting companies play an important role in promoting economic growth and development in both exporting and importing countries. By creating new markets and expanding trade relations, exporting companies can create employment opportunities, stimulate innovation, and increase the flow of goods and services across borders.

Overall, exporting can be a great way for companies to grow their business and increase profits, but it requires careful planning, preparation, and execution.

A crisis in the work of enterprises or entire states and economies is not a coincidence, but a consequence of the work of the management apparatus of the above-mentioned entities. However, not all factors that influence the emergence of crisis situations can be controlled. To prevent the spread of crisis phenomena to enterprises and stop them, specialists use anti-crisis management strategies.

Crisis management is a process- and strategy-based approach to identifying and responding to threats, unforeseen events, or any negative disruptions that could potentially harm people, property, or business processes. To be prepared for the possibility that a random event could become a crisis, a crisis management plan is needed [5].

Crises can arise at any time, with or without warning, and can take many forms. In addition to any immediate threat to people, property, and processes, crises and critical emergencies often have unpredictable and cascading effects on employee morale, brand reputation, customer satisfaction, and even the supply chain. A crisis at one individual company can trigger a crisis process across the entire market, and vice versa.

The most well-known approach to categorizing the factors that cause a crisis is to divide them into two groups external factors and internal factors.

Internal factors that cause a crisis include:

– negative trends in the development of the industry;

– monopolization of the market for the goods produced by the enterprise;

– costs exceeding the selling price of products;

– unfavorable attitude of stakeholders;

– development of the enterprise according to traditional but ineffective strategies;

– changes in the surrounding environment.

Internal factors that cause a crisis include factors caused by internal problems of the enterprise

– changes in industry trends that the enterprise has not kept track of;

– loss of competitive advantages;

– ineffective development strategy;

– differences in approaches to business development between owners and management;

– internal conflicts;

– delayed response to competitors' actions;

– unjustified risk of bringing new products to market;

– ineffective implementation of investment and/or innovation projects, etc. [6].

In addition, crisis situations in the export market and exporting companies can arise due to a number of factors, including economic, political, social, or environmental factors. Some examples of such crisis situations include:

1. Economic downturns. Economic downturns or slowdowns can lead to a decline in demand for exports, as consumers and businesses may cut back on their spending.

2. Trade barriers. The introduction of tariffs, quotas, or other trade barriers may restrict exports and make them less competitive in foreign markets.

3. Trade wars. A set of actions (economic, fiscal, administrative) to achieve the desired status and balance in trade relations with other countries or countries/trade blocs [7].

4. Competition from other exporters in the same market may affect export demand and make it difficult to sell goods at competitive prices.

5. Political instability changes in government, civil unrest, or conflicts can disrupt supply chains and damage relationships with trading partners.

6. Natural disasters such as earthquakes, hurricanes, or floods, can damage infrastructure and disrupt supply chains, leading to delays and losses for exporters.

7. Public health crises. Global pandemics can lead to trade disruptions, travel restrictions, and reduced demand for exports.

8. Currency fluctuations. Changes in exchange rates can affect the competitiveness of exports and the profitability of exporters.

9. Environmental issues. Environmental regulations or disasters such as oil spills or industrial accidents can affect the reputation and sales of exporters in foreign markets.

10. Global economic conditions: recessions, exchange rate fluctuations, and changes in commodity prices can affect demand for imported goods and adjust exporters' profitability.

11. War and escalating military conflicts any war causes incredible economic and social damage to international market niches, economies, businesses, their staff, beneficiaries, and consumers. In addition, it causes serious changes in the level of supply and demand for certain goods.

To mitigate these crisis situations, exporters can take measures such as diversifying their markets, building strong relationships with trading partners, investing in risk management strategies, and staying abreast of global economic and political developments.

There are several well-known examples of the impact of such factors on export markets, which are discussed in Table 1.

Table 1. Examples of the impact of crisis factors on global exports

Crisis factor	Explanation of the phenomenon	Example
Economic downturns	Economic downturns or slowdowns in foreign markets can lead to a decline in demand for exports, as consumers and businesses may cut back on their spending.	For example, during the global financial crisis of 2008-2009, many countries experienced a decline in demand for exports.
Trade barriers	The introduction of tariffs, quotas, or other trade barriers can restrict exports and make them less competitive in foreign markets.	For example, in 2018, the United States imposed tariffs on steel and aluminum imports from various countries, including China, which led to retaliatory tariffs and disruptions in global trade.
Political instability	Changes in government, civil unrest, or conflicts can disrupt supply chains and damage relationships with trading partners.	For example, the ongoing conflict in Syria has led to disruptions in trade with neighboring countries, affecting the export market.
Natural disasters	Such as earthquakes, hurricanes, or floods can damage infrastructure and disrupt supply chains, leading to delays and losses for exporters.	For example, the 2011 earthquake and tsunami in Japan disrupted the country's exports, particularly in the automotive and electronics industries.
Public health crises	Global pandemics, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, can lead to trade disruptions, travel restrictions, and reduced demand for exports.	For example, the pandemic has disrupted global supply chains, affecting the export market for many industries.

Continuation of Table 1.

Currency fluctuations	Changes in exchange rates can affect the competitiveness of exports as well as the profitability of exporters.	For example, when the value of the Japanese yen rose sharply in 2011, it made Japanese exports more expensive and less competitive in foreign markets.
Wars	A war-induced crisis is global in nature, affecting not only companies in the country where the fighting is taking place, but also all of its other external partners.	For example, the full-scale war between Russia and Ukraine has led to the destruction of many key export flows, the destruction of enterprises, and the restructuring of international trade relations.

Source compiled by the author based on sources [1-8]

The consequences of the crisis on the export market can be significant for exporting companies. Potential consequences include:

– Loss of income. If demand for exports declines due to the crisis, exporting companies may experience a significant loss of income. This can affect the entire company, impacting its ability to invest in research and development, hire new employees, or pay dividends to shareholders.

– Disruption of supply chains. A crisis in the export market can also lead to disruptions in supply chains, making it difficult for exporting companies to obtain the raw materials or finished products they need for production. This can lead to delays, increased costs, and reduced quality, which can affect the company's competitiveness in the market.

– Decreased profitability. In addition to lost profits, a crisis in the export market can also lead to a decline in the profitability of exporting companies. For example, if the crisis leads to higher tariffs or other trade barriers, exporting companies may need to lower their prices to remain competitive, which can affect their profits.

– Reputational damage. A crisis in the export market can also damage a company's reputation, especially if it is perceived as responsible for the crisis. This can affect its ability to attract customers, partners, and investors, and can be difficult to repair.

– Legal and regulatory consequences. In some cases, a crisis in the export market may lead to legal or regulatory consequences for exporting companies. For example, if a company is found to be in violation of trade agreements or regulations, it may be subject to fines or other penalties, which could further impact its financial performance.

To mitigate these consequences, exporting companies should have contingency plans in place to manage potential crises, including diversifying their markets, building strong relationships with trading partners, and investing in risk management strategies. They should also stay informed about economic, political, and environmental factors that could affect the export market and be prepared to adjust their strategies accordingly.

In general, it is important for exporters to be aware of these factors and have contingency plans in place to deal with crises when they arise. This may include diversifying their markets, building strong relationships with trading partners, investing in risk management strategies, and staying informed about global economic and political developments.

Companies engaged in international trade are very sensitive to external factors and market changes. Although exporting is a risky and crisis-prone activity, little is known about the behavior of exporting companies in crisis planning.

There are countless reasons why every business should have a crisis management plan. Let's look at some of the most important ones:

– A crisis management plan helps save the company's reputation among customers, competing brands and companies, as well as other industry leaders.

– A developed action algorithm ensures the mental and physical well-being of all employees of the company.

– Having a reliable crisis management plan can help you run your business more calmly, focusing on successful work in this particular niche, because you will know that the company is ready for any situation.

– It is also important to have a crisis management plan, as it delegates responsibility, because in the event of a real crisis, everyone will understand their role in the situation.

Among the basic principles on which any crisis management system should be based are:

1) early diagnosis of crisis phenomena;
2) timely response to crisis phenomena;
3) adequacy of the enterprise's response to the degree of real threat to its activities;
4) mobilization of internal potential to overcome the crisis;
5) ensuring control over the results of the actions taken.

Figure 1 shows that management experts generally divide crisis management into four stages analysis, preparation, response, and recovery.

Figure 1. Key stages of crisis management

Source compiled by the author based on [9]

At the analysis stage, the company reviews its approach to risk management, level of preparedness, and approach to incident management. This provides an opportunity to understand what is considered a crisis and how they will deal with it.

This process also determines whether local crisis planning is needed due to operational activities or global impact [10].

Crisis preparedness is the most labor-intensive stage, as it brings together all the information gathered in the first stage and determines the planning and management structure that the company will use during a crisis. Plans should be based on the risks the company is considering and should clearly define the organizational definition of a “crisis”, a clearly defined escalation process, roles and responsibilities, crisis response actions, and post-incident actions.

The response to a crisis situation may be short-term (depending on the crisis event) or may be long-term, so it is important to consider the mental and physical condition of the company's employees. The personnel directly involved in incident management may change and, in general, will be reduced when the situation normalizes or diminishes, but flexibility is required and, if necessary, additional resources may be needed even if the situation improves. The response phase ends when normal activities resume.

The recovery phase should never be rushed, except in cases involving safety and operational capabilities. Companies must recognize that emotional recovery can be a long process, and some will never fully recover from the trauma they experienced during the crisis, and this must be taken into account.

The main components of any crisis management system are:

– Risk management. The first step in crisis management is to identify potential risks and take measures to minimize their impact. Risk management involves analyzing the organization's environment, identifying potential risks, and developing risk mitigation strategies.

– Crisis communication. Crisis communication involves effective communication with stakeholders during a crisis. The main goal of crisis communication is to provide accurate and timely information to stakeholders, including employees, customers, suppliers, and the public.

– Financial management. During a crisis, financial management becomes critical to the survival of the organization. Effective financial management involves analyzing the organization's financial situation, developing a cash flow management plan, and identifying potential sources of funding.

– Restructuring. Restructuring involves making significant changes to the organization's structure, processes, and operations to overcome the crisis. This may include downsizing, reorganizing departments, and changing the organization's strategy.

– Innovation. This involves developing new products, services, or business models to adapt to a changing environment. Innovation can help organizations find new ways of operating and generating revenue during a crisis.

– Stakeholder management. Effective stakeholder management is crucial during a crisis. This involves identifying the organization's stakeholders, understanding their needs and concerns, and developing strategies to manage their expectations.

In general, crisis management at all levels, including exporting companies, requires a multidisciplinary approach that covers all aspects of the organization, including financial, operational, and strategic management. Successful crisis management requires a clear understanding of the organization's environment, risks, and stakeholders, as well as the ability to adapt quickly to changing circumstances.

Therefore, companies engaged in export activities must have a crisis management plan, as they are very sensitive to market changes and external factors, and exporting is a risky and crisis-prone activity. A crisis management plan can help a company save its reputation among customers, ensure the mental and physical well-being of all employees, and focus on successful work in a specific niche, as the company will be prepared for any situation.

After conducting a complete diagnosis, identifying the causes, available resources, and the scale of the crisis, the exporting company should create strategic long-term and short-term plans to overcome the crisis and mitigate its consequences. The literature reviewed contains a number of different methodological provisions and recommendations for choosing an anti-crisis management strategy. There are three possible methods of managing a company that has fallen into a crisis situation active anti-crisis management, reactive anti-crisis management, and interactive anti-crisis management.

First, it is appropriate to consider active crisis management as a method of crisis management that involves taking proactive measures to prevent a crisis from occurring or to mitigate its consequences if it does occur. This approach focuses on identifying potential risks and implementing strategies to minimize their impact before a crisis occurs, rather than simply responding to a crisis after it has occurred.

Active crisis management involves a number of steps, including:

– Risk assessment this involves identifying potential risks, their likelihood, and their impact on the organization;

– Risk management this involves implementing strategies to minimize the impact of identified risks;

– Crisis planning involves developing a plan for dealing with crisis situations.

– Training and simulation exercises this includes training employees and conducting simulation exercises to prepare for potential crises;

– Continuous monitoring and review this involves continuously monitoring the organization's environment for potential risks and reviewing and updating the crisis management plan as necessary.

In general, active crisis management is a proactive approach to crisis management aimed at minimizing the impact of a crisis on an organization. By identifying potential risks and implementing strategies to mitigate their impact, organizations can be better prepared to respond to crises and protect their reputation, operations, and stakeholders.

The next methodological approach is reactive crisis management in a company - a crisis management method that involves responding to a crisis after it has occurred. This approach aims to manage the immediate impact of the crisis and minimize the damage it causes.

The stages of reactive crisis management in an enterprise include:

– Immediate response: the first step in reactive crisis management is to take immediate action to resolve the crisis;

– Assessment after the immediate response, the next step is to assess the scale of the crisis and its impact on the organization. This includes identifying the cause of the crisis and assessing the damage it has caused;

– Communication: effective communication is crucial during a crisis. This involves communicating with employees, customers, suppliers, and other stakeholders to provide information and updates about the crisis;

– Recovery: once the crisis has stabilized, the next step is to take steps to recover from the crisis.

– Learning and improvement: once the crisis has been resolved, it is important to conduct a post-crisis analysis to identify areas for improvement and develop strategies to prevent similar crises from occurring in the future.

Although reactive crisis management is often considered a less effective approach to crisis management than proactive crisis management, it can still be an important part of a comprehensive crisis management plan. In situations where a crisis is unpredictable or inevitable, reactive crisis management can help minimize the impact of the crisis on the organization's operations, reputation, and stakeholders.

Leading companies that operate successfully in today's market are increasingly adopting an interactive type of management. According to this type of management, forecasts of future performance indicators are used, which are constantly supplemented by studying the external environment in order to identify possible changes. Typically, this type of management uses both strategic and tactical plans based on indicators from a preliminary analysis of the enterprise's activities.

Without a clear formulation of the problems that caused the crisis in the organization, without their awareness, it is impossible to begin developing anti-crisis measures for the organization. The next stages are related to the implementation of the anti-crisis strategy, evaluation, and control of results. Tactical (operational) measures to overcome the economic crisis may include the following cost reduction, closure of divisions, staff reduction, reduction of production and sales volumes, active marketing research, increase in product prices, identification and use of internal reserves, modernization, attraction of specialists, obtaining loans, strengthening discipline, etc. Tactical planning should be carried out within the framework of the chosen strategy. If operational measures to overcome the economic crisis are implemented in isolation from strategic goals, this may lead to a short-term improvement in the financial situation, but will not eliminate the root causes of the crisis.

The reality for many organizations is that they can achieve the optimal combination of structure, culture, and skills necessary for successful operation. The structure of an organization largely determines its ability to respond to changes in the environment. During the implementation of the anti-crisis strategy, senior management may revise the plan for implementing the new strategy if circumstances require it. The final stage of anti-crisis strategic management is the evaluation and control of strategy implementation. It aims to determine the extent to which the implementation of the strategy leads to the achievement of the organization's goals. If the organization monitors the emergence of external threats in a timely manner and has sufficient time to develop an effective response, it can consistently eliminate all problems. The implementation of an anti-crisis strategy is most effective when it is combined with an already adapted structure and is subject to a balanced system of goals. Bringing in outside experts can be a big help in implementing a crisis management strategy. These experts can be outside consultants, new managers who have previously worked in other organizations, and others. Thus, overcoming a crisis involves eliminating the causes that caused it, and the process of planning this recovery can be called strategy and tactics in crisis management. Therefore, for an organization of any form of ownership and any scale of economic activity, it is essential to manage economic activity, define a strategy, and plan. The main components of managing the development of an organization are forming a vision, identifying goals and objectives, defining a strategy, developing development plans, and establishing appropriate leadership.

The practical aspect of crisis management in a state of war deserves special attention. After all, military action is one of the most unexpected and severe factors that can trigger a crisis. Ukrainian exporting companies specialize in several key industries that have been severely affected by the consequences of the war, namely agriculture (mining of fields, illegal export of crops and equipment from occupied territories, logistics crisis), metallurgy and chemical industry (energy shortages, danger in frontline regions, and logistics problems). These industries account for a significant share of Ukrainian exports and are important drivers of the economy.

In addition to the consequences shown in Figure 2, Ukrainian exporting companies faced a number of challenges due to the war, which caused significant damage and losses. One of the most significant problems in organizing foreign trade operations during the war is the instability of the security situation in the country. Other negative factors, such as outdated infrastructure that has suffered even greater destruction, poor road networks, unreliable power supply, and the constant threat of shelling, have a negative impact on businesses and the economy as a whole. All of this increases the cost and complexity of exports, thereby reducing the competitiveness of Ukrainian producers in international markets.

Figure. 2. Consequences of a full-scale invasion in 2022 for Ukrainian exporting companies

Source: summarized by the author on the basis [12-21]

According to official data provided by the Ministry of Economy of Ukraine, the outbreak of the full-scale invasion by the russian federation produced an immediate and dramatic disruption of the country's foreign trade flows. In March 2022, exports of Ukrainian goods declined by approximately 50 percent compared with pre-invasion levels, while imports experienced an even more severe contraction, falling to less than one-third of their previous volume [12] (Table 2).

Table 2. Indicators of Ukraine's international activity in 2013-2024

Year	*Exports*		*Imports*	
	thousand US dollars	as % of previous year	thousand US dollars	as a % of previous year
2013	62305927.3	91.9	75,834,614.1	91.2
2014	53901689.1	86.5	54,428,716.9	71.8
2015	38,127,149.7	70.7	37,516,443.0	68.9
2016	36,361,711.2	95.4	39,249,779.2	104.6
2017	43,264,736.0	119.0	49607173.9	126.4
2018	47,334,987.0	109.4	57,187,578.0	115.3
2019	50054605.8	105.7	60800173.1	106.3
2020	49191824.5	98.3	54336136.7	89.4
2021	68072328.8	138.4	72843126.6	134.1
2022	44148774.6	64.9	55273492.5	75.9
2023	36186200	82	63562400	114,9
2024	41733100	115,3	70751200	111,3

Source created by the author based on data [13]

This unprecedented collapse reflected not only the direct consequences of active hostilities - such as the destruction of transport infrastructure, the blockade of seaports, and the temporary loss of access to critical industrial regions—but also the broader shock imposed on logistics networks, financial markets, and business operations across the entire economy. The abrupt reduction in trade volumes in this period marked the beginning of a profound structural transformation of Ukraine’s external economic relations, the effects of which continue to shape both export capacity and import dependency in the subsequent years of the war.

Exports in 2022 decreased by 35.1% compared to 2021 and amounted to $44.1 billion. The main factor was a 62.6% decline in exports of ferrous and non-ferrous metals. Exports of food products also fell by 15.5%, mainly due to a 26.2% decline in grain exports. However, exports of oil and oilseeds increased by 2.5%. Imports fell by 24.1% to $55.3 billion. The deficit in trade in services amounted to $9.1 billion. Exports of services fell by 12.1%, while imports increased 1.8 times [14].

The consequences of such a crisis are profound, multidimensional, and often irreversible, generating long-term - and in many cases “chronic” - disruptions in national economic systems and business operations. Unlike cyclical or market-driven downturns, a war-induced crisis produces structural damage that extends far beyond financial indicators, affecting the institutional capacity of the state, the strategic resilience of enterprises, and the socio-economic well-being of the population. Moreover, a crisis triggered by military aggression not only results in severe economic decline, loss of production capacities, destruction of infrastructure, and sharp contraction of trade flows, but also poses an immediate threat to the safety, health, and lives of workers, complicating labour relations and operational continuity.

In addition, the physical destruction of assets - industrial facilities, logistics hubs, transport networks, and energy infrastructure - significantly undermines the ability of companies to maintain stable supply chains and fulfil international obligations. Such conditions fundamentally distinguish a wartime crisis from traditional economic crises, which typically emerge from internal imbalances or global market fluctuations and do not involve existential risks to human life or the physical annihilation of productive potential.

Table 3 presents the key differences between a conventional economic crisis and a crisis caused by war, emphasizing the scale, depth, and systemic nature of wartime disruptions.

Table 3. Comparison of a traditional crisis and a crisis caused by war

Characteristics	Traditional crisis	Crisis caused by war
Scope	Local	Systemic
Rate of spread	localized after identifying the causes of the occurrence	global chain reaction
Duration	Short-term	Long-term
Danger	Absent	Present
External coordination	in peacetime only when necessary	coordinating actions with representatives of state bodies and military administration
Infrastructure availability	availability of basic infrastructure (electricity, communications, transport)	limited access, especially in frontline regions
Impact on civilians	Civilians are vulnerable to displacement, injury, and emotional distress, but the threat is often a byproduct of the event, such as a damaged building.	Civilians are often direct targets of violence and intimidation, experiencing immense trauma, high mortality rates, and forced displacement. The systematic destruction creates a crisis of “human security”.
Economic consequences	Leads to significant but often reparable economic damage, such as a financial market crash or damage to private property.	Causes catastrophic, long-term economic collapse by destroying vital infrastructure, disrupting supply chains, and seizing or eliminating productive capacity.

Continuation of Table 3.

Displacement of people	May cause internal or external displacement, but generally on a smaller and more manageable scale than war.	Causes massive, widespread, and often long-term forced migration of populations both within and beyond a country's borders, creating a humanitarian crisis.

Source created by the author based on data from [15]

This significant difference can be explained by differences related to the impact of war, its duration, and its consequences, both physical and moral. These circumstances force enterprises to look for new ways out of the crisis period and use non-traditional methods of crisis management. The latest crisis management systems and mechanisms must take these circumstances into account and find new ways to adjust the work and normal functioning of the enterprise during the war [16].

The main goal of the crisis management mechanism for a company during wartime is to minimize and suppress the negative socio-economic consequences of the war in the company's operations.

The main task of crisis management in wartime is to make operational, effective, and least risky decisions, which makes it possible to achieve the desired result, brings the moment of overcoming the crisis closer, and reduces all negative consequences. The uninterrupted operation of the enterprise is the desired result of crisis management at the beginning of the war. In the following period, the question arises of adapting and establishing a system of uninterrupted operation, even in wartime [17].

One of the main principles of crisis management in an enterprise during wartime is the principle of urgency of response. However, it should be noted that the larger the enterprise, the less flexible and slower its decision-making in such situations.

An important step at the beginning of any crisis is to analyze the current state and financial stability of the enterprise. This is done using anti-crisis diagnostic tools.

The main goal and task of this diagnostics is to assess the current situation at the enterprise, identify the causes of deviations, and prevent the emergence of new, additional crisis situations in its activities. In such a situation, for micro-enterprises, it is recommended to analyze the growth rate of revenue, sales profitability, and the availability of own working capital in goods. In small businesses, it is advisable to use the same indicators as for micro-enterprises, as well as the current liquidity ratio and the share of accounts receivable in current assets. For medium-sized enterprises, it is worth applying a comprehensive analysis of the financial and economic condition, using indicators of property condition, liquidity, solvency, business activity, and profitability. Large enterprises use a comprehensive analysis of their financial and economic condition, supplemented by models for assessing the probability of bankruptcy and an analysis of value-oriented indicators.

It is appropriate to introduce a system of continuous monitoring of the enterprise's activities, given that the situation may change rapidly under the influence of the war. This increases the chances of timely detection and localization or complete elimination of problems that could lead to serious consequences.

Therefore, organizing the work of exporting enterprises in Ukraine during the war is a complex and responsible task. Ukrainian exporting enterprises have felt the effects of the war in many key industries, such as agriculture, metallurgy, and the chemical industry. Official data show a significant decline in exports and imports in Ukraine. One of the basic principles of anti-crisis management of an enterprise in wartime is the principle of urgent response, and an important step in such a situation is the analysis of the current state and financial stability of the enterprise, which is carried out using anti-crisis diagnostics tools.

An anti-crisis strategy should be built based on the results of the above-mentioned diagnosis. This is a difficult task in conditions of war and high uncertainty, therefore, in the so-called "shock period" at the beginning of the war, the enterprise should apply urgent anti-crisis management, which literally means "immediate."

After completing the adaptation and adjustment phase, the company can apply various anti-crisis management strategies.

One of the common anti-crisis methods, especially in wartime, is downsizing — a strategy used by companies to reduce size and operating costs by eliminating jobs, departments, or entire business units. This process may include layoffs, early retirement, or natural attrition. From a crisis management perspective, downsizing can be a crucial tool for companies facing financial difficulties or other crises, particularly those caused by war. However, downsizing can also have a negative impact on the affected employees and their families, as well as on society at large. It is therefore important for companies to approach downsizing with care and caution. Downsizing is an important crisis management tool that can help companies reduce costs and restructure their operations to remain competitive even in wartime. This strategy has been forced upon many Ukrainian exporting companies. This saved many and helped them stay afloat, but as a result, we faced an increase in unemployment, as many enterprises had already been destroyed and people were forced to move to other regions, thereby increasing competition for jobs.

According to the NBU, the unemployment rate is estimated at 30%. This means that 4.7 million Ukrainians are looking for work and cannot find it. These figures include 2.7 million people outside Ukraine who want to return now and start working, and 2 million within the country [18]. Table 4 shows that this unemployment rate is almost three times higher than in 2021 and significantly exceeds all previous years.

Table 4. Unemployment rate in Ukraine from 2013 to 2024

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Unemployment rate	7.7	9.70	9.50	9.70	9.90	9.10	8.60	9.90	10.30	30	26.1	23

Since 2014 – excluding occupied territories (Crimea, Sevastopol, part of Donbas)

Source compiled by the author based on sources [18; 19] and NBU data

Another important strategy that can be applied in a crisis of martial law is outsourcing — a business strategy whereby a company hires another company to perform certain tasks, services, or processes that were previously performed within the company.

Outsourcing can be used in various areas of a company's activities, including IT services, customer service, manufacturing, and logistics. This allows companies to focus on their core competencies and strategic goals while delegating routine or non-core functions to external partners. From a crisis management perspective, outsourcing can be an effective tool for companies facing financial difficulties caused by the war. By outsourcing certain functions or processes, companies can reduce their operating costs and increase efficiency, allowing them to focus on more important areas of their business. However, outsourcing can also have potential drawbacks, including reduced control over operations and an increased risk of data leaks or intellectual property theft. It is therefore important for companies to carefully assess their outsourcing needs and partners, and to establish clear communication and oversight mechanisms to ensure the effective and efficient execution of their operations even during wartime.

An anti-crisis strategy of not prioritizing a single trading partner can be a very effective crisis management tool for businesses, especially in times of economic instability or war-induced crisis. The main idea behind this strategy is to spread risks across several trading partners instead of concentrating them in one. This means that businesses should consider working with several suppliers or customers instead of relying on one main partner. One of the advantages of this strategy is that it reduces the vulnerability of the business to risks associated with changes in market conditions, such as a drop in demand for products, changes in market prices, or the unavailability of goods from suppliers. If a business works with several partners, it can be more flexible in responding to changes in market conditions, increasing its chances of survival and success in difficult economic conditions. In addition, not prioritizing a single trading partner can help a business improve the quality of its products and services, as it will be able to use a variety of materials and resources provided by different partners.

On April 9, 2022, after the start of the full-scale invasion, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine approved a complete trade embargo on trade with the Russian Federation, and most civilized countries of the world are on the path to achieving complete energy independence from the Russian Federation [21].

Geographic diversification is an anti-crisis business strategy that involves expanding the geography of your operations, in particular, beyond your country or region, or changing your main region. This can help a company reduce risks and increase resilience to crises such as political instability, economic crisis, war, or negative market changes. One of the main advantages of geographic diversification is an increase in the potential customer base, which allows the company to earn more and expand its activities. In addition, it enables the company to find new markets that may have less competition and more demand for its products. However, geographic diversification can also create new challenges and risks. For example, a company may face difficulties in adapting to new cultural, legal, and market conditions. In addition, increasing distances between production and distribution centers can lead to higher transportation costs and delivery delays. Therefore, if a company considers geographic diversification as an anti-crisis strategy, it should conduct a detailed analysis of the markets and countries it is considering, taking into account factors such as cultural characteristics, economic indicators, political stability, competition, and other factors. Six million Ukrainian migrants in Europe created both demand and supply in the beauty industry. 75% of employees in the new salons are also from Ukraine. EU countries simplified the rules for hiring Ukrainians, which was a compelling argument for entrepreneurs.

The anti-crisis strategy of expanding/optimizing the export basket involves increasing the company's export volume by including new goods in the export basket or optimizing the range of export goods in order to increase competitiveness in the foreign market. In times of war, such a strategy can give the company advantages not only in the foreign market but also in the domestic market, as it is often worthwhile for them to focus their efforts on producing products that are different from those that were in demand in peacetime. One of the main components of the strategy is the analysis of the market and its needs, research, and the identification of the company's competitive advantage. For example, one can consider the market's needs for new products that complement the company's existing range. Next, an analysis of existing production technologies and resources should be carried out to determine the company's ability to produce new products using existing resources or based on new technologies.

Relocation (movement) can be an effective anti-crisis management strategy for companies located in unstable regions or countries with high risks, such as economic crises, political changes, natural disasters, and military actions. Unfortunately, many Ukrainian companies have had to resort to this strategy, but there is also a positive side to it, as it has, to some extent, saved their production. A striking example is the Kakhovka-based company Chumak, recently one of the largest players in the market for tomato pastes, sauces, and ketchups in Ukraine. The company exported its products not only to post-Soviet countries, but also to the US, Canada, Scandinavia, Germany, the Baltic states, Israel, West Africa, Korea, Bangladesh, and others. Currently, all of the company's production facilities in Kakhovka have been suspended, and production has been relocated to Lutsk, where tomato paste is now produced. Its mayonnaise is produced at the Zaporizhzhia-based Delta Food facility, which has been moved to Ternopil. Sauces are produced at the Olkom Group's factory in the capital. Pasta and some tomato paste are produced at factories in Turkey and Italy, respectively [28].

The usual advantages of relocation include lower labor costs, increased market accessibility, reduced exposure to negative factors affecting the business, a more stable environment for business development, and increased international presence for the company.

The transition to online work can be an effective anti-crisis management strategy, not only in the context of a pandemic and war, but also if the company needs to reduce office rental costs, reduce communication costs, increase accessibility for employees, increase productivity, reduce the impact of negative factors on the business, and ensure a more stable environment for business development.

Regularization involves the implementation of the latest approaches to enterprise management. In wartime, regularization speeds up and improves enterprise management, allowing resources to be directed towards further stable development.

Benchmarking, or the method of comparative analysis, is the process of comparing a company's performance, products, or services with those of its competitors or industry peers to identify areas for improvement and best practices. In the context of crisis management, benchmarking can be an important tool for companies facing financial difficulties or other crises. By comparing their performance with that of their competitors or industry peers, companies can identify areas where they may be lagging behind or where they have room for improvement.

In the context of crisis management, modernization can be an important tool for companies facing financial difficulties or other crises. By modernizing their operations, systems, and technologies, companies can increase their competitiveness, reduce costs, and increase revenue. Modernization can also help companies adapt to changing market conditions and customer needs, which can be crucial for companies seeking to remain relevant and sustainable in the long term. However, in the current war conditions, modernization can be complicated by the need for investment and other financial resources.

Increasing sales and profits, which is a pressing issue during wartime, can be achieved through diversification. This refers to the process of expanding a company's activities, products, or services into new markets or industries. Diversification can be achieved through various strategies, such as expanding into new geographic regions, introducing new product lines, or acquiring or merging with other companies. In wartime, companies can expand their product range by producing relevant and scarce goods. However, this method also requires significant financial resources, which can be a problem during wartime.

The desire to preserve one's business or expand its scope can be achieved through business reorganization. Reorganization is the process of restructuring a company's operations, structure, or management in order to increase efficiency, reduce costs, and adapt to changing market conditions. Reorganization can involve various aspects of a company's activities, such as its workforce, products, services, systems, or strategies. Reorganization is an important crisis management tool that can help companies improve efficiency, reduce costs, increase flexibility and adaptability, and enhance competitiveness.

Reengineering focuses on radically redesigning and rethinking business processes to improve the quality of the system's functioning. In general, it is the process of redesigning and optimizing a company's core business processes to achieve significant improvements in productivity, efficiency, and competitiveness. Reengineering can help companies achieve sustainable productivity gains, which can be critical for companies seeking to remain competitive and viable in the long term and in times of war.

Thus, crisis management uses a number of strategies to stabilize the operation of an enterprise during wartime. Downsizing is an effective strategy for reducing the size and operating costs of enterprises, while outsourcing allows companies to focus on their core competencies and delegate non-core functions to external partners. Regularization and benchmarking can also help enterprises improve their operations and remain competitive in wartime. Abandoning the prioritization of a single trading partner, geographical diversification, expansion/optimization of the export basket, relocation, and transition to online work often have related applications, and their choice depends on the specific enterprise and the conditions in which it finds itself. However, it is important to approach the application of these strategies with caution in order to minimize negative impacts and accelerate the gradual recovery of the enterprise.

Thus, when analyzing the theoretical aspects of crisis management at an exporting company in the first chapter, we came to the following conclusions. Companies engaged in foreign trade are known as exporting companies, and they can be involved in all aspects of the export process, including production, packaging, delivery, and customs clearance. The size of such enterprises can vary from small businesses to large multinational corporations. The success of exporting enterprises depends on their ability to identify and exploit opportunities in foreign markets, respond quickly to crises, and manage the logistical and regulatory challenges of international trade. Exporting companies can participate in international trade through various means, such as exporting, licensing, franchising, joint ventures, and foreign direct investment. Exporting companies must comply with various rules and standards established by both exporting and importing countries and ensure that their products comply with product safety standards, labeling requirements, and intellectual property laws.

Crises in the activities of enterprises, states, or economies are not accidental but are the result of the management apparatus of these entities. However, not all factors contributing to the emergence of crisis situations can be controlled. To prevent the spread of crises and stop them, experts use crisis management strategies. Crisis management is an approach based on the processes and strategies that organizations use to identify and respond to potential threats, unforeseen events, or any negative disruptions that could potentially harm people, property, or business processes. The most well-known approach is to divide the factors that cause crises into two groups external factors and internal factors. In addition, crisis situations in export markets and exporting companies can arise due to a number of factors, including economic, political, social, or environmental factors. Some examples of such crisis situations include economic downturns, trade barriers, trade wars, competition, political instability, natural disasters, health crises, currency fluctuations, environmental problems, the global economic situation, and wars. The impact of a crisis on export markets can be significant for exporting companies. Potential consequences include loss of revenue, supply chain disruptions, reduced profitability, reputational damage, and legal and regulatory implications. To mitigate these effects, exporting companies should have contingency plans in place to manage potential crises, including market diversification, risk management strategies, and maintaining good relationships with trading partners.

To sum up the second section, it can be noted that companies engaged in international trade must have a well-developed crisis management system, as this activity is very sensitive to external factors and market changes. Successful crisis management requires a multidisciplinary approach that covers all aspects of the organization, including financial, operational, and strategic management. The main components of any crisis management system are risk management, crisis communication, financial management, restructuring, innovation, and stakeholder management. Effective crisis management requires a clear understanding of the organization's environment, risks, and stakeholders, as well as the ability to adapt quickly to change.

As mentioned in the third chapter, the literature reviewed contains a number of different methodological provisions and recommendations regarding the choice of crisis management strategy. There are three possible methods of managing a company that has fallen into a crisis situation proactive crisis management, reactive crisis management, and interactive crisis management. Active crisis management is a crisis management method that involves taking proactive measures to prevent a crisis from occurring or to mitigate its consequences if it does occur. Reactive crisis management in an enterprise is a crisis management method that involves responding to a crisis after it has occurred. Leading enterprises that operate successfully in the modern market are increasingly adopting interactive management. According to this type of management, forecasts of future performance indicators are used, which are constantly supplemented by studying the external environment in order to identify possible changes.

War is an unexpected and harsh factor that can trigger a crisis, one can agree. Ukrainian exporting enterprises specializing in industries affected by the war have suffered significant losses and a decline in competitiveness. According to the Ministry of Economy, exports of Ukrainian goods fell by 30% and imports by 4%, while exports of goods fell by 35.1% over the past year. The consequences of such a crisis are long-term and can have a serious impact on the safety of employees and the preservation of physical assets. Therefore, it is important to understand that war can have serious consequences not only for the country's economy, but also for the lives of people and the security of the state as a whole.

The main goal of the anti-crisis management mechanism during wartime is to minimize and suppress the negative socio-economic consequences of war in the operational work of the enterprise. The main task of crisis management in wartime is to make operational, effective, and least risky decisions, which makes it possible to achieve the desired result, brings the moment of overcoming the crisis closer, and reduces all negative consequences. The uninterrupted operation of the enterprise, and, in fact, its "survival," is such a desirable result at the beginning of the war. An important step in such a situation is to analyze the current state and financial stability of the enterprise. This is done using anti-crisis diagnostic tools. It is appropriate to introduce a system of continuous monitoring of the enterprise's activities, given that the situation may change rapidly under the influence of the war. This increases the chances of timely detection and localization or complete overcoming of problems that, due to the crisis caused by the war, can lead to serious consequences. The anti-crisis strategy should be built based on the results of the above-mentioned diagnostics.

After the adaptation and adjustment phase is complete, various anti-crisis management strategies can be applied.

Crisis management uses a number of strategies to stabilize the enterprise's operations during wartime. Downsizing is an effective strategy for reducing the size and operating costs of enterprises, while outsourcing allows companies to focus on their core competencies and delegate non-core functions to external partners. Regularization and benchmarking can also help enterprises improve their operations and remain competitive in wartime. However, when choosing crisis management strategies, it is important to focus on preventing or minimizing negative impacts and ensuring the long-term stability of the exporting enterprise.

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Chapter 2. Women's export-oriented entrepreneurship: the economic front

Women embody strength, love, self-sacrifice, and courage. The role of women in the modern world has changed significantly for the better. Women are now self-sufficient, well-informed, and financially independent. The twenty-first century has brought new hope and positively expanded opportunities for women. Previously, they were under the protection of their husbands or fathers, but now they have established their own identities and independence. Education is an important key to success. The empowerment of women would be more relevant if women were well-informed and educated. Women need to understand their rights so that they can walk on equal footing with men. The role of women has changed significantly, and they have been able to make a positive impression on society. The transition from housewives to CEOs is accelerating. Modernization and the emergence of new technologies have expanded their hopes and opportunities. They have proven themselves socially, politically, and economically in almost all areas.

Women's entrepreneurship is a growing trend in both developed and developing countries. To maintain this trend, it is very important to understand the motivations and outcomes of women starting businesses in developing countries.

As a result of russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, more than 7.6 million Ukrainians have left their home country since the start of the war, forcing them to suspend their education, quit their jobs, or separate from their families and relatives. Women and children make up the majority of refugees - approximately 90% - who are fleeing the threats of war. But despite finding safety and shelter in new places, women still have to struggle to start a new life—to find decent work and suitable employment.

In this difficult situation, not only have women's homes and daily lives been destroyed, but so have their hopes and dreams for their own professional development, such as starting a business or other initiatives.

Gender policy is a set of measures, laws, programs, and political strategies aimed at ensuring equality between women and men in society. The main goal of gender policy is to eliminate gender-based discrimination, improve the socio-economic status of women, provide them with equal opportunities, include them in the decision-making process, and allow them to realize their potential.

Gender policy includes aspects such as preventing gender-based violence, improving women's education and health, creating equal conditions in the labor market, ensuring access to social services, supporting mothers and families, ensuring equal opportunities for women in politics and public life, and much more.

Gender policy recognizes that gender should not be a factor that limits a person's opportunities and social status. It seeks to create conditions in which every person has the opportunity to develop their potential and achieve success in life, regardless of gender.

Gender policy is an important component of any society that strives for equality and justice. It helps to unlock the potential of women and men, creates conditions for the development and progress of society as a whole, and contributes to the strengthening of democracy and human rights.

Gender politics is an interdisciplinary field of study that examines political science in the context of gender studies, analyzing how a person's political beliefs influence their gender identity. Scholars investigate how society's perceptions of gender affect the structure and functions of political institutions. For example, a major area of research in this field focuses on understanding women's political participation in public policy and political institutions that have a history of patriarchal systems.

The study of politics and gender can take on a global perspective, as scholars use international relations as a context for examining gender differences around the world. For example, scholars Mona Lena Crook and Sarah Childs use a global lens to analyze women and politics around the world in their 2010 book Women, Gender, and Politics [30].

Around the world, gender acts as a determinant of power relations, influencing people's opinions about political parties and candidate choices. The study of gender and politics aims to find solutions to equalize these power structures. Here is a brief overview of key moments in the evolution of the field.

After World War II, many women did not want to return to the domestic sphere after taking on roles in the workplace; however, when World War II soldiers returned, companies laid off many women and replaced them with men. This sparked the women's rights movement and a wave of political activism that began in the 1960s and continued into the 1980s.

The second feminist movement, building on the women's suffrage movement and focusing on gender equality, as women advocated for equal employment opportunities, reproductive rights, and additional legal rights. Second-wave feminism sought to combat sexism within the patriarchal structures that still dominated political institutions, gender stereotypes, and cultural mindsets. It also contributed to the empowerment and mobilization of women in the United States, from New York to Washington, D.C., and around the world, from Latin America to Europe.

The second women's movement became a catalyst for studying how social structures dictate gender relations and cause gender inequality, which led to the study of gender politics. By the mid-2000s, gender politics had become a separate branch of political science. Today, this field is an important subject of study and has expanded to include the study of the intersection of other points of identity, such as sexual orientation and ethnicity, as well as the assertion that women's issues are an example of human rights activism.

Over the past decade, significant research has been conducted on gender diversity in leadership, focusing on workforces where women are well represented and those where they are underrepresented. It is essential to evaluate the results of this research to identify areas that require additional action to create equality and raise awareness of existing inequalities.

While we recognize the progress made in women's leadership over the years, we must also recognize that achieving gender parity in leadership positions will require sustained effort over the coming decades at the current rate of progress. Gender biases, both conscious and unconscious, affect women differently in the workplace and in leadership positions, and we must celebrate the achievements of women leaders while striving to accelerate progress in the future. Gender balance is not only a women's issue, but also an economic issue.

Table 1 below shows the top five companies for gender equality this year. They are Australian industrial enterprise Transurban with a score of 80%, followed by Enagás (Spain), Storebrand (Norway), QBE (Australia) and GPT Group (Australia), all with scores of 79% [1].

Table 1. Top 5 companies for gender equality worldwide in 2025

Global ranking	Company	Country	Sector	Gender equality rating
1	Transurban	Australia	Industrials	80
2	Enagás	Spain	Utilities	79
3	Storebrand	Norway	Financials	79
4	QBE	Australia	Financials	79
5	GPT Group	Australia	Real Estate	79

Source: compiled based on data from [1]

Women's progress in leadership has stalled, and the gender pay gap is going in the wrong direction. These are some of the troubling findings of Equileap's latest research on publicly listed companies worldwide. While more companies are publishing more data, the numbers themselves are not improving — and in some cases, they are getting worse.

Gender pay gap transparency jumped from 33% in 2024 to 44% in 2025, yet the percentage of companies that have actually closed the gap has declined — from an already abysmal 1.1% to just 1.0%.

The representation of women in top corporate roles remains alarmingly low — and in some countries, the situation is worsening - Austria, Denmark, and Finland saw a sharp drop in the number of women CEOs.

There is a stagnation in the representation of women in leadership and the workforce globally, with no change from last year except for a slight increase at the board level, from 30% to 32% women.

Overall, the United States, a key player in the global economy, is one of the worst performers on women's equality among developed markets — while Hong Kong and Singapore move ahead.

Equileap researches the gender balance of companies at four levels (board of directors, executive team, senior management and workforce) and assesses the progression of women to senior levels of the company. They define gender balance as between 40% and 60% women. While strides have been made, Equileap's analysis underscores the persistent challenge of achieving gender balance. On average, women represent 32% of the overall workforce, with a decline at senior levels 21% in senior management, 14% in executive roles, and 18% on boards. Thailand emerges as a frontrunner for women in executive roles (28%), while South Africa leads for representation of women on boards (36%). India has among the lowest representation of women in management and the workforce.

The gender pay gap is the difference between the average salaries of all women and all men in a company, country, or sector. At the company level, Equileap evaluates multiple facets of gender pay gap disclosures the overall pay gap, pay gaps in three or more corporate levels covering all employees, and strategies to address pay gaps. We give credit for transparency, and additional points for performance. The highest points are awarded to companies that publish mean, unadjusted gender pay gap of +/-3% or less. The gender pay gap remains a critical issue, with only 38% of companies publishing their pay gap data in emerging markets. While low, this is better than the developed markets disclosure rate of 33%. Strategies to close the pay gap are scarce, with less than 1% of companies elaborating on how they will rectify pay gaps. Eight markets have a disclosure rate of 50% or greater, and three are among the largest markets in the dataset South Korea (88% disclosure), Taiwan (76%), and India (65%).

Ideally, parents would be given equal paid leave to care for a new child, but the reality is there is still a lot of differentiation globally. Less than 1% of companies offer equal paid parental leave to both parents. In markets where statutory parental leave does not require this, 5% of companies provide 14+ weeks of paid primary carer leave, and 4% of companies provide 2+ weeks of paid secondary carer leave. Brazilian and Thai companies provide company-sponsored paid parental leave at higher rates than other markets 30% of Brazilian companies and 20% of Thai companies provide 14+ weeks of paid leave for primary carers, while 26% of Brazilian companies and 15% of Thai companies provide 2+ weeks of paid leave for secondary carers.

Additionally, 27% of companies offer flexible hours, while 28% provide flexible location options, promoting work-life balance. South Korea leads in terms of publication for flexible hours at 77%.

Under this indicator, Equileap assesses whether companies explicitly prohibit sexual harassment and gender-based violence. Publishing a clear and accessible anti-sexual harassment policy signals to employees and the wider public that a company recognises the issue and provides a framework for reporting incidences. While social and legal barriers to reporting unfortunately persist, this is a first step that all companies should take to combat the issue and protect those who experience it. 54% of companies publish anti-sexual harassment policies. An impressive eight of the 24 markets analysed had over 90% policy publication rates. Amongst these are several sizable markets India (100%), Brazil (97%), and Taiwan (96%). Efforts to combat sexual harassment in supply chains remain a work in progress, with only 30% of companies implementing policies. Brazil sets an exemplary standard with 75% of companies requiring their suppliers to have an anti-sexual harassment policy.

Equileap analyses four supply chain metrics commitments to pay living wages across the supply chain, antisexual harassment policies applying to the supply chain, social supply chain management policies, and supplier diversity programmes that mention women-owned businesses specifically.

Only 3% of companies across emerging markets require their suppliers to pay living wages, with South Africa making some headway (15% of companies).

More than half (56%) of emerging market companies have a social supply chain policy which prevents child labour, forced labour, and the like.

The role of women around the world continues to evolve. While women in Western societies are actively achieving gender equality, women in other less developed countries are fighting for basic human rights. Women have often been forced to adhere to strict stereotypical roles assigned to them, but many have begun to break free from these roles over the past 100 years.

Access to education has opened the eyes of women around the world to the realization that they deserve to pursue their dreams without facing gender inequality. Unfortunately, not all women have the right to education, so their roles are determined by their culture, religion, and sometimes by ancient and deeply outdated traditions. It seems like common sense that women should have the same opportunities as men, but in many parts of the world, there's still a lot of social resistance when it comes to giving them a level playing field.

Let's take a look at how different parts of the world shape the roles of women who live there. This comparison will help us understand how far women have come and what struggles they still face in many parts of the world.

Women in Western societies such as Europe, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the United States have come a long way in terms of gender equality over the past 100 years. While most women in the past played the role of housewife and wife, expectations for this role have changed dramatically since then. Nowadays, it is almost expected that women will join the workforce, and virtually any career path is open to them. Women are now elected as leaders of nations and have shown that they are capable of becoming anything from astronauts to sports stars.

Women in Europeanized societies enjoy most of the same rights as men, including things like the right to vote, drive a car, and own land, access to education, and protection from violence. The gender pay gap is narrowing, and in many countries, such as Canada and Sweden, women are almost equal in government. It is becoming increasingly common for men to stay at home and be the primary homemaker/caregiver, while women work to support their families. European countries such as Sweden, Estonia, Iceland, and Norway have replaced maternity leave with more gender-neutral parental leave policies in recent years.

These things seem like basic human rights that all women should enjoy, but unfortunately, those who do not live in Western societies are often denied many of these freedoms.

Although gender roles vary greatly depending on the tribe and region, women in tribal communities often face the harshest conditions and are generally limited to the traditional roles that women have been expected to perform.

Many tribes, especially in regions such as North Africa, have refrained from integrating into modern society, instead adhering to their traditional culture. Men are taught to be warriors, while women are taught to gather food, cook, clean, and bear children. Tribes such as the Maasai (one of the oldest tribes in Africa, living in Kenya and Tanzania) are often patriarchal, and relationships are typically polygamous. Women share a husband, and there is often a large age gap between young women and their older husbands.

Despite some progress in women gaining more freedom in developing countries, many still face long-standing problems in regions such as South America, Africa, and Asia. One of the biggest obstacles for women in developing countries is the lack of access to education, which has unfortunately led to women making up two-thirds of the world's illiterate population. Women are often expected to fulfill more traditional roles, where they stay at home, cook, and take care of children.

Today, there are many matriarchal societies around the world that are headed by women. And many scholars believe that this is how human society was originally; millions of years ago, women were revered as high priestesses, although around 3000 BC, the balance of power shifted to men.

Today, the Chinese ethnic group known as the Mosuo believes that children should take their mother's surname and that property should be passed down through the female side of the family. The Minangkabau women of West Sumatra are similar, and although they are led by a male chief, it is the women who have the right to choose and remove him from power. Similarly, the Bribri of Costa Rica, the Garo of Northeast India, and the Nagovisi of New Guinea are matriarchal societies. While most matriarchal societies are home to both women and men, there are some where only women live. The Umoja tribe in northern Kenya has effectively banished all men and is a refuge where survivors of gender-based violence can create a safe existence.

The world is becoming a safer place for women to travel, and in fact, recent studies show that women travel alone much more often than men.

The issue of gender equality has risen to the top of public debate in many countries. While the focus is rightly on labor, social, and other domestic policies as the primary tools for expanding women's economic rights and opportunities, increased attention is also being paid to how trade can affect gender issues. This is linked both to the desire for more inclusive trade, where benefits are more widely shared, and to the potential for trade to contribute to “progressive” policy and social goals.

Helping governments understand how trade can contribute to women's economic empowerment means examining how women participate in trade as entrepreneurs, traders, or workers; how trade adjustments affect women; and how they benefit from trade as consumers. This can help shed light on priorities for negotiations in terms of which sectors or reforms may disproportionately (positively or negatively) affect women, as well as the domestic policies needed to support trade opportunities for women.

Available data suggest that women tend to be concentrated in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), which are not always included in trade data. Nevertheless, we know that SMEs face particular barriers to participating in trade and can benefit from reforms that reduce trade costs, such as trade facilitation.

In addition, many SMEs participate indirectly in global trade; that is, they supply goods or services to another company in the domestic market, which then exports them to a supply chain partner or buyer abroad. Thus, more SMEs and more women may be involved in trade than we think.

This may also be true of the concentration of female employment in the service sector. Given the growing importance of services as inputs - services account for about one-third of the value of manufacturing exports and about one-quarter of the value of agri-food exports - more women may also be participating in trade by providing services to firms in the domestic market, which are then exported.

Finally, as digitalization reduces the costs of trade, it may also open up new opportunities for women to participate in trade. However, the measurement of digital technologies also remains incomplete.

Changes in global trade are altering how trade affects women as workers, particularly the role of women workers in global value chains. Research shows that in OECD countries, on average, 27% of jobs held by women are directly or indirectly dependent on exports; in contrast, 37% of jobs held by men are dependent on exports. Helping women take advantage of these business opportunities, as well as modernizing women's production in the value chain, can reduce the adverse effects and maximize the benefits of trade for women.

For many women, trade has brought economic opportunities and higher wages. In developing countries, women are often concentrated in export-oriented sectors such as clothing, textiles, and electronics. Trade-related opportunities have allowed women to control more household resources, which in turn has a positive impact on overall investment in the health and education of future generations.

But women are also actively engaged in several sectors that continue to undergo adjustments and changes due to trade liberalization, such as agriculture and the textile industry. More work is needed to understand whether there are differences in how women cope with trade regulation.

Apart from some specialized goods and services, it is unclear whether it makes sense to consider women as a group in terms of their role as consumers. Although women often act as the primary purchasers of food, this may reflect their role as shoppers for the household. One issue is that, to the extent that female-headed households may be overrepresented among low-income households, they also suffer more from the impact of trade barriers in raising prices for basic food and clothing. This remains an area where further work is needed.

Despite progress towards gender equality, men and women continue to face different conditions in the labor market at all levels of employment, not least in senior positions. Even female managers who have broken through the glass ceiling receive lower pay than their male counterparts.

Women business leaders have a huge impact on their markets, industries, and communities through innovation, job creation, and economic growth. However, their contributions are often lost in the common narrative that women are overrepresented among the poorest and most vulnerable entrepreneurs worldwide. Women tend to run smaller, younger, and less profitable companies. Firms led by women also tend to perform similarly to firms led by men in the same industries. Researchers are now gaining a better understanding of how and why women entrepreneurs start and grow new businesses, and the evidence is guiding policymakers and program managers toward more effective solutions to remove the barriers to starting and growing a business that women face in different industries and regions of the world.

The Global Gender Gap Index data measures the proportion of women and men in professional and technical positions, as well as senior officials and managers. Over the past five years (2017–2022), the proportion of women in leadership positions has grown steadily worldwide. In 2022, global gender parity for this category reached 42.7%, the highest gender parity rate ever [2].

Beyond these statistics, LinkedIn's high-frequency data for 155 countries examines the representation of women in leadership positions, providing a snapshot of gender parity in business leadership in 2022. Overall, the global share of women in leadership positions, as shown in this data, is 31%, although the shares vary by industry. In 2022, only a few industries were close to gender parity in leadership, such as non-governmental and membership organizations (47%), education (46%), and personal services and well-being (45%). At the other end of the range are energy

(20%), manufacturing (19%), and infrastructure (16%). A breakdown by industry is provided in Figure 1 [2].

However, the proportion of women in management positions is increasing over time. The number of women hired for management positions has been increasing since 2016. Although the share of women hired for management positions was 33.3% in 2016, it increased to 36.9% in 2022. Progress stalled during the pandemic, with the annual share of women hired into management positions at 35% between 2019 and 2020, but then increased to 36% in 2021 [2].

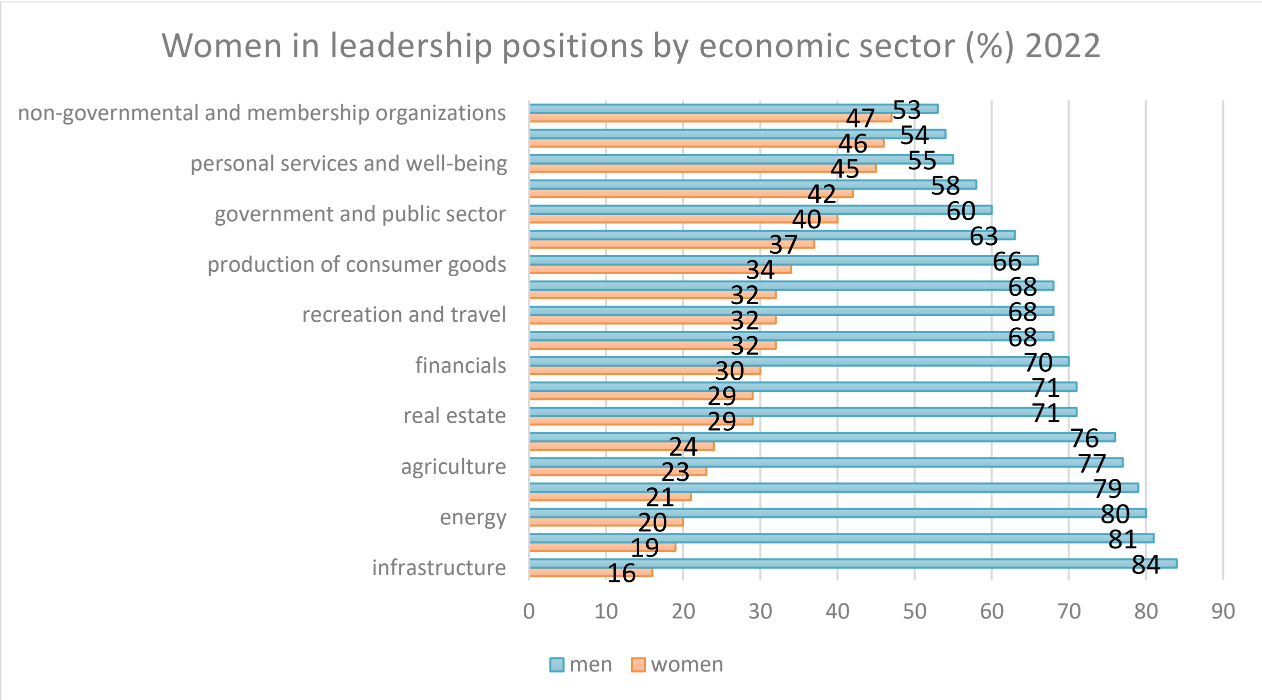

Figure 1. Women in leadership positions by economic sector (%) 2022

Source built by author on the basis of [2]

In 2022 was the highest share of women hired for management positions during last 7 years and remained 37% (Figure 2).

There are significant differences in the rates of women hired for management positions across different industries. On average, more women were hired for management positions in industries where women were already widely represented. Similarly, more men held senior management positions in industries where men were predominant. The industries with the highest share of women hired into management positions in 2021 include non-governmental and membership organizations (54%), education (49%), public and government sector (46%), personal services and well-being (46%), health and care services (46%), and media and communications (46%).

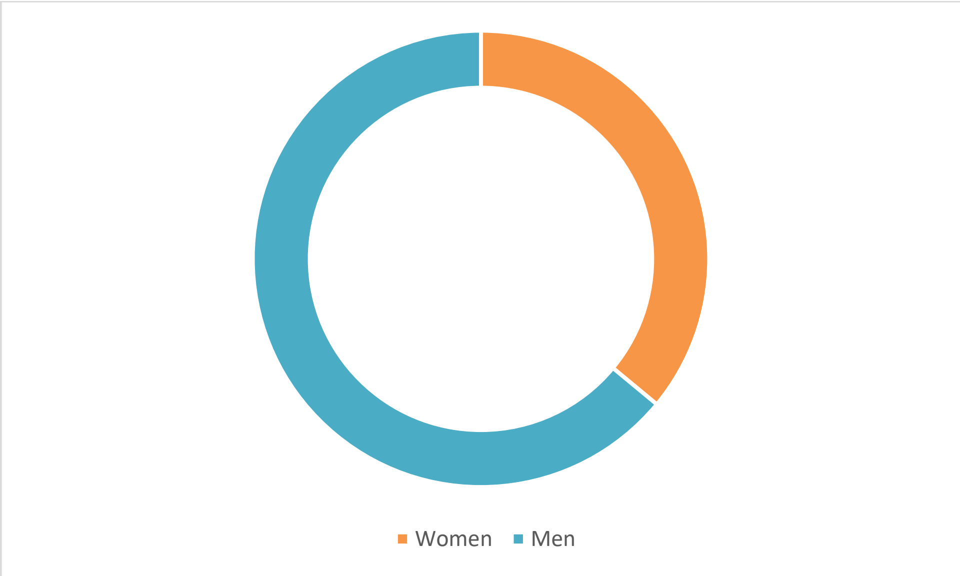

Figure 2. Share of women hired for management positions, %, 2022

Source constructed by the author based on data [2]

In 2021, there was a significant disparity in the recruitment of men and women to management positions in certain industries. In particular, 30% more men were hired in the technology sector, while 28% more men were hired in agriculture, 25% more in energy, 25% more in supply chains and transportation, 22% more in manufacturing, and 21% more in infrastructure. It is important to note that these industries also have the lowest percentage of women in the workforce [2].

Despite the prevailing trend, some industries have shown notable progress in hiring women for leadership positions. In particular, the technology, energy, supply chain, and transportation industries have seen a significant increase in the hiring of women for leadership positions compared to 2016.

Need to mention, that the trend toward increasing female representation on boards of directors is only the first step toward obtaining positions as board chairs and executive management positions.

Leading countries in the development of women's leadership (Table 2).

Table 2. Leading countries in the development of women's leadership, 2022

Percentage of leadership positions on company boards held by women			Percentage of CEO positions held by women		
country	percentage	changes, %	country	percentage	changes, %
France	43,2	5,9	Singapore	13,1	3,2
Norway	42,4	1,4	Sweden	12,4	2,1
Italy	36,6	7,3	Thailand	11,6	1,9
Belgium	34,9	4,3	Ireland	11,5	3,7
Sweden	34,7	1,4	France	9,7	3,5

Source: built by author on the basis of [10]

For comparison in Ukraine, women held 18.3% of supervisory boards in 2022.

Sectors with a significant number of women still show gender inequality in leadership positions compared to the overall representation of women in all positions. For example, in the personal services and welfare sector, women make up 62% of the total workforce, but only 45% hold leadership positions. Similar observations can be made for the real estate and healthcare sectors, where the difference between the representation of women in the sector as a whole and among leaders is 16%. While increasing the hiring of women at the entry level is an important step toward closing the gender gap in leadership, it is not sufficient on its own [2].

According to research, business women in Ukraine have twice the entrepreneurial sentiment index (58%) compared to the national average (27%). The index is based on three components, such as:

- desire to start a business,
- resilience to obstacles;
- assessment of the feasibility of a business project [3].

In 2021, 500 women participated in the study “Portrait of a Ukrainian Woman Entrepreneur”. Thirty percent of respondents said they face various stereotypes regarding gender inequality and women's entrepreneurship, the key one being the belief that “business is not a woman's business” [3].

Women's entrepreneurship is gaining momentum - the share of women among individual entrepreneurs (IE) has grown to 46.6% [3].

According to various studies, the number of women entrepreneurs in Ukraine is indeed growing, with most of them working as private entrepreneurs (individual entrepreneurs), developing micro or small businesses.

According to the survey, as shown in Figure 3:

- 74% of respondents chose individual entrepreneur as their form of entrepreneurship,
- 22% chose LLC,
- 4% chose other forms of entrepreneurship.

In terms of business size, 68% of respondents run microbusinesses, 23% run small businesses, 8% run medium-sized businesses, and only 0.4% run large businesses (see Figure 4).

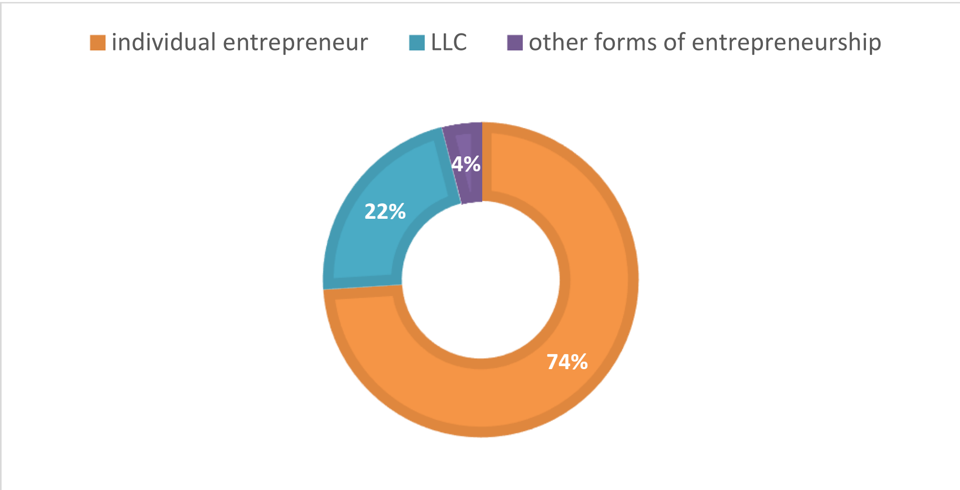

Figure 3. Forms of entrepreneurship among women in Ukraine in 2022

Source: constructed by the author based on data [3]

The average age of women-owned businesses in Ukraine is 8 years [3]. These figures confirm that women entrepreneurs have a huge impact on the formation of the small business ecosystem in the country.

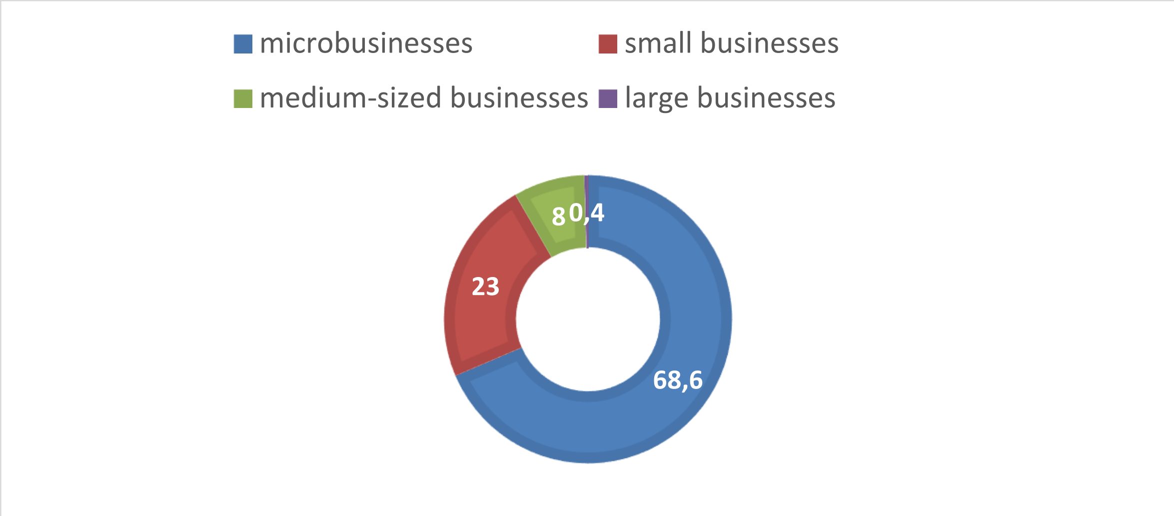

Figure 4. Size of women's businesses in Ukraine in 2022

Source: compiled by the author based on data [3]

Most women entrepreneurs implement corporate social responsibility.

According to a survey, 63% of business owners implement corporate social responsibility, in particular the "green office" strategy, which is now an integral attribute of a modern company [3].

Today, women-led businesses are implementing corporate social responsibility through humanitarian support to meet the needs of society and the military. Support for vulnerable groups, assistance to orphanages, and care for the environment (waste sorting, eco-strategy) are actively developing.

Self-sufficiency, independence, and self-fulfillment are key motivations for women to start a business.

There is a stereotype that the main reason women start their own businesses is to strike a balance between domestic and work responsibilities. However, according to a survey, the main motive for starting a business for 74% of women is the desire to earn well in order to provide for themselves and their families. In addition, women are motivated by the desire for independence from their employer (48%) and the desire for self-fulfillment and the ability to realize their own ideas (46%) [3].

A study conducted by Jennifer L. Merlucci and Ronald S. Bert showed that 97% of Chicago Booth graduates started working for others immediately after graduation. Of these, 15% left their jobs and went their separate ways, and another

9% started their own businesses while continuing to work as employees. Women who held senior management positions in any company were reluctant to leave and start their own business, as they had the opportunity to run their own business in a larger corporation [4].

The Ukrainian survey also found interesting data that helps to better understand women entrepreneurs. For example, the fact that before starting a business, most respondents (94%) were employed, and only 6% immediately started their own business [3].

The effort put into the business is worth it, according to almost 100% of women entrepreneurs.

According to the survey, 91% of women who started their own business believe that the effort spent on the business is worth it, because there is profit from their own activity, which also brings satisfaction, independence from an employer, and prospects for further development [3].

Also, 63% of the female entrepreneurs surveyed have a positive view of their business development, as the effort and resources spent have paid off.

There are opportunities for the development of women's businesses in Ukraine, according to 9 out of 10 women entrepreneurs.

Seventy-three percent of survey participants consider unpredictability to be a key characteristic of Ukrainian entrepreneurship. Most businesses are moving from the eastern regions of Ukraine to the west, 27% have closed due to the war, 9% have lost their jobs, and 30% have left for other countries, according to a mini-survey of 200 women entrepreneurs [3].

However, despite the existing obstacles and unpredictability, 42% of women entrepreneurs are optimistic and continue to work.

In 2015, Ukraine, like other UN member states, joined the global process of implementing 17 Sustainable Development Goals, 5 of which are about ensuring gender equality. In addition, in February 2016, the government adopted a National Action Plan to implement UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, becoming the only country in the world to adopt such a plan during a military conflict.

Thousands of Ukrainian women joined the Armed Forces of Ukraine and chose to volunteer, helping the state on various fronts, including the economic one.

According to data from the Unified State Register of Legal Entities, Individual Entrepreneurs, and Public Organizations (USR), the statistics of which are presented in Table 3, the tourism sector has the largest number of companies owned by women in the Ukrainian business market. There are 7,600 such enterprises, accounting for 51.7% of the total number of travel agencies.

Table 3. Top industries with the maximum and minimum influence of female owners in 2023, %

Economic sector	*Share of companies owned by women, %*	*Number of companies owned by women*	*Number of other companies*	*Total number of companies*	*Share of sector by number of companies, %*
Maximum impact					
Tourism	51.7	7633	7142	14,775	1.6
Education	49.3	3515	3615	7130	0.8
Real estate transactions	42.7	26632	35,731	62,363	6.9
Public catering	42.4	6613	8980	15,593	1.7
Pharmaceutical	42.2	3429	4704	8133	0.9
Minimal impact					
Machine building	27.5	5893	15,559	21,452	2.4
Oil and gas sector	26.6	4167	11,516	15,683	1.7
Information technology	26.4	6936	19,309	26,245	2.9
Construction	26.3	22,495	63,009	85,504	9.4
Water supply and disposal	20.1	1373	5461	6834	0.8

Source compiled based on data from [6,7]

In second place is the education sector, where 3,500 companies are owned by women, accounting for 49.3% of the market. Companies engaged in real estate transactions rank third with 26,600 companies owned by women, accounting for 42.7% of the market [6].

The least popular sectors among women are water supply and sanitation and construction, where female owners account for less than 30% of the market in each sector. Among the unpopular sectors controlled by businesswomen is also the information technology industry, where 6,900 companies owned by women account for 26.4% of the market [6].

On the other hand, women are actively involved in supporting various sectors of Ukrainian business during the war.

In 2023 there are 306,200 companies registered in Ukraine that are owned by women, accounting for 32.8% of the total number of registered companies [6].

The next largest number of companies owned by businesswomen are located in the partially occupied Donetsk region - 15,200 companies (36%), and in the Mykolaiv, Odesa, and Zaporizhzhia regions - 35% each.

The largest number of companies in 2023 with female owners is registered in Kyiv—94,800, which is 31.2% of all registered companies in the capital. The smallest share of such companies is in the Sumy region—30.5% [6,7].

Russia's full-scale war against Ukraine has severely damaged the country. New businesses are opening more slowly, but women are starting more companies, especially in education and healthcare, which have become more important due to destruction and hostilities. Changes in the economy occurred after February 24, 2022, when the number of female entrepreneurs in the country increased by 4.4 percentage points compared to 2021. The biggest changes occurred in the education and healthcare sectors, where more female-owned companies appeared.

The education sector led the way with 95 new companies, accounting for 53.4% of the market, while the healthcare sector accounted for 49.3% (113 companies). Companies operating in the media and film sector also took the lead in terms of the share of companies created by women.

The increase in the number of companies in these sectors is due to the growing demand for their services. The destruction of state educational institutions in the regions where the fiercest fighting is taking place has created a need for educational companies, while active hostilities and regular massive rocket attacks throughout the country have increased the need for medical services.

The significant increase in the share of newly established companies in the film production industry is very interesting. The growth in the number of companies in this industry is undoubtedly linked to the need to cover the real situation in Ukraine through cinema. Currently, 33 companies founded by women account for 42.9% of the total market. Tourism suffered the greatest losses, falling by 14 percentage points from the usual average.

Top sectors by share of women among company owners registered between February 24, 2022, and February 24, 2023 represented in Table 4.

Table 4. Top sectors by share of women among company owners registered between February 24, 2022, and February 24, 2023

	Economic sector	Share of new companies owned by women, %	Number of new companies owned by women
1.	Education	53	95
2	Health care	49.3	113
3.	Media and cinema	42.9	33
4	Advertising and marketing	41.5	54
5	Publishing	39.3	11
6	Pharmaceuticals	39.0	55
7	Retail	37.5	281
8	Tourism	37.3	28
9	Real estate transactions	36.2	388
10	Law firms	36.1	48

Source compiled based on data from [6,7]

Data from a study by the YouControl R&D center shows that women in Ukraine actively influence business development, particularly in terms of supporting it during military operations [7, 26].

In 2025 was carried the research on Women in Governance Diversity, Inclusion, and Beyond in Supervisory Boards in Ukraine [11].

Supervisory board members agree that diversity enhances boards' effectiveness (Figure 5).

	Women	Men
Completely agree	56%	22%
Mostly agree	39%	70%
Mostly disagree	5%	4%
Totally disagree	0%	4%

Figure 5. Answers of respondents on effectiveness of diversity among supervisory board members in Ukraine, 2025

Source: compiled based on data from [11]

So, 94% of respondents agree that gender diversity on supervisory boards positively impacts their effectiveness. Men are less likely to choose "completely agree", indicating a more moderate response pattern. Only 5% of women and 8% of men disagree.

Most supervisory boards in Ukraine have women among their members. However, parity in representation has not yet been achieved (Figure 6).

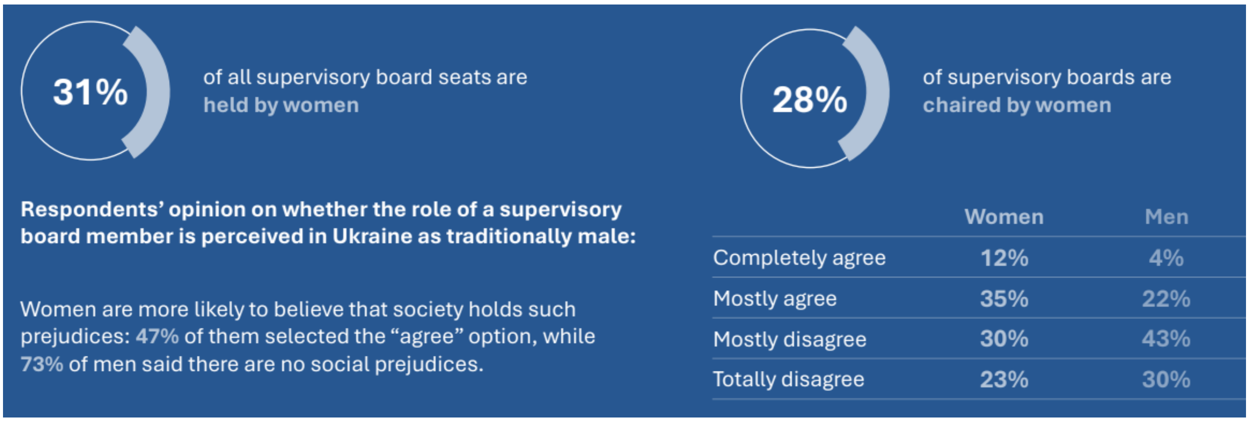

Figure 6. Respondents' opinion on the role of a supervisory board member in Ukraine, 2025

Source: compiled based on data from [11]

Since the beginning of the full-scale invasion, the composition of supervisory boards hasn't changed significantly. Supervisory boards chaired by women show a positive trend in women's representation, with one-third increasing the number of female members over the past three years. In contrast, only 18% of male-chaired boards have made efforts to enhance gender diversity.

At the same time the most common reasons for women's representation in Ukraine are election of a new supervisory board and to balance out gender composition.

Women are represented on all mandatory committees — Audit, Remuneration, and Nomination — and every second woman chairs the latter two. Additionally, women are present on committees focused on Transformation, IT, International Cooperation, ESG, Business, Budget, and Innovation (Figure 7).

Let's consider gender inclusion and discrimination experience in Ukraine [11].

The sense of inclusion and belonging is very high in supervisory boards, with no women reporting negative experiences regarding teamwork. This is further supported by male colleagues, 82% of whom fully and 18% mostly agree that women contribute significantly to the supervisory boards' work.

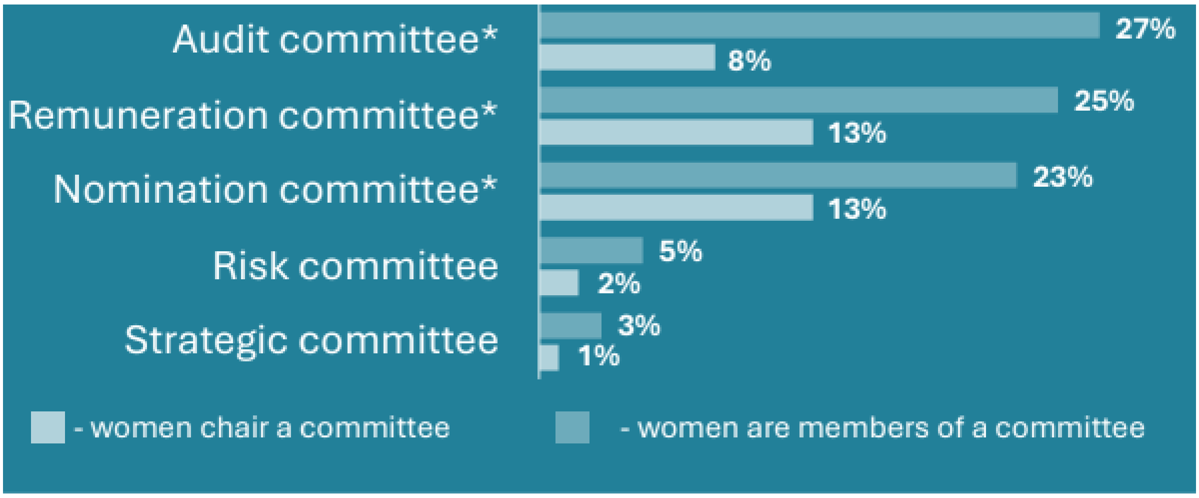

Figure 7. Supervisory board committees with the highest levels of women's participation in Ukraine, 2025

Source: compiled based on data from [11]

However, the lowest number of highly favorable responses relates to the feeling of belonging to a team (Figure 8).

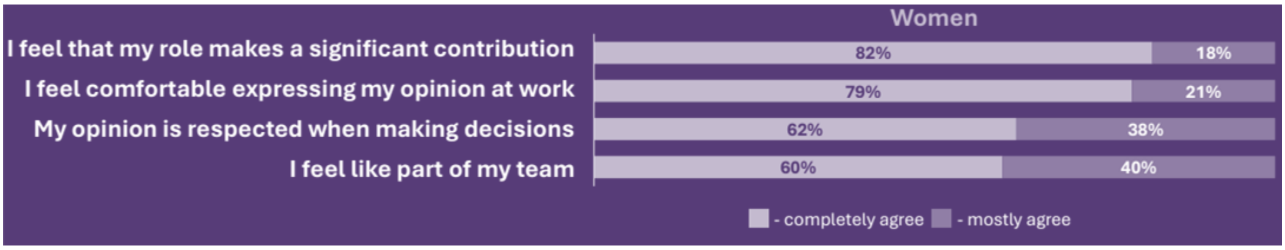

Figure 8. Contribution of women in work process, 2025

Source: compiled based on data from [11]

Women are more likely to experience workplace discrimination or witness it when directed at others in Ukraine (Figure 9). The most common type faced or witnessed by both men and women is work meetings scheduled outside of working hours. This poses risks to engagement and wellbeing, particularly for leaders who are primary caregivers in their household.

So, the gender pay gap is the second most common form of discrimination faced by women (51%) and ranks first in responses “usually/often”. The types of discrimination with the greatest differences in responses between gender representatives are gender bias and verbal insults.

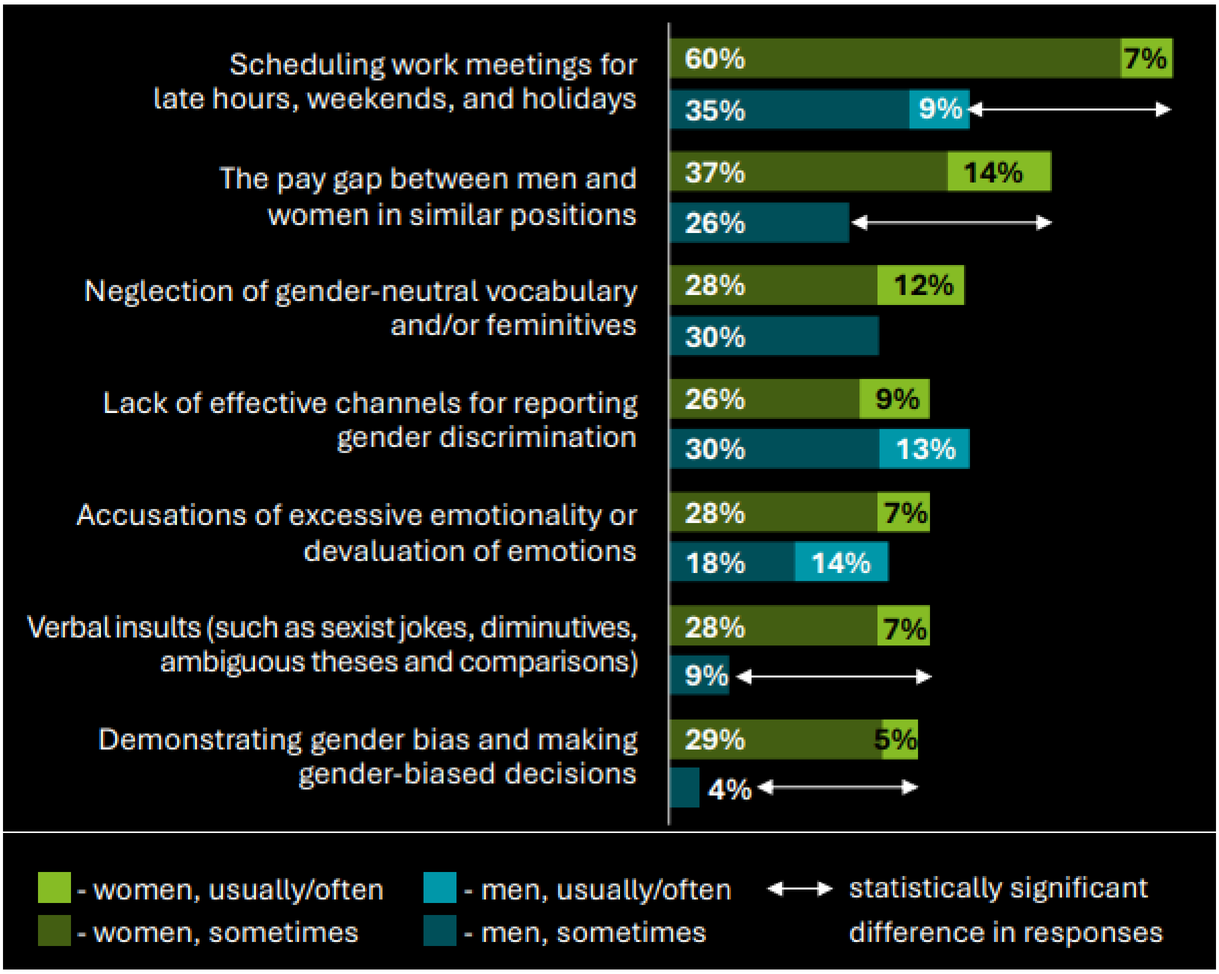

Figure 9. The most widespread acts/types of discrimination, 2025

Source compiled based on data from [11]

Women experience or observed these manifestations 30 and 26 p.p. more often than men. Men are more likely to notice the lack of effective discrimination reporting systems. Long-term global paradigm shifts are driving progress in Ukraine. However, traditionally low levels of women's participation in economic activity and deeply ingrained gender roles continue to slow the pace of progress.

Thus, despite the fact that female leadership in Ukraine is less common compared to the leading countries, improvement is observed in all areas. Undoubtedly, one of the main driving factors for the increase of female entrepreneurship and the increase of the role of women in companies was the war. As of 2025, it is difficult to quantify the impact of the isolated war on female entrepreneurship. There are risks that the trend may reverse in the post-war years, as has historically often been the case in societies rebuilding after war. However, the female entrepreneur is already becoming one of the most powerful tools for maintaining the country's economy and the basis for the future recovery of its economic activity.

Let’s consider several Ukrainian initiatives that focus on women empowering.

UN Women Ukraine: Works on economic empowerment, leadership, and ensuring women's needs are central to recovery, running campaigns like "Of Course, You Can!" for equal pay [27].

Since 2016, UN Women Ukraine has established itself as a trusted partner and key actor in advancing gender equality and women’s empowerment, delivering tangible results through the effective application of its triple mandate across the development–humanitarian–peace nexus. By combining deep technical expertise, strong operational capacity, and evidence-based policy development with a proven ability to convene diverse stakeholders, UN Women brings a distinct comparative advantage to the United Nations system and its partners in Ukraine.

As the United Nations entity mandated to lead on gender equality and the empowerment of women, UN Women plays a central role in mainstreaming gender perspectives across UN coordination mechanisms and strategic decision-making processes. It chairs both the Gender Theme Group (GTG) and the Gender in Humanitarian Action (GiHA) Working Group, ensuring that gender equality considerations are systematically integrated into humanitarian response planning, early recovery, and longer-term development frameworks.

In its role as Secretariat of the Women, Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF), UN Women works closely with women’s rights organizations (WROs) to promote localized, inclusive, and conflict-sensitive programming. This collaboration strengthens the leadership and resilience of women and women-led organizations, particularly in war-affected regions in eastern Ukraine, enabling targeted responses to the needs of the most vulnerable populations.

UN Women also forges strategic partnerships with the private sector through innovative platforms such as the Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs), fostering responsible business practices and advancing women's economic empowerment. Its integrated approach complements and reinforces the work of other UN agencies, international partners, and national institutions, bridging critical gaps and ensuring that women's leadership, agency, and voices are embedded across humanitarian, development, and recovery efforts.

With a team of more than 65 staff members and 20 national consultants based in Kyiv and Dnipro, UN Women Ukraine plays a pivotal role in advancing gender equality nationwide. The organization provides sustained technical and financial support to government institutions and civil society organizations, advocating for women's rights and promoting gender-responsive policies and programmes across all sectors.

UN Women's work in Ukraine is guided by three strategic priority areas: (1) Governance, Leadership, and Women, Peace and Security (WPS); (2) Women's Economic Empowerment and Inclusive Growth; and (3) Humanitarian Response and Coordination. Across all areas, UN Women ensures that women's needs, perspectives, and leadership are central to decision-making processes. In parallel, the organization actively supports Ukraine's European Union integration efforts, including the alignment and transposition of the EU gender acquis into national legislation, policies, and institutional practices.

In 2023 alone, UN Women Ukraine provided more than USD 10.5 million in direct support to women-led organizations, significantly strengthening their capacity to deliver life-saving assistance, promote gender equality, and contribute to sustainable recovery and peacebuilding across the country [28].

BOOST Women Innovators was launched in February 2022 [5]. Its goal was to engage women innovators in the Europe and Central Asia region, using innovation and technology to promote gender equality and bridge the gender digital divide. Participants learned how to rethink and implement effective innovations, increase reach and visibility, attract alternative financing and other resources, and establish and maintain long-term partnerships.

To understand the challenges associated with forced displacement and overcome the devastating effects of war, below are the stories of Ukrainian women entrepreneurs who have successfully completed the BOOST Women Innovators program. They shared their experiences with their innovations and projects, as well as the challenges they overcame, the opportunities that opened up, and the new horizons they are striving for.

Gender policy is important in business because it affects gender equality and equity in employment, particularly in terms of pay and women's representation in leadership positions. The study's findings indicate that women play a significant role in business and can have a significant impact on the development of export-oriented businesses.

The study also indicates that gender inequalities in business not only hinder development but can also create new challenges. The role of women in business and the world is constantly growing, demonstrating the significant contribution of women to economic development. Therefore, ensuring equal opportunities for women in business and eliminating stereotypes about their role are key tasks of gender policy.

In particular, the impact of women on the development of Ukrainian business during the war underscores the importance of gender equality and opportunities for women in business. The war has a major impact on business development in Ukraine, including the role of women in this sector.

Women are forced to face the difficulties and challenges associated with the war, but at the same time, they are active participants in economic life and can make a significant contribution to the development of export-oriented business.

Therefore, to ensure the successful development of export-oriented business in Ukraine, it is necessary to take into account the gender aspect and ensure equal opportunities for women in business. This can be achieved by implementing gender equality policies and encouraging women to actively participate in business processes. The development of export-oriented business has the potential to increase women's contribution to economic development, especially in times of war.

Impact Force [29] is a Ukrainian non-governmental organization founded in 2021, operating at the intersection of social innovation, economic empowerment, and sustainable development. As a women-founded and women-led organization, Impact Force focuses on addressing structural socio-economic challenges exacerbated by the full-scale war in Ukraine, with particular attention to inclusive recovery, behavioural change, and long-term resilience.

The organization’s mission is grounded in the promotion of sustainable economic growth, social cohesion, and human capital development in alignment with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Ukraine’s European integration agenda. Impact Force adopts a systemic approach, recognizing that post-war recovery requires not only financial resources but also institutional capacity, entrepreneurial ecosystems, and inclusive participation of women and vulnerable groups in economic and decision-making processes.

Impact Force’s activities are structured around three interrelated areas: advocacy, capacity building, and community empowerment. Through advocacy and policy-oriented dialogue, the organization contributes to discussions on economic recovery, inclusive growth, and social innovation. Its capacity-building initiatives focus on strengthening entrepreneurial skills, business sustainability, and leadership competencies among small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), displaced persons, veterans, and women affected by the war. Community empowerment efforts emphasize multi-stakeholder collaboration, fostering partnerships among civil society, the private sector, public institutions, and international actors.

A key component of Impact Force’s work is the implementation of accelerator and educational programmes designed to support socially oriented and green entrepreneurship. The Impact Business Accelerator provides structured mentoring, training, and access to financing for Ukrainian entrepreneurs whose activities contribute to economic recovery and social impact. Similarly, educational initiatives such as Dream and Achieve focus on enhancing the economic agency of displaced and war-affected women by developing their entrepreneurial, digital, and financial competencies. Complementary programmes address psychosocial resilience and labour market reintegration, acknowledging the interconnected nature of economic recovery and mental well-being in post-conflict contexts.

In addition, Impact Force promotes innovation in strategically important sectors, including energy efficiency and sustainable technologies, through targeted acceleration programmes and expert networks. The organization also convenes national and international stakeholders through platforms such as the Impact Force Forum, facilitating dialogue on recovery, resilience, and inclusive development.

In terms of scale, Impact Force has supported a substantial number of entrepreneurs and war-affected individuals through training, mentoring, and grant-based assistance, contributing to the development of socially responsible businesses and employment opportunities. Its partnerships span national government institutions, international organizations, and private sector actors, reinforcing the organization’s role as an intermediary that connects policy objectives with grassroots economic initiatives.

Overall, Impact Force represents a contemporary model of Ukrainian civil society engagement that combines economic empowerment, social innovation, and gender-responsive approaches. By strengthening entrepreneurial ecosystems and promoting inclusive participation in recovery processes, the organization contributes to Ukraine’s long-term socio-economic resilience and sustainable development in the context of ongoing conflict and post-war reconstruction.

The RED KALYNA Initiative [31] is a strategic programme implemented within the framework of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) Community, aimed at promoting women’s leadership, innovation, and entrepreneurship in Ukraine. The initiative responds to persistent gender disparities in innovation ecosystems while addressing the specific socio-economic challenges faced by Ukraine in the context of war, recovery, and long-term development. By recognising and supporting outstanding Ukrainian women leaders, RED KALYNA contributes to strengthening inclusive innovation and enhancing national resilience.

The initiative is grounded in the understanding that women's participation and leadership are critical drivers of sustainable innovation, economic growth, and social transformation. In environments affected by crisis and instability, such as Ukraine, empowering women innovators is particularly important for maintaining institutional continuity, fostering adaptive solutions, and supporting reconstruction efforts. RED KALYNA therefore aligns with broader European and international policy priorities on gender equality, diversity, and inclusive growth within research, innovation, and entrepreneurship systems.

A core objective of the RED KALYNA Initiative is to identify, acknowledge, and elevate Ukrainian women who have demonstrated significant leadership and innovative impact. These include entrepreneurs, researchers, educators, and organisational leaders who have developed novel products, services, processes, or governance models, or who have successfully integrated innovation into existing institutional or business structures. Through a competitive selection process, the initiative annually recognises a group of women whose achievements exemplify excellence, resilience, and transformative leadership. Selected participants are inducted into the Red Kalyna Hall of Fame and receive formal recognition under the "Red Kalyna by EIT Community" label.

Beyond symbolic recognition, the initiative serves as a mechanism for capacity-building and ecosystem integration. It provides awardees with increased visibility at national and European levels and facilitates their engagement with EIT Community networks, innovation hubs, and support programmes. This enables access to mentoring, international partnerships, knowledge exchange, and potential investment opportunities. In this way, RED KALYNA functions not only as an award scheme but also as a platform for strengthening women's participation in transnational innovation networks.

The initiative also plays an important normative role by challenging structural barriers and gender stereotypes that continue to limit women's advancement in science, technology, business, and leadership. By showcasing successful role models, RED KALYNA contributes to changing perceptions of women's roles in innovation and encourages broader participation among younger generations of women in Ukraine. This demonstration effect is particularly significant in traditionally male-dominated sectors and in post-crisis contexts, where gender inequalities tend to intensify.

In the broader context of Ukraine's recovery and European integration, the RED KALYNA Initiative contributes to building human capital and institutional resilience. Women leaders supported through the programme often operate at the intersection of economic, social, and technological innovation, making their contributions especially relevant for inclusive reconstruction and sustainable development. By embedding gender equality within innovation policy and practice, RED KALYNA reinforces the alignment of Ukraine's development trajectory with European values and standards.

SEED Project (Acted): Provides grants, training (vocational, greenhouse), and support to women in rural/IDP areas for economic resilience [32].

Since 2020, with financial support from Global Affairs Canada, Acted has implemented the Securing Women's Economic Empowerment for Recovery and Development (SEED) project to enhance economic inclusion, livelihoods, and resilience among women and other vulnerable and marginalised populations in Ukraine. The project was initially launched in Donetska and Luhanska oblasts, regions significantly affected by protracted conflict, where structural inequalities and limited economic opportunities had disproportionately constrained women's economic participation. Following the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, SEED demonstrated strong adaptability and operational flexibility by significantly expanding its geographic scope. By June 2025, the project had extended its reach to Volynska, Chernivetska, Vinnytska, Chernihivska, Odeska, and Mykolaivska oblasts, responding to emerging humanitarian and early recovery needs across both frontline and host communities.

Throughout its implementation, SEED has prioritised women and other at-risk groups, including internally displaced persons (IDPs), elderly individuals, and residents of rural and underserved areas. The project has supported participants in accessing employment opportunities, improving income security, and strengthening their capacity to withstand economic shocks. Interventions have included livelihood grants, skills development, and income-generating activities designed to promote both short-term economic stability and longer-term self-reliance. At the same time, SEED has worked to enhance the institutional capacity of local service providers, enabling them to better uphold rights, reduce exclusion, and create sustainable economic opportunities in sectors with growth potential.

A central feature of the SEED project has been its deliberate focus on addressing structural barriers to women's economic participation. By engaging community networks, local authorities, and service providers, the project has sought to challenge restrictive gender norms and promote the gradual transformation of traditional practices that limit women's access to decent work and economic resources. This approach aligns closely with Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy, which emphasises gender equality, women's empowerment, and inclusive development as foundational elements of sustainable peace and prosperity.

While the war in Ukraine continues to generate urgent humanitarian needs, the persistence and scale of displacement and economic disruption underscore the importance of reducing long-term aid dependency and strengthening pathways toward recovery and self-reliance. Sustainable solutions for internally displaced and conflict-affected populations must go beyond immediate relief to support the revitalisation of local and national economies. In this context, enabling women and other marginalised groups to rebuild and diversify their livelihoods is critical, as they are often among the most affected by economic shocks yet play a central role in household and community resilience.

The provision of targeted grants to support income generation, subsistence activities, and food production has proven particularly effective in enhancing economic security and mitigating vulnerability to future crises. These measures are especially important given the extensive destruction of local businesses, which has resulted in elevated unemployment levels across many regions. Concurrently, the closure or disruption of schools and childcare facilities has significantly increased unpaid care responsibilities, disproportionately affecting women, single parents, and caregivers. Pre-existing gender inequalities, including wage gaps and occupational segregation, have been further exacerbated by the war, pushing many women into informal, unstable, and low-paid employment.

Against this backdrop, the SEED project demonstrates that economic empowerment initiatives targeting women and vulnerable groups are a critical complement to humanitarian assistance. By addressing both immediate livelihood needs and longer-term structural constraints, such interventions contribute to strengthening community resilience, promoting inclusive recovery, and laying the foundations for sustainable development in Ukraine. In doing so, SEED supports not only individual economic security but also broader socio-economic stabilisation during a prolonged period of crisis and recovery.

Let’s concider the total support of women empovering in figures.

Efforts to advance gender equality, women’s economic empowerment, and gender-responsive recovery in Ukraine during the period 2022–2025 have involved a wide range of international actors, including the European Union (EU), United Nations entities—most notably UN Women and the Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF)—as well as bilateral donors and multilateral partnerships. While overall international assistance to Ukraine has increased substantially since the onset of the full-scale invasion in 2022, funding explicitly earmarked for women’s empowerment remains comparatively limited and is often embedded within broader humanitarian, recovery, and civil society support frameworks [33-37].

According to United Nations data, total official development assistance (ODA) to Ukraine rose sharply from approximately USD 1.3 billion in 2021 to nearly USD 18.9 billion in 2022, reflecting the scale of the humanitarian and recovery response. However, only around USD 44 million of this assistance was allocated to programmes in which gender equality constituted the principal objective. This discrepancy highlights a persistent gap between overall recovery financing and resources specifically targeted at advancing women's rights, leadership, and economic participation [34-37].

In response to these challenges, the Alliance for Gender-Responsive and Inclusive Recovery in Ukraine was launched at the Ukraine Recovery Conference (URC) to promote systematic gender mainstreaming across recovery financing and policy frameworks. Initial commitments by alliance members totalled approximately €46 million, aimed at integrating gender considerations into recovery planning and implementation.

Under the Team Europe framework, the European Union—together with Sweden and Germany—announced a €44 million civil society support package for Ukraine in 2025. Within this allocation, €6 million was explicitly earmarked for initiatives addressing gender equality, women's leadership, and conflict-related gender challenges. In parallel, the EU launched a dedicated 2025 call for proposals allocating an additional €6 million to strengthen women's leadership and participation in peacebuilding and recovery processes, further reinforcing gender-focused civil society engagement [33].

Complementing this work, the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) allocated over USD 6.5 million in 2024 to support 54 women's civil society organisations operating across Ukraine. These grants focused on women's economic security, access to livelihoods, social services, and participation in peace and recovery processes, particularly for internally displaced and conflict-affected women [37].

In addition to international donor funding, domestic grant mechanisms have contributed to women's economic empowerment. Ukraine's Ministry of Economy implemented the "Create!" (Створюй!) grant programme to support entrepreneurship, including women-owned and women-led small and medium-sized enterprises. By mid-2024, the programme had allocated approximately UAH 140 million (around USD 4 million), with individual grants averaging USD 15,000, aimed at job creation and local economic recovery [36-37].

Smaller-scale initiatives implemented by international organisations and regional institutions, such as the Council of Europe, have also provided targeted grants—typically up to €15,000 per project—to support gender equality, women's rights advocacy, and community-level empowerment activities. Although modest in scale, these programmes play a complementary role in sustaining grassroots engagement and institutional reform [33-34].

Despite these commitments, gender equality remains underfunded relative to overall aid flows. OECD analyses indicate that only approximately 14 per cent of ODA to Ukraine in 2022–2023 included gender equality as either a principal or significant objective, while less than 1 per cent targeted gender equality as the primary focus. These structural funding gaps have constrained the capacity of women's rights organisations and underscore the need for sustained, predictable, and gender-earmarked financing to support women's leadership and economic recovery in Ukraine [34-36].

So, between 2022 and 2025, funding for women's empowerment initiatives in Ukraine has comprised tens of millions of euros and US dollars through targeted programmes, alongside broader recovery and civil society funding streams with integrated gender components. While progress has been made in elevating gender equality within recovery discourse, women-focused initiatives remain under-resourced relative to overall assistance. Strengthening gender-responsive budgeting and scaling up dedicated investments in women's economic empowerment and leadership are therefore critical for fostering inclusive recovery and long-term resilience in Ukraine.

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Chapter 3. International activity in the context of trade wars: opportunities and challenges for Ukraine

In recent years, the global economy has become increasingly interconnected, and international trade plays a vital role in the growth and development of many countries. However, this interdependence has also led to increased trade tensions and conflicts, and trade wars between major economic powers have significant implications for the global economy. For Ukraine, as a country that is heavily dependent on international trade, these trade wars can have a significant impact on its international activity.

This study aims to explore the opportunities and challenges for Ukraine's international activity in the context of trade wars. In particular, the study will analyze the impact of trade wars on Ukraine's export-oriented industries and explore potential opportunities for Ukraine to diversify its trade relations and enter new markets as a strategy to mitigate the negative impact of trade wars on the country's economy. In addition, the study will consider geopolitical considerations and potential risks associated with participation in international trade, especially in light of the ongoing Russian-Ukrainian war.

The object of the study is Ukraine's international activity, its opportunities and challenges in the context of trade wars that affect the global economy and international relations.

The subject of the study is practical tools to counteract the impact of trade wars on Ukraine's international activity, as well as the opportunities and challenges that arise for Ukraine in the context of such conflicts.

The study will consider the theoretical aspects of the impact of trade wars on the country's international activity, the analytical aspect of studying this impact on Ukraine, and the practical aspects of the impact of trade wars on the country's international activity.

The information basis for the study was provided by Ukrainian and foreign websites and articles with information and data for calculations, including the websites of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, the State Customs Service of Ukraine, the State Statistics Service of Ukraine, The New York Times, Trade Map, and others.

Trade wars have become a common phenomenon in the global economy, affecting countries' international activity and creating significant challenges for international trade. The term "trade wars" refers to economic conflict between countries. This leads to both countries implementing protectionist policies in the form of trade barriers against each other. These barriers can be established in various ways, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Tariffs (according to the Law "On the Customs Tariff of Ukraine") are a list of import duty rates, systematized in accordance with the Ukrainian classification of goods of international activity, which are levied on goods imported into the customs territory of Ukraine [1]. When one country imposes tariffs on imports from another country, this can make certain goods more expensive for consumers in the importing country and also make it more difficult for exporters from the country on which the tariffs are imposed to compete.
- Quotas are the maximum volume of a certain category of goods that may be exported from the territory of Ukraine (imported into the territory of Ukraine) during a specified period and which is determined in physical or value units, in accordance with the Law "On International Activity" [2].
- An embargo is a ban (restriction) on the export of goods to countries specified in relevant UN Security Council resolutions [3].
- Subsidized imports – the importation into the customs territory of the importing country of goods (or products) that benefit from subsidies granted for the production, processing, transportation, or export of such goods [4].
- Devaluation – a decrease in the exchange rate of the national currency against foreign currencies or international currency units (before the abolition of gold parities – against gold) as a result of an exchange rate imbalance [5].

Trade wars often start when one country's government believes that another country is engaging in unfair trade practices that are harming the markets of the first country. In an effort to protect domestic industry or create jobs, a government may impose a trade barrier, such as a tariff on a key product imported from another country. When each country imposes a trade barrier, the other country responds with another policy. This creates the concept of a “war”. Common causes include:

- protectionist policies – countries may impose tariffs or other trade barriers to protect domestic industries from foreign competition;
- unbalanced trade relations – a trade deficit or surplus can lead to tension between countries, as one of them may feel that it is being exploited or treated unfairly;
- intellectual property disputes – countries may accuse each other of intellectual property theft or unfair trade practices related to patents, trademarks, or copyrights;
- currency dumping – devaluing the national currency in order to increase exports of goods at prices below world prices. Currency dumping allows countries to capture markets. For it to be successful, the national currency must be devalued by more than the decline in its purchasing power on the domestic market [6]. Countries can manipulate exchange rates to gain advantages in international trade, leading to accusations of unfair practices. Thus, the Figure 1 shows export volumes and how they changed during currency crises and against the backdrop of political situations.
- Political tensions – trade can become a weapon in political disputes between countries, as exemplified by the trade war between the US and China [7].

Trade wars hurt consumer sentiment and business in both countries, negatively affecting various aspects of both countries' economies. On the other hand, some proponents argue that trade wars protect national interests and are beneficial to domestic businesses. A trade war that starts in one sector can spread and affect other sectors. Similarly, a war that starts between two countries can affect other countries that were not initially involved in the trade war [8].

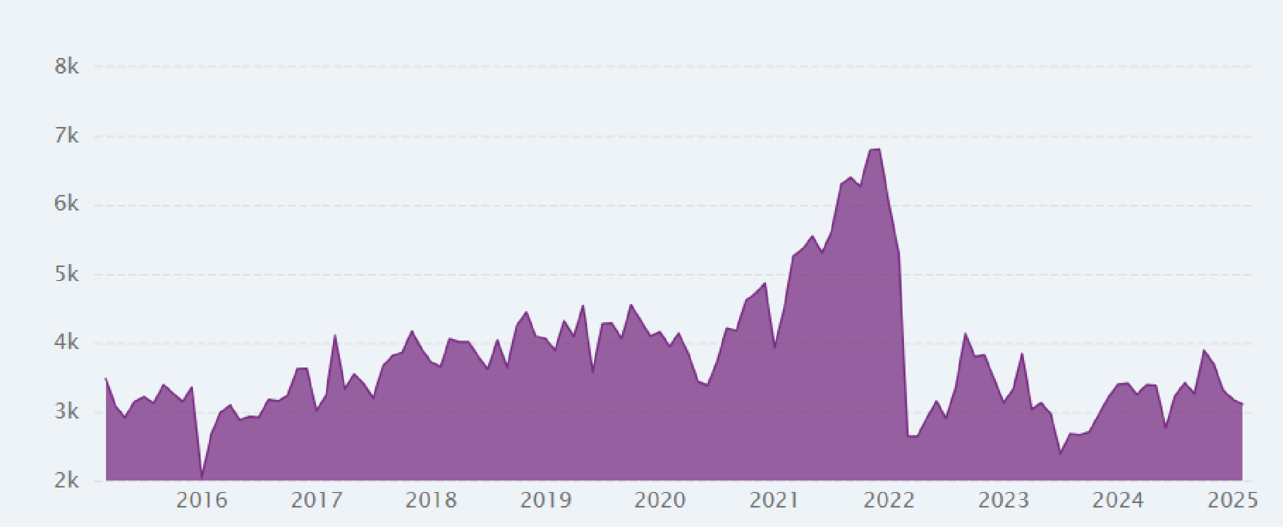

Figure 1. Total export of Ukraine 2015-2025*, USD bn

Source: compiled by the author based on data [37]

* for 2025, data for 9 months is presented

In recent years, trade wars have become a significant threat to global economic growth and stability, as numerous countries resort to trade restrictions and tariff increases. Trade wars have far-reaching consequences for the global economy. Countries engaged in trade wars can expect a number of significant consequences, including:

- Disruptions in trade flows. They can be seriously affected during trade wars, as countries may impose tariffs on imports from other countries. This can make imported goods more expensive, leading to lower demand and reduced trade volumes. As a result, Ukrainian exporters may face a decline in export volumes, which could have a negative impact on the country's economy;
- Disruptions in global supply chains. Trade wars can lead to a decline in global trade. As countries become more protectionist, it may become more difficult for companies to obtain components and raw materials from other countries. This can lead to increased costs, reduced efficiency, and production delays, which can ultimately lead to higher prices for consumers. This can have a domino effect, with the consequences being felt in many industries and countries;

- Reduction in trade volumes, as tariffs and other trade barriers make it more expensive to import and export goods. This could affect many industries and lead to job losses and economic decline;
- Trade diversion. When countries impose tariffs on imports from one country, importers may start sourcing goods from other countries where tariffs are lower. This can lead to changes in trade flows and a redistribution of trade patterns;
- Investors may also suffer from trade wars. Investors may be reluctant to invest in countries that are actively involved in international trade, as trade barriers can lead to lower profits and increased risks. This can slow economic growth, as FDI is an important driver of economic development.
- Higher government spending on measures to mitigate trade restrictions. Governments must spend more on measures to mitigate trade barriers, such as subsidies, tax breaks, and financial support for affected industries, to offset the negative impact of trade barriers and tariffs. This can lead to an increase in budget deficits and public debt, which can have long-term economic consequences. In addition, increased government spending on measures to mitigate trade barriers may divert resources from other public policy priorities, such as education, health care, and infrastructure, which could negatively affect social welfare and economic development.
- Negative impact on global efforts to reduce poverty and achieve sustainable development goals. Trade wars can reduce demand for exports, slow economic growth, and limit employment opportunities. This can lead to increased poverty, inequality, and social unrest. In addition, it could undermine international cooperation and solidarity, which are essential for achieving the SDGs, which require the collective efforts of all countries to address global challenges. Trade wars could weaken international institutions and disrupt global cooperation, making it more difficult to achieve the SDGs;
- Increased political tensions and potential diplomatic consequences between participating countries [9, 10].

In general, trade wars lead to increased uncertainty and volatility in financial markets, which can cause businesses to hold back on investment and consumers to cut back on spending. Some industries and countries may suffer more than others some countries will see a decline in exports, while others will see a decline in domestic industry. Although trade wars cause disruptions in the global economy, they can also lead to certain positive developments. For example, they can force countries to reevaluate their economic relations and diversify their trading partners. In addition, they can encourage some countries to invest more in domestic industry and reduce their dependence on imports.

As a country that actively participates in international trade, Ukraine may be significantly affected by trade wars on world trade. The consequences for Ukraine may be as follows:

- Decline in exports: if countries with which Ukraine has close trade relations introduce tariffs or other trade barriers, Ukrainian exports to these countries may decline, leading to a drop in export volumes and a potential slowdown in economic growth;
- Increased cost of goods: trade wars could lead to an increase in the cost of goods, which could affect both importers and exporters. This could lead to higher prices for Ukrainian consumers and a potential decline in the competitiveness of Ukrainian exporters;
- Decrease in foreign direct investment: trade wars may cause investors to hesitate to invest in countries that are actively involved in international trade, such as Ukraine. This could lead to a reduction in foreign direct investment and a potential slowdown in economic growth;
- Potential changes in trade patterns: if trade patterns change as a result of trade wars, Ukrainian exports may be redirected to other countries with lower tariffs, leading to a redistribution of trade patterns.
- Negative impact on domestic industry: industries that are heavily dependent on imports may face rising costs, while industries that are heavily dependent on exports may suffer from reduced demand.

Thus, the impact of trade wars on global trade can have significant consequences for Ukraine's international activity. The country's significant dependence on exports and participation in international trade means that disruptions in global trade flows can have far-reaching consequences for the Ukrainian economy [11].

In order to normalize and attempt to resolve the consequences of trade wars, the country's economic strategy must take into account the potential impact of wars on its economy, as well as its own economic strengths and weaknesses. Here are some possible features of the country's economic strategy and prospects in the context of a trade war:

1. Diversification of trading partners. Ukraine may seek to diversify its trading partners to reduce its dependence on any one country or region. This could involve expanding trade with countries that are not involved in the trade war or strengthening economic ties with countries that have not been directly affected by the trade war.

2. Protecting domestic industry. Ukraine could implement policies to protect domestic industry from foreign competition, for example through tariffs or subsidies. This could be done to support industries that are particularly vulnerable to the trade war or to encourage the growth of industries that the country considers strategically important.

3. Investing in innovation. The country may invest in research and development to create new products or technologies that are less affected by the trade war or give the country a competitive advantage in the global market.

4. Negotiations and diplomacy. A country may engage in negotiations and diplomatic efforts to resolve a trade war or mitigate its impact on the country's economy. These may include bilateral or multilateral negotiations with other countries or engagement with international organizations such as the World Trade Organization.

5. Stimulus measures. A country may implement stimulus measures to boost its economy during a trade war. These measures may include tax cuts,

increased government spending, or monetary policy measures such as lowering interest rates.

In general, a country's economic strategy in a trade war depends on a number of factors, including its own economic strengths and weaknesses, the nature of the trade war, and the policy instruments available to the country's policymakers. Moreover, a country's economic strategy during a trade war plays a decisive role in determining the impact of the trade war on its international activity. Developing a strategic plan aimed at diversifying markets, increasing local production, and expanding supply chains can help mitigate the negative effects of a trade war, while investing in research and development can lead to the creation of new products or technologies that are less affected by the trade war.

Ukraine's exports have been and remain an important driver of the country's economy, accounting for a significant part of its GDP and providing jobs for millions of people. The country's main exports were metals, chemical products, machinery, and agricultural products, particularly grains and oilseeds. In recent years, Ukraine has made significant efforts to diversify its export markets and increase the value of exports by moving up the value chain through increased innovation and technology adoption. However, with the start of Russia's full-scale armed invasion of Ukraine, everything changed and exports declined sharply.

According to data from Diia.Business and the State Customs Service of Ukraine, Ukrainian exports showed very positive dynamics in January and February 2022, with growth of 34% compared to the same period last year. However, exports collapsed in March, falling by 50%. In the first eight months of 2022, Ukrainian exports amounted to $29 billion. This is one-third less than in the same period last year (-31%). In real terms, Ukrainian exports amounted to 63 million tons, which is 59% less than last year. A slow recovery in exports began in May, and the largest volume of exports since the start of the large-scale war was recorded in August due to the unblocking of Ukrainian Black Sea ports (almost $3.4 billion) [12]. According to the overall results for 2022, Ukraine's exports amounted to US$44.1 billion, which is

35.1% less than in the previous year [13]. A visual comparison chart of Ukraine's exports in 2021-2022 is presented in Figure 2.

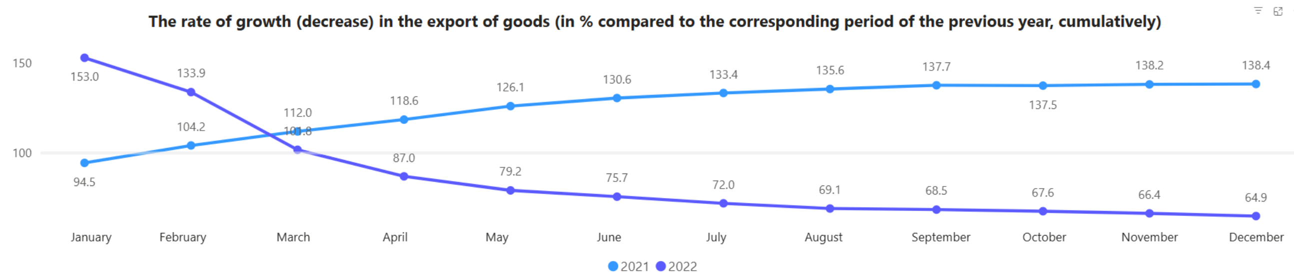

Figure 2. Visual comparison chart of Ukraine's exports in 2021-2022

Source: compiled by the author based on data [37]

In 2022 export of goods amounted to 44,148.8 million dollars. USA, or 64.9% compared to 2021, import - 55,273.5 million dollars, or 75.9%. The negative balance amounted to USD 11,124.7 million. (in 2021, it is also negative - 4,770.8 million dollars). The export-import coverage ratio was 0.80 (0.93 in 2021).

However, even without taking into account the current protracted armed conflict, Ukraine's export sector has been and remains vulnerable to external shocks, such as trade wars, which can disrupt supply chains, increase costs, and reduce demand for export products. Tariff and non-tariff barriers imposed by trading partners also limit Ukraine's access to important markets, which will further affect its export performance.

In recent years, Ukraine has faced trade barriers from several key trading partners, including:

- Reduction in export volumes. Trade wars can lead to a decline in demand for Ukrainian exports due to increased trade barriers, tariffs, and other trade restrictions imposed by trading partners. In 2018, Ukrainian exports to Russia fell by 15.4% due to the trade war between the two countries [14];
- Decrease in export prices for Ukrainian exports due to increased competition and excess supply in the market. For example, the trade war between the US and China led to a fall in world steel prices, which had a significant impact on the

Ukrainian metallurgical industry, which accounted for a significant share of Ukrainian exports. The US imposed tariffs on steel imports from several countries, including Ukraine, which led to a decrease in Ukrainian steel exports to the US [15];

- Shifts in export markets, as countries seek new trading partners to compensate for the loss of trade with their traditional partners. For example, the trade war between the US and China has led to increased demand for Ukrainian soybeans from China as an alternative to American soybeans [15];
- Increased competition, making it difficult for Ukrainian exporters to maintain their market share. For example, the trade war between the US and China has led to increased competition for Ukrainian agricultural exports, as other countries seek to fill the void left by US agricultural exports to China [15];
- Disruption of supply chains, making it difficult for Ukrainian exporters to access the necessary resources and materials for their products. For example, the trade war between the US and China disrupted global technology supply chains, which affected Ukrainian electronics exports [15];
- Decrease in foreign investment. Trade wars can hinder foreign investment in Ukraine, affecting export-oriented industries. The trade war between the US and China has led to a decline in foreign investment in the Ukrainian metallurgical industry [15];
- Increased production costs for Ukrainian exporters due to higher tariffs and other trade barriers. Thus, in the trade war between the US and China, US tariffs on steel and aluminum imports increased production costs for Ukrainian steel exporters [15];
- Increased trade uncertainty. Trade wars can increase uncertainty and volatility in the global market, making it difficult for Ukrainian exporters to plan and make investment decisions. For example, the trade war between the US and China has created uncertainty in global financial markets, affecting Ukraine's ability to attract foreign investment [15];

However, trade wars can also create opportunities for the Ukrainian export industry. For example, as some countries seek to reduce their dependence on imports from countries involved in trade wars, they may look for new suppliers, including from Ukraine. This provides an opportunity for Ukrainian exporters to diversify their markets and expand their customer base. This is what happened during the trade war between the US and China which created new opportunities for Ukraine to export agricultural products to China.

The list of opportunities that may arise from trade wars includes:

- increased competitiveness;
- development of new industries;
- conclusion of trade agreements with other countries and expansion of export markets;
- development of new technologies that will help companies mitigate the negative impact of trade barriers;
- increased government support for export-oriented industries.

Thus, the impact of trade wars on Ukraine's export performance is complex, as they can create both challenges and opportunities. While trade barriers may lead to a decline in demand for Ukrainian exports, they may also create opportunities to enter new markets. It is therefore crucial for Ukraine to closely monitor trade tensions and develop strategies to mitigate any negative consequences for its export sector.

The Ukrainian import industry is a crucial aspect of the country's economy, as it provides access to goods and services that the country cannot produce domestically. The importance of some industry for Ukraine's economy is evident in its impact on employment and economic growth.

Let’s consider the total import dynamics through the last 10 years (Figure 3).

Ukraine’s annual imports fluctuated throughout 2015–2024, yet the overall trajectory remained upward, reflecting both structural economic changes and external shocks. The most pronounced surge occurred in 2023–2024, when the full-scale war fundamentally reshaped the country’s demand profile. Import dynamics in this period were largely driven by the urgent need to sustain critical infrastructure, maintain military resilience, and support essential civilian functions.

A significant share of the increase stemmed from the rising demand for energy equipment and fuel, as repeated attacks on Ukraine's energy system required constant replacement of transformers, generators, high-voltage equipment, and alternative energy components. At the same time, imports of defense and dual-use goods expanded sharply, including protective gear, surveillance technologies, drones, communication systems, and spare parts for military and humanitarian purposes.

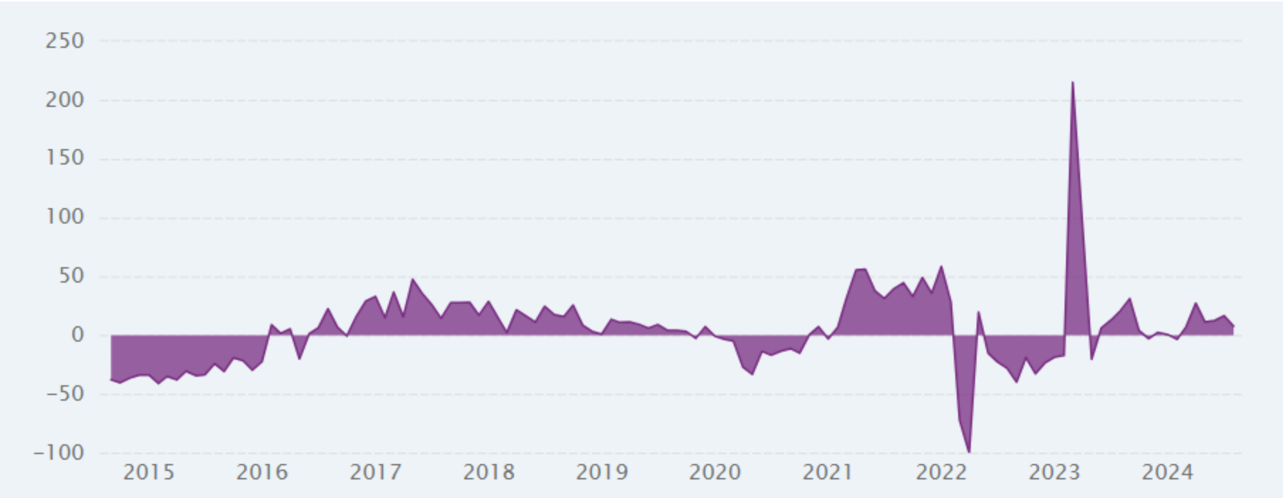

Figure 3. Total import of Ukraine 2015-2025, USD bn

Source compiled by the author based on data [37]

The need to stabilize industrial production and restore damaged facilities boosted imports of machinery, mechanical equipment, and transport components, while the healthcare system's heightened burden increased the inflow of medicines, medical devices, and hospital supplies. Additionally, the destruction of residential and industrial infrastructure created a steady demand for construction materials, such as cement, metal products, timber, and insulation materials. All of these categories were further influenced by higher logistics costs, insurance premiums, and global price volatility, which amplified the value of imports even when physical volumes grew more slowly.

Looking ahead to 2025, Ukraine's imports are expected to remain at an elevated level. This trend will be supported by continued defense procurement, large-scale infrastructure repairs, expanded reconstruction programs, and increased access to international financing from partners and development institutions. As reconstruction accelerates, the structure of imports is likely to shift gradually toward building materials, industrial machinery, transport equipment, and technologies aimed at modernizing production and improving energy resilience. Overall, import intensity will remain a critical component of Ukraine's wartime and post-war economic recovery strategy.

Let's compare dynamics of total export and import in Ukraine (Figure 4).

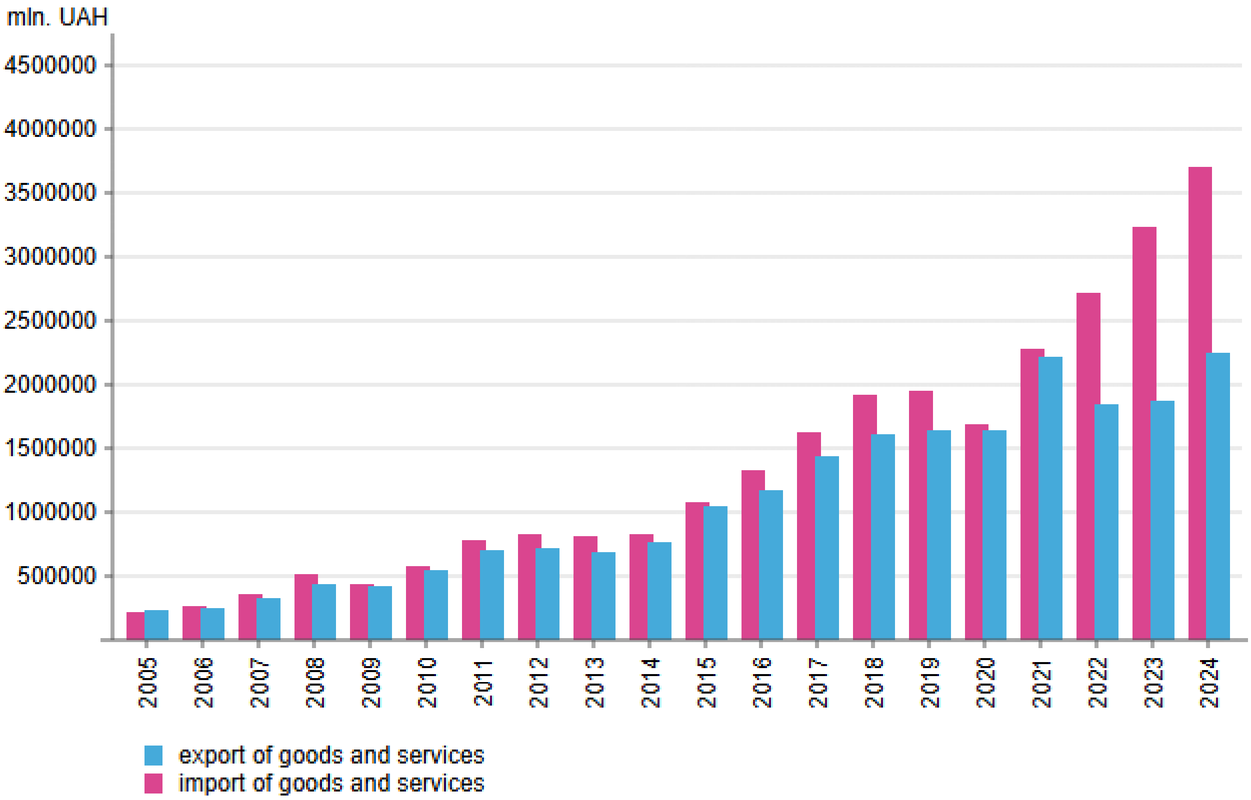

Figure 4. Total import and export of Ukraine 2005-2024, mln UAH

Source: compiled by the author based on data [37]

We can see that along with the growth of export-import operations, imports in Ukraine are chronically outstripping exports, and their difference is getting bigger and bigger.

Many businesses in Ukraine rely on imported goods for their operations. In addition, by importing goods, Ukraine increases its economic activity, as businesses gain access to the resources they need to expand their operations and compete in the global market.

According to data provided by the Ministry of Economy of Ukraine, the total volume of Ukraine’s imports in 2022 reached $55.3 billion, reflecting a 24.1% decline compared to the previous year. This sharp contraction was primarily driven by the profound disruptions caused by the full-scale invasion of the russian federation, which resulted in large-scale destruction of critical infrastructure, a reduction in domestic production capacity, temporary occupation of key industrial regions, and severe logistical constraints. The decline in household incomes and a contraction in consumer demand also contributed to the overall reduction in import volumes.

Despite these negative dynamics, certain categories of essential goods—such as energy equipment, fuel, medical supplies, and defense-related items—maintained or even increased their import share due to wartime necessities. Meanwhile, imports of consumer goods, industrial raw materials, and capital equipment decreased substantially as businesses and households adjusted to heightened uncertainty and operational risks.

For clarity and comparative analysis, Figure 5 presents a visual chart illustrating the dynamics of Ukraine’s imports in 2021–2022, highlighting the scale of the decline and the structural shifts in import composition observed during the first year of the full-scale war. This graphical representation enables a more precise understanding of the changes in external trade flows and their correlation with the broader macroeconomic environment.

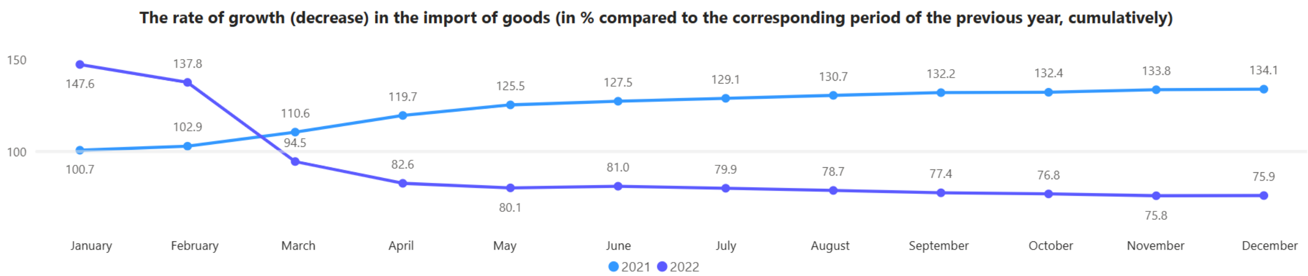

Figure 5. Visual comparison chart of Ukraine's imports in 2021-2022

Source: compiled by the author based on data [37]

These countries accounted for a significant share of Ukraine’s total import flows, reflecting both long-standing supply-chain linkages and the structure of Ukraine’s pre-war economic dependencies. China served as a key supplier of machinery, electronics, industrial components, chemical products, and consumer goods, maintaining its position as Ukraine’s largest individual import partner. Germany played a major role in supplying high-value-added products, including automotive components, mechanical equipment, pharmaceuticals, and technological goods.

Poland, meanwhile, acted as both a production partner and a logistics hub within the EU, supplying machinery, processed foods, household goods, and intermediate industrial products.

The distribution of these import partners in 2021 provides important context for understanding how the full-scale war later forced Ukraine to reorient its external trade structure, diversify supply channels, and reduce dependence on markets tied to the aggressor states. Figure 6 visually illustrates the relative shares of these countries in Ukraine’s total imports during the last full pre-war year.

Ukraine imports a wide range of goods, including machinery, electronics, chemicals, vehicles, and food products. However, the country is particularly dependent on imports in certain sectors, including energy and industry. In terms of energy, Ukraine imports significant amounts of natural gas, oil, and coal to meet its energy needs.

Trade wars can have significant consequences for Ukraine's ability to import essential goods and services, which in turn can affect the country's economy, including the following:

- Higher tariffs on imported goods, making them more expensive for Ukrainian consumers. For example, in 2018, the US imposed tariffs on steel and aluminum imports from several countries, including Ukraine. This increased the cost of these materials for Ukrainian manufacturers, which could potentially lead to higher prices for consumers and lower demand for these products [15];

- Disruption of supply chains, as businesses will try to avoid tariffs and find new suppliers. For example, in 2018, China and the US started a trade war, which led to disruptions in the global soybean market. This had a ripple effect on Ukraine, which is a major soybean producer and exports significant volumes to China. As demand for Ukrainian soybeans fell, farmers and exporters were left with excess supply and reduced incomes [15];
- Reduced access to markets in response to tariff increases by other countries. For example, in 2019, Russia banned imports of certain Ukrainian food products, including meat, dairy products, and certain fruits and vegetables [18];
- Currency fluctuations, which can affect the cost of imported goods. For example, in 2018, the US imposed tariffs on Chinese goods, leading to a depreciation of the Chinese yuan. This made imports from China more expensive for Ukraine, leading to higher prices for consumers and lower demand for these goods;
- Decrease in foreign investment, as businesses become more cautious about investing in countries involved in trade disputes. For example, the US imposed tariffs on Chinese goods, which led to a reduction in Chinese investment in Ukraine's infrastructure and energy sectors [15];
- Increased inflation, as the cost of imported goods rises. For example, in 2014, Russia imposed a ban on food imports from several countries, including Ukraine. This led to higher food prices in Ukraine, as demand for food increased while availability decreased [19].

In general, the impact of trade wars depends on many factors, including the specific goods involved, the intensity and duration of the trade war, and the country's ability to adapt to changing market conditions.

Nevertheless, trade wars can create both challenges and opportunities for the Ukrainian import industry. While the challenges were discussed in the previous paragraphs, here are some potential opportunities:

- Introduction of tariffs and trade barriers may force Ukrainian importers to look for new suppliers in other countries. This could lead to the development of new trade relations and diversification of the Ukrainian import market, reducing dependence on a single country or region;

- Increased competitiveness. Trade wars can create opportunities for Ukrainian businesses to invest in new technologies and products, making them more competitive in the global market. This can help Ukrainian businesses offer better products at lower prices, making them more attractive to foreign buyers.
- Expansion into new markets. If Ukraine does not participate directly in a trade war, it can take advantage of new opportunities to export goods to countries affected by the conflict. For example, if China and the US are in a trade war, Ukrainian exporters will be able to sell more goods to China as an alternative supplier.
- Innovation and growth. The challenges posed by trade wars may force Ukrainian businesses to innovate and seek new avenues for growth and expansion. This could lead to the development of new products and services, which would increase the competitiveness of the Ukrainian economy as a whole.
- Stimulating domestic production If trade wars lead to shortages or higher prices for imported goods, Ukrainian businesses may be incentivized to invest in domestic production, leading to the development of new industries and the creation of new jobs.

Overall, while trade wars can pose significant challenges for Ukraine's import industry, they can also create opportunities for businesses to expand their markets and increase their competitiveness. The key is to remain vigilant, be flexible and adaptive, and continue to seek out new opportunities as they arise.

Increased tensions in global trade have led to the introduction of trade barriers and tariffs, which have negatively affected the economies of many countries. Ukraine, as a country that is heavily dependent on international trade, is not immune to these effects. To address this, various policy measures are being considered that Ukraine could take to mitigate the negative effects of trade wars. In particular, the effectiveness of trade diversification, trade agreements, and trade facilitation as potential solutions.

Trade diversification is a policy measure that involves expanding the range of goods and markets to which a country exports, reducing dependence on a single market or commodity. This approach helps to spread risks and minimize the impact of trade wars on a country's economy. When a country is overly dependent on a single market or commodity, any disruptions in trade, such as the imposition of tariffs or trade barriers, can have a significant impact on the economy. The goal of mitigating the effects of trade wars is to maintain economic stability and competitiveness. By implementing a trade diversification policy, a country can potentially reduce the negative impact of trade disruptions on its economy, thereby maintaining economic stability. In addition, trade diversification can help a country remain competitive in the global market by expanding its customer base and developing new export opportunities [20].

The potential advantages of trade diversification include reduced dependence on a single market or commodity and access to new markets, but the disadvantages include costs, as entering new markets can be expensive and require investment in new infrastructure, marketing, and supply chains, as well as difficulties in finding new markets.

An example of such a measure is Canada's response to the trade war between the US and China. The country has focused on diversifying its trade relations, especially in Asia. In 2018, Canada signed the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership, which opened up new export opportunities in Asia [21].

Thus, trade diversification can be an effective policy measure to mitigate the negative effects of trade wars, but it also has potential drawbacks that must be carefully considered when designing and implementing diversification strategies.

Next are trade agreements. Trade agreements are formal agreements between two or more countries that regulate their trade relations. These agreements typically involve reducing or eliminating tariffs and other trade barriers, as well as establishing rules governing trade in goods and services, intellectual property, and investment [22].

Trade agreements can help mitigate the effects of trade wars in several ways. First, they can provide a framework for stable and predictable trade relations between countries, reducing uncertainty and the risk of trade disputes. Second, trade agreements can open up new markets for exports, providing countries with new opportunities for economic growth and diversification. Third, trade agreements can help reduce the negative impact of tariffs and other trade barriers by ensuring that trade in goods and services is governed by a set of rules that promote fair competition and market access.

For Ukraine's economy, trade agreements can be an important policy measure to mitigate the effects of trade wars. In recent years, Ukraine has signed several trade agreements, including the Association Agreement with the European Union [23] and the Free Trade Agreement with Canada [24]. By providing a basis for stable and predictable trade relations with other countries, trade agreements can help Ukraine overcome the negative effects of trade wars and maintain its economic competitiveness.

Finally, trade facilitation should be mentioned. Trade facilitation refers to policies and measures aimed at reducing the costs, time, and complexity of trade transactions between countries. This includes measures such as simplifying customs procedures, improving transport infrastructure, and upgrading information and communication technology systems [25].

Trade facilitation can help mitigate the effects of trade wars in several ways. First, by reducing the time and cost of trade transactions, trade facilitation measures can help businesses maintain their competitiveness in the face of trade disruptions. Second, by improving the efficiency of customs procedures and reducing the risk of delays or errors, trade facilitation measures can help minimize the negative impact of tariffs and other trade barriers. Third, by promoting transparency and predictability in trade operations, trade facilitation measures can help reduce uncertainty and the risk of disputes between countries.

In the context of Ukraine, trade facilitation can be an important policy measure to mitigate the effects of trade wars. In recent years, Ukraine has made progress in improving trade facilitation measures, including through the introduction of a new electronic customs system and improvements in transport infrastructure. These measures have helped reduce the time and cost of trade transactions, making Ukrainian businesses more competitive and better able to withstand the negative effects of trade disruptions. By continuing to invest in trade facilitation measures, Ukraine can further enhance its competitiveness and resilience in the face of trade wars.

Thus, the government's response to trade wars can have a significant impact on the country's ability to mitigate the negative effects of these shocks on its economy. Taken together, these measures can help Ukraine maintain its economic competitiveness and resilience to withstand the negative effects of trade wars.

Trade wars are not an invention of modern society. Such battles have been going on since states began trading with each other. For example, in the 17th century, colonial states fought each other for the right to trade exclusively with overseas colonies.

The British Empire has a long history of such trade battles. An example is the 19th-century Opium Wars with China.

The Opium Wars were a series of armed conflicts that took place between 1839 and 1860 between these countries. The wars were provoked by China's attempt to stop the illegal opium trade conducted by British merchants, who had been selling opium produced in India to Chinese consumers for years. China's efforts to ban the drug were met with resistance from the British, who had significant economic interests in the opium trade. Attempts to resolve the conflict were unsuccessful, and the emperor eventually sent troops to confiscate the drugs. The conflict consisted of several naval battles and land battles, each of which was won by the British.

Thanks to their military superiority, the British were able to force China to sign a series of unequal treaties that opened the way for China to expand its international trade and influence. These treaties also led to the transfer of Hong Kong to British control and forced China to pay large sums of money to the British as reparations for the conflict. The Opium Wars had a profound impact on China, leading to the loss of sovereignty and territorial concessions, as well as exacerbating social and economic unrest. For the British Empire, the wars led to expanded access to Chinese markets and increased economic and political influence in East Asia [26].

In 1930, the United States passed the Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act, which raised tariffs to protect American farmers from European agricultural products. This law increased already high import duties to nearly 40%. In response, several countries imposed their own higher tariffs, leading to a decline in global trade worldwide. When America entered the Great Depression, which was largely contributed to by destructive trade policies, President Roosevelt began to pass several laws aimed at reducing trade barriers, including the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act [26].

The chicken war began in mid-1962 when six member countries of the Common Market — France, West Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg — raised the common external tariff on poultry meat to 13.43 cents per pound. In Germany, the largest market for American chicken exports, the tariff was 4.8 cents per pound. For American poultry farmers, the tariff increase meant the effective elimination of their lucrative export market in European regions.

The tariff was intended to stimulate the development of German poultry farmers and promote the agricultural self-sufficiency of the European Economic Community, thereby destroying the price advantage of American poultry farmers, and their exports began to fall rapidly. The American poultry industry protested strongly. Complaints reached Washington, because this was much more than just a loss of chicken exports. Administration officials feared that the chicken war was the first step in a protectionist agricultural policy by the European Economic Community.

In early 1963, the United States called on the Common Market countries to change their tariffs on poultry meat. The market's proposal to reduce the tariff by 10 percent was rejected as insufficient. The United States, in turn, threatened to impose retaliatory tariffs worth $46 million. France and West Germany reacted angrily to this threat. Doubts grew that the chicken war could be contained.

Then, in early autumn, the United States agreed to arbitration by a panel of experts convened under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. The panel ruled that the losses incurred by the United States due to Common Market tariffs amounted to $26 billion.

Shortly after taking office, President Johnson announced tariff increases on trucks, brandy, dextrin, and potato starch totaling about $26 million. The new tariffs affected West German trucks, French cognac, and Dutch potato products.

Thus, a truce was reached in the chicken war. Both sides claimed victory, with the United States on the principle of retaliation and the Common Market on the underestimation of US losses. However, few were truly satisfied with this decision [27].

The Cod War (1958-1961) between Iceland and Great Britain. The Cod War was a series of disputes between Iceland and Great Britain that took place between 1958 and 1961. The conflict centered on fishing rights in the North Atlantic, as Iceland sought to establish control over its territorial waters and the fishing grounds located within them.

At the time, fishing was a vital industry for Iceland, and the country was concerned about overfishing by foreign vessels, particularly from the United Kingdom. In 1958, Iceland extended its fishing s from three miles to four miles, and then to 12 miles in 1959. This move was met with resistance from the British, who argued that waters beyond the three-mile zone were international waters and that they had the right to fish there.

The Cod War led to a series of clashes between Icelandic coast guard vessels and British fishing trawlers, with each side using different tactics to defend its position. Iceland even threatened to leave NATO and join the Soviet Union if their demands for greater control over their fishing grounds were not met.

The conflict was finally resolved in 1961 when the British agreed to recognize Iceland's extended fishing limits and compensate Iceland for lost revenue as a result of their withdrawal from the disputed waters. The Cod War had a significant long-term impact on the fishing industry in the North Atlantic, leading to the creation of exclusive economic zones and the development of new laws and regulations governing international fishing rights [28].

In summary, analysis of examples of trade wars has shown that trade tensions and disputes have a significant impact on world trade and individual countries, including Ukraine.

Trade wars affect almost all regions of the world. They have a powerful impact on other countries that are not directly involved in these battles. In general, they all have similar consequences, both positive and negative.

In recent years, Ukraine has taken significant steps in developing its international activity policy and strategy. The country is actively seeking to integrate into the global economy and is taking a number of measures to promote trade and investment.

One of the key elements of Ukraine's international policy is the diversification of its trade relations. After the annexation of Crimea in 2014 and the subsequent conflict in the territories of Ukraine, the state has tried to reduce its dependence on Russia as a trading partner. As part of these efforts, Ukraine has signed free trade agreements with the European Union, Canada, and Israel, among others. These agreements have opened up new markets for Ukrainian exporters and helped increase trade with other countries. Diversification can be achieved by exploring new markets and expanding the range of products exported. By diversifying its trade relations, Ukraine can reduce its dependence on a few key trading partners, which can help mitigate the impact of trade wars.

In addition to diversifying its trade relations, Ukraine is working to improve its business environment and attract foreign investment. The country has implemented a series of reforms aimed at reducing corruption, improving the rule of law, and simplifying bureaucratic procedures. These reforms have helped create a more favorable environment for foreign investors and contributed to an increase in foreign direct investment in the country.

Optimizing the trade process and reducing trade costs can make Ukrainian exports more competitive in the global market. To achieve this, Ukraine needs to implement trade facilitation measures such as simplifying customs procedures, reducing administrative barriers, and improving trade infrastructure. This will help reduce trade costs and make it easier for businesses to trade with international partners.

Also, concluding trade agreements that can give Ukraine access to new markets, reduce trade barriers, and create a stable and predictable trading environment. Ukraine should focus on negotiating and signing trade agreements with key partners to secure market access and protect its interests in international trade.

Encouraging domestic production of goods and services can help Ukraine reduce its dependence on imported goods and mitigate the impact of trade wars. This can be achieved by creating favorable conditions for the development of domestic business and increasing investment in domestic production.

In summary, developing resilience to the challenges and opportunities created by trade wars requires a combination of measures, the implementation of which will help Ukraine maintain the stability of its international activity and increase its competitiveness in the global market.

In conclusion, although Ukraine has made progress in developing its international activity policy and strategy, the country continues to face significant challenges. Continued efforts to diversify trade relations, improve the business environment, and attract foreign investment will be critical to Ukraine's economic development and long-term stability.

After conducting an in-depth analysis of international activity in the context of trade wars, it can be concluded that Ukraine faces both significant opportunities and challenges in this area.

One of the key opportunities for Ukraine in this context is the potential to diversify trade relations and expand export markets. Trade wars between major economic powers can lead to changes in global trade, allowing countries such as Ukraine to gain access to new markets and increase their global competitiveness. In addition, increased control of global supply chains may create opportunities for

Ukrainian businesses to fill gaps and become new suppliers of certain goods and services.

However, trade wars can also create significant problems for Ukraine's economy. Higher tariffs, trade barriers, and other protectionist measures could lead to lower demand for Ukrainian goods and services, negatively affecting the country's export-oriented industries. In addition, the uncertainty created by trade wars could lead to a decline in foreign investment, as well as a general sense of economic instability, which could affect economic growth and stability.

Furthermore, Ukraine's geopolitical position may also be a significant factor in its ability to overcome the challenges associated with trade wars. As a country located between major economic powers, Ukraine must carefully balance its economic interests with political considerations, especially given the ongoing war with Russia and the potential for further political instability in the region.

Therefore, although international activity in the context of trade wars creates both opportunities and challenges for Ukraine, the country must carefully consider the potential risks and benefits of participating in international trade and adapt its policies and strategies accordingly. By focusing on diversifying its trade relations, reducing its dependence on any single market, and developing a strong and resilient economy, Ukraine will be able to continue to navigate the complex global trade environment and maintain its economic competitiveness in the years to come.

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Chapter 4. International activity of agricultural enterprises in Ukraine

In recent years the international activity of Ukrainian agricultural enterprises is shaped by the ongoing war, shifts in global markets, and evolving trade relations. Despite severe challenges, Ukraine remains a significant player in global food supply.

The Russian invasion continues to disrupt agricultural production and logistics, especially in eastern and southern regions. Blocked or threatened Black Sea ports have forced Ukraine to rely on alternative routes via the EU and the Danube, increasing transport costs and complexity. At the same time, Ukraine has strengthened economic integration with the EU through preferential trade arrangements. The EU remains Ukraine's dominant trading partner, supported by tariff-free access. China, India, Turkey, Egypt, and other Middle Eastern and African states continue to be major buyers of Ukrainian grain and oilseeds. Ukraine is also seeking to expand into niche markets in North America, particularly for sunflower oil and organic products.

Ukraine continues to be a major global exporter of wheat, corn, barley, and sunflower oil, although production remains below pre-war levels. Agricultural enterprises are diversifying crop structures expanding soybeans, legumes, and higher-value crops to maintain competitiveness. Export flows remain directed primarily to the EU, Middle East, North Africa, and Asia, where demand for Ukrainian grain and oilseeds is strong.

Global concerns over food security reinforce Ukraine's importance as a supplier to food-insecure regions. Sustainability requirements, especially from EU markets, are driving Ukrainian enterprises to adopt more environmentally responsible practices and precision agriculture technologies. Compliance with higher standards in areas such as pesticide use, carbon footprint, and traceability is increasingly necessary for maintaining international market access.

International investment continues, though at a cautious pace due to security risks. Foreign capital and international financial institutions support infrastructure rebuilding and modernization. Technological innovation - in automation, digital monitoring, and precision farming is becoming essential for compensating for labor shortages and improving efficiency.

Thus, the agricultural sector of Ukraine's economy faces a number of challenges related to the war, disruption of logistics channels, the need to diversify markets, labor shortages, and the need to harmonize with international sustainable development standards in order to maintain export positions. The high yield in 2021 allowed Ukrainian farmers to balance their financial resources at the beginning of the full-scale invasion thanks to significant carryover stocks.

However, this financial cushion has been exhausted, and most market operators now note that difficult times with many challenges have come for the agricultural sector, and only those enterprises that can adapt to the new conditions will be able to survive.

We will compare the state of the agricultural sector before and after the full-scale invasion, identify the challenges currently facing the development of agricultural enterprises, and make further predictions about the prospects for the international activities of Ukraine's agricultural sector.

Agriculture has long been one of the most significant sectors of Ukraine's economy next to industry and trade. For the example, in gross value added structure agriculture occupied 10,8% in 2021 (Figure 1).

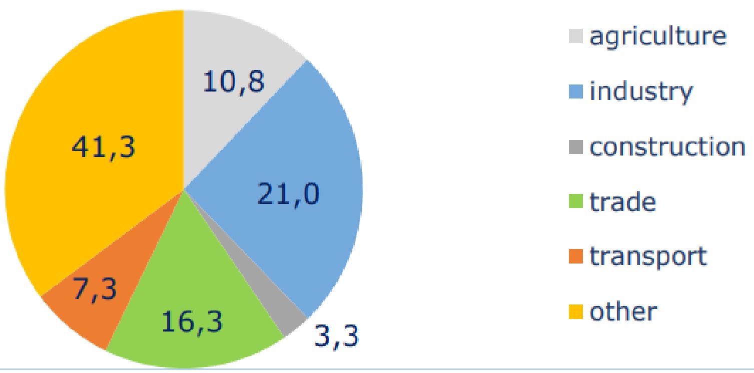

Figure 1. Gross value added structure in Ukraine, 2021, %

Source: stat.gov.ua

At the same time, like for other industries, war significantly changed the structure, if we consider recent data, the share of agriculture drastically dropped to 7,41% in 2023, that was the lowest indicator for the last 10 years (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Agricultural sector share in gross value added structure in Ukraine, 2014-2023, %

Source: stat.gov.ua

But still it's high even in comparison with other EU countries that usually associated with strong agriculture tradition (Figure 3).

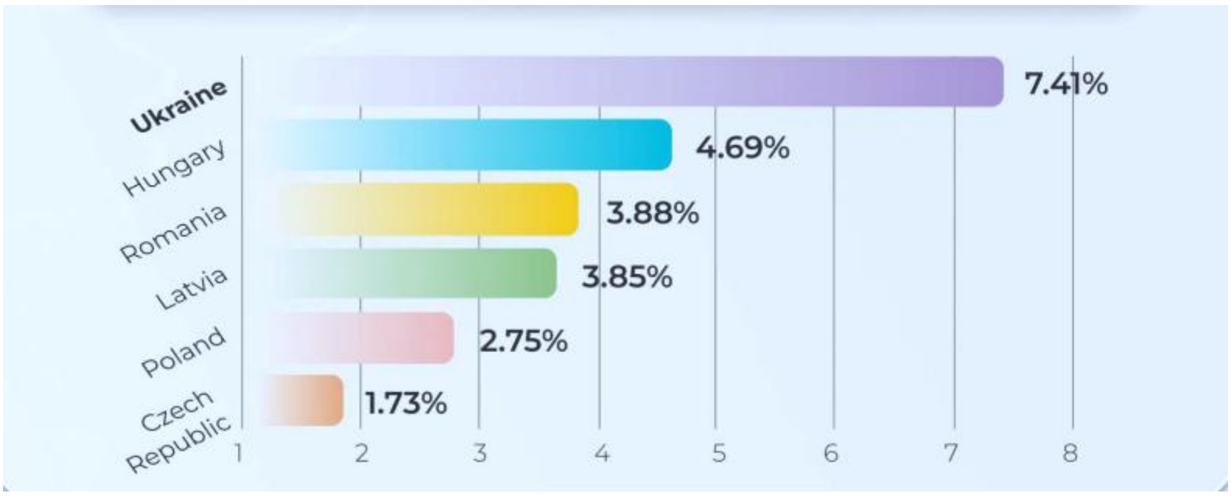

Figure 3. Agricultural sector share in gross value added structure in different countries, 2023, %

Source: Our World in Data

Despite the observed decline in the share of the agricultural sector in Ukraine's GDP over the analyzed period, agriculture continues to occupy a structurally significant position in the national economy. Its relative weight remains high not only within the domestic economic system, but also in comparison with countries traditionally characterized by strong and export-oriented agricultural sectors. This underscores the systemic importance of Ukrainian agriculture as a stabilizing factor and a key contributor to external trade revenues.

A notable downward shift in the sector's share becomes evident starting in 2022 — the year marked by russia's full-scale military invasion of Ukraine. This turning point requires a more nuanced examination of the underlying factors. Specifically, it is essential to investigate whether the contraction is primarily driven by a real decline in agricultural output (both in physical production and value terms), or whether it results from broader structural changes within GDP. Such structural shifts may include an expansion or contraction of other sectors, alterations in price dynamics, war-induced distortions in production chains, or changes in the composition of value added across the economy.

To clarify these dynamics, it is necessary to analyze the structure of gross value added (GVA) in Ukraine and trace how the relative positions of key economic sectors evolved under the influence of wartime conditions. A detailed breakdown of GVA by sector provides insights into whether agriculture's reduced share reflects a genuine sectoral weakening or is instead the consequence of disproportionate declines or growth in other segments of the economy. The following section presents the structure of gross value added in Ukraine, which is visually illustrated in Figure 4.

We can see according to the gross value added structure that war significantly changed shares of different sectors. Thus, if in 2021 share of agricultural sector was next to industry and trade, in 2022 almost 24% was occupied by public administration and defence, almost 14% by trade and repair of motor vehicles.

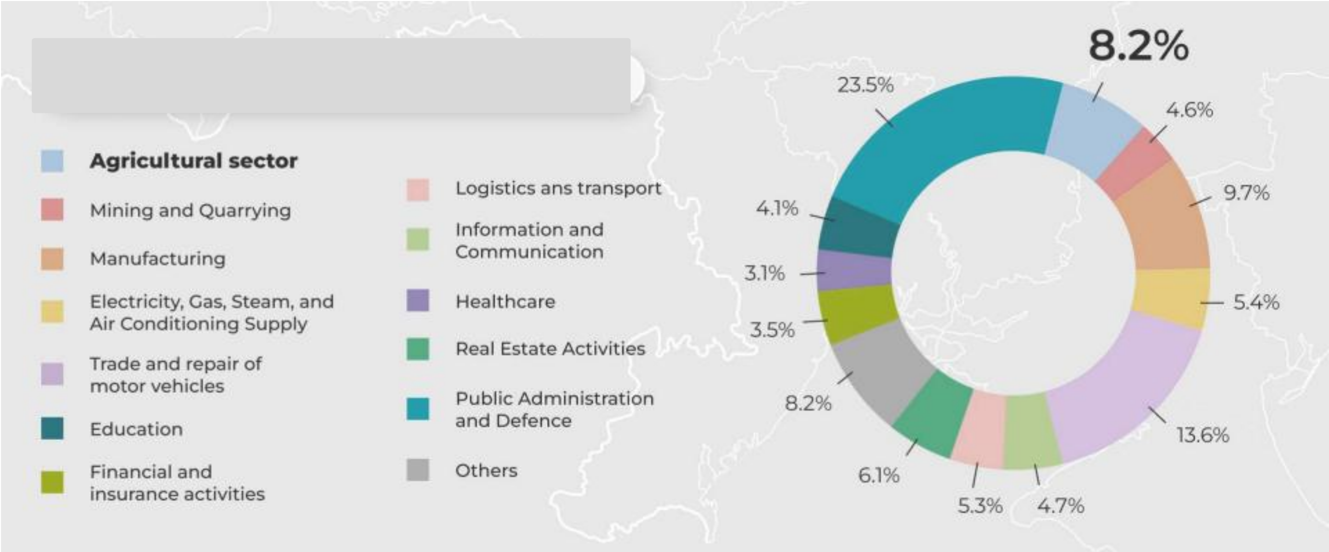

Figure 4. Gross value added structure in Ukraine, 2022, %

Source: stat.gov.ua

Let’s consider the food and agricultural turnover in Ukraine during last 5 years to understand the reasons (Figure 5).

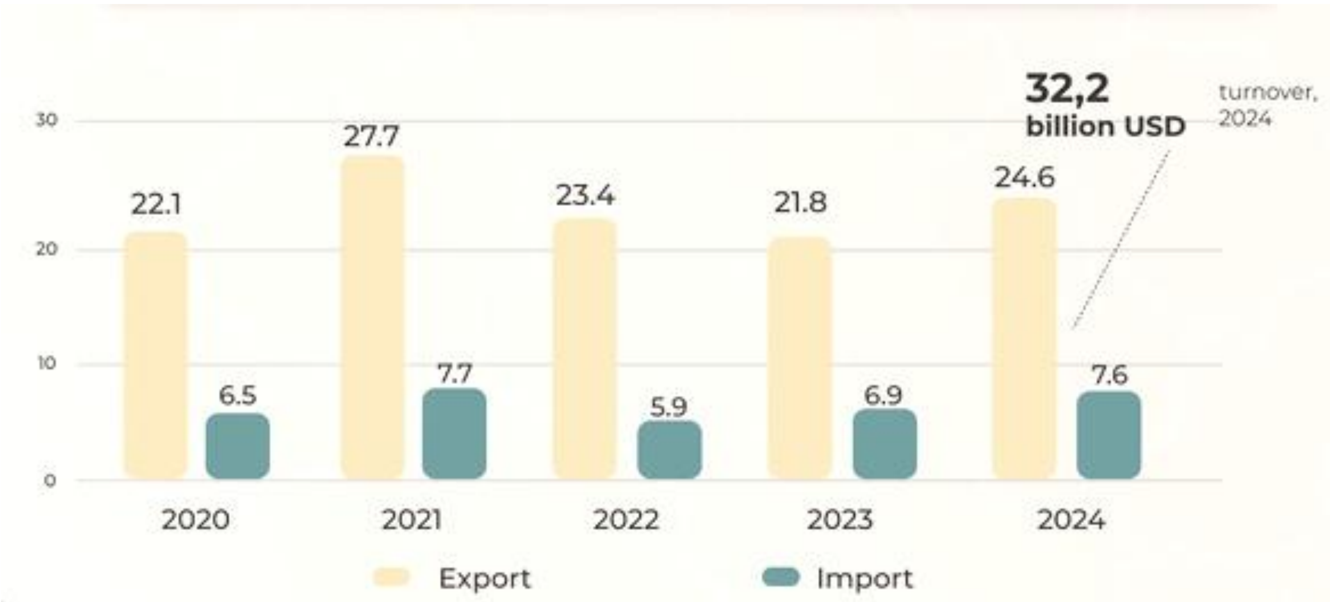

Figure 5. Food and agricultural turnover in Ukraine, 2020-2024, bln.USD

Source: stat.gov.ua

Based on export and import dynamics for 2020-2024, there has been no significant growth in exports of agri-food products, at least in terms of value. It should be noted that the figures for 2022-2024 are indeed lower than those for 2021, but 2021 was a bumper year for all agricultural producers, so it is necessary to compare them with 2020. If we compare the dynamics of exports in 2020 and the period 2022-2024, we even see a tendency towards growth, which indicates that export positions in the agricultural sector have been preserved. At the same time, most market operators note that the preservation of export positions after a full-scale invasion is precisely due to transitional stocks in the bumper harvest year of 2021 for subsequent periods, and the real consequences of the full-scale invasion and their impact on export positions in Ukraine's agricultural sector will begin to be statistically reflected from 2025.

This is indirectly evidenced by the exceptionally high agricultural production figures in Ukraine for 2021 (Figure 6).

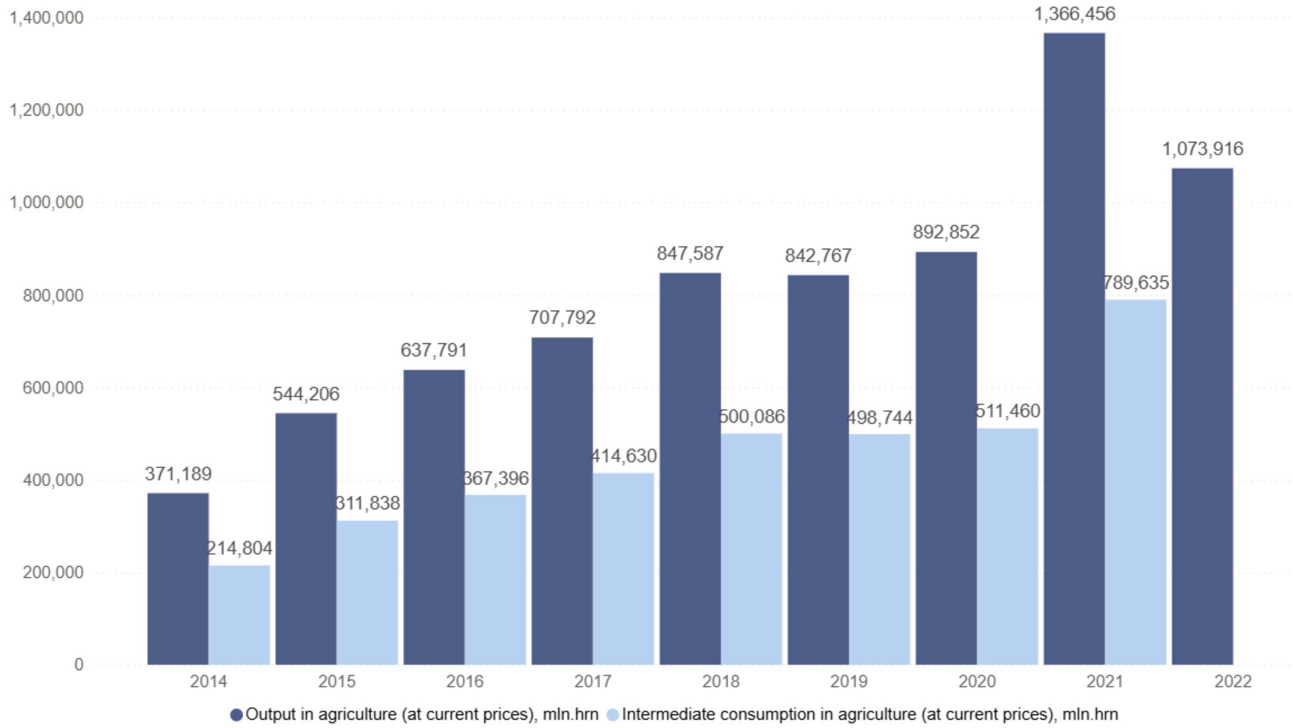

Figure 6. Production and intermediate consumption in agriculture in Ukraine, 2014-2022, in actual prices, mln UAH

Source: stat.gov.ua

Over recent decades, the international activities of Ukrainian agricultural enterprises have evolved significantly. These activities span various aspects, from export expansion to cross-border partnerships, foreign investments, and integration into global food supply chains. However, this progress has not been without challenges, particularly due to geopolitical tensions, regulatory barriers, and environmental concerns.

The high level of development of Ukraine's agricultural sector is dictated by the abundance of fertile soils and a climate conducive to growing a variety of crops. Since 2014, Russia's war against Ukraine has dramatically disrupted the soil environment and caused large-scale and long-term environmental degradation. The full-scale invasion since 24 February 2022 has further aggravated the problem of soil degradation and had a significant impact on productivity. Moreover, the high intensity of fighting in certain areas has called into question the safety of using land directly affected by the military action.

Eruptions from aerial bombs and artillery shelling, mined territories, destroyed heavy military equipment, leakage of oil products, burned areas from fires, and landslides have become the main markers signalling a powerful impact on soil resistance to pollution, bringing with it severe socio-economic consequences, both locally and nationally.

This drastic change of landscape requires an immediate and comprehensive study, followed by the development of policies for the management of lands contaminated by war. Failure to act on the identified problem risks causing accelerated soil erosion, adversely affecting production, spreading toxic and contaminated agricultural or other products, and harming human health.

Recent crises-including climate extremes and ongoing war in Ukraine—have sharply exposed vulnerabilities in agriculture. We try to integrate current insights of 2024–2025 into the theoretical underpinnings of anti crisis management systems adapted to agricultural enterprises. It draws on systems theory, risk and resilience concepts, digital transformation, circular economy, institutional responses, and supply chain resilience. The aim is to provide a rigorously updated framework for building resilient agri enterprises amid escalating challenges.

Ukraine's agricultural sector plays a crucial role in global food production. It is a top producer and exporter of grain, particularly wheat, corn, and barley. In addition to grain, Ukraine produces a significant amount of sunflower oil, sugar beets, and various fruits and vegetables. The country has a diverse agro-industrial complex that includes dairy, poultry, and livestock sectors, although grain and oilseeds are the most prominent.

Let's concider the Ukrainian export of goods by categories in 2024 (Figure 7)

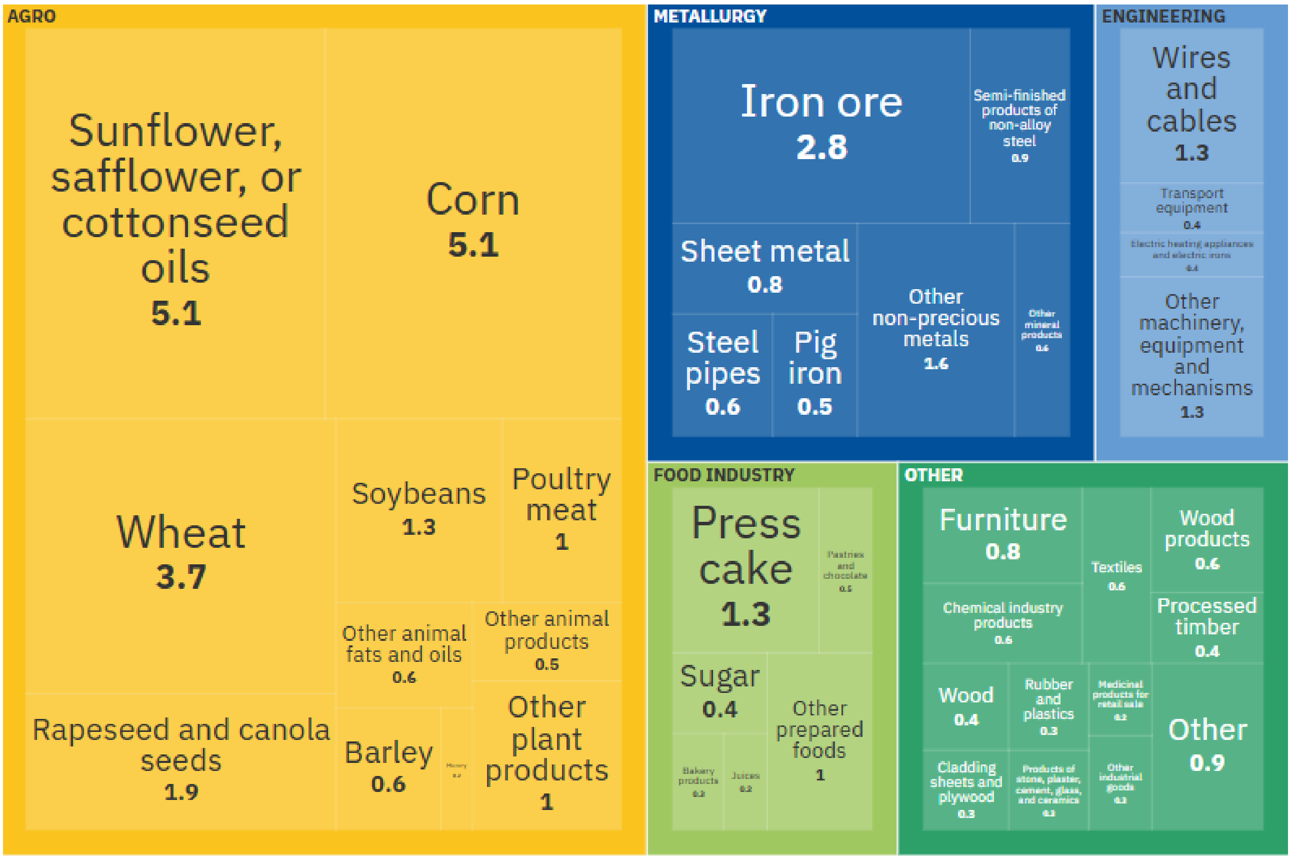

Figure 7. Ukrainian export of goods by categories in 2024, bln USD

Source: built by the authors on the basis of [24]

In 2024, Ukraine demonstrated a significant recovery of its export potential despite the persistent constraints imposed by the full-scale war. The total value of exported goods reached approximately 41 billion USD, marking a notable increase compared to 2023. This positive dynamic was driven both by the restoration of maritime logistics and by the sustained competitiveness of key export-oriented sectors. In quantitative terms, exports amounted to more than 129 million tonnes, which reflects an almost one-third growth rate relative to the previous year. The reactivation of seaports played a decisive role in this expansion, as maritime shipments accounted for the overwhelming share of outbound trade flows and rose to levels approaching pre-war norms.

The dominant component of Ukraine's export structure in 2024 remained the agricultural sector. Agricultural and food-related commodities accounted for approximately half of total export revenues, reaffirming the pivotal function of agribusiness in the national economy. In value terms, agricultural exports were estimated at 20,9-24,5 billion USD, depending on methodological approaches and the inclusion of processed goods. Notably, this represented not only an expansion in absolute volumes, but also a strengthening of agriculture's relative contribution to Ukraine's trade balance, with some assessments indicating that agro-products constituted nearly 59% of export earnings.

The composition of agricultural exports in 2024 was traditionally concentrated around grain, oilseed, and fat-and-oil products, which collectively formed the core of Ukraine's agro-industrial specialization. Corn, with export revenues of roughly 5 billion USD, and wheat, valued at about 3,7 billion USD, remained the leading cereal commodities. The oil-and-fat industry maintained its global competitiveness as well: sunflower oil - a product in which Ukraine has long been a world leader—generated more than 5 billion USD, while export deliveries of related by-products such as oil-cake exceeded 1 billion USD. Oilseed crops, notably rapeseed and soybeans, contributed additional revenues of approximately 1,8 billion USD and 1,3 billion USD, respectively. Alongside primary commodities, processed agro-products also expanded their presence on international markets. Exports of sugar approached 418 million USD, while meat and poultry supplies amounted to close to 1 billion USD, demonstrating gradual diversification within the sector.

Ukraine remains one of the world’s most important agricultural players in 2025, despite the ongoing challenges posed by geopolitical instability and environmental issues. As a major producer and exporter of agricultural commodities, Ukraine's agricultural sector plays a central role in global food security, influencing both international markets and supply chains. Place of Ukraine in agricultural production among other exporting contries in the world (Figure 8).

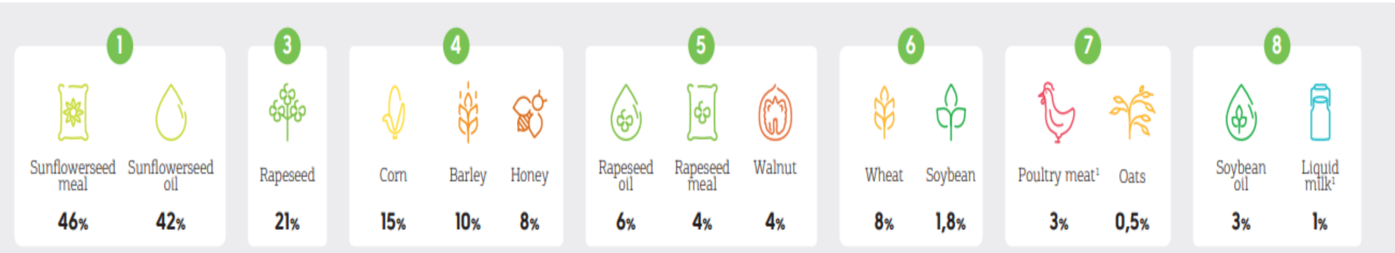

Figure 8. Place of Ukraine in the world among exporting countries in 2023-2024 MY, % of world exports, by tonnage

Source: [23]

Ukraine exports the majority of its agricultural and food products to markets in Europe and Asia, with a particularly strong presence in the Middle East, the countries of the so-called “Global South,” and the People’s Republic of China. This geographic concentration of export flows, while historically shaped by logistical routes, established trade partnerships, and long-standing demand patterns, simultaneously creates structural risks for the stability and predictability of Ukraine’s export revenues. High dependence on a limited number of destination regions increases vulnerability to geopolitical turbulence, market volatility, changes in import regulations, and disruptions in transport corridors. Therefore, diversification of external markets becomes a strategic priority for strengthening the resilience and sustainability of Ukraine’s agricultural exports.

Within this context, Africa has emerged as one of the most important and rapidly growing importers of agricultural products globally. The continent’s demographic expansion, increasing urbanization, and gradual rise in food demand have made African markets progressively more attractive to international suppliers.

Recognizing these dynamics, Ukraine has markedly intensified its engagement with African states since 2022. This shift has been driven both by economic considerations and by the broader geopolitical environment shaped by russia's full-scale war against Ukraine.

Key instruments of this renewed engagement include the Grain from Ukraine humanitarian program, which aims to supply grain to countries facing acute food insecurity, and the expansion of Ukraine's diplomatic presence through the opening of new embassies in regions where representation had previously been limited or entirely absent. These steps signal a long-term commitment to developing deeper trade, political, and humanitarian ties with African partners.

Importantly, Ukraine's strategic outreach to Africa serves a dual purpose. Beyond opening new markets and strengthening export diversification, it also acts as a vital mechanism to counter russia's attempts to weaponize global food insecurity as a tool of hybrid aggression. By reinforcing its role as a reliable supplier and humanitarian partner, Ukraine contributes to the stabilization of global food systems and undermines narratives used by russia to manipulate public opinion and exert geopolitical pressure in vulnerable regions. Let's consider the agri-food exports from Ukraine to Africa (Figure 9).

By the end of 2023, Ukraine had supplied more than 170,000 tonnes of grain and grain-based products, with African states accounting for the majority of this volume. Beneficiary countries included Ethiopia, Somalia, Kenya, Sudan, Nigeria, and Djibouti (used as a logistical hub for onward distribution to the Horn of Africa), where the grain was delivered primarily through partnerships with the World Food Programme (WFP). These shipments provided essential support to food-insecure populations in regions experiencing some of the most severe humanitarian crises worldwide. In Ethiopia and Somalia, Ukrainian grain contributed to emergency food assistance during one of the most severe droughts in four decades. In Kenya, deliveries helped stabilize food aid allocations in arid and semi-arid regions, whereas in Sudan and Nigeria the program mitigated disruptions caused by armed conflict, economic instability, and widespread displacement. Subsequent official communication reported that 110,000 tonnes of Ukrainian grain had been supplied to Ethiopia and Somalia under the initiative, reflecting the high-priority status of the Horn of Africa within global humanitarian food assistance schemes. Likewise, documented evidence confirms that Kenya received at least 25,000 tonnes of wheat through a 2023 shipment facilitated under the program.

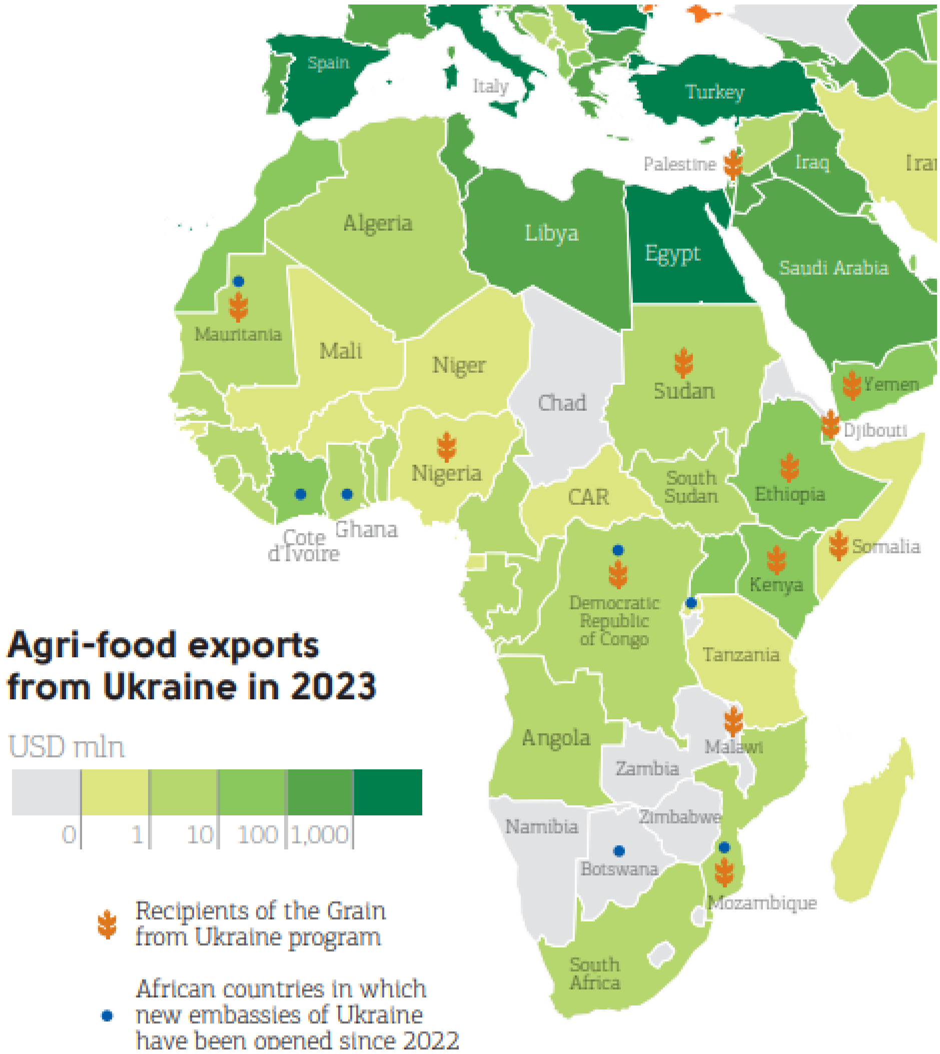

Figure 9. Agri-food exports from Uraine to Africa in 2023, mln USD

Source: [29]

Let's consider the main challenges in agri-food export to Ukraine under the example of main importers of it in East Africa, particularly: Ethiopia (recipient of the Grain from Ukraine program), Tanzaia and Kenya (recipient of the Grain from Ukraine program).

Ethiopia — in 2024 home to an estimated 132.1 million inhabitants - continues to exhibit substantial demographic growth and ongoing economic transformation. That population figure represents a marked increase compared with earlier decades, confirming sustained high growth rates.

Economically, the country has registered persistent expansion. As of 2024, its GDP was approximately US$ 118,972 million, with a GDP per capita of around US$ 964.3. The structure of value added shows that agriculture contributes a significant though reduced share of GDP: according to recent data, agriculture accounts for roughly 34.9–38.8% of Gross Value Added (GVA), while industry and services constitute increasingly larger shares.

Similarly, employment statistics indicate that in 2024 about 62.8% of the employed population works in agriculture, marking a gradual shift away from purely agrarian livelihoods.

However, despite these economic advances, Ethiopia continues to face acute challenges in food security and nutrition. According to a recent assessment by the World Food Programme (WFP), over 58% of the population is estimated to suffer moderate or severe food insecurity, and only about one in four households currently has access to a nutritious diet.

This underscores the persistent structural vulnerability of large segments of the population, especially in rural areas, where climatic shocks, economic disruption, and limited infrastructure exacerbate existing deficits.

Agricultural self-sufficiency remains uneven. While Ethiopia retains a relatively lower cereal import-dependency ratio compared to many of its East African neighbors — thanks to robust domestic cereal production — certain sub-segments of the agricultural import basket (e.g., vegetable oils, processed foods) have seen increases in import value.

Simultaneously, domestic production of staple crops such as wheat and maize has expanded; for instance, nationwide wheat output has reportedly increased several-fold over the past two decades.

On the export side, Ethiopia continues to rely heavily on a relatively narrow portfolio of agricultural commodities: coffee remains the dominant foreign-exchange earner, supplemented by oilseeds, pulses, hides and skins, and livestock products.

Exports to Ukraine are minimal; trade flows with Ukraine are limited and primarily consist of cereals such as wheat and maize. As a result, while the export of agri-food commodities remains vital for Ethiopia's foreign trade, the direct contribution of Ukraine–Ethiopia trade to these exports remains modest. In quantitative terms, Ukraine's exports to Ethiopia remain limited, confirming that bilateral trade plays only a marginal role in Ethiopia's overall import structure. According to international trade statistics, Ethiopia's imports from Ukraine in 2023 amounted to approximately US $83.48 million, the overwhelming majority of which—US $65.93 million—fell within the cereals category, predominantly wheat and maize. Other exported commodities, including animal and vegetable fats, edible vegetables and tubers, milling products, meat, and iron and steel, constituted only a minor fraction of the total import value and did not substantially affect the composition of Ethiopia's agricultural or industrial import basket. By contrast, preliminary data for 2024 indicate a substantial contraction in bilateral trade, with total Ukrainian exports to Ethiopia declining to an estimated US $1.63 million.

In light of these dynamics, agriculture continues to represent a foundational pillar of the Ethiopian economy — both in terms of employment and rural livelihoods — even though its relative share in GDP is gradually declining. The sector's structural constraints remain formidable: only a small fraction of arable land benefits from irrigation, soil degradation and climate variability continue to undermine productivity, and investment in agricultural inputs remains insufficient.

Ethiopia's government has responded by advancing strategies intended to modernize agriculture, increase productivity, and improve food security. Nevertheless, given the latest data on food insecurity, poverty, and structural vulnerability, the challenge remains significant. Poverty — particularly multidimensional poverty, which encompasses nutrition, health, and living conditions

— continues to affect a large proportion of the population, impeding broad-based gains in welfare despite macroeconomic growth.

Tanzania, with a population of approximately 66 million in 2024, has experienced substantial demographic growth in recent decades. Nevertheless, its economic development has progressed more gradually than that of other East African countries, such as Kenya and Ethiopia. This comparatively modest growth can be attributed to delayed structural reforms, declining industrial productivity, and underdeveloped financial markets. Despite these constraints, Tanzania has demonstrated gradual improvements in food security. According to the 2024 Global Hunger Index (GHI), the proportion of undernourished individuals remains at roughly 23%, situating the country just below the regional average. However, unlike Ethiopia, the absolute number of undernourished individuals has continued to rise over the past twenty years due to persistent rural poverty, leaving a substantial segment of the population vulnerable to food shortages and malnutrition.

Tanzania has made notable strides in achieving food self-sufficiency. The cereal import dependency ratio has declined markedly, from over 10% two decades ago to approximately 2.5% in 2023-2024, reflecting an increased capacity to satisfy domestic demand through local agricultural production. Concurrently, the monetary value of food imports has increased, with cereals, vegetable oils, and sugar comprising the majority of imported commodities.

On the export side, Tanzania's agri-food sector remains diversified relative to many neighboring countries. Principal export products include oilseeds, vegetables, roots and tubers, fruits and nuts, and fish, with major destinations encompassing China, India, Vietnam, and regional partners such as Uganda. Trade with Ukraine remains limited and is primarily concentrated in cereals and vegetable oils, products for which Ukraine is a leading global supplier.

Although Tanzania is less dependent on Ukraine than countries in North Africa or the Horn of Africa, Ukrainian agri-food exports exert an indirect yet significant influence on domestic food supply and market stability. Between 2018 and 2021, Tanzania's annual imports from Ukraine averaged 50–90 thousand tonnes of wheat and 8–12 thousand tonnes of sunflower oil, supplied through a combination of direct commercial shipments and humanitarian procurement via the World Food Programme (WFP). Disruptions to Ukraine's export capacity - caused by port blockades, reduced harvests, elevated logistics costs, or instability in Black Sea shipping routes - have the potential to affect Tanzanian markets. Moderate reductions in Ukrainian grain exports during 2022–2023 contributed to global wheat price increases of 20–30%, translating into higher import costs and local price pressures across East Africa, including Tanzania. Consequently, although Tanzania is not a primary African trading partner of Ukraine, the country remains indirectly exposed to fluctuations in Ukraine's agri-food export performance due to the interconnected nature of global grain markets.

Agriculture continues to be a cornerstone of Tanzania's economy. In 2023–2024, approximately 63–65% of the population remains engaged in agricultural activities, while the sector contributes 26–27% of GDP, reflecting relative stability over the past three decades. Crop production is dominated by maize and cassava, supplemented by substantial outputs of sweet potatoes, sugarcane, bananas, and rice. Livestock production is also significant, with cattle meat and milk as primary outputs, alongside goat milk and poultry products. Overall agricultural output has increased by approximately 230% over the past twenty years. Nevertheless, the sector continues to face structural challenges, including limited access to finance, inadequate infrastructure, and reliance on traditional farming methods. Smallholder farmers, who constitute the majority of the agricultural workforce, frequently lack access to modern technologies, high-quality seeds, and fertilizers, impeding sector modernization and competitiveness.

To address these challenges, the Tanzanian government continues to implement the Agricultural Sector Development Programme II, scheduled through 2028. The programme aims to enhance agricultural productivity, promote commercialization, and improve market access, with particular emphasis on smallholder farmers. Key initiatives under this Programme include the expansion of irrigation infrastructure, modernization of rural transportation networks, and increased investment in value-added processing. Improving access to finance for farmers and agribusinesses constitutes a critical component of the programme, addressing one of the primary constraints to growth within the sector. Collectively, these measures seek to strengthen Tanzania's competitiveness in domestic and international markets while promoting long-term sustainability in its agricultural system.

Kenya, with an estimated population of 55 million in 2024, continues to demonstrate stronger and more sustained economic growth than many of its East African neighbours. This performance has been underpinned by substantial public infrastructure investments, expanding private-sector activity, and comparatively stable fiscal and monetary frameworks. Kenya also benefits from one of the most advanced and integrated financial markets in Sub-Saharan Africa, which has facilitated capital mobilisation, innovation in digital finance, and greater economic resilience during periods of external volatility.

Despite these macroeconomic achievements, food insecurity remains a persistent structural challenge. Although the share of undernourished individuals has remained relatively stable at around 23–24%, the absolute number of food-insecure people has continued to rise, reaching approximately 15,6 million in 2023. This trend reflects widening socioeconomic inequalities, high regional disparities in food access, recurrent droughts in arid and semi-arid lands, and rising dependence on imported cereals. Kenya's exposure to global price fluctuations has heightened vulnerability, particularly during the cereal price spikes of 2022-2023.

Kenya's agri-food imports have expanded steadily in recent years. Wheat, maize, rice, vegetable oils, and sugar constitute the primary import categories. On the export side, the country exhibits a high degree of product specialization. Tea, coffee, and cut flowers remain dominant export commodities. Kenya is the world's largest exporter of black tea and one of the leading suppliers of floriculture products to Europe. Major destination markets include Pakistan (for tea), as well as the Netherlands and the United Kingdom for horticultural goods, particularly cut flowers. Although export volumes and earnings have increased, Kenya remains structurally dependent on imports to meet its domestic consumption of wheat and, increasingly, maize and rice.

Ukraine has historically been an important - though not primary - supplier of cereals to Kenya. Between 2018 and 2021, Ukrainian exports to Kenya averaged:

- 350,000 - 650,000 tonnes of wheat per year, accounting for 8–12% of Kenya's total wheat imports.
- 20,000 - 40,000 tonnes of maize annually, depending on domestic production cycles.
- Regular shipments of sunflower oil, though at significantly lower volumes than wheat.

As a result, the disruptions to Ukraine's export capacity had direct implications for Kenya's food import bill. The contraction of Ukrainian grain exports in 2022–2023 contributed to global wheat price increases of 20–30%, which were transmitted into higher domestic prices for wheat flour, maize flour, and bread products. Kenya was among the East African countries most exposed to these fluctuations due to its high dependence on imported cereals.

The World Food Programme (WFP) continues to play a central role in Kenya's food-security landscape. Programmes implemented between 2022 and 2024 have increasingly focused on climate-resilient agriculture, livelihood diversification, and anticipatory action frameworks, in addition to humanitarian assistance.

Agriculture remains a critical pillar of the Kenyan economy. In 2023, the sector contributed approximately 21% to GDP, while employing 32% of the national workforce, a comparatively lower share than in neighboring countries due to Kenya's more diversified economic structure. Key crops include maize, sugarcane, tea, coffee, potatoes, horticultural products, and an expanding segment of high-value fruits (avocado, mango). Livestock production is dominated by dairy, in which Kenya is the regional leader, alongside significant production of beef, goat meat, and poultry. Although agricultural output has increased by roughly 160% over the past two decades, production growth has not kept pace with population expansion or rising food-demand pressures.

The sector continues to face structural constraints, including climate variability, limited irrigation infrastructure - currently covering only about 3-4% of cultivated land-low productivity levels, and insufficient access to credit and modern inputs. In response, government strategies such as Kenya Vision 2030, the Agricultural Sector Transformation and Growth Strategy (2019–2029), and the Agricultural Policy 2021 prioritize modernization, irrigation expansion, digitalisation of agricultural services, and stronger integration into regional and global value chains. Recent policy measures emphasize value addition, especially in the tea and coffee subsectors, to enhance export competitiveness and improve farmer incomes.

Climate resilience and sustainability have become increasingly central to Kenya’s agricultural policy agenda in 2023-2024. Strengthening market infrastructure, improving financial inclusion for smallholders, and expanding public and private investment remain essential priorities for enhancing productivity, improving food security, and safeguarding the long-term stability of Kenya’s agricultural system.

On the basis of above research, we can conclude, that Kenya is one of the most prospective country for Ukrainian export and taking into account the fact, that Kenya is one of the recepirnts in the Grain from Ukraine Program, it’s essential to use all measures and tools to expand Ukrainian share on this market.

So, the full-scale russian invasion of Ukraine has generated extensive disruptions across the national economy, with the agricultural sector - traditionally one of Ukraine’s most productive and export-oriented industries - experiencing particularly severe losses. As a key global supplier of cereals, oilseeds, and vegetable oils, Ukraine’s reduced production and export capacity have implications not only for domestic economic stability but also for international food security. Let’s concider the damages and losses of agricultural industry of Ukraine because of the war.

War-related damages include the destruction and contamination of agricultural land, loss of machinery and storage facilities, and damage to transport and port infrastructure essential for export logistics. Large areas of farmland in frontline and occupied regions have become inaccessible, leading to notable declines in sown areas and harvest volumes. At the same time, indirect losses have intensified due to export blockades, rising logistics costs, disrupted supply chains, and increased prices for critical inputs such as fuel and fertilizers.

The cumulative impact of these factors has significantly undermined farm profitability, constrained investment, and weakened the long-term resilience of the sector. Assessing and addressing these losses is therefore critical not only for Ukraine's economic recovery but also for stabilizing global agricultural markets affected by reduced Ukrainian export flows.

On Figure 10 shown the losses of Ukrainian agricultural sector during the war in 2022-2023, estimated by Latifundist.

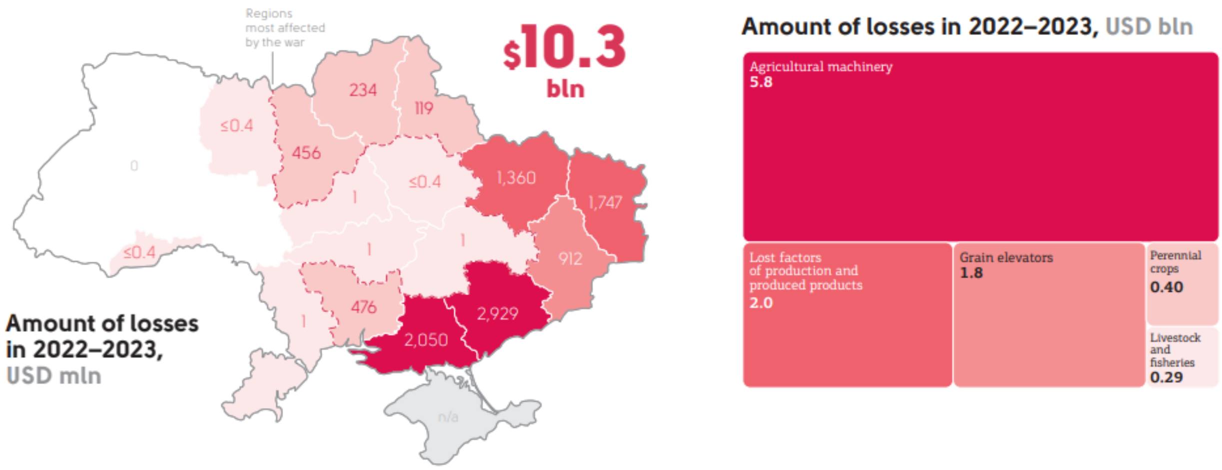

Figure 10. Losses of Ukrainian agricultural sector during the war, 2022-2023, bln USD

Sourse: https://latifundist.com/

Damages represent the monetary valuation of material assets that were destroyed, stolen, or partially impaired - yet still technically capable of repair or restoration - as a direct consequence of hostilities and territorial occupation. The greatest losses were recorded in the segment of agricultural machinery, particularly tractors, with more than 18,000 units rendered inoperable. Substantial destruction also affected grain elevator infrastructure, resulting in a reduction of total storage capacity by approximately 19,5%, not including facilities that remain inaccessible in occupied areas.

Furthermore, agricultural production on occupied territories was entirely lost, accompanied by the destruction of essential input stocks such as fertilizers, fuel, and crop protection materials. The livestock sector experienced severe setbacks due to animal deaths and widespread forced culling: losses amounted to an estimated 238,000 head of cattle, 544,000 pigs, 131,000 sheep and goats, and nearly 13 million poultry. Aquaculture and fisheries likewise incurred significant damage, particularly following the destruction of the Kakhovka Dam, which led to extensive ecological and production-related losses.

On Figure 11 shown the indirect losses of Ukrainian agricultural sector during the war in 2022-2023, estimated by Latifundist.

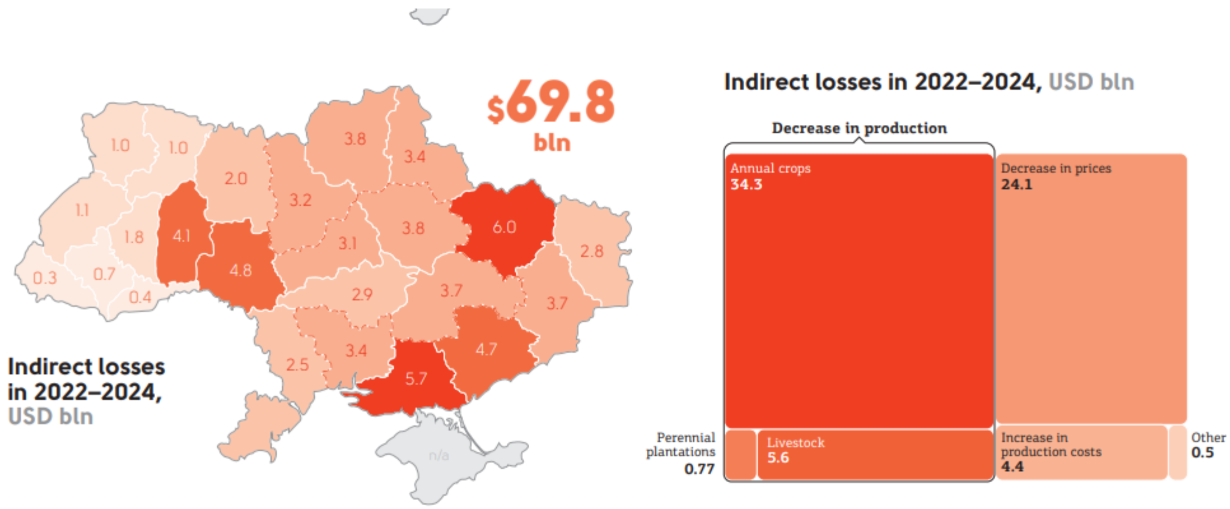

Figure 11. Indirect losses of Ukrainian agricultural sector during the war, 2022-2024, bln USD

Sourse: https://latifundist.com/

Indirect losses represent the gap between the actual revenues received by agricultural producers and the income they would have generated in the absence of russia’s invasion of Ukraine. These losses affect farmers throughout the entire country, extending far beyond the territories directly exposed to active hostilities.

Current assessments encompass data for 2022 and 2023, as well as projections for 2024.

A central source of indirect losses is the decline in the production of annual crops, which constitute the foundation of Ukraine's agricultural output. For 2022-2023, the cumulative shortfall is estimated at 48,6 million tonnes of grain crops and 8,7 million tonnes of sunflower. The livestock sector has also experienced substantial indirect impacts, driven by both declining herd sizes and reduced productivity. Dairy farming has been the most severely affected subsector, with estimated indirect losses of 2,9 billion USD over three years, accounting for more than half of the sector's total indirect losses of 5,6 billion USD.

Export disruptions resulting from the russian naval blockade have further intensified indirect losses by creating logistical bottlenecks, decreasing external demand, and driving up transportation costs. Despite the partial restoration of maritime export routes, the differential between domestic and global prices for key agricultural commodities remains wider than prior to the invasion, reflecting lingering market distortions and elevated risk premiums.

So, we can conclude the main findings, challenges and opportunities for the export activity and further development of agri-businesses in Ukraine.

The geographic distribution of Ukraine's agricultural exports in 2024 reflected a combination of long-standing trade relations and shifting regional demand. The European Union remained the principal destination, accounting for more than 13 billion USD in agro-product imports. Asian markets absorbed approximately 7,5 billion USD, while African countries purchased around 2,6 billion USD worth of agricultural goods. This structure underscores the strategic role of Ukrainian food exports in global food security and confirms the country's embeddedness in supply chains connecting Europe, the Middle East, and Africa.

Despite the overall upward trajectory, several structural vulnerabilities persisted throughout 2024. The high concentration of exports in a narrow range of primary commodities continued to expose Ukraine to fluctuations in global prices and demand. Monthly export data indicated periodic declines, particularly toward the end of the year, reflecting limited domestic supply, seasonal factors, and strategic decisions by producers to delay sales in anticipation of more favourable price conditions. Moreover, although maritime export corridors experienced substantial revitalisation, their functioning remained sensitive to security risks and external geopolitical pressures.

Nevertheless, the recovery of export capacity in 2024 demonstrated the resilience of Ukraine's economy and the adaptive capabilities of its agro-industrial complex. The sector not only preserved, but strengthened its role as the primary generator of foreign currency earnings. In the medium term, however, increasing the share of processed agricultural products, broadening export markets, and enhancing value-added production will be critical for mitigating volatility and ensuring sustainable export-led growth.

While the agricultural sector in Ukraine has made substantial strides in international markets, several challenges have hindered the full potential of Ukrainian agricultural enterprises.

Ukraine possesses one of the world's most valuable concentrations of highly fertile chernozem soils, which constitute roughly one-quarter of the global stock of this soil type. As of 2025, the country retains approximately 42 million hectares of agricultural land, with about 70% of this area allocated to crop production. This unique soil endowment has historically enabled Ukraine to rank among the leading agricultural producers and exporters worldwide.

However, the full-scale war has inflicted substantial losses and irreversible damage on Ukraine's soil resources. Large areas of arable land - particularly in frontline and formerly occupied regions - have been subjected to intense military activity, resulting in contamination by heavy metals, unexploded ordnance, fuel residues, and explosive materials. Shelling, missile strikes, and the movement of heavy military equipment have caused soil compaction, erosion, and physical destruction of topsoil layers, reducing fertility and hindering natural regeneration processes.

In addition, the mining of agricultural fields has rendered vast territories unsafe and unsuitable for cultivation, with demining expected to take decades. The war has also disrupted crop rotations, reduced organic matter input, and limited access to fertilizers and soil amendments, further contributing to the degradation of soil quality. These combined factors pose long-term risks to agricultural productivity and challenge Ukraine’s ability to fully restore its pre-war agricultural capacity.

Ukraine remains one of the top 5 wheat exporters in the world, producing high-quality wheat varieties, particularly soft wheat for the baking industry. Wheat exports in 2025 are projected to reach approximately 20 million tons, maintaining the country's position as a major supplier to markets in the Middle East, Asia, and Africa.

Corn (maize) as the third-largest corn exporter globally, Ukraine is expected to export around 30 million tons in 2025, a critical food source for livestock feed and a key ingredient in biofuels. Ukraine’s export of corn plays an essential role in stabilizing world food prices, especially for countries in Asia and North Africa.

Sunflower Oil Ukraine continues to dominate the global sunflower oil market, producing around 5 million tons annually, which accounts for over 25% of global sunflower oil exports. In 2025, Ukraine's oilseed production remains crucial for the food and biodiesel sectors worldwide.

The ongoing conflict in Ukraine has significantly disrupted agricultural production and exports. Ukrainian agricultural enterprises face logistical challenges due to damaged infrastructure, blocked access to key export routes, and a shrinking labor force as people are displaced or conscripted into military service. Export routes through the Black Sea, traditionally a major trade corridor for Ukrainian grain, have been blocked due to military conflict, forcing enterprises to seek alternative land and river transport routes.

The russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022 had a significant impact on Ukraine's agricultural sector, particularly in terms of logistics and access to Black Sea ports. As of 2025, while the conflict is ongoing, Ukraine’s agricultural industry has found innovative ways to continue exports through alternative land routes and rail transport via neighboring countries. The Black Sea Grain Initiative, which allowed limited access to Ukrainian ports, has been a temporary solution but remains fragile, and Ukraine's logistics infrastructure continues to face disruptions.

Key instruments of Ukraine's renewed engagement with African states include the Grain from Ukraine humanitarian initiative and the establishment of new embassies in previously underrepresented regions. These steps reflect a long-term strategy to deepen trade, political cooperation, and humanitarian partnerships across the continent.

Ukraine's outreach serves a dual function: it expands and diversifies export opportunities while countering Russia's efforts to weaponize global food insecurity as a tool of hybrid aggression. By acting as a reliable food supplier and humanitarian partner, Ukraine contributes to stabilizing global grain markets and challenges narratives used by Russia to exert influence in vulnerable regions.

By the end of 2023, Ukraine had delivered over 170,000 tonnes of grain and grain-based products under the Grain from Ukraine program, with African countries receiving the majority of this aid. Beneficiaries included Ethiopia, Somalia, Kenya, Sudan, Nigeria, and Djibouti—primarily through cooperation with the World Food Programme (WFP).

In Ethiopia and Somalia, Ukrainian wheat supported emergency responses to the most severe drought in four decades. In Kenya, shipments helped stabilize food assistance in arid regions, while in Sudan and Nigeria they mitigated disruptions caused by conflict and economic instability. Official reports confirm that 110,000 tonnes of grain were supplied to Ethiopia and Somalia, and Kenya received at least 25,000 tonnes of wheat in 2023.

After analyse of the main challenges in agri-food export to Ukraine under the example of main importers of it in East Africa, particularly: Ethiopia (recipient of the Grain from Ukraine program), Tanzaia and Kenya (recipient of the Grain from Ukraine program), we decided that Kenya could be one of the priority direction for further expansion of agri-food export from Ukraine.

Despite these challenges, Ukraine's resilience and adaptability have ensured that the country maintains its export volumes. Ukraine's agricultural export infrastructure is evolving, with increasing use of overland trade routes through Poland, Romania, and Moldova, and improvements to rail and road networks that help bypass the Black Sea bottlenecks.

The shift in global trade patterns following the conflict has prompted Ukraine to diversify its export markets and build new partnerships. In 2022-2025, Ukraine has successfully increased agricultural exports to regions, such as:

1) China. Expanding exports of corn and sunflower oil to China as part of a broader trade agreement.

2) India and Southeast Asia. Ukraine’s competitive pricing and large-scale production capacity have allowed the country to become a major exporter to India, particularly in the wheat and pulses markets.

3) Africa and the Middle East. Ukraine's export of grains, especially wheat and barley, to food-import dependent countries in Africa continues to be crucial to maintaining food security.

4) The European Union remains one of Ukraine’s most important trading partners, although political tensions occasionally impact trade relations. In 2025, Ukraine's agricultural exports to the EU have increased due to the EU’s interest in diversifying its food supply chains away from russia.

Ukraine’s agricultural sector also faces challenges related to regulatory constraints and trade barriers. While Ukraine has made significant progress in aligning its agricultural policies with EU standards, there are still bureaucratic hurdles and regulatory complexities that international buyers and investors must navigate.

Climate change is another challenge that agricultural enterprises in Ukraine must address. The sector is highly dependent on weather patterns, and any changes - whether extreme droughts, flooding, or temperature fluctuations - can have a direct impact on crop yields. Sustainable agricultural practices and adaptation to climate variability are becoming increasingly important for ensuring long-term viability.

Despite the challenges, Ukrainian agricultural enterprises have numerous opportunities to increase their international footprint.

One of the key strategies for Ukrainian agricultural enterprises is diversifying their export markets. The signing of trade agreements with the European Union (EU) and other nations has helped Ukrainian enterprises tap into new markets and reduce dependence on a few trading partners. Ukraine's Free Trade Agreement with the EU, for instance, allows easier access to European markets for agricultural products, with reduced tariffs and regulatory barriers.

Ukrainian agricultural enterprises are increasingly adopting modern agricultural technologies, such as precision farming, drones, and data analytics, to improve crop yields, optimize resource usage, and increase profitability. This shift towards digital agriculture is helping companies to reduce costs and improve the quality of their products, making them more competitive in the global market.

Additionally, sustainability is becoming a key theme in international agricultural trade. More and more international buyers are looking for products that meet stringent environmental and sustainability standards. By adopting more sustainable farming practices, Ukrainian enterprises have the opportunity to tap into the growing demand for eco-friendly agricultural products.

The Ukrainian government is working with international organizations and agribusinesses to promote greener practices and invest in sustainable agriculture technologies, including renewable energy sources for farms and organic farming initiatives.

Foreign direct investment (FDI) in Ukraine's agricultural sector has been steadily increasing, driven by the sector's potential for growth. Ukraine’s vast land resources, fertile soil, and large agricultural workforce make it an attractive destination for international investors. The government has also made efforts to create a more favorable investment climate by offering incentives for agricultural development, such as subsidies for machinery purchases and tax breaks for foreign investors.

With greater foreign investment, Ukrainian agricultural enterprises can expand their operations, improve their production capabilities, and integrate more effectively into global food supply chains.

Ukrainian agribusinesses have increasingly embraced export-oriented strategies, focusing on scaling up production, improving quality, and expanding their market reach. Many enterprises are now producing value-added products, such as packaged sunflower oil, processed grains, and dairy products, which can fetch higher prices in international markets.

Furthermore, agribusinesses are becoming more involved in international partnerships and joint ventures, allowing them to share resources, knowledge, and market access. These collaborations can help Ukrainian enterprises expand their operations and reduce risks associated with entering new markets.

The international activity of Ukrainian agricultural enterprises is central to the country's economy and its place in the global agricultural market. Despite ongoing geopolitical and environmental challenges, Ukraine's agricultural sector remains highly competitive, with significant opportunities for growth in international trade. By diversifying export markets, adopting new technologies, and attracting foreign investment, Ukrainian agricultural enterprises can continue to build on their successes and secure a more prominent role in the global food supply chain.

As the world becomes more interconnected and the demand for food continues to rise, Ukraine's agricultural enterprises will undoubtedly remain an essential contributor to global food security. With the right policies, strategies, and innovation, the future of Ukraine's agricultural sector looks promising on the international stage.

Ukraine’s role in global food security cannot be overstated. The country’s agricultural exports, particularly grains and oilseeds, are critical for food stability in many developing countries. In 2025, Ukraine remains one of the world’s largest suppliers of food staples to regions facing food insecurity, including parts of Africa, the Middle East, and Asia.

Given the rising global demand for food, particularly with the growing population and the challenges of climate change affecting crop yields in other regions, Ukraine’s agricultural production is vital to maintaining global food supply chains.

Despite the ongoing war, Ukraine's agricultural sector holds significant potential for growth. The country has the capacity to expand production further through investments in infrastructure, modernization of its farming practices, and adaptation to market demands.

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CONCLUSIONS

In the contemporary globalised economy, international economic activity functions simultaneously as a driver of national development, a mechanism of structural transformation, and a measure of systemic resilience. For open economies, sustained engagement in international trade and investment not only accelerates economic growth but also shapes the quality of that growth by influencing institutional development, technological diffusion, and human capital formation. Integration into global markets enables countries to move beyond domestic demand constraints, benefit from economies of scale, and participate in international production networks that facilitate learning, innovation, and productivity gains. At the same time, heightened exposure to external shocks increases vulnerability, requiring states and enterprises alike to develop adaptive capacities that can withstand volatility and uncertainty.

For Ukraine, whose economic structure remains strongly export-oriented—particularly in agriculture, metallurgy, and selected manufacturing industries—international engagement represents a central pathway to economic expansion, modernisation, and integration into global value chains. Export activity plays a critical role in generating foreign exchange revenues, stabilising the balance of payments, and attracting foreign direct investment. Moreover, access to international markets incentivises domestic firms to improve product quality, adopt international standards, and upgrade technologies, thereby strengthening overall production capacity and competitiveness. However, the benefits of openness are accompanied by heightened exposure to external risks, including fluctuations in global demand, trade restrictions, and geopolitical tensions. This duality underscores the need for adaptive economic governance, institutional flexibility, and innovation-driven management strategies capable of navigating an increasingly volatile global environment.

The intensification of geopolitical instability, the fragmentation of trade alliances, and the recurrence of global crises—ranging from financial shocks and pandemics to large-scale armed conflict—have profoundly altered the operating environment for export-oriented enterprises. Ukrainian firms face a particularly complex risk landscape shaped by war-related disruptions, including damaged infrastructure, constrained transport and logistics corridors, labour shortages, currency volatility, and heightened uncertainty regarding market access. These conditions have exposed structural weaknesses in supply chains and financial systems while simultaneously accelerating the need for organisational transformation. In this context, crisis management must be understood not merely as an emergency response mechanism but as a strategic function embedded within long-term enterprise development.

Effective crisis management enables firms to anticipate and assess external risks, develop contingency plans, and maintain operational continuity under adverse conditions. It also facilitates strategic adaptation, allowing enterprises to reconfigure business models, diversify export destinations, and exploit emerging market niches. Managerial competence, financial resilience, and organisational flexibility thus become decisive factors of competitiveness. Enterprises that invest in risk management systems, strengthen internal governance, and cultivate adaptive leadership are better positioned not only to survive crises but also to convert disruption into opportunity. At the macroeconomic level, the aggregation of such firm-level resilience contributes to broader economic stability and recovery.

An increasingly significant dimension of Ukraine’s international economic engagement is the growing role of women’s export-oriented entrepreneurship. In recent years, women entrepreneurs have emerged as important agents of innovation, economic diversification, and sustainable development, particularly within small and medium-sized enterprises that form the backbone of the national economy. Women-led businesses often operate in value-added segments, creative industries, agri-processing, and service-oriented exports, contributing to diversification away from traditional commodity dependence. Their participation in international trade enhances social inclusion, expands employment opportunities, and strengthens household and community resilience - outcomes that are especially critical in contexts of crisis, displacement, and post-conflict recovery.

Empirical research suggests that women-led enterprises frequently demonstrate higher levels of social responsibility, collaborative management practices, and long-term sustainability. However, despite their growing economic significance, women entrepreneurs continue to face persistent structural barriers that limit their full participation in international markets. These include unequal access to financial resources, limited integration into export and business networks, insufficient exposure to international market information, and enduring gender norms that restrict entrepreneurial mobility and leadership opportunities. Overcoming these constraints requires coordinated policy interventions, including targeted financial instruments, gender-responsive export promotion programmes, mentorship and networking initiatives, and the systematic integration of women entrepreneurs into national trade strategies. Addressing gender disparities in international economic activity is therefore not only a matter of social justice but also a strategic imperative for inclusive and sustainable growth.

The escalation of trade wars and the resurgence of protectionist policies have further transformed the structure of global commerce, compelling Ukraine to reassess its traditional trade orientations and strategic partnerships. While trade conflicts disrupt established export routes and increase market uncertainty, they also generate incentives for diversification and strategic repositioning. In this context, Ukraine's gradual pivot toward emerging markets in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East reflects both an adaptive response to geopolitical fragmentation and a proactive effort to expand economic opportunities. These regions offer growing demand for agricultural products, food commodities, and industrial inputs, presenting new avenues for export growth.

To capitalise on these opportunities, Ukraine must invest in logistics and transport infrastructure, modernise border and customs procedures, enhance product quality and certification standards, and strengthen economic diplomacy. Developing trade facilitation mechanisms and deepening bilateral and multilateral partnerships will be essential for reducing transaction costs and increasing market access. The capacity to adapt to shifting global trade dynamics will ultimately determine Ukraine's ability to consolidate its position as a reliable, competitive, and forward-looking participant in international markets.

At the core of Ukraine's international economic activity lies the agricultural sector, which functions as a cornerstone of national economic stability and a critical contributor to global food security. Despite extensive war-related disruptions, Ukrainian agricultural enterprises have demonstrated remarkable resilience, maintaining production and export capacity under highly adverse conditions. Through diversification of export products, adoption of digital and precision farming technologies, and participation in international cooperation and humanitarian initiatives, the sector is undergoing a gradual transformation from a resource-based model toward one grounded in innovation, efficiency, and sustainability.

This transformation enhances Ukraine's competitiveness in global agricultural markets while contributing to broader international objectives related to sustainable food systems, climate adaptation, and supply chain resilience. Moreover, Ukraine retains substantial untapped potential for agricultural growth, supported by favourable natural conditions, skilled labour, and opportunities for technological upgrading. Realising this potential will depend on sustained investment in infrastructure, modernisation of production and storage facilities, and alignment with international environmental and quality standards.

In conclusion, Ukraine's international economic activity reflects a complex and dynamic interplay between structural constraints and emerging opportunities. The country's capacity to sustain growth amid prolonged crises, effectively manage export-related risks, empower women entrepreneurs, and adapt to evolving global trade conditions will shape its future trajectory within the international economic system. Achieving these objectives requires an integrated policy approach that combines robust crisis management mechanisms, inclusive entrepreneurial development, and proactive engagement in global trade and economic diplomacy. By aligning economic resilience with innovation, gender equality, and sustainability, Ukraine can strengthen its role as a stable, adaptive, and influential actor in the global economy. In doing so, the country not only advances its national development objectives but also contributes meaningfully to global economic stability and food security in an era of profound and ongoing transformation.