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Trends in the development and diversification of Ukraine's oils export markets

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▸ **Abstract.** This article analysed trends in the development and diversification of Ukraine's oils export markets. It examined the impact of globalisation processes, economic integration, and international competition on the structure of exports, as well as the role of state support mechanisms for exporters. The study employed a combination of statistical, analytical, and comparative methods, along with a systematic approach to assessing the competitiveness of oil and fat products in global markets. Export diversification was carried out in three main directions: expanding the geography of supply and increasing the number of importing countries, reorienting logistics routes and utilising alternative transport corridors, and diversifying the product structure by increasing the share of different types of oils and their processed products. A gradual increased in exports of soybean and rapeseed oil, meals, and oilcake was noted, contributing to higher added value and the formation of a more resilient system of foreign markets. The main constraints hindering effective diversification were identified as stricter technical and phytosanitary requirements, an insufficient level of transport and logistics infrastructure development, fluctuations in global prices, and a high level of competition. To overcome these barriers, a set of state support measures was proposed, including the modernisation of logistics, the development of trade and economic diplomacy, marketing support, and the stimulation of deep processing of oilseed crops. Market diversification is a strategic tool for ensuring economic resilience and enhancing the competitiveness of Ukraine's oil and fat industry in the context of global instability and the transformation of the international trading system. The practical significance lies in identifying effective directions for diversifying foreign markets for Ukraine's oil and fat products, which can be used by public authorities and industry enterprises to improve export competitiveness and resilience

▸ **Keywords:** export diversification; oil and fat industry; sunflower oil; international markets; logistics routes; processed oilseed products

▸ Introduction

The escalation of geopolitical instability, the transformation of supply chains and increased competition in global markets are creating additional challenges for domestic manufacturers. In such circumstances, reliance on a limited number of export markets increases economic risks and undermines the resilience of foreign trade operations. At the same time, the role of diversification as a tool for ensuring the continuity of exports and maintaining foreign exchange earnings is growing. This applies primarily to the oil and fat industry, which is the main component of Ukraine's exports of processed agricultural products by food industry enterprises. The issue of export diversification is particularly relevant for countries with a significant share of agricultural and raw material products in their

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foreign trade structure. The need to establish new logistics routes and access alternative markets determines the practical significance of this study. Research into trends in the diversification of foreign markets is vital for ensuring the country's economic stability.

The issue of the development of foreign trade and Ukraine's integration into global economic processes is examined in the work by O. Bykonia & N. Romanovska (2023), which analyses the prospects for the development of Ukraine's trade in the context of European integration and the expansion of international economic ties. The development of sectors with high export potential is of particular importance, notably the oil and fat sector of the food industry. Ukraine's oil and fat sector plays a significant role in shaping the export potential of the agricultural sector, accounting for a substantial share of foreign exchange earnings from foreign trade (Makarchuk, 2022; Shandrivska *et al.*, 2024). At the same time, dependence on a limited number of foreign markets creates certain risks to the stability of the sector's development.

Modern researchers view the diversification of production and the structure of oilseed cultivation as an important tool for enhancing the competitiveness and resilience of the agricultural sector. In their work, L. Stepasiuk & M. Stepasiuk (2024) highlighted the potential of niche oilseed crops for expanding the production base of agricultural enterprises. The authors argue that the introduction of innovative technologies for growing non-traditional crops reduces dependence on major oilseed crops whilst opening up new market segments. Prominent attention is given to the economic efficiency of this approach and the opportunities for integrating agricultural production with the food industry, which contributes to increasing the added value of products and the development of local markets. O.O. Petrova (2020) investigated the regional aspect of oilseed business diversification, specifically using the example of the Kherson region. The author analysed existing production and market constraints that hinder the scaling up of non-traditional oilseed crops, and proposes practical ways to overcome these obstacles through the modernisation of technologies, the formation of cooperative structures among farmers, and the promotion of state support. Particular emphasis is placed on the importance of developing logistics and marketing strategies that ensure the entry of products into foreign markets.

The authors V. Gamayunova *et al.* (2024) examined the global prospects for the diversification of oilseed crops. The researchers have analysed current trends in the agricultural sector aimed at identifying new types of oilseed crops and optimising their cultivation. They emphasise that strategic diversification contributes not only to increased economic efficiency but also to strengthened food security, as it ensures more sustainable productivity in the face of climatic fluctuations and market instability. The authors proposed conceptual approaches to crop planning and risk management that are relevant for the scientifically sound development of the agricultural sector. Research by C. Arndt *et al.* (2023), V.I. Mytsenko (2024) and F. Boz *et al.* (2026) confirmed that current processes of global trade fragmentation, heightened geopolitical risks and the transformation of global production chains are creating new challenges for national economies. In these circumstances, the diversification of export markets takes on particular importance, as it allows for a reduction in dependence on individual importing countries, an increase in the resilience of foreign trade flows, and the assurance of stable sectoral development.

Despite a significant body of academic research devoted to the issues of international trade and export support, a number of questions remain under-researched. In particular, current trends in the fragmentation of world trade, the intensification of geopolitical risks and the transformation of global production chains are creating new challenges for national economies. In these circumstances, the search for effective tools to help export-oriented sectors adapt to changes in the structure of international markets becomes particularly relevant. One such tool is the diversification of export markets, which helps reduce dependence on individual importing countries, enhance the resilience of foreign trade flows, and ensure the sector's stable development. In this regard, it is relevant to study the mechanisms for diversifying sales markets for the oil and fat industry's products, as well as to analyse the possibilities for adapting international experience in supporting exporters to national conditions.

The aim of the study was to identify trends in the development and diversification of foreign markets for the oil and fat industry of Ukraine, as well as to substantiate effective directions for expanding export geography, ways to improve the commodity structure of exports, and methods for enhancing competitiveness in the context of global trade transformation.

▸ Materials and methods

The study was conducted within the framework of the theory of international trade development, the economics of the agricultural sector and the theory of competitive advantages, which enabled an assessment of the factors influencing the competitiveness of Ukrainian oil and fat products in foreign markets. To achieve the objective, the following methods were applied: descriptive statistical analysis (assessment of the volumes and structure of oil and fat product exports by country, identification of trends in the development of foreign markets); analytical method (systematisation of data from various sources, identification of factors influencing the effectiveness of market diversification); a comparative method (comparison of Ukrainian export practices with international experience to identify optimal strategies); and a systematic approach (integration of economic, logistical, technological and institutional factors into a comprehensive assessment of product competitiveness). The Herfindahl-Hirschman Index (*HHI*) was used for a quantitative assessment of the level of concentration:

$$HHI = \sum_{i=1}^{n} s_i^2, \quad (1)$$

where s_i – the country's share of total exports, n – the total number of entities.

The source base of the study encompassed both official statistics as well as sectoral analytics and information resources. The foundation consisted of data from state authorities, in particular materials from the State Service of Ukraine on Food Safety and Consumer Protection (2026),

which reflect current results of the functioning of the export system and the processes of digitalisation within the sector. The heuristic potential of these sources lies in their applicability for assessing state policy and the institutional environment. At the same time, their limitation is the aggregated nature of the data and the lack of detailed breakdowns by individual market segments.

Sectoral analytical resources were also of considerable importance, in particular materials from AgroPortal.ua (2025) and Grain Trade Online (2025), which provided up-to-date information on the structure of exports, Ukraine's position in global markets (including its share in the global sunflower oil trade), and the dynamics of changes in 2024-2025. Their heuristic value lies in reflecting current market trends, their rapid response to changes in market conditions, and their usefulness for analysing Ukraine's competitive position. However, such sources also have limitations related to the lack of a unified calculation methodology, possible differences in statistical approaches, and partial reliance on expert assessments.

In addition, materials from industry associations, in particular the Ukroilprom Association (2022), were used, making it possible to trace long-term trends in the development of foreign trade in oil and fat products and the market structure in 2021-2023. These sources proved valuable for retrospective analysis and for assessing sector-specific features; however, their limitations include a certain time lag in the data and potential institutional bias. The combination of official statistics, sectoral analytics, and information resources ensures a sufficient level of representativeness of the study, enables a multidimensional analysis of export processes, and enhances the reliability of the results obtained. At the same time, the use of heterogeneous sources requires careful interpretation of data and comparison of indicators in order to minimise methodological discrepancies.

▸ Results

The global economy underwent significant structural changes during the 2010s and 2020s, driven by the development of information and communication technologies, the growing importance of innovation, and the emergence of global value chains. In such conditions, international trade is characterised by high dynamism, which requires national economies to be able to adapt quickly to changes in global market conditions. One of the key tools for such adaptation is export diversification, which involves broadening the geographical scope of foreign trade, expanding the range of export products, and entering new segments of the global market. Export diversification is a key factor in ensuring economic resilience and reducing the national economy's vulnerability to external shocks. Excessive concentration of exports on a limited number of goods or markets can lead to significant economic risks associated with fluctuations in world prices, changes in partners' trade policies, or heightened political instability. In this context, export diversification is one of the aspects of international trade policy that determines the structure and nature of foreign trade relations.

According to data from the State Service of Ukraine on Food Safety and Consumer Protection, between the start of 2022 and 2025, 75 new foreign markets were opened for Ukrainian exports, indicating the preservation and gradual expansion of Ukraine's presence in international trade even under martial law (State Service of Ukraine on Food Safety and Consumer Protection, 2026). To a large extent, these results were made possible by the systematic work of the State Service of Ukraine on Food Safety and Consumer Protection, aimed at harmonising veterinary and phytosanitary requirements with the competent authorities of foreign states, conducting international audits, and expanding access for Ukrainian products to foreign markets. According to the 2025 report by the Head of the State Service of Ukraine on Food Safety and Consumer Protection, work was carried out to open markets for the export of goods to Vietnam, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United States, the Philippines, Peru, Canada, Egypt, the Republic of Korea and Chile. Ukrainian products covered by these initiatives include cereals and oilseeds, flour, fresh apples, planting material, meat and meat products, dairy products, honey, animal feed, hatching eggs, live animals, fish and shellfish. Particular attention is being paid to opening up the Canadian market for exports of Ukrainian wheat, soya, maize and rapeseed. Efforts are being made to expand export opportunities to South American countries and the EU. In particular, regarding opportunities to export mustard seeds to Peru, maize grain to Chile, and maple seedlings to the EU (State Service of Ukraine on Food Safety and Consumer Protection, 2026). This helps to support the national economy, develop the food, processing, meat and dairy industries, and increase the state's foreign exchange earnings.

Within the structure of Ukrainian agricultural exports, oilseed processing products occupy a special place, accounting for a significant share of foreign exchange earnings and characterised by a high level of international competitiveness. In 2024, Ukraine's main export items were products of the oil and fat sector of the food industry and agricultural produce, namely:

- sunflower oil – 6 million tonnes worth USD 5.1 billion (21%);
- maize – 29.6 million tonnes worth USD 5 billion (21%);
- wheat – 20.6 million tonnes worth USD 3.7 billion (15%);
- rapeseed – 3.8 million tonnes worth USD 1.8 billion (7%);
- soybeans – 3.4 million tonnes worth USD 1.3 billion (5%);
- oilcake and meal – 4.7 million tonnes worth USD 1 billion (4%) (Grain Trade Online, 2025).

For this reason, the processes of opening up new foreign markets and expanding trade opportunities are of particular importance to the oilseed and oil industry (Fig. 1). First and foremost, the expansion of the geographical scope of oilseed product exports should be noted. Whilst until 2023 a significant proportion of supplies was directed towards a limited number of major importers, the structure of export markets subsequently became considerably more diversified. In 2023, Ukraine exported sunflower oil to 128 countries, whereas in 2024 this figure rose to 134 countries worldwide (AgroPortal.ua, 2025), indicating the sector's expanding international presence and the formation of a broader network of trading partners.

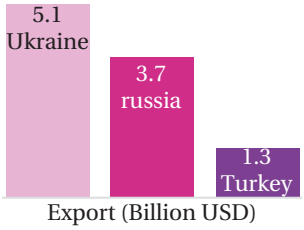

Figure 1. Leading exporters of sunflower oil in 2024, USD billions
Source: compiled by the authors based on data from AgroPortal.ua (2025)

According to data from the Ukroilprom Association, in 2024 the export volume of Ukraine's oil and fat products amounted to approximately USD 7.5 billion, which is 2.7% higher compared to 2023. A positive foreign trade balance confirms the strong export orientation of the sector. An important place in the structure of oil and fat exports is occupied by sunflower oil, which traditionally serves as the main commodity of the industry in international markets and accounts for around 21% of Ukraine's total food exports, indicating a high level of competitiveness of domestic products in the global market. The total trade turnover of sunflower oil in 2024 amounted to USD 6.74 billion. An analysis of the export structure of sunflower oil indicates significant geographical diversification of sales markets (Fig. 2). Approximately 65% of the physical export volume and nearly 60% of foreign currency revenues are concentrated in seven leading importing countries. The largest buyer of Ukrainian sunflower oil remains India, accounting for about 14.3% of exports in physical terms (over 858 thousand tonnes) and nearly 13.9% of foreign currency earnings. Significant export volumes are also directed to countries of the European Union. In particular, Spain imported around 686.9 thousand tonnes of Ukrainian sunflower oil (11.4% of exports), Romania over 572 thousand tonnes (9.5%), the Netherlands 512.2 thousand tonnes (8.5%), Italy 470.1 thousand tonnes (7.8%), and Poland approximately 412 thousand tonnes (6.8%). Turkey also remains a notable market, importing over 380 thousand tonnes of the product, which accounts for about 6.4% of total exports (Fig. 2).

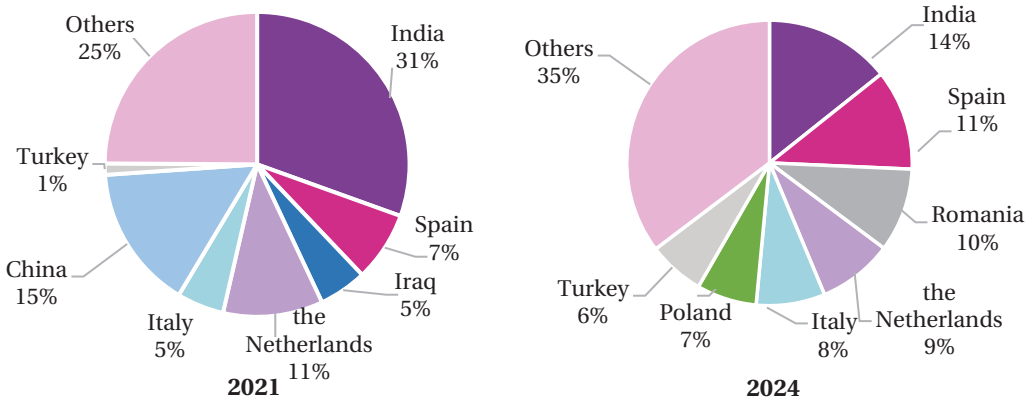

Figure 2. Main importers of Ukrainian oil in 2021 and 2024
Source: compiled by the authors based on data from the Ukroilprom Association (2022) and AgroPortal.ua (2025)

An important direction in the diversification of export markets is the strengthening of positions in Mediterranean markets, particularly in Spain, Italy, and Turkey. Collectively, these countries account for a significant share of Ukrainian sunflower oil exports and serve as key hubs for the processing and subsequent re-export of the oil within the European and global markets. Significant volumes of supplies to Spain and Italy indicate stable demand for Ukrainian products from the food industry in these countries. At the same time, Turkey, as an importer of sunflower oil, acts as an important regional trade hub through which part of the produce can reach other markets in the Middle East and the Mediterranean (Ukraine's oil and fat complex, 2025).

The high level of demand from India has a clear economic basis and is confirmed by statistical data. In particular, India is one of the world's largest importers of oils: according to various estimates, domestic production covers only 35-40% of demand, whilst the remainder is met through imports. Total oil imports exceed 14-16 million tonnes annually, making the country systematically dependent on external supplies. Palm, soya and sunflower oils dominate the consumption mix, with the share of the latter gradually increasing. An additional factor is the steady growth in domestic consumption from 8.2 kg in 2001 to the current 23.5 kg per capita, driven by both demographic factors (a population of over 1.4 billion) and rising incomes and changing dietary preferences. In recent years, there has been a trend towards diversification in oil consumption, notably an increase in the use of sunflower oil in the food industry and the HoReCa sector as an alternative to palm oil (Mukherjee, 2025)

In this context, imports of sunflower oil from Ukraine, which exceed 850,000 tonnes per year, are part of a broader trend of growing demand for this product. Given India's significant share in the structure of Ukrainian exports (around 14% in 2024) and its high import dependency, this market can be characterised as one of the key export destinations that significantly influences the formation of Ukraine's oil and fat product export structure. The level of development of transport and logistics infrastructure also remains a significant problem, complicating the effective facilitation of foreign trade operations (Table 1). Disruptions to traditional logistics routes caused by military

operations, rising transport costs, and limited capacity of transport corridors and port infrastructure significantly increase exporters' costs and reduce the competitiveness of products on global markets. In such conditions, the development of alternative transport routes, the modernisation of logistics systems and integration into international transport networks take on particular importance. Furthermore, fluctuations in global prices for agricultural products and energy resources, as well as increased competition from major oil exporters, notably Argentina, Brazil, Indonesia and Malaysia, are having a significant impact on the operations of Ukrainian exporters of oil and fat products. Changes in the logistics structure of exports have a significant impact on the process of diversifying sales markets. Following the outbreak of full-scale war, a significant portion of shipments was redirected to alternative routes: Danube ports and rail transport through European Union countries. Subsequently, with the partial resumption of operations at Black Sea ports, their role began to grow again; however, alternative logistics routes continue to account for a significant portion of exports, enhancing the flexibility and resilience of the export system.

Table 1. Share of sunflower oil actually exported from the customs territory of Ukraine by mode of transport according to the PIC "Control over Delivery" UAIS (March 2022 to March 2026)

Modes of transport	% by year			
	2022	2023	2024	2025
Ports	63.29133	70.11909	70.81223	83.17019
Road	18.70827	14.68894	14.671	8.386823
Rail	15.22708	10.74581	10.60772	6.98712
Ferry	2.773322	4.446154	3.909047	1.455871

Source: authors' calculations based on UGA data (n.d.)

Another important trend is the transformation and diversification of the product structure of oil and fat exports. Alongside traditional sunflower oil, the role of other types of oils and processed oilseed products is gradually increasing, in particular soybean and rapeseed oil, as well as meals and oilcake. In 2024, exports of soybean oil increased by 25.8% and meals and oilcake by 6.3%, indicating a gradual expansion of the export product range and a higher level of raw material processing. At the same time, an analysis of the geographical structure of sunflower meal exports shows that the main importers remain countries in Asia and the European Union. In particular, the largest buyer is China, which accounts for 1,470.5 thousand tonnes of products, or 30.6% of total exports, equivalent to USD 324.4 million (31.5%). Significant volumes are also supplied to Poland – 597.5 thousand tonnes (12.5%) worth USD 126.4 million, and to France – 471.0 thousand tonnes (9.8%) worth USD 101.9 million. Taken together, these three countries account for 52.9% of the physical export volume and 53.7% of its value, indicating a relatively high level of market concentration. At the same time, nearly half of exports (47.1%) are directed to other countries, confirming the presence of a relatively broad geographical distribution of sales (Ukraine's oil and fat complex, 2025).

Calculation of *HHI* based on the data provided (the top three countries and the aggregated "others" group) yielded an *HHI* value of approximately 0.34, which corresponds to a high level of concentration. This means that, despite the presence of dominant markets, the export structure is not critically dependent on one or two destinations. This implies that, despite the presence of a significant group of other importing countries, exports are largely dependent on a limited number of key markets. Thus, the diversification of export destinations is partial in nature and is accompanied by the persistence of concentration trends in the export structure.

Similar trends are observed in soybean oil exports. The total export volume amounts to 386.8 thousand tonnes, valued at USD 317.0 million. A dominant position is held by Poland, which imports 269.2 thousand tonnes (69.6%) worth USD 218.5 million (68.9%). Significantly smaller volumes are supplied to the Netherlands – 12.8 thousand tonnes (3.3%) and to the United Arab Emirates – 9.3 thousand tonnes (2.4%). The combined share of the three leading importers amounts to 75.3% of total soybean oil exports, indicating a high level of concentration in this market segment (Ukraine's oil and fat complex, 2025). *HHI* is approximately 0.55, corresponding to a very high level of concentration. This indicates a critical dependence of soybean oil exports on a single market – Poland – which significantly limits the degree of diversification within this segment.

Exports of rapeseed oil are characterised by a somewhat more balanced geographical structure. In 2024, the total export volume amounted to 270.0 thousand tonnes, valued at USD 238.9 million. The largest importers are Poland – 69.8 thousand tonnes (25.9%), China – 58.1 thousand tonnes (21.5%), and Belgium – 38.7 thousand tonnes (14.3%). Taken together, these countries account for 61.7% of the physical export volume and 60.7% of its value. The remaining 38.3% of supplies is distributed among other countries, indicating a relatively broader geographical distribution compared to soybean oil (Ukraine's oil and fat complex, 2025). The calculation of the Herfindahl–Hirschman Index for rapeseed oil shows a lower level of concentration, at approximately 0.28, which still exceeds the threshold for high concentration but is significantly lower than in the soybean oil segment. This indicates a relatively more balanced, although still insufficiently diversified, geographical structure of exports.

Thus, the results of the analysis confirm that, alongside the traditional export of sunflower oil, the role of other processed oilseed products is gradually increasing. At the same time, the analysis of concentration levels shows that diversification is uneven in nature: while rapeseed oil demonstrates a relatively broader geographical distribution, soybean oil exports remain highly concentrated. Whereas previously a significant share of exports consisted

of raw materials, there is now a clear trend towards an increasing share of products with a higher level of processing. In particular, according to sectoral analytical estimates, the share of processed products (oil, meal, oilcake) in the structure of oilseed exports increased from approximately 55-60% in 2018-2019 to over 70-75% in 2023-2024, indicating a gradual shift from the export of raw materials (rapeseed and soybean seeds) to products with higher added value. At the same time, the share of oilseed exports in the form of raw seed declined from around 40-45% to 25-30%. The role of refined and packaged oil, specialised food fats, and by-products of processing, such as meal and oilcake, widely used in the feed industry, is increasing. The growth in exports of soybean oil and meal is driven by a combination of factors. Firstly, rising external demand from EU and Asian countries for protein feed and vegetable oils, linked to the development of livestock farming and the food industry. Secondly, changes in logistics: in 2022-2024, exports of processed products proved more adaptable to new transport conditions compared to exports of raw seeds, as they have a higher value per unit of weight and better transportability. Thirdly, the expansion of processing capacities in Ukraine and the reorientation of enterprises towards deeper processing of raw materials under conditions of restrictions on seed exports. Fourthly, price conditions: higher global prices for oils and protein components stimulated exports specifically of processed products. The expansion of the product range of exports contributes to increasing the level of added value and strengthening the position of industry enterprises within global value chains. The growing role of products with a higher level of processing has not only a quantitative but also a structural basis, reflecting the transformation of Ukraine's export model from a raw-material orientation to a more technologically oriented one.

Alongside the emergence of positive trends in the diversification of markets for oil and fat products, a number of significant economic, institutional, and infrastructural constraints can be observed. One of the major obstacles is the tightening of technical and phytosanitary requirements for imported food products. Many importing countries establish strict standards regarding safety, quality, traceability, and environmental sustainability of production. This requires enterprises in the oil and fat industry to implement modern food safety and quality management systems, adapt production processes to international certification standards, and enhance control at all stages of the production and logistics chain, as also confirmed in studies devoted to the principles of safe food production and the requirements for food safety management systems in industrial production (Romanovska *et al.*, 2022a; 2022b).

In particular, updated regulatory requirements are in force in the European Union, which significantly strengthen product quality and safety controls. For example, European Commission Regulation No. 2023/915 (2023) sets strict maximum levels for contaminants (mycotoxins, heavy metals, processing contaminants) in food products; exceeding these levels prevents the product from entering the EU market. In parallel, Regulation (EC) No. 396/2005 (2005) on maximum residue levels of pesticides is in force, which provides for mandatory laboratory testing of raw materials and finished products. Furthermore, as part of the European Green Deal (2019), new requirements for environmental sustainability and product traceability are being introduced, including Digital Product Passports and mandatory disclosure of information on the origin, composition and carbon footprint of goods. Failure to comply with these requirements may result in restrictions on market access for products within the EU.

The analysis conducted leads to the conclusion that the current stage of development of the oil and fat industry is characterised by a gradual diversification of exports, which manifests itself in three main areas:

- expansion of the geographical scope of exports and an increase in the number of importing countries;
- reorientation of logistics routes and the use of alternative transport corridors;
- diversification of the product structure through an increased share of various types of oils and their processed products.

To ensure the stable development of the oil and fat industry and enhance its competitiveness, a comprehensive set of measures to support exporters must be implemented. The development of export infrastructure – the modernisation of ports, transport corridors and logistics centres – is particularly relevant. Responsible institutions: Ministry of Community, Territorial and Infrastructure Development of Ukraine, Sea Port Administrations, regional transport departments. Intensifying trade diplomacy will facilitate the conclusion of new free trade agreements and the removal of technical barriers in foreign markets. Implementation tools here may include not only bilateral and multilateral negotiations and participation in international trade forums, but also the simplification of certification procedures in accordance with Law of Ukraine No. 124-VIII (2015) (Articles 8-10) and Law of Ukraine No. 959-XII (1991) (Articles 4, 7). Another tool is the promotion of Ukrainian products at international exhibitions through state export support programmes, participation in international exhibitions, information campaigns and B2B platforms. Finally, encouraging the deep processing of oilseeds – increasing the added value of exports and expanding the product range.

At the same time, the entry of Ukrainian products into new international markets is accompanied by a range of economic, technical and regulatory challenges. The main difficulties include: lengthy administrative procedures related to obtaining certificates, audits and risk assessments (in particular, certification); logistical and market constraints, including costs of transporting and storing products, as well as a high level of competition; technical difficulties in modernising product safety control systems; coordination issues in the process of exchanging information between government bodies and foreign partners. Each of these tools is clearly linked to a specific problem and the expected outcome: for example, harmonisation of standards removes technical barriers, digitalisation reduces administrative delays, and the development of infrastructure and logistics lowers transport costs. This comprehensive strategy allows for the minimisation of risks, the enhancement of product competitiveness, and the securing of stable access to new markets.

▸ Discussion

The results obtained generally confirm the key provisions of contemporary international trade theory regarding the role of diversification as a tool for enhancing economic resilience, while at the same time revealing a number of specific features characteristic of Ukraine's oil and fat industry in the context of the wartime and post-crisis period. In particular, the findings are consistent with the conclusions of R. Baldwin (2016), who substantiates the concept of "new globalisation" and emphasises the growing role of global value chains. Indeed, the analysis conducted demonstrates that the Ukrainian oilseed and oil industry is gradually integrating into these chains through an increase in the share of processed products (oil, meal, oilcake) within the export structure. Thus, the conclusions drawn by the researcher are entirely relevant, as they confirm the trend of transition from a raw material model to a model with higher added value.

At the same time, the approach of O. Cadot *et al.* (2011) regarding the evolution of export diversification is partially confirmed, but requires clarification. The author argues that at a certain stage of development, countries transition from diversification to specialisation. However, the analysis presented above paints a different picture, as even given the significant role of sunflower oil, Ukraine is compelled to simultaneously expand both the product and geographical structure of its exports. This is explained not only by the level of economic development but also by external shocks (war, logistical constraints), which alter the classical trajectory of structural transformation. Similarly, the results are partly consistent with the findings of J. Imbs & R. Wacziarg (2003), who demonstrate the cyclical nature of diversification and specialisation. However, these conclusions do not fully align with the results of the present analysis, as Ukraine is currently experiencing a simultaneous combination of two processes: on the one hand, the preservation of specialisation in sunflower oil, and on the other, forced diversification due to geopolitical risks. The reason for this discrepancy lies in the specific nature of the economy's functioning under martial law, which was not taken into account in classical models.

The approaches of K. Bagwell & R. Staiger (2016), which emphasise the importance of international trade agreements, also play a significant role in explaining the findings. In the context of this study, these conclusions are confirmed by Ukraine's expanded access to new markets (75 new export destinations in 2022-2025). Thus, the authors' assertions are well-founded, as institutional interaction at the international level does indeed contribute to export diversification. At the same time, the study's findings expand upon D. Rodrik's (2024) approach regarding the state's role in export development. The author emphasises the need for an active industrial policy. The analysis conducted confirms this thesis, yet at the same time shows that, in the Ukrainian context, state support must be complemented by the development of logistics infrastructure and adaptation to the regulatory requirements of export markets. Thus, this researcher's technical solutions, taking into account the results of this study, can be viewed in a broader context – as a combination of industrial, trade and logistics policies. The results also correlate with the research by A. Parteka & M. Tamberi (2013), which demonstrates the positive impact of diversification on economic stability. The conclusions drawn are entirely relevant, as it has been found that expanding the geography of exports to over 130 countries helps to reduce dependence on individual markets. At the same time, the analysis reveals a different picture at the sectoral level, as soya oil exports are characterised by very high concentration ($HHI \approx 0.55$), indicating that risks remain.

In terms of institutional support, the results are consistent with the findings of G.J. Felbermayr & E. Yalcin (2013) regarding the role of export credit instruments. This is confirmed by the fact that Ukrainian enterprises' limited access to financial resources hinders export diversification. At the same time, unlike the author's studies, in the domestic context the main constraining factor is not only financing but also logistical constraints, which highlights the complex nature of the problem.

Among Ukrainian researchers, the findings of this study align with the conclusions of V.V. Venger & O.M. Kushnirenko (2025) regarding the importance of infrastructure development through public-private partnership mechanisms. Their conclusions are relevant, as the analysis confirms that logistical constraints remain one of the key barriers to diversification. At the same time, unlike their approach, this study places greater emphasis on the transformation of transport flows (Danube ports, railways, roads), which is a new aspect in the context of military challenges. The study by L. Stepasiuk & M. Stepasiuk (2024) on production diversification is also corroborated. Their conclusions are supported, as the growing role of soya and rapeseed oil does indeed indicate a broadening of the commodity structure of exports. At the same time, the analysis demonstrates that production diversification does not always automatically lead to market diversification, as evidenced by the high concentration of soya oil exports. It should be noted separately that the study's results partly diverge from the conclusions of O.O. Petrova (2020) regarding regional opportunities for diversification. The author's assertions appear debatable, as current conditions significantly complicate the implementation of regional strategies due to logistical constraints and changes in trade routes. The reason for the discrepancies is a significant change in the external environment after 2022.

Thus, the comparative analysis conducted shows that most contemporary theoretical approaches to export diversification are confirmed; however, their application to Ukrainian realities requires consideration of specific factors, in particular military risks, logistical constraints and the tightening of regulatory requirements. Consequently, the research findings not only complement existing academic approaches but also refine them in the context of the transformation of global trade and the functioning of the economy under conditions of instability. The globalisation of economic processes, the deepening of international integration and the growth of competition in global markets necessitate the search for new approaches to the development of foreign economic activity.

▸ Conclusions

The conducted study has shown that the diversification of export markets is one of the key instruments for ensuring

the stability of foreign economic activity and enhancing the competitiveness of the national economy in conditions of global economic instability. In the context of the transformation of the global trading system, increasing geopolitical risks, and the growing complexity of logistics chains, export diversification makes it possible to reduce dependence on individual markets, mitigate the impact of global price fluctuations, and ensure a more balanced development of foreign trade.

It has been established that the oil and fat industry occupies a strategically important place in Ukraine's export structure, accounting for a significant share of the state's foreign exchange earnings and demonstrating a high level of competitiveness in the global market. Sunflower oil plays a particularly significant role in the commodity structure of exports, accounting for a substantial portion of exports of oilseed processing products; at the same time, there is an increase in the share of products undergoing further processing, which enhances the added value of exports. The geographical structure of exports indicates a gradual expansion of the circle of trading partners and the formation of a diversified system of foreign markets, among which the countries of the European Union, the Mediterranean region and Asia occupy an important place. There has also been a rise in exports to countries in South-East Asia and the Middle East, which demonstrates the effectiveness of strategies to expand market presence.

The diversification of oil and fat product exports is taking place in several interrelated directions. Firstly, there is an expansion of the geographical scope of supplies and an increase in the number of importing countries, which helps to reduce the concentration of exports in individual markets. Secondly, there is a reorientation of logistics routes, linked to the need to adapt the export system to the new operating conditions of the transport infrastructure. Thirdly, the product structure of exports is gradually diversifying due to the growing role of various types of oils and products of further processing of oilseeds.

The process of expanding sales markets for oil and fat products is accompanied by a number of economic, institutional and infrastructural constraints. The main ones include stricter technical and phytosanitary requirements in foreign markets, the increasing complexity of logistics processes, the underdevelopment of transport infrastructure, and fluctuations in global prices for agricultural products. Comprehensive export diversification (geographical, logistical and product-based), together with the effective use of state support instruments, is a key factor in enhancing the competitiveness of the oil and fat industry and ensuring the stable development of Ukraine's foreign economic activity.

Prospects for further research should be linked to an in-depth analysis of structural changes in the global oil market, an assessment of the competitive positions of Ukrainian producers in specific regional markets, and a study of the impact of logistical, institutional and trade factors on the efficiency of oil and fat product exports. Another important area for further research is the development of economic models for forecasting demand for oils in various countries. Furthermore, it is advisable to investigate the role of financial instruments for state support of exports, in particular export credits, guarantees and insurance mechanisms, as well as the effectiveness of institutional initiatives such as export credit agencies and state programmes to stimulate foreign economic activity. This will enable the formulation of well-founded strategic recommendations for enhancing the competitiveness of Ukrainian exporters in international markets.

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▸ Conflict of interest

None.

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Тенденції розвитку та диверсифікації зовнішніх ринків олії України

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Анотація. Стаття присвячена аналізу тенденцій розвитку та диверсифікації зовнішніх ринків олії України. Розглянуто вплив глобалізаційних процесів, економічної інтеграції та міжнародної конкуренції на структуру експорту, а також роль державних механізмів підтримки експортерів. У роботі використано комплекс статистичних, аналітичних і порівняльних методів, а також системний підхід для оцінки конкурентоспроможності олійножирової продукції на світових ринках. Диверсифікація експорту здійснюється у трьох основних напрямах: розширення географії постачань та збільшення кількості країн-імпортерів, переорієнтація логістичних маршрутів та використання альтернативних транспортних коридорів, а також диверсифікація товарної структури за рахунок збільшення частки різних видів олій та продукції їхньої переробки. Відзначено поступове зростання експорту соєвої та ріпакової олії, шротів і макухи, що сприяє підвищенню доданої вартості продукції та формуванню більш стійкої системи зовнішніх ринків. Встановлено головні обмеження, що стримують ефективну диверсифікацію: посилення технічних та фітосанітарних вимог, недостатній рівень розвитку транспортно-логістичної інфраструктури, коливання світових цін, високий рівень конкуренції. Для подолання цих бар'єрів запропоновано комплекс заходів державної підтримки, що включає модерн ізацію логістики, розвиток торговельно-економічної дипломатії, маркетингову підтримку та стимулювання глибокої переробки олійних культур. Диверсифікація ринків збуту є стратегічним інструментом забезпечення економічної стійкості та підвищення конкурентоспроможності олійножирової галузі України в умовах глобальної нестабільності та трансформації міжнародної торговельної системи. Практичне значення полягає в пошуку ефективних напрямів диверсифікації зовнішніх ринків збуту олійножирової продукції України, що можуть бути використані органами державного управління та підприємствами галузі для підвищення конкурентоспроможності та стійкості експорту

Ключові слова: диверсифікація експорту; олійножирова галузь; соняшникова олія; міжнародні ринки; логістичні маршрути; продукція переробки олійних культур