

SUPPORT FOR EXPORTERS UNDER CURRENT CONDITIONS: FROM INTERNATIONAL PRACTICE

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Abstract: A country's export is the engine of its economic development, contributes to attracting investments, creating new jobs, increasing the income level of the population. Export deliveries stimulate the development of industry, promote the expansion of product sales, increase the competitiveness of enterprises, strengthen their positions on the world market. In addition, export is a source of foreign exchange earnings, thus contributing to the import of modern equipment and technologies, the development of infrastructure, which, in turn, makes it possible to achieve structural transformations of the national economy, which is also a necessity for the Republic of Moldova.

In world and European practice, various methods of supporting exporters are used. At the state level, export strategies and programs are developed, a wide range of economic and financial measures are implemented to support exporters by the state. Most countries have created organizations to support foreign economic activity, which are part of the national export support systems.

Exporter support mechanisms have been formed over a long period of time. The article examines the forms of support for export operations currently used internationally, in particular, in several European countries. It is noted that in recent decades, export support in Europe has undergone significant changes, adapting to changing economic conditions and political priorities. In general, the following trends can be identified: a shift from direct subsidies to indirect forms of support, correlated with innovation, sustainability, market diversification.

The historical and systemic approach was used, as well as the general scientific methods of logical and comparative analysis.

Keywords: export, financing, subsidies, export agency, economic diplomacy

JEL Classification: F10, F14

1 Introduction

Foreign trade is one of the ways for economic agents of a country to participate in world economic flows. Moreover, by virtue of international trends, the basis of development in many countries of the world is precisely trade relations with the outside world. They allow national producers to actively participate in competition on the world market, contributing to the development and stimulation of national production. Such processes favorably influence the economic growth of countries. Export orientation has been almost universally accepted as the direction of industrial development since the early 1970s. This is the path chosen by Japan and the newly industrialized countries of Asia (South Korea, Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan), which have achieved remarkable successes, in 2023 the first two of the listed countries are in the top 10 of world exporters. (Banque Mondiale, 2025)

Currently, supporting national exporters is an integral part of the economic and trade policy of all countries in the world. We believe that the problem is particularly relevant for the Republic of Moldova, as statistical data indicate that the negative trade balance of the Republic of Moldova over the past five years has been increasing. In 2024, the considerable gap between exports and imports of goods determined the accumulation of a trade balance deficit of \$5510.1 million or \$883.2 million (+19.1%) more than that recorded in 2023. (BNS, 2025) In this context, it is necessary to adopt measures to more actively support exporters, and international and European

practice confirms that in all countries there are support systems for local producers/exporters, based on short-term and strategic priority objectives, market conditions, signed agreements, etc.

2 General characteristics of export support

In international practice, various methods of supporting exporters are used. However, the combination of different elements is quite flexible, which gives flexibility to the entire system, which reacts and changes depending on the economic situation, the role of the state, the situation on world markets, etc. Of course, the dynamism and nature of supporting export activity in different countries differ depending on the structure of the economy, participation in international organizations and other factors. The state is the one that organizes the formation of the export strategy, contributes to the promotion and implementation of its basic provisions through economic policy instruments, and in particular, means of supporting national exporters. At the same time, supporting national exporters in developed countries can be characterized by a number of common features:

Export support has become a major direction of the state's economic activity, often resulting in direct trade expansion. Significant financial resources are allocated to this purpose, the activities and competencies of state structures and special organizations involved in foreign economic activity are subordinated to it;

The activity of governments aimed at stimulating exports is carried out continuously, including during favorable economic conditions. Increased attention in this regard is paid to the prospects for expanding exports, in particular, the development of special support programs;

Along with the intensification of the stimulation of export transactions, measures are taken to form or expand demand for national products abroad, by organizing special distribution and sales networks and creating international associations with numerous subsidiaries and divisions of companies in the markets of partner countries in transactions.

In connection with the use of various methods of financial support for exporting industries and, as a result, mutual accusations of unfair competition, countries tend to coordinate control functions. The Consensus on Export Credits and the concept of the need for a transition from free trade to organized free trade, which emerged as early as the 1980s, can serve as evidence and which involves the development of a complex system of intergovernmental agreements, combined with intergovernmental regulation of the conditions for granting export credits, guarantees and subsidies. (OECD, 2024)

This integration of efforts and means in the competition for export markets is based on objective foundations. On the one hand, globalization has expanded access to new markets, determined the evolution of institutions that ensure and determine the development of international trade in goods and services. In the world circuit, production with a high technical and capital intensity is increasingly attracted, manufactured by cooperating companies or production units from different countries. In parallel, the world market for technologies that involve long-term partnership relationships has expanded. In this context, the promotion of goods on foreign markets currently requires exporters to mobilize quite significant resources, and to direct them towards the importer in order to provide technical services, maintenance, etc. On the other hand, such an integration of possibilities is subordinated to the contemporary framework for the development of trade, which develops in conditions of economic instability in certain regions or sectors of activity, of toughening competition, the existence of geopolitical, commercial, financial risks, etc. (WTO, 2025) Modern protectionism differs significantly from the protectionism of previous decades, as it largely involves a combination of traditional means of protection with disguised protectionist measures and the promotion of the interests of domestic producers.

3 Support measures for exporters

The mechanism for supporting exporters was formed over a long period of time. In this process, we can highlight several stages depending on the actuality of the state's economic tasks.

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Thus, in the 50s of the 20th century, there was a tendency to regulate the level of selling prices by various methods, in the 60s - to create a long-term interest in the export of goods and penetration into new sales markets, in the 70s-80s the main task was the formation of a competitive export base, in particular, in the machine-building industry. In the first decades of the 21st century, we note the tendency to support market diversification, orientation towards consolidating positions in emerging markets, promotion of intelligent products and services with high added value. In the arsenal of export support measures, we mention:

Subsidies (export premiums) - financial support provided by the government or private institutions to manufacturing firms for the export of certain goods. Many countries have gradually reduced or revised direct subsidies to exporters, following World Trade Organization rules. They often arise as a reason for disputes and accusations of unfair competition, for example, case Boeing vs Airbus. (Reuters, 2021)

Export credits. They apply mainly to finished goods, include both long-term and short-term credits. Lending is carried out through payments from special funds, as well as refinancing, subsidizing or insurance and is implemented through banks and intergovernmental banking organizations.

Export insurance. This is achieved by providing state guarantees to banks that provide export credits. Insurance covers not only traditional commercial risks, but also political risks and applies to a wide range of goods and countries.

Devaluation of the national currency. Many countries that have successfully developed their exports (China, South Korea, Indonesia, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Taiwan) have resorted to maintaining an artificially low exchange rate of the currency. Devaluation has its positive and negative effects. On the one hand, it is an effective means of forming exports, since the exporter gets the opportunity over a period of time to take advantage of advantages on the foreign market. As the owner of foreign currency, by exchanging it, he comes into possession of a higher equivalent in the national currency, in accordance with the variation in the exchange rate. However, after a certain period, production costs, related to the increase in the price of imports, could exceed all the advantages of devaluation, including for exporters.

All of the above export support measures are used to some extent. But the significance of each of them in certain periods of time for different countries was different. Moreover, it can be said that some export stimulation measures, previously widely used, are gradually beginning to disappear under the influence of fiscal pressure, anti-dumping and anti-subsidy measures. The WTO and a number of other international organizations are acting in the same direction. This does not mean that such measures have been completely abandoned, but the possibilities for their use have narrowed.

Under current conditions, the most common methods of stimulating exports are export credit and export credit insurance. As a rule, state support for export operations is carried out through export credit agencies (ECAs). By providing insurance services, ECAs act mainly to support export projects, in terms of commercial and political risks that are not covered by commercial insurance companies. It is important that the activities of ECAs do not violate the principles of the commercial insurance market. Among other support measures for exporters in the current period, we mention:

Training and consultations: organizations can organize seminars, trainings and consultations on export activities, helping companies develop the necessary skills and knowledge;

Support at international exhibitions: many countries support exporters at international exhibitions and fairs, providing exhibition space, consultations on participation, etc.;

Informational support: providing information on potential markets, product requirements, customs procedures and other aspects of international trade.

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All these measures, used in international practice, are intended to contribute to the expansion of exports in both the short and long term. Simultaneously with operational regulation, states carry out strategic tasks of trade policy aimed at long-term goals and strengthening the national economy. An example is the increase in state allocations for scientific and research work, which increase the competitiveness of the national economy, which is the foundation of export competitiveness. In this context, we mention the leading countries in terms of the share of research and development expenditures in GDP in 2024: Israel – 5.56%, South Korea – 4.93%, USA – 3.46%, Belgium – 3.43%, Sweden – 3.42%, Switzerland – 3.36%. (UIS UNESCO, 2024)

We note the increasing role of economic diplomacy which contributes to solving important political tasks of the state and involves activities to protect the country's economic interests at the international level: increasing exports, attracting foreign investments, participating in the activities of international economic and financial organizations; promoting national interests in the sphere of interstate cooperation in the economic field, etc.

A means of promoting goods on foreign markets is counterparty, which is currently used in various forms by most countries of the world. The role of the state here is reduced to the legal support of counterparty transactions, to the creation of structures, designed to contribute to the development of these types of transactions. Although there are reticent attitudes towards counterparty transactions on the part of large companies, due to additional obligations, complicating their commercial activity, the governments of Western countries, proceeding from commercial interests, support the participation of national companies in such transactions. By its characteristics, counterparty transactions occupy an intermediate place between the means of stimulation of a financial and administrative nature. (NATIONS UNIES, 1993)

4 From the experience of some European countries

France is undergoing a profound transformation of the system of state support and foreign economic activity. In 2015, after the merger of two specialized organizations, a new national institute for supporting exports and attracting investments was created - Business France. Government guarantees were transferred from the private insurance company COFACE to the state bank Bpifrance, which was allowed to issue state guarantees directly. Bpifrance plays a central role in financing French exports through several key measures, such as prospecting insurance, international growth loans, export credit insurance.

Launched in 2018, Team France Export brings together all stakeholders in the field of public export support (Business France, Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Bpifrance) to offer a unified service, a “one-stop shop” with a dedicated international advisor who can leverage all available solutions according to the exporter’s needs. Team France Export offers: • Export diagnostics; • Personalized assistance programs; • Business prospecting missions abroad; • French pavilions at major international fairs.

The missions of the Chambers of Commerce and Industry include providing support and advice for the international development of businesses and the export of their products. Specifically, this mission can take various forms (putting partners in contact, providing information, providing free or paid advice, etc).

The French Chambers of Commerce Abroad are private organizations governed by local law, which bring together French and foreign companies. Federated within a network led by CCI France International, they aim to facilitate business relations and contacts abroad. In addition to their general mission of supporting French companies wishing to establish or expand in a foreign country, some French Chambers of Commerce Abroad have won a tender to designate a public service concessionaire on behalf of Business France. (COMMISSION DES AFFAIRES ÉCONOMIQUES, 2023)

In the **Netherlands**, support for exporters is provided as part of a general economic policy aimed at strengthening the country’s competitiveness. Exporters can benefit from various grants

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and subsidies. For example, the government can repay part of the exporter's loan if the exporter cannot repay this part himself. The subsidy programme 'Support for International Business' (SIB) provides professional advice on export plans, especially for SMEs that plan to expand into new markets. (Ondernemersplein, 2025a) The SIB Alternatieve markten subsidy is offered to small and medium-sized enterprises in the Netherlands affected by the war in Ukraine or trade sanctions against Russia. The subsidy covers 80% of the costs, up to 2500 euros. (Netherlands Enterprise Agency, 2025a)

The Netherlands Enterprise Agency helps to conduct business abroad, provides tailored country information, using its own experience and databases, as well as collaborating with the international network of embassies, consulates and national statistical offices. Advice is provided on current market trends, possible distribution channels for the product or service, export rules and product requirements, business culture, subsidy and financing options. The services are provided free of charge and always take into account specific needs. Individual support is also provided regarding business partners, which meet specific needs and requirements. The consultants collaborate with the international network in the chosen country, including, for example, the embassy. The best way to establish contact with potential business partners is recommended. An individual approach is essential in finding the best ways to establish contact with international business partners and helps to quickly consolidate positions in a new market. (Rijksdienst voor Ondernemend Nederland, 2025a)

In the Netherlands there is a government program for export credit insurance (EKV), which is applied when private companies are reluctant to insure against non-payment on exports, for example in case of very large amounts, long delivery times or unstable political situations in the country. In addition to export credit insurance, there are other state products to increase protection against export risks, such as 1. investment insurance against political risks such as civil war, 2. export credit guarantee, which allows banks to expand the range of export financing for Dutch exporters. (Rijksdienst voor Ondernemend Nederland, 2025b)

The Eurostars grant is designed to support small and medium-sized enterprises in high-tech research and development, in collaboration with partners from other countries (at least two). Eligibility requirements: at least 10% of turnover is spent on research and development or at least 10% of staff is engaged in research and development. The project must be completed within 36 months and aims to develop a marketable product or process within 1 year of completion. (Netherlands Enterprise Agency, 2025b.)

The Dutch Good Growth Fund (DGGF) provides financing for Dutch and local companies in emerging markets and developing countries. It is a program created at the request of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands. The DGGF offers several opportunities for Dutch SMEs: Investment in an emerging market or developing country; Import of goods from an emerging market or developing country; Export to an emerging market or developing country; (Netherlands Enterprise Agency, 2025c) The DGGF is accessible to a number of countries in Asia, Africa, Central America, South America and Europe, including the Republic of Moldova. (Invest International, 2025)

Openness to business, ideas and people is essential for **Ireland's** success. The country's economic climate is currently considered one of the most favourable in the EU. Export-oriented companies can use the Market Discovery Fund to explore new markets, with support of up to €150,000. The Get Exporting programme covers both financial support and consultancy for entering international markets. The state actively supports companies focused on international markets and innovation. The Key Manager Support programme offers funding of up to €150,000 for the employment of highly qualified managerial staff capable of developing export activities.

European programmes such as Eureka Eurostars and Innowwide fund research and training for small and medium-sized enterprises to enter international markets. The Digital Marketing

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Capability Grant helps develop digital marketing, improving companies' international presence. To participate in such programmes, it is necessary to prepare a strategic plan, analyse target markets and interact with relevant agencies. (Irish Exporters Association, 2025)

Embassies and consulates play an important role in trade activities, which vary by market and include:

Influence and Networking – embassies and consulates build long-term networks of influence in the political, economic, cultural and academic spheres, which can be used to support Irish economic and business objectives.

Providing local market information and advice to Irish government bodies and companies, as well as briefings and practical advice on business culture, legislation and regulations. As part of economic diplomacy, the embassy also disseminates important economic information about Ireland to key local stakeholders and reports to headquarters on local economic developments.

Commercial and other support to Irish agencies and companies operating in the market, as required. This includes addressing market access issues, facilitating local contacts, providing certifications and other consular services, and highlighting opportunities and challenges associated with new or existing EU free trade agreements with third countries. (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2025)

There are various government support programmes available to Irish businesses. (Enterprise Ireland, 2025a) <https://www.enterprise-ireland.com/en/enterprise-hub>. The government's Market Diversification Action Plan, launched in August 2025 following the introduction of US tariffs on EU products, is a comprehensive government approach to supporting Irish businesses in securing new and diversified markets for their innovative and high-quality products. (Enterprise Ireland, 2025b)

Team **Estonia** is a cooperation model created to promote the economic development and international competitiveness of Estonia, led by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Enterprise Estonia Foundation (EIS). The aim is to coordinate the state's efforts to bring companies to the international stage, attract investment and promote Estonia as an attractive environment for investment and business. The cooperation also aims to attract foreign talent and knowledge.

The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications sets the strategic direction, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs provides diplomatic support and representation opportunities, while the EIS focuses mainly on providing relevant and effective services to help attract new foreign investment and enable Estonian companies to successfully enter new target markets or expand their growth opportunities in existing export markets. Diplomatic missions and export advisors provide support to companies entering foreign markets and collect market intelligence. As of 2024, Estonia has 36 diplomatic missions that provide local support to companies in foreign countries, help establish business contacts and promote Estonia's interests internationally. In addition, Estonia has 195 honorary consuls who are ready to support Estonian companies in over 90 countries, significantly expanding the availability of assistance and the network of local contacts. Furthermore, EIS has advisors in 14 countries who share detailed market intelligence and provide strategic advice and local expertise to increase the competitiveness of Estonian companies in global markets. (Ekspordi strateegia 2025–2028)

For Estonia, a current objective is to create an export support measure for trade associations. The aim of the measure is to support the capacity of trade associations to develop export activities in their sector and to direct resources towards promoting smart and value-added products and services to foreign markets. The support measure will amount to two million euros and will be financed from the European Union's structural funds. Support activities include participation in trade fairs, hiring export advisors or conducting market research. The support is mainly targeted

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at smart and value-added industries, including digital solutions, medical technology, sustainable energy solutions and the valorisation of local resources. (Government Republic of Estonia, 2024)

5 Conclusions

Export support is an integral part of the foreign economic policy of states. In order to promote export products, countries create a favorable climate for exporters, use incentive support measures, both financial and non-financial methods. Countries have created special organizations and devices to support foreign economic activity, which are part of the national export support systems. In the current conditions, marked by uncertainty, geopolitical conflicts, trade disputes, protectionist tendencies, we note that:

Measures to support national exporters are a significant part of export promotion strategies;

There are different methods of supporting exporters, aiming to ensure certain priorities and advantages, both short-term and strategic;

Measures to diversify markets are current to maintain profitability and jobs in the context of tariff pressures;

Grants provide exporters with the necessary financing to help them diversify their markets and improve the sustainability of their business models.

Financial and credit means of stimulating exports currently remain effective instruments of trade expansion for most states. State support for export operations is carried out, in particular, through export credit agencies. Participation in international organizations, mainly the WTO, and the search for a balance between market opening and protecting and promoting the interests of national producers require extensive and complex work, constant study and forecasting of development trends and flexible adaptation of the national economic strategy to current challenges. An important role in the set of measures is played by economic diplomacy.

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