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NEW MANAGEMENT INSTRUMENTS FOR STIMULATING AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS FROM THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

This work looks at new ways for stimulating agricultural exports from the Republic of Moldova. The purpose of this study is to identify and describe the management tools that can contribute to the growth of the export of agricultural products of Moldova and the expansion of its sales markets. The goal of this work is to find a way to list new management tools. These tools can help grow the amount of Moldovan farming products we sell to other places. They can also help sell to more markets. The study check numbers from the government of Republic of Moldova and from big lists of trade data. It also uses reports about what to do from 2020 to 2025. The methodological framework combined comparative analysis, institutional analysis, and elements of strategic management analysis. The study reveals a transition from traditional administrative regulation to integrated management tools. These include digital export support platforms, export credit and guarantee mechanisms, cluster management models, and public-private partnership mechanisms. The results show that the effectiveness of export promotion depends not only on financial support, but also on coordination between government institutions, business associations and producers. Weak institutional coherence and limited managerial competences remain the main constraining factors.

Keywords: export management; agricultural exports; management instruments; institutional support.

Tab. 1. Fig. 1. Lit. 16.

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НОВІ УПРАВЛІНСЬКІ ІНСТРУМЕНТИ СТИМУЛЮВАННЯ АГРАРНОГО ЕКСПОРТУ З РЕСПУБЛІКИ МОЛДОВА

У статті розглядаються нові способи стимулювання експорту сільськогосподарської продукції з Республіки Молдова. Метою дослідження є визначення та характеристика управлінських інструментів, які можуть сприяти зростанню експорту аграрної продукції Молдови та розширенню ринків її збуту. Ціллю цієї роботи є визначення та систематизація нових управлінських інструментів. Ці інструменти можуть сприяти збільшенню обсягів продажу молдовської сільськогосподарської продукції на зовнішніх ринках, а також розширенню географії її реалізації. Проаналізовано статистичні дані уряду Республіки Молдова та великі масиви торговельної статистики. Також використано стратегічні та аналітичні звіти щодо розвитку аграрного експорту на період 2020–2025 років. Методологічна основа дослідження поєднує порівняльний аналіз, інституційний аналіз та елементи стратегічного управлінського аналізу. У дослідженні виявлено перехід від традиційного адміністративного регулювання до інтегрованих управлінських інструментів. До них належать цифрові платформи підтримки експорту, механізми експортного кредитування та гарантування, моделі кластерного управління, а також механізми державно-приватного партнерства. Результати дослідження свідчать, що ефективність стимулювання експорту залежить не лише від фінансової підтримки, а й від координації між державними установами, бізнес-асоціаціями та виробниками. Основними стримувальними факторами залишаються слабка інституційна узгодженість та обмежені управлінські компетентності.

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Ключові слова: управління експортом; аграрний експорт; управлінські інструменти; інституційна підтримка.

Problem statement. The agricultural sector plays a strategic role in the economy of the Republic of Moldova. It provides employment for the population and forms a significant part of the country's export revenues. Agricultural products traditionally dominate the structure of Moldovan exports. However, its export potential is not fully realized. This is confirmed by modern scientific studies that indicate an imbalance between production capabilities and real export volumes [1; 2].

Analysis of recent research and publications. The topicality of the topic is due to the strengthening of external and internal challenges. The Moldovan agricultural sector is affected by climate change. Demands for quality, safety and traceability of products on foreign markets are increasing. An important factor is the European integration of the country. Harmonization with the norms of the European Union requires the adaptation of management approaches in the field of export [3; 4]. In these conditions, traditional administrative management methods lose their effectiveness. Moldova's agriculture is characterized by a low level of added export value. Raw material orientation prevails. Export markets remain limited by geography. A significant problem is the fragmentation of institutional support for exporters. Studies show weak coordination between government authorities, business and agricultural producers [5; 6]. This reduces the competitiveness of Moldovan products on international markets. Modern scientific approaches emphasize the role of management in the development of agricultural exports. Innovative and digital tools are gaining special importance. They are related to the concepts of Agriculture 4.0, sustainable development and food security [7; 8]. Such tools make it possible to increase the efficiency of export activities and reduce risks for producers.

The motivation for choosing the topic is the need for a systematic analysis of new management tools for export promotion. Particular attention is paid to the specificity of the Republic of Moldova as a country with an agrarian-oriented economy.

The purpose of the study is to identify and generalize modern management tools aimed at the development of export of agricultural products. The task of the work is to assess their impact on export capacity and market diversification.

The research used methods of analysis, comparison and generalization. Data from official statistics, analytical reports and results of scientific publications were used. An analysis of previous studies shows that most works focus on econometric evaluations and macroeconomic factors of exports [2; 9]. At the same time, the administrative dimension of agricultural export stimulation remains insufficiently systematized. This determines the scientific relevance and practical significance of this research.

Main results of the study. The results show a clear gap between the export dynamics of the Republic of Moldova and the external demand for agricultural products on the EU market, which is a key sales channel for the country [10]. This means that the problem lies not only in the general market situation, but also in the ability of exporters and state institutions to ensure stable access to European sales channels under conditions of increasing requirements for quality, traceability and logistical reliability [10; 11].

According to national statistics, in 2023, Moldova's export of goods amounted to 4,048.6 million dollars. USA, and in 2024 it decreased to 3,555.1 million dollars. USA, that is, the decline was double-digit [12]. Such dynamics increase the vulnerability of the agricultural sector, as a reduction in exports reduces foreign exchange earnings and narrows the financial capabilities of producers during periods of seasonal peaks and price fluctuations [11; 13]. In 2024, exports to the EU reached 2,392.4 million dollars. USA and formed 67.3% of total exports, which emphasizes the critical dependence of the export model on European supply chains and market access standards [12; 10]. This concentration creates a "narrow corridor effect", where any changes in regulatory requirements or in logistics routes are immediately translated into losses for exporters, so managing compliance with EU requirements becomes a basic management function, not a secondary option [10; 11].

In the structure of exports for 2023, product groups with an agrarian core remained significant, in particular "vegetable products" and "prepared food products, beverages, tobacco", which forms a significant segment of the export portfolio, but at the same time increases the risks of raw materials and price volatility [12; 13]. This indicates the need for management tools aimed at increasing added value, better contractual coordination and reducing transaction costs in supply chains [13].

In this logic, the evaluation of exports should be supplemented with socio-economic parameters, because the export of agricultural products is directly related to the incomes of rural households and the stability of the development of territories, and the macro-financial context and external shocks determine the space for management decisions at the level of the state and business [14; 11]. Given the high level of social vulnerability in rural areas, even moderate disruptions in exports can increase inequality, reduce investment activity and limit opportunities to modernize agricultural production, making export management part of a broader economic and social sustainability policy [14; 15].

Table 1 presents the generalized indicators of external exports and key socio-economic indicators of the Republic of Moldova for 2023-2024, which allow for a comprehensive assessment of export dynamics in combination with the level of social vulnerability. The table shows a reduction in the total volume of exports in 2024 compared to 2023, as well as a high share of the European Union in the structure of exports, which indicates a significant concentration in one main sales market. Indicators of multidimensional poverty are presented separately, which demonstrate a significant gap between urban and rural areas. This confirms that the export of agricultural products is closely related to the socio-economic stability of rural households and should be considered not only as a tool of trade policy, but as a component of a broader model of economic and regional development.

Table 1 captures two conclusions that are important for export management. First, the reduction in total exports in 2024 occurred against the background of very high concentration in the EU market, which means that the management tools for promoting exports must be adjusted to the requirements of the European market: compliance with standards, traceability, logistical reliability, stability of contract performance and financial risk insurance. Secondly, social vulnerability remains significant: in 2024, 25.6% of the population was in a state of multidimensional poverty, and in rural areas this indicator was 37.6%, which makes export policy not only a tool for

growth, but also a tool for reducing inequality and supporting the incomes of agrarian territories. That is why “new management tools” in exports should be evaluated not only by the volume of deliveries, but also by the effect on transaction costs, employment and sustainability of households.

Table 1. External exports and related socio-economic indicators of the Republic of Moldova (2023–2024), based on [11; 12; 14]

Indicator	2023	2024
Export of goods, million dollars USD	4048,6	3555,1
Exports to the EU (EU-27), million USD	–	2392,4
EU share in total exports, %	–	67,3
Level of multidimensional poverty (H), %	26,5	25,6
Intensity of multidimensional poverty (A), %	45,3	46,0
MPI (M0 = H×A)	0,120	0,118
Multidimensional poverty in urban areas (H), %	–	10,0
Multidimensional poverty in rural areas (H), %	–	37,6

Next, the results compare the export background of Moldova with the trends of agricultural trade in the EU as the main target market. According to Eurostat, in 2024 the EU exported 234.1 billion agricultural products, which was 2.8% more than in 2023, meaning that the incoming demand and trade flows for agricultural products from the EU generally showed growth. This contrast with the decline of Moldova’s total exports reinforces the management conclusion: the constraints lie not only in external demand, but in the ability to organize access to markets through the tools of promotion, financing, standardization and coordination of the “producer-processing-logistics-exporter” chain.

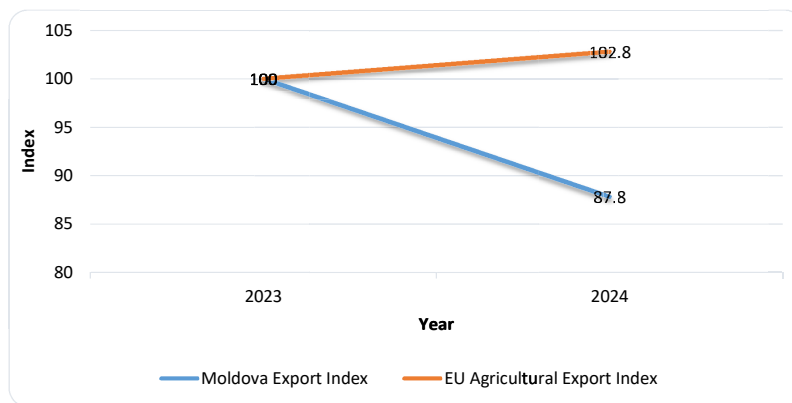


Fig. 1. Export dynamics: Moldova (total export) and the EU (agricultural export), index 2023 = 100, based on [10; 12; 14]

The graph 1 emphasizes the difference in trajectories between the export dynamics of Moldova and the general situation of EU agricultural trade. According to official statistics, the total export of goods of the Republic of Moldova in 2024 decreased relative to 2023, so the index falls below the base level of 2023 = 100 [12]. At the same time, in the EU, the export of agricultural products in 2024 showed growth until 2023, which is reflected by an index above 100 and confirms the preservation of market opportunities for suppliers able to meet the requirements of access and competition in the EU market [10]. This contrast has a managerial explanation: the drop in exports in the presence of a growing target market means that not only “production volumes” become critical, but the quality of export organization, speed of adaptation to standards, contractual discipline, logistical reliability and financial stability of exporters in periods of shocks [11].

In practical terms, this means that “export promotion” should move from point administrative decisions to an integrated system of management tools. First, we need digital support services for exporters that reduce information gaps, accelerate access to market requirements, and standardize interaction with state and quasi-state institutions. Second, export financing and guarantee instruments are needed, which give enterprises the opportunity to work with deferred payments, to insure against risks and to provide working capital during seasonal peaks. Thirdly, clustering and contractual coordination are important, because they reduce the fragmentation of the offer, strengthen the negotiating position and allow to stabilize the quality and volume of supplies. Fourthly, it is necessary to manage compliance with the requirements of the EU market, since it is compliance with quality, safety and traceability standards that determine real access to sales channels and the ability to receive a quality premium [10; 11]. The logic of these tools is directly related to reducing transaction costs and increasing supply predictability, which is critical for agricultural exports with short seasonal windows, high dependence on logistics and sensitivity to price fluctuations [13].

In a broader context, global food risks remain significant, increasing competition for markets and increasing the value of stable and transparent export chains. Global reviews of food security document the continued vulnerability of large parts of the population to food price, income and availability shocks, and emphasize that financing and institutional capacity are key to reducing hunger and malnutrition [15]. Separately, acute food insecurity reports show that risks are intensifying in many countries and regions, and markets are therefore becoming more volatile and demanding of supply reliability and quality risk management [16]. For Moldova, this means the need for a “double result” of the export policy: to ensure access to the EU market and at the same time support the social sustainability of agricultural territories through the growth of added value, better organization of supply chains, reduction of losses and increase of producers’ incomes. Here, the social dimension is not background, but determining, because indicators of multidimensional poverty demonstrate high vulnerability of households, especially in rural areas, and this directly affects labor resources, investment capacity, and sustainability of agricultural production [14].

In this sense, an agreed system of export management becomes a basic condition not only for the recovery of export rates, but also for the long-term competitiveness

of the agricultural sector. It should be synchronized with macroeconomic constraints, stabilization policies and the need to increase productivity, which are outlined in international assessments of the country [11]. At the same time, the system should take into account the medium-term trends of agricultural markets and sustainability requirements, because they will shape the “rules of the game” in exports in the coming years [13]. This logic makes it possible to transfer export promotion from the level of individual measures to the level of a managed model, where the tools of support, standardization, financing and coordination work as a single system.

Conclusions. In the course of the study, it was established that the export of agricultural products remains a key factor in the economic stability and development of the Republic of Moldova, while its potential is not fully realized. The analysis showed that in 2024, the reduction in total exports occurred against the background of the growth of agricultural trade in the European Union, which is the main market for Moldovan exporters. This indicates the presence of managerial, institutional and organizational constraints, and not a deficit of external demand.

The study confirmed that traditional administrative methods of export promotion do not provide sustainable results in the face of growing competition, stricter standards and logistical risks. It was determined that the key factor in increasing export capacity is the transition to an integrated system of management tools, which combines digital services to support exporters, export financing and guarantee mechanisms, cluster forms of production organization, and contractual coordination of supply chains. The obtained results proved a close connection between the export policy and the social stability of the agrarian territories. The high level of multidimensional poverty in rural areas limits the investment opportunities of producers and reduces the resilience of the agricultural sector to external shocks. In this context, export development should be considered not only as a tool for economic growth, but also as a mechanism for reducing social vulnerability through the creation of added value and increased income in the rural economy.

It was concluded that an agreed system of export management is a basic condition for the long-term competitiveness of the agricultural sector of the Republic of Moldova. Such a system should be oriented to the requirements of the EU market, integrated with macroeconomic policy and coordinated with global trends of food security and sustainable development. The practical implementation of the proposed approaches can increase the predictability of exports, reduce transaction costs and ensure a more sustainable inclusion of Moldovan agricultural products in international markets.

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