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ENSURING FOREIGN TRADE SECURITY AT THE REGIONAL LEVEL: WORLD EXPERIENCE

ЗАБЕЗПЕЧЕННЯ ЗОВНІШНЬОТОРГОВЕЛЬНОЇ БЕЗПЕКИ НА РЕГІОНАЛЬНОМУ РІВНІ: СВІТОВИЙ ДОСВІД

Summary. The article is devoted to examining global practices in ensuring foreign trade security at the regional level. It identifies modern tools and effective mechanisms that help regions strengthen their positions in international trade while mitigating risks and threats. The importance of ensuring regional foreign trade security is emphasized in the context of global instability, economic competition, and geopolitical threats, as this issue concerns not only the national level but also specific regions, cities, and communities that actively participate in international economic processes. The experience of EU countries is considered, where regions are active participants in foreign trade operations thanks to decentralization processes and access to EU structural funds, and where regional development agencies operate effectively. Attention is given to Germany's experience, where federal states can have their own economic offices abroad to promote foreign trade, and chambers of commerce and industry outside the country offer German companies a wide range of services. The experience of the United Kingdom is studied, which supports the activities of nine regional directors for international trade. Based on the activities of relevant institutions and information networks, the experience of the United States in supporting the foreign trade of regional companies is demonstrated. Measures to ensure regional foreign trade security in China are examined, particularly through the creation and operation of free trade zones as export-oriented hubs with a high level of security. Japan's experience in assisting small and medium-sized enterprises to maximize their global export potential and Canada's experience in developing regional export diplomacy are also explored. It is substantiated that the experience of foreign countries in ensuring regional foreign trade security is relevant and useful for Ukraine, especially in the context of Russian military aggression, complications in transport and logistics schemes, and increased vulnerability of regional development.

Keywords: economic security, foreign trade security, region, threats, military aggression.

Анотація. Стаття присвячена розгляду світового досвіду забезпечення зовнішньоторговельної безпеки на регіональному рівні. З'ясовано сучасні інструменти та ефективні механізми, які допомагають регіонам зміцнювати позиції у міжнародній торгівлі на фоні зменшення ризиків та загроз. Наголошено на важливості забезпечення зовнішньоторговельної безпеки регіонів в умовах глобальної нестабільності, економічної конкуренції та геополітичних загроз, оскільки це питання стосується не лише національного масштабу, а й конкретних областей, міст і громад, які активно беруть участь у міжнародних економічних процесах. Розглянуто досвід країн ЄС, коли регіони є активними учасниками зовнішньоторговельних операцій завдяки процесам децентралізації та доступу до структурних фондів ЄС, і де ефективно працюють агенції регіонального розвитку. Приділено увагу досвіду Німеччини, де землі можуть мати власні економічні офіси за кордоном для стимулювання зовнішньої торгівлі, та торгово-промислові палати за межами країни пропонують німецьким компаніям різноманітний спектр послуг. Вивчено досвід Великобританії, яка підтримує діяльність дев'яти регіональних директорів із питань міжнародної торгівлі. На прикладі діяльності відповідних інституцій та інформаційних мереж показано досвід США у підтримці зовнішньої торгівлі регіональних компаній. Розглянуто заходи забезпечення зовнішньоторговельної безпеки регіонів у практиці Китаю, зокрема за рахунок створення та функціонування зон вільної торгівлі як експортно-орієнтованих хабів з високим рівнем безпеки.

ки. З'ясовано досвід Японії у наданні допомоги малим та середнім компаніям максимізувати свій глобальний експортний потенціал та досвід Канади у розвитку дипломатії регіонального експорту. Обґрунтовано, що досвід іноземних країн у процесі забезпечення зовнішньоторговельної безпеки регіонів є актуальним та корисним для України, особливо в умовах російської воєнної агресії, ускладнення транспортно-логістичних схем та підвищення вразливості розвитку регіонів.

Ключові слова: економічна безпека, зовнішньоторговельна безпека, регіон, загрози, воєнна агресія.

Problem statement. Global experience in ensuring foreign trade security at the regional level shows that a successful strategy in this area is based on a combination of state policy, interregional cooperation, institutional partnerships, and digital control tools. Various countries have implemented effective mechanisms that allow regions to independently strengthen their positions in international trade while reducing risks and threats. Foreign trade security at the regional level serves as a means for sustainable economic development, adaptation to external risks, and successful integration into the global economy. In today's realities, its provision is not only a task of economic policy but also an instrument of national stability and security.

Analysis of recent studies and publications. In scientific literature, economic security is associated with the protection and the ability of the state and the national economy to withstand external threats. Globalization, regionalization, and the dynamic functioning of markets have a negative impact on these processes [1; 13]. Scholars examine the approaches and application of various methods for assessing foreign economic security, which enables a comprehensive analysis of the current state of economic security and the identification of positive and negative trends in both its individual components and partial indicators [2]. They also study the threats affecting economic security, dividing them into external (foreign economic and foreign political) and internal (financial, economic, and social) [3]. The importance of ensuring regional economic security is linked to the monitoring and strategic planning of the region's socio-economic development, considering that strengthening a region's economic security requires qualitative changes in all resource components [4]. Currently, the main threat to national security, which directly determines the state of regional foreign trade security, is the full-scale Russian aggression. Accordingly, scholars argue that during the war, threats caused by structural imbalances in regional economies, technological backwardness of enterprises, and low competitiveness of products in international markets have re-emerged with new intensity, preventing many regions from meeting security criteria in foreign trade [5]. Under such conditions, in our view, it is essential to examine the global experience in ensuring foreign economic, particularly foreign trade, security of regions.

Statement of purpose. The aim of the article is to study leading global practices in ensuring the foreign trade security of regions.

Presentation of the main research material.

Ensuring foreign trade security at the regional level is an extremely important and relevant task in today's context of global instability, economic competition, and geopolitical threats. This issue concerns not only the national level but also specific regions, cities, and communities that actively participate in international economic processes.

First, regions are key participants in foreign economic activity. They generate export flows, attract foreign investment, cooperate with international partners, and launch new production facilities. Therefore, the presence of stable and secure conditions for foreign trade directly influences the region's economic development, job creation, budget revenues, and the competitiveness of local businesses.

Second, military aggression, sanctions, logistical restrictions, and currency instability increase the vulnerability of regional economies to external influences. Under such conditions, it is important to develop regional risk management strategies, such as diversifying foreign economic ties, supporting critical industries, and ensuring the protection of infrastructure and information systems.

Third, the regional level enables quicker responses to threats. Local authorities, chambers of commerce and industry, and business associations better understand the specifics of their market, logistics, human resources, and customs policy. This allows for effective control over trade processes, and prevention of smuggling, fraud, or losses in foreign trade.

It is also important to note that foreign trade security has a social dimension, it protects the interests of producers, entrepreneurs, exporters, and workers who depend on foreign markets. Without it, there may be sharp declines in trade volumes, production reductions, and loss of household income.

In EU countries, regions play an important role in foreign trade due to decentralization policies and access to EU structural funds. For example, regions develop export strategies, cooperate with customs authorities, implement smart specializations and industrial clusters. Regional development agencies actively support small and medium enterprises, stimulate investment, and form trade alliances with other EU regions.

Accordingly, foreign trade interests shape the EU's trade policy and are powerful tools in addressing international cooperation issues. O. Sharov argues that in EU practice, lobbying of individual foreign trade actors' interests sometimes occurs not based

on priority, but on the international competitive position of the integration group, where the goal is not to promote new products and services but to maintain existing market positions. In such cases, companies either accept the terms of trade or develop alternative market entry strategies. Stimulating the foreign trade interests of economic actors may also involve financial mechanisms, and support for export activities of SMEs remains a key feature of EU trade policy [6, pp. 45–46]. L. Hryhorova-Berenda and K. Kaverina note that trade volumes within the EU exceed external EU trade by 1.5 times, confirming one of the key goals of any regional integration union [7].

Germany's federal governance model allows its Länder (regions) to establish their own economic offices abroad to promote exports, attract partners, and monitor trade risks, from currency fluctuations to political threats. Significant attention is paid to the cybersecurity of logistics and trade systems, especially in seaports, which play a key role in foreign trade.

In addition to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other federal ministries, other organizations support foreign economic activities, such as institutions of individual federal states and regional associations of German businesses (through the Federation of German Industries). In countries with German chambers of commerce or GTAI representatives, embassies closely coordinate with them. Under the "DEinternational" service, foreign chambers of commerce offer a range of marketing services to assist German companies in identifying business opportunities abroad [6, p. 42].

The UK Department for International Trade has nine regional directors, one for each of the regional development agencies: London, South East, South West, North East, North West, East Midlands, West Midlands, Yorkshire and the Humber, and East of England. The purpose of these roles is to strengthen the role of local authorities in enhancing the effectiveness of state support for foreign economic activity [6, p. 45].

U.S. states actively develop trade missions, partnerships with foreign companies, and technology hubs. For example, California and Texas have their own export support programs, global risk monitoring, and protection of critical infrastructure. Chambers of commerce and municipalities play a major role in monitoring international logistics security and mitigating sanctions-related risks.

In California, Export-U operates as a free export education website, offering webinars on topics such as finding foreign clients, obtaining financing, and managing international business risks. Its Exporter's Resource Database provides trade-related information [8]. In Texas, the International Business and Trade team helps local SMEs expand into new international markets and export their goods and services globally. Businesses can access direct technical assistance from international trade specialists [9].

China's regions have their own free trade zones, which serve as secure export-oriented hubs. These zones house customs checkpoints, international market analysis centers, and risk insurance financial mechanisms. Local governments coordinate with the central government to align regional interests with the national export strategy.

Measures used to support regional development and foreign trade security include [10; 12]:

- creating new mechanisms for sustainable trade development;
- forming an attractive investment climate: encouraging foreign investment in central and western China, and accelerating pilot projects for new open economy institutions;
- strengthening intellectual property protection;
- developing pilot free trade zones;
- supporting economic globalization and creating new platforms for international cooperation;
- active participation in global economic governance and countering protectionism;
- establishing new free trade zones and promoting trade and investment liberalization.

Regional governments in South Korea and Japan invest in digital trade infrastructure, automated customs, logistics monitoring systems, and support small businesses in entering global markets. They implement early-warning systems for external risks, such as tariff changes or supply chain disruptions.

JETRO (Japan External Trade Organization) is a government body that promotes mutual trade and investment between Japan and the rest of the world. Its current focus is on helping Japanese SMEs maximize their global export potential.

The Enterprise Europe Network supports SMEs with international ambitions in innovation and international development. Operating in over 60 countries, it connects 3,000 experts from 600 member organizations, including technology centers, innovation support organizations, universities and research institutes, regional development organizations, and chambers of commerce [11].

Canadian provinces have developed regional export diplomacy, establishing trade offices and conducting independent negotiations within the federal strategy. Their approach combines economic protection (tariff and non-tariff policies) with openness to innovative business and sustainable development.

Thus, the experience of foreign countries in ensuring foreign trade security at the regional level is valuable for Ukraine, especially in the context of Russian military aggression, complications in transportation and logistics, and heightened vulnerability of regional economic and social development. Regional foreign trade security will contribute to Ukraine's institutional integration into the global space, particularly through cross-border cooperation, participation in European programs, and the creation of industrial parks and logistics centers.

Conclusions and prospects for further research in this area. Global experience shows that effective foreign trade security at the regional level is based on the following principles: decentralization of powers and local strategies; partnerships between government, business, and the public sector; risk analytics and

digital monitoring systems; development of specialized logistics and production clusters; international cooperation among regions and export diplomacy. For Ukraine and its regions, this experience can be useful in forming a sustainable, secure, and flexible model of foreign trade at the local level.

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