



UKRAINE
OPEN FOR BUSINESS

BLINKEN CONFIRMS \$5.6 BLN IN AID TO UKRAINE



U.S. Secretary of State Anthony Blinken has announced the allocation of \$5.55 billion in support of Ukraine under the President's arms reduction authority, which will allow for the transfer of U.S. weapons to Ukraine and then replenish U.S. stockpiles.

"Today, I am ordering a \$5.55 billion reduction in the remaining authority to support Ukraine's defense. The United States and over 50 countries stand united with Ukraine, and this support will ensure continued strong support in the months ahead," he wrote on social media site X.

In addition to this money, U.S. President Joe Biden officially announced an additional \$2.4 billion, bringing the total amount of additional defense assistance to Ukraine to \$7.9 billion, for which President Zelenskyy thanked the United States earlier today.

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08 October 2024



UKRAINE INCREASED EXPORTS BY 36%



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IN 2024-2026, 45 NEW HOTELS AND 108 HOTEL-TYPE COTTAGE TOWNS PLANNED TO BE BUILT IN UKRAINE



UKRAINIAN MEEST PLANS TO ATTRACT A STRATEGIC INVESTOR



UKRAINIAN GRAIN ASSOCIATION NAMES TEN LARGEST BUYERS OF UKRAINIAN WHEAT IN AUGUST

NATIONAL BANK HAS PUBLISHED RATING OF MOST PROFITABLE BANKS IN UKRAINE

State-owned PrivatBank in July 2024 reduced its net profit by 2.6% by June – to UAH 6.25 billion and with this indicator headed the top five most profitable banks in the country in July, according to the data of the National Bank of Ukraine (NBU) on its website.

“ According to them, Privat is followed by state-owned Oschadbank, which in July received 2.18 billion UAH of net profit compared to 0.07 billion UAH in June. Universal Bank (mono) rounded out the top three, having almost eightfold increased its profit compared to June – up to UAH 0.84 bln.

It is followed by two banks with foreign capital: Credit Agricole and Raiffeisen Bank with UAH 0.62 bln (+28.3% to June) and UAH 0.56 bln (+78%) respectively.

The second five most profitable banks in July were headed by Ukrsibbank, which increased its net profit by 10.1% to UAH 0.55 bln. It also included: City Bank – UAH 0.54 billion, Ukrgasbank – UAH 0.43 billion, FUIB – UAH 0.42 billion and Ukreximbank – UAH 0.38 billion.

In July 2024, net profit of over UAH 100 million was received by three more banks: OTP Bank – UAH 365.3 million, Pivdennyi Bank – UAH 340.7 million and Kredobank – UAH 193.5 million.

At the same time, the three most unprofitable banks in July were formed by Sense Bank with net loss of UAH 65.67 mln, Alliance Bank – UAH 17.81 mln and Pravex Bank – UAH 13.34 mln.

The list of the most profitable banks in general for seven months of this year is also headed by Privat with a large gap – UAH 37.16 billion, followed by Oschadbank – UAH 11.00 billion.

As for unprofitable banks, according to the results of January-July, there are 8 out of 62 banks in Ukraine. The worst indicator is Pravex Bank – UAH 95.79 billion, followed by Industrialbank – UAH 39.00 billion.

At the First Investbank and Motor-Bank, which were transferred to the state from the sub-sanctioned owners following the results of the trial, the net loss for 7 months amounted to UAH 25.69 mln and UAH 14.69 mln, respectively.

CASH CURRENCY IMPORTS REACHED RECORD HIGH SINCE 2014 – \$9.9 BLN

Cash currency imports to Ukraine in January-September 2024 amounted to \$9.89 billion, which is 80.9% more than in the same period last year and 4.5% more than the total amount of currency imported in 2023, according to statistics from the National Bank of Ukraine (NBU).

According to the statistics, this is the highest figure since 2014, when cash currency imports amounted to \$12.43 billion for the year.

In particular, in August, banks imported \$1.09 billion in the equivalent to Ukraine, which is less than \$1.31 billion in July, \$1.33 billion in June, and \$1.18 billion in May.

According to the statistics, the US dollar and euro accounted for 77.5% and 22.5% of all imported cash currency in August, respectively.

At the same time, dollar deliveries decreased from \$960.8 million in July to \$840.8 million in August, while euro imports fell for the second month in a row: from \$348.7 million in July to \$243.9 million in August.

Meanwhile, since the beginning of this year, the cash dollar has risen in price by about UAH 2.72 when buying to UAH 41.47/\$, and by about UAH 2.1 when selling to UAH 41.52/\$.



UKRAINE INCREASED EXPORTS BY 36% – MINISTRY OF ECONOMY

Ukraine exported 99.3 million tons of goods worth \$28.9 billion in January-September 2024, up 36.2% in commodity terms and 6% in monetary terms compared to January-September 2023, Deputy Minister of Economy and Trade Representative of Ukraine Taras Kachka said.

““ Exports amounted to 28.2 million tons, which is 36% more than in the third quarter of 2023, and the increase in monetary terms is also significant – 20.1%, it increased to \$9.3 billion.

“There is also a positive trend in September-24 compared to August-24. There is a 12.6% decrease in the weight of exports, but the largest revenue for the quarter is \$3.2 billion. This means that we are increasing exports of goods at the best price. This all means that exports are coming to life and are recovering at a fairly active pace,” Kachka wrote on Facebook.

He noted that among the exported goods, metallurgy is one of the best performers: exports of semi-finished products in commodity terms increased by 65.6% to 1.5 million tons in nine months, flat products by 86.2% to 1.1 million tons, and pipes by more than half to 338 thousand tons. Iron ore exports almost doubled, up 99.6% to 25.2 million tons.

In the agricultural sector, corn (25.2 million tons exported, up 16.2%) and wheat (16 million tons, up 42.4%) remained the leaders in terms of volumes over the three quarters.

In addition, since the beginning of the year, Ukraine has already exported 4.6 million tons of sunflower oil and 3.6 million tons of meal.

Poultry exports remain stable – 334 thousand tons for 9 months, while in monetary terms there was an increase of 15% to \$708 million.

Most of the money was spent on oil and oil products (\$5.1 billion), cars (\$3.27 billion), medicines (\$1.4 billion), phones/smartphones/tablets (\$904 million), UAVs (\$904 million), and electricity (\$527 million).

GENESIS HAS OPENED ALMOST 400 VACANCIES FOR IT SPECIALISTS IN UKRAINE

Ukrainian product IT holding Genesis has opened almost 400 vacancies for IT specialists in Ukraine, despite the difficulties for the market and companies in the sector, said the company's founder and CEO Volodymyr Mnoholyetnyi.

“In terms of markets, we have no revenue in Ukraine (the company is focused on foreign markets – IF-U), but in terms of people, we hire (them – IF-U) in Ukraine. We have about 400 vacancies. This is the largest number of open positions,” he said at the conference ‘Business and War – Dialogues about the Future’ organized by New Voice.

According to him, the situation on the IT market in Ukraine has become more complicated, especially for relatively small companies. There are also difficulties with hiring specialists.

“The market is much more complicated now than it was a year or two ago. Of course, it's more complicated than it was before the full-scale invasion (...) I don't understand how relatively small and small IT companies work,” said the founder and CEO of Genesis.

Mnogoletyniy suggested that this could be a problem for the IT industry in the long run, as the market will not develop properly if only large IT companies are represented.

According to his estimates, about 20-30% of Ukrainian IT specialists are abroad. Among Genesis employees, it's 10-15%, while most of the management team works in the country.

DYNAMICS OF EXPORT OF GOODS IN JAN-JUNE 2024 BY MOST IMPORTANT ITEMS IN RELATION TO SAME PERIOD OF 2023, %



Fats and oils of animal or vegetable origin

▲ +7,3% (3 078,8 million USD)



Ferrous metals

▲ +3,3% (1 464,6 million USD)



Grain crops

▼ -1,5% (5 263,4 million USD)



Electrical machines

▼ -63,1% (366,0 million USD)

DYNAMICS OF IMPORT OF GOODS IN JAN-JUNE 2024 BY MOST IMPORTANT ITEMS IN RELATION TO SAME PERIOD OF 2023, %



Nuclear reactors, boilers, machines

▲ +35,3% (3 027,6 million USD)



Land transportation vehicles, excluding railways

▲ +29,5% (3 887,2 million USD)



Electrical machines

▲ +9,3% (3 254,0 million USD)



Mineral fuels; oil and refined products

▼ -27,3% (4 246,6 million USD)

KEY ECONOMIC INDICATORS OF UKRAINE AND WORLD FROM EXPERTS CLUB

The article presents key macroeconomic indicators of Ukraine and the global economy for the first half of 2024. The analysis is based on official data from the State Statistics Service of Ukraine, the NBU, the IMF, the World Bank, and the UN, on the basis of which Maksim Urakin, PhD in Economics, founder of the Experts Club Information and Analytical Center, presented an analysis of macroeconomic trends in Ukraine and the world. The key aspects of the report include the dynamics of gross domestic product (GDP), inflation, unemployment, foreign trade and public debt of Ukraine, as well as global macroeconomic trends.

According to the State Statistics Service of Ukraine and the National Bank of Ukraine, Ukraine's real GDP growth rate slowed to 3.5% in May 2024, compared to 4.3% in April and 4.8% in March. This decline is mainly due to a drop in electricity generation, which affected the industrial sector and led to a decrease in production in the machine building and metallurgy sectors. At the same time, exports and demand in the construction industry supported positive economic growth.

“*In June 2024, Ukraine's public debt increased by UAH 200 billion, and inflation accelerated to 2.2%, which is generally in line with the NBU's target range,” Maksim Urakin emphasized.*

The World Bank forecasts global economic growth of 2.6% in 2024, up from the previous forecast of 2.4%. In 2025-2026, the growth rate is expected to further increase to 2.7%. For developing countries, the average annual GDP growth in 2024-2025 is projected at 4%, slightly lower than in 2023.

“In low-income countries, growth will accelerate to 5% in 2024, compared to 3.8% in 2023. For developed countries, growth is expected to reach 1.5% in 2024 and 1.7% in 2025,” said Maksim Urakin, founder of Experts Club.

Maksim Urakin summarized that despite the decline in food and energy prices, core inflation will remain high in the medium and long term.

In January-June 2024, Ukraine's foreign trade balance in goods deteriorated by 24.4% compared to the same period in 2023, reaching a negative value of \$13.606 billion. Merchandise exports increased by 0.3% to \$19.589 billion, while imports increased by 9% to \$33.205 billion. The main export items include agricultural products, metals, and machinery, while the main imports are energy and chemicals.

Ukraine's economy is showing signs of recovery, despite significant challenges from internal and external factors. The global economy, in turn, is also facing uncertainty, but maintains positive growth rates. It is important to monitor changes in macroeconomic indicators to assess the prospects for further development and adaptation to new economic conditions.

Thus, this article provides a holistic view of the current economic situation in Ukraine and the world, based on the latest statistics and forecasts.

Trends in the global and Ukrainian economies can be tracked via the Experts Club information and analytical channel – <https://www.youtube.com/@ExpertsClub>

Source: <https://expertsclub.eu/osnovni-ekonomichni-indykatory-ukrayiny-ta-svitu-vid-experts-club/>



BOEING OF SUPERNOVA AIRLINES OF NOVA GROUP OF COMPANIES (NOVA POSHTA) HAS MADE ITS FIRST FLIGHT

A Boeing 737-800SF from the fleet of Supernova Airlines of the NOVA Group (Nova Poshta) has completed its first flight between European airports, the press service of the NOVA Group reports.

“On September 18, 2024, Supernova Airlines made the first flight on its own Boeing 737-800SF aircraft flying the flag of Ukraine, with Ukrainian registration marks UR-NPA. This was a certification flight, one of the final steps in the process of introducing the Boeing 737-800SF type to Supernova’s operator certificate by the State Aviation Administration of Ukraine,” the NOVA press service said.

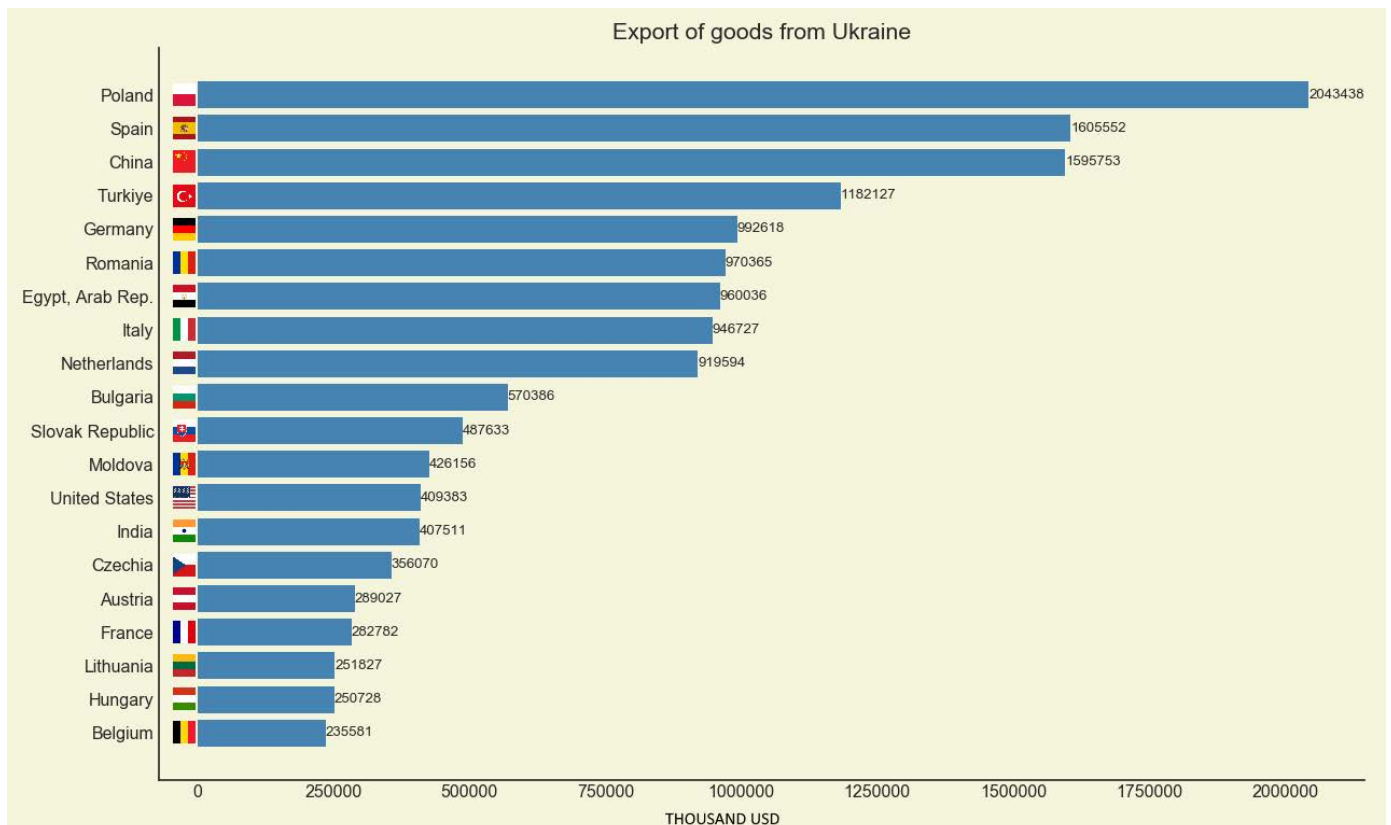
The airline plans to start regular commercial operation of the aircraft in the winter season of 2024-2025.

Earlier, a Boeing 737-800 from Supernova’s fleet operated a maintenance flight from Guangzhou (China) to Vilnius (Lithuania) with a technical stop at Tashkent Airport.

The company clarified that the use of air transportation saves up to 36 hours on the delivery of parcels from (or to) Riga compared to trucks. It was also reported that Supernova Airlines plans to form a fleet in the future using cargo versions of modern aircraft manufactured by Boeing or Airbus.

Supernova Airlines has received a Ukrainian operator’s certificate, which allows it to start cargo flights on January 6, 2023.

GEOGRAPHICAL STRUCTURE OF UKRAINE’S FOREIGN TRADE (EXPORTS) IN JAN-JUNE 2024, THOUSAND USD



INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION IN UKRAINE DECREASED BY 0.3% IN JUNE-2024, GROWTH SLOWED TO 8.1% OVER SIX MONTHS

In June this year, industrial production in Ukraine decreased by 0.3% compared to June last year and by 6.2% compared to May this year, according to the State Statistics Service (Ukrstat).

As a result, industrial production growth in the first half of 2024 slowed to 8.1% from 9.9% in the first five months of the previous year compared to the same period last year.

It is noted that the decline in production in June is due to a drop in the supply of electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning – by 11.2%, while the manufacturing industry recorded an increase of 0.6%, and the mining and quarrying industry – by 1.4%.

It was specified that the increase in production in June 2024 compared to June 2023 was recorded in metallurgy – by 34%, in mining and quarrying – by 1.4% due to growth in metal ore mining – by 30.1%, in coke and petroleum products production – by 3.2%.

In general, in the first half of 2024, industrial production in Ukraine increased by 11% in the manufacturing industry, by 9.3% in the mining and quarrying industry, and by 1.5% in the supply of electricity, gas, steam, and air conditioning.

The statistics agency notes that the volume of industrial products sold in January-June this year reached UAH 1707.9 billion, of which UAH 351.7 billion was exported.

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“NIKO SPETSAVTO” HAS STARTED PRODUCTION OF ARMORED PICKUPS

After the beginning of the full-scale invasion, the NIKO group of companies, which has been successfully operating in Ukraine and the EU for over 30 years, expanded its activities. NIKO SpetsAvto LLC has launched a new business line – certified production of armored specialized military pickup trucks. The new pickup truck, called NIKO, is designed as a universal vehicle platform based on the Isuzu D-Max and is equipped with armored protection. Denis Fomenko, CEO of NIKO SpetsAvto, said: “Outwardly, our pickup truck looks no different from an ordinary car, but each copy is the result of a symbiosis of advanced armor technology, perfect design and high quality. Every detail is created with maximum attention to safety and technological progress. Despite the increased weight, the car has retained its maneuverability and safety.”



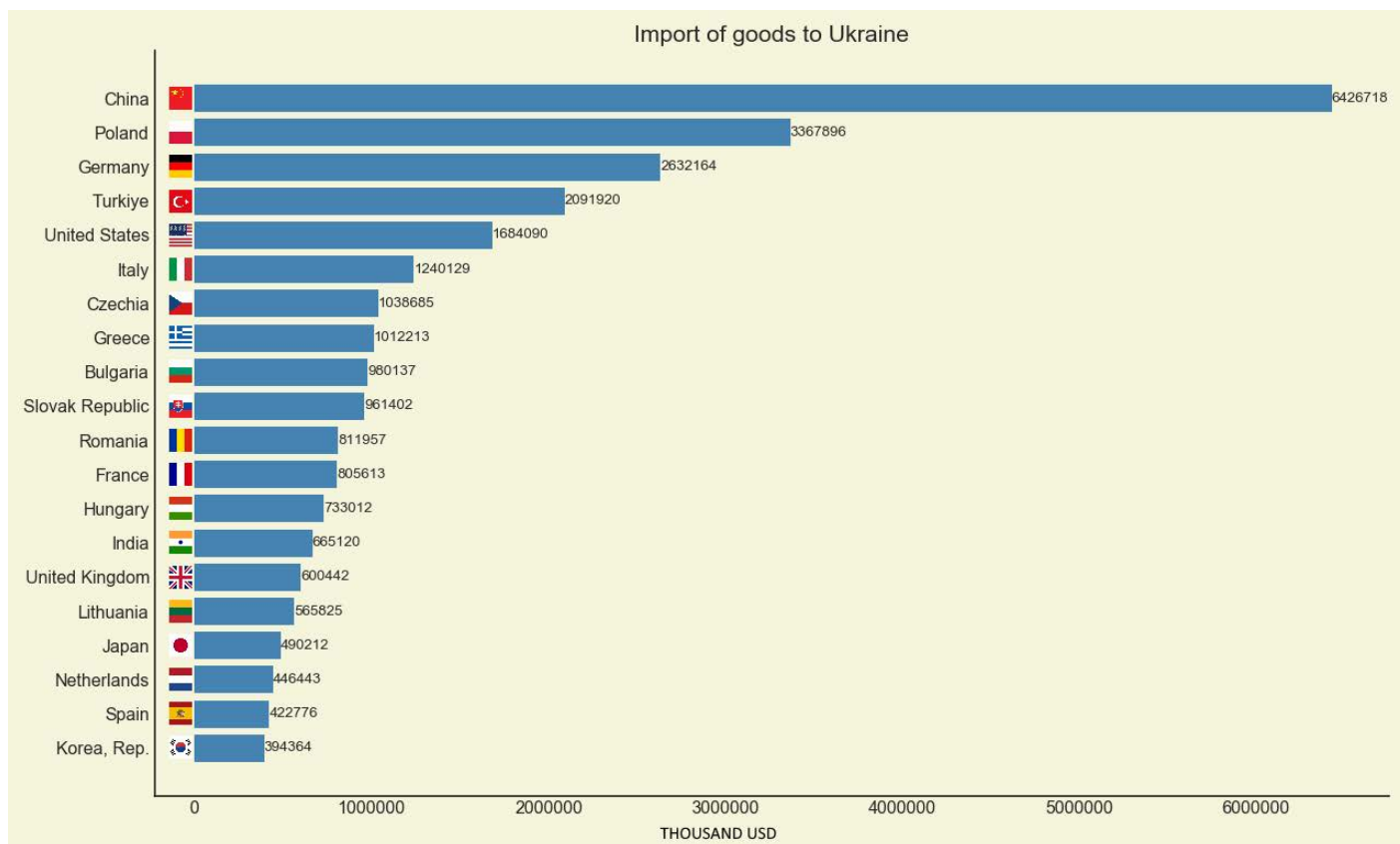
Denis Fomenko also added that the company plans to produce about 30 such pickups by the end of 2024 to meet the needs of individual structures performing specialized tasks.

According to the company, the carrying capacity of the NIKO pickup truck is 1100 kg, which is 35% higher than the carrying capacity of analogues in the same class and price range, such as Toyota Hilux and SsangYong Musso. This allows the vehicle to be used as efficiently as possible for cargo transportation and other specialized tasks.

The vehicle is also equipped with a 7620 kg (16,800 LBS) winch for off-road lifting and towing, which makes it indispensable for search and rescue operations and expeditions.

Source: <https://nikospecauto.com/sertifikovane-virobnitstvo-bronovanikh-pikapiv-niko-viyskovogo-priznachennya/>

GEOGRAPHICAL STRUCTURE OF UKRAINE'S FOREIGN TRADE (IMPORTS) IN JAN-JUNE 2024, THOUSAND USD



“NOVA POSHTA” TO OPEN TWO OFFICES IN SPAIN, BRINGING ITS TOTAL NUMBER TO EIGHT

Nova Poshta, the largest logistics operator in Ukraine, is going to open two new offices in Spain – one in Barcelona and one in Benidorm, said Sergey Karputev, CEO of Nova Post in Spain.

“We are currently focusing on two areas of development: improving our services and developing our network. In the near future, we plan to open another branch in Barcelona and one in Benidorm,” he said.

According to the company’s press service, there are currently six Nova Poshta offices in Spain.

In Barcelona, the first branch was opened in September. It accepts shipments of up to 1 thousand kilograms.

The other five, in particular in Valencia, Alicante, Málaga and Torevieja, started operating in June-September. They accept parcels up to 30 kg.

In addition, Nova Poshta has started delivering parcels to post offices and pickup points. The company delivers prepaid parcels weighing up to 25 kg to 13.38 thousand InPost and GLS parcel delivery points, as well as to 1350 InPost post offices throughout Spain.

In this country, Nova Poshta customers can receive and send documents, parcels and cargo to/from Ukraine to other cities, as well as to 13 European countries where the company has offices. Delivery time: from Ukraine – from five business days, in Spain and between European countries – from one day, the press service said.

In addition, customers can order delivery or pickup by courier to any address in Spain.

SAAB PLANS TO SET UP PRODUCTION IN UKRAINE AMID GROWING DEMAND

Saab is looking to set up production in Ukraine to support the country's development of independent defence capabilities, the Swedish defence equipment maker's CEO told Reuters. Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 has prompted a surge in demand for military equipment, with several Western manufacturers looking to set up production in Ukraine.

“We have to help Ukraine build sovereign capacity and capabilities, so we need to have partnership with Ukrainian industry in Ukraine and also Ukrainian industry that has moved outside of Ukraine,” Saab CEO Micael Johansson said.

He added Saab was in talks with two or three companies on “how to establish local production”, but an agreement was yet to be finalised.

Saab, which competes with the likes of U.S. giant Lockheed Martin, France's Dassault Aviation and Britain's BAE Systems, is seeing a boom in demand spurred by global tensions, the war in Ukraine, and Sweden's recent NATO accession.

Johansson said he saw potential for working with Ukrainian companies on drone capabilities. Ukraine could also be supplier of munitions parts and contribute to the development of sensor technology, he added.

Johansson said the arms industry was pivoting from donation-based aid to direct partnerships with Kyiv.

“I think we are sort of in a movement of going from having countries donating things to Ukraine, which will continue, of course, to having us as an industry delivering directly to the MoD (Ministry of Defence) and the defence forces in Ukraine, which has not happened completely yet, but it's starting to happen,” he said.

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OPTIMA ONLINE SCHOOL JOINS EUROPEAN BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

Optima Distance Learning School announced on its Facebook page that it has joined the European Business Association (EBA), one of the largest and most influential business communities in Ukraine.

According to the school's founder, Maria Miletska, this step is intended to accelerate the further development of the educational institution and improve educational programs based on innovative approaches and methods.

“EBA membership opens up new opportunities for Optima to cooperate with leading companies and experts, which will help improve the quality of educational services and allow the school to invest more effectively in educational projects using modern technologies and approaches to learning. Students and their parents will have access to even more innovative and high-quality curricula that meet international standards,” Miletska said.

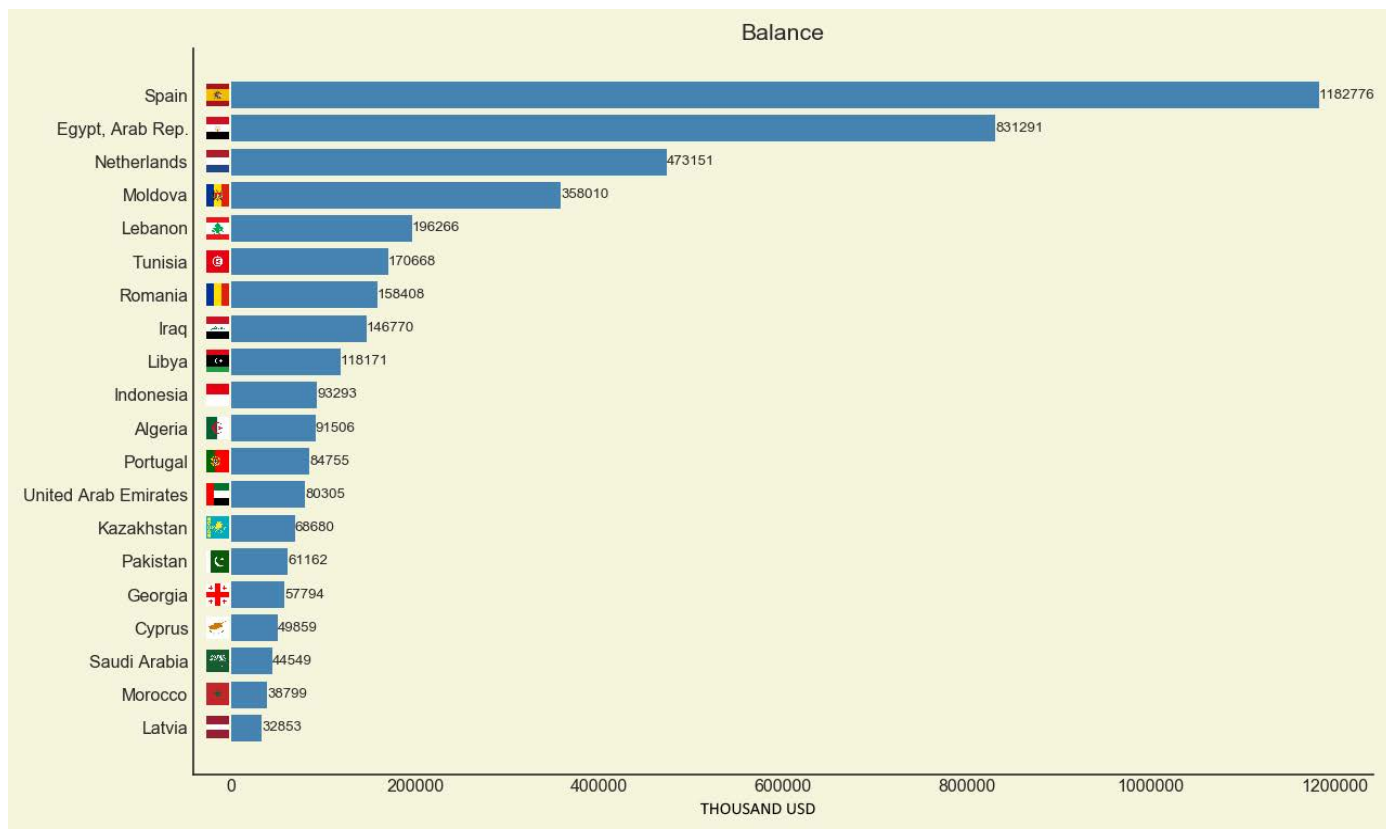
She also emphasizes that membership in the European Business Association is a recognition of its reliability and professional level. This confirms that Optima continues to move towards providing high-quality education for its students, helping them prepare for a successful future.

Thus, joining the EBA is an important step in strengthening Optima's position in the educational services market, providing additional opportunities for its students, their parents and teaching staff.

Earlier, at a press conference at Interfax-Ukraine, Optima School Director Olga Bilodid announced that Optima School had received a permit to conduct educational activities in Poland and had started teaching high school students (grades 10-11) in this country.

Optima School was established and licensed in 2015. Currently, the school has 20 thousand students and is the largest online school in Ukraine.

GEOGRAPHICAL STRUCTURE OF UKRAINE'S FOREIGN TRADE (SURPLUS) IN JAN-JUNE 2024, THOUSAND USD



FRANCO-GERMAN DEFENSE CONCERN KNDS OPENED SUBSIDIARY IN KIEV

Franco-German defense concern KNDS has opened a subsidiary in Kiev, which under the name KNDS Ukraine LLC will support cooperation between Ukrainian government agencies, the Ukrainian defense industry and KNDS, the concern's press service reports.

"The purpose of opening KNDS Ukraine LLC is, among other things, to consolidate the Ukrainian land industry and enable it to more effectively carry out maintenance, repair and overhaul of KNDS systems – including Leopard 1 and 2 tanks, CAESAR and AMX 10RC artillery systems and PzH 2000 self-propelled howitzers – which significantly increases their combat readiness. KNDS and Ukrainian industry also intend to jointly produce in Ukraine 155-mm artillery ammunition and spare parts using advanced technologies," the report says.

It is noted that the creation of KNDS Ukraine LLC is the result of a joint French-German government initiative, the framework of which was presented on March 22, 2024 by French Defense Minister Sebastien Lecornu and the head of the German Defense Ministry Boris Pistorius in Berlin.



IN 2024-2026, 45 NEW HOTELS AND 108 HOTEL-TYPE COTTAGE TOWNS PLANNED TO BE BUILT IN UKRAINE

In the Ukrainian hospitality market, 45 new projects of hotel and apartment complexes and 108 hotel-type cottage towns are planned for 2024-2026, according to a study by Ribas Hotels Group.

“ According to it, in the next two years, the announced replenishment of the room stock is 6670 rooms for hotels and apartments, and 3097 houses for cottage communities. According to the study, as of mid-2024, there are 2017 hotels operating in Ukraine, while 12 facilities have been destroyed or damaged since the start of the full-scale war.

Optima Hotels (64 hotels), Ribas Hotels Group (21 hotels) and Premier Hotels and Resorts (11 hotels) are the leaders in terms of the number of hotels. Among the foreign chains, Accor with nine hotels and Radisson with five are the leaders in terms of the scale of their presence.

The average occupancy rate of Ukrainian hotels in the first half of 2024 was 34-38%, and in some regions in the west of the country (Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk, and Zakarpattia regions) it reached 60-70%.

According to the study, since 2013, the total number of collective accommodation facilities has been decreasing by an average of 175 facilities annually, mainly due to health facilities, sanatoriums, health resorts, boarding houses with treatment, balneotherapy and mud hospitals, tourist bases, campsites, recreation centers and boarding houses. At the same time, the number of hotels increased by 9.1%, motels by 10.7%, and hostels by 28.7%.

According to analysts, after the war ends, the tourist flow in Ukraine may increase to 14.5 million people. Thus, the current room capacity will not be able to meet the demand. According to Ribas Hotels Group, the potential need for hotel rooms may be +30-40% of the current number.



RUUKKI SANDWICH PANELS WERE USED FOR CONSTRUCTION OF NOVUS LOGISTICS CENTER

Ruukki Energy sandwich panels were used for the construction of the NOVUS Logistics Center, the first BREEAM-certified food logistics complex in Ukraine, the Rauta press service reports.

“Especially for the logistics terminal, Rauta specialists, which is the exclusive importer of Ruukki sandwich panels in Ukraine, have developed a project of enclosing structures with unique nodes that provide maximum airtightness and significant cost savings during the operation of the facility,” said Rauta Director Andriy Ozeychuk.

As reported, in the spring of 2024, Novus Ukraine LLC, which operates the Novus hyper- and supermarket chain, launched the NOVUS Logistics Center in Kyiv, built according to the BREEAM green building principles with loans from the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. The complex was BREEAM certified at the design stage, and now, after commissioning, the company is preparing the facility to receive the international BREEAM certificate for new buildings, rating Good.

With an area of more than 50 thousand square meters and a height of 15 meters, NOVUS Logistics Center is designed for 5.2 thousand pallet spaces and has 18 temperature zones – from -30 to +24 degrees Celsius.

According to Konstantin Parshin, Head of Operational Logistics at NOVUS, thanks to the use of Ruukki sandwich panels, the temperature inside the main room does not fall below the set 15 degrees in winter and does not rise above 20 degrees in summer.

The release emphasizes that the use of Ruukki Energy sandwich panels ensured the building’s airtightness up to $q_{50} = 0.01 \text{ m}^3/\text{h}\cdot\text{m}^2$ and thermal resistance of structures up to $R = 7.47 \text{ (m}^2\cdot\text{K)/W}$, which are the best indicators for cold storage warehouses.

Founded in 2014, Rauta Group LLC (Rauta) is an engineering and construction company engaged in the design, supply and installation of sandwich panels, ventilated facades and prefabricated buildings. It is the exclusive importer of commercial products from the Finnish concern Ruukki to Ukraine, as well as the developer of a number of innovations that reduce the cost and time of construction.

UKRAINIAN COMPANIES PLAN TO BUILD APARTMENT HOTEL IN KATOWICE, POLAND

The development company Creator-Bud has announced the construction of the WOL.100 apartment hotel in Katowice (Poland), with the international management company Ribas Hotels Group responsible for the integrated management of apartments and services, the hotel operator’s press service reports.

WOL.100 apartment hotel with 71 apartments will be located in the center of Katowice (100a Mykółowska Street), with completion of construction and renovation works scheduled for Q4 2025.

“WOL.100 is a modern apartment hotel that provides flexible and mobile living. It fits perfectly into the growing market of Katowice, meeting the needs of tourists, business travelers and those looking for quality mixed-use space. The growing tourist flow, business attraction, development of various industries and high demand for complexes of this format make the hotel an ideal solution for the city,” Dmytro Struk, Development Director of Creator-Bud, was quoted in the release. As of 2023, about 4.8 thousand rooms in hotels of various categories were registered in Katowice.

According to Statistic Poland, the city is visited by about 1.2 million tourists annually, and the average length of stay is two nights. The demand for rooms exceeds the current supply by 37%, indicating high demand and expansion of the room stock. The WOL concept – home+hotel – provides comfortable conditions for living, working and relaxing in one place, regardless of the length of stay, whether it is 7 days or several months. The infrastructure of WOL.100 in Katowice includes a coffee shop, lobby and reception, gym, rooftop and coworking space on the top floor.

“The biggest competitive advantage of WOL.100 is that it is the first hotel in our chain, and the second in Ukraine, which guarantees investors a minimum yield of 17 euros per square meter in the first two years. Moreover, due to the capitalization of the project, the stable forecasted European market and the recognition of the object, this amount has the potential to grow,” says Artur Lupashko, CEO and founder of Ribas Hotels Group.

UKRAINIAN MEEST PLANS TO ATTRACT A STRATEGIC INVESTOR

The postal and logistics group Meest is planning to attract a strategic investor to build a stable business in Europe, Meest China shareholder Vyacheslav Lysenko told Interfax-Ukraine in a blitz interview.

“*We are preparing the company to go public, and we have attracted powerful investments for its development – a powerful foreign investor who appreciates our achievements and experience, is interested in the stable business that our company will build in Europe,*” Lysenko said.

It is a strategic investor, the company’s shareholder clarified.

He refused to name the size of the stake the group is ready to offer to the “strategist.”

At the same time, a Meest China shareholder confirmed that the potential investor is a logistics company.

The deal could be closed in 2025, Lysenko said.

Meest Group delivers to 90 countries and has been operating in the c2c and b2c postal services market for over 30 years. The company was founded by entrepreneur Rostyslav Kysel, who remains its beneficiary and is responsible for the strategic direction of the company. The Group of companies includes Meest China, Meest USA, Meest Europe and Meest Ukraine.

Meest China has been a leader in the delivery of postal parcels from China for over 15 years. It also delivers large cargoes from China with customs clearance. It has its own warehouse of 5 thousand square meters in Guangzhou. In May 2024, Meest International launched a new logistics center near the city of Dębica in Poland, 170 km from the border. The company plans to expand its network of hubs in Eastern and Central Europe.

GALINA GEREGA ALREADY CONTROLS MORE THAN 50% OF VOTES IN POLISH INTERSPORT

Galina Gerega, co-founder of Epicenter K LLC (Kiev), indirectly through Epicenter K and Paravita Holding Limited (Nicosia) has obtained over 50% of votes in Intersport Polska S.A., which develops a chain of stores with the same name in Poland.

As reported by the Polish company on the Warsaw Stock Exchange on October 4, this happened after the above companies participated in the closed subscription for Intersport Polska series J shares, with Epicenter K’s share in the total number of votes exceeding 10%.

As reported, Gerega indirectly received 51.3% of Intersport Polska’s share capital at the end of last year within the framework of the investment agreement concluded by the Polish company with Epicenter K and Paravita Holding, but at that time her share of votes was just short of 50% – 49.94%.

The investment agreement with Epicenter K and Paravita Holding, which also operates stores under the Intersport brand in Ukraine, was concluded on April 19, 2023. The document envisaged a total investment of EUR10 million by the partner and the investor. This amount was to be used, in particular, for the development of the Polish company by opening new stores and modernizing existing ones.

Speaking about the current problems, Gerega pointed to the lack of staff. “Even for such a small Intersport in Poland, we faced the same staffing problem we have now in Ukraine. Even among Ukrainians who left temporarily to Poland, we can’t find effective staff for them to work in this Intersport,” she stated at the forum.

The Intersport Polska network, according to its website, includes 31 stores and a delivery network with about 500 employees, while the Intersport network has about 5,400 stores worldwide.

KOVLAR GROUP'S SHARE IN FIRE PROTECTION MARKET OF UKRAINE IN 2024 IS 60%

Thanks to the best price-quality ratio, professional service and high customer confidence, Kovlar Group's share in the Ukrainian fire protection market in 2024 amounted to 60%, and for some products it reaches 90%. The company announced this in a press release.

According to the company's co-founder Kostiantyn Kalafat: "In 2016, the then newly established Kovlar Group offered the Ukrainian construction market an affordable fireproof plaster Ammokote GP-240, which completely changed the rules of the game in the segment. Prior to that, the market for fire protection materials was largely divided between unscrupulous Russian manufacturers and importers of European products, who kept the prices for fire protection high. This not only increased construction budgets, but also harmed the development of the steel construction industry in Ukraine, as customers refused to use steel solutions in their projects due to the high cost of fire protection."

According to him, after the launch of the innovative Ammokote GP-240 gypsum plaster, due to the excellent combination of high fire protection properties and low price, it became so successful that in a few years it occupied about 80% of the plaster fire protection market. This allowed the company to invest in its own production facilities with modern equipment and a large warehouse, as well as in a research laboratory that allows for fire testing and the development of new materials.

Today, the company's portfolio includes more than 20 different types of fire protection materials. Over the past 6 years, Kovlar Group's turnover has amounted to about UAH 200 million, of which the company has paid more than UAH 38 million to the Ukrainian budget, which is a record figure for the fire protection segment.

Kovlar Group is owned by three Ukrainian citizens: Konstantin Kalafat, Lyubov Vakhitova and Andrey Ozeychuk.

UKRAINE AMONG TOP 5 SUPPLIERS OF ORGANIC PRODUCTS TO EU

In Ukraine, only 471 thousand hectares are engaged in organic production, they need to increase, because the country keeps the course on deep processing, said the Minister of Agrarian Policy and Food Vitaly Koval at the conference dedicated to the organic market of Ukraine and its prospects.

“*Regarding the first: organics is the closest to the settlement of all EU legislative processes. And if we are now among the top five in the supply of organic products to Europe, our task is to become the first. We have the space, the desire and the experience that our people have,*” the press service of the Ministry of Agrarian Policy and Food quoted him as saying.

Koval emphasized the importance of exporting finished products, not raw materials. At the same time, they should meet the EU requirements.



GRAIN EXPORTS FROM UKRAINE AMOUNTED TO 10.6 MLN TONS AS OF BEGINNING OF OCTOBER

Ukraine has exported 10.647 mln tonnes of grains and pulses since the beginning of the 2024-2024 marketing year (July-June) as of October 2, 197 mln tonnes of which were shipped on the first day of the month, the press service of the Ministry of Agrarian Policy and Food reported, citing the State Customs Service.

According to the report, as of the same date last year, the total shipments were estimated at 6.676 mln tons, including 7 thsd tonnes in October.

“*In terms of crops, since the beginning of the current season, 6.207 mln tons of wheat have been exported (a year earlier, the figure was 3.342 mln tons), barley – 1.325 mln tons (622 thsd tonnes), rye – 7.5 thsd tonnes (0.7 thsd tonnes), corn – 2.849 mln tons (2.689 mln tons).*”

The total exports of Ukrainian flour since the beginning of the season as of October 2 are estimated at 19.9 thsd tonnes (36.4 thsd tonnes), including 17.7 thsd tonnes (35.4 thsd tonnes) of wheat.

UKRAINIAN GRAIN ASSOCIATION NAMES TEN LARGEST BUYERS OF UKRAINIAN WHEAT IN AUGUST

Ukraine exported 2.24 mln tons of wheat in August of this year (2024-2025 marketing year), the Ukrainian Grain Association (UGA) reported on Facebook.

According to the published infographic, 492 thousand tons of wheat were shipped to Spain, 426 thousand tons to Indonesia, 240 thousand tons to Vietnam, 191 thousand tons to Algeria, and 146 thousand tons to Egypt. Thailand (96 thsd tonnes), Portugal (82 thsd tonnes), Yemen (61 thsd tonnes), Tunisia (79 thsd tonnes) and Italy (68 thsd tonnes) also became the top 100 buyers of Ukrainian grain.



“Interestingly, in August, Indonesia and Vietnam took the 2nd and 3rd place in terms of imports of Ukrainian wheat, pushing Algeria and Egypt to the 4th and 5th place, respectively,” the association noted.

According to the UGA, Ukraine exported 1.277 mln tons of wheat in the first half of September, which is already higher than the volume for the same period last month, when it amounted to 1.266 mln tons.

UKRAINE RETAINED LEADERSHIP IN GLOBAL SUNFLOWER OIL MARKET WITH SHARE OF 42%

Despite the negative expectations, Ukraine retained its leadership in the global sunflower oil market in 2023-2024 marketing year (MY), accounting for 42% of the global production, while Russia accounted for 29%, UkrAgroConsult, a Ukrainian information and analytical agency, reports. The analysts referred to the forecast of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, according to which in 2023-2024 MY the forecast for Ukraine's gross sunflower production due to higher yields was increased by 27% to 15.5 mln tonnes compared to 2022-2023 MY, and for Russia – by 5% to 17.1 mln tonnes.

The high exports of sunflower oil were achieved due to the increase in harvest. Stable operation of the sea corridor is becoming an important point for Ukraine in realization of the export potential: the country increased exports by 9% compared to 2022-2023 MY, Russia – by 10%, experts noted.

They noted that since the beginning of the war, the markets for sunflower oil have been redistributed. For Ukraine, the European Union has become the key sales destination. In addition, Turkey has reoriented its purchases from Russia to Ukraine, while India and China continued to increase Russian imports.

According to analysts' forecast, 2024-2025 MY will be a bad harvest year for sunflower. According to the current USDA forecast for September 2024, the global sunflower production is estimated to be the lowest in the last four seasons due to unfavorable weather conditions in the key producing countries – 50.6 mln tonnes, which is 10% less than the previous season. At the same time, Ukraine is expected to reduce the production of this crop by 19% to 12.5 mln tonnes compared to 2023-2024 MY, and Russia – by 6% to 16.0 mln tonnes.

“Ukraine will retain the leadership, but the share in the global production will decrease to 41% vs. 42% in 2023/24 MY in favor of Russia – 33% vs. 29%. The forecast for Russia seems quite optimistic,” UkrAgroConsult stated.



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Contact info: info@open4business.com.ua

<https://www.facebook.com/Ukraineopen4business>,

<https://twitter.com/uaopen4business>

+38(044) 270 65 74 PhD in Economics, Maksim Urakin

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