The fifth wave of the annual survey of Ukrainian exporters and importers

Topic 3. TRADE FACILITATION IN UKRAINE:

Association Agreement, Foreign Trade Barriers and Business Associations

Summary of key findings

The study was conducted by the Institute for Economic Research and Policy Consulting as a part of the implementation of the project Support of the Civil Society Initiative "For Fair and Transparent Customs", funded by the European Union, the Renaissance Foundation and the Atlas Network

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OVERVIEW

The results of the 2020 survey show that the share of those who felt the positive impact of the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU on the company's activities is growing among businesses. 39.3% of business managers believe that their company has benefited from the implementation of the Agreement. This is the highest figure for the entire period of the study since 2016 (!).

The presence of obstacles in the implementation of export and import activities was reported by the fewest respondents in all waves of the annual survey. Moreover, in 2020 compared to 2018, the share of exporters who reported facing problems decreased threefold - from 23.6% to 7.9%

The main obstacles, according to the interviewed exporters, are the lack of simplified rules for determining the origin of goods and the long wait for customs clearance. For importers, the main obstacles are the non-transparency of the customs value of goods, the complexity of customs and tax legislation, high rates of customs duties.

The Internet remains the most popular source of information on foreign trade regulation in Ukraine and abroad. However, personal connections (information from buyers and suppliers) are important when looking for information on foreign trade regulations in partner countries. Exporters and importers also use government portals. About 98-99% of respondents are aware of most government websites. The most frequently interviewed entrepreneurs use the State Customs Service and State Tax Service websites.

In 2020, exporters were asked for the second time to evaluate the activities of the Export Promotion Office of Ukraine, which in 2018 was transformed from an export support project / advisory body into a government agency. According to the results, the level of awareness of exporters about the Export Promotion Office increased from 27.8% in 2018 to 34.1% in 2020. The average score of the activities of Export Promotion Office is 3.4 points (in 2018 - 3.3 points).

In 2020, almost a third (30.9%) of enterprises participating in foreign trade were members of at least one business association, including chambers of commerce and industry, employers' unions, small businesses, etc. The vast majority of companies participate in only one business association. Only 13.2% of respondents said they were not willing to pay for any services of business associations.

1. The structure of the surveyed enterprises

Among 1,045 enterprises surveyed in 2020, micro-enterprises (42.3%), small (28%), medium-sized (21.4%) and large (8.2%) enterprises are represented.

Enterprises participating in the foreign trade, which took part in the survey, are divided into three groups by type of foreign trade:

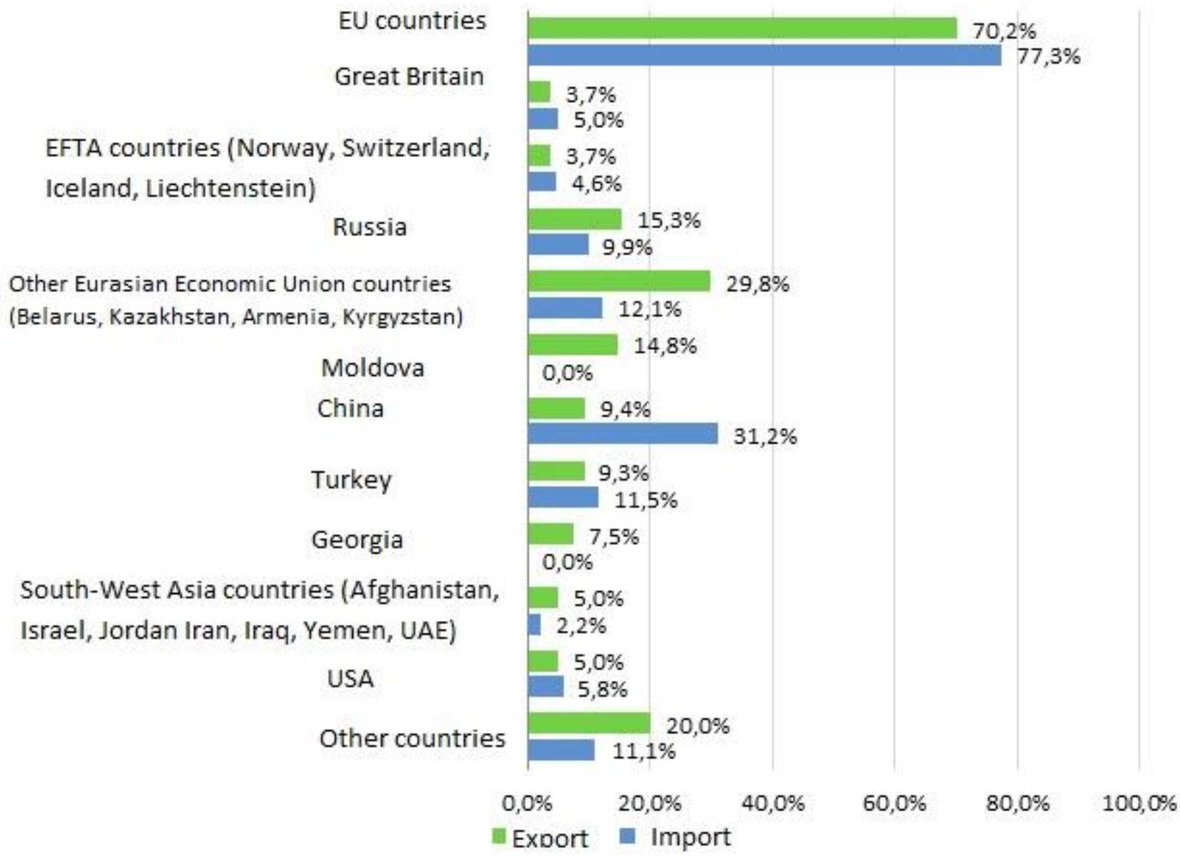
- Which are engaged only in exports (24.4%) – hereinafter "exporters only",
- Which are engaged only in imports (40.8%) – hereinafter "importers only",
- Enterprises, which are engaged both in exports and imports (34.8%).

The surveyed enterprises participating in the foreign trade work in the sectors of agriculture, industry, trade and other services sectors (hereinafter "services").

86.8% of enterprises reported working with customs brokers.

The European Union is the most common destination for both exports and imports for the surveyed companies.

Fig. 1. Areas of trade in exports and imports, % of respondents



67.5% of respondents were men, 32.5% - women.

2. Impact of the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU

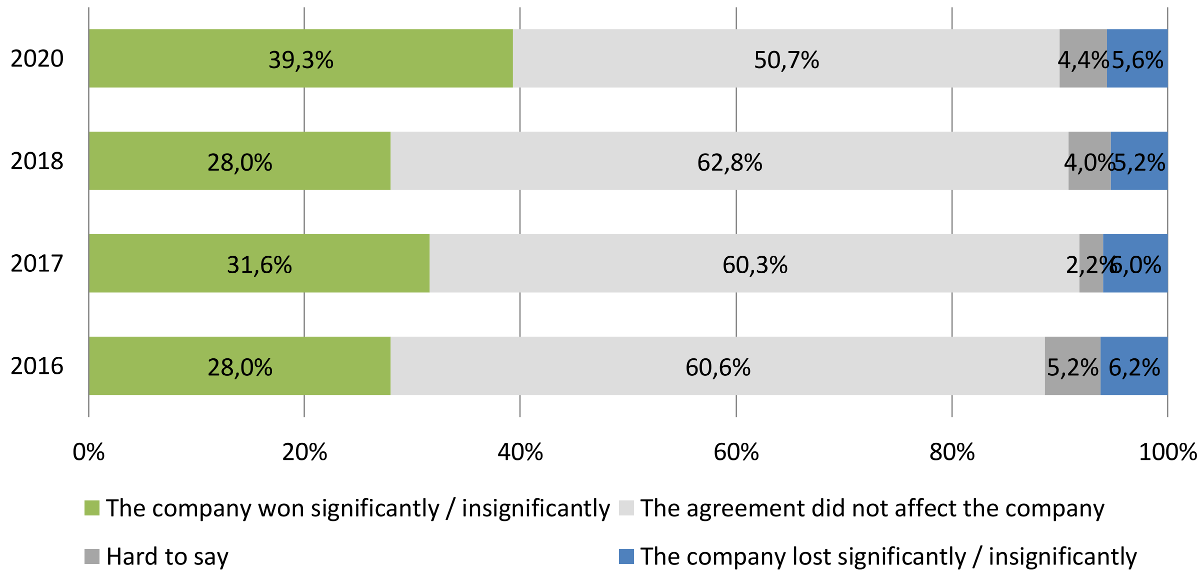
2.1. Assessment of the impact from the Association Agreement

• In 2020, compared to previous waves of the survey, there is observed the highest share of enterprises that positively assessed the impact of the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU (including the creation of a free trade area with the EU) - 39.3%. In 2016-2018, this figure remained at about 30%.

• Only almost 6% of respondents indicate that their company has lost significantly or insignificantly. The share of respondents who felt the negative impact has remained almost unchanged since 2016.

• Every second respondent believes that the Agreement did not affect the company.

Fig. 2. Impact assessment of the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU, by years (% of respondents)



• Businesses that combine exports and imports or only imports felt the greatest positive impact.

• According to the survey results, the lowest level of positive assessments remains among exporters.

• The results of the survey indicate that in 2020, almost two thirds of exporters have not yet felt the impact of the Agreement. However, the share of negative assessments of exporters has almost halved compared to 2016.

• In 2020, compared to 2016, the share of positive assessments for all types of foreign economic activity increased.

• According to the results of the study, big business has a greater positive impact of the Agreement compared to the SME sector. Among large businesses, there is also a smaller share of enterprises that cannot assess the impact of the Agreement.

- In 2020, the level of positive assessments is higher among enterprises of all sizes compared to 2016. At the same time, the share of positive assessments of micro and small businesses has almost doubled.

Fig. 3. Impact assessment of the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU in 2020, by type of foreign trade (% of respondents)

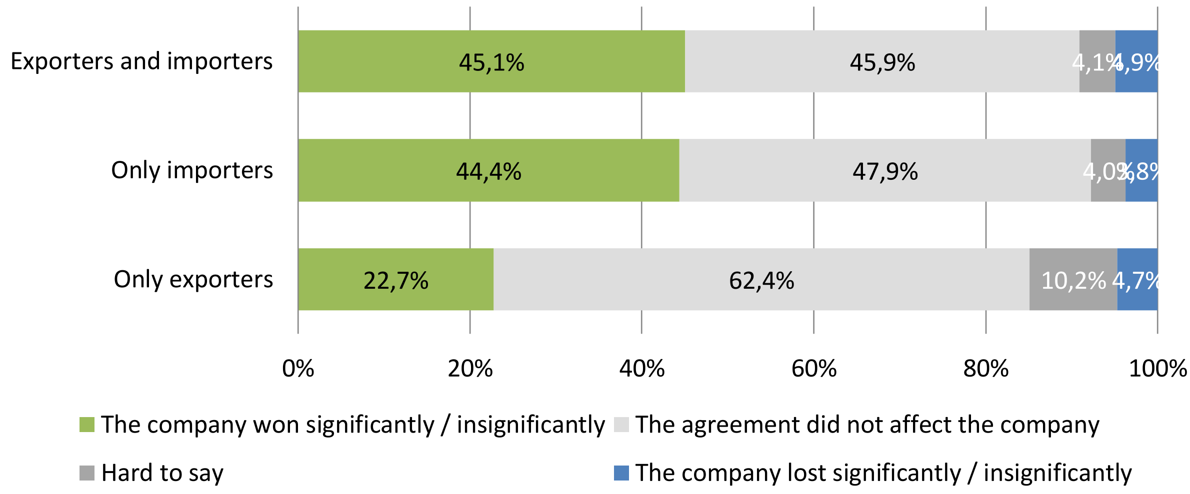
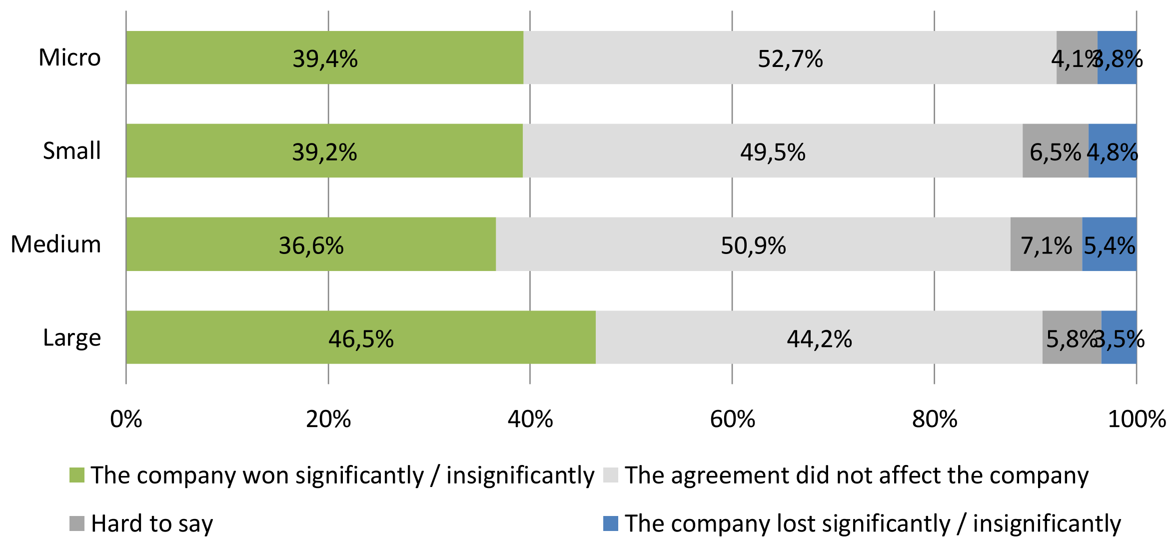


Fig. 4. Impact assessment of the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU, by size of enterprises (% of respondents)



• The trade sector has been most affected by the Association Agreement. In contrast, among agricultural enterprises the lowest share of positive assessments.

• In the field of services, the highest share of respondents who indicate a loss from the impact of the Agreement. In particular, every tenth respondent indicates significant or insignificant losses.

• Compared to 2016, the share of positive assessments of industrial and commercial enterprises increased almost one and a half times. At the same time, the level of positive assessments of agricultural and service enterprises has hardly changed.

Fig. 5. Impact assessment of the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU, by sector (% of respondents)

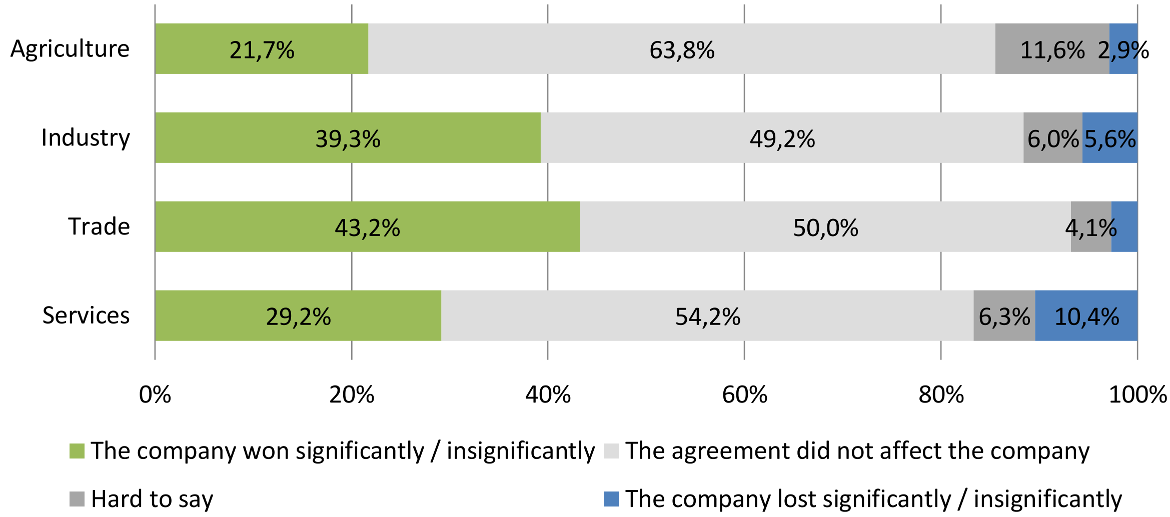
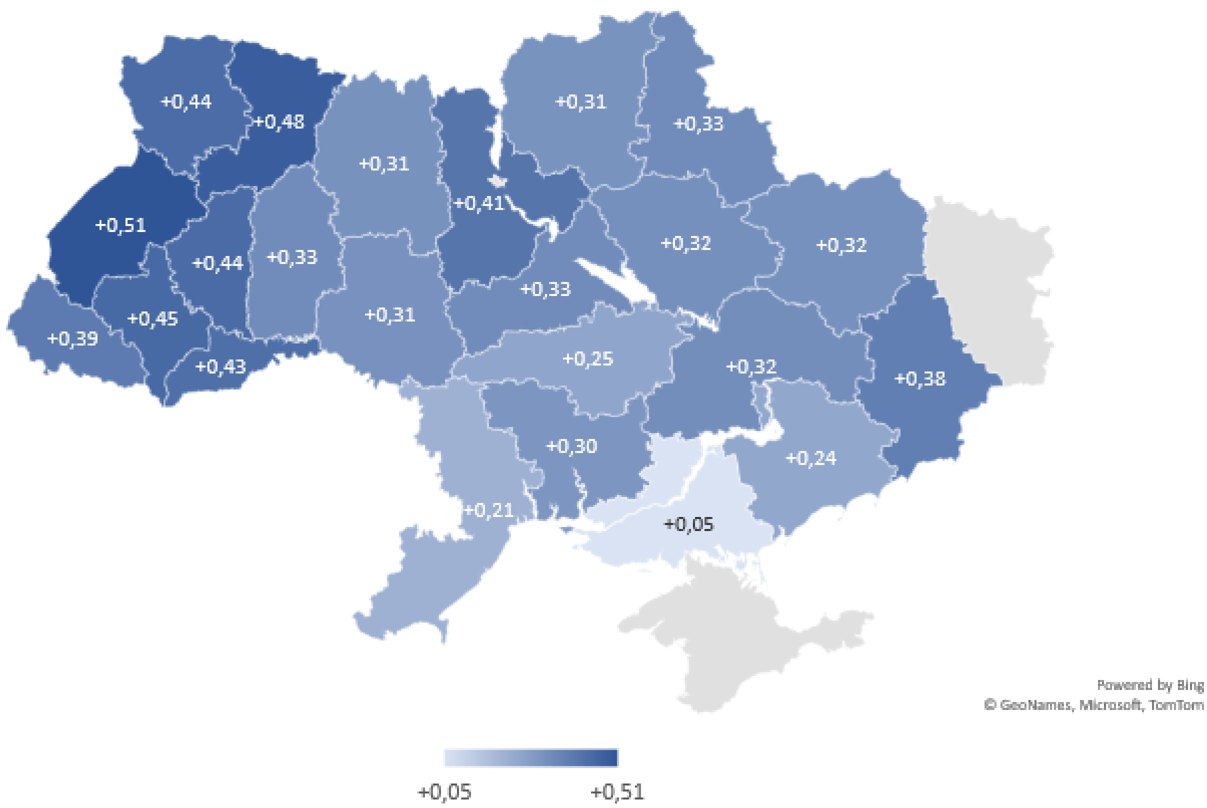


Fig. 6. Balance index of assessment of the impact of the Association Agreement in the regions [1]



[1] It is impossible to calculate the balance indicator for Luhansk region due to insufficient number of respondents.

• Lviv region is the leader of positive assessments, the only region where such assessments predominate (more than 50%). Almost every second respondent gives positive assessments in Rivne (48.3%), Ternopil (48.0%) and Chernivtsi (47.6%) regions.

• According to the survey results, the lowest share of positive assessments is observed in Kherson region, only one in five respondents (18.2%)

• In six regions, there are no respondents who have had a negative impact on their enterprise. Also, in more than half of the regions, the negative impact of the Agreement is less than 4%.

• Kherson regions also has the highest share of respondents who believe that their company has lost from the Agreement (13.6%).

The study also calculated the balance index of impact assessments of the Association Agreement - the difference between positive and negative assessments of the impact of the Association Agreement:

- The highest balance index indicator is in Lviv region (+51). The results of the study indicate that high values of the balance index indicator are mainly in the western and central regions.

- The lowest index is in Kherson region (+0.05). That is, in the Kherson region, positive assessments exceed the negative assessments by only 5 p. p.

2.2. Expected impact of the Association Agreement

The share of enterprises that believe that their enterprise will benefit from the Association Agreement (including free trade zone with the EU) over the next five years, in 2020 (44.9%) increased compared to 2018 (41.1 %).

- However, enterprises still remain less optimistic compared to the results of 2016 and 2017 (the latter's expectations were the most optimistic).

- The share of respondents who expect a negative impact has remained almost unchanged since 2016.

- A quarter of the surveyed participants in the foreign trade cannot determine the impact of the Agreement on the company in five years. The lowest level of uncertainty about the future impact of the Agreement was in 2017 (only one in five respondents at the time could not decide on this issue).

- According to the survey, almost every second manager of companies that import, or both export and import, have positive expectations. The level of positive expectations of enterprises that import or combine exports and imports is lower than in 2016.

- Enterprises engaged only in exports have the least positive expectations (only one in three respondents). However, in 2020 the share of positive expectations of exporters exceeds the figure for 2016.

- Among exporters, the highest share of respondents who do not expect the impact of the Agreement on the company and those who could not determine whether there is an impact or not.

Fig. 7. Assessment of the expected impact of the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU, by years (% of respondents)

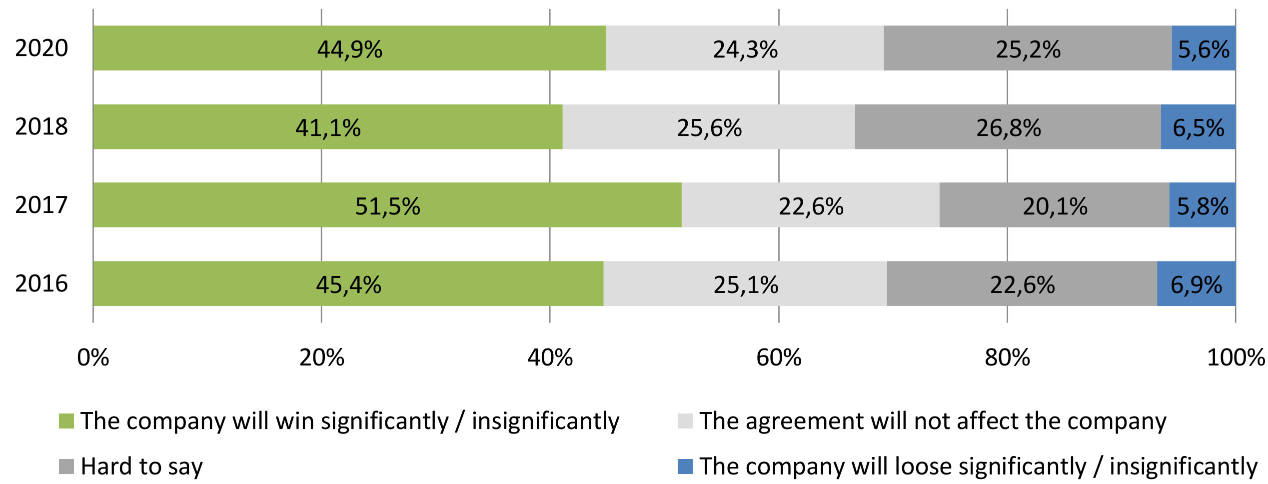
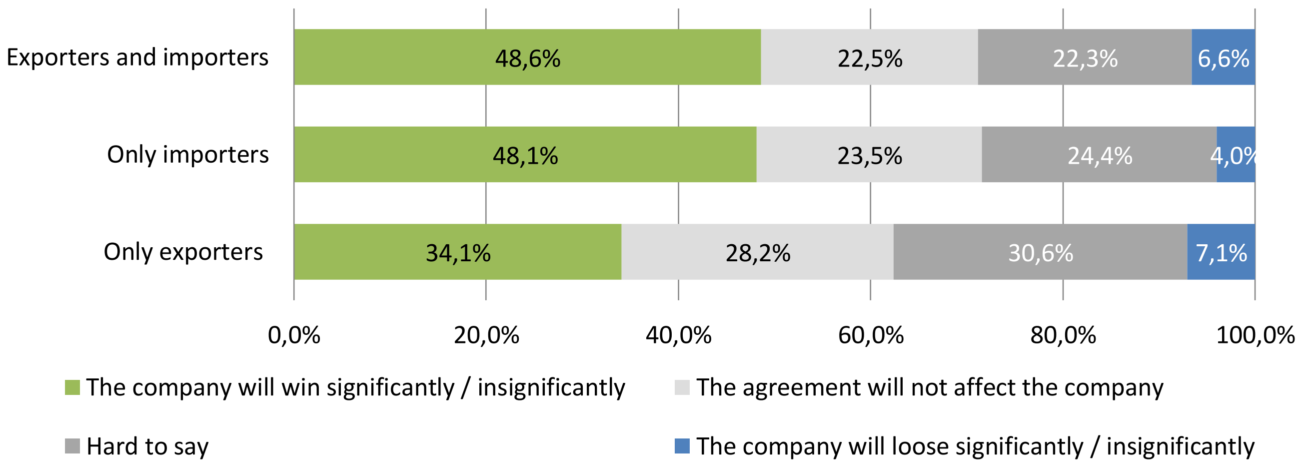


Fig. 8. Assessment of the expected impact of the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU, by type of foreign trade (% of respondents)



• The results of the survey show that large enterprises have the most optimistic expectations about the impact of the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU.

• The share of positive expectations is almost the same among micro, small, and medium enterprises.

• As the size of enterprises increases, the level of uncertainty about the impact of the Agreement decreases. According to the data obtained, the level of uncertainty among SMEs is higher than among large enterprises.

• Compared to 2016, the share of positive expectations among large and medium-sized businesses decreased but increased among small and micro businesses.

Fig. 9. Estimation of the expected impact of the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU in 2020, by size of enterprises (% of respondents)

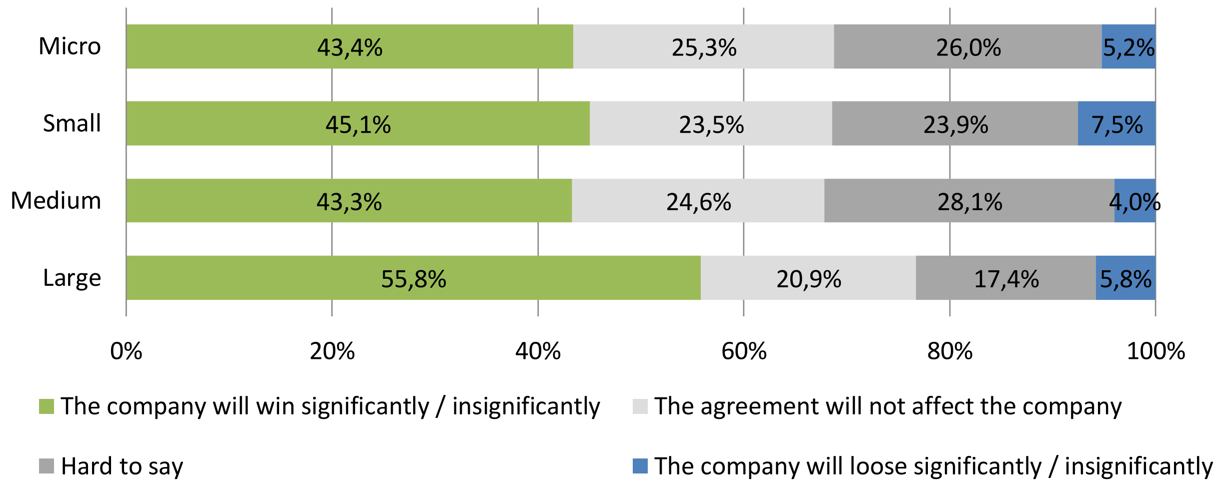
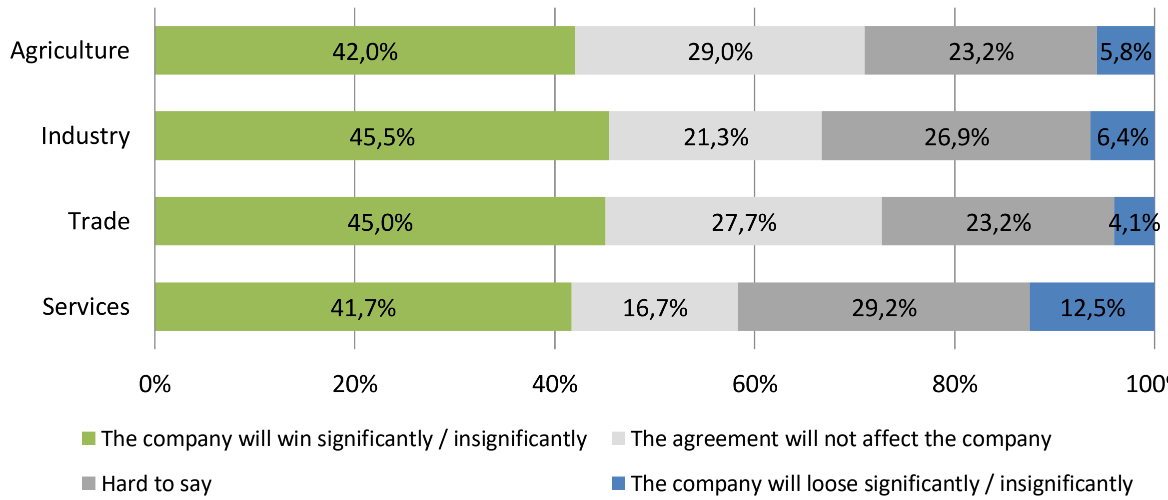


Fig. 10. Assessment of the expected impact of the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU in 2020, by sector (% of respondents)



• According to the data obtained, in 2020 the share of positive assessments is almost the same between sectors, but the share of positive assessments is higher in industry and trade.

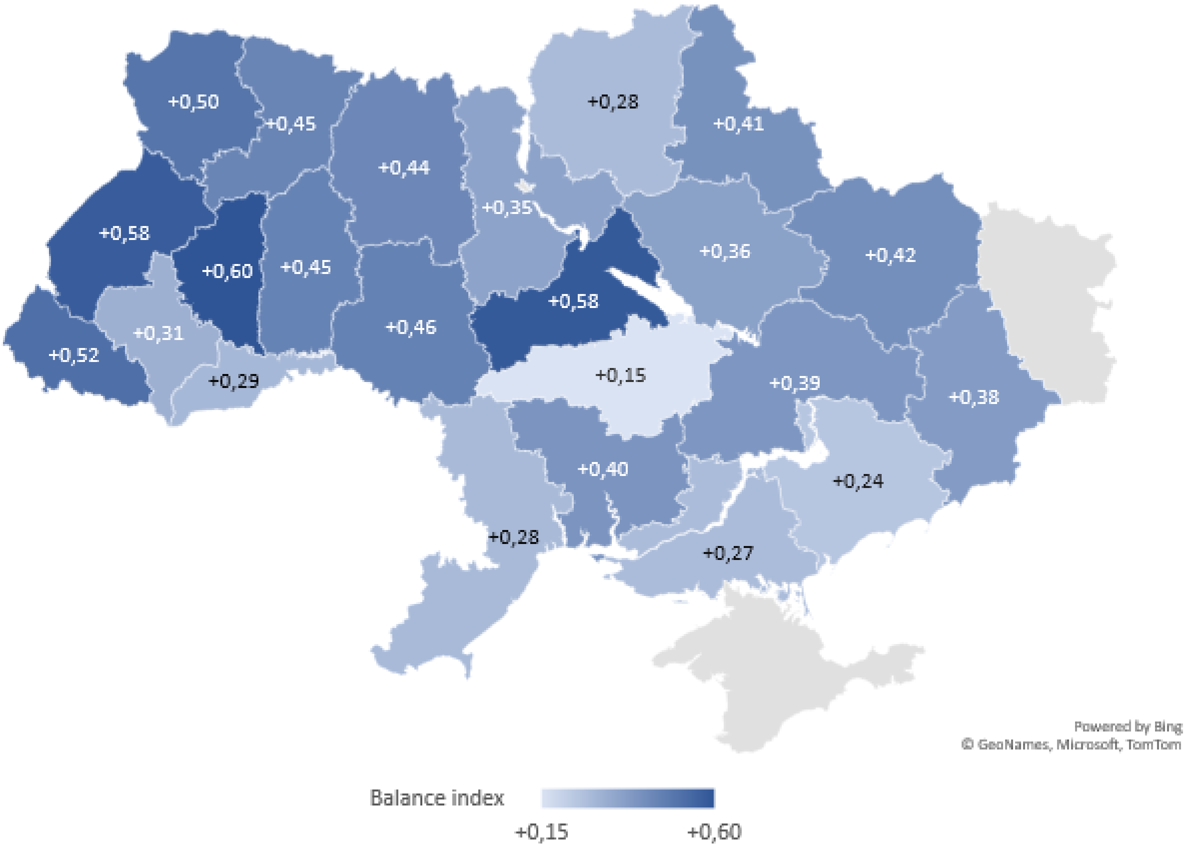
• Research shows that agriculture has the highest share of respondents who believe that the Agreement will not affect their businesses in the next five years.

• In the services sector, the highest share of respondents who have negative expectations. The result is several times higher than for other sectors.

• Compared to 2016, the share of positive expectations in services, trade and industry has hardly changed. In agriculture, the share of positive expectations decreased by almost 7 p.p.

• The greatest uncertainty about the impact of the Agreement among service enterprises.

Fig. 11. Balance index of assessments of the expected impact of the Association Agreement in the regions[2]



• Enterprises engaged in foreign trade from Cherkasy (62.5%), Lviv (60.3%) and Ternopil (60.0%) regions have the most positive expectations regarding the impact of the Agreement. In these regions, almost 2/3 of respondents reported a possible positive impact.

• The smallest share of enterprises expecting positive results is in Kirovohrad (30.0%), Zaporizhia (31.7%) and Chernihiv (34.5%) regions. Only about a third of respondents gave positive assessments.

• In Ternopil, Zhytomyr and Sumy regions, there are no respondents who would anticipate a negative impact on their enterprises. At the same time, in half of the regions, 5% or less of respondents have negative expectations.

• In Kirovohrad region, the highest share of respondents who expect a negative impact is 15.0%. There is also a high share of negative assessments in Chernivtsi (14.3%), Kherson (13.6%) and Odesa regions (12.3%).

The study also calculated the balance index of impact assessments of the Association Agreement - the difference between positive and negative assessments of the expected impact of the Association Agreement:

[2] It is impossible to calculate the balance indicator for Luhansk region due to insufficient number of respondents.

• The highest value of the balance index of expectations in Ternopil region (+0.60). High results were also demonstrated in Lviv and Cherkasy regions (+0.58 each).

• The lowest indicator of the balance index was found in Kirovohrad region - only +0.15.

• According to the obtained results, high values of the balance index indicator are mainly in the western and central regions. This situation corresponds to the distribution of high values of the balance index for assessments of the existing impact of the Agreement.

3. Barriers to foreign economic activity

3.1. Obstacles at exports

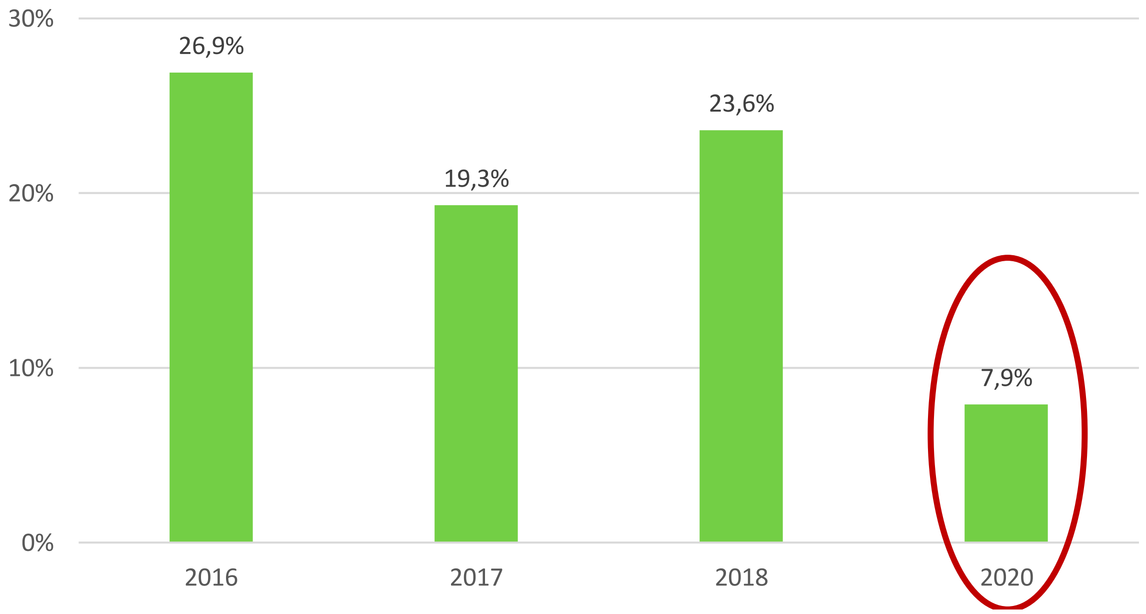
• According to the survey, in 2020 the indicator of obstacles presence at exports is the lowest of all waves of the survey since 2016.

• The presence of obstacles is almost indistinguishable for companies that only export or combine exports and imports.

• The results show that large and small enterprises (10.4% and 10.7%) are more likely to report obstacles at exports compared to micro (8.1%) and medium (4.1%).

• In the sectoral context, enterprises in the service sector most often deal with obstacles in the export of (22.6%).

Fig. 12. Share of exporters facing obstacles,% of exporters surveyed



• In four regions there are no complaints about obstacles (Chernivtsi, Ternopil, Zhytomyr and Donetsk regions).

• In contrast, exporters from Rivne, Sumy, Kirovohrad, Ivano-Frankivsk and Poltava regions (every fifth respondent) most often report obstacles.

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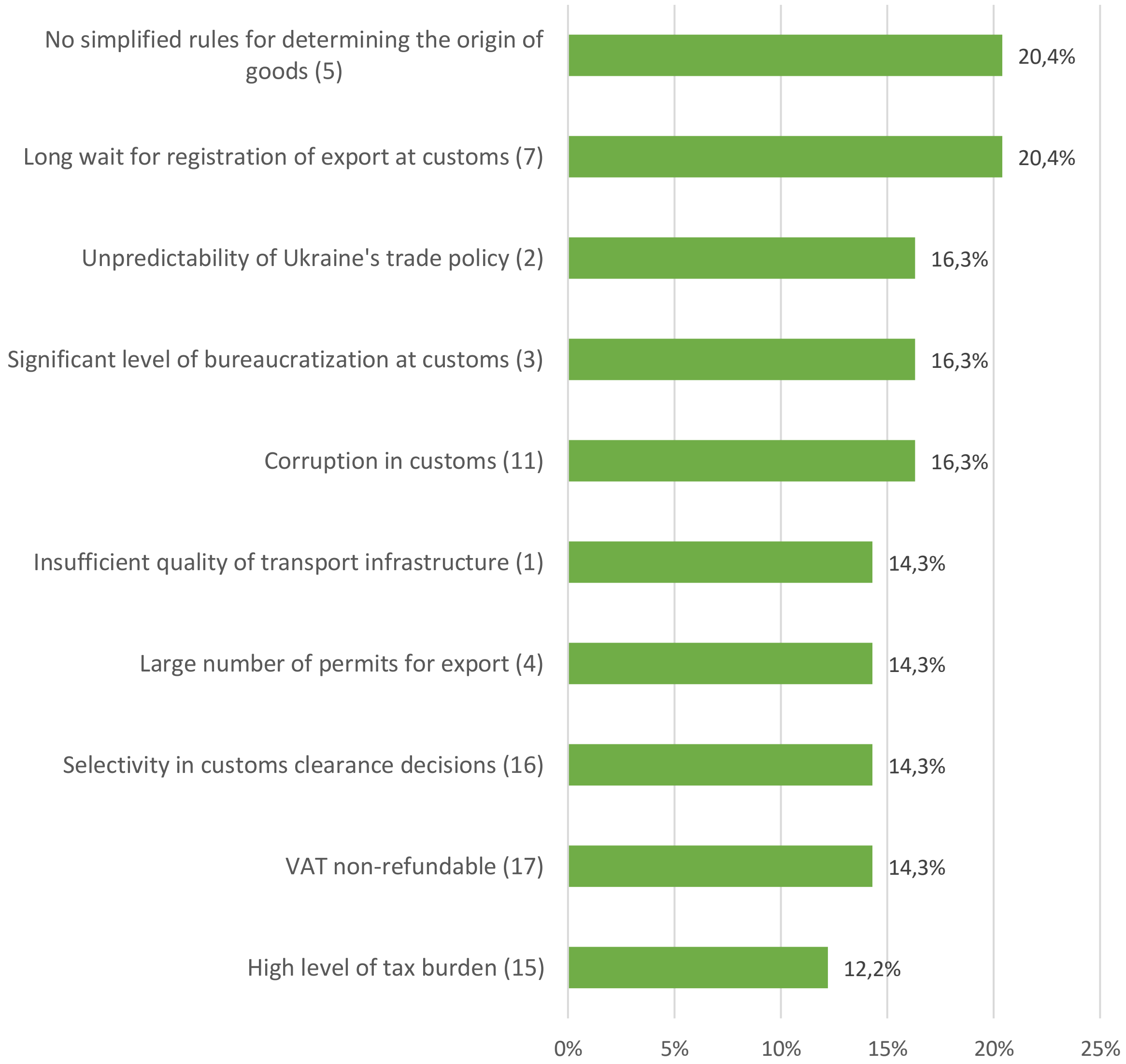
Fig. 13. Top 10 obstacles among those who met obstacles to exports



Note: The position of the obstacle in the 2018 rating is indicated in parentheses

- According to the results obtained, the main obstacles to exports are the lack of simplified rules for determining the origin of goods and the long wait for customs registration at exports.[3] These issues took the first place in the ranking of obstacles to exports for the first time.
- The problem of poor infrastructure has become less relevant (7th place), although in 2017 and 2018 it took the first place.
- Corruption is among the top 5 obstacles to exports for the first time. The corresponding figure has increased during each wave of the survey since 2016.

[3] It is impossible to compare obstacles by sectors and size of enterprises due to insufficient number of respondents.

3.2. Obstacles at imports

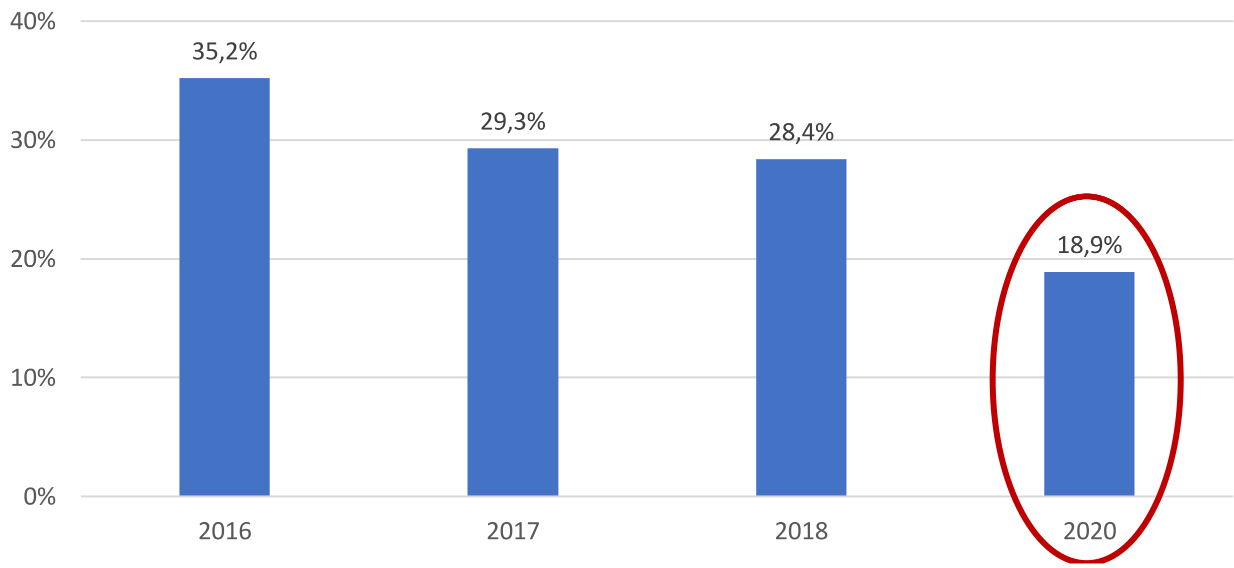
• According to the survey, in 2020 the indicator of obstacles to imports is the lowest of all waves of the survey since 2016.

• The presence of obstacles is almost indistinguishable for companies that only import or combine exports and imports.

• Large and medium-sized enterprises (13.9% and 15.2%, respectively) report problems with imports less often than small and micro enterprises (22.2% and 19.4%).

• Enterprises services most often report obstacles to imports (30.8%).

Fig. 14. Share of importers facing obstacles,% of importers surveyed



• According to the results, Cherkasy region is the only region where there are no complaints about obstacles to imports.

• Enterprises from the Nikolaev region most often report obstacles at imports (every third interrogated). In Rivne, Poltava, and Ivano-Frankivsk region, more than a quarter of respondents complain about obstacles to imports.

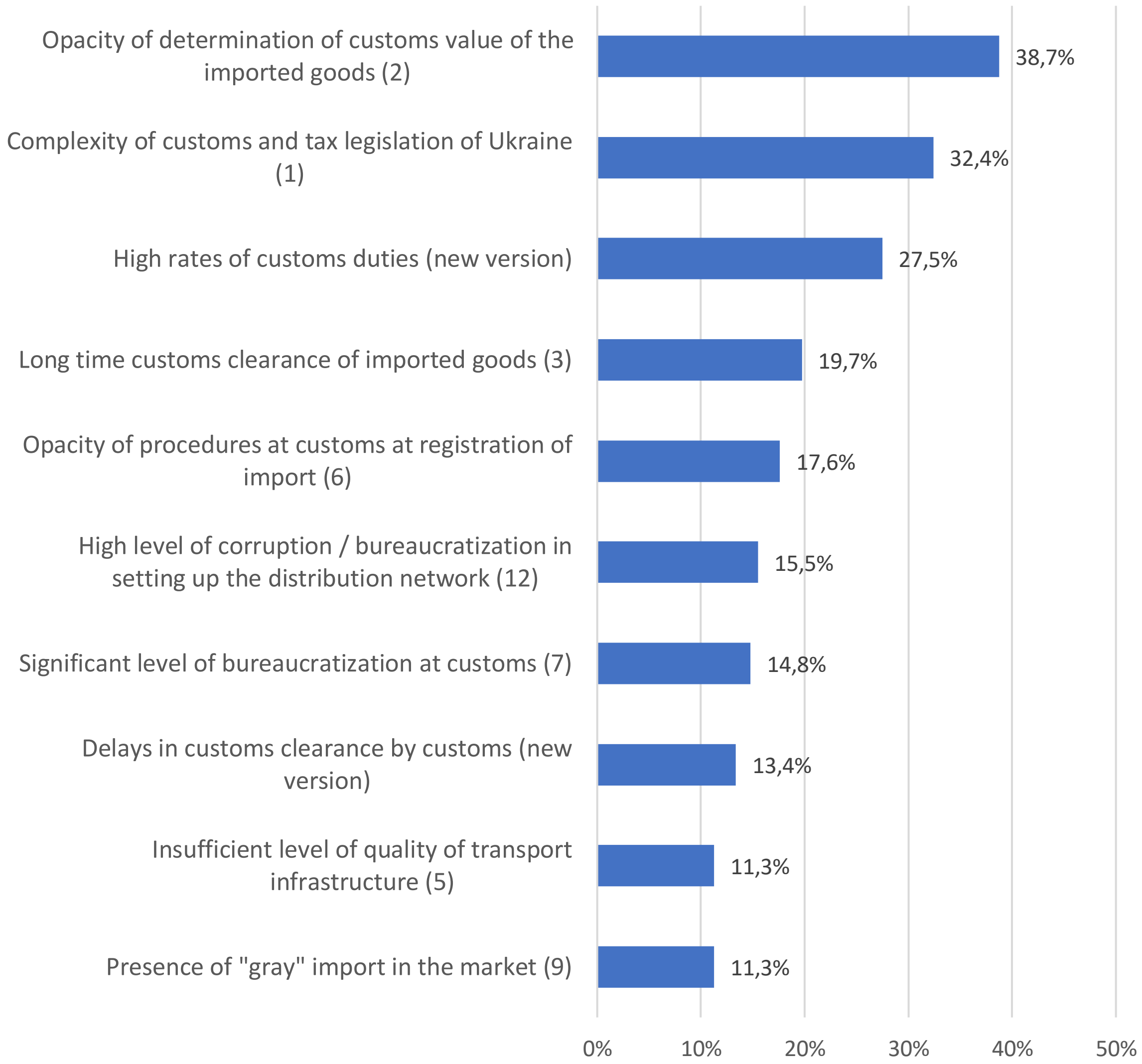
• The main obstacle in carrying out import activities is the non-transparency of determining the customs value of imported goods (in 2018 - the top 2 obstacle).

• Almost a third of respondents complain about the complexity of customs and tax legislation, which placed the obstacle in second place (in 2018 - the main obstacle).

• In third place in the ranking of obstacles - high rates of customs duties (customs duties, import payments, VAT). The problem was first included in the rating in 2020.

• The problem of corruption is not included in the top 10 ranking of obstacles. It is reported by every tenth, which is almost the same result since 2016.

Fig. 15. Top 10 obstacles among those who had obstacles to imports,%



Note 1: The position of the obstacle in the 2018 rating is indicated in parentheses

Note 2: Comparison of obstacles by sector and size of enterprises is not possible due to insufficient number of subsamples

4. Assessment of the Export Promotion Office

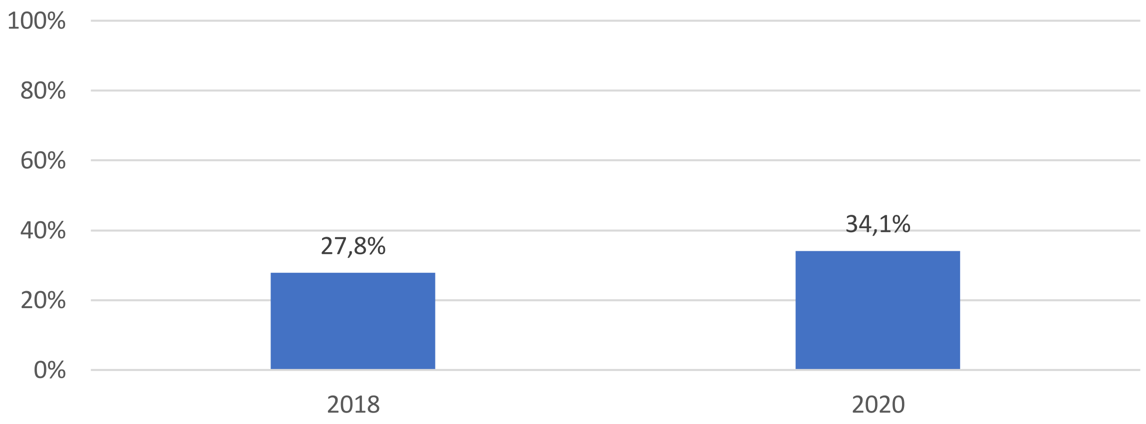
In 2020, exporters were asked for the second time to assess the activities of the Export Promotion Office (EPO) of Ukraine, which in 2018 was transformed from an export support project / advisory body into a government agency.

- In 2020, two thirds (65.9%) of exporters were unaware of the existence of the Export Promotion Office.

- The level of exporters' awareness of the Export Promotion Office increased from 27.8% in 2018 to 34.1% in 2020.

• Enterprises engaged exclusively in exports are better informed (36.9%) about the EPO than enterprises that combine exports and imports (32.1%).

Fig. 16. Aware of the existence of the EPO, % of respondents

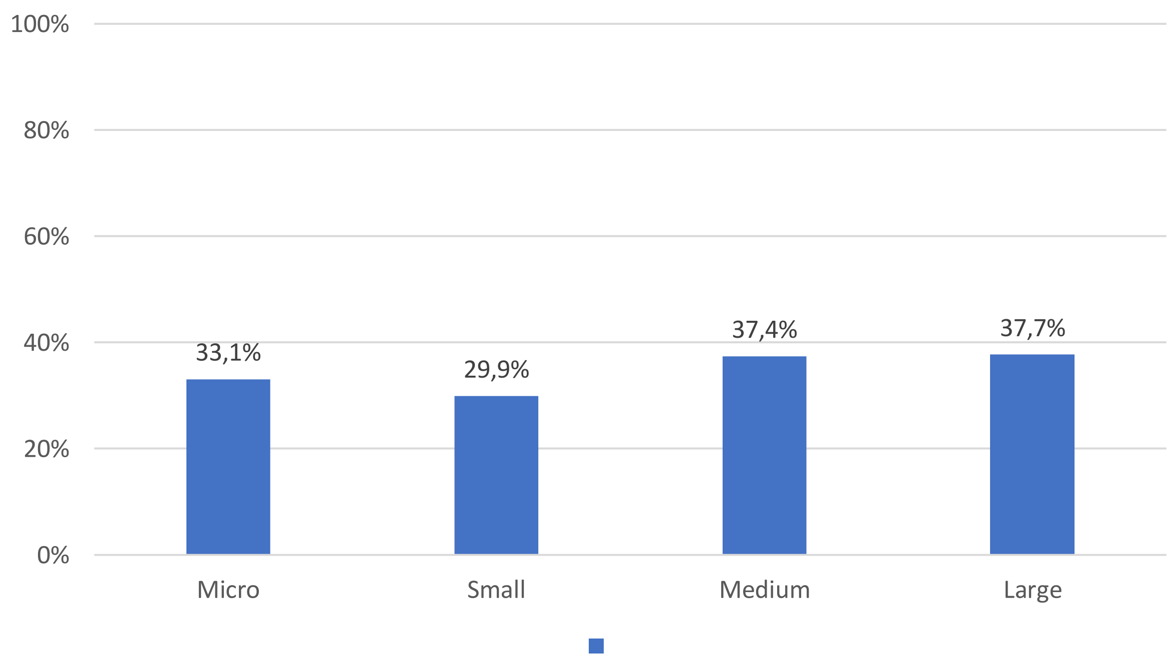


• Large and medium-sized enterprises are better informed about the existence of the Export Promotion Office compared to micro and small ones.

• Among the representatives of agriculture, the highest share of respondents who know about the existence of the EPO - 45.8%.

• Businesses in industry and services are less well informed about the EPO than all exporters in general.

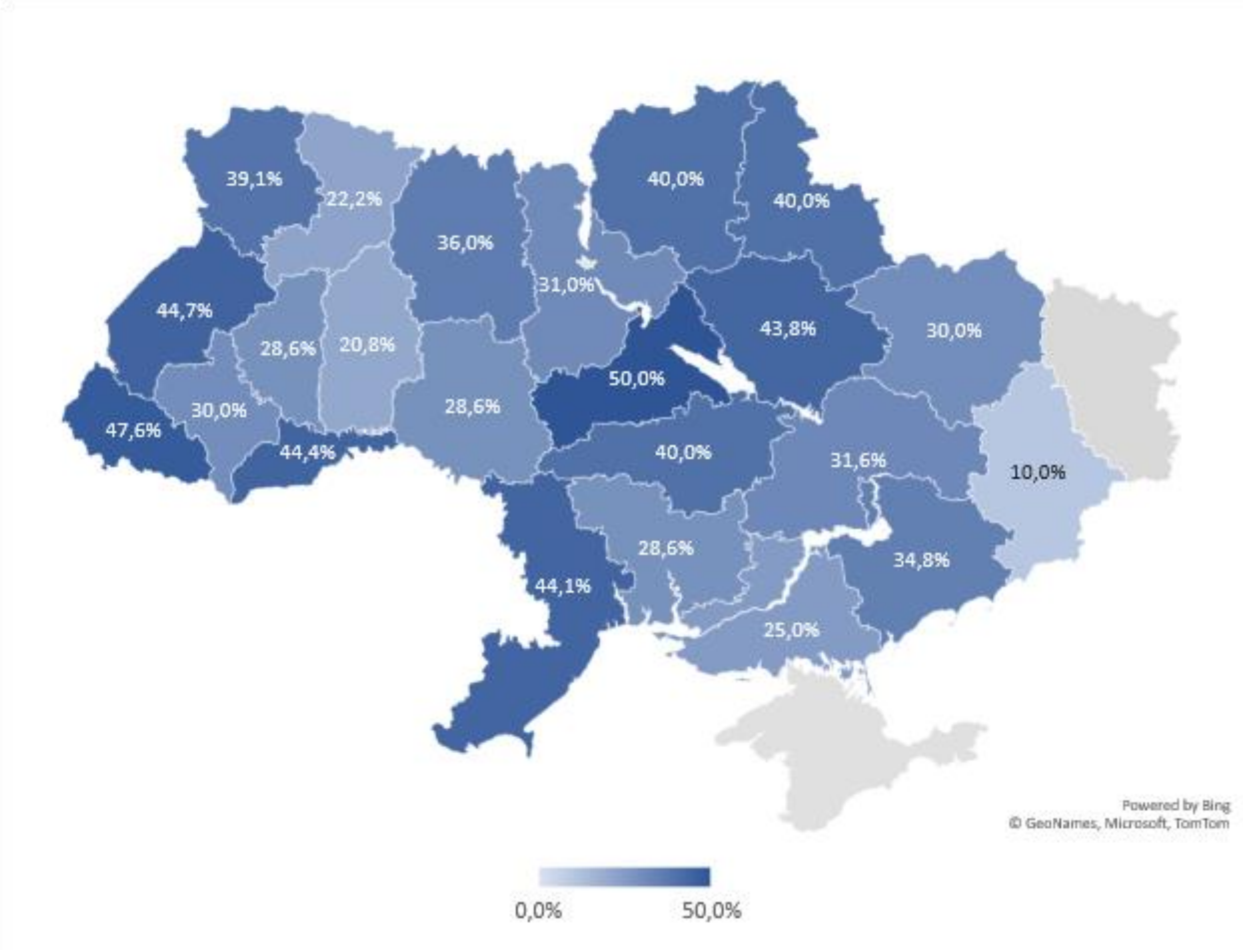
Fig. 17. Aware of the existence of the EPO, by the size of the enterprise, % of respondents



• According to the results of the survey, in Cherkasy, Zakarpattia, Lviv, Chernivtsi and Odesa regions almost every second exporter is informed about the existence of the Export Promotion Office.

• However, only one in ten is informed in Donetsk region and one in five in Rivne region.

Fig. 18. The share of respondents who know about the existence of the Export Promotion Office[4]



Respondents were also asked to rate the EPO's efficiency from 1 (negative) to 5 (positive) points.

• According to the results of the survey, almost half of the respondents rated the activity of the EPO on 4 or 5 points. Only every tenth respondent gave the EPO 1 point.

• In 2020, the average score of the Export Promotion Office is 3.4 points (in 2018 - 3.3 points) on a five-point scale.

• The average score is the same among enterprises engaged exclusively in exports and among those that combine exports and imports.

• Large enterprises have the lowest assessment of the EPO efficiency - an average of 2.9 points. At the same time, the highest assessments of the EPO are among small and medium enterprises (3.5 points).

• In terms of sectors, services companies evaluate the activities of the Export Promotion Office at the best - on average 3.8 points. The lowest marks were given by agricultural exporters - an average of 3.0 points.

[4] It is impossible to calculate the indicator for Luhansk region due to insufficient number of respondents.

Fig. 19. Distribution of assessments of the Export Promotion Office efficiency, % of respondents

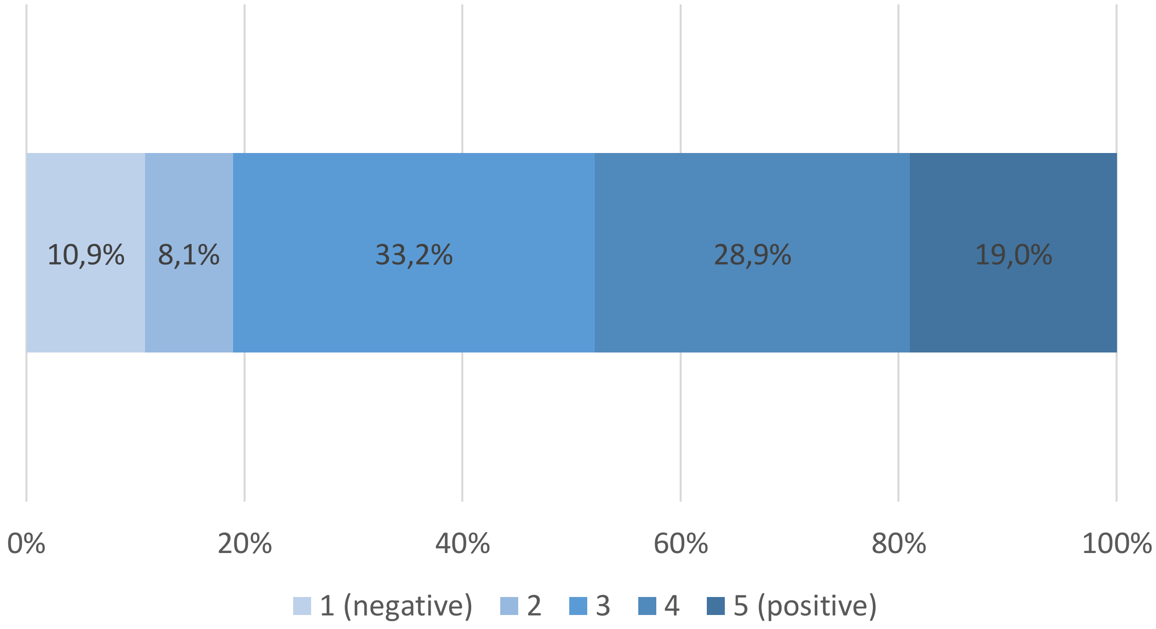
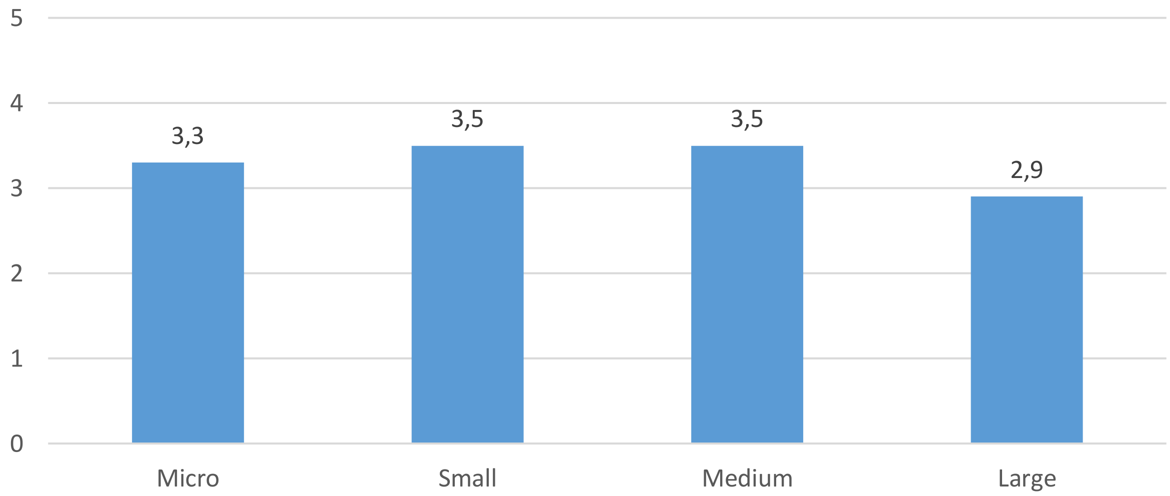


Fig. 20. Assessments of the Export Promotion Office efficiency, by size of enterprises (points)



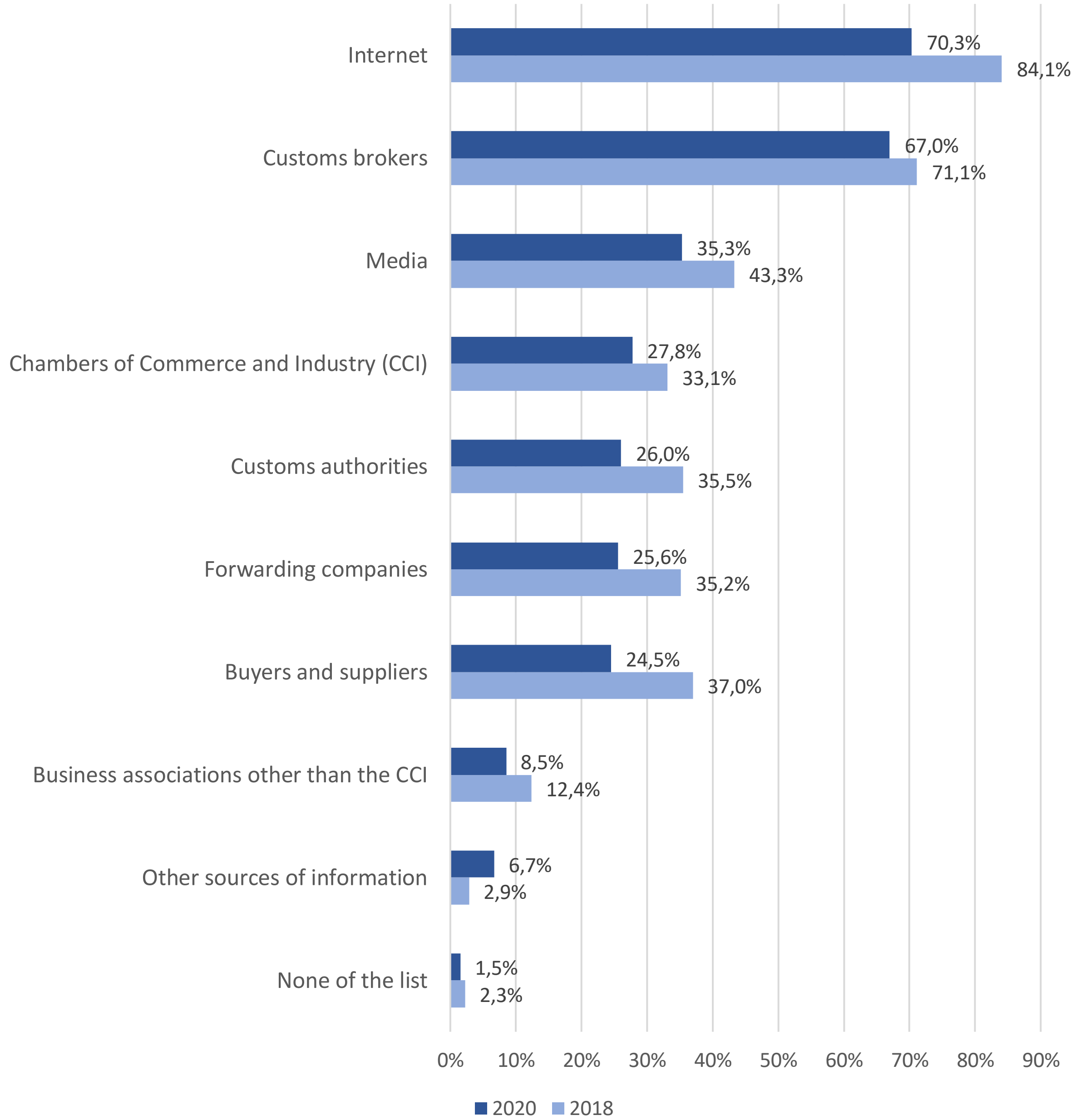
5. Sources of information for enterprises engaged in foreign trade

5.1. Use of sources of information on foreign trade regulation

The Internet remains the most popular source of information about doing business in Ukraine (as in 2017 and 2018). The Internet is the main source of information for businesses of all types. In addition:

- Customs brokers are the only source that is most popular with importers.
- As the size of the enterprise increases, the popularity of all sources of information (except customs brokers) increases.
- Only 1.5% of respondents do not use any of the sources.

Fig. 21. Sources of information on foreign trade regulation in Ukraine, % of respondents



The Internet is also a major source of information on doing business in partner countries. Also:

- Also, almost every second respondent receives information from buyers and suppliers. This shows that when looking for information on the regulation of foreign trade abroad, it is important to establish personal connections.

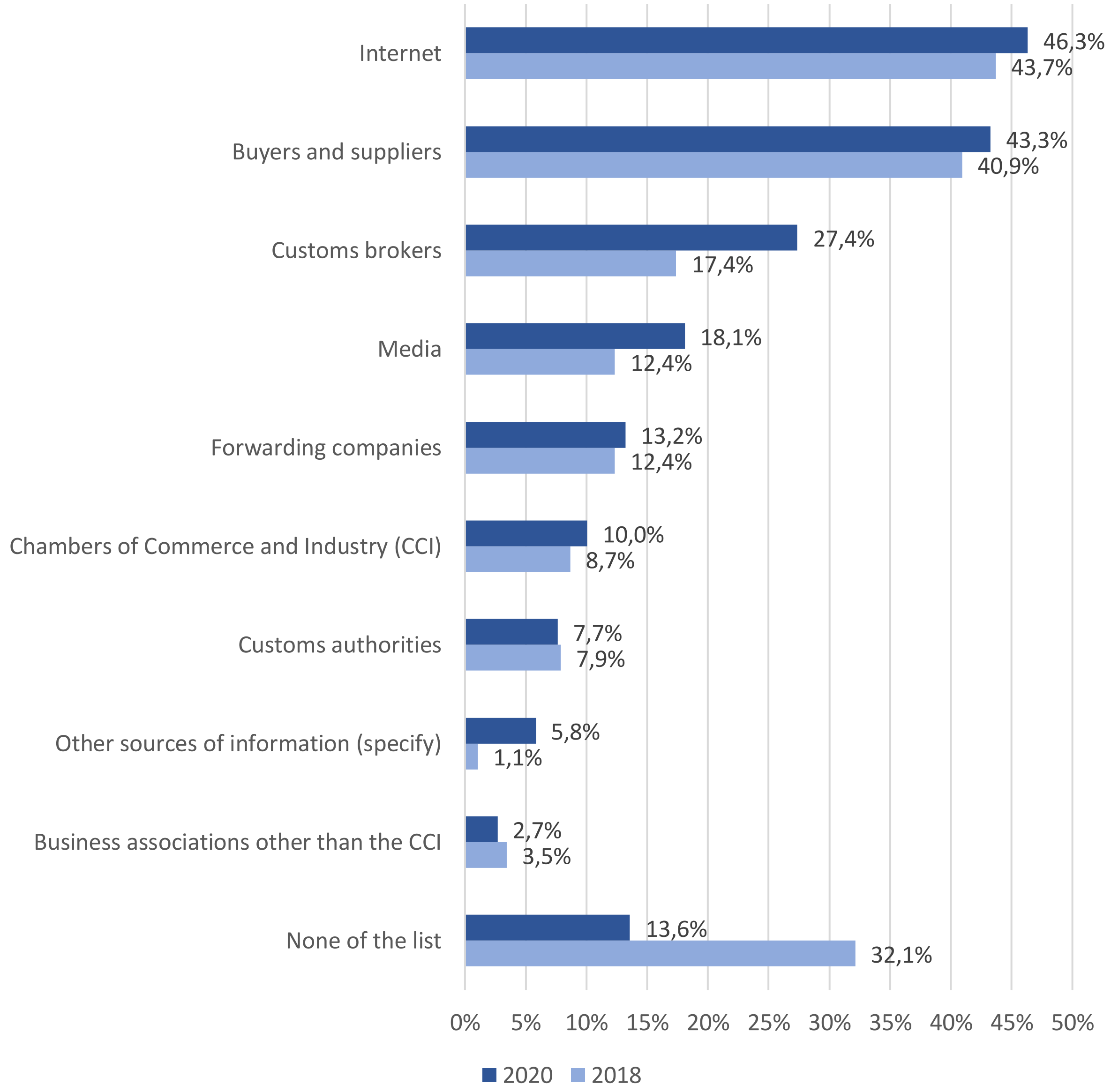
- Among exporters, exporters most often use information from buyers and suppliers, the Internet is only in second place.

- As the size of the enterprise increases, the popularity of most sources of information (except for customs brokers) increases.

- In the trade sector, the most popular sources of information are buyers and suppliers.

- 13.6% of respondents do not use any of these sources of information.

Fig. 22. Sources of information on foreign trade regulation in partner countries,% of respondents



The study also compared the use of sources of information on foreign trade regulation in Ukraine and in partner countries:

- Enterprise engaged in foreign trade most often use the Internet, but more actively - to find information on foreign trade regulation in Ukraine.
- Customs brokers are the second most popular in the search for information on the regulation of foreign trade in Ukraine.
- Buyers and suppliers are the second most important source of information on foreign trade regulation abroad.
- Enterprises engaged in foreign trade are more likely to use the media, CCI, business associations and freight forwarders to search for information on foreign trade in Ukraine than abroad.
- When searching for information on foreign trade regulation abroad, respondents more often do not use any of the sources.

The study also analyzed the average number of sources used by enterprises in searching for information.

- On average, enterprises engaged in foreign trade use more sources to obtain information on foreign trade regulation in Ukraine than in partner countries.
- Compared to 2018, enterprises engaged in foreign trade began to use on average fewer sources to obtain information. Such a change may indicate a more concentrated use of verified sources.
- The average number of sources on foreign trade in Ukraine decreased from 3.6 units in 2018 to 3 units in 2020. At the same time, the average number of sources on foreign trade in the partner countries decreased from 2.2 to 2 units.

Fig. 23. Number of sources per 1 respondent who uses sources, by years (units)

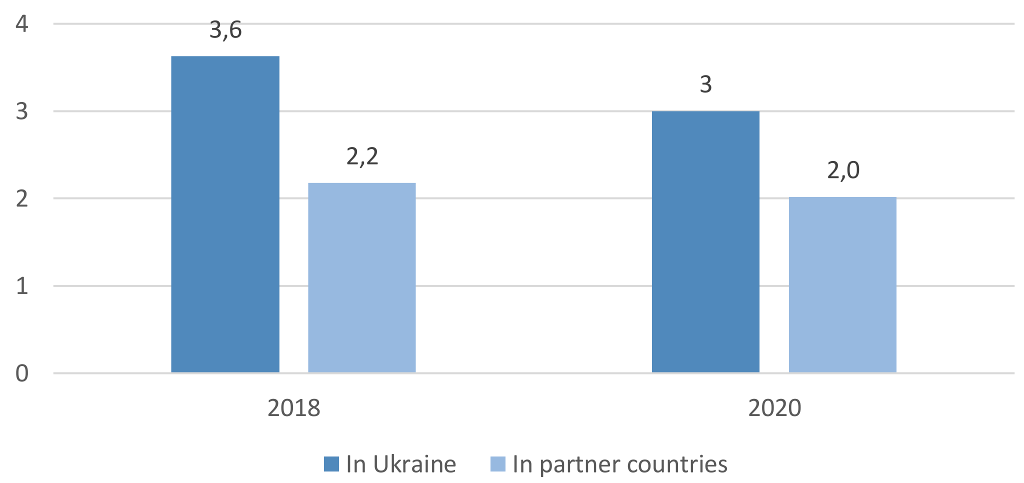
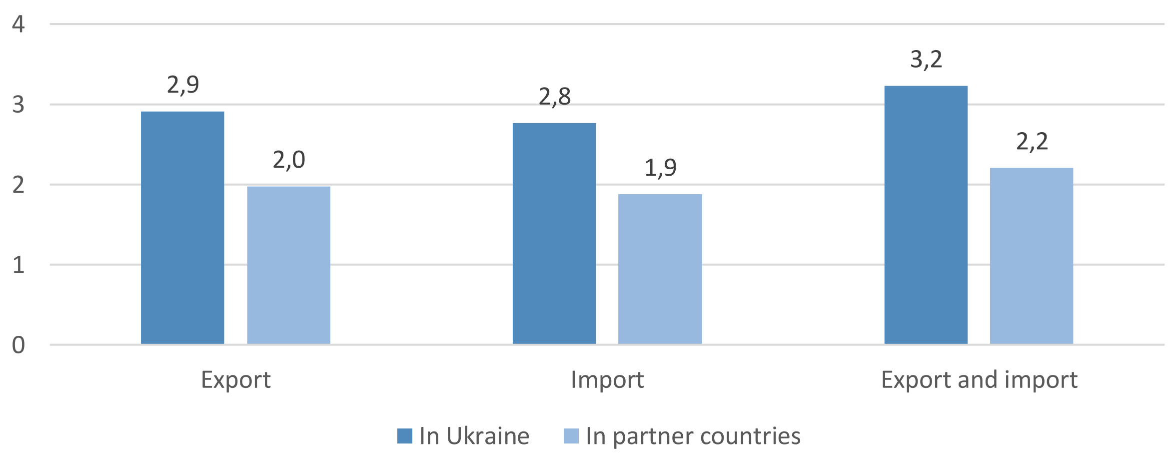


Fig. 24. Number of sources per 1 respondent who uses sources, by type of foreign trade (units)



- Businesses that combine exports and imports, on average, use more sources to search for information.
- As the size of the enterprise increases, the number of sources used increases.
- Industrial enterprises are more active in using different types of sources than representatives of other sectors.

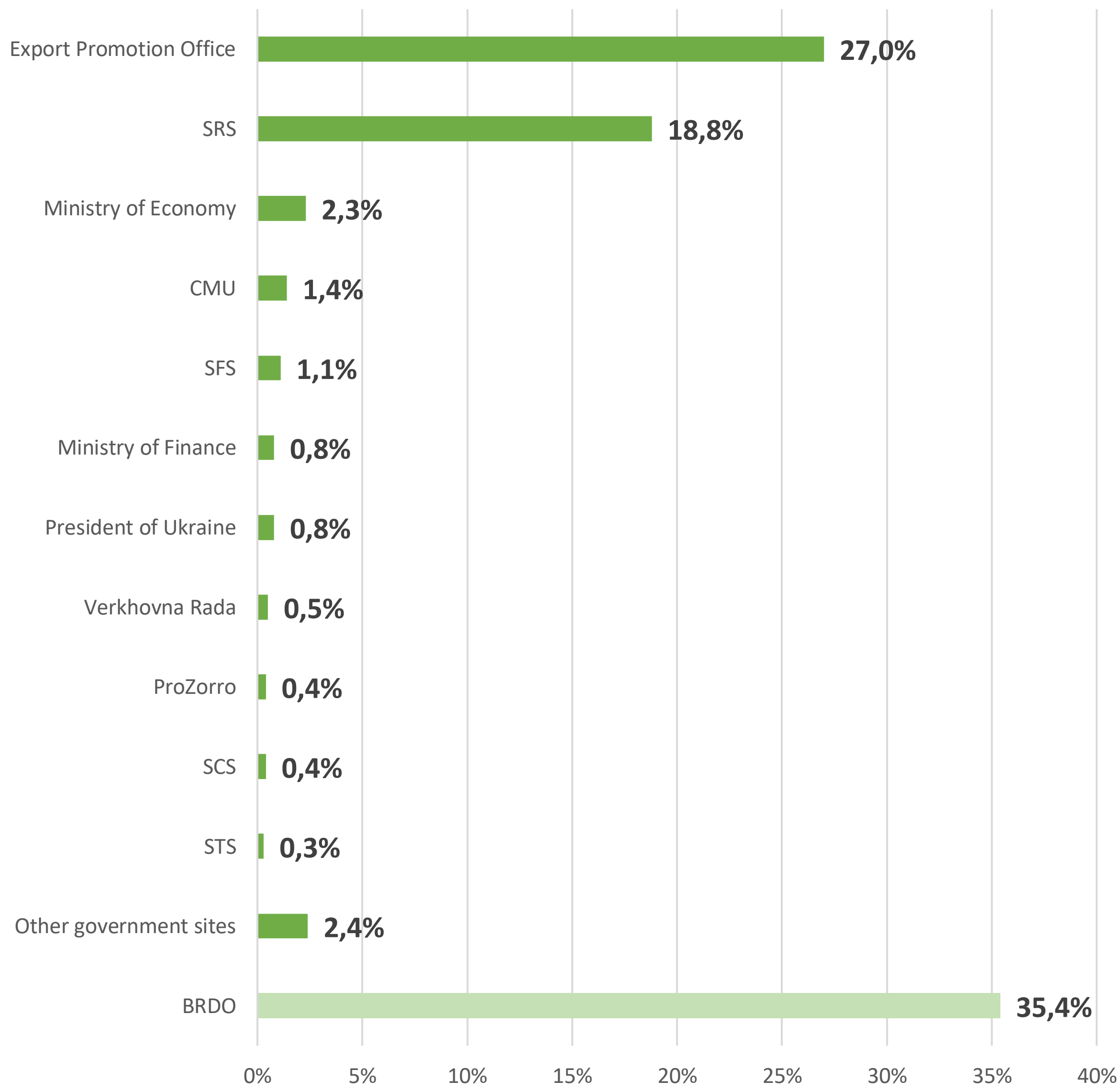
5.2. Use of government sites by enterprises engaged in foreign trade

• According to the results, only 1-2% of respondents do not know about most government websites. Thus, respondents are well informed about the existence of most government websites.

• It should be noted that one in five respondents does not know about the website of the State Regulatory Service (SRS), and one in four - about the website of the Export Promotion Office.

• At the same time, two thirds of respondents do not know about the existence of the Export Promotion Office. Not all respondents may be willing to admit that they are unaware of the existence of certain government websites.

Fig. 25. Share of respondents who do not know about the existence of government websites, % of respondents[5]



[5] The analysis also includes the website of the Better Regulation Delivery Office (BRDO), which is a non-governmental structure aimed at improving the business environment, but was created at the initiative of the Ministry of Economy.

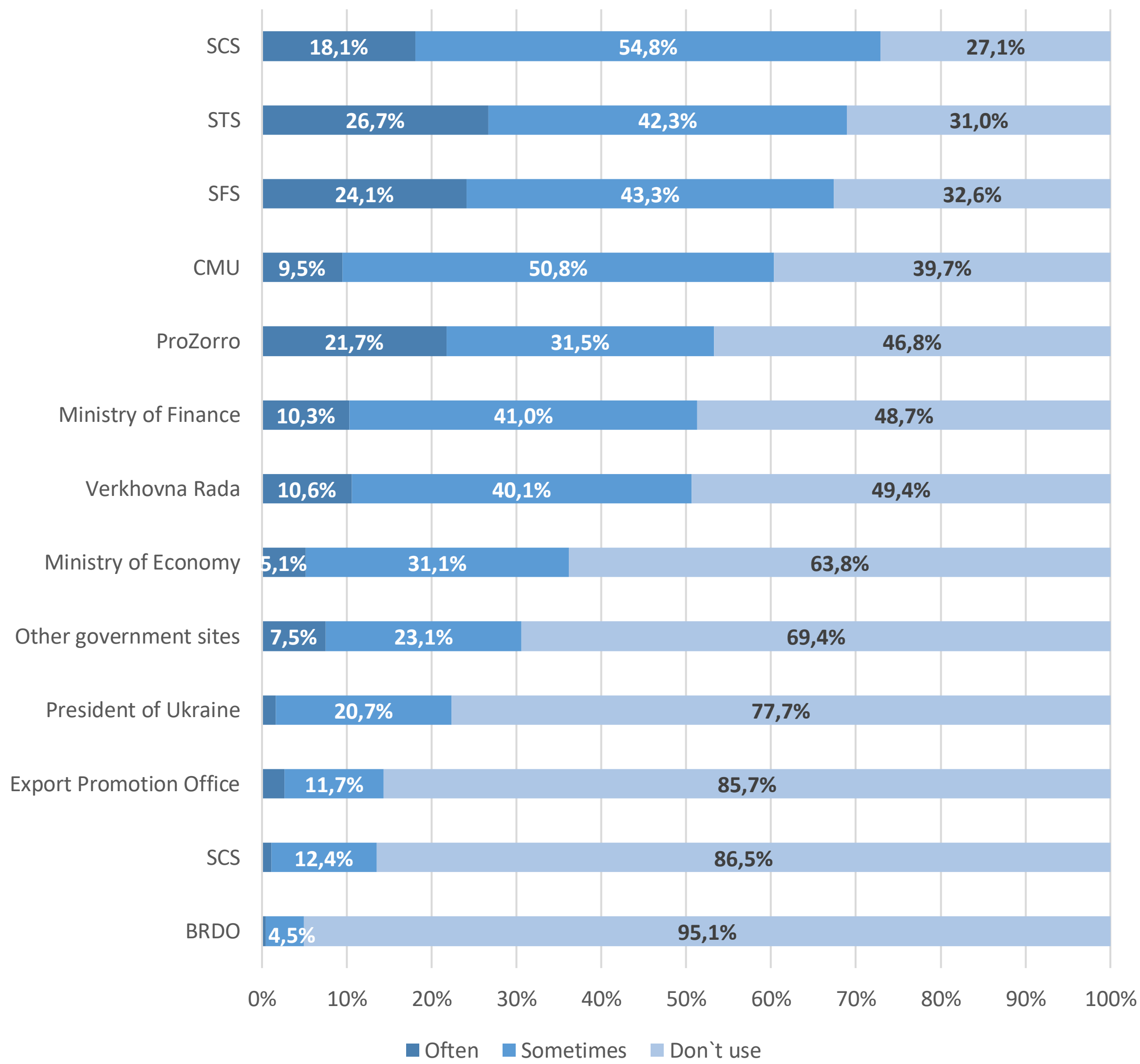
• The results of the study show that exporters and importers most often use the websites of the State Customs Service (SCS) and the State Tax Service (STS).

• At the same time, the least popular are the websites of the State Regulatory Service (SRS) and the Export Promotion Office.

• Large and medium-sized businesses are more likely to use most government websites.

• ProZorro is more popular with small and micro businesses

Fig. 26. Use of government sites among those who are aware of them



6. The role of business associations

6.1. Membership in business associations

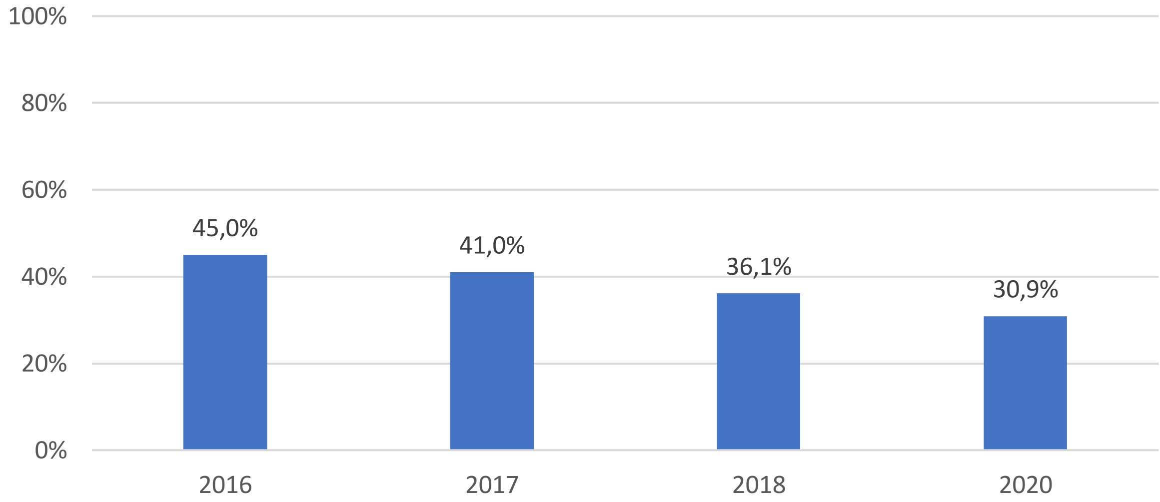
Businesses were asked whether they were members of at least one business association, including chambers of commerce, employers' unions, small business unions, and so on.

• According to the results, in 2020 almost a third (30.9%) of enterprises engaged in foreign trade were members of at least one business association.

• The share of enterprises that are members of business associations decreased during each wave of the survey. Compared to 2016, the share of enterprises that are members of business associations decreased by a third.

• Exporters and importers are more active in business associations than other companies. According to the results of the USAID Municipal Competitiveness Index 2019/2020, 11.5% of all companies were members of business associations[6].

Fig. 27. Membership in business associations by years, % of respondents

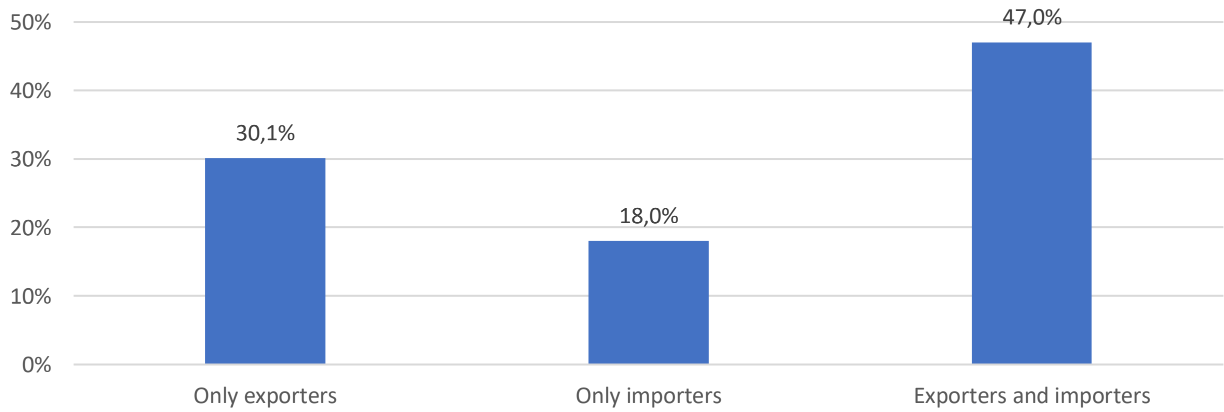


• In 2020, almost a third (30.9%) of enterprises engaged in foreign trade were members of at least one business association, including chambers of commerce and industry, employers' unions, unions of small enterprises, etc.

• The probability of membership in business associations increases with the size of the enterprise.

• Industrial enterprises are most often members of business associations: almost every second respondent.

Fig. 28. Membership in business associations, by type of foreign trade, (% of respondents)



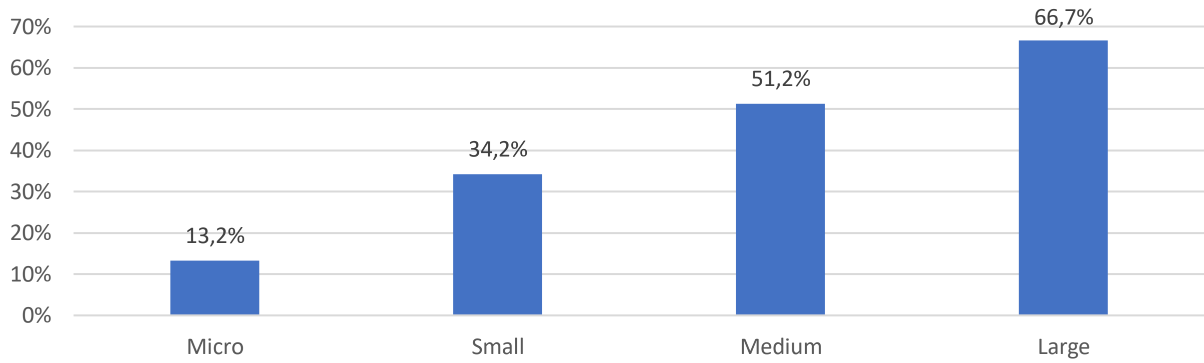
[6] Municipal Competitiveness Index 2019/2020, Kyiv 2020, http://www.ier.com.ua/ua/mci/Report_19-20

• Enterprises that combine exports and imports are more likely to be members of business associations (every second respondent). At the same time, only one in five importers and one in three exporters are members of business associations.

• As the size of the enterprise increases, the share of enterprises that inform about membership in business associations increases. For example, only 13.2% of micro-enterprises and 66.7% of large ones are members of business associations.

• Industrial enterprises are members of business associations several times more often than enterprises of other sectors.

Fig. 29. Membership in business associations, by size of enterprises, (% of respondents)

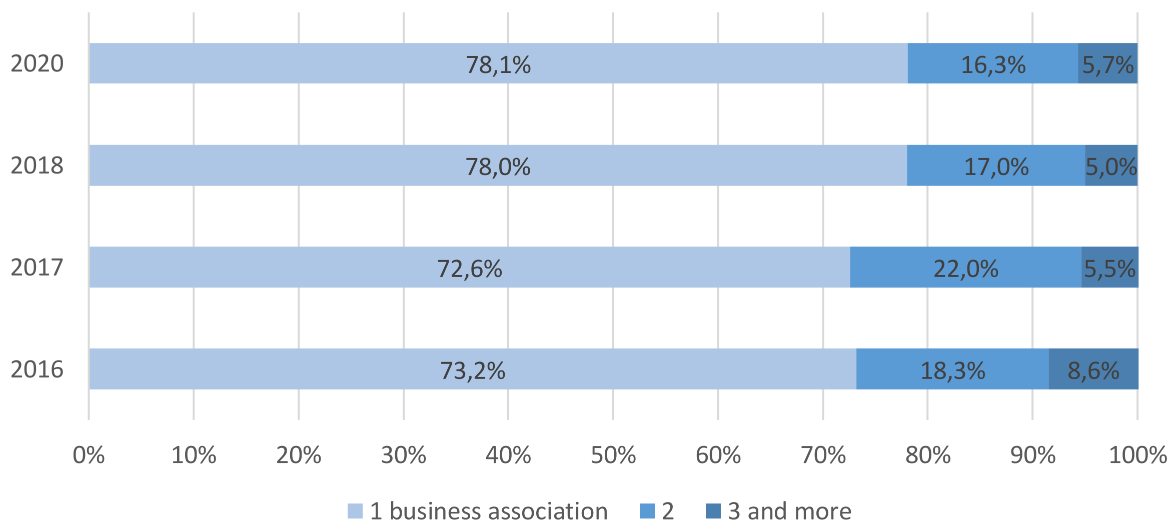


• Most companies are involved in only one business association, including chambers of commerce, employers' unions, small businesses, etc. (as in previous years).

• Compared to 2016, enterprises engaged in foreign trade are more often members of only one business association.

•Exporters participate in an average of 1-2 associations, while importers (both those who import only and those who combine exports and imports, are members of an average of 3 or more business associations.

Fig. 30. Number of business associations in which enterprises participate, by years (% of respondents)

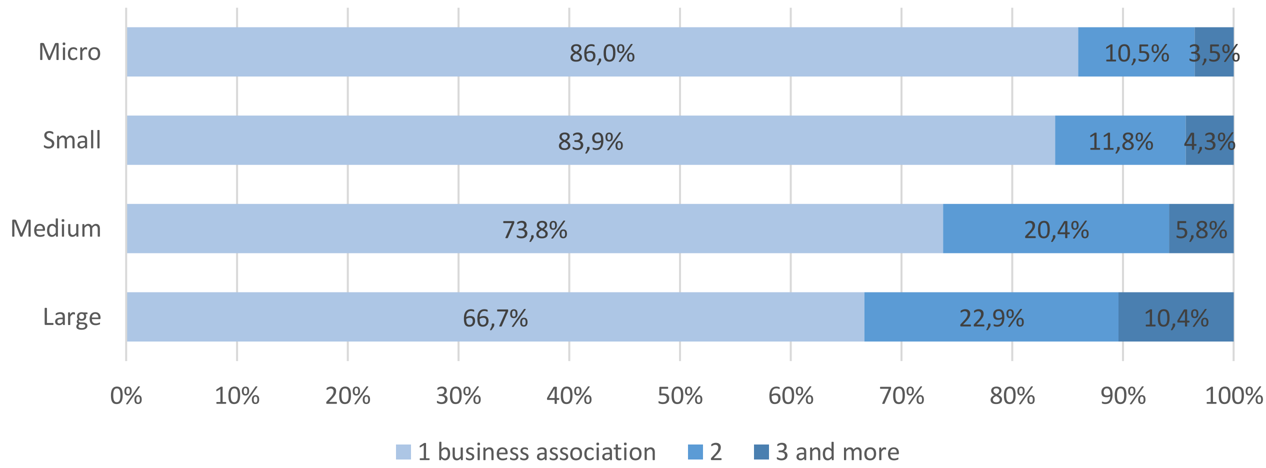


• Larger businesses are more likely to be members of several business associations. In particular, among large enterprises, several business associations include a third of respondents, and among small ones, only one in ten.

• Agricultural enterprises are most often members of more than one business association (a third of respondents in the sector).

• In trade, several business associations include less than a fifth of those surveyed in the sector.

Fig. 31. Number of business associations in which enterprises participate, by size of enterprises (% of respondents)



• The most involved in the activities of business associations are participants in foreign economic activity of Zakarpattia (67.9%) and Kherson (66.7%) regions (two thirds of respondents). However, the results show that in most regions the figure does not exceed 40%.

• Enterprises in Khmelnytskyi region (17.2%), Mykolaiv region (21.1%) and the city of Kyiv (21.6%) are the least active in the activities of business associations.

6.2. Willingness to pay for the services of business associations

• Within the survey, in 2020, only 13.2% of respondents said they were not willing to pay for any services.

• In 2018, 29% of enterprises were not ready to pay. However, the list of possible services offered for the answer included twice less answer options. Thus, the growth of the list of possible paid services may increase the willingness of businesses to pay for them.

• Among large enterprises, the highest share of respondents who are not willing to pay for services.

• One third of agricultural enterprises are not ready to pay - the highest rate among sectors.

• Finding new trading partners abroad is the most popular service.

• Export promotion services are more popular than importer services.

• Micro and small businesses are more willing to pay for rights protection and legal advice.

• Large business is more willing to pay for consulting on export and import issues, training and educational programs related to import.

Fig. 32. Share of respondents who are not willing to pay for the services of business associations, by type of foreign trade (% of respondents)

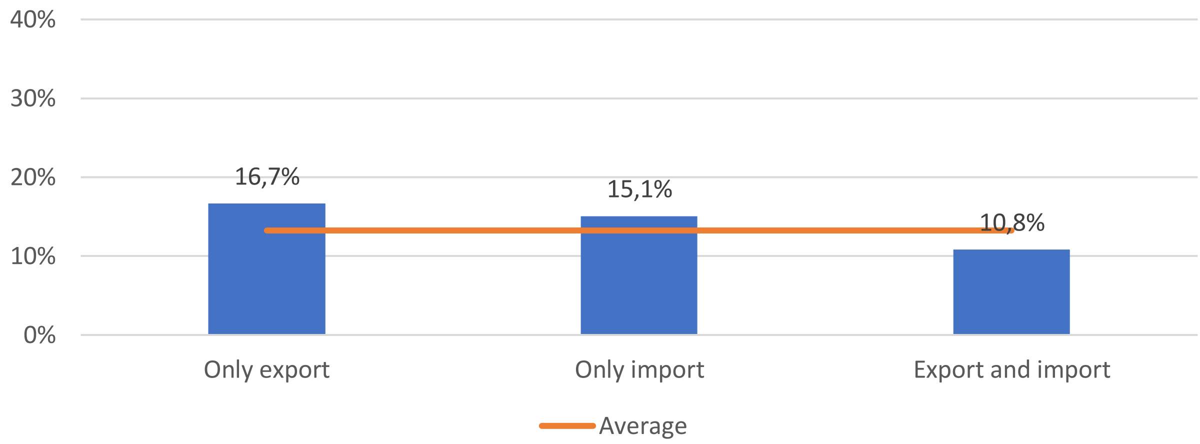


Fig. 33. Services of business associations for which companies are willing to pay (% of respondents)

Survey methodology

It is important to hear the opinion of business engaged in foreign trade (importers and exporters) in order to study the conditions of foreign economic activity in Ukraine, the challenges facing businesses, and the reforms and policy measures that are needed to solve the existing issues. The Institute for Economic Research and Policy Consulting conducts regular monitoring of business opinion on these issues through an annual survey of exporters and importers. This survey provides the "feedback" directly from business representatives who are engaged in import and export and can tell from their experience about the specifics and problems of this activity in Ukraine.

In 2015-2016, the Institute for Economic Research conducted such monitoring for the first time as a part of the Trade Facilitation Dialogue project. This wave of the survey was exploratory in nature and covered 381 businesses engaged in foreign trade. The fieldwork took place in April-August 2015. In the following years, the Institute for Economic Research conducted three more waves of this monitoring as a part of the Trade Facilitation Dialogue project:

- The second wave of the monitoring was conducted in 2016-2017. Information was collected in October-December 2016. 1044 businesses engaged in foreign trade were interviewed.
- The third wave of the monitoring was conducted in 2017-2018. Information was collected in November 2017 — February 2018. 1019 businesses engaged in foreign trade were interviewed.
- The fourth wave of the monitoring was conducted in 2018-2019. Information was collected in October-December 2018. 1012 businesses engaged in foreign trade were interviewed.

The fifth wave of this survey took place in 2020 as a part of the project "Public Initiative "For Transparent and Fair Customs". The fieldwork phase of the survey took place from 14 April to 9 June 2020. 1045 businesses engaged in foreign trade were interviewed.

The fieldwork of the second, the third and the fourth waves of the survey was conducted by GfK Ukraine, and the fieldwork of the fifth wave in 2020 was conducted by Info Sapiens research agency. The samples of the second, the third, the fourth and the fifth waves of the survey are representative in the national dimension.

The 2020 survey was conducted using computer assisted telephone interviews (CATI). All interviews were conducted with business representatives, who can assess the economic situation of the business and the conditions of foreign trade (owners, directors, deputy directors, chief accountants, heads of departments or deputy heads of departments related to exports or imports).

The survey covered companies from all over Ukraine except those located in the temporarily occupied Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, as well as certain areas of Donetsk and Luhansk regions that are not controlled by the Ukrainian government.

The number of observations for each sampling option was monitored at the data analysis stage. If the number of observations was insufficient for statistical analysis, such analysis was not performed and, accordingly, is not presented in the report. For more information on sampling parameters, see the Sampling section.

To carry out this monitoring, the IER developed a standardized questionnaire to survey businesses. This report compares the findings of surveys in different waves on a number of questions, the wording of which in the fifth wave of the survey has not changed compared to the previous waves of the survey in 2016-2018. At the same time, some questions are also compared with the findings of the first wave of the survey in 2015-2016. However, it must be noted that the sample of this wave of the survey was different from the following ones, which may factor in the difference in indicators.