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## DEVELOPMENT OF WHOLESALE FOOD TRADE IN UKRAINE'S DOMESTIC MARKET UNDER MARTIAL LAW

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**Introduction.** *Under martial law, disruptions in food supply logistics, the occupation of significant agricultural land in the South and East, and the destruction of agro-industrial infrastructure have posed severe challenges to Ukraine's food security. In this context, the development of domestic wholesale food trade has become critically important as a mechanism for ensuring stable food distribution and market resilience.*

**Problem Statement.** *Addressing the challenges of food industry sustainability and agricultural raw material processing under martial law is directly linked to the advancement of wholesale food trade. Wholesale trade enterprises play a key role in balancing the interests of all market participants and establishing a modern supply chain system designed to maximize consumer needs.*

**Purpose.** *This study has examined trends in domestic wholesale food trade before and during the war, identifying strategic opportunities for wholesale enterprises to support the industry's sustainable and effective development in the post-war period.*

**Materials and Methods.** *The study is based on statistical data from the State Statistics Service of Ukraine and the Ministry of Finance of Ukraine. The research has employed dialectical, systemic, and historical approaches, alongside methods of theoretical generalization, comparative analysis, and economic mathematical modeling.*

**Results.** *The study has identified key elements of a strategy for the development of wholesale food trade in Ukraine's domestic market, integrating marketing, logistics, and innovation.*

**Conclusions.** *Implementing the proposed strategic elements has been shown to enhance food trade volume and strengthen food security during Ukraine's post-war reconstruction.*

*Keywords:* wholesale trade, food products, domestic market, strategic recruitment, post-war recovery.

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In the context of martial law and the post-war period, identifying key aspects and trends in the development of wholesale food trade is essential for ensuring food security in Ukraine's domestic market. With increasing globalization and evolving consumer preferences, the role of wholesale trade in food production and distribution has gained new significance. The primary challenge lies in how producers, distributors, and other stakeholders in the wholesale supply chain can optimally leverage innovative approaches and strategies to maximize efficiency.

An analysis of research on wholesale trade, including food products [1, 24], has made it possible to propose strategic elements that integrate marketing, logistics, and innovation. The implementation of these elements has been shown to enhance the quality of domestic food products, improve logistics and consumer activity, and ultimately contribute to increased food security and higher food trade turnover during Ukraine's post-war recovery.

This study aims to examine the causes and consequences of these challenges and identify strategic opportunities for wholesale food trade enterprises to ensure the sector's sustainable and effective development. To achieve this goal, the following objectives have been pursued: analyzing trends in wholesale food trade development in Ukraine's domestic market and forecasting its future trajectory; identifying the most significant factors influencing the wholesale food market through PEST analysis; and proposing strategic elements whose implementation has been shown to enhance food security and increase food trade turnover during Ukraine's post-war reconstruction.

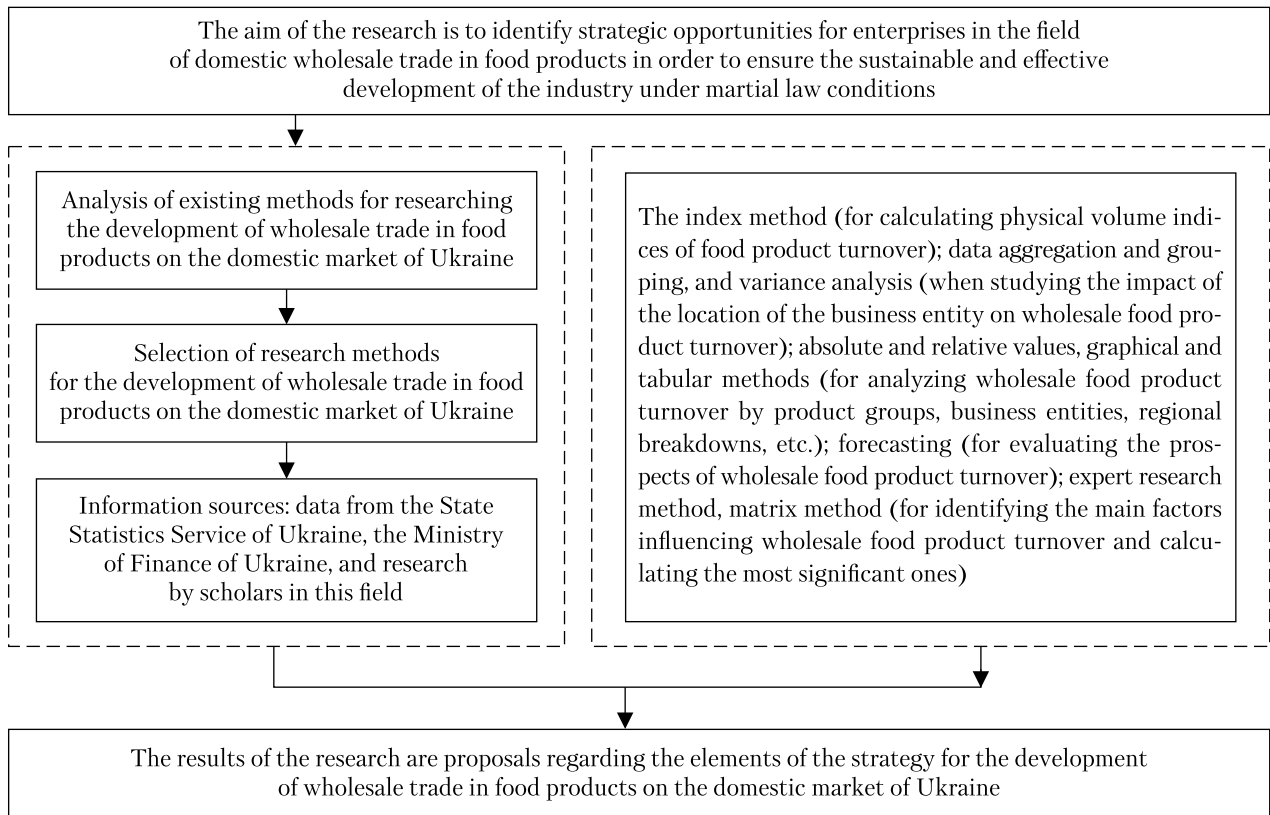
The modern development of wholesale food trade in Ukraine is occurring under conditions of significant complexity and unpredictability, driven by economic and socio-political instability caused by Russian aggression and the imposition of martial law. The war has disrupted established interregional food supply chains, led to shortages of certain food products from the southern and eastern regions, created logistical transport chal-

lenges, and contributed to the collapse of the consumer market due to population displacement and the destruction of trade infrastructure.

Significant challenges have also arisen due to the absence of effective regulatory instruments for state intervention, the instability and unpredictability of the agricultural market, and the insufficient knowledge and experience of entrepreneurs in conducting efficient business operations under martial law. Additionally, a growing trend of direct interactions between producers and the retail sector has been observed. Collectively, these factors have created threats to the profitability of wholesale food trade and posed substantial challenges for its further development in the near future. In light of these complex conditions, it is essential to explore the potential implementation of strategies aimed at adaptation and addressing the challenges faced by the modern wholesale segment of the food market.

In accordance with the study's objectives and research tasks, and considering existing methodologies, a structural-logical framework for analyzing the development of wholesale food trade in Ukraine's domestic market has been proposed. The suggested framework outlines a step-by-step approach to studying the evolution of wholesale food trade in Ukraine's domestic market. The primary sources of information for this research have included statistical reports from the State Statistics Service of Ukraine and the Ministry of Finance of Ukraine, academic studies in this field, as well as the results of the authors' own research and calculations (Fig. 1).

Domestic trade in Ukraine comprises both wholesale and retail sectors. The wholesale trade primarily focuses on the resale of goods to other business entities for use in production processes or for further distribution. This defining criterion reflects the core aspects of wholesale trade, which specializes in the supply and distribution of products to optimize their utilization in production. The predominant focus in this context has been on the resale of goods to meet the needs of production and subsequent trade.



**Fig. 1.** The structural-logical scheme of the research on the development of wholesale trade in food products on the domestic market of Ukraine

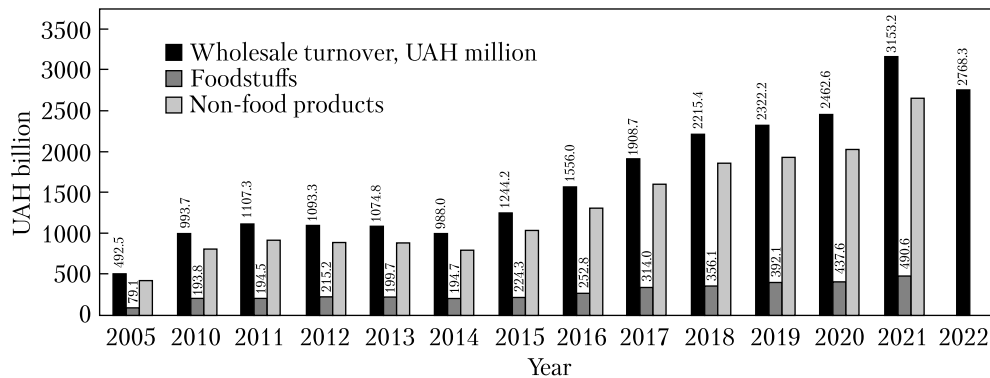
*Source:* prepared by the authors.

Scholars in the field of trade [1–4] have extensively analyzed this phenomenon. The majority of researchers have concentrated on examining issues related exclusively to retail trade. At the same time, numerous studies have indicated a potential trend toward increased monopolization in the national wholesale trade sector. The degree of monopolization has increased in recent years, which, in the long run, has had negative implications for the competitiveness of local trading enterprises [5].

The wholesale trade turnover in Ukraine, along with its regional distribution, has been analyzed based on the classification system defined by the State Statistics Service of Ukraine. This classification serves as a foundation for structuring and systematizing the composition of wholesale trade

in food products and agricultural resources, allowing for a more detailed analysis of wholesale turnover according to specific product categories. This approach has been essential for a comprehensive study of the development of domestic wholesale food trade. The State Statistics Service of Ukraine classifies wholesale trade turnover into food and non-food products. The latter category includes agricultural raw materials such as grains, oilseeds, live animals, and animal feed. In addition to food products, the study of agricultural goods as a primary source for the formation of food products has been considered necessary.

In assessing wholesale trade dynamics, the primary focus has been placed on the quantitative indicator of wholesale trade turnover. This crucial metric defines the volume of market transac-



**Fig. 2.** Dynamics of wholesale trade turnover in Ukraine, 2005–2022

Source: prepared by the authors, based on [6].

tions and has served as a key criterion for analyzing industry development. Between 2010 and 2014, wholesale trade turnover remained stable, with no significant fluctuations. However, since 2015, a notable and rapid increase in these figures has been observed. During this period, the total wholesale trade turnover has increased nearly 6.5 times, rising from UAH 492.5 billion in 2005 to an impressive UAH 3,153.2 billion in 2021. The COVID-19 pandemic has not hindered this growth, as the active expansion of e-commerce and the adaptation of enterprises to emerging challenges through online business models, process optimization, and product range expansion have played a significant role.

It is important to highlight that multiple factors have contributed to this sharp growth after 2015, including economic conditions, shifts in consumer demand, technological advancements, and other market influences. However, the full-scale war has introduced substantial disruptions, leading to a decline in wholesale trade turnover to UAH 2,768.3 billion in 2022. Despite this setback, the figure has remained higher than in 2020 (UAH 2,462.6 billion). Notably, the wholesale turnover of food products has increased 6.2 times (Fig. 2).

The share of food products in wholesale trade turnover averaged 17.6% over the study period, while the proportion of domestically produced food products sold was 74.7%. Regarding agricul-

tural raw materials, despite Russia’s full-scale invasion, Ukraine managed to rank fifth among wheat-exporting countries, third in barley exports, and fourth in corn exports even during the 2021/2022 marketing year. However, in 2022, Ukraine experienced a 30% decline in wheat production (a decrease of 8 million tons) and a 17% reduction in barley output (a loss of 1.1 million tons). By the fall of 2022, only 61% of the usual wheat acreage and 69% of the barley acreage had been sown, indicating a significant decline in the potential of Ukraine’s agricultural sector [7]. This reduction resulted from the loss of cultivated land in regions affected by active hostilities or temporary occupation, posing a serious threat to food security [8].

To analyze the dynamics of wholesale food trade turnover amid economic instability, it is essential to account for the impact of inflationary processes during the studied period. To gain a more accurate understanding of real changes, we employed physical volume indices of trade turnover, calculated at constant prices. These indices reflect the real year-over-year growth in trade volumes, adjusting for price fluctuations. This approach eliminates the distorting effect of inflation-driven price changes, which can significantly impact growth or decline indicators. By considering physical volume indices, researchers obtain a clearer picture of the actual dynamics of wholesale trade turnover, allowing for a more precise assessment

of economic turbulence in this sector. For this purpose, the approach [9] is applied:

$$I_q = \frac{\sum p_0 q_1}{\sum p_0 q_0}, \quad (1)$$

where  $I_q$  is the physical wholesale trade turnover index;  $\sum p_0 q_1$  is the total wholesale turnover for the reporting period, adjusted to base period prices;  $\sum p_0 q_0$  is the actual wholesale trade turnover for the base period.

When sales are measured in monetary units, the physical volume index of wholesale trade turnover is calculated using individual price indices of representative goods [9]:

$$I_p = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n \frac{1}{I_p} q_{i1} p_{i1}}{\sum_{i=1}^n q_{i0} p_{i0}}, \quad (2)$$

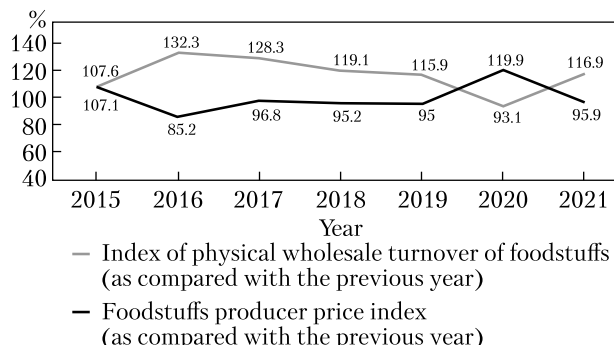
where  $I_p = p_{i1}/p_{i0}$  is the individual index of the  $i$ -th good.

To calculate the physical wholesale trade turnover index for food products in wholesale trade enterprises over a given year, the total wholesale trade turnover of food products, computed based on the trade structure of the reporting year, must be adjusted to the prices of the base year. This requires dividing the wholesale trade turnover volume of food products by the individual price index of food products.

The annual physical wholesale trade turnover index is determined by dividing the wholesale trade turnover volume of the reporting period, expressed in base-period prices, by the wholesale trade turnover volume of the base period.

Using the data [6, 10] and methodology [9], we calculate the physical wholesale trade turnover index for food products in wholesale trade enterprises from 2015 to 2021. Based on the study results, we present a graphical representation of the dynamics of the physical volume index of wholesale trade turnover for food products alongside their respective price indices (Fig. 3).

During the period 2015–2021, there was a consistent upward trend in the wholesale trade turnover of food products, driven by an impressive



**Fig. 3.** Dynamics of the index of physical wholesale trade turnover of food products and their price indices (as compared with the previous year), %

Source: prepared by the authors, based on [6, 10].

2.2-fold increase in the nominal value of this indicator, reaching 490.6 billion UAH in the reporting year (see Fig. 2). While inflation has influenced the overall increase in the value of food products sold, it is not the decisive factor. For instance, compared to the previous year (2020), the turnover index increased by 116.9%, whereas the producer price index for food products rose by only 95.9% (see Fig. 3). This has indicated that rising prices do not have a decisive impact on the dynamics of wholesale trade turnover, indicating a high level of demand for food products. This trend has been observed in most years, except for 2020. Such an approach allows us to analyze wholesale trade turnover from the perspective of stable demand, which is not solely dependent on inflationary influences.

Based on the presented analytical data, it can be concluded that the wholesale-intermediary sector plays a key and continuously growing role in the supply chain of food products from producers to consumers. The increase in the nominal volume of wholesale trade turnover highlights the strengthening role and significance of wholesale intermediaries in ensuring the efficiency of this process.

The dynamics of wholesale trade turnover growth, even when accounting for inflationary factors, underscore the stable demand for wholesale services in the food trade sector. This sustained trend confirms the necessity and effectiveness

of the wholesale-intermediary sector in managing the supply and distribution of food products. Therefore, the development of the wholesale-intermediary sector is strategically crucial for ensuring the stable and efficient movement of food products in the market, based on objective economic factors.

As previously mentioned, the fundamental performance indicator for analyzing and determining the dynamics of wholesale trade, including at the regional level, is the volume of wholesale trade turnover. This indicator serves as a critical benchmark for assessing the overall condition and trends in the industry. It is important

**Table 1. Volume and Structure of Wholesale Foodstuff Turnover Through the Regions of Ukraine**

Region	Year						Difference between 2021 and 2017, +/-	Ratio of 2021 to 2017, %
	2017		2019		2021			
	UAH billion	%	UAH billion	%	UAH billion	%		
Vynnytsia Oblast	2.9	0.9	3.1	0.8	3.4	0.7	0.5	117.2
Volhynian Oblast	7.5	2.4	9	2.3	13.1	2.7	5.6	174.7
Dnipropetrovsk Oblast	11.6	3.7	18.8	4.8	22.2	4.5	10.6	191.4
Donetsk Oblast	4.7	1.5	6.1	1.6	7	1.4	2.3	148.9
Zhytomyr Oblast	2	0.6	2.8	0.7	3.3	0.7	1.3	165.0
Zakarpattia Oblast	2.1	0.7	2.5	0.6	4	0.8	1.9	190.5
Zaporizhzhia Oblast	4.7	1.5	7.5	1.9	8.4	1.7	3.7	178.7
Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast	3.4	1.1	5.6	1.4	7.1	1.5	3.7	208.8
Kyiv Oblast	24.3	7.8	44.6	11.4	64.7	13.2	40.4	266.3
Kirovohrad Oblast	3.4	1.1	3.9	1	8.1	1.6	4.7	238.2
Luhansk Oblast	1	0.3	1.6	0.4	1.3	0.3	0.3	130.0
Lviv Oblast	12.5	4	18.6	4.7	25.9	5.3	13.4	207.2
Mykolaiv Oblast	2.5	0.8	3	0.8	3.7	0.8	1.2	148.0
Odesa Oblast	42.1	13.4	48.8	12.5	59.5	12.1	17.4	141.3
Poltava Oblast	4	1.3	5.6	1.4	4.6	0.9	0.6	115.0
Rivne Oblast	2.9	0.9	3.9	1	5	1	2.1	172.4
Sumy Oblast	4.2	1.3	5	1.3	1.6	0.3	-2.6	38.1
Ternopil Oblast	1	0.3	2.1	0.5	2.8	0.6	1.8	280.0
Kharkiv Oblast	11.6	3.7	12.2	3.1	16.5	3.4	4.9	142.2
Kherson Oblast	3.1	1	3	0.8	2.9	0.6	-0.2	93.5
Khmelnyskyi Oblast	2.7	0.9	2.5	0.6	3	0.6	0.3	111.1
Cherkasy Oblast	2.7	0.9	4.3	1.1	6.9	1.4	4.2	255.6
Chernivtsi Oblast	2.6	0.8	3.8	1	4.5	0.9	1.9	173.1
Chernihiv Oblast	1.9	0.6	1.7	0.4	2	0.4	0.1	105.3
Kyiv	152.4	48.5	172	43.9	208.9	42.6	56.5	137.1
Ukraine	314	100	392.1	100	490.6	100	176.6	156.2

Source: calculated by the authors, based on [6].

to recognize that wholesale trade turnover reflects not only the volume of trade but also the variety of goods and services circulating in the market. Continuous monitoring of this indicator provides deep insights into market dynamics and helps identify potential risks or opportunities for the further development of the sector.

Analyzing wholesale trade turnover at the regional level is essential for understanding the specific characteristics of local markets and for making balanced strategic decisions regarding the development and optimization of business processes in wholesale trade. This approach contributes to the stability and efficiency of the sector, which is critical for the sustainable and successful operation of the wholesale industry.

The growth of wholesale trade turnover for food products occurred across all regions of Ukraine, but its structure remains heterogeneous. During the period 2017–2021, the leading position was held by Kyiv (45.1% on average), Odesa Oblast (12.9%), and Kyiv Oblast (10.9%). A significant decline was observed in Sumy region, which can be attributed to the decline in gross agricultural production [6]. This reduction led to lower supply volumes, a decrease in product assortment, price instability, and export-oriented priorities. Consequently, the decline in production in the region had a significant impact on the wholesale trade turnover of food products (see Table 1).

To investigate the impact of the location of wholesale trade enterprises on the volume and structure of wholesale trade turnover for food products, a dispersion analysis was conducted. The calculations were performed using the following Sturges formulas [11]:

$$n = 1 + 2.322 \lg N, \quad (3)$$

where  $N$  is the sample size,  $n$  is the number of groups (intervals).

For the population as a whole, the variation of the characteristic under the influence of other factors is described by the mean within-group variance. There is a relationship between the total variance  $\sigma_0^2$ , the mean within-group variance  $\bar{\sigma}^2$

and the between-group variance  $\delta^2$  known as the variance decomposition rule (the law of total variance). According to this rule, the total variance is equal to the sum of the mean within-group variance and the between-group variance [11]:

$$\sigma_0^2 = \bar{\sigma}^2 + \delta^2. \quad (4)$$

The strength of the relationship is characterized by the comparison of the between-group variance with the total variance.

The results of the variance analysis enabled the examination of the characteristics of wholesale turnover volumes across regional clusters of Ukraine by categorizing them into four clusters. Based on the calculations, it can be concluded that, on average, for the period 2017–2021, the volume of wholesale turnover of food products was determined by the location of the economic entity by 96.3%, while only 3.7% was influenced by other factors. The summarized calculations are presented in Table 2.

The primary factor influencing the development of wholesale trade in food products is food consumption by the population. The conducted studies [12] confirm the process of  $\beta$ -convergence in per capita consumption across all food groups. Furthermore, spatial interactions between regions significantly impact this convergence process, with neighboring regions exerting a positive effect on food consumption in a given region.

To examine the key trends in the development of domestic wholesale trade in food products as a means of ensuring food security, a detailed analysis of the dynamics of the commodity structure of wholesale turnover in enterprises engaged in wholesale trade of food products and agricultural commodities should be conducted, as reflected in Table 3.

It is considered essential to study not only food products but also agricultural commodities, as they serve as the primary source for food production. This approach allows for the identification of general trends in the wholesale food sector and enables a more in-depth investigation of specific factors shaping the dynamics of the analyzed commodities.

Analyzing these data allows for the identification of key food products that exhibit significant growth in trade volumes, as well as those that

**Table 2. Features of the Wholesale Trade Turnover by Regional Clusters of Ukraine**

Region	Wholesale turnover, UAH billion	$(x_i - \bar{x})$	$(\bar{x}_i - \bar{x})^2 f_i$	$(x_i - \bar{x}_i)^2$
2021				
Total, 1st cluster	157.3	4336.9	3418.8	918.1
Total, 2nd cluster	124.2	3623.3	3609.8	13.5
Total, 3rd cluster	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total, 4th cluster	208.9	35828.4	35828.4	0.0
Total for Ukraine	490.4	43788.6	42857.0	931.6
2020				
Total, 1st cluster	183.6	4367.3	2085.1	2282.2
Total, 2nd cluster	54.6	1376.1	1376.1	0.0
Total, 3rd cluster	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total, 4th cluster	199.4	33086.2	33086.2	0.0
Total for Ukraine	437.6	38829.5	36547.4	2282.2
2019				
Total, 1st cluster	126.6	2670.4	2167.3	503.1
Total, 2nd cluster	93.4	1933.3	1924.5	8.8
Total, 3rd cluster	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total, 4th cluster	172.0	24435.9	24435.9	0.0
Total for Ukraine	392.0	29039.6	28527.7	511.9
2018				
Total, 1st cluster	147.0	2910.5	1419.7	1490.7
Total, 2nd cluster	49.2	1221.6	1221.6	0.0
Total, 3rd cluster	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total, 4th cluster	160.0	21243.6	21243.6	0.0
Total for Ukraine	356.2	25375.7	23885.0	1490.7
2017				
Total, 1st cluster	119.3	1869.9	1247.6	622.3
Total, 2nd cluster	42.1	873.1	873.1	0.0
Total, 3rd cluster	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total, 4th cluster	152.4	19557.5	19557.5	0.0
Total for Ukraine	313.8	22300.4	21678.2	622.3

Source: calculated by the authors, based on [6].

may require additional strategies to stimulate sales. Furthermore, examining the dynamics of individual food product categories helps identify potential market niches and determine the factors influencing their competitiveness.

The results of the conducted calculations can serve as a scientifically grounded basis for developing wholesale trade strategies aimed at optimizing the product assortment, enhancing supply chain efficiency, and ensuring alignment with market demand.

The presented data convincingly indicate a positive trend in the turnover of most product categories within the wholesale trade sector for food products. Notably, there has been an impressive increase in trade volumes at wholesale enterprises, particularly in the following categories: processed meat and meat products (2.7 times), bakery and confectionery flour products (2.9 times), fish, crustaceans, and mollusks (2.2 times), processed fruits and vegetables (2.5 times), fresh fruits and vegetables (2.2 times), and cereals (2 times). These high growth rates reflect not only an increase in trade volumes but also the effectiveness of development strategies within these market segments. The obtained data can serve as a foundation for further research on the factors contributing to the success of these product categories and for assessing consumer demand for innovative products.

On the other hand, the decline in the turnover of edible oils and fats, as well as agricultural raw materials and live animals, requires attention. This trend may serve as a stimulus for further analysis of the reasons behind this downturn and the development of strategies to restore competitiveness in these segments.

The distribution system of products from the manufacturer to the end consumer can involve several intermediary stages, while sales channels through wholesalers and their sources of stock formation can be diverse. These include intra-system trade exchanges, interregional transactions, and export-import operations. Regarding the latter, it is important to note that in recent years,

the share of foreign goods in the wholesale turnover of food products has increased (see Table 3). This trend suggests intensive international trade relations and growing global integration in the wholesale trade of food products. The increasing presence of foreign goods in the wholesale sector underscores the importance of efficient supply chain and distribution management to achieve

competitive advantages in the context of market globalization. However, certain product groups have experienced both absolute and relative declines in imports due to competition from other importers, as well as ongoing import substitution processes [13].

The economic situation in Ukraine's wholesale food trade sector is largely shaped by the absence

**Table 3. The Product Structure of Wholesale Trade Turnover in Wholesalers of Food Products**

Indicator	Year						Difference between 2021 and 2017, +/-	Ratio of 2021 to 2017, %
	2017		2019		2021			
	UAH billion	% of Ukrainian products	UAH billion	% of Ukrainian products	UAH billion	% of Ukrainian products		
Food products	224.5	68.2	283.1	66.4	353.9	62.3	129.4	157.6
	Including:							
Meat and meat products	18.9	92.1	40.6	93.8	50.2	94.8	31.3	265.6
Dairy products	17.2	83.1	22.3	84.3	26.8	70.9	9.6	155.8
Eggs	1.3	100.0	2.1	100.0	2.5	100.0	1.2	192.3
Edible oils and fats	22.4	81.7	17.4	89.7	20.5	94.1	-1.9	91.5
Alcoholic beverages	29.5	74.2	40.5	67.4	47.7	63.9	18.2	161.7
Non-alcoholic beverages.	12.2	76.2	18.8	71.3	22.4	79.9	10.2	183.6
Bakery and flour-based confectionery products	2.9	96.6	4.2	97.6	8.3	92.8	5.4	286.2
Sugar	9.5	92.6	5.3	81.0	6.8	58.8	-2.7	71.6
Sugar confectionery and chocolate	21.0	69.5	24.6	79.2	27.0	63.3	6.0	128.6
Coffee, tea, cocoa, and spices	17.5	55.4	16.7	67.9	15.2	44.7	-2.3	86.9
Fish, crustaceans, and mollusks	8.0	22.5	13.0	56.9	17.2	23.8	9.2	215.0
Processed fruits and vegetables	2.4	58.3	4.4	20.0	5.9	62.7	3.5	245.8
Fresh fruits and vegetables	9.1	35.2	12.9	63.6	20.4	27.5	11.3	224.2
Other foodstuffs	52.7	53.7	60.1	35.7	83.1	41.8	30.4	157.7
Agricultural products	174.1	84.3	215.1	47.4	312.4	87.4	138.3	179.4
	Including:							
Cereals	109.8	90.7	150.0	91.7	219.9	91.0	110.1	200.3
Seeds and oilseeds	41.0	70.2	48.4	70.7	69.1	82.6	28.1	168.5
Animal feed	6.2	40.3	6.5	53.8	9.6	52.1	3.4	154.8
Other agricultural raw materials and live animals	17.1	93.0	10.2	72.5	13.8	77.5	-3.3	80.7

Source: calculated by the authors, based on [6].

\* The Report does not contain data on the wholesale turnover of tobacco goods, since the authors do not consider them to be a foodstuff.

of significant transformations, despite the presence of a large number of enterprises. This results in difficulties in controlling product flows due to the growing number of intermediary links in the supply chain, leading to increased final product prices and a shortage of adequate services.

The number and structure of wholesale food trade entities by product groups in 2017–2021 are presented in Table 4. Wholesale trade in food raw materials plays a crucial role, contributing to the food security of both regions and the country as a whole. Among business entities, wholesalers specializing in grain, unprocessed tobacco, seeds, and animal feed hold the most significant posi-

tion, accounting for 19–22% of the total, with their numbers remaining relatively stable throughout the period. The second-largest category, with a 16–17% share, consists of wholesalers dealing in fruits and vegetables. In third place, with a share of 12–14%, are entities engaged in non-specialized wholesale trade of food products, beverages, and tobacco.

It should be noted that the structure has remained stable, and the diversity of business entities in this segment allows the industry to function properly.

The multi-tiered resale system in the wholesale trade of food products plays a crucial role in

**Table 4. The Number and Structure of Wholesalers of Food Products by Product Groups**

Specialization	Year						Difference between 2021 and 2017, +/-	Ratio of 2021 to 2017, %
	2017		2019		2021			
	Number of companies	%	Number of companies	%	Number of companies	%		
Wholesale trade in agricultural raw materials and live animals	7643	27	7834	27	7109	27	-534	93
Including:								
Wholesale trade in grain, unprocessed tobacco, seeds, and animal feed	6086	21	6157	21	5702	22	-384	94
Wholesale trade in live animals	268	1	338	1	213	1	-55	79
Wholesale trade in food products, beverages, and tobacco products	20744	73	21457	73	19290	73	-1454	93
Including:								
Wholesale trade in fruits and vegetables	4806	17	4992	17	4454	17	-352	93
Wholesale trade in meat and meat products	2394	8	2533	9	2390	9	-4	100
Wholesale trade in dairy products, eggs, edible oils, and fats	2145	8	2331	8	2177	8	32	101
Wholesale trade in beverages	996	4	978	3	949	4	-47	95
Wholesale trade in sugar, chocolate, and confectionery products	1602	6	1669	6	1487	6	-115	93
Wholesale trade in coffee, tea, cocoa, and spices	1540	5	1777	6	1657	6	117	108
Wholesale trade in other food products, including fish, crustaceans, and mollusks	3524	12	3394	12	2963	11	-561	84
Non-specialized wholesale trade in food products, beverages, and tobacco products	3687	13	3685	13	3113	12	-574	84
Total wholesale trade in food products	28387	100	29291	100	26399	100	-1988	93

Source: calculated by the authors, based on [6].

ensuring the uninterrupted and efficient supply of goods from producers to final buyers. This system reflects the number of sequential stages a product goes through before reaching the end consumer. A high level of resale tiers may indicate the presence of multiple intermediaries and trading stages, which can impact prices and delivery time. Reducing the number of tiers can contribute to supply chain optimization, cost reduction, and improved responsiveness to market changes. The multi-tiered resale system in wholesale food trade is presented in Table 5.

Among food products, there has been an increase in the resale tiers for sugar, which has risen 1.4 times over the specified period. For other food products, either the growth is less significant or a decline in the studied indicator is observed.

A third-degree polynomial is used to calculate the forecast for wholesale trade in food products up to 2025 [11]:

$$y = a_0 + a_1x + a_2x^2 + a_3x^3, \quad (5)$$

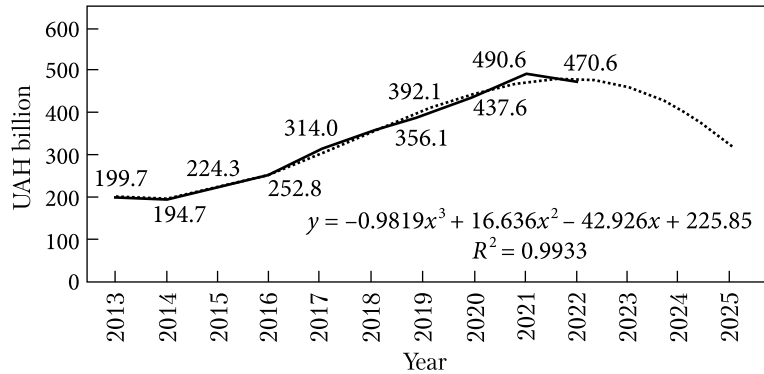
where  $a_0, a_1, a_2, a_3$  are the equation parameters;  $x$  is the period number.

According to the conducted research using Eq. 5, the forecast for wholesale trade in food products indicates a downward trend (Fig. 4). The projection was calculated based on the trend of a third-degree polynomial function, as it demonstrated the highest level of statistical significance (99.33%). This decline is expected to occur if all influencing factors remain unchanged; therefore, it is crucial to identify the key determinants and propose a strategic framework for the development of wholesale trade in food products within

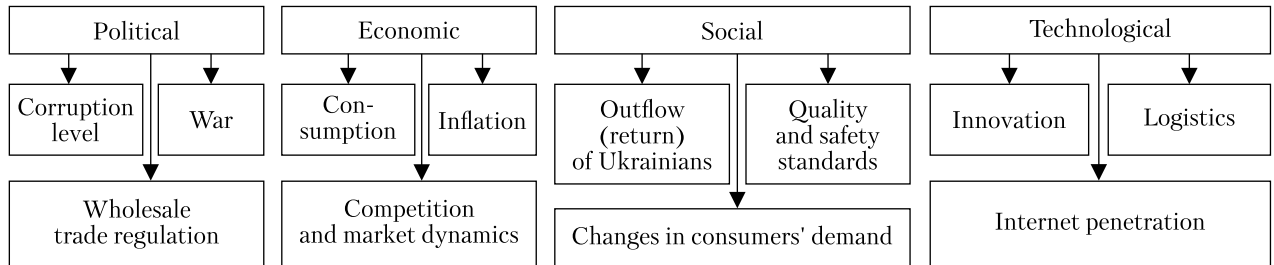
Table 5. Resale Chain in Wholesale Trade of Food Products, %

Indicator	Year					
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2021 to 2017
Meat and meat products	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.1	84.6
Dairy products	2.3	2.6	2.4	2.5	2.5	108.7
Eggs	4.9	3.4	3.4	3.3	4.2	85.7
Edible oils and fats	2.2	2.2	2.6	3.2	2.2	100.0
Alcoholic beverages	1.7	1.5	1.7	1.7	1.9	111.8
Mineral waters and non-alcoholic beverages, fruit and vegetable juices	2.7	2.5	2.7	2.5	2.8	103.7
Bakery and flour-based confectionery products	2.0	2.0	1.8	1.4	1.9	95.0
Sugar	1.4	1.7	2.1	2.1	2.0	142.9
Sugar confectionery and chocolate	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.8	1.8	94.7
Coffee, tea, cocoa, and spices	2.1	2.2	2.4	2.1	1.9	90.5
Fish, crustaceans, and mollusks	3.4	2.6	2.4	2.6	2.2	64.7
Processed fruits and vegetables	2.1	2.3	2.1	1.9	2.3	109.5
Fresh fruits and vegetables	—	2.6	1.9	2.5	2.6	—
Other foodstuffs	2.6	2.5	2.0	2.0	2.3	88.5
Cereals	3.0	2.8	4.4	3.8	3.1	103.3
Seeds and oilseeds	3.0	2.8	3.1	3.0	2.5	83.3
Animal feed	1.7	1.9	1.8	1.7	1.8	105.9
Other agricultural raw materials and live animals	1.5	1.3	2.1	2.0	1.7	113.3

Source: authors' calculations, based on [6].



**Fig. 4.** Forecast of wholesale trade in food products until 2025, UAH billion  
 Source: authors' calculations.



**Fig. 5.** Factors influencing the development of wholesale trade in food products  
 Source: prepared by the authors.

Ukraine’s domestic market to mitigate or prevent the negative forecast.

An essential aspect of diagnosing wholesale trade in food products, given the restricted availability of information during wartime, is the assessment of the most significant factors affecting the industry. The development of wholesale trade in food products is influenced by a variety of factors, including economic, political, social, and technological aspects. Based on the research findings and the analyzed determinants of domestic wholesale trade in food products as a means of ensuring food security, key influencing factors have been identified (Fig. 5).

The level of corruption can significantly impact the development of wholesale trade in food products in Ukraine’s domestic market, leading to negative consequences such as reduced competitiveness of businesses, increased food prices, de-

teriorating product quality, slowed innovation, decreased investment, and other adverse effects. Changes in legislation and regulatory frameworks, particularly concerning labeling, packaging, and environmental standards, can influence the operations of wholesale food traders. The ongoing Russia-Ukraine war remains a critical factor negatively affecting all domestic industries and even impacting other countries.

Shifts in consumer activity levels directly affect the wholesale turnover of food products. Declining or increasing consumer incomes can determine their spending on wholesale goods. The level of competition in the wholesale trade sector influences pricing strategies, innovation, and marketing approaches adopted by companies. Inflation levels play a crucial role in price dynamics, changes in consumer behavior, market stability, and the need for businesses to rapidly

adapt, optimize costs, and refine supply chain management strategies.

The migration trends of Ukrainians, whether in terms of emigration or repatriation, will have a significant impact on the domestic wholesale food market, as an increase in the number of consumers leads to market expansion. Rising quality and safety standards for food products play a key role in wholesale trade development. Compliance with these standards enhances consumer trust and supports brand competitiveness. Evolving consumer preferences – such as demand for organic, functional, or locally sourced products – affect the assortment and sales volumes in the wholesale sector.

The integration of new technologies in food production, storage, and transportation can enhance supply chain efficiency and improve product quality. The effectiveness of logistics processes in wholesale trade is critical; ensuring fast and safe product transportation directly impacts delivery time

and overall costs. The expansion of internet penetration in the country accelerates the adoption of technological innovations and enhances logistical efficiency.

By synthesizing these factors and understanding their interconnections, wholesale traders can develop strategies that foster sustainable and innovative growth amid constant market changes.

The PEST analysis method is widely used to assess external factors, particularly in the political, economic, social, and technological domains. This approach is highly relevant for analyzing the development of wholesale trade in food products in Ukraine's domestic market (Table 6). Conducting research using PEST analysis helps identify the most influential factors affecting the industry and formulate strategic recommendations for its development.

The conducted study identified the most significant political factors affecting the wholesale

Table 6. PEST-Analysis of Wholesale Trade in Food Products in the Domestic Market of Ukraine

Factor	Effect of the factor	Expert evaluation					Average value	Weight-adjusted value
		1	2	3	4	5		
Political factors								
Corruption level	3	4	3	4	4	3	3.6	0.36
Wholesale regulation	2	5	4	3	4	2	3.6	0.24
Russia-Ukraine war	3	5	3	4	3	4	3.8	0.38
Economic factors								
Consumption	3	4	5	5	4	4	4.4	0.44
Inflation	2	4	2	5	3	3	3.4	0.23
Competition and market dynamics	2	3	3	4	5	2	3.4	0.23
Social factors								
Outflow (return) of Ukrainians	3	2	3	3	4	3	3	0.30
Quality and safety standards	2	4	5	5	4	4	4.4	0.29
Changes in consumer demand	2	4	4	4	4	4	4	0.27
Technological factors								
Innovation in wholesale trade	3	4	5	2	3	2	3.2	0.32
Internet penetration	2	4	4	3	3	3	3.4	0.23
Logistics	3	3	3	5	4	3	3.6	0.36

Source: calculated by the authors.

trade of food products, namely the Russia-Ukraine war and the level of corruption. The ongoing military conflict has already triggered several issues, including severe disruptions in supply chains, deteriorating payment discipline, and declining consumer purchasing power. Additionally, there are objective risks of further demand contraction for certain categories of food products due to consumers' loss of purchasing capacity. This could result in excess inventory and increased storage costs. Another substantial risk lies in the potential for missile and bomb attacks on logistics infrastructure in the event of a prolonged war, further complicating supply chain processes and increasing transportation costs.

The level of corruption in Ukraine exacerbates these challenges, impacting all aspects of wholesale trade in food products. However, it is worth noting that in 2023, Ukraine improved its Corruption Perceptions Index score by three points, reaching 36 out of 100 [14].

Furthermore, the PEST analysis identified the most critical economic, social, and technological factors among those examined: consumer activity, migration trends of Ukrainians (both emigration and return), quality and safety standards, changes in consumer demand, technological innovations in wholesale trade, and logistics. Among all factors, and particularly among economic factors, consumer activity received the highest weighted score in the PEST analysis of Ukraine's domestic wholesale food market. The key determinants of consumer activity include consumption expenditures, the number of consumers, the Consumer Price Index, and household incomes [15].

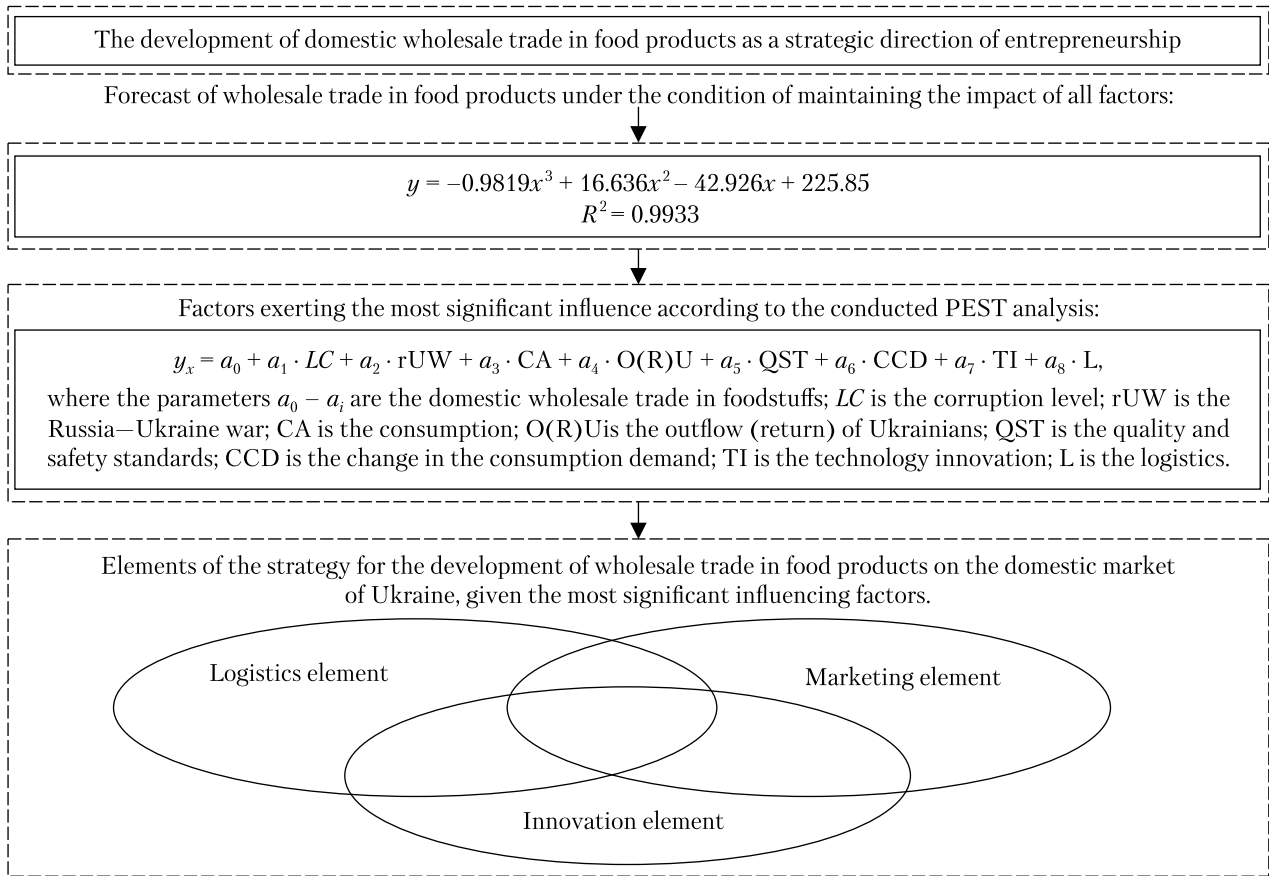
Among social factors, the migration trends of Ukrainians received the highest weighted score, closely linked to the most significant factor mentioned above. These two factors have contributed to the decline in wholesale food trade in Ukraine's domestic market during the Russia-Ukraine war due to population outflow and the resulting drop in consumer activity. However, they are expected to drive the growth of wholesale trade during Ukraine's post-war reconstruction.

Among technological factors, logistics received the highest weighted score. The logistics sector has suffered considerable damage during the war and requires strategic solutions for recovery.

The current situation necessitates not only adaptation but also a strategic rethinking of the development model for the wholesale food trade system to align with modern market demands and global trends in trade and intermediation. This highlights the need to implement elements of a strategic development framework for wholesale food trade in Ukraine's domestic market, considering the most significant influencing factors. Based on the research findings, key strategic elements for wholesale food trade in Ukraine's domestic market have been formulated, namely the integration of marketing, logistics, and innovation components (Fig. 6).

When developing the marketing component, it is crucial to consider that, according to UN data, 7.9 million people have left Ukraine since the onset of the full-scale war [15], significantly reducing food consumption. The marketing strategy during wartime and in the post-war period will differ fundamentally. During the war, it should include reducing the assortment of food products, limiting imports, diversifying supply sources, and minimizing trade markups on essential goods. During post-war recovery and the return of Ukrainian migrants, consumer activity will increase, consumer demand will shift, and quality and safety standards for goods will become more stringent. At this stage, a thorough market analysis and assessment of consumer trends will be essential to adapt the product assortment. Additionally, engaging in research and development to introduce new or improved products, as well as collaborating with producers and farmers to promote eco-friendly or unique products, will be highly beneficial [16].

Unlike the marketing component, the logistics and innovation components will remain consistent during both wartime and post-war reconstruction. The development of a logistics strategy should involve the renovation and modernization



**Fig. 6.** Elements of the strategy for developing wholesale trade in food products in the domestic market of Ukraine  
 Source: prepared by the authors.

of warehouse complexes, the construction and commissioning of large-scale specialized and universal storage facilities to ensure efficient supply chain management [22], the adoption of tracking and supplier monitoring technologies, and the implementation of automated warehouse management systems to optimize inventory and reduce storage costs. The application of Just-In-Time methods can help minimize stock levels and optimize product turnover, while enhanced monitoring and quality control systems will mitigate the risk of spoiled inventory.

A critical aspect of the logistics strategy may include the expansion of wholesale food markets and commodity exchanges. The development of a network of wholesale food markets should con-

sider regional natural resource potential, agricultural production capacity, and market demand for food products. Based on these factors, the infrastructure of the wholesale market should be designed accordingly [23].

Involving wholesale traders in commodity exchange markets can be a crucial element of the logistics strategy. In the post-war period, a focus on developing organized commodity markets has significant potential for Ukraine's recovery. This approach will facilitate efficient interactions between wholesale sellers and buyers of food products and play a key role in ensuring the country's strategic food security [24]. Commodity trading in the wholesale food market is essential for several reasons, as it contributes to the formation of

real market prices; provides mechanisms for the rapid turnover of goods and services; reduces risks associated with price fluctuations, exchange rate volatility, and other economic factors; fosters a competitive environment, as different suppliers and buyers can operate under common conditions, thereby driving business development and improving the quality of goods and services; encourages investment in the economy; ensures a transparent trading mechanism where all participants have access to price and contract information, enhancing market efficiency and trust; integrates quality and safety standards for food products; includes regulatory oversight and trade monitoring, preventing unfair practices and ensuring compliance with established standards and regulations.

Transparent and efficient pricing mechanisms in the analyzed market support optimal resource allocation, enhance the competitiveness of wholesale sellers, and stabilize price fluctuations. This is achieved, in part, through the organization of exchange trading with derivative contracts, which provide domestic market participants with modern and effective tools for managing price risks.

The introduction of derivative contracts in the market helps reduce price volatility, as these instruments enable participants to hedge against adverse price changes in advance. This mechanism encourages market participants to make more cautious and well-founded decisions, thereby reducing risks and increasing market stability.

The formation of organized commodity markets enhances economic activity and investment attractiveness, stimulating the development of wholesale food trade. Commodity exchanges establish a centralized electronic platform where various producers and suppliers can trade goods, optimizing the supply chain by reducing the time and costs associated with finding and selecting partners.

Integrating wholesale traders into exchanges facilitates swift and efficient transaction execution through electronic systems and standardized procedures, increasing trade volumes, improving transparency, and enhancing informational exchan-

ge. The exchange can serve as a platform where wholesale traders access market data, prices, and product availability, leading to greater transparency in logistics processes. Standardized agreements and trading conditions simplify logistics management, while convenient tools for electronic ordering and transaction processing accelerate logistics operations and improve overall efficiency.

Beyond its economic impact, the development of organized commodity markets is a crucial social factor, ensuring the population's access to high-quality and affordable food, improving living standards, and maintaining societal stability. Aligning logistics strategies with the formation of organized markets optimizes supply chains and enhances efficiency and competitiveness for wholesale food traders.

In the context of an innovation-driven strategy, it is essential to focus on adopting advanced approaches, including innovative technologies in logistics and distribution. Implementing artificial intelligence (AI) and data analytics solutions can enhance supply chain management and improve demand forecasting accuracy. Supply chain optimization in wholesale food trade may involve direct deliveries from producers to retail chains or restaurants, as well as the integration of tracking technologies to ensure product quality and safety throughout the supply chain. These improvements contribute to the creation of an efficient and reliable supply mechanism that meets modern food industry requirements.

The conducted study supports the assertion that, in the pre-war period, wholesale food turnover exhibited growth both regionally and across different product groups. However, under wartime conditions, a decline in wholesale turnover has been observed. Inflation impact calculations indicate that price increases do not play a decisive role in the dynamics of wholesale food turnover. A variance analysis revealed that, on average, during the studied period, 96.3% of wholesale food turnover variability was determined by the location of the business entity, while only 3.7% was influenced by other factors.

While analyzing the prospects for the development of wholesale trade in food products in Ukraine's domestic market, we have employed trend-based forecasting. The analysis concluded that the most accurate forecast, with a probability of 99.33%, is represented by a third-degree polynomial function, which indicates a steady downward trend in the wholesale turnover of food products. This decline is directly influenced by ongoing military actions and is expected to persist in the near future unless elements of a development strategy are implemented.

To substantiate these strategic elements, potential factors affecting the wholesale food market were analyzed. Key influencing factors were identified, and a PEST analysis was conducted, highlighting the most significant ones: the Russia-

Ukraine war, the level of corruption, consumer activity, the outflow (or return) of Ukrainians, quality and safety standards, shifts in consumer demand, technological innovations in wholesale trade, and logistics.

Based on the analysis of these factors, a strategic framework was proposed, integrating marketing, logistics, and innovation elements. Implementing these strategic components will enhance the quality of domestic food products, improve logistics efficiency, and stimulate consumer activity. This, in turn, will strengthen food security and increase the turnover of food products during Ukraine's post-war recovery period.

Future research will focus on studying trade development during the post-war economic reconstruction of Ukraine, the return of the population, and the improvement of living standards.

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## РОЗВИТОК ОПТОВОЇ ТОРГІВЛІ ПРОДОВОЛЬЧИМИ ТОВАРАМИ НА ВНУТРІШНЬОМУ РИНКУ УКРАЇНИ В УМОВАХ ВОЄННОГО СТАНУ

**Вступ.** В умовах воєнного стану, під час якого порушено логістику реалізації продовольчих товарів, окуповано значні площі продуктивних сільськогосподарських угідь на півдні та сході країни, зруйновано майнові комплекси підприємств агропромислового комплексу, надзвичайно актуальним є розвиток внутрішньої оптової торгівлі продовольчими товарами як засобу забезпечення продовольчої безпеки України.

**Проблематика.** Вирішення проблем розвитку харчової промисловості і перероблення сільськогосподарської сировини в умовах воєнного стану пов'язане насамперед із розвитком оптової торгівлі продовольчими товарами. Саме підприємства оптової торгівлі відіграють важливу роль у забезпеченні балансу інтересів усіх учасників ринку та формуванні сучасної системи товароруку, орієнтованої на максимальне задоволення потреб кінцевих споживачів.

**Мета.** Дослідити тренди внутрішньої оптової торгівлі продовольчими товарами в довоєнний і воєнний періоди та визначити стратегічні можливості для підприємств у галузі внутрішньої оптової торгівлі продовольчими товарами для забезпечення стійкого та ефективного розвитку галузі у післявоєнний час.

**Матеріали й методи.** Інформаційною базою дослідження слугували статистичні дані Державної служби статистики України та Міністерства фінансів України. Застосовано діалектичний, системний та історичний підходи. Використано методи теоретичного узагальнення інформації, порівняльного та економіко-математичного аналізів.

**Результати.** Визначено елементи стратегії розвитку оптової торгівлі продовольчими товарами на внутрішньому ринку України, що поєднує маркетинговий, логістичний та інноваційний компоненти.

**Висновки.** Застосування запропонованих елементів стратегії призведе до збільшення товарообороту продовольчих товарів та підвищення продовольчої безпеки в період післявоєнного відновлення України.

*Ключові слова:* оптова торгівля, продовольчі товари, внутрішній ринок, стратегічний набір, післявоєнне відновлення.