

CURRENT PROBLEMS AND OBSTACLES TO THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF TRANSPORT ENTERPRISES OF UKRAINE

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Introduction. In the current conditions of the transformational economy of Ukraine, the transport sector plays a key role in ensuring the sustainable development of the national economy and the country's integration into the global economic space. The effective functioning of transport enterprises is critically important for the stability of logistics chains, uninterrupted supply of goods, population mobility and the development of related industries. However, despite its strategic importance, the transport sector of Ukraine faces numerous challenges that complicate its economic growth and competitiveness at the domestic and international levels.

The deepening economic crisis, the destructive consequences of military operations, insufficient investment, infrastructure deterioration, unreformed management approaches, as well as the lack of a clear state policy in the transport sector – all this forms a complex system of obstacles that requires in-depth analysis and systemic solutions. A significant part of transport enterprises operates in conditions of high risk, instability and regulatory uncertainty, which, in turn, leads to a decrease in their profitability, loss of market positions and a decline in the overall economic potential of the industry [4]. In this context, a study of the current state of transport enterprises in Ukraine in order to identify key problems in their development and determine factors that hinder economic growth is of particular relevance.

Analysis of recent research and publications. The current state and prospects for the development of Ukraine's transport industry have become critically relevant for scientists and researchers, especially in the context of martial law and the future post-war reconstruction of the country. Thus, Pererva P. et al. [5] observed current state and prospects of economic development of the transport industry, which were also described in the work of Mishchenko M.I. and Tsiuman E.S. [6]. In turn, Tyukhtenko N. [7] analysed modern issues of formation transport and logistics infrastructure of Ukraine, and researching of this topic continued in the work of Piletska S.T., Lunkina I.Yu. and Volkov O.I. [8].

The problems and challenges of the economic development of the transport system of Ukraine are addressed in the works of such scientists as Maliuta L. et al. [9] and Khvedelidze P. et al. [10]. Researchers like Lebedeva L., Shkuropadska D. [11], Polivantsev, A. [12] study the future prospects for the development of Ukraine's transport systems in the post-war period. However, obstacles to the future development of Ukraine's transport industry and possible directions for increasing the efficiency of their improvement remain poorly understood.

The aim of the research is to identify key problems and obstacles that hinder the economic development of transport industry in Ukraine, as well as identify the main challenges that will affect their functioning in the near future.

The main material of the study. The current state of the transport industry in Ukraine (fig. 1) is characterized by profound structural changes, caused by both internal transformation processes and external factors, among which the full-scale military aggression of the Russian Federation occupies a decisive place. As a result of active hostilities, a significant part of the transport infrastructure has suffered critical damage or complete destruction, which has led to the disruption of logistics routes, a decrease in cargo flows and restrictions on population mobility.



Fig. 1. Transport system of Ukraine

Source: [1]

Against the background of the destruction of infrastructure and a decrease in demand for transport services, there is a sharp decline in the financial performance of transport enterprises. Most of them operate in conditions of a significant deficit of working capital, limited access to credit resources and an increase in the cost of servicing worn-out equipment [5]. In particular, road and rail transport are experiencing the greatest difficulties in ensuring the safety of transportation, adhering to schedules and maintaining fixed assets in working condition.

In addition, the industry is affected by general macroeconomic trends, such as inflation, exchange rate fluctuations, energy instability and increased regulatory pressure. Export and import restrictions, as well as disruptions in trade relations with traditional partners, are increasing pressure on the transport services market. Maritime transport has lost a significant part of its functionality due to the blockade of ports, especially in the southern regions of the country, which has significantly affected foreign trade activity [6]. Despite numerous difficulties, the industry is demonstrating some positive developments, in particular in the direction of digitalization of logistics processes, development of alternative routes (for example, through EU countries), adaptation to EU standards and increased international assistance in infrastructure restoration. In the future, these factors may become the basis for the recovery of the industry, but currently Ukrainian transport enterprises are in a state of deep economic instability, which requires systemic support at the state and international levels [7].

The current problems of economic development of transport enterprises in Ukraine are systemic and arise because of a combination of long-term structural imbalances, external economic shocks and military-political instability. Today, the key problems that hinder the efficiency of the transport sector are the degradation of the material and technical base, uneven territorial provision of infrastructure, the lack of a modern management model and the low level of investment attractiveness of enterprises.

One of the most acute problems is the physical and moral wear and tear of vehicles and technical equipment. Outdated rolling stock significantly reduces labor productivity, increases operating and maintenance costs, and also negatively affects the quality and safety of transportation. Due to limited access to capital investments, transport enterprises are unable to carry out systematic modernization, which prevents them from adapting to

modern technological standards. Ineffective tariff policy, weak development of the competitive environment and monopolization of certain segments of the transport market also significantly affect the economic instability of the industry [8]. The presence of administrative barriers, complex and opaque licensing procedures, as well as corruption risks in the regulatory sphere create an unfavourable business climate for private and mixed enterprises.

A significant factor that deepens the crisis phenomena is the personnel problem: the outflow of qualified specialists, insufficient level of professional training of personnel and the mismatch of the employment structure with modern market requirements. This increases the internal inefficiency of organizational processes and reduces the innovative potential of the industry. In addition, the foreign economic activity of transport enterprises is negatively affected by military actions in the country by disrupting logistics chains, changing export-import geography and restricting access to sea and air routes. This necessitates the search for new ways of integration into European logistics networks and adaptation to EU standards, which requires significant financial, technical and managerial resources [9].

In order to comprehensively understand the current state of the transport industry of Ukraine, it is advisable to turn to the analysis of the dynamics of freight transportation as one of the key indicators of economic activity in the sector. The volumes of transported cargo directly reflect the level of demand for transport services, the state of inter-industry relations and the degree of integration of the national economy into global logistics networks. The assessment of these indicators allows us to identify the main development trends, seasonal and crisis fluctuations, as well as the efficiency of the functioning of various types of transport in the face of external challenges [10]. In the context of martial law and economic instability, the study of changes in the structure of freight transportation is of particular importance, which allows us to outline new logistical realities and identify potential areas for adaptation of the transport system of Ukraine. The dynamics of cargo transportation volumes by Ukrainian transport enterprises is shown in Figure 2:

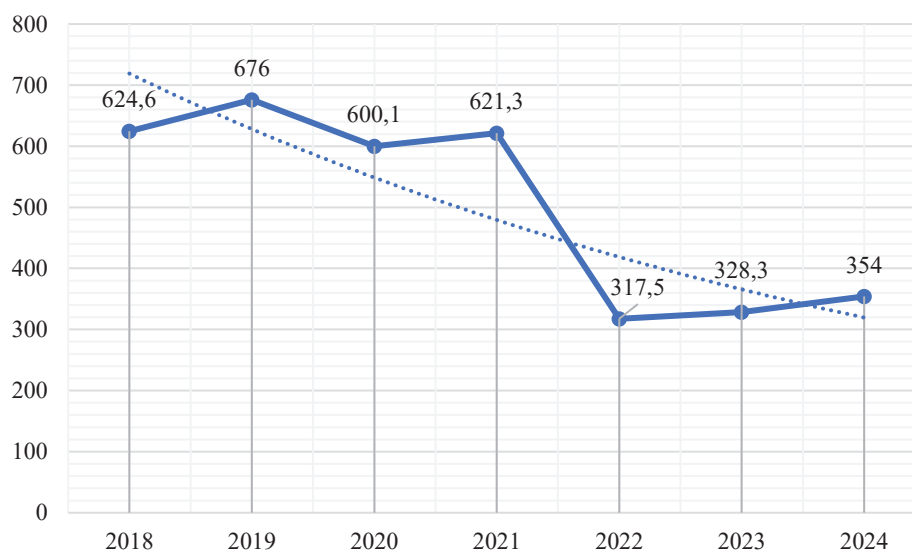


Fig. 2. Dynamics of cargo transportation volumes for 2018–2024, million tons

Source: [2]

Analysis of the dynamics of freight transportation volumes in Ukraine in 2018–2024 demonstrates an unstable trend, reflecting the influence of both economic and political factors. In 2019, there was an increase of more than 8% compared to the previous year, which indicated the intensification of the transport industry in conditions of gradual economic growth. However, already in 2020, due to the global pandemic and disruption of logistics chains, there was a drop in transportation volumes by approximately 11%. A partial recovery in 2021 – an increase of about 3,5% – signalled the ability of the industry to adapt to new operating conditions.

Radical changes occurred in 2022, when, due to a full-scale invasion, transportation volumes almost halved – by more than 48% compared to the previous year. This was the deepest decline in the analysed period and reflected the devastating impact of military actions on infrastructure and logistics [15]. In 2023 and 2024, a

slight but steady growth was recorded: by 3,4% and 7,8%, respectively. Although this indicates a certain trend towards recovery, the total volume of freight transportation remains more than 40% lower than pre-invasion indicators. Thus, the dynamics of changes in transportation volumes clearly illustrate the sensitivity of the transport industry to external shocks, especially in war conditions, as well as the urgent need for systemic reform and state support. Restoring transport potential requires long-term investments, international cooperation and modernization of management approaches.

In the near future, the Ukrainian transport sector will face a number of challenges that will determine the trajectory of its economic development. First of all, the main and at the same time long-term challenge remains the need to restore the infrastructure destroyed as a result of military operations [11]. Large-scale losses in the transport sector, especially in regions that have experienced military operations, require not only significant capital investments, but also strategic planning of restoration, taking into account the changed logistical realities and security risks.

The second critical challenge is ensuring the financial sustainability of transport enterprises in conditions of limited access to credit resources, increasing costs for fuel, repair and maintenance of equipment, as well as general macroeconomic instability. Deterioration of rolling stock, limited investments in modernization and technological renewal may make it impossible for Ukrainian carriers to compete both in the domestic and international markets. In the context of Ukraine's European integration course, the key challenge will be the need to harmonize national transport legislation with EU standards [12]. This involves significant changes in the system of regulation, licensing, quality control of services and environmental protection. For most transport companies, this will be a serious test due to the need for significant organizational and financial resources.

In addition, an important risk factor is the demographic situation on the labor market: the outflow of qualified personnel abroad continues, and young people are in no hurry to join the professions of the transport sector due to low prestige and insufficient wages. This creates a shortage of specialists, which complicates the effective functioning of enterprises and the implementation of innovative approaches to management [13]. This is evidenced by the general negative dynamics of the number of employees employed at enterprises in the transport, warehousing, postal and courier sectors (fig. 3):

An equally important challenge is ensuring cybersecurity and digital resilience of transport infrastructure. Given the active digitalization of logistics processes and transportation management systems, the need for protecting information systems, increasing the digital literacy of personnel and implementing modern IT solutions is growing [14]. Thus, the economic development of transport enterprises in Ukraine in the coming years will depend on the industry's ability to adapt to new conditions, overcome institutional and technical limitations, and effectively integrate into global and regional logistics chains.

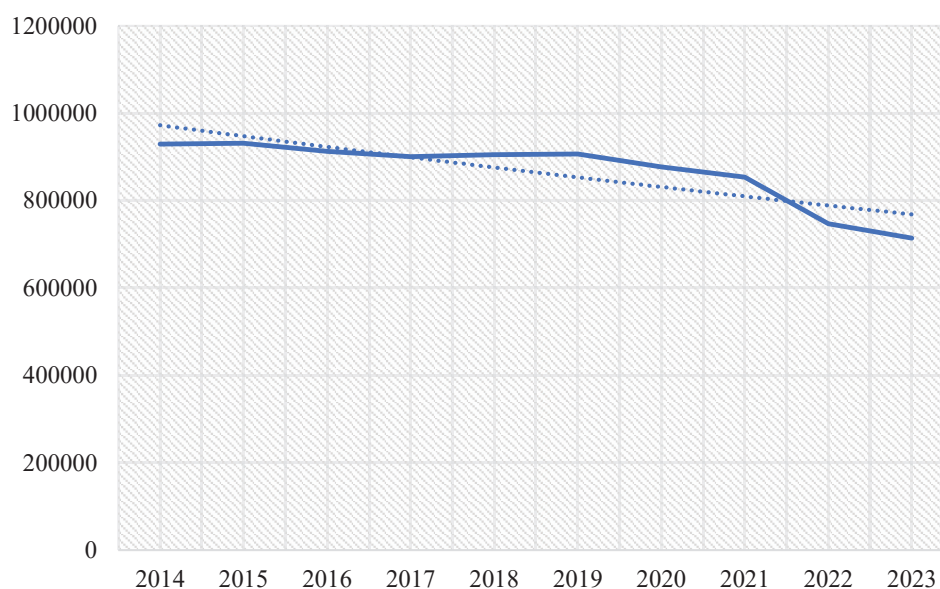


Fig. 3. Dynamics of the number of employees employed at enterprises in the transport, warehousing, postal and courier sectors for 2014–2023, people

Source: [3]

Conclusions. In conclusion, it can be argued that the transport sector of Ukraine is in a deep crisis caused by military aggression, destruction of infrastructure, economic instability and institutional uncertainty. The main obstacles to development remain the outdated material and technical base, lack of investment, problems with personnel, a complex regulatory framework and a low level of digital integration. However, despite the depth of the challenges, the industry retains strategic potential for recovery and modernization provided that there is a comprehensive approach from the state, increased international support and attraction of private capital. Successfully overcoming the identified problems is possible only if the efforts of all market participants are consolidated, the institutional environment is reformed, and modern management and technological solutions are implemented.

In the future, the development of Ukraine's transport sector will largely depend on the pace of post-war recovery, the scale of infrastructure reconstruction and the attraction of foreign investments. An important role will be played by the processes of integration into the European transport space, particularly the harmonization of standards, the opening of new international routes and participation in trans-European logistics initiatives. In the case of effective use of financial instruments of international assistance, the introduction of innovative technologies and the development of public-private partnerships, the transport system of Ukraine can be transformed into a modern, competitive and sustainable infrastructure platform capable of ensuring dynamic economic growth in the long term.

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UDC 338.4:656

JEL L91, O18, R41

Anatolii Sokolov, Postgraduate Student, Pryazovskyi State Technical University. **Current problems and obstacles to the economic development of transport enterprises of Ukraine.**

The article examines the current state of Ukraine's transport sector and identifies key obstacles to its economic development. The article analyses structural issues, the impact of war, and macroeconomic instability. The research outlines a sharp decline in freight volumes since the beginning of full-scale invasion and limited recovery in subsequent years. Key challenges include outdated infrastructure, low investment attractiveness, labor shortages, and regulatory uncertainty. The study emphasizes the need for systemic reforms, state support, and integration with EU logistics networks as crucial conditions for sustainable sectoral recovery and long-term competitiveness. Particular attention is paid to the prospects for Ukraine's integration into European logistics networks and the development of public-private partnerships as conditions for ensuring sustainable development of transport infrastructure and strengthening the competitiveness of the industry in the long term.

Key words: transport, transport system, economic development, logistics, infrastructure, transport enterprises.

УДК 338.4:656

JEL L91, O18, R41

Соколов Анатолій Валерійович, аспірант, Приазовський державний технічний університет. **Актуальні проблеми і перешкоди економічного розвитку транспортних підприємств України.**

У статті досліджено сучасний стан транспортного сектору України та визначено ключові перешкоди його економічного розвитку. У статті аналізуються структурні проблеми, вплив війни та макроекономічна нестабільність. Дослідження окреслює різке зниження обсягів вантажних перевезень з початку повномасштабного вторгнення та обмежене відновлення в наступні роки. Ключові проблеми включають застарілу інфраструктуру, низьку інвестиційну привабливість, дефіцит робочої сили та регуляторну невизначеність. У сучасних умовах трансформаційної економіки України транспортний сектор відіграє ключову роль у забезпеченні сталого розвитку національної економіки та інтеграції країни у світовий економічний простір. Ефективне функціонування транспортних підприємств має критичне значення для стабільності логістичних ланцюгів, безперебійного постачання товарів, мобільності населення та розвитку суміжних галузей. Однак, незважаючи на своє стратегічне значення, транспортний сектор України стикається з численними викликами, що ускладнюють його економічне зростання та конкурентоспроможність на внутрішньому та міжнародному рівнях. У дослідженні наголошується на необхідності системних реформ, державної підтримки та інтеграції з логістичними мережами ЄС як вирішальних умов для сталого відновлення сектору та довгострокової конкурентоспроможності. Особлива увага приділяється перспективам інтеграції України до європейських логістичних мереж та розвитку державно-приватного партнерства як умов забезпечення сталого розвитку транспортної інфраструктури та посилення конкурентоспроможності галузі в довгостроковій перспективі. У майбутньому розвиток транспортного сектору України значною мірою залежатиме від темпів повоєнного відновлення, масштабів реконструкції інфраструктури та залучення іноземних інвестицій. Важливу роль відіграватимуть процеси інтеграції в європейський транспортний простір, зокрема гармонізація стандартів, відкриття нових міжнародних маршрутів та участь у трансєвропейських логістичних ініціативах. З ефективним використанням фінансових інструментів міжнародної допомоги та впровадження інноваційних технологій транспортна система України може бути перетворена на сучасну та стійку інфраструктурну платформу, здатну забезпечити динамічне економічне зростання у довгостроковій перспективі.

Ключові слова: транспорт, транспортна система, економічний розвиток, логістика, інфраструктура, транспортні підприємства.