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Strategies for Companies to Enter International Markets: Literature Review and Conceptualization

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Abstract

Based on the analysis of the current state of international markets, the article reveals the main problematic issues of creating an effective strategy for companies to enter them. The criteria and approaches to the segmentation of international markets are also disclosed. Priority directions for creating a strategy for companies to enter international markets are identified. The main elements of this strategy are emphasized and the threats to its implementation are classified. The practical result of the study is a set of recommendations for improving the efficiency of applying methods of companies' entry into international markets. The theoretical result is the identification of the main patterns of interaction between companies in international markets. The scientific originality of the study lies in the fact that for the first time a thorough study of the coffee markets of Germany and Poland was conducted in terms of the entry of foreign business, namely Ukrainian. This allowed us to identify the obstacles and prospects for Ukrainian companies and to create useful proposals for successful entry into the EU market. For the first time, we present a revised model of the international marketing environment that takes into account social capital, availability of support, and institutional maturity of the exporting country. In addition, it highlights modern exit strategies such as marketplaces, crowdsourcing, and diaspora participation. This ensures that the internationalization plan is tailored to the circumstances of Ukraine's developing economy.

Keywords

Foreign Markets, Marketing, Trade, Export, Import, Management

I. Introduction

The expansion of business into foreign markets is becoming more than just a survival strategy in Ukraine's changing economy, which is being worsened by the effects of the full-scale conflict and falling domestic demand. It is also becoming a precondition for

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sustainable development. Companies can increase their competitiveness globally, diversify their revenue streams, and reduce the risks associated with an unstable domestic environment by implementing an internationalization plan. However, a common problem faced by Ukrainian companies, especially SMEs, is the lack of a clear understanding of the best strategies for entering foreign markets given their limited resources, lack of organizational support, and limited experience (Makhammedova, 2022; Franko and Romanyukha, 2023).

Concentrating on the unique characteristics of the Ukrainian business environment, this review and inductive research attempts to systematize current ways of creating strategies for businesses entering foreign markets. The main objectives are to conceptualize the key ideas that influence internationalization strategy, identify gaps in previous research, and conduct a literature survey of relevant academic sources. The combination of theoretical foundations and applied research on markets in Poland and Germany, two countries often considered by Ukrainian businesses as key areas for expansion, makes this work particularly important. These markets were selected to provide an empirical example of the theoretical propositions related to internationalization strategy. A practical test of the common obstacles and opportunities faced by Ukrainian enterprises when entering the EU markets was conducted by analyzing their macro-marketing, legal, and socio-cultural characteristics. The article develops useful proposals for modifying the strategies of exit from the realities of Ukrainian business by analyzing the marketing environment, social obstacles and forms of cooperation.

The study also has an educational component. Its findings can serve as a basis for creating training programs for start-up company owners, especially young people, who are the focus of most government programs related to business support. The secret to effective integration of Ukrainian business into global markets could lie in institutional support for business incubators and access to up-to-date information on international marketing.

The uniqueness of this work lies in the fact that it fills the identified gaps – the lack of specific examples of market entry, underestimation of the importance of the socio-cultural environment, and the lack of analysis of the interconnection of national, foreign, and global markets. Thus, the study not only summarizes existing approaches, but also offers a new vision of strategic planning for the internationalization of Ukrainian business.

The coffee market was chosen as a typical industry to study companies' entry into foreign markets to add an applied dimension to the study. Due to its high demand, fierce competition, dependence on imported raw materials, and crucial role in marketing, it is a representative industry. The study includes Germany and Poland, two of Ukraine's main trading partners with different approaches to market regulation. Germany was selected as an example of a highly developed and strictly controlled EU market, while Poland was chosen because of its close proximity both geographically and culturally. This allowed us to identify both typical and unique obstacles that are key for Ukrainian businesses preparing to go international (Shtal et al., 2018).

It is important to compare these countries with the domestic economic climate, as most Ukrainian firms are focused on EU markets. Despite the favorable public attitude towards the growth of international trade, businesses often neglect strategic planning and do not take into account the unique legal, fiscal and cultural characteristics of the market. In order to test the relevance of general strategies and offer useful advice to Ukrainian companies, the article uses the case of the coffee industries in Poland and Germany for empirical research (Kaplina, 2020).

The problem of creating a successful plan for business entry into foreign markets is becoming increasingly relevant in light of the military attack by the Russian Federation, which has transformed the Ukrainian economy. Ukrainian companies are forced to look for new markets due to logistical constraints, declining local demand, and loss of production capacity. Despite their interest in the EU markets, most companies face difficulties due to a lack of resources and experience. Developing effective methods for assessing the global marketing landscape and adapting internationalization tactics to Ukrainian conditions is particularly important in this regard.

The purpose of the study is to study, organize and analyze modern business strategies for entering the global market, taking into account the Ukrainian environment. Based on the analysis of literature and case studies of the German and Polish coffee markets, practical proposals for improving the efficiency of implementing the relevant strategies have been developed. The primary objectives of the study are to identify the reasons and obstacles to entry, study the marketing landscape, describe internationalization tactics, and create useful recommendations for Ukrainian businesses. This study also aims to help future entrepreneurs, especially young people who are most active in promoting the idea of expanding their company globally, to develop their experience. The findings can be applied in the future to ensure sustainable economic growth and increase the involvement of Ukrainian businesses in the global economy.

II. Literature Review

It is necessary to present the methodology for selecting literature for analysis. The main criterion for selecting the literature was its relevance (no older than ten years) and diversity (works by Ukrainian and foreign researchers). The search was conducted using the free search engines Google and Google Scholar (a specialized system for searching for scientific publications). The main criteria for excluding articles for analysis were: obsolescence (older than ten years), lack of Ukrainian or English versions, and paid access to information. Due to the rapid changes in the fields of international marketing and corporate internationalization, which have been greatly expedited by digitalization, geopolitical changes, and changes in global supply chains, a 10-year period was chosen as the relevance criterion. We can cover current events over this time period without sacrificing scientific representativeness.

The keywords used in the search included: “entering foreign markets”, “marketing and management”, “marketing strategies”, “market trends”, “factors of entering foreign markets”. After formulating the methodology for selecting the literature, it was decided to proceed to the analysis of the selected literature. In the course of this analysis, it will be shown what it gave for writing the current article. Based on the primary study of the vocabulary used in well-known Ukrainian and international marketing journals, search terms were developed. Their combination covers both broad ideas (e.g., “marketing strategies”) and more focused research elements (e.g., “factors of entering foreign markets"), which allows for an appropriate and thorough search for materials on the subject of the study.

As a consequence of the globalization of the world economy, companies at some stage of their development face the need to enter foreign markets (Stal et al., 2018). Since strong competition is a defining element of every foreign market in the present day, modern marketing and management techniques are the only ways to enter such a market (Mahammedova, 2022).

Knowledge of Ukrainian literature is essential for a full understanding of the peculiarities of business entry into foreign markets in the Ukrainian context. Only Ukrainian sources allow us to consider the unique features of the domestic corporate environment, legislation, limited resources and mental peculiarities of managerial choices, although foreign studies offer broad approaches to the development of marketing strategies. The analysis of Ukrainian scientific publications allows us to identify regional obstacles and opportunities that are important for modifying widely used tactics to meet the needs of Ukrainian business. For this reason, a review of Ukrainian sources is not only appropriate, but also necessary to develop useful proposals within the framework of this study. A review of Ukrainian and foreign literature on the subject matter and a comparative characterization of scientific approaches to the formation of strategies for companies to enter international markets are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Comparative characteristics of approaches to international market entry strategies

Author(s)	Research object	Key aspects	Methodology	The main findings
Loshenyuk, Galan, and Posokhov	International marketing strategies for multinational companies	Theoretical aspects of forming an effective strategy, market trends, competitive advantages	Theoretical analysis and development of practical recommendations	Recommendations have been developed for creating an authentic strategy for entering international markets with a focus on long-term success
Kovtun, Denisevych, and Zaitseva	Strategies for enterprises to enter foreign markets	Strategy selection, change of marketing orientation, market specifics	Analysis of the practice of Ukrainian enterprises	The strategy can only be effective with in-depth market research; the process is complex and time-consuming
Kovbatiuk, Shklyar and Kovbatiuk	Planning for entry into international markets	Stages: diagnostics, selection of market, partners, representative offices, information base; scaling	Structural analysis of process stages	Scaling of all enterprise processes is necessary, not just export-import operations

Author(s)	Research object	Key aspects	Methodology	The main findings
Khryniuk and Ganich	Factors and strategies for entering foreign markets	Market potential, environment, technology, competition; types of strategies – export, compensation agreements, joint ventures	Complex factor approach	Businesses should choose strategies taking into account internal and external factors, including the market and type of cooperation
Katsikeas, Leonidou, and Zeriti	International marketing strategies in the digital age	Internal requirements, external business environment, market selection, digital marketing, implementation and control	Theoretical and analytical research	Adaptation to digital technologies is necessary, taking into account internal and external changes
Paul	International marketing in emerging markets	Overview of theories, recommendations for taking into account market characteristics, choosing an approach	Literature review, research summary	Companies should consider market and consumer characteristics when choosing a strategy to enter emerging markets
Griffin and Pustay	International business practice	Management skills, intercultural competence, examples of global business practices	Case method, practical examples	Managers should focus on cultural literacy and adaptation to the specifics of different countries for effective international management
Hill	International business in a globalized environment	Globalization, trade, cross-cultural management; cases and thematic examples	Case analysis, applied approach	International business strategy should be based on real examples and take into account global trends and cultural differences

Source: Author's own elaboration

Thus, after completing the analysis of the scientific literature, it should be noted that it allowed to highlight the theoretical aspects of forming effective marketing strategies, to identify the importance of market research and scaling up of enterprises, to investigate the need to use the latest technologies, to determine the role of competition and globalization in modern international trade processes. Given the results obtained in the reviewed studies of scholars, it is worth noting that they need to be updated due to the rapidity of the globalization process and provide additional recommendations for improving the efficiency of applying methods of companies' entry into international markets through their own prism of vision of the company's strategy for entering the global market.

The purpose of the study is to review and conceptualize existing strategies for companies to enter international markets. It is this review that will allow us to provide our own recommendations for improving the effectiveness of the application of methods for companies to enter international markets. This research can be considered evaluative, as it allowed to assess various factors of companies' entry into international markets by analyzing the literature on a particular issue.

III. Materials and Methods

Theoretical and conceptual basis

At the beginning of the study, a terminological framework was created that allowed us to specify the main ideas that define the analytical boundaries of the issue and offer a comprehensive understanding of the topic. The concept of "foreign markets" is one of the most fundamental and defines a set of specialized international markets that operate within many countries with distinct national characteristics. In this study, "marketing" refers to the processes of developing, advertising, and delivering a product or service to customers, as well as maintaining communication with them, in order to guarantee sustainable profits for a company.

The concept of "globalization" is important because it refers to the process of increasing economic, political and cultural exchange between nations, which increases the importance of international trade and intensifies the competitive environment. Accordingly, the idea of "capital flows" – i.e., the transfer of assets abroad to generate profits or reduce economic risks – is becoming increasingly important.

The term "trade" describes commercial activities, including the buying and selling of goods on domestic and foreign markets. The study uses the terms "import" and "export" as the most important instruments of international economic activity of business; these are imports of products from abroad and exports of goods outside the country, respectively. This terminological base is completed by the concept of "management", which is interpreted as a purposeful process of planning, organization, motivation and control in order to achieve the strategic goals of the enterprise, in particular those related to entering international markets. The formulated definitions became the methodological basis for the subsequent analytical and practical stages of the study.

Approaches

The methodological basis of the study is a methodical and consistent approach to the study of how enterprises develop successful strategies for entering foreign markets. This approach involves the gradual use of various scientific methodologies in accordance with the research considerations. First, the source base was created, which consisted of independent observations of Ukrainian and foreign researchers, monographs, analytical papers, and scientific literature on the subject areas. At this stage, it became possible to outline the primary vectors of the study, which also added theoretical depth to the analysis. To systematically collect and organize relevant information on the dynamics of global markets, as well as forms and models of business entry into the foreign economic environment, the next step was to apply the monitoring method – collecting and structuring empirical data. The methods of collecting and processing information, such as the study of statistical sources, expert opinions, the results of industry surveys and data from open databases, were also used within the parameters of this stage.

During the analytical stage of the study, a comparative technique was used to assess the effectiveness and applicability of several strategic approaches to entering the international market under different economic circumstances. The structure of the global marketing environment, identification of its main components and the links between them were made possible by the methods of analysis and synthesis. The forecasts on the possible effectiveness of certain tactics in the context of international competition and unpredictable economic climate were partly formed thanks to the induction approach.

Methods of abstraction, abstract-logical methods and dialectical methods were used to form the categorical apparatus of the study, logically structure the key concepts related to the international development strategy, as well as to conduct their theoretical generalization in the process of theoretical modeling and generalization.

The concretization approach was used to assess the effectiveness of individual strategy components in different markets, which allows taking into account the unique characteristics of the political, economic and regulatory environment. Finally, the reasoning technique was applied to provide useful suggestions for improving the strategic entry of companies into international markets based on the previous stages of the study. This chronologically structured technique helped to obtain reliable and validated results, prevented fragmentation of the analysis, and guaranteed a logical progression of the study.

IV. Results

The process of market research is complex and extremely dependent on the motivation behind the decision to enter an international market (The EU plans to destroy…, 2023). A business that is negligent in researching the markets it intends to enter may suffer huge losses from which it will not be able to recover. Since Ukrainian companies enter the market of the EU member states (Ukrainian wave…, 2023), two EU countries were selected for analysis, based on the principle of geographical proximity (Poland) and the country with the largest economy in the EU (Germany). Currently, the EU is facing a coffee shortage because hundreds of thousands of tons of coffee and cocoa stored in the EU's warehouses are at risk of destruction (The EU plans to destroy…, 2023), so increasing coffee imports to the EU is more important than ever.

The identified factors of the macromarketing environment for this analysis will be:

- availability of stable and effectively functioning legislation;
- taxation of the coffee processing and sales industry;
- state quality control.

A preliminary assessment of the impact of political and legal factors of the macro environment in Poland and Germany on the activities of coffee processing and sales companies is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Generalized characteristics of the main factors influencing the coffee markets of Germany and Poland

No.	Country name	Factor name	The essence of the factor
1	Germany	Availability of stable and effectively functioning legislation	Germany promotes foreign investment in every possible way, and Germany's law on foreign investment provides for equal treatment of foreign and domestic investors. Germany's strong legal tradition ensures that property rights, including intellectual property rights, are as enforceable as contractual agreements. Corruption does not affect investors.
	Poland		The legal framework for business activities in Poland is regulated by the Civil Code, the Commercial Code and the General Act "On Business Activities". There are no laws in Poland that restrict or prohibit foreign investment, participation or control outside specific strategic areas. Property rights are clearly defined, but foreigners cannot buy land. Corruption does not have a significant impact on business, as in 2015 Poland was ranked only 30th out of 180 countries, according to the Corruption Perceptions Index (Corruption perceptions index, 2015).
2	Germany	Taxation of coffee processing and sales	According to the German Customs Tariff, the import duty rate for green coffee is 0%, and for roasted coffee −7.5%. And the VAT on coffee is 7%, but despite such a low VAT rate, it should be remembered that in Germany there is a coffee tax of 2.19 euros per kilogram of roasted coffee and 4.78 euros per kilogram of instant coffee
	Poland		According to the Customs Tariff of Poland, the import duty rate for green coffee is 0%, for roasted coffee −7.5%. And VAT is 23%. This is a rather high VAT rate for an EU member state.
3	Germany and Poland	State quality control	In accordance with the Common Food Law, which defines the guidelines and protocols for guaranteeing food safety, it occurs in every EU member state. The single food safety agency is also working to regulate the market. The organization's activities include risk assessment and scientific advice in the field of food safety.

Source: Based on Strategic Analysis…, 2018; Cichy and Gradoń, 2016; Jakubowski, 2016; Alemanno and Gabbi, 2016; Chervona, 2022

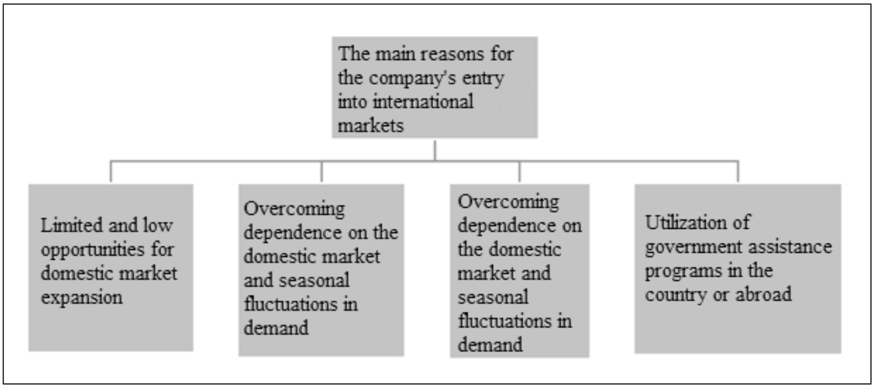
Based on Table 1, several conclusions can be drawn about the coffee markets in Germany and Poland. State control over coffee processing and marketing not only regulates legal relationships between enterprises and consumers but also ensures equal conditions for all business entities, fostering market development. To align with this regulatory framework, companies must implement their own policies, procedures, and controls to prevent instances where product quality falls short of established standards and requirements.

A stable and well-developed legislative framework provides essential support for businesses, as legal stability plays a significant role in forecasting a company's growth. Effective legislation allows for a clearer definition of economic activities and contributes to a predictable business environment.

In Poland, the import tax on green coffee is 0%, which presents an opportunity for companies to avoid paying the tax on roasted coffee by investing in green coffee processing plants. Furthermore, green coffee, which is tax-exempt, can be incorporated into final products alongside roasted or instant coffee. This strategy not only mitigates the negative effects of the German coffee tax but also serves as an effective marketing tool, potentially distinguishing the product as a unique brand attribute.

Since a company's entry into international markets is a long and expensive process that requires large amounts of money and time, the firm's management must be motivated to do so (Figure 1).

Figure 1: List of the main motives for the company's entry into international markets



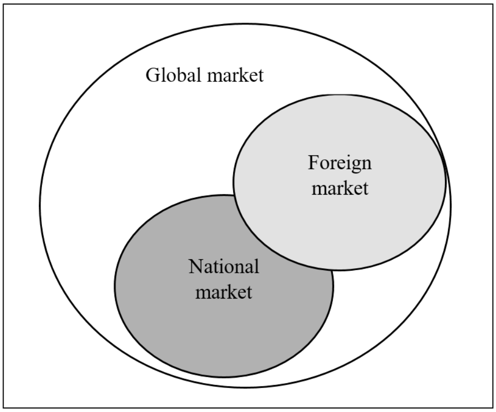
Source: Based on Dado et al., 2015; Fedorenko, 2020

The information shown in Figure 1 suggests that the main motivations for a company's management to enter international markets are the small size of the domestic market or its imperfection, so the decision to enter should be made only after analyzing the domestic market. It is impossible to consider the entry of companies into international markets without understanding the concept of the global market and their connection. The world market is a sphere of stable commodity and monetary relations between countries based on the international division of labor and other factors of production. The main internal sign of the existence of the world market is the movement of goods and services between countries (Aharoni, 2024). As an expected outcome of the combination (unification) of the national and international markets that form the worldwide market for products and services, the connection of the global, foreign, and national markets for all companies may be characterized by the formula:

$$F \cap N = G \tag{1}$$

where F is the foreign market, N is the national market, and G is the global market. This relationship between the markets, according to the formula, is shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Interconnection of markets

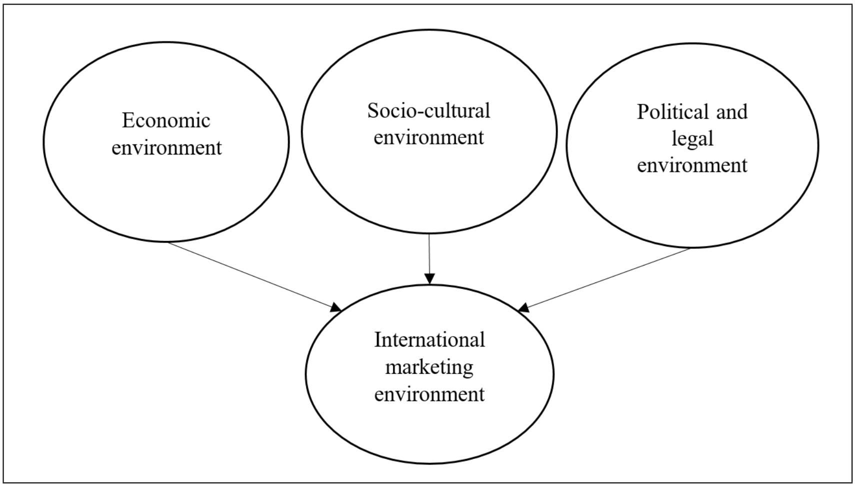


Source: Author's own elaboration

The type of market connection shown in Figure 2 makes it relevant to choose not only the products to be imported into a specific country's market but also the international marketing environment in general. Analyzing the international marketing environment is an essential first step in understanding the nature and trends in the growth of global markets and business types, which affect decisions related to the popularity of particular foreign markets as well as strategies for entering and setting up shop abroad (Koleshnia and Savicheva, 2021). The relationship between the structures of the international marketing environment is shown in Figure 3.

The political and legal environment, as a component of the international marketing environment, encompasses three distinct legal systems, each offering a unique approach to interpreting and managing commercial situations in international cooperation. The common law system, prevalent in countries such as the United States and the United Kingdom, is rooted in traditions, historical precedents, customs, and economic practices (Vlasenko and Vlasenko, 2022). In contrast, the civil law system, widely adopted in Ukraine, the European Union, and most other countries, operates based on codified laws. Legal situations are addressed by comparing the facts with specific legislative provisions (Merryman and Perez-Perdomo, 2018).

Figure 3: Relationship between the components of the international marketing environment



Source: Author's own elaboration

The system of theocratic law, predominant in Islamic countries, is grounded in religious norms and requirements. This system governs all aspects of economic activity, including banking services, ensuring alignment with religious principles (Rammal and Parker, 2013). In all these systems, business activities are regulated by different rules. That is why companies entering foreign markets require a preliminary analysis of the laws of their operation in different legal systems. An example of unsuccessful marketing would be an attempt by a pork trading company to enter the market of theocratic Iran. This will not only cause losses, but also damage the company's reputation in other countries in the region.

During the study, we identified a modern conceptual model of the global marketing environment that moves away from abstract schemes and takes into account the unique characteristics of nations with transformational economies, such as Ukraine. The main components of the model include the company's internal readiness for internationalization, as well as external elements (political, legal, economic, and socio-cultural features of the target market). The authors propose to add a new component to the analytical framework: the level of institutional maturity of the exporting country and the ability of businesses to enter international markets.

This includes a company's willingness to use low-risk adaptive strategies, such as crowdsourcing, pilot market sales, and diaspora cooperation, as well as access to business incubators, infrastructure assistance, financial instruments, and expertise. Because it can be used as a tool for strategic analysis and decision-making, this approach provides an important role in model management and helps us better explain why organizations' internationalization efforts have succeeded or failed in challenging circumstances. For the benefit of countries that seek to join the global economy without ongoing assistance and with little market entry experience, the authors modify the model rather than simply systematize recognized elements of the international environment (Kvasova et al., 2023).

The socio-cultural environment plays a critical role in assessing international markets and can be analyzed through several key characteristics (Medvedeva, 2017). The language environment is vital, as inaccuracies in language use can lead to misinterpretation of decisions. The social organization of society provides insight into the primary consumer base for goods. Legal culture reflects how societal norms influence a country's legal system, while political culture helps in understanding power dynamics and mechanisms of governance. The development of science and education indicates the country's technical advancement and buyers' aesthetic perceptions, while the level of education affects customer expectations and demands. Religion, local values, and norms shape ethical considerations and determine the appropriateness of selling certain goods.

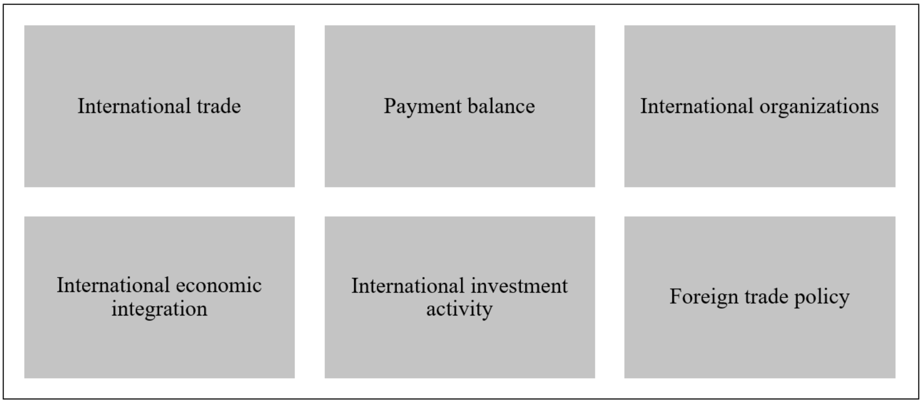
These socio-cultural factors are deeply interconnected with a country's legal system since laws are a reflection of societal values. Failing to analyze these factors can lead to significant risks, as products or services that are legally acceptable might still provoke scandals or financial losses due to cultural backlash.

Geert Hofstede's research into cultural influences on international marketing and management further categorizes these dynamics into specific dimensions (Fediv and Fediv, 2023). Power distance measures the level of inequality in power distribution that a population tolerates. Uncertainty avoidance assesses a society's comfort with planning and controlling future outcomes. The individualism-collectivism dimension highlights whether local behavior is dominated by individual or group-oriented tendencies. The masculinity-femininity dimension evaluates the degree to which societies distinguish between traditional gender roles.

Studying these cultural dimensions allows companies to identify developmental trends in a target country and predict demand for their goods or services. For instance, a market with higher masculinity might favor traditional men's clothing, while markets with a higher femininity index or a moderate masculinity level might respond better to metrosexual styles or women's clothing. This nuanced understanding helps businesses tailor their offerings to align with cultural preferences.

The economic environment of international marketing is primarily shaped by the international trade system, i.e. the sphere of international commodity and monetary relations, which embodies many processes related to foreign trade of all countries. The main components of the economic environment of international marketing are shown in Figure 4. The management of each company should choose the most legally understandable marketing environment, where the laws work for everyone without exception and there is stability in the political culture of the transfer of power. As for the place of the market chosen for the country's exports in the economic environment of international marketing, the main ones are high indicators of international trade, international economic integration and investment activity. This indicates the attractiveness of the marketing environment and its importance for the global economy. The market research takes into account and analyzes all elements of the external and internal marketing environment of the enterprise, as well as all conditions that affect the process of selling export products.

Figure 4: The main components of the economic environment of international marketing



Source: Based on Daniels et al., 2019; Belch and Belch, 2018

The study of foreign markets follows a process similar to that of analyzing the national market, with primary goals that include determining the feasibility of entering the market and understanding the conditions for operation. It involves assessing market attractiveness, evaluating consumers' purchasing power, analyzing the specifics of the sales system, and identifying competitive segments (Martín, 2022). Conducting this research is a complex and time-intensive task typically handled by a team of analysts, which may include both company employees and external experts hired temporarily.

The primary objectives of foreign market research are to explore potential market opportunities, including capacity, demand, and growth potential, and to review the international marketing environment, focusing on factors such as the legal framework and the level of competition. Additionally, it seeks to assess the company's capabilities in areas like management, marketing, finance, sales, and production.

Decisions about entering foreign markets are influenced by various factors, including the company's objectives, the scale of its operations, and the types of goods or services it offers. These considerations guide the strategic approach to market entry and help ensure alignment with the company's broader goals.

The study includes three main categories of internationalization methods: direct investment, joint ventures, and exports. Categorizing these tactics is crucial, but it is also important to outline how they can be applied in real-world scenarios based on current Ukrainian business opportunities and future development possibilities. Exporting is currently the most popular and cost-effective choice for SMEs, as it involves the fewest adjustments to the production process and allows for risk-free market testing. However, the way in which this technique is implemented greatly affects its effectiveness; direct exports require a thorough knowledge of the language, culture, and logistics, while indirect exports limit control over product sales (Aguzzoli et al., 2021). On the other hand, joint exports are a compromise model for small enterprises that wish to cooperate to enter international markets.

While joint ventures open up new markets through deeper integration with international partners, they also require greater trust, legal protection, and alignment of interests. Ukrainian businesses can realize this through joint ventures, licensing, or franchising; each of these approaches carries significant risks and varying degrees of control. Under the current circumstances, medium-sized enterprises with sufficient competencies but limited access to capital find this strategy attractive. In terms of control, image building, and long-term presence, the direct investment approach is still the most effective, but the most costly and complex. It involves setting up branches, subsidiaries, or own production operations abroad. For large businesses that have a clear vision of priority markets and resources for scaling, this strategy can be a crucial step towards strengthening their position on a global scale (Kozlenkova et al., 2021).
There are three main groups of internationalization strategies that have different goals and configurations, market exit rates, levels of control, participation, risk and flexibility and provide different opportunities for acquiring knowledge and experience of international activities (Table 3).

Table 3: Characteristics of the main groups of internationalization strategies

No.	Group name	Essence
1	Trading strategies	Production of goods and services in the domestic market and export to foreign markets
2	Cooperative strategies	Transfer of production to a foreign market on the basis of an agreement with a local company
3	Hierarchical strategies	Manufacture of goods and services in the foreign market carried out by a firm that includes an international company that owns a controlling stake in it

Source: Based on Orlovska et al., 2013; Gubin and Nabatova, 2016

Companies can engage in international marketing in an active or passive way (active and passive internationalization) (Polyak and Voitovich, 2020). The most common method for companies to enter foreign markets is through export, which offers several advantages (Grin, 2015). This approach requires minimal changes to the company's product range, involves low levels of investment, and presents minimal risk during market entry while allowing for an easy exit if necessary.
Exports can be categorized based on how they are organized abroad (Pylnova et al., 2020). Direct export involves the company independently managing all export-related activities, which requires a deep understanding of the language, culture, and specific characteristics of the target market. Indirect export allows the company to avoid direct involvement in selling products overseas, though this comes with the disadvantage of being unable to monitor the conditions of implementation. Joint export, typically used by smaller companies, involves collaboration among multiple firms to coordinate export activities.
Another strategy for entering foreign markets is joint entrepreneurial activity, which encompasses four main types (Polyuga, 2018). This approach facilitates shared efforts

and resources between companies, offering a cooperative pathway to international market presence (Table 4).

Table 4: Characteristics of joint business activities

No.	Name of the type of joint entrepreneurial activity	Essence
1	Licensing	An offer of the right to use a manufacturing process, trademark, patent, trade secret or other asset in exchange for a royalty or royalty payment
2	Contract manufacturing	Concluding agreements with a local manufacturer for the production of the necessary goods gives the company the opportunity to quickly expand its activities in the market
3	Contract management	The foreign partner receives new management expertise from the company and the necessary capital from it
4	Jointly owned enterprises	Investors come together to create a local company that is jointly owned and operated by all investors

Source: Based on Pichugina and Volchenok, 2018; Shynkarenko et al., 2018; Tokhtamysh, 2023

Companies also use a direct investment strategy to enter foreign markets, which is the most expensive of all, but has a number of serious advantages over others (Polkovnichenko and Yelchishcheva, 2019):

* maintaining control over invested finances;
* establishment of reliable relations with all levels of consumption;
* reduction of transportation costs;
* creating a good image of the company and partial control over the state by providing additional jobs.

The method of entering the foreign market and the strategy of internationalization should be chosen depending on the direction of the company, the purpose of entry and the scale of its production of goods or services. For small businesses, with small-scale production of goods and financial resources, the ideal method of entering the foreign market is export, because the risk of potential failure is minimal. Indirect or joint exports are suggested if the company's management want to reduce risk and does not have employees who are fluent in another language or who are familiar with the features of the market. Otherwise, direct or joint exports may be applied.

For medium-sized businesses, exports and joint ventures are ideal, as they may lack the financial resources to invest directly, which increases the risks. Large companies can afford any of the previously defined strategies for entering the foreign market, but if a particular market is a priority for them, then it is better to use a direct investment strategy. It will enable individuals to spend their finances as freely as possible with the highest benefit and preheat the excitement for a product that stimulates the local market and will immediately interest future buyers (Sereda, 2023).

In this study, the authors propose a new method for developing an international marketing strategy that takes into account the unique characteristics of the Ukrainian business environment in light of the conflict and the changing economy. Limited resources, institutional immaturity, and an unstable external environment are taken into account by an international marketing strategy, which is viewed as an adaptive and context-dependent approach to corporate development. Such a plan should be based on the idea of progressive internationalization with risk reduction and learning potential in the process for Ukrainian companies, especially for small and medium-sized enterprises.

This implies the use of flexible market entry strategies such as pilot sales, crowdsourcing, or market cooperation, as well as reliance on institutional assistance such as company incubators, export centers, and digital platforms that provide open access to real-world examples. Another important element is social capital, in particular the Ukrainian diaspora, which can serve as a guide to market adaptation. In this sense, international marketing is a holistic strategy for adapting to the legal, cultural, and economic conditions of target markets, not just a means of promoting a product. This strategy allows Ukrainian companies to engage in international economic processes, not only entering but also eventually establishing themselves in foreign markets.

V. Discussion

Although the topic of the strategy of companies' entry into international markets has gained immense popularity among domestic and Ukrainian researchers, none of the sources considered has been disclosed in such a volume and whole form. Also, there were no recommendations for improving the efficiency of the methods of companies entering international markets, which could be used in practice for the activities of domestic companies. Several factors contribute to the current situation. First, there is a lack of a clear connection between the goals and objectives of studying foreign markets and the process of companies entering these markets. Second, there is limited theoretical foundation in some research, which prevents asserting its universal applicability due to numerous potential gaps. Third, some materials used in studies are outdated.

At the same time, certain studies on the strategies for companies entering international markets have presented unique developments. For instance, a strategy has been designed for companies to enter foreign markets in the context of strengthening European integration processes (Sokol, 2014). Additionally, a marketing strategy has been developed for an IT company entering the global information technology market (Volynets, 2023). Furthermore, a strategy for the entry of small firms into foreign markets has been proposed (Koleshnia and Savicheva, 2021). One study even suggests creating a specific strategy for entering the global market during wartime, which could provide substantial assistance to domestic enterprises impacted by the destruction of facilities and the loss of workers due to shelling. Based on an analysis of the international coffee market in Germany and Poland and the interconnections between these markets, as well as the components of the international marketing environment, several recommendations can be made. These recommendations aim to enhance the effectiveness of companies' market entry strategies and include the following actions: first, it is essential to define the goals and objectives of entering the foreign market. Second, a comprehensive study of the product should be conducted, analyzing its strengths and weaknesses. Third, preliminary calculations should be made regarding the required resources and potential profits from the market entry. Fourth, the unique characteristics of the target country should be explored. Fifth, companies with similar profiles should be identified, and their experiences in the market should be reviewed. Sixth, the core values of the selected market should be compared with the company's resources, capabilities, and goals. Seventh, a market entry method should be chosen that initially requires limited resources. With early success, additional capital should be sought. Finally, marketing and managerial innovations should be actively integrated into the market entry strategy.

The authors believe that it is worth making concrete proposals that can be implemented immediately or in the near future to add a practical element to the discussion about the originality of the study in the Ukrainian context. Establishment of sectoral export centers in the EU should be the first step in facilitating the entry of small and medium-sized Ukrainian businesses into international markets. These centers could include market research, consulting, translation, legal assistance, and logistics intermediation. From a scientific point of view, this provides an opportunity to investigate how well multifunctional platforms work to increase the global competitiveness of developing companies (Strategic analysis of international markets, 2018).

Second, gradual expansion models based on the "easy entry" principle should be introduced, taking into account the risks associated with a lack of experience and institutional maturity. This can be achieved by piloting online sales through marketplaces, temporary licensing, or crowdfunding to test the product, which avoids significant upfront investment. These models serve as the basis for empirical research in the field of flexible business models and adaptive marketing tactics in highly unpredictable circumstances (Iordache et al., 2022).

The third strategy should be close cooperation with the diaspora, which can serve as an initial point of contact with a new market. In addition to being potential customers, Ukrainian communities abroad can also serve as brand ambassadors, helping to build relationships, create demand, and adapt culturally. This creates opportunities to study models of social capital and ethnomarketing in the context of corporate globalization.

The fourth proposal is the creation of a publicly accessible digital platform that would collect the achievements and shortcomings of Ukrainian businesses entering different markets, along with a detailed analysis of product type, strategy, obstacles, costs, and results (Dana et al., 2022). Such a framework would serve as a source of empirical data for creating case studies in strategic management and international marketing education, as well as practical information that is especially useful for novice participants.

Last but not least, a scheme should be introduced to allow Ukrainian small and medium-sized businesses to adopt European certification standards and receive state reimbursement for part of the costs associated with compliance processes. This would significantly reduce export barriers. This could be the subject of additional institutional marketing research, as well as a study of how regulatory instruments affect business export practices (Dana et al., 2022). All of these actions are not just additions to theoretical models; rather, they are important processes that will allow adapting general internationalization tactics to the unstable but attractive Ukrainian environment, opening up new areas of research in business intelligence and marketing science.

VI. Conclusion

The study led to the systematization of theoretical approaches to developing a successful strategy for businesses seeking to enter foreign markets, taking into account the unique features of the Ukrainian business environment. In order to classify the main risks and obstacles faced by Ukrainian business, as well as to set goals and objectives for researching foreign markets, the structure and content of the international marketing environment were studied. For the first time, an applied study of the coffee markets of Germany and Poland was conducted in the context of internationalization; this study served as an empirical basis for proposals for Ukrainian enterprises to enter the EU markets.

The study proposes an updated conceptual model of the international marketing environment that combines classical external factors with new variables: the level of institutional maturity of the exporting country, entrepreneurial capacity, and the availability of infrastructure support. This method improves the relevance of the model to management and allows for better adaptation of plans to the requirements of an unstable transformational economy. The main groups of internationalization strategies (exports, joint ventures, direct investment) are considered and the feasibility of their application is determined depending on the size and capabilities of the company. An adaptive model of phased entry into foreign markets is proposed, which involves the use of sales pilots, crowdfunding, marketplaces and reliance on the Ukrainian diaspora as a channel of cultural integration.

The practical result of the study is a collection of proposals for reducing risks and increasing the efficiency of entering foreign markets that can be used by Ukrainian businesses and export support programs. The scientific uniqueness of the study lies in the combination of an industry case study and an analytical method of structuring the marketing environment, which allows extrapolating the results to other FMCG industries. The findings can serve as a basis for regional plans for Ukrainian companies seeking to go global in the future.

Furthermore, there are good reasons why the coffee sector was chosen as the focus of the empirical study. It is a typical industry because it has a number of features that make it useful for assessing broad approaches to globalization. The coffee business is heavily dependent on imported raw materials, is highly competitive, has constant demand, and is extremely sensitive to socio-cultural and legal differences in importing countries. Because of this, we can use it as a demonstration model to extend important findings to other FMCG-related businesses that have comparable marketing logic and market constraints. Since the EU market is the most desirable market for Ukrainian exports, the coffee case in this study serves as a model case that allows us to test and improve proposals for internationalization tactics.

This study offers a revised model of the international marketing environment, adding key factors like institutional maturity, social capital, and support infrastructure-especially relevant for transitional economies. Using the coffee markets of Germany and Poland as a case, it provides practical insights into internationalization strategies for Ukrainian companies. The research contributes both a conceptual framework and adaptive entry model that can be applied across other FMCG sectors and emerging markets.

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