

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.32782/2524-0072/2025-79-162>

UDC 339.542(4ЄС)

PECULIARITIES OF TRADE PROTECTION OF THE EUROPEAN UNION MARKET

ОСОБЛИВОСТІ ТОРГОВЕЛЬНОГО ЗАХИСТУ РИНКУ ЄВРОПЕЙСЬКОГО СОЮЗУ

Hehamian Lusine

Master's Student,

Vasyl` Stus Donetsk National University

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4391-3515>**Atamanchuk Zoryna**

PhD in Economics, Associate Professor,

Vasyl` Stus Donetsk National University

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6139-1653>**Гегамян Лусіне Радіківна, Атаманчук Зорина Асланівна**

Донецький національний університет імені Василя Стуса

The article examines the features of trade protection in the European Union; measures used to protect the internal market from unfair competition and negative external economic influences; the legislative framework of the European approach to regulating competitive relations in the field of trade protection. The main instruments in this area are considered, starting from traditional options for trade protection (anti-dumping and anti-subsidy measures) and ending with newer instruments (Regulation on Foreign Subsidies, International Procurement Instrument). The dynamics of anti-dumping, anti-subsidy and safeguard investigations by the European Commission are analyzed. The importance of the evidence base and statistical data in making decisions on the application of both compensatory and sanction measures in EU trade policy is substantiated.

Keywords: international trade, trade protection, trade protection measures, anti-dumping measures, anti-subsidy measures, foreign economic policy, security, European Union, European Commission, World Trade Organization.

У статті розглянуто особливості торговельного захисту Європейського Союзу; заходи, які застосовуються для захисту внутрішнього ринку від недобросовісної конкуренції та негативних зовнішньоекономічних впливів; законодавчі основи європейського підходу до регулювання конкурентних відносин у сфері торговельного захисту. Розглянуто основні інструменти в цій площині, починаючи від традиційних варіантів торговельного захисту (антидемпінгові та антисубсидійні заходи), і закінчуючи новішими інструментами (Регламент про іноземні субсидії, Інструмент міжнародних закупівель). Кожен інструмент діє на різних ринках ЄС – деякі стосуються ринку закупівель, інші – злиттів та поглинань, а ще інші – ланцюгів поставок та стандартів – разом ці захисні торговельні політики роблять Європейський Союз більш замкнутим, що може мати певні негативні наслідки для цього інтеграційного утворення. На підставі статистичних даних проаналізовано динаміку антидемпінгових, антисубсидійних та захисних розслідувань з боку Європейської комісії за період 2020-2024 років, виявлено зростання інтенсивності їх застосування. Обґрунтовано значення доказової бази та статистичних даних у прийнятті рішень щодо застосування як компенсаційних, так і санкційних заходів у торговельній політиці Європейського Союзу. Зауважено, що результативність політики визначається прозорістю процедур, якістю доказової бази, верифікацією методик розрахунків та передбачуваністю регуляторного середовища. Наголошено на тому, що Європейський Союз повинен забезпечити чесну конкуренцію на єдиному ринку. Це є основоположним для того, щоб компанії продовжували процвітати та інвестувати в Європу. Зроблено висновки, що поєднання економічної автономії, конкуренції та дотримання міжнародних правил є умовою для збереження ролі Європейського Союзу та забезпечення довгострокового зростання. Зазначено, що впровадження автоматичної реєстрації імпорту спрощує адміністративні процедури та зменшує навантаження на промисловість, усуваючи потребу в підготовці окремих запитів. Крім того, це дозволяє Європейській Комісії отримувати точні дані про обсяги та джерела імпорту товарів, що перебувають під розслідуванням, а також про загальні ринкові тенденції. Виконання реєстрації покладається на митні органи держав-членів відповідно до інструкцій окремих імплементаційних регламентів.

Ключові слова: міжнародна торгівля, торговельний захист, засоби торговельного захисту, антидемпінгові заходи, антисубсидійні заходи, зовнішньоторговельна політика, безпека, Європейський Союз, Європейська комісія, Світова організація торгівлі.



Statement of the problem. In the current conditions of globalization and integration of international markets, countries face risks for national producers and domestic market. Product safety is one of the most important problems of the world economy. Products must meet the safety requirements of the countries in which they are sold. The European Union (EU) uses various trade protection mechanisms to regulate imports and ensure the competitiveness of its own economy. However, the effectiveness of these instruments remains debatable, since they can simultaneously stimulate the development of national industry and, at the same time, create tension in international trade.

Analysis of recent research and publications. The problem of trade protection and regulation of foreign economic activity has been the subject of numerous scientific studies. Rudyk V. A. examined the mechanisms of state regulation of foreign economic activity, emphasizing the need for effective institutional tools to protect national producers and stabilize external trade relations [1]. His conclusions provide a methodological basis for analyzing how similar regulatory approaches are implemented at the supranational level within the European Union. Hladshtein Ye. D. focused on the modern transformation of socio-economic systems under globalization, which is essential for understanding the contextual changes that influence the evolution of EU trade protection policy and its adaptation to new economic challenges [2]. Lamprecht Y. provided an in-depth economic analysis of the EU's trade defence instruments, paying particular attention to their efficiency, structure, and impact on the competitiveness of the single market. The author's findings highlight the complex relationship between protectionist measures and the principles of fair competition [3]. Kovalova M. L. investigated the instruments of trade defence of the EU and Ukraine, emphasizing the similarities and differences in their regulatory frameworks and identifying opportunities for the approximation of Ukrainian trade policy to European standards [4].

Despite the presence of valuable theoretical and analytical research, the existing literature still lacks a comprehensive assessment of the functioning of the EU's trade protection system that would integrate both traditional and new regulatory instruments within a single analytical framework. This gap determines the need for further investigation of the EU's trade defence policy from a holistic and interdisciplinary perspective.

Highlighting previously unresolved parts of the overall problem. Despite extensive research on trade protection, many aspects of the EU's trade defence policy remain insufficiently studied. In particular, there is a lack of comprehensive analysis of how traditional instruments interact with new regulatory tools and how these measures affect the balance between protectionism and competitiveness in the single market.

Formation of the objectives of the article. The objective of the article is to analyze the main features of the EU's trade protection system, assess the effectiveness of its instruments, and determine their role in maintaining fair competition and economic security within the internal market.

Summary of the main research material. The world economy is currently undergoing a period of significant transformation. Events over the past decade, including China's economic growth and global climate change, have significantly disrupted traditional models of international trade. The Covid-19 pandemic has forced misunderstanding in Europe and elsewhere about over-reliance on imports of critical goods and technologies, while Russia's war against Ukraine has highlighted the need for greater economic autonomy. In Brussels and other European capitals, the EU's declining share of the global economy has prompted policymakers to reconsider the region's role in the global economic context and assess the implications of changing patterns of economic power for the European Union. Experts say Europe is insufficiently prepared for new geopolitical challenges and risks losing its relevance in the international institutions that had formed trade rules earlier [5].

The legislative framework of the European approach to regulating competition relations in the field of trade defence is presented in Articles 131 and 133 of the Treaty establishing the European Community [6]. These provisions define the need to protect internal trade, in particular through the regulation of dumping and state subsidies, creating the basis for the application of trade defence measures.

Trade protection measures of European Union are presented in Figure 1.

EU anti-dumping measures aim to protect the internal market from imports of goods sold at prices lower their normal value, where such imports cause injury to European producers. This is usually done by imposing anti-dumping duties. In June 2025, the European Commission

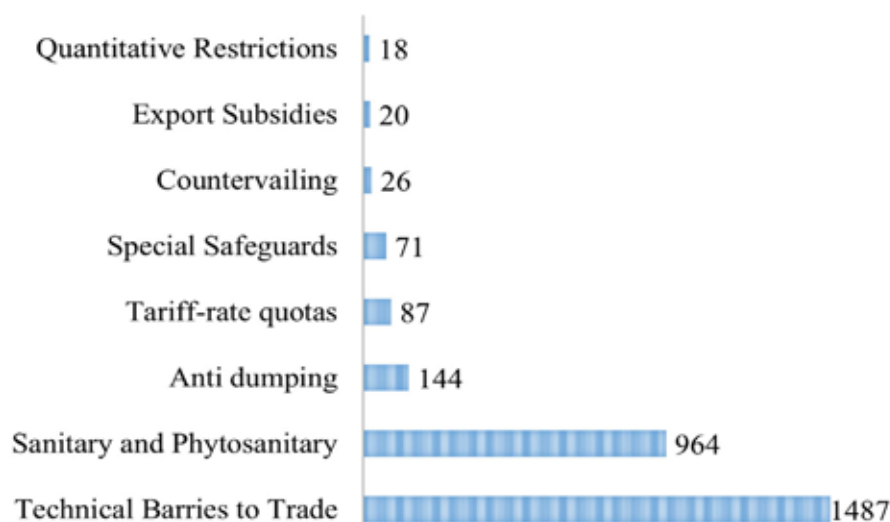


Figure 1. Trade protection measures of European Union, total number

Source: formed on the basis of [4; 7]

imposed an anti-dumping duty of 131.1% on vanillin from China after the investigation confirmed dumping [2].

Subsidies are financial support provided by governments or public bodies of member countries of the World Trade Organization (WTO) that creates a competitive advantage for the recipient, including direct cash payments, tax benefits or the provision of goods and services. The WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies, which prohibits support for illegal and overfishing, entered into force on 15 September 2025 [8].

The current policy instruments of the EU customs regulation include the Anti-Coercion Mechanism (ACI), the International Procurement Instrument (IPI), the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM), the Foreign Subsidies Instrument (FSI), the updated compliance regulations, the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive and the level playing field provisions in trade agreements with the United Kingdom. This also includes screening of foreign direct investment, anti-dumping, sanctions, export credits and sustainability standards in trade agreements, and state subsidies to stimulate production in the EU [9].

In 2024, the European Commission opened 33 new investigations – the highest number of new cases in a calendar year since 2006. While many of the ongoing measures and new investigations, as in previous years, concerned steel products, over a third of the new investigations opened last year concerned the chemicals sector [6].

Current policy instruments for EU customs regulation include the Anti-Coercion Mechanism

(ACI), the International Procurement Instrument (IPI), the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM), the Foreign Subsidies Instrument (FSI), updated compliance regulations, the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive and the level playing field provisions in trade agreements with the UK. This also includes screening of foreign direct investment, anti-dumping, sanctions, export credits and sustainability standards in trade agreements, and state subsidies to stimulate production in the EU [9].

The dynamics of anti-dumping, anti-subsidy and safeguard investigations for the period from January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2024 are presented in table 1.

The European Commission's anti-subsidy investigation concerning imports of battery electric vehicles (BEVs) from China has become one of the most important economic cases of 2024. Through this investigation and the countervailing duties imposed, the European Commission has demonstrated its commitment to strict compliance with EU rules and World Trade Organization norms.

To strengthen trade defence instruments and combat the effects of unfair competition, including overcapacity, the European Commission introduced automatic registration of imports for all ongoing anti-dumping and anti-subsidy investigations in October 2024. The aim of such registration is to ensure the possibility of retroactive collection of duties if certain legal conditions are met. However, automatic registration does not mean automatic application of measures; the final decision is taken only at the final stage of the investigation. Previously,

Table 1

**Dynamics of anti-dumping, anti-subsidy and safeguard investigations
for the period from January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2024**

Investigations	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Proceedings initiated during the period	28	28	41	31	31
Expiry date revisions completed					
by confirming the measures	7	15	18	23	11
by suspending/cancelling measures	0	1	0	1	0
Other types of completed views					
by confirming / alteration / reapplying / extending measures	12	3	13	16	9
by suspending/cancelling measures	6	2	8	2	6
Total views completed during the period	25	21	39	42	26

Source: formed on the basis of [6]

registration was carried out only after a reasoned request from industrial enterprises.

The introduction of automatic import registration simplifies administrative procedures and reduces the burden on industry by eliminating the need to prepare separate requests. It also allows the European Commission to obtain accurate data on the volumes and sources of imports of the products under investigation, as well as on general market trends. In accordance with the instructions of the individual implementing regulations, the implementation of registration is entrusted to the customs authorities of the member states.

Import control following the introduction of trade measures is a key to the effectiveness of the system, as avoidance of these measures undermines their effectiveness. Where industry finds evidence of avoidance, the European Commission takes action to address such violations. Avoidance is defined as a change in the pattern of trade between third countries and the EU resulting from a practice, process or operation not covered by the measures in force [10].

The EU uses both compensatory and punitive measures in its trade policy, which generally promotes domestic production and reduces import dependence. This approach represents a policy changing, as a protectionist strategy makes the EU more economically self-sufficient, which can potentially distort markets and trade,

reducing the benefits of foreign trade and contributing to the redistribution of resources within Europe. As the EU is primarily a supplier of goods and services to the world market, punitive measures can trigger corresponding restrictions from trading partners, which will negatively affect exports and the trade balance. In addition, there are potential strategic consequences, the importance of which has increased since Russia's war against Ukraine. New trade disputes may arise not only with competitors, but also with states [11] with which the EU seeks closer cooperation to enhance geopolitical security.

Conclusions. The European Union must therefore ensure fair competition in the single market. This is essential if companies are to continue get profits and invest in Europe. The EU has several tools at its disposal to combat market-distorting practices, ranging from more traditional trade defence options such as anti-dumping and anti-subsidy measures to newer instruments such as the Foreign Subsidies Regulation and the International Procurement Instrument. Each instrument operates in different EU markets – some concern the procurement market, others – mergers and acquisitions, and others – chains and standards' suppling. Together, these protectionist trade policies make the EU more closed-off, which can have negative consequences for this integration unit, as the EU is more of a supplier of goods and services than a buyer.

REFERENCES:

1. Rudyk, V. A. (2014). Mekhanizmy derzhavnoho rehulivannia zovnishn'oeekonomichnoyi diial'nosti [Mechanisms of state regulation of foreign economic activity]. *Visnyk TNTU* [Bulletin of TNTU], (2), 67–74. (in Ukrainian).
2. Hladshtein, A. L. (2021). Zasoby torhovel'noho zakhystu yak instrument rozvytku konkurentsii u rehional'nykh torhovel'nykh uhodakh [Trade defence instruments as a tool for developing competition in regional trade agreements]. *Yevropeys'ki perspektivy* [European Perspectives], (1), 190–199. (in Ukrainian).

3. Lamprecht, Y. (2022). EU trade defence instruments: An economic analysis. *ECIPE Occasional Paper*, no. 04/2022. Brussels: European Centre for International Political Economy.
4. Kovalova, M. L. (2025). Instrumenty torhovel'noho zakhystu YeS ta Ukrayiny [Instruments of trade defence of the EU and Ukraine]. *Zymova ekonomichna shkola* [Winter Economic School], conference paper. (in Ukrainian).
5. European Union. Torhovelnyi zakhyst [Trade defence]. Official website of the European Union. Available at: https://policy.trade.ec.europa.eu/enforcement-and-protection/trade-defence_en (accessed September 14, 2025).
6. World Trade Organization. *Taryfni profili – Tsentralna Yevropa* [Tariff profiles – Central Europe]. Available at: https://www.wto.org/english/res_e/statis_e/daily_update_e/tariff_profiles/CE_e.pdf (accessed September 18, 2025).
7. World Trade Organization. World Trade Organization official website. Available at: <https://www.wto.org/> (accessed October 19, 2025).
8. Policy Trade. (2025, June 12). YeS vzhyvaie zakhodiv proty dempinhovogo importu vanilinu z Kytau [EU takes action against dumped imports of vanillin from China]. Available at: https://policy.trade.ec.europa.eu/news/eu-acts-against-dumped-imports-vanillin-china-2025-06-12_en (accessed September 15, 2025).
9. World Trade Organization. Uhoda pro subsydii ta kompensatsiini zakhody [Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures]. Available at: https://www.wto.org/english/docs_e/legal_e/24-scm.pdf (accessed September 17, 2025).
10. Council of the European Union. Servis dokumentiv [Council of the European Union. Document service]. Available at: <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-11968-2025-ADD-1/en/pdf> (accessed September 18, 2025).
11. European Commission. Official website of the European Commission. Available at: https://commission.europa.eu/index_en (accessed September 18, 2025).

СПИСОК ВИКОРИСТАНИХ ДЖЕРЕЛ:

1. Рудик В. А. Механізми державного регулювання зовнішньоекономічної діяльності. *Вісник ТНТУ*. № 2, 2014. С. 67–74.
2. Гладштейн А. Л. Засоби торговельного захисту як інструмент розвитку конкуренції у регіональних торговельних угодах. *Європейські перспективи*. № 1, 2021. С. 190–199.
3. Lamprecht Y. EU Trade Defence Instruments: An Economic Analysis. *ECIPE Occasional Paper*, № 04/2022. Brussels: European Centre for International Political Economy, 2022.
4. Ковальова М. Л. Інструменти торговельного захисту ЄС та України. *Зимова економічна школа*. 2025 (доповідь).
5. Офіційний вебсайт Європейського Союзу. Торговельний захист. URL: https://policy.trade.ec.europa.eu/enforcement-and-protection/trade-defence_en (дата звернення: 14.09.2025).
6. Світова організація торгівлі. Тарифні профілі – Центральна Європа. URL: https://www.wto.org/english/res_e/statis_e/daily_update_e/tariff_profiles/CE_e.pdf (дата звернення: 18.09.2025).
7. Світова організація торгівлі. Офіційний вебсайт. URL: <https://www.wto.org/> (дата звернення: 19.10.2025).
8. ЄС вживає заходів проти демпінгового імпорту ваніліну з Китаю. Policy Trade, 12 червня 2025 р. URL: https://policy.trade.ec.europa.eu/news/eu-acts-against-dumped-imports-vanillin-china-2025-06-12_en (дата звернення: 15.09.2025).
9. Світова організація торгівлі. Угода про субсидії та компенсаційні заходи. URL: https://www.wto.org/english/docs_e/legal_e/24-scm.pdf (дата звернення: 17.09.2025).
10. Рада Європейського Союзу. (2025). Сервіс документів. URL: <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-11968-2025-ADD-1/en/pdf> (дата звернення: 18.09.2025).
11. Європейська комісія. Офіційний вебсайт. URL: https://commission.europa.eu/index_en (дата звернення: 18.09.2025).