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**Diversification of Belarusian Exports:  
The Potential of the DCFTA-Countries  
Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia**

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# **Diversification of Belarusian Exports: The Potential of the DCFTA-Countries Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia**

## **Executive Summary**

Belarus is an open economy, with exports running at above 50% of GDP. The Russian Federation accounts for about half of Belarus' total exports of goods. A diversification of Belarus' exports to other markets would be a well-founded policy goal, increasing export sales and reducing the vulnerability to external shocks.

Apart from discovering new markets, traditional trade partners offer also new opportunities at comparatively low access costs. This is in particular true for Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia, which have all free trade agreements with Belarus, and which taken together are the destination of 12% of Belarusian exports. At the same time, these markets have newly established deep and comprehensive free trade agreements (DCFTAs) with the EU, which implies a changing competitive environment for Belarusian exporters to these markets over the short to medium term.

In this study, we look at the concrete export potential of Belarus on a product level to Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia. Our empirical analysis reveals there is export potential in each country case, as the export structure of Belarus and the import structure of these countries show a high degree of complementarity. On a (HS4) product level, we find that railway equipment, fertilizers and agro-food products are among the Top-10 products for which Belarus has the highest potential of exports to Ukraine. In the case of Moldova, the corresponding products are metal products, construction materials, fertilizers, and special vehicles. Wood products, chemicals, metal, food and equipment are among Top-10 products, for which Belarus has the highest potential of exports to Georgia.

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## 1. Introduction

Belarus is an open economy, with exports running at above 50% of GDP. The country's exports are concentrated mainly on one main partner – the Russian Federation. It accounts for about half of Belarus' total exports of goods, and 96% of exports to the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU). The diversification of Belarus' exports would therefore be beneficial for the economy, increasing export sales and reducing the vulnerability to external shocks.

The goal of this study is to look at the export potential of Belarus on a product level to Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia. Taken as a group, the three markets are quite important for Belarus, absorbing 12% of goods exports. This is after the EAEU (46%) and the EU (27%) the highest country group. All three countries have CIS free trade agreements with Belarus, and recently entered into deep and comprehensive free trade agreements (DCFTAs) with the EU. These DCFTAs imply also a new competitive environment for Belarusian exporters on their domestic markets.

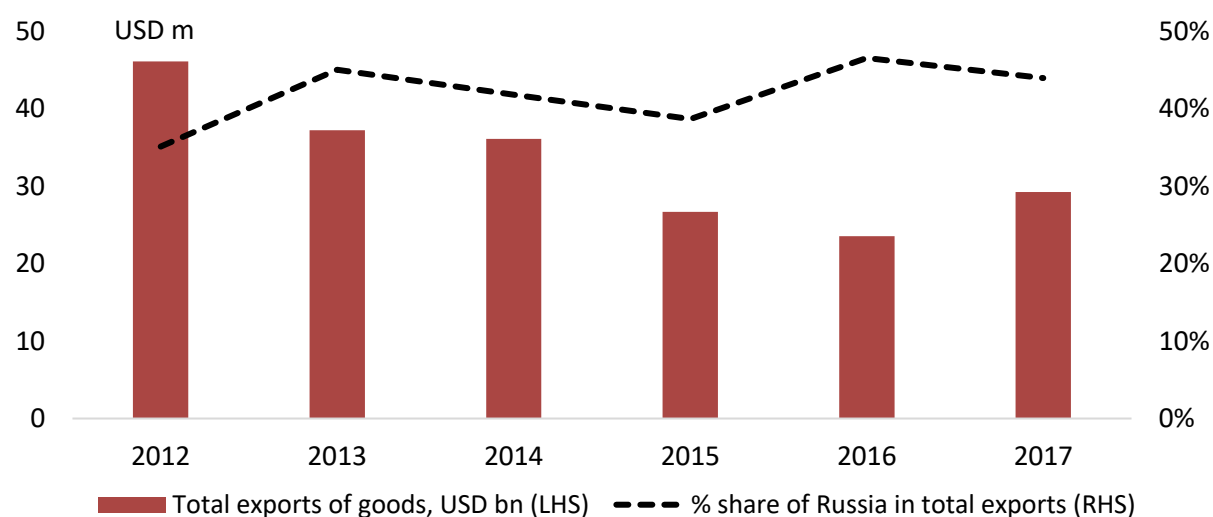
The study is structured as follows: In chapter 2, we provide an overview of Belarus' export patterns and trade regimes. Chapter 3 lays down the methodology of our analysis, which is based on the methodology developed by the International Trade Centre (ITC), and was further modified to meet the goals of the study. The following chapter 4 summarizes the main results of our exercise, identifying Belarusian products with high export potential on three markets Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia. Chapter 5 concludes.

## 2. Review of export patterns and trade regime

### 2.1. Belarus' general export patterns

In 2017, Belarus' nominal exports grew for the first time after several years of decline. According to Belstat, exports of goods reached USD 29 bn, demonstrating an impressive USD 5 bn or 24% increase compared to the previous year (Figure 1). The higher exports of mineral products, machines and transport equipment and agro-good exports explain two thirds of the total expansion. Exports of mineral products grew most significantly – it reached USD 7 bn, adding USD 2 bn or +42% in 2017.

**Figure 1: Belarus' exports of goods, 2012-2017**

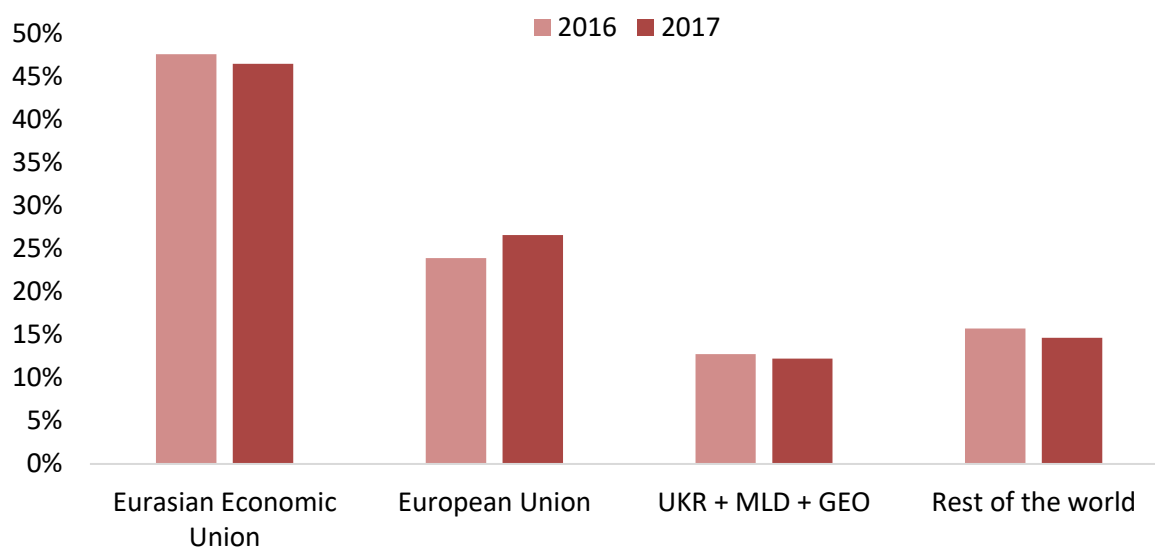


Source: UN ComTrade

Belarus predominantly trades with its direct neighbors, or within the close neighborhood. Among individual countries, the Top-3 destinations for Belarusian exports are Russia (44% of total in 2017), Ukraine (12%) and the United Kingdom (8%). Thus, together these three countries account for almost two thirds of Belarusian exports.

Key export partners of Belarus belong to three distinct groups (blocs) of countries, with unique trade regimes vis-à-vis Belarus and each other.

**Figure 2: Regional structure of Belarus' exports of goods, 2016-2017**



Source: UN ComTrade

Russia is the largest member of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), to which also belongs Belarus, Armenia, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. Altogether, the EAEU accounts for 46% of Belarusian exports in 2017, out of which 96% are shipments to Russia. The EAEU features duty free trade within the union and a common tariff regarding trade with third countries, although with a number of exemptions. Also, the EAEU countries have been gradually unifying their food and industrial safety regulations.

The EU-28 is the second largest export destination of Belarus, accounting for 27% of total exports. In addition to the UK, Germany, the Netherlands and Poland are key destination markets within the EU. Belarusian exports to the EU are subject to the Most Favored Nation (MFN) trade regime as well as all standard food and industrial safety requirements. Animal origin products requirements are probably the most cumbersome out of all regulations, as export access is granted to individual establishments after both the national and the enterprise's food safety control system are verified by the EU.

Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia are tentatively grouped as the third largest export destination for the Belarussian exports. Ukraine is the largest among them being the second largest export partner of Belarus after Russia and absorbing 92% of Belarus' shipments to the group. These three countries do not form any formal trade group, but they are united by at least three important features:

1. First, all three of them have free trade agreements with Belarus, despite the latter is the member of the EAEU. The EAEU Agreement allows preservation of the existing bilateral and plurilateral FTAs within the CIS signed before the establishment of the EAEU. Moreover, the EAEU allows unilateral trade restrictions, and Belarus does not share trade restrictions

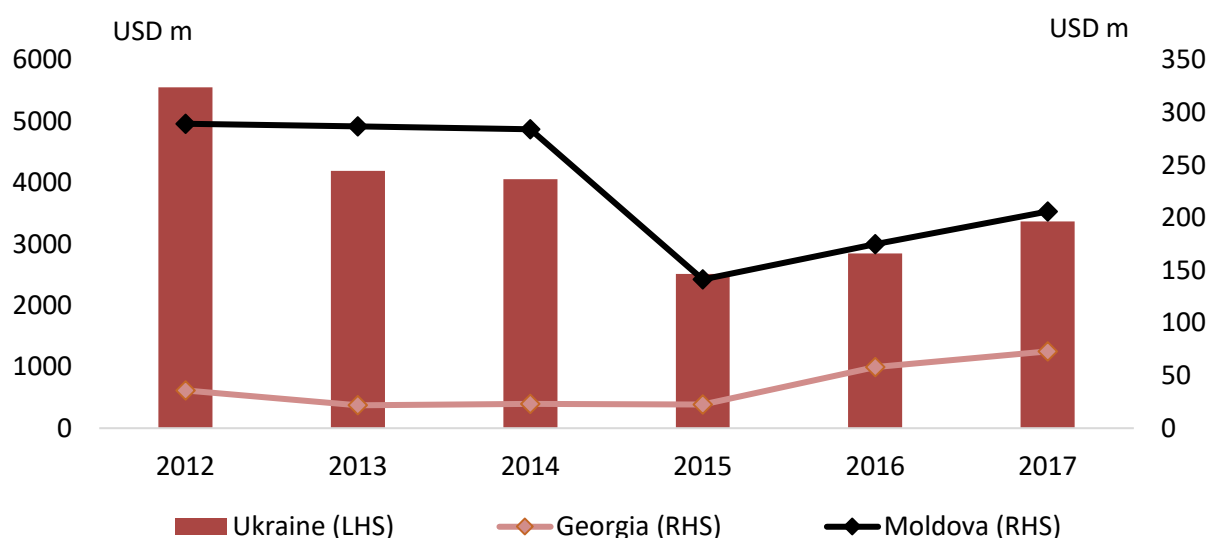
applied by Russia against Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia. Thus, Belarus can trade with the DCFTA countries duty-free.

2. Second, these countries as well as Belarus are signatory parties of the CIS Rules of Origin Agreement allowing a full cumulation among them and thus further simplifying trade.
3. Third, Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia established Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas (DCFTAs) with the EU, envisaging complete or almost complete elimination of import duties in trade with the EU and a harmonization of food and industrial products safety regulations with the EU norms and practices. Within this study, we will call them the DCFTA countries and focus on them.

## 2.2 Belarus' exports to the DCFTA countries

Belarus' exports to the DCFTA countries accelerated in 2016-2017 after several years of a downward trend, but remained well below its peak reached in 2012. In 2017, exports of goods to Ukraine increased by 18%, to Moldova by 14% and to Georgia by 26%, with only the latter exceeding the Belarussian total nominal export growth at 24% in 2017. As a result, the shares of Ukraine and Moldova in Belarus' exports decreased.

**Figure 3: Belarus' exports to Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, 2012-2017**



Source: UN ComTrade

The structure of Belarusian exports to Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia is very different for each of the country, and does not resemble the structure of exports to the rest of the world, indicating that there could be a potential for extensive margin type expansion – existing products entering new markets. In particular, exports to Georgia is skewed towards machinery and equipment, to Moldova and Ukraine – towards mineral fuels, while exports of food products and chemicals being an important components of Belarus total exports are underrepresented in trade with the DCFTA countries.

**Table 1: Structure of Belarus' exports, 2016**

	Ukraine	Moldova	Georgia	ROW
Food and live animals	2%	14%	9%	18%
Beverages and tobacco	1%	1%	3%	1%
Crude materials, inedible, except fuels	0%	2%	1%	3%
Mineral fuels, lubricants and related materials	66%	28%	0%	15%
Animal and vegetable oils, fats and waxes	0%	0%	0%	0%
Chemicals and related products	10%	11%	9%	17%
Manufactured goods classified chiefly by material	8%	19%	15%	17%
Machinery and transport equipment	11%	19%	54%	17%
Miscellaneous manufactured articles	2%	6%	8%	8%
Commodities and transactions not classified elsewhere in the SITC	0%	0%	0%	4%

Source: UN ComTrade

Looking at the trade complementarity index, estimated by the World Integrated Trade Solution (WITS), allows us to assess how well the global export structure of a country matches the import structure of its partner. The index is ranging from 0 (lowest score) to 100 (highest score) with a higher score indicating that the countries show a higher trade complementarity. The index shows that Belarus' exports feature strong (potential) complementarity with the structure of imports of Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia, exceeding the complementarity of the Belarusian trade with, for example, Russia (Table 2).



**Table 2: Trade complementary of Belarus exports with imports of selected partners**

	2012	2014	2016
Russia	41.99	46.02	50.92
European Union	59.55	59.42	59.35
Ukraine	68.44	66.64	66.02
Moldova	56.06	59.62	64.10
Georgia	57.37	60.50	64.60

Source: WITS

This suggests that Belarus' exports to the DCFTA countries have untapped export potential, which we explore in more details below.

### 2.3. The DCFTA countries' trade regime vis-à-vis Belarus

The DCFTAs between the EU have been applied since 2014 for Moldova and Georgia, and since 2016 for Ukraine. In all three cases, the DCFTA had been launched provisionally before the ratification of the Association Agreements was completed allowing their full-scale enactment.

**Table 3: DCFTAs launch schedule**

	Provisional application	Fully in force
Georgia	September 2014 – June 2016	Since July 2016
Moldova	June 2014 – June 2016	Since July 2016
Ukraine	January 2016 – August 2017	Since September 2017

Source: [3dcftas.eu](http://3dcftas.eu)

For Belarus, the establishment of the DCFTAs means two key changes in terms of access to the markets of Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia. First, the relative price competitiveness of the Belarusian products changes as they face tougher competition vis-à-vis the EU products after tariff liberalization. Georgia has immediately opened its market for all EU products, while Ukraine and Moldova opted for more gradual liberalization with long transition periods (Table 4).

**Table 4: Market access for the EU products**

	Before DCFTA: MFN tariffs	Immediately to zero	Zero after transition period	Partial liberalization
<b>Ukraine</b>	MFN applied: Agricultural duty – 9.2%  Non- agricultural – 3.7%	Majority of products	Transition up to 10 years for selected agricultural and industrial products	Selected agricultural products
<b>Moldova</b>	MFN applied: Agricultural duty – 11.6%  Non- agricultural – 4.4%	Majority of products	Transition up to 10 years for selected agricultural and industrial products	Selected agricultural products
<b>Georgia</b>	MFN applied: Agricultural duty – 6.4%  Non- agricultural – 0.7%	All products		

Source: *3dcftas.eu*

Second, the DCFTA countries committed to align their product safety regulations with the EU norms and practices. In the sphere of technical barriers to trade (TBT), setting non-food product safety requirements, all three countries have to harmonize their cross-sectoral legislation concerning general product safety, marketing requirements, and responsibility for defective products. In addition, the countries committed to align with over 20 sectoral directives regulating safety requirements for specific types of products, including machines, electromagnetic equipment, vessels under pressure, toys, medical devices and others. Currently, about one quarter of the directives have been fully aligned with the EU directives.

In the sphere of food safety, regulated by the system of sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures, the DCFTA countries committed to approximate to over 200 EU directives and regulations. As of now, the countries adopted the comprehensive SPS approximation strategies and have launched the approximation, but the main efforts are still ahead.

Once the harmonization is completed, Belarus exports to the DCFTA countries will have to meet these requirements. Simultaneously, the EAEU has been developing its technical regulations on the basis of the international/EU norms. Thus, the eventual impact of the TBT/SPS harmonization with

the EU norms by the DCFTA countries on Belarus will largely depend on the differences between the EU and the EAEU product safety regulations. However, during the transition, the risk of increased compliance costs is quite high.

### 3. Methodology of export potential estimates

The estimate of the export potential is based on the methodology developed by the International Trade Centre (ITC),<sup>1</sup> which was further modified to meet the goals of the study.

The methodology takes into account three dimensions of the export potential to create the composite indicator. The first is the supply side dimension, capturing current export performance of the exporter vis-à-vis the world. The second is the demand side dimension, capturing the current performance of the importing market vis-à-vis the world. The third is interaction dimension, capturing the current characteristics of trade interaction between Belarus and its partner. The three dimensions are evaluated using quantitative statistics.

Each dimension consists of several indicators. As they are measured differently, scores are assigned to normalize them. The scores are in scale between 0 (lowest ranking) to 100 (highest ranking). For each dimension, the average score is estimated. Then, the composite indicator is estimated as an average of the scores across three dimensions.

On supply side, the following indicators are used for each product:

- *Total export value*. The larger the total exports of the country, the greater its potential for the expansion. The latest annual figure and the five-year average are included.
- *World market share*. It is an indicator of the competitiveness of the product. While the total export value is biased towards large industries, the world market share could show the potential of smaller industries. The larger the share, the higher the potential. The latest annual figure and the five-year average are included.
- *Total Export growth (in value)*. The faster the exports growth, the better it is for export potential. The scores are zero for products, for which exports drop. The latest annual figure and the five-year average are included.
- *Revealed comparative advantage (RCA)*. The RCA traditionally used to evaluate competitiveness of exporters. The higher the RCA, the better the potential. The scores are assigned only for  $RCA > 1$  as 1 is the threshold indicating the country's competitive advantage in exports of a particular product.
- *Relative trade balance*. It shows the efficiency of the productive capacity. It is assumed that the country that exports less than it imports is unlikely to have a strong export potential in the product. The products with a negative trade balance get a zero score. The latest annual figure and the five-year average are included.

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<sup>1</sup> The original ITC methodology is described here: <http://www.intracen.org/uploadedFiles/intracenorg/CBIpolicyreport.pdf>. The methodology applied in the study modifies the ITC methodology using the experience of the Export Promotion Office of Ukraine (see methodology in each country profile, [https://epo.org.ua/category/analytics/country\\_profile/](https://epo.org.ua/category/analytics/country_profile/), in Ukrainian) as well as own modifications.

On demand side, the following indicators are used for each product:

- *Total value of imports*. It shows the potential size of the market. The latest annual figure and the five-year average are included.
- *Import growth (in value)*. The higher growth of imports signals about the demand expansion and thus could produce more opportunities for the exporter compared to stagnant or declining market. The scores are zero for products, for which imports drop. The latest annual figure and the five-year average are included.

On interaction dimension, the following indicators are used for each product and importing country:

- *Average tariff advantage of Belarus compared to the top competitor in the market*. It reveals the relative competitiveness of the exporter on the importing market. The higher the tariff faced by the competitor, the higher the score.
- *Relative revealed comparative advantage (RCA)*. Relative RCA shows whether the exporter is more competitive in a particular product than the importer, and thus whether it has stronger export potential. The score is zero if the exporter is less competitive than importer.
- *Ratio of the share of exports to a specific country over the share in total exports*. The ratio shows whether the country overtrades or undertrades in a particular product with a specific country compared to its aggregate trade. The smaller the ratio, the higher potential exists. The score is 100 if the country exports the product elsewhere, but not to the partner in question. The latest annual figure and the five-year average are included.
- *Ratio of the share of imports from a particular exporter (here: Belarus) over the share in total imports*. The ratio shows whether the country overtrades or undertrades in a particular product with a specific country compared to its aggregate trade. The smaller the ratio, the higher potential exists. The score is 100 if the country imports the product from any other country, but not from the partner in question. The latest annual figure and the five-year average are included.
- *Relative unit value*. It shows whether the exporter can supply to the importing market cheaper than its competitors can. To reduce an aggregation bias (very high difference in unit values could signal that there are very different products grouped together), the scores are assigned only for products with unit values ratios between 0.7 and 5. The latest annual figure and the five-year average are included.

The analysis is based on 4-digit level of Harmonized Trade Nomenclature (HS). Key data sources are the UN ComTrade, ITC Market Access Map and World Integrated Trade Solution (WITS). The base year of the analysis is 2016 due to data availability; the five-year averages are estimated for 2012-2016.

## 4. Export potential assessment: Empirical results

### 4.1. Ukraine

Railway equipment, fertilizers and agro-food products are among Top-10 products, for which Belarus has the highest potential of exports to Ukraine (see following Table 5). Belarus has already exported many of these products to Ukraine, but for several, including coaches, cheese and curd, animal origin flours and buckwheat, the potential remains untapped. Interestingly, Ukraine's imports from Belarus in 2017 show a quick expansion of several products from our top-10 list, like sawn wood and fertilizers.

Below we review each of Top-10 products briefly:

*Self-propelled railway or tramway coaches, vans and trucks (HS 8603).* Belarus exports these products to Russia and Georgia, in both cases paying zero duties. Ukraine imports coaches and vans from the EU countries, mostly Poland and Czech Republic. The reduced import duty within the DCFTA is currently 2.5% compared to 10% MFN, but will go to zero within several years. The coaches are subject to technical regulations and thus exposed to regulatory changes due to the DCFTA.

*Wood sawn or chipped lengthwise (HS 4407).* Belarus exports the sawn wood mostly to the EU, at an import duty of 0.2%. In 2016, Ukraine imported sawn wood from the EU (Poland, Romania) and Russia, in all cases duty-free. In 2017, Ukraine reported that Belarus became the second highest source of sawn wood, accounting for 20% of total and surpassing Russia. Wood is subject to phytosanitary regulations as well as construction materials regulations, and exposed to regulatory changes due to the DCFTA.

*Mineral or chemical fertilizers containing two or three of the fertilizing elements (HS 3105).* Belarus exports these fertilizers already to Ukraine and to the EU, in particular Lithuania, Poland, and Latvia. The import duty in the EU is 6.3%. Ukraine imports fertilizers mostly from Russia, despite applied anti-dumping duties against the Russian producers. Belarus is the second largest source of imports, but it is only about one fifth of Russia's share. Imports from the EU countries are quite small and still subject to import duties (1.3%), which will vanish in several years. Fertilizers are subject to SPS regulations and exposed to regulatory changes due to the DCFTA.

*Harvesting or threshing machinery, including straw or fodder balers (HS 8433).* Belarus exports these machines mostly to Russia and to smaller extent to Kazakhstan, i.e. with the EAEU. Exports to Ukraine are relatively small, although increased recently. Ukraine imports harvesting machines from the EU and the USA predominantly. The import duty is zero for all countries. Machines are subject to technical regulations and thus exposed to regulatory changes due to the DCFTA.

*Cheese and curd (HS 0406).* Belarus exports almost all cheese to Russia at zero import duty. Exports to the EU are tiny, although Belarus is authorized as dairy exporter to the EU, and individual enterprises are verified. Currently, eight Belarus dairy producers are allowed to export to the EU market. Ukraine imports most of the cheese from the EU at 5-6% import duty that gradually phases out. The MFN import duty is 10%. Cheese is subject to SPS regulations and exposed to regulatory changes due to the DCFTA. However, the existence of Belarusian EU-verified exporters signals that the impact of changes on the Belarus exporters could be minor.

*Other fermented beverages (HS2206).* Belarus supplies over 90% of fermented beverage exports to Russia. The second most important destination is the EU where it is subject to 6.1% import duty.

Exports to Ukraine exist, but are unstable. Ukraine imports this type of beverages mostly from the EU and Moldova, in both cases duty-free. Beverages are subject to SPS regulations and exposed to regulatory changes due to the DCFTA.

*Cereal flours other than of wheat or meslin (HS 1102).* Belarus exports these products mostly to the CIS countries, with Russia absorbing the most of exports. Ukraine was the second most important destination of exports in 2016, while in 2013-2015 exports to Ukraine was close to zero. Ukraine started importing this product recently, and it comes mostly from Belarus. Cereal flours are subject to SPS regulations and exposed to regulatory changes due to the DCFTA.

*Flours, meals and pellets, of animal origin (HS 2301).* Belarus exports this product mostly to Russia. Ukraine imports the product duty-free from the EU, but also from Mauritania and Senegal. The flours are subject to SPS regulations and exposed to regulatory changes due to the DCFTA.

*Cane or beet sugar and chemically pure sucrose (HS 1701).* Belarus exports sugar to the CIS countries, primarily to Russia (about 80% of total), but also to Moldova, Georgia, Central Asian countries. Exports to Ukraine intensified in 2016. Ukraine imports sugar mostly from the EU. Ukraine applied the tariff rate quota on imports of sugar within the DCFTA. Sugar is also subject to SPS regulations and exposed to regulatory changes due to the DCFTA.

*Buckwheat, other cereals (HS 1008).* Belarus exports this product predominantly to Russia, while Ukraine imports these products from Russia and Kazakhstan. Cereals are subject to SPS regulations and exposed to regulatory changes due to the DCFTA.

**Summing up, export potential of Belarus on the Ukrainian market is diverse ranging from buckwheat and cheese through fertilizers to harvesting machinery and self-propelled railways coaches. In several cases, Belarus competes with Russia on the Ukrainian market as it happens with mineral fertilizers, sawn wood or buckwheat. However, the role of the EU has been growing and it became a more serious competitor of Belarus for the Ukrainian market as Ukraine has been gradually reducing its imports duties vis-à-vis the EU and progresses in regulatory harmonization. All Top-10 products identified as having the highest export potential are exposed to the risk of the TBT/SPS related regulatory changes due to the DCFTA.**

**Table 5: Belarus products having the highest export potential on the Ukrainian market**

HS code	HS 2007 Product Description	Rank	BEL total exports, 2016, USD m	BEL exports growth, % 2016/2015	share in BEL total exports, %, 2016	share in BEL exports to UKR, %, 2016	BEL RCA 2016	UKR total imports, 2016, USD m	UKR imports growth, % 2016/2015	share in UKR total imports, %, 2016	share in UKR imports from BEL, %, 2016	UKR RCA 2016
8603	Self-propelled railway or tramway coaches, vans and trucks	1	46	33%	0.2%	0.0%	6.33	14	1365%	0.0%	0.0%	0.00
4407	Wood sawn or chipped lengthwise	2	175	20%	0.7%	0.0%	3.36	4	133%	0.0%	0.0%	4.90
3105	Mineral or chemical fertilizers containing two or three of the fertilizing elements	3	238	1%	1.0%	4.0%	9.15	567	25%	1.4%	4.1%	0.15
8433	Harvesting or threshing machinery, including straw or fodder balers	4	167	31%	0.7%	0.6%	6.28	408	131%	1.0%	0.6%	0.64
0406	Cheese and curd	5	690	8%	2.9%	0.1%	17.13	30	28%	0.1%	0.0%	0.39
2206	Other fermented beverages	6	4	49%	0.0%	0.0%	1.74	3	203%	0.0%	0.0%	0.24
1102	Cereal flours other than of wheat or meslin	7	27	221%	0.1%	0.2%	22.49	6	4028%	0.0%	0.2%	0.56
2301	Flours, meals and pellets, of animal origin	8	11	-7%	0.0%	0.0%	1.35	12	11%	0.0%	0.0%	0.18
1701	Cane or beet sugar and chemically pure sucrose	9	183	-11%	0.8%	0.8%	4.66	20	1582%	0.0%	0.0%	3.79
1008	Buckwheat, other cereals.	10	2	181%	0.0%	0.0%	1.53	2	-7%	0.0%	0.0%	8.17

Source: author's estimates

#### 4.2. Moldova

Metal products, fertilizers, and special vehicles are among Top-10 products, for which Belarus has the highest potential of exports to Moldova (see following Table 6). Most of them are products that Belarus currently exports elsewhere to the world, but not to Moldova, so the identified export potential is untapped.

Below we review each of Top-10 products briefly:

*Bars and rods of iron or non-alloy steel, hot-rolled (HS 7213).* Belarus exports iron and non-alloy steel bars and rods mostly to the EU, in particular the Netherlands, and to Israel and the USA. Except for Israel, Belarus' exporters face no duties in main destination countries. Import duty in Israel is 0.8%. Moldova imports this product from Ukraine. As Moldova committed to approximate wider range of industrial products safety requirements compared to Ukraine and Georgia, in Moldova, metal products are subject to TBT regulations and exposed to regulatory changes due to the DCFTA.

*Ceramic building bricks, flooring blocks, tiles (HS 6904).* Belarus exports bricks and tiles mostly to Russia and since recently – to Kazakhstan. Moldova imports these products mostly from Romania and Ukraine, in both cases duty-free. The products are subject to TBT regulations and exposed to regulatory changes due to the DCFTA.

*Knotted netting of twine, cordage, rope (HS 5608).* Belarus exports this product to Russia and to several EU countries. In the latter case, the product is subject to the 8% import duty. Moldova imports knotted netting from China and the EU, charging 8% import duty. No changes in TBT/SPS regulations are expected for this product due to the DCFTA.

*Flours, meals and pellets, of animal origin (HS 2301).* Belarus exports this product mostly to Russia. Moldova imports the product from the EU countries, including Denmark, Poland and Portugal. Imports are duty-free after the DCFTA. Animal-origin flours are subject to SPS regulations and exposed to regulatory changes due to the DCFTA.

*Pebbles, gravel, broken or crushed stone (HS 2517).* Belarus exports this type of product to Russia, several EU countries and Ukraine. Moldova imports these materials from Romania and – at smaller extent – Ukraine, in both cases duty-free. No changes in TBT/SPS regulations are expected for this product due to the DCFTA.

*Mineral or chemical fertilizers containing two or three of the fertilising elements (HS 3105).* Belarus exports these fertilizers already to Ukraine and to the EU, in particular Lithuania, Poland, and Latvia. The import duty in the EU is 6.3%. About three quarters of Moldova's imports of these fertilizers come from Russia, about 15% - from the EU. The current share of Belarus is tiny. Imports are duty-free. Fertilizers are subject to SPS and TBT regulations and exposed to regulatory changes due to the DCFTA.

*Cullet and scrap of glass; glass in the mass (HS 7001).* Belarus exports this product to Russia, Moldova's imports come from Romania. Glass is subject to TBT/SPS regulations depending on its purpose and thus exposed to regulatory changes due to the DCFTA.

*Wool and fine or coarse animal hair (HS 5105).* Belarus supplies this product to Russia, while Moldova imports duty-free from the Czech Republic. Wool is subject to SPS and regulations and exposed to regulatory changes due to the DCFTA.



*Tools put up in sets for retail sale (HS 8206).* Belarus exports the tool sets mostly to Russia and recently it accelerated exports to Kazakhstan as the EAEU partner. Moldova imports tools from the EU at zero duties and from China charging 8% import duty. No changes in TBT/SPS regulations are expected for this product due to the DCFTA.

*Special purpose motor vehicles (HS 8705).* Belarus exports special purpose motor vehicles predominantly to the CIS countries including Russia, Ukraine and Kazakhstan. Moldova imports them duty-free from Russia and the EU, including Germany, Italy and the Netherlands. The motor vehicles are subject to technical regulations and thus exposed to regulatory changes due to the DCFTA.

**Summing up, Belarus has untapped export potential on the market of Moldova for a variety of products including fertilizers, metals, construction materials, tool sets and special purpose motor vehicles. Currently, Moldova imports most of these products from Russia and the EU, although in some cases, Belarus will compete with Ukraine (iron bars and rods and gravel) or China (tool sets). Mostly, the competitors have duty-free access to Moldova's market, so the competitive advantage of Belarus could be lower price for comparable quality. For special purpose motor vehicles, accompanying services are especially important. Most of identified products are subject to TBT and/or SPS regulations and thus exposed to regulatory changes due to the DCFTA.**

**Table 6: Belarus products having the highest export potential on the Moldovan market**

HS code	HS 2007 Product Description	Rank	BEL total exports, 2016, USD m	BEL exports growth, % 2016/2015	share in BEL total exports, %, 2016	share in BEL exports to MLD, %, 2016	BEL RCA 2016	MLD total imports, 2016, USD m	MLD imports growth, % 2016/2015	share in MLD total imports, %, 2016	share in MLD imports from BEL, %, 2016	MLD RCA 2016
7213	Bars and rods, hot-rolled	1	110	70%	0.5%	0.0%	9.73	2	49%	0.1%	0.0%	
6904	Ceramic building bricks, flooring blocks, tiles	2	10	-18%	0.0%	0.0%	5.10	1	21%	0.0%	0.0%	4.86
5608	Knotted netting of twine, cordage, rope	3	5	79%	0.0%	0.0%	1.88	0	61%	0.0%	0.0%	
2301	Flours, meals and pellets, of animal origin	4	11	-7%	0.0%	0.0%	1.35	2	-14%	0.1%	0.0%	
2517	Pebbles, gravel, broken or crushed stone	5	66	132%	0.3%	0.0%	16.26	5	-5%	0.1%	0.0%	0.01
3105	Mineral or chemical fertilisers containing two or three of the fertilising elements	6	238	1%	1.0%	0.2%	9.15	28	25%	0.7%	0.2%	0.00
7001	Cullet and scrap of glass; glass in the mass	7	5	14%	0.0%	0.0%	8.24	0	373%	0.0%	0.0%	
5105	Wool and fine or coarse animal hair	8	6	149%	0.0%	0.0%	2.15	1	6251%	0.0%	0.0%	
8206	Tools put up in sets for retail sale.	9	3	158%	0.0%	0.0%	1.58	0	123%	0.0%	0.0%	0.00
8705	Special purpose motor vehicles	10	50	25%	0.2%	0.2%	2.87	10	63%	0.3%	0.1%	0.00

Source: author's estimates

### 4.3. Georgia

Wood products, chemicals, metal, food and equipment are among Top-10 products, for which Belarus has the highest potential of exports to Georgia (see following Table 7). Most of them are products that Belarus currently exports elsewhere to the world, but not to Georgia, so the identified export potential is untapped.

Below we review each of Top-10 products briefly:

*Prepared additives (HS 3811)*. Currently, key exports markets for prepared additives from Belarus are the EU countries (Latvia, the Netherlands, and Lithuania) and Russia. In the EU, the import duty is 5.4%, exports to Russia are duty-free. Georgia imports the product from the EU (Germany and the UK), Switzerland and Ukraine. For all partners, the import duty is zero. No changes in TBT/SPS regulations are expected for this product due to the DCFTA.

*Wire of iron or non-alloy steel (HS 7217)*. Key export markets for these products are Russia and the EU, all applying zero import duties. Georgia imports almost half of wires from Ukraine and another 39% from Turkey. The import duty for all partners is zero. No changes in TBT/SPS regulations are expected for this product due to the DCFTA.

*Wood sawn or chipped lengthwise (HS 4407)*. Belarus exports the sawn wood mostly to the EU, at an import duty of 0.2%. Georgia imports wood mostly from Russia (67%), Turkey and (10%) and Ukraine (10%). For major trading partners, the import duty is zero, although MFN import duty, faced e.g. by imports from Canada and the USA, is 12%. Wood is subject to phytosanitary regulations as well as construction materials regulations, and is exposed to regulatory changes due to the DCFTA.

*Hoopwood; split poles; piles, pickets and stakes of wood (HS 4404)*. Belarus exports the products predominantly to the EU, first of all Latvia, at zero import duty. Georgia imports this category of products from Ukraine (97%), duty-free. Wood is subject to phytosanitary regulations as well as construction materials regulations, and thus exposed to regulatory changes due to the DCFTA.

*Carpets and other textile floor coverings, woven (HS 5702)*. Belarus exports textile floor covering almost exclusively to Russia, while Georgia imports this product category mainly from Turkey (57%) and China (19%). The import duty on this product in Georgia is zero. No changes in TBT/SPS regulations are expected for this product due to the DCFTA.

*Liquid crystal devices not constituting articles; lasers (HS 9013)*. Belarus exports liquid crystal devices mostly to Russia (about 80%), followed by the EU countries and the USA. Exports to Russia are duty free, while exports to the EU are subject to 2.2% import duty, to the USA – 3.8%. Georgia imports these devices mostly from the EU, China and the USA, in all cases duty free. The devices are subject to technical regulations and thus exposed to regulatory changes due to the DCFTA.

*Portland cement and similar hydraulic cements (HS 2523)*. Belarus exports cements mostly to Russia, followed by the EU and Ukraine. Import duty charged by the EU is 1.7%. Georgia imports cements mostly from Azerbaijan and Turkey. The import duty for key partners is zero, the MFN duty is 12%. Cement is subject to construction materials regulations, and thus exposed to regulatory changes due to the DCFTA.

*Fruit and nuts, uncooked or cooked, frozen (HS 0811)*. Belarus currently exports these products, mostly various berries, to the EU at 17% import duty and to Russia much cheaper, as it is duty free.

Georgia imports this category of products from the EU and Russia duty-free. Fruits are subject to SPS regulations and thus exposed to regulatory changes due to the DCFTA.

*Apples, pears and quinces, fresh (HS 0808)*. Belarus exports fresh apples and other fruits belonging to this category exclusively to Russia, while Georgia imports them from Turkey (charging 6.5% import duty), the EU and Ukraine (duty-free). Apples are subject to SPS regulations and thus exposed to regulatory changes due to the DCFTA.

*Self-propelled railway or tramway coaches (HS 8603)*. Belarus exports these products to Russia and – since recently – to Georgia, while for Georgia, Belarus is the only large supplier of coaches. It is the only product among top-10, for which Belarus is already active on the Georgian market. Future exports will depend on whether Belarus can expand its production capacity to meet demands of both markets. Moreover, the coaches are subject to technical regulations and thus exposed to regulatory changes due to the DCFTA.

**Summing up, Belarus has quite a diversified set of products with export potential on the Georgian market, ranging from apples and berries through chemicals and metals to coaches and liquid crystal devices. Given the highly liberal trade policy of Georgia, import duty differentials cannot play a role as an export trigger. However, Belarus is likely to offer more competitive prices than other exporters. Six out of ten products are subject to TBT/SPS regulations and exposed to regulatory changes due to the DCFTA.**

**Table 7: Belarus products having the highest export potential on the Georgian market**

HS code	HS 2007 Product Description	Rank	BEL total exports, 2016, USD m	BEL exports growth, % 2016/2015	share in BEL total exports, %, 2016	share in BEL exports to GEO, %, 2016	BEL RCA 2016	GEO total imports, 2016, USD m	GEO imports growth, % 2016/2015	share in GEO total imports, %, 2016	share in GEO imports from BEL, %, 2016	GEO RCA 2016
3811	Anti-knock and other prepared additives, for mineral oils	1	94.1	-68%	0.4%	0.0%	6.10	1	127%	0.0%	0.0%	0.00
7217	Wire of iron or non-alloy steel	2	130.4	-8%	0.6%	0.0%	15.18	6	15%	0.1%	0.0%	0.24
4407	Wood sawn or chipped lengthwise	3	175.4	20%	0.7%	0.0%	3.36	7	186%	0.1%	0.0%	2.91
4404	Hoopwood; split poles; piles, pickets and stakes of wood	4	15.0	264%	0.1%	0.0%	43.06	2	2103%	0.0%	0.0%	
5702	Carpets and other textile floor coverings, woven	5	22.4	27%	0.1%	0.0%	3.62	3	156%	0.0%	0.0%	
9013	Liquid crystal devices not constituting articles; lasers	6	111.9	13%	0.5%	0.0%	1.03	1	308%	0.0%	0.0%	0.00
2523	Portland cement and similar hydraulic cements	7	67.5	-3%	0.3%	0.0%	4.97	28	42%	0.4%	0.0%	0.01
0811	Fruit and nuts, uncooked or cooked, frozen	8	38.0	1%	0.2%	0.0%	6.01	0	60%	0.0%	0.0%	0.01
0808	Apples, pears and quinces, fresh	9	39.8	-72%	0.2%	0.0%	2.73	6	57%	0.1%	0.0%	0.47
8603	Self-propelled railway or tramway coaches	10	45.9	33%	0.2%	21.4%	6.33	23	181805%	0.3%	39.0%	

Source: author's estimates

## 5. Conclusions

The regional diversification of Belarusian exports markets is a well-founded policy goal. Apart from discovering new markets, traditional trade partners offer also new opportunities at comparatively low access costs. This is in particular true for Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia, which have all free trade agreements with Belarus. At the same time, these markets have newly established deep and comprehensive free trade agreements (DCFTAs) with the EU, which implies a changing competitive environment for Belarusian exporters to these markets over the short to medium term.

Our empirical analysis reveals there is export potential, as the export structure of Belarus and the import structure of these countries show a high degree of complementarity. On a (HS4) product level, we find that railway equipment, fertilizers and agro-food products are among the Top-10 products for which Belarus has the highest potential of exports to Ukraine. In the case of Moldova, the corresponding products are metal products, construction materials, fertilizers, and special vehicles. Wood products, chemicals, metal, food and equipment are among Top-10 products, for which Belarus has the highest potential of exports to Georgia.

Our assessment methodology, which is based on the methodology developed by the International Trade Centre (ITC), and was further modified to meet the goals of the study, could be refined further in future research. Apart from the indicators included in our analysis, other important factors that could play a role for a policy decision regarding export promotion and market entrance could be taken into account in the analytical process. Such factors could e.g. include domestic supply factors or the socio-economic impact.

## 6. Annex

**Table A1: Export potential assessment for Ukraine – scores of individual components**

HS code	score_BEL exp value2016	score_BEL exp value2012-2016	score_BEL exp growth2016	score_BEL exp growth2012-2016	score_BEL share in world exp 2016	SCORE average BEL share in world exp 2012-2016	score_BEL RCA2016	score_BEL relative balance_2016	score_BEL relative balance_2012-2016	<b>SUPPLY average</b>	score_imp_value2016	score_UKR imp_value2012-2016	score_UKRimp growth_2016/2015	score_UKRimp growth_2016/2012	<b>DEMAND average</b>	score_UKRtariff	score_BEL/UKR RCA 2016	SCORE_ratio WLD/UKR_2016	Score_ratio shares WLD/UKR_2012-2016	score_UV_BEL_UKR_2016	SCORE average UV ratio_2012-2016	SCORE ratio shares WLD/BEL_2016	score_ratio shares WLD/UKR_2012-2016	<b>INTERACTION average</b>	<b>Estimate</b>	<b>rank</b>
<b>8603</b>	93	87	69	93	96	91	96	81	80	<b>87</b>	69	90	99	0	<b>65</b>	54	100	100	100	0	0	99	98	<b>69</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>4407</b>	98	97	63	76	92	90	92	98	97	<b>89</b>	48	38	94	85	<b>66</b>	0	0	63	60	97	96	99	98	<b>64</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3105</b>	99	98	48	74	97	96	97	92	88	<b>88</b>	99	99	65	86	<b>87</b>	77	96	23	10	60	62	11	5	<b>43</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>8433</b>	98	99	68	0	96	97	96	93	90	<b>82</b>	99	98	94	88	<b>94</b>	0	88	25	27	77	76	15	12	<b>40</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>0406</b>	100	99	53	68	99	99	99	98	97	<b>90</b>	81	86	67	0	<b>59</b>	81	95	52	38	64	66	99	41	<b>67</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2206</b>	70	63	74	89	87	79	87	89	84	<b>80</b>	45	35	96	95	<b>68</b>	0	84	47	26	89	93	99	41	<b>60</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>1102</b>	89	83	90	79	99	98	99	98	96	<b>93</b>	54	30	99	96	<b>70</b>	0	95	23	58	56	82	11	40	<b>46</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>2301</b>	81	79	0	77	84	82	84	89	80	<b>73</b>	67	61	50	85	<b>66</b>	0	85	100	66	81	76	99	48	<b>69</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>1701</b>	98	98	0	0	93	95	93	85	87	<b>72</b>	74	46	99	99	<b>79</b>	100	63	23	41	0	78	99	41	<b>56</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>1008</b>	64	50	88	98	86	67	86	98	94	<b>81</b>	41	37	0	90	<b>42</b>	81	0	100	100	99	64	99	98	<b>80</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>10</b>

Source: authors' estimates

**Table A2: Export potential assessment for Moldova – scores of individual components**

HS code	score_BEL exp value2016	score_BEL exp value2012-2016	score_BEL exp growth2016	score_BEL exp growth2012-2016	score_BEL share in world exp 2016	SCORE average BEL share in world exp 2012-2016	score_BEL RCA2016	score_BEL relative balance_2016	score_BEL relative balance_2012-2016	SUPPLY average	score_imp_value2016	score_MLD imp_value2012-2016	score_MLD imp growth_2016/2015	score_MLD imp growth_2016/2012	DEMAND average	score_MLD tariff	score_BEL/MLD RCA 2016	SCORE_ratio WLD/MLD_2016	Score_ratio shares WLD/MLD_2012-2016	score_UV_BEL_MLD_2016	SCORE average UV ratio_2012-2016	SCORE ratio shares WLD/BEL_2016	score_ratio shares WLD/MLD_2012-2016	INTERACTION average	Estimate	rank
<b>7213</b>	97	91	78	95	97	91	97	95	90	<b>92</b>	74	71	84	79	<b>77</b>	0	100	100	62	66	62	100	48	<b>67</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>6904</b>	81	87	0	0	94	98	94	87	92	<b>70</b>	67	60	72	91	<b>73</b>	91	67	100	100	75	76	100	100	<b>88</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>5608</b>	73	63	79	97	87	76	87	92	85	<b>82</b>	51	47	87	83	<b>67</b>	80	100	100	53	59	0	100	100	<b>74</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2301</b>	81	79	0	77	84	82	84	89	80	<b>73</b>	76	75	0	79	<b>57</b>	67	100	100	100	89	87	100	100	<b>93</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2517</b>	95	91	86	81	99	97	99	89	85	<b>91</b>	85	87	0	0	<b>43</b>	67	93	100	100	76	65	100	100	<b>88</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3105</b>	99	98	48	74	97	96	97	92	88	<b>88</b>	99	97	75	86	<b>89</b>	0	100	34	21	71	71	24	14	<b>42</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>7001</b>	72	65	58	95	97	93	97	96	91	<b>85</b>	45	33	97	89	<b>66</b>	75	100	100	64	55	0	100	48	<b>68</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>5105</b>	74	68	86	75	89	82	89	80	82	<b>81</b>	58	37	10	10	<b>74</b>	0	100	100	100	0	0	100	100	<b>62</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>8206</b>	67	56	87	90	86	73	86	0	0	<b>61</b>	54	49	93	70	<b>67</b>	80	100	100	100	82	50	100	100	<b>89</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>8705</b>	93	95	66	0	91	93	91	88	87	<b>78</b>	93	87	88	89	<b>89</b>	55	100	26	36	66	51	22	35	<b>49</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>10</b>

Source: authors' estimates



**Table A3: Export potential assessment for Georgia – scores of individual components**

HS code	score_BEL exp value2016	score_BEL exp value2012-2016	score_BEL exp growth2016	score_BEL exp growth2012-2016	score_BEL share in world exp 2016	SCORE average BEL share in world exp 2012-2016	score_BEL RCA2016	score_BEL relative balance_2016	score_BEL relative balance_2012-2016	SUPPLY average	score_imp_value2016	score_GEO imp_value2012-2016	score_GEOimp growth_2016/2015	score_GEOimp growth_2016/2012	DEMAND average	score_GEOtariff	score_BEL/GEO RCA 2016	SCORE_ratio WLD/GEO_2016	Score_ratio shares WLD/GEO_2012-2016	score_UV_BEL_GEO_2016	SCORE average UV ratio_2012-2016	SCORE ratio shares WLD/BEL_2016	score_ratio shares WLD/GEO_2012-2016	INTERACTION average	Estimate	rank
<b>3811</b>	96	98	0	80	95	98	95	95	95	<b>84</b>	62	54	91	92	<b>75</b>	104	100	100	100	0	99	100	100	<b>75</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>7217</b>	97	98	0	0	98	99	98	92	92	<b>75</b>	84	81	69	86	<b>80</b>	54	89	100	100	58	62	100	100	<b>76</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>4407</b>	98	97	63	76	92	90	92	98	97	<b>89</b>	84	76	94	75	<b>82</b>	39	64	100	31	63	80	100	32	<b>59</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>4404</b>	84	72	91	92	10	99	10	10	10	<b>93</b>	67	46	99	100	<b>78</b>	74	100	100	100	0	0	100	41	<b>55</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>5702</b>	87	85	67	67	92	90	92	88	90	<b>84</b>	73	69	93	69	<b>76</b>	96	100	100	49	77	55	100	41	<b>65</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>9013</b>	97	96	57	69	81	78	81	95	94	<b>83</b>	59	42	95	97	<b>73</b>	122	100	100	100	0	0	100	100	<b>62</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>2523</b>	95	95	0	0	94	94	94	91	86	<b>72</b>	96	96	82	0	<b>68</b>	171	92	100	100	71	61	100	100	<b>78</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>0811</b>	91	90	48	0	95	95	95	0	92	<b>67</b>	49	38	86	94	<b>67</b>	191	92	100	100	93	84	100	100	<b>84</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>0808</b>	92	95	0	0	90	94	90	0	0	<b>51</b>	83	76	85	90	<b>84</b>	34	77	100	100	88	80	100	100	<b>81</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>8603</b>	93	87	69	93	96	91	96	81	80	<b>87</b>	94	82	100	91	<b>92</b>	6	100	24	49	56	0	15	41	<b>35</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>10</b>

Source: authors' estimates

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