

# HARMONISATION OF UKRAINIAN LEGISLATION IN THE FIELD OF ORGANIC PRODUCTION WITH INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS\*

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**Abstract.** The article examines the process of harmonising Ukrainian legislation in the field of organic production with international and European standards. It analyses the conceptual and legal essence of harmonisation as an instrument of legal integration, in particular its role in ensuring the compatibility of the national legal field with EU regulations, Codex Alimentarius and FAO and IFOAM recommendations. *The purpose of the article* is to study the theoretical, methodological and practical foundations for harmonising Ukrainian legislation in the field of organic production with international standards, in particular EU standards, and to justify ways of improving it. The article reviews Ukrainian legislation in the field of organic production and describes the institutional mechanism for state control and certification. It identifies key challenges facing Ukraine in implementing international requirements, including insufficient detail in national standards, limited state support, certification issues, and the need to improve a number of procedures. Particular attention is paid to the need to adapt to the requirements of Regulation (EU) No. 2018/848 and the role of the Association Agreement with the EU as an instrument of legal compatibility. Current international trends in the development of the organic products market are analysed, confirming the strategic importance of legal harmonisation in the field of sustainable agriculture. Priority areas for improving legal policy in Ukraine have been identified, covering legislative, institutional, informational, educational and international aspects. Harmonisation of legislation in this area is seen as the basis for improving the competitiveness of the agricultural sector, ensuring transparency in the organic market and fulfilling Ukraine's international obligations. Key aspects of legal compatibility have been studied, including the ban on GMOs, certification requirements, transparency of labelling, traceability of the supply chain and adaptation of the control system. National and international approaches to organic production in the EU, the US, Canada and Japan were characterised, and the level of compliance of Ukrainian legislation with international standards was assessed using comparative and SWOT analysis. The study identified the strengths of national legislation, in particular the legal definition of organic production, the ban on the use of GMOs, the creation of a state register of operators, and active participation in international technical assistance programmes. At the same time, problematic aspects were identified, such as insufficient regulation of aquaculture, a limited number of certification bodies, unclear procedures for importing organic products, and fragmented use of international labelling. The scientific novelty of the article lies in a comprehensive approach to analysing Ukraine's legislative framework from the perspective of its compliance with EU standards, as well as in the development of a model for adapting national legislation to international requirements. A set of strategic directions for improving the legislative and institutional system has been proposed: updating the basic law in line with changes in EU legislation, strengthening the institutional capacity of control bodies, introducing a digital certification platform, developing legal awareness among farmers and consumers, and deepening international co-operation. Harmonisation of national legislation is defined not only as formal coordination of regulatory texts, but also as a systemic transformation of the legal, institutional and educational environments with the aim of achieving Ukraine's full integration into the international organic market.

**Keywords:** organic production, Ukrainian legislation, EU legislation, organic standards, international standards, harmonisation, certification, legal compatibility.

**JEL Classification:** O13, Q13, Q16, Q58

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## 1. Introduction

In today's world of globalisation, environmental challenges and growing consumer demand for high-quality and safe food products, organic production is becoming an important component of the agricultural sector in developed countries. Its development is based on the principles of environmental rationality, sustainability, and the rejection of chemically synthesised means of production, antibiotics, growth stimulants, GMOs, etc. According to estimates by the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM), the amount of land used for organic production will continue to grow in 2023. The total area of organic land already reaches 99 million hectares and accounts for 2.1% of all agricultural land in the world (IFOAM – Organics International). The global market for organic products exceeded 136.4 billion EUR, covering more than 190 countries, with the US and EU markets having the largest capacity, accounting for almost 90% of all organic products in the world (Willer et al., 2025). On average, per capita consumption of organic products per year worldwide is 17 EUR, and in the EU it is 104 EUR per person (Global Organic Market 2025).

The global organic market is seeing some clear trends that are shaping the industry and influencing consumer demand. One of the key features is the rapid growth in prices for organic products, which is outpacing the rate of increase in prices for traditional (non-organic) goods. At the same time, there is active development of innovations in organic farming. In particular, agroecological technologies that combine traditional farming methods with environmentally friendly modern practices are becoming increasingly widespread (Galutsky et al., 2024; Lohosha et al., 2025). The number of farms certified according to international organic production standards is also growing significantly, indicating growing confidence in the organic sector on the part of both producers and consumers.

The importance of organic production is constantly growing, not only because of its environmental aspect, but also because of its strategic role in shaping a competitive, high-tech and long-term oriented agricultural economy. EU countries are consistently implementing policies to stimulate the organic sector through subsidies, legislative incentives, the development of institutional infrastructure and support for scientific research. At the same time, one of the key factors for the development of this segment is the existence of an effective legislative framework that complies with international standards, in particular Regulation (EU) No. 2018/848, Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/279, as well as the recommendations of Codex Alimentarius and IFOAM standards.

Ukraine is one of Europe's largest countries in terms of agro-industrial potential, as it has unique natural and climatic conditions, highly productive land resources and Codex Alimentarius experience in environmentally friendly farming dating back to pre-Soviet times. After independence, the first farms began to appear, focusing on organic production, mainly for export. According to the Federation of Organic Movement of Ukraine, in 2024, the area of land certified as organic reached about 420,000 hectares, and the number of operators exceeded 600 business entities (Federation of Organic Movement of Ukraine).

However, institutional and regulatory inconsistencies in this sector remain a significant challenge for Ukraine. The adoption of the Law of Ukraine "On Basic Principles and Requirements for Organic Production, Circulation and Labelling of Organic Products" No. 2496-VIII of July 10, 2018, was a significant step towards formalizing the organic sector at the national level (The Resolution of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine "On Adoption of the Draft Law of Ukraine on State Regulation of Organic Production, Circulation and Labelling of Organic Products"). However, given the dynamic changes in European legislation and the requirements of the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU, this is not enough. On June 18, 2025, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine (Ukrainian parliament) adopted in the first reading a Draft Law on state regulation of the production, circulation and labeling of organic products (The Resolution of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine "On Adoption of the Draft Law of Ukraine on State Regulation of Organic Production, Circulation and Labelling of Organic Products"). The task of harmonising domestic legislation with European legislation in terms of requirements for organic production, control, certification, labelling and traceability is becoming increasingly urgent.

In addition to regulatory aspects, harmonisation of legislation has a direct economic dimension. The entry of domestic organic products into the European market requires compliance with clear and strict EU standards. In 2023, Ukraine was among the top three exporters of organic agricultural products to the EU, supplying mainly cereals and oilseeds, berries and juices (European Commission). In the event of further certification non-compliance or disruptions in the control chain, Ukraine risks losing its reputation in key export markets.

The issue of harmonisation is particularly important in the context of martial law imposed due to the full-scale aggression of the Russian Federation. Organic farms, certified land plots, logistics routes, export supplies, and the very mechanisms of state control are under threat. Therefore, the adaptation of domestic legislation to international standards is not only a matter of legal compliance, but also

a factor in maintaining and restoring the international community's confidence in Ukrainian organic products in the post-war period.

**The purpose of the article** is to study the theoretical, methodological and practical foundations for harmonising Ukrainian legislation in the field of organic production with international standards, in particular EU standards, and to justify ways of improving it.

## 2. Literature Review

One of the key conditions for Ukraine's integration into the EU is bringing national legislation into line with international standards in the field of organic production. This is particularly relevant in the context of the development of organic production, which requires strict compliance with environmental, technological and safety criteria (Vasylyuk et al., 2022). In order to obtain organic certification, it is necessary to take into account not only agrotechnological features, but also compliance with regulatory acts governing the requirements for state control, inspection, labelling and circulation of such products. Ensuring compliance with these requirements is not only a technical task, but also a component of legal harmonisation and international recognition of Ukrainian agricultural products.

However, the development of organic production is hampered by an imperfect legislative framework and the lack of specific proposals for its improvement (Bersutska & Kozycheva, 2020), as well as the inconsistency of Ukrainian legislation on organic production with EU legislation (Malohlib, 2021).

The overall objective of regulation is to support and improve the quality of organic livestock production, ensure that its production and circulation processes comply with organic standards, and provide appropriate guarantees to consumers. Regulation is a prerequisite for a more transparent organic market and trust among trading partners (Milovanov, 2018; Dayoub & Korpela, 2019).

Ukraine's European integration aspirations envisage the gradual alignment of the national regulatory system in the field of organic production with EU requirements and standards. One of the key conditions for such alignment is the harmonisation of the regulatory framework, in particular with regard to the production, labelling, certification and marketing of organic products. However, Ukraine's European integration process in this area is progressing rather slowly. This is due, on the one hand, to the dynamic nature of changes in EU regulations, which are constantly being improved to achieve the strategic goal of sustainable development of the agricultural sector, and on the other hand, to the initial stage of formation of organic legislation in Ukraine (Rodionova et al., 2020).

Based on the above, Ignatenko I. (2021) reasonably points out the need to develop and implement a modern model of organic product market management in Ukraine. Such a model should provide for the updating of state policy in the field of organic production, circulation and labelling of products in accordance with international standards; the creation of a regulatory framework for the effective functioning of the state control system; and the implementation of state support programmes aimed at developing both domestic and foreign markets for organic products. Successful implementation of these measures will help strengthen Ukraine's position in the global organic market and increase confidence in the national certification system.

Ukraine is actively implementing European legal principles for regulating organic production, reflecting the state's strategic course towards integration into the EU's single legal space. The implementation of this direction requires the effective introduction of global experience in the application of modern mechanisms, both in terms of systemic support for certified organic production and in ensuring the promotion of organic product consumption (Prokopenko & Udova, 2025). A comprehensive approach to organising the legal and economic environment of the organic sector will increase the profitability of agricultural producers, expand the export potential of high-quality products, and contribute to the overall growth of the country's food security.

An analysis of the results of scientific research conducted by domestic and foreign scientists emphasises that successful harmonisation of the regulatory framework in the field of organic production requires consideration of several key principles: adaptation without excessive implementation, adherence to the principle of legal certainty, ensuring the effectiveness of control mechanisms, and creating a favourable environment for domestic producers. In this regard, it is critically important to strike a balance between "strict" regulatory requirements and the realities of Ukraine's agricultural sector, which needs state support, investment incentives and scientific support.

## 3. Materials and Methods

The research process involved the use of general scientific and specific methods such as: analysis and synthesis (in the study of international standards); a systematic approach (in formulating conclusions on the compliance of Ukrainian legislation with European standards); comparative legal analysis (when comparing Ukrainian norms and EU regulations); grapho-analytical methods (when constructing tables and diagrams of compliance of Ukrainian norms and EU regulations).

#### 4. Results and Discussion

The international organic production system is based on numerous standards that ensure uniform approaches to the methods of cultivation, processing, certification and labelling of organic products. Given the globalisation of trade, these standards play a key role in regulating product quality, market access and consumer protection. In this context, international, regional and national approaches to organic production must be harmonised, while maintaining a degree of flexibility that takes into account the social, economic and environmental realities of each country.

The concept of "harmonisation of legislation" (from the Greek—concordance, consistency, unity) encompasses the process of purposefully bringing normative legal acts into conformity, which ensures the elimination of legal conflicts, the reduction of contradictions within the legal system, as well as alignment with international, European, and national standards of legal regulation. In the context of modern economic and political globalisation, harmonisation is an important form of legal integration, which is one of the legal instruments for achieving common goals between different legal systems and international associations (Kleshchenko, 2020).

Harmonisation creates opportunities for the coordinated functioning of individual elements of legal systems within a specific inter-state space. This process can take various forms, including adaptation, standardisation, implementation, etc. In some cases, it precedes the unification of legislation or is used as an alternative approach when there is no need for unification.

The harmonisation of legislative systems is based on scientific principles and requires consistency, methodological coherence, internal integrity, completeness and regulatory proportionality.

At the international level, harmonisation of legislation is seen as one of the key tools for integration into global markets. Under WTO provisions, in particular the Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade, countries undertake to harmonise their national standards with generally accepted international requirements in order to minimise trade restrictions (WTO). Accordingly, the harmonisation of legislation in the field of organic production in Ukraine is in line not only with the European integration vector, but also with the basic international principles of trade liberalisation.

Throughout the entire period of the development of organic agricultural production in Ukraine, international regulatory standards, in particular EU legislation, as well as leading global practices in this area, remained a key benchmark. International support programmes have made a significant contribution to the development of the organic sector by facilitating

the exchange of knowledge and experience with Ukrainian producers, along with funding from donor organisations in Germany, Switzerland, the United States, the United Kingdom, France and other countries. Such intergovernmental co-operation has helped to boost the export potential of domestic organic products, had a positive impact on macroeconomic indicators and increased the competitiveness of the Ukrainian agricultural sector on the world market.

The process of harmonising Ukrainian legislation in the field of organic production with EU legislation is a multifaceted and dynamic phenomenon, covering regulatory, institutional, organisational, law enforcement and control aspects. It is being implemented within the framework of the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU and is an integral part of Ukraine's course towards European integration. Harmonisation in this area involves the systematic adaptation of national legislation to the body of EU legal acts regulating organic production, circulation and labelling of organic products.

Thus, the need to harmonise Ukrainian legislation in the field of organic production is justified by the following:

- Strategic importance of developing the organic sector in the context of European integration;
- the need to bring national legislation into line with the requirements of EU Regulation No. 2018/848 and other international acts;
- strengthening Ukraine's position as an exporter of organic products;
- restoring the trust of foreign partners in the post-war period;
- fulfilment of international obligations under the WTO and the Association Agreement with the EU (Ishchenko et al., 2025);
- ensuring sustainable agricultural development on an environmentally friendly basis (Bondarenko et al., 2023).

Consider the requirements for harmonising Ukrainian legislation in the field of organic production in more detail, as organic production is an important component of sustainable development in the agricultural sector, which involves the use of environmentally friendly technologies aimed at preserving the environment, human and animal health, restoring soil fertility, and reducing the chemical load on ecosystems.

One of the key factors for effective harmonisation of legislation is the existence of an institutional mechanism that ensures coordination between public authorities, certification bodies, scientific institutions and economic operators (Shpykuliak & Bilokinna, 2019; Kaletnik et al., 2021). In Ukraine, the main entities providing institutional support for organic production are as follows:

1. The Ministry of Agrarian Policy and Food of Ukraine, which is responsible for policy-making in



the field of organic production and the adaptation of regulatory acts to EU standards.

2. The State Service of Ukraine for Food Safety and Consumer Protection, which exercises state control over compliance with requirements in the field of organic production.

3. Authorised certification bodies that verify the compliance of organic production with established standards.

4. Professional associations and civil society organisations, such as the Federation of Organic Movement of Ukraine, which play a role in promoting organic production, raising awareness among consumers and producers, and developing policies.

The key condition for the effective functioning of the institutional mechanism is a clear division of powers, interaction between institutions and the introduction of a system for monitoring and evaluating policy effectiveness.

Despite significant progress in harmonisation, Ukraine still faces a number of problems that hinder the development of organic production. Among the main problems are: fragmented legal regulation, manifested in the absence of a unified approach to defining requirements for all links in organic production; insufficient adaptation of national legislation to EU technical regulations, especially in terms of labelling, packaging and quality control; the lack of effective mechanisms for state support of organic production in Ukraine, in particular financial incentives for producers to switch to organic technologies; problems with certification and the lack of effective control over the activities of certification bodies (Honcharuk, 2025).

The definition of organic production is enshrined in the Law of Ukraine "On Basic Principles and Requirements for Organic Production, Circulation and Labelling of Organic Products" dated July 10, 2018, No. 2496-VIII (The Resolution of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine "On Adoption of the Draft Law of Ukraine on State Regulation of Organic Production, Circulation and Labelling of Organic Products"). It defines organic production as activities carried out in accordance with legally established principles and practices aimed at maintaining ecological balance and biodiversity, excluding the use of mineral fertilisers, pesticides, growth regulators, GMOs, etc.

The regulatory framework for organic production in Ukraine has been developed gradually, taking into account international commitments and the desire to integrate into the European legal field. In addition to the aforementioned Law, important regulatory acts include resolutions of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, in particular No. 970 of October 23, 2019, which defines the procedure for certification of organic production, as well as orders of the Ministry of Agrarian Policy and Food of Ukraine, which detail

the requirements for producers (The Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine "On Approval of the Procedure (Detailed Rules) for Organic Production and Circulation of Organic Products"). At the same time, technical regulation harmonised with relevant EU regulations, in particular Regulation (EU) No 2018/848 of the European Parliament and of the Council on organic production and labelling of organic products, plays a significant role (Regulation (EU) 2018/848).

In Ukraine, legislation in the field of organic production is constantly being improved, which is happening on the basis of various measures at the state level. Thus, on September 27, 2024, a round table on organic legislation was held on the initiative of the project "German-Ukrainian Co-operation in Organic Agriculture" (Organic legislation continues to improve). The event examined the state and problems of organic production, circulation and labelling of organic products, the role and functions of state authorities in regulating relations in the organic products market, as well as foreign experience in the process of implementing organic legislation in Ukraine and its harmonisation with the EU.

Harmonisation of legislation is considered in legal theory as the process of bringing national regulatory acts into line with international norms, standards and principles. Harmonisation is based on the principles of mutual recognition, transposition and adaptation, which ensure the reduction of legal barriers in international trade and create conditions for integration into global and regional economic associations, in particular the EU. According to research by the European Commission, harmonisation provides legal certainty and transparency in the regulatory environment, which is a prerequisite for attracting investment in agriculture (European Commission, 2020).

International practice in harmonising legislation in the field of organic production is based on documents from organisations such as FAO (FAO. Organic Agriculture.), IFOAM (IFOAM – Organics International) and Codex Alimentarius. For example, the FAO/WHO Guidelines for the Production, Handling, Labelling and Marketing of Organically Produced Foods (Codex Alimentarius GL 32-1999) contain the basic requirements for organic production, which have become a benchmark for the national legislation of WTO member countries.

As part of the European integration process, Ukraine has committed to adapting its national legislation to EU requirements, particularly in the field of organic production, as reflected in the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU. Thus, Ukraine is implementing a model of deep legal adaptation, focusing on harmonisation with EU Regulation 2018/848, which establishes

requirements for organic production and control (Regulation (EU) 2018/848).

Sustainable development is a key doctrine that integrates economic, environmental and social components of agricultural policy. The legal doctrine of sustainable agriculture stipulates that the state provides legal guarantees for the conservation of natural resources, the restoration of soil fertility, the protection of biodiversity, the reduction of environmental pollution and the support of rural communities (Lohosha et al., 2020; Lohosha et al., 2024a).

Legislation in the field of sustainable agriculture in Ukraine is still in its infancy, but already provides for elements of integration of environmental requirements into the agricultural law system. The Strategy for the Development of Agriculture and Rural Areas of Ukraine for 2015-2030 plays an important role in this process, setting out guidelines for the transition to sustainable agricultural production. At the international level, the legal doctrine of sustainable agriculture is based on the UN Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 2 – Zero Hunger, Goal 12 – Responsible Consumption and Production, and Goal 15 – Life on Land (UN Sustainable Development Goals).

In the context of organic production, sustainable development requires appropriate legal regulation based on an ecosystem approach, the principles of precaution and the integration of environmental protection into all stages of the production process. This, in turn, requires legal compatibility.

Legal compatibility means that national legislation complies with EU legal acts, which ensures the effective implementation of EU legal norms into the national legal field. In the field of organic production, this compatibility means harmonising certification, labelling and control procedures, as well as liability for violations of organic legislation with EU standards.

The main principles of legal compatibility are: the principle of subsidiarity, which defines the limits of state intervention in the sphere of regulation; the principle of proportionality, which requires legislative norms to be adequate to the objectives of regulation; the principle of legal certainty, which requires clarity and predictability of legal norms; the principle of mutual recognition, which allows for the recognition of certification carried out in other EU member states. These principles form the basis for the development of Ukraine's legal policy in the field of organic production in the context of European integration processes (Kluge, 2019).

In 2020, Ukraine took significant steps towards legal compatibility with the EU by developing and implementing national standards that comply with the requirements of EU Regulation 2018/848,

adopted by the European Parliament and the Council. It regulates organic production and labelling of organic products within the EU. This document sets high standards for environmental purity, restricts the use of chemicals, prohibits genetically modified organisms, and imposes strict requirements for animal feeding, care, and soil treatment. The regulation also provides for a mandatory certification system, a transparent control system and clear rules for importing organic products from non-EU countries. Accordingly, the implementation of the provisions of this regulation into Ukrainian national legislation requires not only formal harmonisation of the texts of regulatory acts, but also a real transformation of approaches to regulating the industry, taking into account the principles of legal certainty, proportionality, mutual recognition and equivalence. At the same time, a state register of organic production operators was created, which meets the requirements of European information transparency.

A distinctive feature of the Regulation is its holistic approach, which involves harmonised legislation that considers regional differences in agricultural production while ensuring equal market access conditions for producers and exporters. The document sets out detailed requirements for crop production, animal husbandry, aquaculture, wild plant harvesting, yeast production and food additives, as well as packaging.

Another fundamental basis for international legal regulation of organic production is the IFOAM Guidelines. These principles have global coverage and reflect not only the technical but also the philosophical aspects of organic production. IFOAM defines four basic principles: the principle of health (organic production should maintain and enhance the health of soils, ecosystems and people), the principle of ecology (production should be based on living ecological systems and cycles), the principle of fairness (ensuring equal access to resources, fair wages, ethical relationships) and the principle of precaution (making informed decisions to protect the well-being of current and future generations).

The IFOAM Guidelines are not legally binding, but serve as a basis for the development of national standards, voluntary certification, international initiatives and the harmonisation of standards on a global scale. These principles are subject to annual review and improvement in line with changes in society, its current needs and contemporary challenges. In addition to IFOAM, which brings together more than 760 members from over 100 countries, including two representatives from Ukraine, other international and national institutions are also active in the field of organic production. These include farms, industry associations, processing enterprises, intermediary structures, distribution companies and

retailers that ensure the functioning and development of the organic agricultural sector at various levels.

Codex Alimentarius, a joint programme of the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Health Organisation (WHO), has made a significant contribution to the development of international standards. The main document in the field of organic farming is the Codex Alimentarius GL 32-1999 Guidelines. It sets out in detail the requirements for the production, processing, labelling and marketing of organic products. Codex Alimentarius provides basic terms and definitions and establishes minimum requirements for certification and inspection systems, which are used in various countries as a basis for developing national legislation or international co-operation.

Among national standards that are important at the global level, the standards of the United States (National Organic Programme – NOP (USDA. National Organic Programme)), Japan (Japanese Agricultural Standards – JAS), and Canada (Canada Organic Regime – COR) should be highlighted. In the United States, the NOP programme, administered by the Department of Agriculture, regulates organic production and certification in accordance with the Organic Production Act of 1990. The programme provides for specialised accreditation of certification bodies recognised both nationally and internationally, including bodies from Ukraine.

In Japan, the JAS system provides for certification in accordance with its own standards, which cover requirements for the cultivation, processing, packaging, transportation and labelling of organic products. Certification bodies must be accredited by the Japanese Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. However, Canada, in turn, has introduced the COR system, which recognises equivalence with organic standards in the EU, the US and other countries. This allows products certified to Canadian standards to access markets in many countries without re-certification.

Despite the diversity of systems, there are a number of common features that can be found in most international standards. First and foremost, these include the rejection of synthetic chemicals, a ban on GMOs, an emphasis on soil fertility conservation, concern for animal welfare, and strict requirements for labelling and supply chain transparency. At the same time, there are differences that stem from national policies, the level of agricultural development, climatic conditions and domestic demand. For example, the EU emphasises the harmonisation of rules between member states, while the US gives more autonomy to certification bodies. Japan has strict labelling requirements, while Canada focuses on bilateral recognition of equivalence.

Thus, international standards in the field of organic production create a regulatory framework for environmentally sustainable agriculture, consumer protection and the development of international trade. Harmonisation of Ukrainian legislation with these standards is a prerequisite for the country's integration into the global organic community and ensuring high quality agricultural products. Going forward, an important task will be not only legislative harmonisation, but also the practical implementation of international requirements, taking into account national interests and the needs of Ukrainian farms.

On this basis, it should be noted that legal compatibility involves harmonising legislation with best European practices, including agri-environmental standards, legal mechanisms to encourage organic production, and state support for environmentally-oriented agricultural producers.

Thus, the harmonisation of Ukrainian legislation in the field of organic production at the theoretical and legal level is based on international standards, European legal principles and national strategic goals for sustainable development, ensuring the country's integration into the global organic market.

The assessment of the compliance of Ukrainian legislation with international standards (in particular, EU Regulation 2018/848, Codex Alimentarius standards and IFOAM principles) in the field of organic production is systematised in Table 1.

Analysing the data in Table 1, it should be noted that Ukrainian legislation in the field of organic production largely complies with international standards in terms of key parameters. Strengths include a legislative ban on GMOs, clear certification requirements, and the functioning of a central control body. At the same time, there are shortcomings in the control of supply chains, organic aquaculture, import procedures, and the use of logos. International technical assistance plays an important role in the implementation of standards.

In order to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, a SWOT analysis of Ukrainian legislation in the field of organic production will be conducted (see Table 2).

Based on the SWOT analysis, it should be noted that Ukrainian legislation in the field of organic production has significant potential for further development and integration into the European legal space. The main strengths are legislative support, compliance with key international requirements, and the active participation of international partners in harmonisation processes. At the same time, existing weaknesses and threats indicate the need for further improvement of the regulatory system, expansion of control, reduction of barriers to certification for small producers, and increased transparency across the entire industry.

Table 1

**Assessment of the degree of harmonisation of Ukraine's legal system with international standards**

Criterion	International standards	Legislation of Ukraine	Degree of compliance	Comments
GMO prohibition	Specified in all international documents	Enacted in Law of Ukraine No. 2496-VIII	High	Complete prohibition of the use of GMOs in production
Synthetic substances	Prohibited (IFOAM, EU, Codex)	Prohibited by law	High	Compliance with IFOAM and EU standards
Organic aquaculture	Requirements specified in the EU, Codex	No clear regulations	Low	Necessary expansion of regulation
Product labelling	Mandatory logos, certificates (EU Organic, JAS, USDA)	National logo, insufficient detail on use	Medium	Requires adaptation to EU and Codex standards
Supply control	Full traceability of the chain	Partial implementation	Medium	Electronic control systems need to be developed
Operator certification	ISO 17065 requirements, independence	ISO provided, quantity limited	Medium	The number of certification bodies needs to be increased
State control bodies	Central control body	Ministry of Agrarian Policy, State Service of Ukraine for Food Safety and Consumer Protection	High	Clearly defined powers
Import of organic products	Certification, recognition of equivalence	No detailed procedure	Low	The equivalence mechanism needs to be regulated
International technical assistance	Available under FAO, EU4Business, APD, Swisscontact programmes	Actively used	High	Positive impact on policy development and training

Source: compiled by the author

Table 2

**SWOT analysis of Ukrainian legislation in the field of organic production**

Strengths	Weaknesses
Legislative prohibition on the use of GMOs, synthetic substances, antibiotics	Lack of clear regulation in the field of aquaculture
Operation of a single National Register of Organic Operators	Small number of accredited certification bodies
Harmonisation with EU Regulation 2018/848 on key criteria	Unclear regulation of imports and recognition of foreign certificates
Support from international technical projects	Limited state control over the logistics chain
Opportunities	Threats
Expansion of export opportunities to EU countries and the US	Risk of counterfeiting organic products
Access to technical assistance and financing programmes	Declining consumer confidence due to insufficient control
Recognition of Ukrainian certificates as equivalent to international ones	Low level of awareness among consumers and farmers
Development of digital product tracking systems	High cost of certification procedures for small producers

Source: compiled by the author

Harmonisation of Ukrainian legislation requires further efforts, particularly in the area of adaptation to aquaculture standards, improvement of certification recognition mechanisms and harmonisation of logistical procedures. The priorities for the next stage should be: ensuring full transparency of labelling, developing the institutional capacity of certification bodies and strengthening integration into international registers of certified producers.

The adaptation of national legislation in the current conditions takes place in several key stages. First, EU norms that are subject to implementation in the relevant area are identified. This is followed by a comparative legal analysis of the current legislation

of Ukraine to identify gaps, conflicts and differences in regulation. Based on this analysis, amendments to legislative and subordinate acts are developed and gradually introduced into the legal field. It is also important to train specialists, in particular civil servants, inspectors and employees of certification bodies, who must be knowledgeable not only about national but also European legislation.

At the practical level, law enforcement and administrative control instruments play an important role in harmonisation. Ukraine already has a state register of organic production operators and has established a number of national standards that take into account the provisions of EU regulations. In 2020,



regulations were adopted governing the certification, control and labelling of organic products, bringing the Ukrainian legal environment closer to European standards. At the same time, there are certain problems with ensuring effective control and enforcement of requirements: not all producers undergo mandatory certification, and there are cases of falsification of organic products, which indicates the need to strengthen state supervision (Lohosha, 2024b).

Court practice is also an indicator of the level of legal harmonisation. Although the number of court cases in this area is still insignificant, existing precedents testify to the gradual formation of a law enforcement base. In particular, courts are considering cases related to violations of organic product labelling requirements, non-compliance with certification procedures, and recognition of foreign certification results. At the same time, there is a noticeable lack of unified approaches to interpreting the rules, which requires further training of specialised judges in the field of agricultural, environmental and European law.

An important element of the harmonisation process is Ukraine's participation in international co-operation programmes, in particular EU technical assistance projects such as TAIEEX and Twinning, which enable the adoption of best practices from EU Member States. Positive examples include Germany, where the "organic clusters" model works effectively; Poland, which has adapted its organic legislation to European requirements through municipal support for small farmers; and Lithuania, where an electronic system for tracking certified organic producers has been introduced. These models can be adapted to Ukrainian conditions, in particular through the formation of regional programmes for the development of the organic sector.

Ukraine's state policy in the context of harmonising organic legislation is comprehensive in nature. It includes regulatory support, institutional strengthening, information and awareness-raising, and financial support for producers. For example, the state compensates part of the certification costs, introduces programmes to improve farmers' qualifications, and promotes organic production among consumers. These measures, together with further improvements to the regulatory framework, create the basis for Ukraine's integration into the European organic market.

Thus, the harmonisation of Ukrainian legislation in the field of organic production with the EU is gradually moving from the regulatory level to the practical level. Its effectiveness depends on the consistency of state policy, high-quality regulatory control, professional training of personnel, and transparency of certification and supervision procedures. In the long term, it is necessary to ensure full compliance of legislation with the requirements of EU Regulation 2018/848, expand mechanisms of state support for organic production,

and establish systematic co-operation with EU member states to exchange experience and standardise control and certification procedures. Only under such conditions will harmonisation become an effective tool not only for legal but also for economic integration of Ukraine into the European space.

Ukraine is harmonising its legislation not only through legal instruments, but also through economic and institutional instruments, in particular through: state programmes to support organic production (partial reimbursement of certification costs, subsidies for environmentally friendly technologies); educational programmes for farmers aimed at raising legal awareness; public consultations with business and community representatives on draft regulations; harmonisation monitoring indicators based on compliance with standards, effectiveness of control, and number of certified producers. The Strategy for the Development of Organic Production until 2030, which provides for the integration of the principles of the "green economy" and circular agriculture, plays a significant role in shaping state policy.

Ukraine's legislative model in the field of organic production is highly compliant with international standards, but its implementation requires enhanced institutional support, expanded certification opportunities, active communication with farmers, and consistent integration into the European legal space. Harmonisation is not only a formal alignment of regulatory texts, but also the creation of a sustainable mechanism for their implementation in practice, which requires long-term political will and support from stakeholders.

Successful harmonisation of Ukrainian legislation in the field of organic production with international standards requires a comprehensive approach that goes beyond formal coordination of regulatory acts. It is necessary to take into account both legislative aspects and institutional, informational and educational factors that affect the effectiveness of the implementation of regulations in practice. Following a comprehensive review of the results of the comparative analysis and SWOT analysis, the following strategic directions for improvement have been formulated:

1. Legislative initiatives aimed at amending the basic Law of Ukraine "On Basic Principles and Requirements for Organic Production, Circulation and Labelling of Organic Products" No. 2496-VIII. The Law needs to be updated to reflect the latest changes in EU Regulation No. 2018/848, particularly with regard to organic aquaculture, product labelling, supply chain control, import procedures and the recognition of equivalence of foreign certificates.

In addition, a separate regulatory act should be adopted to regulate organic production, taking into account environmental aspects, growing conditions,

storage and marketing of organic products in accordance with European approaches.

In the area of labelling, it would be advisable to allow the use of international organic logos (EU Organic, USDA Organic, JAS) alongside national labelling, which would significantly facilitate Ukrainian producers' entry into foreign markets.

2. Institutional modernisation, namely strengthening the institutional capacity of the bodies responsible for state control and certification. It is necessary to expand the powers of the State Service of Ukraine for Food Safety and Consumer Protection in the field of organic production supervision and to provide additional resources to strengthen its human and technical capacity.

A specialised interdepartmental coordination centre should also be established under the Ministry of Agrarian Policy and Food of Ukraine to coordinate the harmonisation process, interact with international partners and monitor the implementation of legislation in the organic sector.

Improving the transparency of the certification system is equally important. The introduction of a unified digital platform with open access to information about certified manufacturers, certification bodies, inspection results and the validity of certificates will promote trust among consumers and international partners.

3. Technical and educational support that raises legal awareness among farmers, agricultural consultants and representatives of certification bodies is essential for the effective functioning of the organic production system. It is necessary to ensure the further development of large-scale educational campaigns, training sessions, advanced training courses, and certification of consultants with the involvement of the best international practices and experts.

Special attention should be paid to informing consumers about the benefits of organic products, their labelling and certification system, which will help increase demand for organic goods, expand the domestic market and foster a culture of responsible consumption. International technical assistance can be directed towards financing educational projects, creating training centres, developing training programmes, translating international standards into Ukrainian, and adapting them to the local context.

4. International co-operation aimed at further convergence with the international community in the field of organic production is an important factor in strengthening export potential. Ukraine should expand its participation in international structures such as IFOAM, FAO, Codex Alimentarius, and conclude bilateral agreements on mutual recognition of certification systems with the EU, North America, Japan and other strategic partners. It is also important to establish co-operation with international donors

and technical assistance organisations (GIZ, USAID, Swisscontact) that have significant experience in supporting national reforms in the field of organic production.

The proposed areas for improvement are key to ensuring Ukraine's full integration into the international organic market. Legislative changes, institutional modernisation, information and educational support, and expanded international co-operation form a single strategic set of measures. Its implementation will not only enable formal compliance with international standards, but also increase the effectiveness of control, consumer confidence, the competitiveness of Ukrainian organic products, and the resilience of the agricultural sector to the challenges of the modern world.

## 5. Conclusions

The article analyses the theoretical and legal foundations, international standards, status and assessment of Ukrainian legislation in the field of organic production, which has led to a number of key conclusions. Firstly, organic production in Ukraine has been given a clear regulatory and legal definition that complies with the basic international principles of sustainable agricultural production. However, the legislative framework is still in the process of being developed and needs further refinement, especially in areas such as organic aquaculture, imports of organic products, and labelling mechanisms. Secondly, international standards, in particular EU Regulation No. 2018/848, IFOAM guidelines and Codex Alimentarius, serve as a foundation for harmonising national legislation. Ukraine is actively integrating these standards, which contributes to improving product quality and creating a competitive organic market. Thirdly, the institutional system, consisting of the Ministry of Agrarian Policy, the State Service of Ukraine for Food Safety and Consumer Protection, and accredited certification bodies, plays an important role in ensuring control and support for organic production. However, there are problems with resource provision, transparency and the number of certification bodies, which need to be reformed. Fourthly, the SWOT analysis demonstrated both strengths (GMO ban, legislative framework, international support) and weaknesses (limited control, insufficient number of certifiers, import problems). The main threats are counterfeiting, low awareness among market participants and insufficient state control.

The proposed ways to improve legislation are comprehensive in nature, including the development of new regulations, institutional modernisation, awareness campaigns, and active international co-operation. The implementation of these measures will contribute not only to harmonisation with international standards, but also to the creation of a transparent, competitive organic production system in Ukraine.

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