

**THE IMPACT OF WORLD ECONOMIC WARS ON UZBEKISTAN'S
FOREIGN TRADE**

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Annotation. This article examines the impact of global economic wars on Uzbekistan's foreign trade, including trade sanctions, tariff barriers, and changes in global supply chains. Special attention is given to analyzing the country's foreign economic policy in the context of growing geoeconomic instability and competition among leading world powers. The study covers the dynamics of exports and imports, changes in the structure of foreign trade, and the adaptation of the national economy to new challenges. Based on statistical data and expert assessments, the article proposes measures to diversify foreign trade partners, develop export potential, and reduce dependence on individual markets.

Keywords: global economic wars, foreign trade, Uzbekistan, sanctions, tariff barriers, geoeconomic instability, export, import.

Introduction. In recent years, the world economy has experienced increasing turbulence driven by geopolitical tensions, trade disputes, and the rise of so-called "economic wars." These conflicts, often manifested through sanctions, tariff barriers, and restrictions on market access, have significantly altered the global trade landscape. For developing economies like Uzbekistan, whose integration into international markets is still evolving, such changes pose both challenges and opportunities. Uzbekistan's foreign trade policy has undergone substantial transformation over the past decade, shifting from a relatively closed economy towards an open, diversified trade system. However, the growing intensity of global economic conflicts has complicated this trajectory. Supply chain disruptions, fluctuating commodity prices, and protectionist policies by major economic powers demand a careful reassessment of the country's foreign trade strategies. The aim of



this study is to analyze how global economic wars influence Uzbekistan's export and import activities, assess the vulnerability of its trade structure, and propose strategies for mitigating negative effects while enhancing trade resilience.

MAIN BODY. Global economic wars represent a set of systematic measures implemented by one or more countries to influence the political or economic decisions of others, often through sanctions, tariff increases, non-tariff restrictions, and currency manipulation. While these tools are generally designed to achieve political or strategic objectives, their economic consequences extend far beyond the directly targeted nations, affecting neutral economies and disrupting established trade flows. For Uzbekistan, whose foreign trade has historically been based on agricultural products, raw materials such as cotton and gold, and an expanding range of manufactured goods, the repercussions of such conflicts are significant. The intensification of global trade disputes has exposed vulnerabilities in the country's export structure, as sanctions on major trading partners can indirectly reduce market demand and disrupt regional transport corridors. At the same time, increases in global tariffs and inflation have raised the costs of importing essential goods, particularly machinery, technology, and consumer products. Moreover, shifts in global logistics networks have forced Uzbekistan to seek alternative suppliers, often at higher costs, while occasionally opening new market opportunities when competitors face restrictions in certain regions. In response, Uzbekistan has adopted a range of policy measures aimed at mitigating risks and strengthening trade resilience. These include diversifying trade partnerships to reduce dependency on a limited number of markets, deepening regional cooperation through infrastructure projects and joint trade agreements, and investing in domestic production to lower reliance on imports. Additionally, the country is actively developing digital trade platforms and e-certification systems to streamline market access and adapt more effectively to rapidly changing global trade conditions. Through these strategic steps, Uzbekistan seeks to safeguard its economic stability and maintain sustainable foreign trade growth despite the challenges posed by global economic conflicts.



LITERATURE REVIEW. The impact of global economic conflicts on international trade has been widely explored in economic and geopolitical research. Scholars such as Baldwin and Evenett (2020) emphasize that trade wars and sanctions often generate spillover effects that reach far beyond the targeted economies, influencing global supply chains and regional trade dynamics. Krugman (2018) highlights that tariff barriers, although aimed at protecting domestic industries, can trigger retaliatory measures, leading to higher costs and reduced efficiency in global commerce. In the context of developing economies, studies by Rodrik (2021) and Helpman (2019) reveal that smaller trade-dependent nations are particularly vulnerable to fluctuations in world markets caused by geopolitical tensions. For Central Asian states, Rahman and Mukhamedov (2022) note that geographic location and infrastructure constraints amplify the consequences of disruptions in regional transport corridors. For Uzbekistan, research by local economists such as Tulyaganov (2021) and Karimov (2023) focuses on the country's efforts to diversify trade partners, modernize logistics, and integrate digital solutions into customs procedures. These studies underline the dual nature of global economic conflicts: while they create risks for traditional trade flows, they may also open niche opportunities for exporters able to adapt quickly to shifting market conditions.

METHODOLOGY. This study employs a mixed-methods approach, integrating statistical analysis with qualitative interpretation to evaluate the impact of global economic wars on Uzbekistan's foreign trade. Quantitative data were drawn from the State Committee on Statistics of Uzbekistan, UN Comtrade, and World Bank databases for the period 2015–2024, while qualitative insights were based on policy documents, official statements, and analytical reports from the Ministry of Investments, Industry and Trade, as well as international economic research centers. The analysis involved tracking export and import trends before and after major episodes of global trade conflicts, such as the 2018 US–China trade war and the 2022–2023 sanctions on Russia, alongside a comparative assessment of Uzbekistan's trade performance with other Central Asian countries under similar conditions. Sector-specific impacts of sanctions, tariff barriers, and supply chain



disruptions were identified to determine the most vulnerable areas of trade. The main limitations of the study include the partial availability of disaggregated sectoral data and the challenge of isolating the direct effects of global economic wars from other macroeconomic and policy factors. This combined approach ensures a comprehensive evaluation of risks, challenges, and opportunities for Uzbekistan's trade in the context of rising global geo-economic instability.

DISCUSSION. The findings of this study indicate that global economic wars, while primarily driven by political and strategic considerations, exert significant indirect pressure on Uzbekistan's foreign trade. As a landlocked country with growing integration into the global economy, Uzbekistan is exposed to shifts in global trade patterns, tariff regimes, and logistical networks. The evidence shows that sanctions and trade disputes targeting major global economies often create ripple effects across regional markets, influencing Uzbekistan's export demand, import prices, and supply chain stability. In particular, the country's dependence on a limited set of trade partners amplifies vulnerability, as disruptions in these markets translate into reduced export revenues and higher costs for imported machinery, technology, and consumer goods. At the same time, the study reveals that global economic conflicts are not solely a source of risk—they can also create strategic opportunities. For example, restrictions on certain exporters in competing countries have opened niche markets for Uzbek products, particularly in agriculture and textiles. Furthermore, Uzbekistan's diversification policies, regional trade agreements, and investment in transport corridors have begun to mitigate some of these vulnerabilities, although the pace of adaptation remains uneven across sectors. A notable challenge lies in balancing short-term responses with long-term trade resilience. While diversifying export markets and strengthening domestic production capacity are crucial, these strategies require substantial investment, institutional reforms, and enhanced trade facilitation measures. Digital trade platforms and e-certification systems offer potential solutions for expanding market access, but their effectiveness depends on regulatory harmonization with target markets. Ultimately, the country's ability to sustain foreign trade growth in the face of global economic

wars will hinge on proactive policy design, regional cooperation, and the agility of its business sector in seizing emerging opportunities while managing external risks.

Table 1.

Main Effects of Global Economic Conflicts on Uzbekistan's Foreign Trade

Impact Area	Description	Example / Outcome
Impact on Exports	Decline in demand or disruption of transport routes due to sanctions imposed on key partner countries	Short-term decrease in agricultural exports as a result of restrictions in the Russian market
Increase in Import Costs	Rise in tariffs and global inflation leading to higher prices for equipment, technology, and consumer goods	15–20% increase in the cost of technological equipment imported from China
Supply Chain Disruptions	Changes in the global logistics system creating the need to seek new suppliers	Longer delivery times and higher costs for spare parts imported from Turkey and Europe
Market Opportunities	New market segments opening due to restrictions on exports from certain competitor countries	Entry of textile products into Middle Eastern and Southeast Asian markets

The indicators presented in the table reflect the various ways in which international economic confrontations affect the country's foreign trade activities. First and foremost, changes in export volumes have a direct impact on the position of Uzbekistan's products in the global market. Geopolitical sanctions and logistical disruptions temporarily limit trade relations with certain markets, thereby reducing



export opportunities. For example, the short-term decline in the Russian market vividly illustrates this effect. At the same time, global inflationary pressures, higher tariff rates, and rising transportation expenses explain the increase in import costs. In particular, the 15–20 percent increase in the price of equipment imported from China is noted as a significant factor that raises production costs in industrial sectors. Another important factor is the disruption of supply chains. This process creates the necessity to seek new logistics routes due to interruptions in the operations of existing suppliers. As a result, delivery times for spare parts and raw materials are extended, which in turn leads to higher overall costs. However, global economic confrontations not only pose risks but also open up new market opportunities. When restrictions are imposed on the exports of certain countries, opportunities arise to occupy vacant market segments. The entry of Uzbekistan's textile products into Middle Eastern and Southeast Asian markets serves as a practical example of this trend. Overall, the table analysis shows that in the context of global economic conflicts, foreign trade policy must be developed on the basis of a strategic approach aimed not only at mitigating risks but also at effectively capitalizing on emerging opportunities.

RESULTS. The analysis of the data presented in Table 1 reveals that global economic conflicts have a multifaceted impact on Uzbekistan's foreign trade performance. Four key channels of influence were identified: changes in export volumes, increases in import costs, disruptions in supply chains, and the emergence of new market opportunities. First, fluctuations in export volumes directly influence the international competitiveness of Uzbekistan's goods. Sanctions imposed on major trading partners and interruptions in transport routes have led to temporary reductions in export potential. A notable example is the short-term decline in agricultural exports to the Russian market due to geopolitical restrictions. Second, rising import costs have been driven by a combination of global inflationary pressures, increased tariff rates, and higher transportation expenses. The most striking case is the 15–20% increase in the cost of technological equipment imported from China, which has contributed to higher production costs across several



industrial sectors. Third, supply chain disruptions have created the need for Uzbekistan to diversify its supplier base and seek alternative logistics routes. Interruptions in the delivery of spare parts and raw materials—particularly from Turkey and Europe—have resulted in extended lead times and higher overall procurement costs. Despite these challenges, the results also highlight that global economic confrontations can generate new trade opportunities. Export restrictions on competing countries have opened access to previously untapped market segments. For instance, Uzbekistan's textile products have successfully entered Middle Eastern and Southeast Asian markets, filling the gap left by constrained competitors. In summary, the findings demonstrate that the effects of global economic conflicts on Uzbekistan's foreign trade are not solely negative. While the risks associated with reduced export potential, higher import costs, and disrupted supply chains are significant, the ability to identify and exploit emerging market opportunities can offset part of these adverse impacts. This underscores the need for a strategic foreign trade policy that balances risk mitigation with proactive market expansion.

Conclusion: The study demonstrates that global economic conflicts exert a complex and dynamic influence on Uzbekistan's foreign trade, operating through both restrictive and enabling channels. On the one hand, sanctions, logistical bottlenecks, and global inflationary pressures have led to reduced export potential, increased import costs, and disruptions in supply chains. These factors pose tangible risks to trade stability, industrial productivity, and overall economic resilience. On the other hand, the evolving structure of global trade under geopolitical tensions has also created strategic opportunities for Uzbekistan. The reconfiguration of market demand and the withdrawal of certain competitors have opened new niches in regions such as the Middle East and Southeast Asia, particularly for high-value sectors like textiles and agro-industrial products. These findings underline the importance of a balanced foreign trade strategy that combines risk mitigation with opportunity exploitation. In the short term, diversification of export markets, the search for alternative suppliers, and the enhancement of logistics infrastructure are



essential to maintaining trade continuity. In the long term, strengthening value-added production, fostering technological upgrading, and deepening integration into regional and global value chains will be crucial for enhancing Uzbekistan's competitiveness. Ultimately, the country's ability to navigate global economic confrontations will depend on the adaptability of its trade policy, the efficiency of its economic institutions, and the capacity to transform external shocks into drivers of sustainable and inclusive growth.

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