

UZBEKISTAN IN THE INTERNATIONAL FREIGHT MARKET

Kholmatov Javokhir, master's student,

Tumanbaeva Bibikhon, doctoral (PhD) student,

Namangan State Technical University

Annotation. *This article discusses the role of Uzbekistan in the international freight market, types of freight transport, and the main international transport networks.*

Keywords: *transport, international freight market, logistics, road transport, cargo, routes.*

The international freight market of Uzbekistan is becoming one of the most important and strategic logistics systems in Central Asia. The geographical location of the country - that is, its role as a natural bridge between Europe and Asia - is one of the main factors for the rapid development of this industry. Despite the lack of direct access to the sea, Uzbekistan pays great attention to strengthening its position as a transit country. Therefore, the international freight transport system brings significant income to the economy not only through export-import operations, but also through the transit of cargo from other countries.

In recent years, large-scale reforms have been carried out in the country aimed at modernizing the transport and logistics infrastructure. Highways are being reconstructed, railway lines are being expanded, and new logistics centers are being built. In particular, logistics centers operating as “dry ports” allow for the rapid and efficient processing of international cargo flows. At the same time, measures such as simplifying customs procedures and introducing an electronic permit (e-permit) system are helping to reduce the time and costs of cargo transportation.

Road transport occupies a leading position in the international cargo transportation system of Uzbekistan. This is explained, first of all, by the country's active trade relations with neighboring countries and the predominance of short-

distance transportation. At the same time, railway transport is also of great importance and is considered especially effective in transporting long-distance and large-volume cargo. Air transport is used for high-value cargo that requires fast delivery. Pipeline transport also plays an important role in the transportation of energy resources.

The country's main trading partners are Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Belarus and China. In particular, the expansion of trade relations with China is leading to a sharp increase in cargo traffic. The China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan transport corridor is considered an important strategic project in this direction. In addition, the Central Corridor (Trans-Caspian Corridor), which provides access to Europe, is also creating new logistics opportunities for Uzbekistan.

At the same time, the Trans-Afghan Transport Corridor project also has great prospects. If this project is implemented, Uzbekistan will have access to the ports of South Asia, which will significantly expand the geography of foreign trade. Such projects will help reduce the country's limitations as a landlocked country.

Although the freight market is experiencing positive growth rates, there are also some problems. In particular, factors such as the sometimes slow customs procedures at the borders, the insufficient development of transport infrastructure in some directions, and high logistics costs negatively affect market efficiency. In addition, increased international competition requires high quality and efficiency from local logistics companies.

In the future, Uzbekistan aims to become an international logistics center. In this regard, the development of multimodal transportation systems, that is, the organization of cargo transportation by combining different types of transport, is of great importance. Also, increasing the export of logistics services, creating a modern warehouse infrastructure, and the widespread introduction of digital technologies are among the main priorities.

Cargo transportation in Uzbekistan is distributed between types of transport depending on economic and geographical factors. The main part of cargo transportation in the country falls on road transport. This type of transport is

distinguished by its flexibility, convenience over short and medium distances, and the ability to deliver cargo directly from the sender to the recipient. Therefore, road transport accounts for a large part of the total freight volume, approximately 70-80 percent.

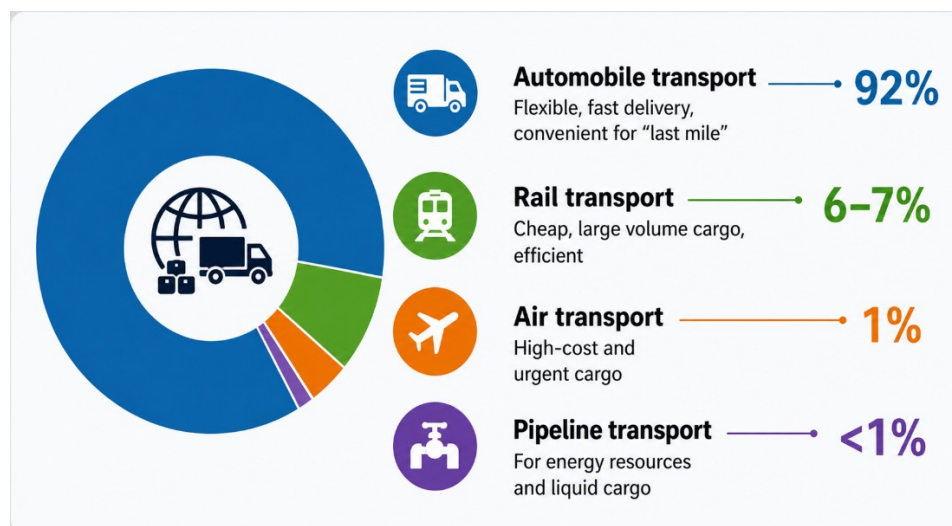


Figure 1. Distribution of cargo transportation by transport modes

Railway transport is in second place in freight transportation. It is mainly effective in transporting heavy and bulky goods over long distances. For example, coal, metal, cotton and grain products are mostly transported by rail. This type of transport is characterized by its relative cheapness and safety and accounts for 15–25% of the total freight volume.

Air transport has a very small share in freight transportation, usually less than 1%. Despite the high cost of this type of transport, it is used for cargo that requires fast delivery, especially valuable or perishable goods.

Pipeline transport is mainly important for the transportation of gas and oil products. Its share is considered separately from other types of transport, since it is designed to transport only certain types of resources.

Water transport is practically not developed in Uzbekistan, since the country has no access to the sea. Only in some cases, limited cargo transportation is carried out through the Amu Darya.

In general, road transport occupies a leading position in the cargo transportation system in Uzbekistan, while railways play an important role for cargo of strategic importance. International cargo transportation routes in Uzbekistan are formed depending on the geographical location and transit potential of the country. Due to its location in the center of Central Asia, Uzbekistan is an important transport crossroads and cargo exchange is carried out in various directions with neighboring and distant countries.

	RUSSIA	+20–25%	High export growth, especially energy resources
	KAZAKHSTAN	+20%	Transit and food products exports are increasing
	CHINA	Rapid growth	Strong strategic support, steady cargo growth
	KYRGYZSTAN	2–3 times	One of the fastest growing countries
	BELARUS	+40%+	New logistics flows and cooperation

Figure 2. Main international routes

One of the most important routes is the route to the north, that is, through Kazakhstan to Russia and European countries. This route is actively used by road and rail transport and is important for export-import cargo.

In the eastern direction, Uzbekistan is connected to Kyrgyzstan and China. In particular, as a result of the expansion of trade relations with China, the importance of this route is increasing. Industrial products and technological goods are transported through this route.

In the southern direction, there is an opportunity to access the ports of the Persian Gulf through Turkmenistan and Iran. This route is one of the closest routes to seaports for Uzbekistan and plays an important role in international trade. Also, the route to the ports of Pakistan through Afghanistan is of strategic importance, through which access to the Indian Ocean is created.

In the western direction, there are routes to Turkey and Europe through the Caucasus region. This route is carried out via the "Trans-Caspian Transport Corridor", meaning that cargo will pass through the Caspian Sea, through Azerbaijan and Georgia.

Uzbekistan's international cargo routes are oriented in four main directions - north, east, south, and west, and they play a significant role in increasing the country's export-import potential and strengthening its role as a transit country.

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