

Transport and transit potential of Uzbekistan and the role of Surkhandarya region.

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Annotation. This article focuses on the transit potential of Uzbekistan, including the role of the Surkhandarya region, the influence of the region's geographical location on the transport-transit system, ways to increase the efficiency of transit opportunities, and the transit status of the region's transport networks.

Keywords: Central Asia, Surkhandarya region, transit, transport, infrastructure, export and import, Afghanistan

In the development of countries and, at the same time, regions, their transport transit potential is important. In this case, the transit feature has become a factor of economic integration of regions. Consequently, the development of the countries of the world shows that their convenient transportation geographical location relative to the world trade and economic corridors has gained great importance in their historical development.

There are more than 40 countries in the world that do not have the opportunity to carry out transportation using sea transport, and Uzbekistan is one of these countries [1]. The conduct of trade and economic relations of these countries largely depends on their transit potential. The Republic of Uzbekistan is one of them.

The global growth of trade in goods and services plays a key role in the globalization of the world economy. The development of foreign economic relations of countries, in turn, requires a new approach to the redistribution of cargo and passenger flows.

At this point, the importance of international transit routes is increasing in ensuring the quality delivery of manufactured products to the consumer and organizing the efficiency of the flow of goods.

Transit (Lat. transitus - passage) means transportation of passengers and goods from one point to another through intermediate points[5].

Currently, 90% of the world's "general cargo" (industrial products, household appliances, non-bulky equipment, food, textile products, semi-finished products, technological components, etc.) is transported in containers. In this case, the transit services of a number of countries such as Panama, Egypt, Singapore, the Netherlands, Finland, and the Baltic States are high.

Nowadays, the development of transit services is determined not only by the transport-geographical location of the countries of the world, specific features of foreign trade relations, but also by the pace of introduction of modern transport-transit and logistics technologies.

The problem of determining the most optimal corridors for access to the sea of inland continental countries and having the possibility to connect to them is an urgent task in the modern age of transport systems. Also, for the Republic of Uzbekistan, solving the issue of the most optimal transit corridors for access to the sea is considered an important aspect in gaining its place in the world market. In this regard, the expansion of transport transit corridors and the increase of the country's transit capacity through them are of strategic importance for the republic.

A transit lane is a direction of movement of vehicles, in which the technical, technological and organizational conditions specified in the passport of the transit lane are created for the transportation of transit goods, and a simplified procedure for performing customs operations is applied to such goods and vehicles [4].

In 2022, the UN adopted a special resolution on strengthening the interdependence between Central and South Asia. It mentions the importance of increasing the efficiency of economic relations between the countries of Central and South Asia and realizing their unique transport, transit and investment potential. This document was developed by Uzbekistan under the co-authorship of 40 countries.

The transit role of our country is important for Central Asian republics. Its location in the center of the region increases the transit potential. Also, in connecting Europe with Asia through the Central Asian region (west and east (TRACEKA)), connecting Russia and Kazakhstan with countries such as Afghanistan and Pakistan (north and south), the transit importance of our republic is clearly felt, and it shows that important transport has a geographical location.

Transit costs for export-import shipments to the seaports of Central Asian countries (in US dollars for 1 container)

Table Zohidov A. A. Improving the effective management mechanism of the Central Asian transport system. diss. - T., 2018.89 p.

States	By rail transport			By road	
	To the port of Bandar Abbas	Black sea ports	To the ports of the Baltic Sea	To the port of Bandar Abbas	To Karachi port
Uzbekistan	1000	1400	1800	2150	1150
Kazakhstan	1265	1700	1750	2780	1650
Tajikistan	1260	1600	2230	1900	1100
Kyrgyzstan	1100	1450	1780	2700	1600

In general, the territory of our country is mainly used for transit services on railways and highways. The cargo turnover of Uzbekistan's railway transport makes up 66% of the cargo turnover of all transport types in the republic (except for pipeline transport) and 80% of export-import cargo. That is, the importance of the railway in the transportation of export and import goods of our republic is high.

In recent years, the countries of Central Asia have been actively participating in the launch of new railway projects. Some of these projects bypass the railways of Uzbekistan and are roads that are against the interests of the country. In 2019, the volume of cargo on the Keles-Bekabad transit route decreased, while transit cargo transportation along the Keles-Kudukli route increased by 2.8 times. In general, more than 50% of the transit goods passing by railway use regional transport transit services (Table 2).

Table 2
Volume of transit cargo by route (thousand tons)

Points (Plot)	2016	2017	2018	2019
Total	7786,1	7190,6	7017,6	6897,7
Including				
Keles (Tashkent)-Bekabad (Tashkent)	2800,7	2733,4	3202,3	2310,6
Keles (Tashkent)-Galaba (Surkhondarya)	1777,8	1890,5	1683,9	1414,1
Karakalpakiya (Karakalpakistan) - Naymankul (Karakalpakistan)	396,8	212,4	133,9	103,4
Galaba (Surkhondarya)-Keles (Tashkent)	371,0	381,4	218,4	110,3
Bekabad (Tashkent)-Keles (Tashkent)	354,6	365,1	363,5	300,4
Baldir (Surkhondarya)-Kudukli (Surkhondarya)	328,9	196,6	178,6	107,2
Keles (Tashkent)-Kudukli (Surkhondarya)	323,0	222,6	513,9	883,8
Baldir (Surkhondarya)-Galaba (Surkhondarya)	315,5	194,2	205,8	130,4
Keles (Tashkent)-Termez port (Surkhondarya)	263,3	247,9	254,6	115,5
Keles (Tashkent)-Khodjadavlet (Bukhara)	209,9	122,7	100,1	98,4

Karakalpakiya (Surkhondarya) (Karakalpakistan)-Galaba	114,7	138,5	106,4	78,9
Kudukli (Surkhondarya)-Baldir (Surkhondarya)	90,8	22,2	41,4	10,

Камалов А.С. Дадабоева З. Камалова Е. Проблемы Конкурентоспособности транзитных Железнодорожных Коридоров Республики Узбекистан // Журнал. Транспорт Шёлкового Пути №1, 2021.стр-3

"Angren-Pop" railway launched in 2016 is not only for domestic transportation, but in the future it is expected to serve as a motivating factor for further increasing the country's transit potential.

The country's road transport network is the densest in Central Asia, and compared to railway transport, it has a higher importance in delivering goods to the destination. The number of goods and cars leaving the republic's highways for export and transit, as well as the share of transit in the volume of cargo, reaches 25% (2019). As an example, in 2019, the total volume of export and transit cargo was 4,083,571 tons, of which 923,666 tons were transit cargo. In addition, our country has a transit feature in pipeline transport. It is observed especially in the supply of gas from the countries of Central Asia to countries such as Russia and China.

Turkmenistan-Uzbekistan-Kazakhstan-China gas pipelines were built in 2007-2009. It will be possible to deliver 40 billion m³ of Turkmen gas at full capacity [3].

In the transport of transit goods on republican roads, the specific geographical location of the regions and border features with other countries are also important. As an example, the transit possibilities of the Surkhondarya region in the transport links of the country are highly appreciated.

The border of the region with 3 republics (Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Turkmenistan) and the connection of these countries through the transport infrastructures (railway and highways) is not observed in any other region of the republic. This aspect determines the transport geographical position of the area and at the same time serves to increase the transit potential. (Table 3).

Table 3

Interdependence of the region in the implementation of transit (export-import) transport with neighboring countries

Directions from Surkhondarya region to Tajikistan		
North direction	South direction	East direction
- Crossing to Tajikistan, including the country's capital Dushanbe, through the Sariosia district of the region (there are road and railway connections). - crossing to Tajikistan via the Uzun district highway (currently this road exists but is not in operation).	Transfer to the south of Tajikistan to Khatlon region by railway through the Termiz district of the province. Amuzang railway station is nearby.	Crossing to Tajikistan through Uzun district Bobotog region. By road
The route from Tajikistan through Surkhondarya region		
South direction		
Through Surkhondarya (car and railway available) Turkmenistan, Iran, Turkey and European countries	Afghanistan through Surkhondarya and then to the ports of Pakistan	
Surkhondarya-Afghanistan		
South direction		
Departure to Pakistani ports through Afghanistan. Transfer to the northern regions of Afghanistan by railway (Galaba station) and by road through the Termiz district of the province. Afghanistan's railway transport was formed only in the part of the country adjacent to the northern Surkhondarya province.		
Afghanistan - Surkhondarya		

North direction	
Transfer to the state of Tajikistan through Uzbekistan (Surkhondarya). There is a railway and a road.	To CIS countries, Iran, Turkey and European countries through Uzbekistan (Surkhondarya)
Surkhondarya - Turkmenistan	
South-west direction	
Exit to Iran, Persian Gulf and Arab countries through Turkmenistan.	
Turkmenistan-Surkhondarya	
Northeast direction	
Transfer to the state of Tajikistan through Uzbekistan (Surkhondarya)..	Transfer to Afghanistan through Uzbekistan (Surkhondarya) (railway and highway)

The table is made by the author.

Since 2008, the launch of the Tashguzor-Boysun-Kumkurgan railway, which connects the southern regions of the republic with the central regions of the country, has served not only for internal cargo transportation, but also as a motivating factor for increasing the transit capabilities of Uzbekistan.

Analyzing the transport systems of the Republic of Tajikistan alone, we can see that the republic's railway connections are carried out by the railways of our country.

At present, the state unitary enterprise "Tajikistan Railways" operates routes such as Dushanbe-Moscow, Kulob-Moscow, Khojand-Saratov, Dushanbe-Konibodom, Kurgantepa-Konibodom, and they mainly use the railways of Uzbekistan for transit. There are two main railway routes from our country to the Republic of Tajikistan: Keles-Bekabad and Keles-Qudugli.

In 2019, 92.7% of goods exported from Kazakhstan to Tajikistan via Uzbekistan were transported by rail. Grain products (44.8%), oil (21.2%), and wood (105%) occupy the main place in the total exported products [1].

Transit cargo crossing points are Bekabad (Tashkent), Kudugli (Surkhondarya), Amuzang (Surkhondarya). In addition, a large amount of construction materials, including iron products and chemical products, are exported from Iran to Tajikistan through the region.

The neighboring Republic of Afghanistan carries out railway trade connections to the north through the transit zone of Uzbekistan. The transit role of the region is extremely large. Because the region has the main transport infrastructures (railway and road) with Afghanistan. In addition, there is a large terminal in the city of Termiz. This terminal is an important infrastructure for the efficiency of logistics service, regulation of trade and commercial activities.

From the Russian Federation and the Republic of Kazakhstan, a large amount of food products are brought to Afghanistan, including oil from Russia, and flour and flour products from Kazakhstan. Also, construction materials are imported from these countries, and fuel products from Turkmenistan. In this case, the transit service of the region is used.

The railway system in Afghanistan exists only in the north of Mazar-e-Sharif, and this railway continues to Termiz. Also, most goods from Turkmenistan are brought to Afghanistan by rail through Surkhondarya region. In this place, the transport and trade relations of Turkmenistan and Tajikistan.

In turn, the leading countries of South Asia, such as India and Pakistan, are trying to revive bilateral relations with the Central Asian republics. In particular, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan is trying to establish railway connections with the Russian Federation through transport corridors passing through Central Asia[3].

In the region, the share of transit goods in the total volume of foreign trade goods transported by car is 57%, while export and import are 23% and 20%, respectively (Fig. 1).

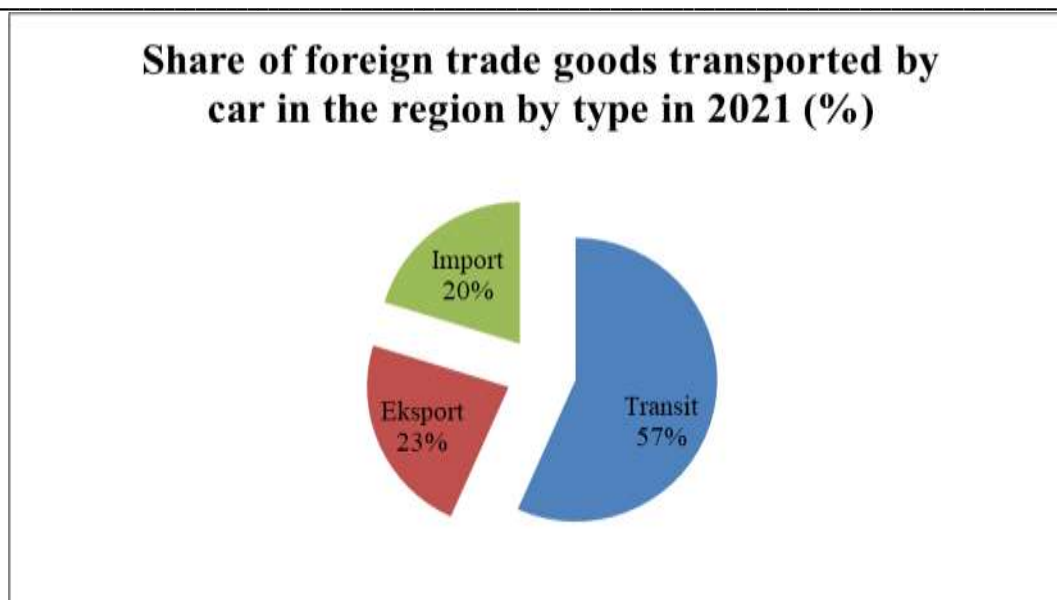


Figure 1. It was prepared based on the information of the Surkhandarya Regional Customs Department

By improving the competitiveness of the transport system of the region in the global market of transport services, it requires the development of the infrastructure of existing transport corridors and transport facilities in order to fully use the transit potential of the region.

In order to have a high transit potential of the regional transport system, it is important for the region's transport infrastructures to provide service at the level of demand, to have modern transport facilities, and at the same time, transit cargo agreements of the states are important.

Its natural geographical location and the historical formation of transport are reflected in the construction of regional transport infrastructures. That is, the mountainous part of the region, the construction of transport infrastructure was difficult. At the same time, during the former union, the railway infrastructure in the plains was organized in the interests of the center.

Today, the transport system of the region is facing problems in fulfilling its transit function, for example, the fact that highways pass through the city center (in the cities of Shorchi, Zharkurgan, Kumkurgan) shows that the road infrastructure is organized on one side. In order to prevent such shortcomings and increase the efficiency of transport transit in the region, it is desirable to reconstruct and standardize the existing Kakaydi-Uzun road, which is located parallel to the M41 road from its center to the north, and ensure the passage of transit goods. Through this, the balance of the traffic flow passing through the main cities of the region, such as Sariosia, Denov, Shorchi, Kumkurgan, Jarkurgan, and the convenience of the transport-transit corridor will be achieved.

In addition, in order to prevent excessive distance and time spent in the transit of goods, it is necessary to launch new roads of international importance within the districts of the region. As a clear example of this, it is possible to ensure quick and cheap delivery of goods transported by trucks to the Republic of Tajikistan by reconstruction of the Boysun-Denov highway.

In short, to create conditions for the formation of new car transit transport corridors that ensure the increase in the volume of transit transportation, taking into account the population settlements and traffic flow when creating them. Also, it is necessary to organize TIR-parks (free parking lots) for their temporary placement in places directly close to customs points and to ensure fast delivery of goods.

Also, in the future, it is an urgent task in the field to take into account the cost of transport in the regulation of trade and commercial activities, and to increase the existing potential of the regional transport system and turn it into an important strategic intersection in the region.

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