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WORLD TRADE IN THE CONDITIONS OF GLOBALIZATION CRISIS

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Abstract. The article focuses on the analysis of factors that slow down the growth of international trade at the current stage of globalization. The latter is experiencing a crisis, but objective data do not indicate the end of globalization, but rather its slowdown following rapid growth. In its development, globalization overcomes many obstacles and faces various risks. At present, the threat of fragmentation of the world economy has become especially relevant. The factors causing the slowdown in the growth of globalization and world trade, for the most part, do not threaten the integrity of the world economy. The spread of regional trade agreements also does not negate the long-term efforts of the WTO aimed at trade liberalization, and in itself does not lead to the division of the world economy into separate blocks. Currently, the probability of the risk of fragmentation of the global economy is associated primarily with the geopolitical crisis. It is generally recognized that political confrontation, accompanied by restrictive measures regarding trade, brings economic losses to its participants. It can be assumed that ultimately objective economic laws will prevail and the scenario of the collapse of the global economy will not be realized. However, the high degree of uncertainty inherent in the political sphere does not allow us to confidently judge the prospects for an exacerbation or, on the contrary, mitigation of the crisis situation, and therefore the depth and duration of the impact of the political factor on economic policy and trade. After a pause, during which integration processes will unfold primarily at the level of world regions, globalization will resume its growth. Its pace will depend on a number of factors: normalization of the international political situation, overcoming trade contradictions, strengthening the system of global governance, dissemination of the principles of sustainable and responsible development, and many others. Development will acquire a more measured character, and the openness of economies and their interdependence will increase. In the long term, the main trends in the development of world trade that are currently observed will continue: a decrease in the share of goods and an increase in the share of services, an increase in the role of developing countries in trade in goods and developed countries in trade in services. The growth rates of world trade and GDP will remain at a relatively low level, while trade will grow somewhat faster than production. In the future, factors related to digitalization, robotics, artificial intelligence, additive technologies and climate change will become more noticeable. They will lead to shifts in the product structure of trade and the directions of the main commodity flows, but will not stop globalization, but will give it new features and directions of development.

Keywords: global economic integration, regional economic integration, international trade, fragmentation of the global economy, COVID19 pandemic, global value chains, World Trade Organization, regional trade agreements.

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МИРОВАЯ ТОРГОВЛЯ В УСЛОВИЯХ КРИЗИСА ГЛОБАЛИЗАЦИИ

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Аннотация. Рассмотрены основные тенденции развития международной торговли в условиях кризиса глобализации. Последний находит выражение главным образом в замедлении развертывания глобализационных процессов. Проанализированы основные факторы, определяющие развитие международной торговли на современном этапе глобализации. Показано, что углубление региональной экономической интеграции не равнозначно фрагментации мировой экономики. Сегодня основная роль в усилении угрозы фрагментации принадлежит политическому фактору.

В то же время объективные закономерности экономического развития будут препятствовать реализации данного сценария, несущего потери всем участникам международной торговли.

Ключевые слова: экономическая глобализация, региональная экономическая интеграция, международная торговля, фрагментация мировой экономики, пандемия COVID19, глобальные цепочки стоимости, Всемирная торговая организация, региональные торговые соглашения.

During the latter half of the 20th century and the early years of the 21st century, globalization accelerated significantly, becoming a defining trend in global economic development. Despite its inherent contradictions for individual countries and segments of the population, it is difficult to overlook globalization's stimulating effect on global economic growth, particularly in advancing the economies of emerging nations. These countries began challenging established leaders in their own markets, fostering conditions that bolstered protectionist sentiments in the United States, the European Union, and other Western nations.

The global financial crisis, followed by the *COVID-19* pandemic and escalating geopolitical tensions, further intensified these dynamics. Disputes between participants in the global market, which were traditionally resolved through government negotiations or corporate competition, escalated into trade wars, threatening the cohesion of the global economy. A growing concern is the potential fragmentation of the global market, with a possible disintegration into distinct blocs formed along political lines. This scenario has reignited discussions on deglobalization, its likelihood, and the far-reaching consequences of such a development.

WORLD TRADE DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

Between 1960 and 1990, the volume of global exports (adjusted for constant prices) increased fivefold, while global GDP grew by a factor of 3.7. Over the next decade, these indicators slowed to 1.9 and 1.3, respectively. From 2000 to 2010, the corresponding figures were 1.4 and 1.3, and for the period between 2020 and 2022, both settled at 1.1 (as shown in Table 1). Following the global financial crisis, the growth rates of global GDP and trade began to converge, despite notable yearly fluctuations in the elasticity coeffi-

cient. From 2010 to 2022, global GDP increased by an average of 2.7% annually. In comparison, global exports and imports of goods grew at rates of 2.5% and 2.7%, respectively. During the same period, the average annual growth rate for global exports and imports of services was higher, at 4% [source 1]. According to the WTO, global merchandise trade volumes declined by 1.2% in 2023, while global GDP grew by 2.7%. Projections for 2024 indicate both figures will converge at 2.6%. By 2025, global merchandise trade growth is expected to outpace GDP growth, with projected rates of 3.3% and 2.7%, respectively [source 2].

After a half-century during which world trade grew 1.5 to 2 times faster than global production, the growth rates of both indicators have converged in the current century, with the pace of both trade and production slowing overall. Notably, world trade experienced particularly rapid expansion from the mid-1980s through the late 2000s. During this period, international investment flows also surged at an unprecedented rate. Between 1986 and 2008, the ratio of global trade in goods and services to GDP rose sharply from 16.7% to 30.9%. However, researchers have pointed out that such growth was unsustainable and would inevitably slow – a shift that began with the global financial crisis of 2008–2009 [1]. By 2011, the trade-to-GDP ratio had recovered to 30.5%, but subsequent years saw a prevailing trend of decline. This ratio bottomed out at 26.3% in 2020 amid the pandemic, peaked at 31% in 2022, and dropped again to 29.3% in 2023 [source 3].

According to IMF forecasts, global trade is expected to grow at a moderate pace of 3.3–3.4% annually between 2025 and 2029, slightly outpacing the projected annual growth rate of global GDP, estimated at 3.1–3.2%. As in previous years, developing countries are anticipated to outpace developed nations significantly in the growth of GDP, exports, and imports of goods and services (Table 2).

Table 1. World exports of goods and world GDP in 1960–2022, index, 2015 = 100

Year	Value volume				Physical volume				GDP
	Exports				Exports				
	Total	Agricultural products	Mining industry products	Manufacturing products	Total	Agricultural products	Mining industry products	Manufacturing products	
1960	1	3	1	1	6	17	19	3	13
1970	2	4	2	2	13	25	38	8	23
1980	13	19	24	10	21	36	45	15	33
1990	21	26	21	21	30	41	50	26	48
2000	39	35	36	42	57	60	72	53	64
2005	64	54	76	65	73	73	86	69	75
2006	74	60	97	74	79	77	90	77	78
2007	86	72	112	85	84	81	93	83	82
2008	99	86	149	93	86	82	94	85	84
2009	77	75	97	75	76	81	90	72	82
2010	93	87	129	89	86	86	95	85	86
2011	112	105	173	103	91	92	97	90	89
2012	112	106	175	103	93	94	99	93	92
2013	115	111	170	106	95	96	100	95	94
2014	115	111	156	108	98	98	98	98	97
2015	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
2016	97	101	85	98	102	102	102	100	103
2017	107	111	110	107	107	110	99	106	106
2018	118	115	137	116	110	115	107	112	110
2019	115	114	130	114	110	118	111	112	113
2020	107	115	98	108	105	115	109	107	109
2021	135	138	154	132	114	118	113	122	115
2022 ¹	151	149	217	136	117	113	110	117	119

¹ Preliminary data.

Source: [source 1].

The WTO economists have compiled a long-term forecast for the development of world trade based on a *recursive dynamic computable general equilibrium model (CGE)*. Calculations have shown that in the period of 2020–2050, trade is expected to grow approximately 1.1 times faster than GDP with average annual growth rates of 3.09 and 2.72%, respectively. Over this period, the composition of global trade is projected to shift: the share of manufactured goods in total trade turnover is expected to decline from 64% to 52%, while the share of services is set to in-

crease from 24% to 38%. The remaining 10% will consist of agricultural and mining products, with the share of agricultural products dropping significantly (from 2% to 1%) as nations pursue greater self-sufficiency in food production. The share of trade between developing countries in global turnover will rise from 19% to 37%, while trade between developed countries will shrink from 40% to 21%. Trade between developed and developing nations will slightly increase, from 40% to 42%. Similarly, the share of developed countries in global exports is projected to fall from 56% to

Table 2. Growth rates of GDP (in constant prices) and physical volume of exports and imports of goods and services, actual data for 2020–2023 and forecast for 2024–2029, %

		2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
GDP	World	–2.7	6.5	3.5	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.1	3.1	3.1
	Developed countries	–3.9	5.7	2.6	1.6	1.7	1.8	1.8	1.7	1.7	1.7
	Developing countries	–1.8	7.0	4.1	4.3	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.0	3.9	3.9
Imports	World	–8.7	10.9	5.9	0.1	3.1	3.3	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.3
	Developed countries	–8.2	10.3	7.1	–1.0	2.0	2.8	2.9	3.0	2.9	2.8
	Developing countries	–9.4	12.1	3.9	2.0	4.9	4.1	4.4	4.1	4.1	4.0
Exports	World	–8.0	11.1	5.2	0.5	2.9	3.3	3.5	3.4	3.3	3.2
	Developed countries	–8.8	9.9	5.6	0.9	2.5	2.9	3.0	2.9	2.9	2.8
	Developing countries	–6.6	13.0	4.7	–0.1	3.7	3.9	4.2	4.0	3.9	3.8

Source: [source 4].

43%, while that of developing countries will rise from 44% to 57%. Parity in global exports between these two groups is expected by 2035. Developed nations will likely strengthen their comparative advantages in the services sector, while developing countries will maintain dominance in manufactured goods [2].

Overall, leading international economic organizations view the future of global trade with cautious optimism. This perspective is grounded in several observations. While the ratio of global trade turnover to GDP has declined in the 2010s and 2020s compared to its peak prior to the global financial crisis, it still surpasses levels seen in the 1990s. Despite significant shocks over the past 15 years, such as the global financial crisis, the pandemic, and ongoing geopolitical tensions, the foreign trade sector has demonstrated resilience. After sharp contractions during the financial crisis and the pandemic, global trade volumes rebounded quickly, and the current geopolitical challenges have had a less severe impact than initially feared.

World trade is known to exhibit sharper fluctuations compared to global production, it is characterized by deeper declines during downturns but also stronger recovery growth. This pattern is evident not only during relatively short crisis periods but also over longer timespans. During phases of rapid economic expansion, the ratio of world trade turnover to GDP tends to increase, reflecting higher trade elasticity rela-

tive to GDP. Conversely, during periods of slower GDP growth, this ratio declines, indicating reduced trade elasticity.

This relationship between trade and production growth is explained by the need for additional resources during periods of accelerated economic growth. These resources – often in greater quantities and of higher quality – may not be readily available within a single national economy. Engaging external resources through various forms of international economic relations becomes a faster and more cost-effective solution. Similarly, as other economies grow, they can utilize their resources more productively by integrating into global value chains (GVCs). However, during recessions, especially when they become global in nature, these same international ties become less stable. The primary factors undermining these connections include deteriorating conditions among trading partners, exchange rate volatility, and restrictive trade policies.

The uneven dynamics of world trade observed over the past two decades are not unusual. Objective data do not signal the end of globalization but rather a slowdown following its earlier rapid expansion. In nature and society, periods of growth and decline alternate cyclically, and globalization is no exception. Indeed, a long-term contraction in globalization occurred during the first half of the 20th century, spanning three decades. Globalization has always had to overcome numerous obstacles and navigate various risks. Today,

the threat of fragmentation within the global economy has become particularly significant.

TRADE FRAGMENTATION

Fragmentation of the global economy – and consequently, global trade – is commonly understood as its division into distinct regional blocs. In today's context, political alignment among participants in such associations plays a particularly significant role. A widely held perspective suggests that deep trade agreements, which extend beyond traditional trade to foster deeper integration of national economies, positively impact growth and development. However, they also pose the risk of fragmenting the global economy [3].

The notion that trade is becoming increasingly regional has gained prominence, particularly with the suggestion that globalization is being supplanted by regionalization. This has spurred interest in studies examining the extent to which this claim is supported by empirical evidence. Swiss researchers Lukaszuk and Legge took on this challenge, basing their analysis on international trade data spanning 1815–2014 [4] and 1950–2019 [5], sourced from the French Center for Research and Expertise on the World Economy (*CEPII*). The analysis focused on three key parameters: the share of trade between neighboring countries (those sharing a common border) in global trade, the share of trade between countries on the same continent in global trade, and the weighted average geographical distance (by trade volume) in global trade. No evidence of a trend toward regionalization was found for any of these indicators before 2014. This conclusion also holds for the period between 1950 and 2019. However, the *COVID-19* crisis caused a temporary shift, with an increase in the share of trade between countries on the same continent and a significant decrease in the weighted average distance of international trade flows [6].

According to UNCTAD, between 1995 and 2022, the share of exports directed to other countries within the same region or group changed significantly, particularly for developing countries. For developed countries, this share decreased slightly, from 73.2% to 70.4%. In

contrast, for developing countries, it increased markedly, from 38.1% to 54.4%, and for developing countries excluding China, from 31.2% to 38.9%. Intraregional exports were notably high in Europe (67.9% in 1995 and 68.4% in 2022) and Asia (52.8% and 58.5% during the same period). In other regions, trade volumes with third countries generally exceeded those within the region [source 5].

According to the WTO, the number of regional trade agreements (RTAs) in force has also grown dramatically, rising from 22 in 1990 to 369 in 2024. Of these, 167 cover trade in goods, 3 in services, and 199 encompass both goods and services [source 6]. This surge in RTAs has reignited debates about their effects on international trade, specifically whether they create obstacles to trade through trade creation and trade diversion effects. The efforts of the WTO over the years have significantly reduced global customs tariffs, diminishing their role in regulating international trade compared to non-tariff barriers. However, eliminating non-tariff barriers through multilateral agreements often faces insurmountable challenges.

As a result, trade preferences have become less influential, leading to a shift in how trade creation and trade diversion effects manifest. These effects increasingly stem from the removal of non-tariff barriers and reflect shifts in the flow of goods within transnational production networks. This trend is particularly evident in RTAs involving countries with low tariff rates and deep integration into GVCs. That said, the general trend varies for specific goods, particularly sensitive items for individual countries. In such cases, tariff rates can remain prohibitively high, and their reduction or elimination plays a critical role in shaping trade creation and diversion effects.

Calculations for major RTAs indicate that nearly all of them have resulted in increased trade, not only among member countries but also with third-party nations. This is because the improvement and unification of the business environment fostered by RTAs function as a public good, benefiting all companies regardless of their country of origin. Moreover, the globalization of business operations has rendered a company's nationali-

ty increasingly irrelevant. Companies can easily navigate restrictions by establishing branches or subsidiaries within RTA member countries. For over half a century, the reduction of customs barriers has progressed simultaneously at the GATT/WTO level, within RTAs, and unilaterally. Rather than conflicting or undermining one another, these processes have been mutually reinforcing, collectively driving the broader trend toward trade liberalization [7]. A study of six RTAs in Europe and Latin America found no significant negative impact on third countries. In fact, it revealed that preferences in mutual trade often preceded reductions in external tariffs granted to third countries under most-favored-nation terms [8].

The impact of RTAs on multilateral tariff liberalization warrants close attention. While this influence is evident, it depends on various factors, including the role of interest groups in RTA member countries, their prominence in international trade, the structure of their foreign trade turnover, their involvement in transnational production networks, the nature of their political relationships, and the level of strategic partnership among them. Overall, researchers conclude that the establishment of preferential trade agreements generally promotes tariff reductions within the multilateral trading system [9]. This effect is supported by a provision in WTO agreements requiring that duties and other trade restrictions imposed by members of a customs union or free trade zone on third countries must not exceed the levels that existed prior to the formation of the integration bloc.

Moreover, calculations by analysts from *DHL* and *New York University's Stern School of Business*, based on data on international trade, investments, information flows, and migration, demonstrate the resilience of cross-border connections. By 2022, three out of four dimensions of globalization (excluding migration) had surpassed pre-pandemic levels. Contrary to predictions made during the pandemic, the geographical reach of trade flows continues to expand, while the share of intraregional trade – which increased between 2012 and 2016 – is now declining. Thus, the hypothesis that regionalization will replace globalization remains unsubstantiated [10].

Based on the findings of the studies mentioned, the formation of regional trade associations does not appear to create new barriers to trade with third countries. On the contrary, there is some evidence suggesting a mutually reinforcing relationship between regional and global economic integration processes. For example, the UK's accession to the *Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership* (CPTPP), established by countries in the Asia-Pacific region, is less an instance of fragmentation and more a demonstration of the globalization potential of RTAs. This illustrates that globalization and regionalization are not mutually exclusive but rather represent two interconnected levels of the broader internationalization of the world economy. This is particularly true for mega-regional trade agreements like the CPTPP.

A shift in the structure of world trade in favor of intraregional flows does not necessarily equate to fragmentation. The critical factor is the dynamics of interregional trade. As long as trade volumes grow in both interregional and intraregional directions, fragmentation does not occur – even if intraregional trade grows at a faster rate. Signs of fragmentation arise only under specific conditions: when interregional trade declines while intraregional trade grows, or if both decline, with intraregional trade declining more slowly.

A thorough analysis of the factors that have shaped the current state of economic globalization – and that will influence the future trajectory of the global economy – can provide deeper insight into the nature and prospects of these ongoing processes.

FACTORS OF TRADE DEVELOPMENT

During the second half of the 20th century, the accelerated growth of international trade was driven by several key factors. These included the deepening of the international division of labor, advancements in transportation, joint efforts by GATT/WTO participants to reduce import duties and non-tariff barriers, and the establishment of principles such as transparency, non-discrimination, and fair trade policies.

The era of hyperglobalization – from the mid-1980s to the onset of the global financial crisis in 2008–2009 – introduced additional transformative factors. Foremost among these were the proliferation of information and communication technologies and the integration of former socialist bloc countries into the global market. These developments reshaped the global economy, enabling unprecedented opportunities for the rapid growth of transnational production. As a result, an increasing volume of components and materials entered international trade, creating a qualitatively new configuration of the world economy. While these factors remain influential today, their effects are subtler and no longer drive the same level of qualitative changes in the dynamics and structure of international trade flows.

At the same time, factors restraining the growth of international trade have become more prominent. These include a slowdown in global economic growth, stagnation in the development of GVCs, escalating trade tensions, the coronavirus pandemic, worsening geopolitical conditions, and the emergence of new technologies capable of reshaping trade flows. Additionally, the growing share of the services sector in global GDP poses a challenge for trade dynamics, as services are inherently less tradable than goods – a phenomenon often referred to as the lower “tradability” of services.

After the 2008–2009 financial crisis, a significant factor hindering global trade was the slowdown in GVC development. This stagnation negatively affected the supply of components and materials, which account for over 40 % of global trade turnover. Because intermediate products cross borders multiple times during transnational production, GVCs play an increasingly influential role in shaping trade dynamics. However, the growth of additive manufacturing technologies, which bring production closer to the point of consumption, is starting to reduce the turnover of trade in intermediate goods. While the impact of this factor is currently limited, it is expected to grow as these technologies become more widespread. Despite these challenges, data on international trade in intermediate goods do not indicate a decline in the GVC sphere. Like global trade

overall, intermediate goods trade has experienced significant fluctuations over the past decade but has shown a clear upward trend in its share of global exports. In 2011, this share was 42.1 %, rising to 46.1 % by 2021 (Table 3). However, more recent data suggests a decline in the share of intermediate goods in world exports (excluding fuel and energy products). This share peaked at 58 % in the second quarter of 2022 but fell to 54 % by the fourth quarter of 2023 [source 2].

The slowdown in GVC growth – and in some cases, their collapse – can be attributed to their reaching a saturation point, as well as the diminishing influence of factors that previously fueled the creation of global production and distribution chains. During the era of accelerated globalization, many emerging economies successfully attracted foreign capital and integrated into GVCs. This integration elevated the technological level of their industries, created numerous high-paying jobs, and improved overall public welfare standards. Policies aimed at localizing production have also yielded significant results. The largest developing economies have increasingly been able to independently supply the necessary components for assembly plants within their borders. This shift has enhanced the role of domestic de-

Table 3. Share of intermediate products in world exports, 2011–2021

Year	World exports, billion USD	World exports of intermediate products, billion USD	Share, %
2011	18 337	7722	42.1
2012	18 508	7707	41.6
2013	18 958	7968	42.0
2014	19 000	7919	41.7
2015	16 554	7150	43.2
2016	16 036	7022	43.8
2017	17 741	7803	44.0
2018	19 549	8509	43.5
2019	19 014	8250	43.4
2020	17 648	8054	45.6
2021	22 344	10 297	46.1

Source: [source 1].

mand in these rapidly growing economies, while expanding their capacity to meet this demand through domestic production. Additionally, rising wages in these developing countries have reduced their attractiveness to foreign TNCs seeking to establish production facilities abroad.

The rise of developing countries and the relative weakening of Western states in the global market have intensified competition between them. Developing nations have expanded their demands for trade concessions, strengthening their negotiating positions. For developed countries, the cost of making concessions and reaching compromises has risen significantly. Trade tensions have been further exacerbated by differences in the socio-economic systems of the leading players, particularly the United States and China. Between 1973 and 2022, China's share of global exports surged from 1% to 14.8%, while its share of imports grew from 0.9% to 10.8%. In contrast, the United States saw its share of global exports decline from 12.2% to 8.5%. Its share of imports rose to 17.1% in 2003 but fell to 13.4% by 2022. The European Union experienced a similar decline, with its share of global exports dropping from 37% to 29.4% and imports from 37.1% to 29.7%. However, when excluding intra-EU trade, its 2022 share in global exports was 13.2% and in imports, 14.8%. In comparison, the United States' adjusted figures increased to 10.1% for

exports and 15.8% for imports, while China's rose to 17.6% and 12.7%, respectively (Table 4).

The ongoing crisis within the WTO has significantly hindered the pace of international trade development. The rising influence of developing countries, the expansion of global value chains (GVCs), the growth of e-commerce, the increasing importance of trade in services, and other evolving forms of international economic relations have presented the WTO with numerous challenges, many of which remain unresolved. It is widely acknowledged that the multilateral trading system requires substantial restructuring. While preparations for the WTO's transformation have already begun, the timeline for completing and implementing these reforms remains uncertain, given the deep-seated contradictions among key players, particularly the United States and China.

One of the most prominent consequences of escalating trade tensions has been the paralysis of the WTO's dispute resolution mechanism. This breakdown was largely driven by actions from Washington, aimed at pressuring the organization to meet its demands. As a result, ensuring compliance with WTO rules has become increasingly difficult, progress toward trade liberalization has slowed, and trade policy has grown more unpredictable. These factors have negatively impacted the dynamics of international trade and hin-

Table 4. World merchandise trade, 1973–2022

	1973	1983	1993	2003	2022 ²
Exports, USD billion	579	1838	3688	7382	24 312
including, %:					
EU ¹	37.0	31.3	37.3	38.6	29.4 (13.2)
China	1.0	1.2	2.5	5.9	14.8 (17.6)
USA	12.2	11.2	12.6	9.8	8.5 (10.1)
Imports, USD billion	594	1883	3805	7599	25 118
including, %:	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
EU	37.1	31.4	36.2	36.1	29.7 (14.8)
USA	12.4	14.3	15.9	17.1	13.4 (15.8)
China	0.9	1.1	2.7	5.4	10.8 (12.7)

¹ 1963 – EU-6; 1973 – EU-9; 1983 – EU-10; 1993 – EU-12; 2003 – EU-25; 2022 – EU without UK.

² The figures in brackets exclude intra-EU trade.

Source: [source 1].

dered the development of rules that could support emerging forms of foreign economic relations.

The pandemic, coupled with worsening geopolitical tensions, has shifted trade policies toward protectionism. A growing emphasis on self-sufficiency and the formation of economic ties primarily with politically aligned nations has heightened the risk of the global economy fragmenting into separate blocs. The economic confrontation between the United States and China is accelerating this trend, marked by restrictive trade measures and the looming threat of a technological divide. This instability in trade policy has increased the unpredictability of business conditions, made forecasting more challenging, and elevated investment risks.

According to calculations by OECD experts, two primary factors contributed to the rise in trade costs within GVCs during the period between the 2008–2009 global financial crisis and the coronavirus pandemic: structural changes (such as the growing role of domestic sources, industry shifts, and changes in the range of foreign suppliers) and increased general uncertainty. The structural factor was most evident in China, while the uncertainty factor impacted nearly all countries. Overall, the study notes a stabilization in the scale of global economic integration during the second decade of the 21st century [11].

Thus, the factors behind the slowdown in globalization and world trade growth generally do not threaten the integrity of the global economy. The proliferation of regional trade agreements (RTAs) does not negate the WTO's long-standing efforts to liberalize trade and does not inherently lead to the fragmentation of the global economy. Instead, the primary risk of economic fragmentation today is linked to the ongoing geopolitical crisis. It is widely acknowledged that political confrontations, accompanied by restrictive trade measures, result in economic losses for all participants.

From this perspective, it can be assumed that, over time, objective economic principles will prevail, making the scenario of a global economic collapse unlikely. However, the high level of uncertainty in the political sphere prevents a de-

finite assessment of whether the current crisis will deepen or ease. This uncertainty complicates predictions regarding the depth and duration of the political factor's impact on economic policy and global trade.

RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

Globalization has driven faster growth in developing economies, accelerated labor productivity, facilitated the widespread dissemination of advanced technologies, reduced poverty, and improved quality of life worldwide. If the global economy fragments into trade blocs and protectionism rises, the opposite outcomes are likely: slower economic growth, a widening technological gap for developing countries, and deepening income disparities both between and within nations.

However, a complete reversal of economic globalization seems unlikely. Its current slowdown is better understood as a natural consequence of the extraordinarily rapid development of previous decades. Rather than “deglobalization”, the current phase represents a temporary deceleration in globalization's momentum. Following this pause, during which integration will primarily occur at the regional level, globalization is expected to resume, albeit at a more moderate rate. Its trajectory will depend on several factors, including the normalization of international political relations, resolution of trade disputes, strengthening of global governance mechanisms, and the promotion of sustainable and responsible development principles. Global development is expected to take on a more measured pace, characterized by increased openness of economies and deeper interdependence among nations.

In the long term, the main trends currently shaping international trade are expected to persist. These include a declining share of goods and a rising share of services in trade, an increasing role for developing countries in goods trade, and a continued dominance of developed countries in services trade. Although the growth rates of world trade and GDP are projected to remain relatively low, trade is anticipated to grow slightly faster than production. Emerging factors such as digitalization, robotization, artificial intelligence,

additive manufacturing, and climate change will play a growing role in shaping trade dynamics. These influences will bring shifts in the composition of traded goods and the directions of major trade flows. However, rather than halting globalization, these developments will redefine it, introducing new features, forms, and directions for its future evolution.

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