

OPPOSER REVIEW OF PHD DISSERTATION

Topic: **The Export Potential of Uzbekistan in the International Market of Agricultural and Foodstuff Products**

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The title of the PhD. dissertation is “**The Export Potential of Uzbekistan in the International Market of Agricultural and Foodstuff Products**”. I can see an appropriate interconnection among the study program of the student and the topic of this dissertation thesis.

Uzbekistan is not a member of the World Trade Organization (the process of fulfilling the necessary criteria is nearing completion) and in its foreign trade it uses mainly bilateral agreements and applies mainly free trade agreements primarily with CIS countries. Uzbekistan is an important producer of some agricultural commodities (e.g. cotton), which can be interesting commodities for other markets since, as I have mentioned and the thesis shows, the main trading partners are the CIS countries. **The topic is therefore highly actual** as Uzbekistan is currently dynamically implementing a reform process, which started with the adoption of the Socio-Economic Strategy Development of the country for 2017-2021 and subsequently Uzbekistan 2030.

The presented dissertation is of a **high research standard**. It has been elaborated in 162 pages of text, up to 242 international literature sources have been used. The author of the thesis used the representation of the research results not only in text and graph, tabular form but also by means of diagrams.

The dissertation is divided into 7 main chapters.

1. Introduction
2. Objectives
3. Methodology
4. Theoretical part

5. Empirical part
6. Summary of findings and discussion
7. Conclusion

The structure of the dissertation is in accordance with the standards for writing final theses.

First chapter is “**Introduction**” where author described introduction to the topic Uzbekistan agrarian export.

In the chapter “**Objectives**” author mentioned, that the main aim of the research is to identify the potential of export agricultural and foodstuff products in international trade and determining the export competitiveness of agricultural and foodstuff products. Another important aim is to specify the current position of the Uzbekistan in the global market of agricultural products and foodstuffs with the accent in relation to specific regions and countries.

Author mentioned also the key objectives of this research:

- To discuss the role of agricultural and especially agricultural trade (both exports and imports) in economic development and its significance for Uzbekistan;
- To identify the views of the average agricultural exporter on the impediments to agricultural export development in Uzbekistan and how these can be resolved;
- To analyze factors affecting country’s agricultural trade;
- To identify the most important countries (trade partners) representing the pillar of Uzbek agrarian exports activities. The idea is to specify the main factors influencing country’s trade competitiveness.

The thesis is divided to theoretical and empirical parts. The aim of theoretical part is to lay a theoretical foundation in:

- The role of international trade in globalization processes,
- Factors affecting the international trade,
- Gains from international trade,
- Restrictions for international trade,
- The role of trade agreements
- The specifics of international trade in agricultural and foodstuff products in Uzbekistan.

The empirical part analyses

- The comparative advantages of agrarian international trade in Uzbekistan,

- The impact of state regulations on international trade in Uzbekistan from the perspective of firm owners and managers,
- The factors affecting international trade of Uzbekistan from the macroeconomic perspective such as geographical distance and GDPs of the trading countries

Chapter 3 **Methodology**

In the thesis are described three main methods framework:

- Indices of comparative advantages and product mapping scheme
- Gravity model
- Ordinal regression analysis of the factors affecting the perception of the firm owners and managers on regulatory policies as obstacles for trade.
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The chapter 4 **Theoretical part**

Theoretical part describes topics as: globalization and trade liberalization in agriculture, factors affecting international trade, world agricultural demand and supply in agricultural product, protectionism in agricultural trade, the arguments of absolute and comparative advantages, economies of scale and diversification argument, Trade Agreements and International Organizations and International trade in agricultural products in Uzbekistan.

The chapter 5 **Empirical part**

The competitiveness analysis of Uzbek agrarian trade, changes in the character and competitiveness of Uzbekistan's agrarian Foreign Trade, distribution of comparative advantages in relation to different groups of countries, the impact of state regulations on international trade in Uzbekistan from the perspective of firm owners and managers, the factors affecting international trade flows of Uzbekistan - geographical distance and economic power of trading countries and the Gravity model.

These two chapters are the main part of the theses.

The chapter 6 **Summary of findings and discussion**

In the given chapter, the author comments on the most important achieved results of the dissertation.

Questions for discussion:

1. Uzbekistan has a negative trade balance with agro-commodities. The reason given by the author is that the value added of exported commodities is low compared to the high value added of imported commodities. What is the source of this situation in terms of historical development?
2. The author states that Uzbekistan has low food self-sufficiency. What is the government doing to increase it?
3. Where does the author see opportunities for the development of the territorial structure of foreign trade in agricultural and food commodities? Can the Central European countries be suitable trading partners of Uzbekistan?

Conclusions of oppose review:

The submitted thesis contains all the requirements for writing a doctoral thesis. The topic is highly topical focusing on foreign agrarian and food trade of Uzbekistan and its evaluation. The thesis also aimed to specify the current position of Uzbekistan in the global market of agricultural products and food with emphasis in relation to specific regions and countries. All the objectives were fulfilled.

Final evaluation: I recommend this dissertation for final defense.

Nitra, February 25, 2024



doc. Ing. Patrik Rovný, PhD.