
The impact of COVID-19 on the economy and international economic relations of the Republic of Korea

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Abstract. *The COVID-19 pandemic has negatively impacted global trade in goods and services and has exposed weaknesses in the existing structures for international interaction within the global value chains in the Asia-Pacific region, including the United States of America, Japan and the Republic of Korea. The dependence of these economies on the People's Republic of China negatively affected the production processes of the largest industrial companies. To minimize the existing risks, countries are actively participating in and developing free trade agreements, which helps to diversify the geography of participants in global value chains and sales markets. The Government of the Republic of Korea has demonstrated its ability to effectively combat the COVID-19 pandemic by implementing its own strategy of preventive measures and economic stimulus measures. In addition, two new foreign economic initiatives were launched: the New Southern Policy and the New Northern Policy, which could be based on existing and new free trade agreements. Active involvement in global value chains and participation in free trade agreements allowed the Republic of Korea to increase its competitive advantages in the world market and develop its economic potential. The diversification of trading partners under free trade agreements had a positive impact on the country's economic performance during the pandemic and helped to minimize the negative impact of disruptions in foreign trade. The Russian Federation has the opportunity to integrate into new foreign economic trends in South Korea, and there are opportunities to increase the volume of mutual trade between the countries. One of the ways to achieve this goal may be the signing of a bilateral agreement of a free trade zone between the Republic of Korea and the Eurasian Economic Union.*

Keywords: *free trade agreements, global value chains, the Asia-Pacific Region, the Republic of Korea, new northern policy, new southern policy, international trade, export, import, COVID-19*

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