

## **Impact of the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic and its control measures on the functioning of trade routes**

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### **Abstract**

The research is aimed to analyze the impact of the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic and measures to combat it on the functioning of trade routes of the XXI century, as well as their innovation and industrial zones. **Goal.** Identification of the main areas of impact of the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic and measures to combat it (in February-May 2020) on the functioning of the global transport and logistics system in terms of key routes of trade routes and modes of transport, determining the place and role of Russian communications and transport and logistics companies in servicing the functioning of trade routes in the new reality. **Tasks.** Consideration, systematization and analysis of various areas of impact of the pandemic and measures to combat it on changing the structure of the transport services market, digital transformation of the transport process and transport behavior of the population. Confirmation of the hypothesis that the increase in the share of rail transport in servicing the functioning of modern trade routes, which is observed during the fight against the pandemic, should be continued in the future in order to prevent new outbreaks of infection, and improve the processes of commodity movement based on digital transformation, automation, robotics, and the expansion of the use of sparsely populated (unpopulated) transport and logistics technologies. Developing proposals for implementing the most effective corporate mechanisms for developing the transit economy in Russia in the context of the new reality created by the pandemic. **Methodology.** The research uses methods of system analysis, evolutionary and institutional theory, the theory of industrial and technological balance, and the historical approach. **Results.** It is shown that in ensuring global economic relations, the pandemic has further strengthened the competitive advantages of railway transport as a low-traffic transportation technology in relation to the volume of transported goods. Promising directions for the development of the national transit economy, due to measures to overcome the pandemic, are outlined. Proposals were put forward on the directions of socio-economic development of Russia after the end of the active phase of the fight against the pandemic. **Conclusions.** The COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic has identified urgent problems in the functioning of transport and logistics systems, all types of transport, and international trade routes, and outlined prospects for their further development, taking into account the need to ensure sanitary and epidemiological security. In order to maintain the competitive advantages of rail transport in cargo transportation services along the Euro-Asian trade routes, it is advisable to consider subsidizing container transport on the China – Russia – Europe route. The pandemic has become an incentive to accelerate the digital transformation of all transport and logistics processes, expand the use of remote jobs, and apply sparsely populated (unpopulated) transportation, storage, and handling technologies. Control functions and implementation of measures to prevent the spread and control infectious diseases can be delegated to the security units of the transit PPP company-the Eurasian transport and transit company (ETTC). This organizational and institutional structure is particularly relevant for the development of trade routes of the XXI century and their innovative and industrial belts in the North – South direction through the States of the South Caucasus and Central Asia.

**Keywords:** *COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic, measures to combat the pandemic, transit economy, trade routes, transport and logistics systems, rail transport, road transport, water transport, air transport, transport behavior of the population, digital transformation, sparsely populated (unpopulated) technologies*

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