# ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL DIMENSIONS OF BILATERAL RELATIONS BETWEEN UZBEKISTAN AND GERMANY: CURRENT TRENDS AND FUTURE PROSPECTS

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Abstract: Since 2017, Uzbekistan's foreign economic policy has undergone a significant transformation, marked by trade liberalisation, the strengthening of diplomatic relations, and the active attraction of foreign investment. As a result of these reforms, Uzbekistan has emerged as an increasingly active participant in the global economy. Notably, its cooperation with economically advanced partners, particularly the European Union and the Federal Republic of Germany, has witnessed substantial growth in trade, investment, and socio-economic collaboration. This article explores the evolving foreign economic relations between the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Federal Republic of Germany, focusing on the current level of trade and economic integration. It also assesses the prospects for further deepening bilateral cooperation. The analysis offers comprehensive insights into new joint initiatives and investment opportunities while evaluating the potential implications and long-term outcomes of these partnerships.

**Keywords:** Foreign economy, trade turnover, economic integration, export, import, technology, international relations, diplomatic relations, investment, labor market, migration, finance.

## Introduction

In recent years, bilateral relations between Uzbekistan and Germany have reached an unprecedented level of strategic cooperation. This evolving partnership is underpinned by Uzbekistan's geopolitical significance, its abundant natural resources, a young and capable labor force, and its pivotal location at the crossroads of Central Asia and the broader Eurasian region. Diplomatic relations between the two countries were officially established on December 31, 1991, shortly after Uzbekistan declared independence. Since that time, bilateral ties have developed consistently, with Germany emerging as one of Uzbekistan's principal economic partners. Germany is now recognized as a major source of foreign direct

ISSN 2277-3630 (online), Published by International journal of Social Sciences & Interdisciplinary Research., under Volume: 14 Issue: 06 in June-2025 https://www.gejournal.net/index.php/IJSSIR

investment and a key exporter of advanced technologies, industrial equipment, and services to Uzbekistan and the wider <sup>1</sup>.

Germany's role as a reliable and strategic partner for Uzbekistan is founded on several key factors. Chief among them are Germany's robust economic performance and its advanced technological capabilities, which have reinforced its status as a global economic leader. In 2023, Germany surpassed Japan to become the world's third-largest economy in terms of nominal GDP, further solidifying its influence in international economic and trade affairs. This economic ascendancy enhances Germany's attractiveness as a partner for countries like Uzbekistan seeking to expand trade, investment, and technological cooperation<sup>2</sup>. Germany's recent economic ascendancy has underscored its leadership in innovation, advanced technologies, and sustainable development practices. German expertise in strategic planning, technological advancement, and innovation serves as a critical model for accelerating Uzbekistan's development trajectory. Both nations have expressed a shared interest in strengthening their economic, social, and cultural ties.

A significant milestone in bilateral relations was marked by the official visit of German Federal Chancellor Olaf Scholz to Uzbekistan on September 15–16, 2024. This high-level visit represented a turning point in Uzbek-German cooperation, culminating in the signing of a series of agreements aimed at deepening collaboration across a wide range of sectors. Key areas of partnership include green energy, information technology (IT), healthcare, education, the automotive industry, construction, the chemical sector, metallurgy, scientific research, cultural exchange, and tourism. These agreements reflect the mutual commitment of both countries to promote sustainable, inclusive, and mutually beneficial development<sup>3</sup>.

This study seeks to analyze the current state of Uzbek-German relations, with particular emphasis on the economic, technological, and socio-political dimensions of bilateral cooperation. It aims to identify strategic opportunities for expanding trade and investment between the two countries. Special attention is given to the complementary nature of the partnership, with resource-rich Uzbekistan and technologically advanced Germany offering substantial potential for mutually beneficial collaboration. The article explores the existing trade and economic linkages and outlines key sectors where bilateral cooperation can be further deepened.

## Literature review

Recent scholarly studies and news reports highlight the dynamic evolution of Uzbekistan's foreign economic policy, which has accelerated international economic engagement, particularly in its bilateral relations with the Federal Republic of Germany. Mamatkulova (2024) provides an in-depth analysis of trade, economic, and investment cooperation between Uzbekistan and Germany, emphasizing that strategic reforms and

<sup>3</sup> Yerzikov, V. (2024, September 14). Olaf Scholz is coming to Uzbekistan. Kursiv Media. https://uz.kursiv.media/uz/2024-09-14/olaf-shols-ozbekistonga-keladi

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Mamatkulova, SS (2024). Trade, economic and investment cooperation between Uzbekistan and Germany . [Journal Name] , 2(4), 146–150. ISSN (E): 2994-9521.

<sup>2</sup> McCurry, J. (2024, February 15). Japan falls into recession as economy slips behind Germany . The Guardian. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/feb/15/japan-recession-economy-falls-behind-germany-worlds-largest

liberal trade policies implemented since 2017 have led to a marked improvement in mutual trade and investment flows.

Furthermore, McCurry (2024) notes that Germany's economic performance has recently surpassed that of Japan, underscoring Germany's growing significance as a global economic actor. Yerzikov (2024) and Daryo.uz (2024) report on the official visit of the German Federal Chancellor to Uzbekistan and the signing of important bilateral agreements, which have further solidified political and economic ties. National news platforms such as Yuz.uz and Kun.uz emphasize that Germany has become Uzbekistan's most significant partner within the European Union, citing agreements in key sectors such as education, healthcare, industrial production, and trade. Meanwhile, Review.uz and the Center for Economic Research and Reforms provide detailed analyses of trade turnover, import-export dynamics, and joint investment projects between the two countries.

Collectively, these scholarly and media sources confirm that Uzbek-German cooperation has entered a new and more comprehensive phase, driven by ongoing economic reforms, deepening diplomatic relations, and rising levels of international investment. Additionally, the coverage by major news agencies reflects growing international recognition of the strategic importance of this bilateral relationship.

## Methodology

This study employs a mixed-methods approach to analyze trade and investment dynamics between Uzbekistan and Germany, utilizing both qualitative and quantitative data derived from official diplomatic documents, policy reports, and empirical economic data. The research process is structured into two primary stages: data collection and data analysis.

In the data collection phase, a wide array of sources was consulted. These include peer-reviewed academic publications (e.g., Mamatkulova, 2024), articles from reputable international and national news agencies (McCurry, 2024; Yerzikov, 2024; Daryo.uz, 2024; Kun.uz, 2023), and statistical information from official German repositories such as the Federal Foreign Office and affiliated economic data platforms. Additionally, infographics and analytical reports from Review.uz and the Center for Economic Research and Reforms were examined to capture the latest developments in bilateral economic relations. These sources provided timely and contextually relevant data for both descriptive and comparative analyses.

The analysis phase incorporates visual and textual data interpretation, focusing on the documentation of diplomatic visits, political reforms, and investment initiatives over recent years. The study pays particular attention to key indicators such as "high-level diplomatic cooperation," "investment agreements," and trade growth trajectories. Yearly fluctuations in import and export volumes and their contribution to total bilateral trade are systematically analyzed to determine the structure and depth of economic integration.

Furthermore, a comparative assessment of milestones and outcomes achieved in Uzbek-German cooperation is conducted, highlighting progress in trade and investment

264	ISSN 2277-3630 (online), Published by International journal of Social Sciences & Interdisciplinary Research., under Volume: 14 Issue: 06 in June-2025 https://www.gejournal.net/index.php/IJSSIR
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flows. The analysis also identifies emerging opportunities and offers policy-oriented recommendations for enhancing future economic integration.

Overall, this methodology ensures a comprehensive and empirically grounded assessment of the current status and future potential of Uzbek-German economic relations. It also provides a robust framework for verifying trade and investment data through triangulation of multiple credible sources.

## Results and findings

Bilateral diplomatic relations between Uzbekistan and Germany over the years

The Federal Republic of Germany officially recognized the independence of the Republic of Uzbekistan on December 31, 1991. Formal diplomatic relations between the two nations were established shortly thereafter, on March 6, 1992. In 1993, the German Embassy was inaugurated in Tashkent, followed by the opening of Uzbekistan's Embassy in Berlin within the same year—marking a significant institutional step in bilateral engagement.

By 1995, the two countries had initiated their first formal economic agreements aimed at fostering trade and investment cooperation. In May of the same year, a permanent Uzbek-German Working Group on Trade and Investment was established in collaboration with the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs. This working group has served as an essential platform for bilateral economic dialogue, regularly convening meetings that include representatives from both governments and the private sector.

The agenda of these sessions typically includes discussions on the economic development trajectories of both countries, assessments of bilateral trade and investment flows, reviews of the implementation progress of joint projects, and the negotiation and signing of trade agreements. These structured interactions have significantly contributed to the institutionalization and deepening of Uzbek-German economic relations (see Figure 1).



Figure 1. Diplomatic relations between Uzbekistan and Germany over the years In 1999, the Goethe-Institute commenced its activities in Uzbekistan with the primary objective of promoting the German language and fostering cultural exchange. Since its

ISSN 2277-3630 (online), Published by International journal of Social Sciences &
Interdisciplinary Research., under Volume: 14 Issue: 06 in June-2025
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establishment, the institute has played a vital role in cultural diplomacy, annually educating thousands of language learners and serving as a bridge for intercultural understanding between the two nations.

However, diplomatic relations between Germany and Uzbekistan experienced a period of strain following the events that occurred in Uzbekistan in 2005. These developments led to the suspension or cancellation of several bilateral agreements and a temporary cooling of diplomatic engagement. Despite these setbacks, cooperation in the field of security gradually resumed and intensified from 2009 onward.

Germany began utilizing the Termez military training grounds in southern Uzbekistan as a logistical and operational hub for its missions in Afghanistan. This development marked a significant shift toward strategic cooperation in defence and national security. As a result, bilateral engagement expanded beyond economic and cultural spheres to encompass robust collaboration in military and security affairs<sup>4</sup>.

During the first official visit of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan to the Federal Republic of Germany in January 2019, a total of 58 bilateral agreements and investment projects—collectively valued at over €4 billion—were signed. A key strategic objective of the visit was the commitment to increase the annual volume of bilateral trade to €1 billion. In addition, the establishment of a dialogue platform under the format "Germany–Central Asia" was announced, aimed at promoting regional integration and fostering collaboration in scientific research and innovation.

Subsequently, several foundational agreements were concluded between Uzbekistan and Germany, including treaties on Investment Protection, the Avoidance of Double Taxation, and Financial and Technical Cooperation, among others. These agreements laid the groundwork for a more stable and attractive environment for foreign investment and institutional cooperation.

In 2022, Uzbekistan further strengthened its international engagement by signing the Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (EPCA) with the European Union. This agreement seeks to broaden the scope of cooperation with EU member states—particularly Germany—across key sectors such as energy, transportation, climate change mitigation, the digital economy, and sustainable agriculture. The EPCA represents a new phase of integration for Uzbekistan into the broader European economic and regulatory frameworks<sup>5</sup>.

On May 2–3, 2023, the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, conducted an official visit to the Federal Republic of Germany, during which a joint declaration was signed to deepen multifaceted cooperation between the two countries. This high-level engagement underscored a shared commitment to expanding strategic, economic, and technological collaboration.

ISSN 2277-3630 (online), Published by International journal of Social Sciences &
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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Daryo.uz (2024, September 17). Olaf Scholz's historic visit: What Germany seeks from Uzbekistan. River. <a href="https://daryo.uz/en/2024/09/17/olaf-scholzs-historic-visit-what-germany-seeks-from-uzbekistan">https://daryo.uz/en/2024/09/17/olaf-scholzs-historic-visit-what-germany-seeks-from-uzbekistan</a>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Yerzikov, V. (2024, September 14). Olaf Scholz is coming to Uzbekistan. Kursiv Media. https://uz.kursiv.media/uz/2024-09-14/olaf-shols-ozbekistonga-keladi

A key highlight of the visit was the emphasis placed on the development of the Trans-Caspian International Transport Corridor, which aims to strengthen connectivity between Central Asia and Europe. This project holds strategic geopolitical and economic significance, positioning Uzbekistan as a vital transit hub in the emerging Eurasian logistics architecture.

In addition, the Uzbek delegation held high-level meetings with senior executives of major German corporations, including Siemens Energy, Deutsche Bank, Commerzbank, CLAAS, and others. These discussions focused on expanding investment, technological transfer, and financial cooperation, particularly in sectors such as renewable energy, infrastructure, industrial machinery, and finance. The visit marked a substantial step forward in enhancing public-private partnerships and fostering long-term economic engagement between Uzbekistan and Germany<sup>6</sup>. Following the Uzbekistan–Germany Business Forum, held in conjunction with the high-level state visit, agreements totaling approximately €9 billion were concluded across a wide range of strategic sectors. These included green energy, transport infrastructure, metallurgy, water management, agriculture, chemical production, mining, automotive manufacturing, textiles, and electrical engineering. The scale and diversity of these agreements reflect the growing depth and breadth of bilateral economic cooperation.

Moreover, leading German financial institutions such as Deutsche Bank and KfW Bank announced their intention to expand collaboration with Uzbekistan in the banking and financial sectors. These plans include the provision of financing for key infrastructure and development projects, thereby facilitating capital flows and contributing to the modernization of Uzbekistan's financial ecosystem. The involvement of such reputable banks further underscores international confidence in Uzbekistan's economic reforms and investment climate<sup>7</sup>. At the conclusion of the official visit, 16 intergovernmental and interdepartmental agreements were signed, encompassing a broad range of sectors including economy, trade, finance, science and education, and innovation. These agreements signify a deepening of institutional cooperation and reflect a shared commitment to fostering sustainable development, knowledge exchange, and mutually beneficial economic growth between Uzbekistan and Germany<sup>8</sup>.

On September 15, 2024, the Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, Olaf Scholz, commenced his first official visit to Central Asia, beginning in the historic city of Samarkand. During high-level bilateral talks, a significant proposal was introduced to develop a "roadmap" for the professional training and employment of Uzbek specialists in sectors experiencing high demand, particularly in the context of labor migration. In line

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Yuz.uz (n.d.). Germany is the main economic partner of Uzbekistan and the EU. Yuz.uz Retrieved from <a href="https://yuz.uz/ru/news/germaniya---glavny-ekonomicheskiy-partner-uzbekistana-v-es">https://yuz.uz/ru/news/germaniya---glavny-ekonomicheskiy-partner-uzbekistana-v-es</a>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Kun.uz. (2023, November 13). *Uzbekistan, Germany sign grant agreements to support education and healthcare*. Kun.uz. Retrieved from <a href="https://kun.uz/en/news/2023/11/13/uzbekistan-germany-sign-grant-agreements-to-support-education-and-healthcare">https://kun.uz/en/news/2023/11/13/uzbekistan-germany-sign-grant-agreements-to-support-education-and-healthcare</a>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Federal Foreign Office of Germany. (n.d.). [Title of the article]. Auswärtiges Amt. Retrieved from <a href="https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/newsroom/news/2595054-2595054">https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/newsroom/news/2595054-2595054</a>

with this initiative, discussions included the potential adaptation of the German dual education model in Uzbekistan, emphasizing the integration of theoretical and practical vocational training.

Furthermore, the parties proposed the establishment of a bilateral university forum aimed at enhancing academic collaboration and scientific exchange between leading higher education institutions in both countries. Following the negotiations, eight bilateral agreements were signed, covering strategic sectors such as migration and mobility, veterinary medicine and animal husbandry, water resource management, mineral extraction, transport infrastructure, and climate change mitigation.

Additionally, a Technological Partnership and Industrial Cooperation Program for 2024–2026 was formally adopted. This program is intended to promote innovation, industrial modernization, and sustainable technological collaboration between Germany and Uzbekistan<sup>9</sup>.

### Trade and economic relations

The Federal Republic of Germany is among Uzbekistan's top ten trading partners, ranking 7th in total trade turnover and 6th in import volume. Bilateral trade between Uzbekistan and Germany has experienced significant growth, with total trade volume increasing from \$529.1 million in 2016 to \$1.1 billion in 2023, effectively doubling over the seven years.

During the same timeframe, Uzbekistan's exports to Germany increased 2.4 times, rising from \$36.9 million to \$87 million, while imports from Germany increased by \$492.2 million. Despite this overall growth, Germany's share in Uzbekistan's total foreign trade turnover declined, moving from 2.2% in 2016 to 1.7% in 2023, likely due to the diversification of Uzbekistan's trade partners. However, Germany's share in Uzbekistan's exports increased modestly, from 0.3% to 0.4%, indicating a gradual expansion of Uzbek goods entering the German market.

These trends reflect both the strengthening of bilateral trade relations and the evolving structure of Uzbekistan's external trade<sup>10</sup>.

Germany remains a key supplier of critical imports to Uzbekistan, particularly in machinery, equipment, vehicles, and other industrial products that play a fundamental role in supporting the country's economic modernization and industrialization strategies. On the export side, Uzbekistan's trade with Germany is characterized by a diverse product structure: textile products account for approximately 29%, followed by non-ferrous metals (21%), food products (8%), chemical products (3%), and services (39%). In contrast, imports from Germany are dominated by machinery, equipment, and vehicles (making up 50% of

<sup>9</sup> News Central Asia. (2024, September 16). The German chancellor and the president of Uzbekistan met in Samarkand: A package of documents was signed, Germany and Uzbekistan are working on projects worth 9 billion euros. News Central Asia. Retrieved from <a href="https://www.newscentralasia.net/2024/09/16/the-german-chancellor-and-the-president-of-uzbekistan-met-in-samarkand-a-package-of-documents-signed-germany-and-uzbekistan-are-working-on-projects-worth-9-billion-euros/</a>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> **Review.uz.** (n.d.). Infographic: Trade, economic, and investment cooperation between Uzbekistan and Germany . Review.uz. Retrieved from <a href="https://review.uz/en/post/infografika-torgovo-ekonomicheskoe-i-investicionnoe-sotrudnichestvo-mejdu-uzbekistanom-i-germaniey">https://review.uz/en/post/infografika-torgovo-ekonomicheskoe-i-investicionnoe-sotrudnichestvo-mejdu-uzbekistanom-i-germaniey</a>

total imports), followed by industrial goods (14%), pharmaceutical products (12%), chemical and plastic products (12%), and services (7%).

As of August 1, 2024, a total of 276 enterprises with German investor participation were operating in Uzbekistan, including 57 newly established enterprises launched in 2024 alone. This reflects the growing interest of German businesses in the Uzbek market, particularly in sectors aligned with Germany's industrial strengths.

In terms of financial flows, German investments and loans in Uzbekistan amounted to \$757.8 million in 2023, and in just the first half of 2024, this figure already reached \$577.7 million, indicating a robust upward trend. The total accumulated volume of German investments and loans in Uzbekistan has now surpassed \$4.5 billion.

German investments are primarily concentrated in the manufacturing sector, especially in the production of textiles, chemicals, and non-metallic mineral products. Additional key areas of investment include construction, mining, trade, and the automotive industry. The legal framework governing these investments is supported by several pivotal bilateral agreements, including the Agreement on the Promotion and Protection of Investments, the Agreement on Most Favoured Nation (MFN) Trade Status, and the Agreement on the Avoidance of Double Taxation (see Fig. 2).



Figure 2. Trade turnover in goods and services between Uzbekistan and Germany

In 2016, the total trade turnover between Uzbekistan and Germany amounted to \$529.1 million, of which \$492.2 million (approximately 93%) represented imports, while exports accounted for \$36.9 million. However, in 2020, bilateral trade experienced a significant contraction, with trade turnover declining by 16.5%, primarily due to a sharp

decrease in imports, which fell to \$168.1 million—a trend influenced by the global economic disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Despite this downturn, trade relations quickly rebounded. By 2022, imports had surged to \$1,070.4 million, marking a 117.5% increase compared to 2016. Exports also demonstrated strong growth, rising by 141% to reach \$88.9 million. As a result, by the end of 2022, the total trade turnover between the two countries reached \$1,159.3 million, surpassing the \$1 billion threshold for the first time in the history of bilateral trade relations.

This upward trajectory underscores the deepening of trade ties and Germany's growing role in Uzbekistan's foreign economic relations. As of 2022, Germany ranked as Uzbekistan's 7th largest trading partner overall and the 6th largest source of imports for goods and services (**see Figure 3**). These figures reflect the structural importance of German industrial and technological exports to Uzbekistan's economic development and trade diversification strategy.



Figure 3. Trade turnover between Germany and Uzbekistan 2016-2022

Opportunities for developing relations between the two countries

Uzbekistan's exports to Germany comprise a diverse range of goods and services. Key export items include textile products valued at \$12.7 million, bedding and home textiles at \$4.29 million, agricultural products, molybdenum worth \$15.1 million, and copper at \$2.8 million. In addition to goods, services also constitute an important component of

Uzbekistan's export portfolio to Germany, reflecting the growing role of non-material trade in bilateral economic relations<sup>11</sup>.

There is significant potential to double Uzbekistan's exports of goods and services to Germany by implementing a range of strategic initiatives across key economic sectors. The following recommendations outline priority areas for deepening bilateral trade and investment cooperation:

- Expansion of Eco-Friendly Textile Exports: It is essential to diversify the range of
  textile products made from environmentally sustainable fibres and to compile
  catalogues of organically certified goods. These efforts would align with Germany's
  consumer preferences, which are increasingly shaped by ecological consciousness
  and ethical sourcing.
- 2. **Agricultural Exports with Value Addition**: Uzbekistan can meet the rising German demand for melon products, fresh fruits, nuts, jams, and dried fruits, particularly those with long shelf lives and international quality certifications. Exporting certified agricultural produce will contribute to food security and consumer trust in the German market.
- 3. **Expansion of Strategic Metal Exports**: Uzbekistan should pursue long-term contracts for the export of critical raw materials such as molybdenum, copper, uranium, and gold, which are essential for the production of renewable energy technologies and high-tech industries in Germany.
- 4. **Joint Production of Renewable Energy Technologies**: The co-production of solar panels, wind turbines, energy storage batteries, and other clean energy technologies in Uzbekistan will not only satisfy domestic demand but also open export channels to third-party markets, positioning the country as a regional hub for sustainable manufacturing.
- 5. **Enhancement of Remote Digital Services**: Establishing a joint digital platform to enhance the provision of remote services—including IT software development, digital design, and artificial intelligence solutions—will significantly elevate bilateral cooperation in the digital economy.
- 6. **Vocational Training and Labor Mobility**: In light of Germany's growing demand for skilled labor, there is a need to expand dual education programs, increase German language training, and negotiate agreements in the area of labor migration, especially in technical and service-oriented professions.
- 7. **Tourism Infrastructure and Connectivity**: Increasing the number of direct flights between Uzbekistan and Germany, enhancing the quality and variety of tourism packages, establishing German tourism centers in major Uzbek cities, and promoting cultural-historical ties will boost mutual tourism flows.
- 8. **Bilateral Agreements in Strategic Sectors**: There is scope to deepen cooperation in green energy, digital transformation, and mining. German companies such as

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup>The Observatory of Economic Complexity. (n.d.). Germany – Uzbekistan. Retrieved February 17, 2025, from <a href="https://oec.world/en/profile/bilateral-country/deu/partner/uzb">https://oec.world/en/profile/bilateral-country/deu/partner/uzb</a>

- Siemens Energy and Linde Group are already active in Uzbekistan, highlighting the potential for expanded industrial infrastructure and technology transfer.
- 9. **Institutionalized Business Dialogue**: Regular German-Uzbek business forums, alternating annually between the two countries, will foster networking, increase investment volumes, and provide visibility into opportunities available within Uzbekistan's special economic zones.
- 10. **Strengthening Political and Security Dialogue**: Establishing permanent diplomatic dialogue mechanisms—including regular intergovernmental meetings and joint decisions on regional security, particularly concerning **Afghanistan**—is crucial for political stability and shared regional interests.
- 11. Adoption of German Agricultural Practices: Transferring Germany's advanced expertise in sustainable agriculture, efficient irrigation systems, and biodiversity protection can contribute to improved food security and water conservation in Uzbekistan.
- 12. Expansion of German Education in Uzbekistan: Increasing the number of German language programs in schools and vocational colleges, opening branches of German universities, and offering more scholarships and grants for Uzbek students will accelerate educational integration.
- 13. **Cultural Diplomacy and Community Engagement**: Expanding German-led cultural festivals and organizing events with Uzbekistan's ethnic German community will preserve cultural heritage and deepen people-to-people ties.
- 14. **Hosting High-Level Summits and Cultural Years**: Uzbekistan should initiate and host a "Germany–Central Asia" summit and propose the celebration of the "German-Uzbek Year of Culture" in 2026, as a significant milestone in bilateral relations.
- 15. **Establishment of a Green Innovation Fund**: Creating a **Green Innovation Fund** will enhance access to financing for joint technological and sustainable development projects, thereby increasing both their quantity and quality.
- 16. **Development of a National Certification System**: Establishing an international certification mechanism within Uzbekistan that complies with EU and German technical and safety standards will streamline the export process and empower Uzbek entrepreneurs to compete more effectively in European markets.

#### Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that Uzbekistan's foreign economic policy—characterized by trade liberalization, strengthened diplomatic relations, and a proactive strategy for attracting foreign direct investment—has significantly enhanced the country's integration into the global economy. Since the official recognition of Uzbekistan's independence by the Federal Republic of Germany on December 31, 1991, bilateral relations have progressed steadily. Milestones include the establishment of embassies in both countries and the signing of initial economic agreements in 1995, which laid the foundation for enduring economic cooperation.

ISSN 2277-3630 (online), Published by International journal of Social Sciences & Interdisciplinary Research., under Volume: 14 Issue: 06 in June-2025 https://www.gejournal.net/index.php/IJSSIR

A new momentum was observed during the high-level visit of German Chancellor Olaf Scholz to Uzbekistan in September 2024, during which a series of bilateral agreements were signed, aimed at further increasing trade and investment flows. The visit acknowledged the acceleration of integration processes between 2016 and 2023, marked by a doubling of trade volumes, the expansion of joint enterprises, and growing German investments in key sectors of the Uzbek economy.

The broad array of bilateral agreements and diplomatic achievements underscore the mutual recognition of the strategic necessity for a robust partnership. They also reflect a shared commitment to developing a sustainable and reform-oriented trade policy. Germany's emergence as a reliable economic partner for Uzbekistan is bolstered by its technological leadership and status as a major investor in industrial, infrastructure, and innovation-driven sectors.

Nonetheless, certain challenges persist, including trade imbalances, regulatory divergences, and the underutilization of bilateral potential in some sectors. These gaps highlight the need for regulatory harmonization, enhanced institutional coordination, and the development of new mechanisms for long-term economic collaboration.

In conclusion, while considerable progress has been made in strengthening Uzbek-German relations, further efforts are required to implement outstanding bilateral projects and capitalize on emerging opportunities. A renewed focus on deepening cooperation in economic, social, financial, environmental, and technological domains will serve to consolidate past achievements and pave the way for mutually beneficial integration in an increasingly interconnected global economy.

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