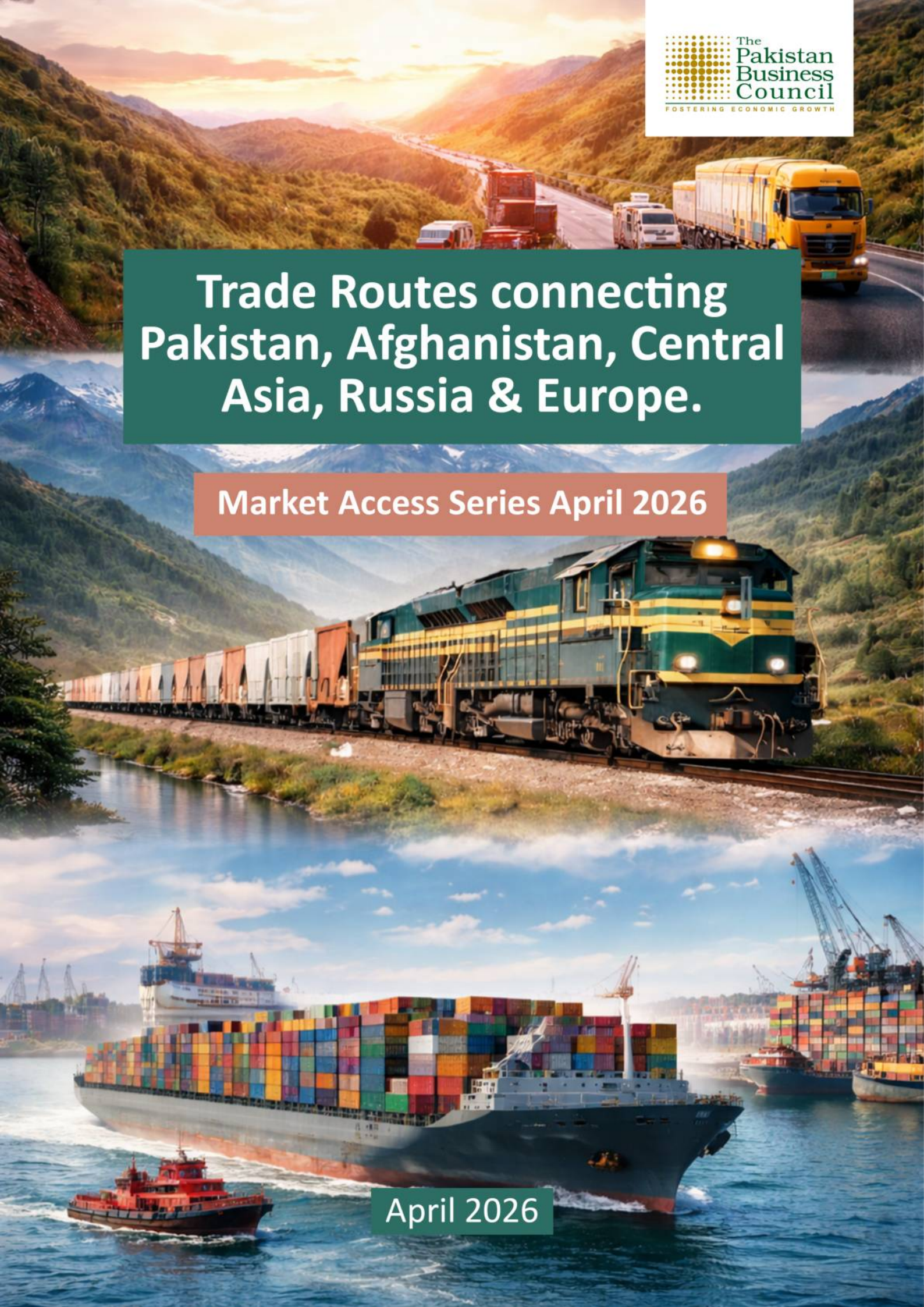


The Pakistan Business Council
FOSTERING ECONOMIC GROWTH

Trade Routes connecting Pakistan, Afghanistan, Central Asia, Russia & Europe.

Market Access Series April 2026

April 2026

Trade Routes connecting Pakistan, Afghanistan, Central Asia, Russia & Europe.

April 2026

Acknowledgements

Team Leader:
Samir S. Amir

Lead Researcher:
Dr. Abdul Shakoor

Disclaimer

The findings, interpretations, and conclusions drawn in this Study are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Board of Directors and Members of the Pakistan Business Council (PBC). Any conclusions and analysis based on the data from ITC Trade Map, Federal Board of Revenue, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, the World Bank, Mordor Intelligence, US Geological Survey, International Monetary Funds, Statista, Pakistan's Ministry of Commerce, the World Trade Organization and the State Bank of Pakistan are the responsibility of author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of these agencies.

Although every effort has been made to cross-check and verify the authenticity of the data used, the Pakistan Business Council, do not guarantee the data included in this work. All data and statistics used are correct as of 20th September, 2025 and may be subject to change.

For any queries or feedback regarding this report, please contact
samir@pbc.org.pk or **abdul.shakoor@pbc.org.pk**

The Pakistan Business Council:
An Overview

The Pakistan Business Council (PBC) is a research-based business advocacy platform established in 2005. It is now supported by over 100 private sector local and multinational businesses with significant investment in, and long-term commitment to sustainable growth of the country. They come from 14 countries, have leading roles in 17 major sectors of the formal economy, generate 40% of annual exports, contribute a third of Pakistan's total tax revenues and employ three million. Their combined sales represent every 6th Rupee of Pakistan's GDP.

PBC's major objectives are to advocate polices that lead to creation of jobs, value-added exports and reduction in import reliance through improved competitiveness of manufacturing, services and the agriculture sectors. It also promotes formalization of the economy.

PBC's over-arching theme, "Make-in-Pakistan" consists of three pillars: "Grow More/Grow Better", "Make More/Make Better" and "Serve More/Serve Better." Its evidence-based advocacy is backed by over a hundred studies to date, through its full-time research team, supplemented by collaborative research with renowned industry experts and economists. Through its Centre of Excellence in Responsible Business (CERB), PBC works to build capacity and capability of businesses beyond its membership, to adopt high environmental, social and governance standards. PBC holds conferences, seminars and webinars to facilitate the flow of relevant information to all stakeholders in order to help create an informed view on the major issues faced by Pakistan. Through its presence in Islamabad and Karachi, it works closely with relevant government departments, ministries, regulators and institutions, as well as other stakeholders including professional bodies, to develop consensus on major issues impacting the economy.

PBC is a pan-sectoral, not-for-profit, Section 42 entity. It is not a trade body; therefore, it does not advocate for any specific business sector. Rather, its key advocacy thrust is on easing barriers that thwart competitiveness of businesses in Pakistan.

Further information on the PBC is available on: www.pbc.org.pk.

The PBC's Founding Objectives

- To provide for the formation and exchange of views on any question connected with the conduct of business in and from Pakistan.

- To conduct, organize, set up, administer and manage campaigns, surveys, focus groups, workshops, seminars and fieldwork for carrying out research and raising awareness in regard to matters affecting businesses in Pakistan.

- To acquire, collect, compile, analyze, publish and provide statistics, data analysis and other information relating to businesses of any kind, nature or description and on opportunities for such businesses within and outside Pakistan.

- To promote and facilitate the integration of businesses in Pakistan into the World economy and to encourage in the development and growth of Pakistani multinationals.

- To interact with governments in the economic development of Pakistan and to facilitate, foster and further the economic, social and human resource development of Pakistan.

The PBC Member Companies


Jubilee
GENERAL INSURANCE

K&Ns

KE

LIBERTY

LIPTON
Teas and Infusions

LOTTE

LUCKY CEMENT

MACPAC
FILMS

Martin Dow

CHANGAN AUTO

MEGA
MEGA CONGLOMERATE

MAHMOOD GROUP

National
FOODS

NAVEENA
GROUP

Nestlé
Good food, Good life

NIMIR

OLP

Packages Limited

Jazz

Pakistan
Oxygen

PSL
PAKISTAN SERVICES LTD.

PSX
PAKISTAN
STOCK EXCHANGE
LIMITED

PEPSICO


reckitt

MASOOD
ROOMI

SAIF GROUP

SAP

Sapphire

Servis

Shan

Atlas

SICPA

SIEMENS

Soneri Bank

SOORTY

SPEL
Synthetic Products
Enterprises Limited

Standard
Chartered

systems

TAPAL

TG

TCS
WE MOVE YOU!

Tetra Pak

Coca-Cola

TPL

TTE

Tufail

Unilever

UBL
where you come first

KHAADI

Young's


The PBC Affiliates

engro elengy terminal

engro fertilizers

engro polymer & chemicals

HINUCON Private Limited

HUBCO

International Steels Limited
Shaping Tomorrow

LCI
LUCKY CORE INDUSTRIES

LMC Lucky Motor Corporation

MASTER
MASTER WIND ENERGY LTD.

Pakistan Cables
TRUSTED NOT TO COMPROMISE

Tri-pack
Tri-Pack Films Limited

IFL

Lucky Electric Power Company

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Acronyms

CARs	Central Asian Republics
ECO	Economic Cooperation Organization
GPS	Global Positioning System
IMU	Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan
IsDB	Islamic Development Bank
ISKP	Islamic State Khorasan Province
ITC	International Trade Center
ITI	Islamabad-Tehran-Istanbul
RISE	Regional Infrastructure Supranational Entity
UAP	Uzbekistan–Afghanistan–Pakistan
UN	United Nations
UNCTAD	United Nation Conference on Trade and Development
WDI	World Development Indicators

Executive Summary

Objective of the Study

The study aims to comprehensively analyze the trade corridors joining Pakistan, Afghanistan, Central Asian Republics (CARs), Russia and Europe. The study examines the key border crossings and road networks that connect Pakistan to Europe and also identifies opportunities to enhance connectivity with Afghanistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan & Russia. Additionally, the study explores the long-term potential of developing and expanding these trade corridors to establish an integrated regional trade network linking Pakistan, Afghanistan, Central Asia, Russia & Europe.

Executive Summary

1. Overview of Pakistan

Pakistan, officially known as the Islamic Republic of Pakistan (Pakistan), is a federal parliamentary democracy and the fifth most populous country in the world, boasting a population exceeding 251 million. Geographically, Pakistan is bordered by India to the east, Afghanistan to the northwest, Iran to the west, and China to the north, while the Arabian Sea lies to the south, providing the country with a coastline stretching over 1,046 kilometers.

1.2 Demographic and Economic Foundations

Pakistan's large and growing population—exceeding 251 million in 2024—provides both a substantial domestic market and a labor base that can support trade-led growth. Although population growth has gradually moderated, urbanization is accelerating, reinforcing demand for infrastructure, logistics, and trade-related services. Economically, Pakistan showed signs of stabilization in 2024, with GDP rebounding to US$380 billion and growth recovering to 2.26 percent, alongside a sharp decline in inflation. However, persistent trade deficits underscore structural weaknesses in export competitiveness and highlight the importance of leveraging transit trade as a complementary growth channel.

2. Pakistan–Afghanistan Trade Routes Connecting Major Cities

Pakistan's overland corridors with Afghanistan serve as critical gateways for bilateral and regional trade, enabling access to Central Asian markets. Key routes—including Peshawar–Kabul, Ghulam Khan–Kabul, Quetta–Kandahar, Kamr-din-karez–Moqar and Angoor Adda–Ghazni—enhance cross-border connectivity, strengthen trade integration, and promote regional economic cooperation. Major border crossings such as Torkham, Chaman, and Ghulam Khan link Pakistani cities to key commercial hubs like Kabul, Kandahar, and Herat, facilitating efficient transit trade and supporting Pakistan's role as a regional trade hub.

Figure 1: Map of Pakistan's Trade Routes to Afghanistan

Source: USAID| PREIA-Pakistan Regional Economic Integration Activity

3. Pakistan Transit Trade Corridor to Central Asia Via Afghanistan

Pakistan's transit trade routes to Central Asia, using Afghanistan as a land bridge, are vital for enhancing regional connectivity and expanding economic opportunities. Key corridors—including Torkham, Ghulam Khan, Chaman, Badini Trade Terminal, and Zhob (Kamr-ud-Din Karez)—link Pakistan with major Afghan hubs such as Kabul and Kandahar, from where road networks extend to Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan. These routes facilitate the movement of goods, strengthen Pakistan's regional trade presence, and support broader economic integration across South and Central Asia.

3.1 Pakistan– Afghanistan–Tajikistan Transit Trade Route

The Pakistan–Afghanistan-Tajikistan transit trade route provides an important regional trade link. The primary route originates in Peshawar, enters Afghanistan via the Torkham border, passes through Kabul, and continues to Sher Khan Bandar before crossing into Tajikistan and reaching Dushanbe. An alternative route runs from Pul-e-Khumri to the Hairatan border, transits through Uzbekistan, and then connects to Tajikistan, also leading to Dushanbe. Together, these routes enhance bilateral and regional trade connectivity and provide Pakistan with strategic access to Central Asian markets.

Figure 2: Map of Pakistan's Trade Routes to Tajikistan Via Afghanistan

Source: USAID| PREIA

3.2 Pakistan–Afghanistan-Turkmenistan Trade Route

The Pakistan–Turkmenistan transit trade route via Afghanistan offers a cost-effective and time-efficient alternative to maritime routes, enhancing trade and economic cooperation with Central Asia. Two main corridors support this connectivity. The Chaman route connects Pakistan to Turkmenistan via Spin Boldak, Kandahar, Herat, and the Towrghundi border, leading to Ashgabat. The Torkham route passes through Kabul, Pul-e-Khumri, and Mazar-e-Sharif before entering Turkmenistan at Aqineh and continuing toward Farap and Mary. These routes strengthen Pakistan's access to Turkmen markets while reinforcing Afghanistan's role as a critical regional transit gateway.

Figure 3: Map of Pakistan-Afghanistan-Turkmenistan Trade Route

Source: USAID| PREIA

3.3 Trade Route Through China

The Pakistan–Central Asia Transit Trade Route via China provides a strategically important overland connection linking Pakistan with the landlocked countries of Central Asia. This route serves as a viable and secure alternative to the traditional transit route through Afghanistan, offering greater reliability and continuity for trade flows. By passing through China, this corridor enables direct access to key Central Asian countries, including Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan.

Table 1: Distance and Travel Time between Pakistan and Central Asia Via China

Route 1 to Central Asia Via China			Route 2 to Central Asia Via China		
Pakistan → China → Kyrgyzstan → Kazakhstan			Pakistan → China → Tajikistan		
Cities	Distance (km)	Approx. Traveling Time	Cities	Distance (km)	Approx. Traveling Time
Peshawar → Islamabad (Pakistan)	~ 185 km	~ 02 hr 45 min	Peshawar → Islamabad (Pakistan)	~ 185 km	~ 02 hr 45 min
Islamabad → Abbottabad	~ 103 km	~ 02 hr 03 min	Islamabad → Abbottabad	~ 103 km	~ 02 hr 03 min
Abbottabad → Chilas	~ 258 km	~ 08 hr 06 min	Abbottabad → Chilas	~ 258 km	~ 08 hr 06 min
Chilas → Gilgit	~ 134 km	~ 03 hr 01 min	Chilas → Gilgit	~ 134 km	~ 03 hr 01 min
Gilgit → Sost	~ 180 km	~ 03 hr 44 min	Gilgit → Sost	~ 180 km	~ 03 hr 44 min
Peshawar → Sost	~ 744 km	~ 15 hr 44 min	Peshawar → Sost	~ 744 km	~ 15 hr 44 min
Sost → Tashkurgan (China)	~ 208 km	~ 02 hr 27 min	Sost → Tashkurgan (China)	~ 208 km	~ 02 hr 27 min
Tashkurgan → Karasu	~ 62 km	~ 00 hr 44 min	Tashkurgan → Karasu	~ 62 km	~ 00 hr 44 min
Karasu → Kashi	~ 230 km	~ 04 hr 09 min	Karasu → Kulma Pass	~ 15 km	~ 00 hr 10 min
Kashi → Torugart	~ 166 km	~ 02 hr 13 min	Peshawar → Kulma Pass	~ 1022 km	~ 12 hr 17 min
Peshawar → Torugart	~ 1402 km	~ 17 hr 09 min	Kulma Pass → Murghab (Tajikistan)	~ 90 km	~ 03 hr 26 min
Torugart → Naryn (Kyrgyzstan)	~ 181 km	~ 02 hr 49 min	Murghab → Khorog	~ 310 km	~ 06 hr 24 min
Naryn → Balykchy	~ 179 km	~ 02 hr 31 min	Khorog → Kevron	~ 230 km	~ 06 hr 03 min
Balykchy → Bishkek	~ 185 km	~ 02 hr 53 min	Kevron → Dushanbe	~ 364 km	~ 05 hr 56 min
Peshawar → Bishkek	~ 1904 km	~ 24 hr 15 min	Peshawar → Murghab	~ 1186 km	~ 17 hr 47 min
Bishkek → Kordai (Kazakhstan)	~ 24.9 km	~ 01 hr 14 min			
Kordai → Almaty	~ 211 km	~ 03 hr 06 min			

Source: Google Map

4. Pakistan's Regional Transit Connectivity Framework

Pakistan's strategic location at the intersection of South Asia, Central Asia, the Middle East, and Europe positions it as a natural gateway for regional trade. A growing network of overland corridors through Afghanistan, Iran, and the Central Asian Republics (CARs), complemented by maritime routes via the Arabian Sea, enables Pakistan to connect with Russia, Turkey, and the European markets. These corridors strengthen regional trade integration by reducing distance, diversifying routes, and enhancing access to Eurasian economies.

4.1. The Pakistan-Afghanistan-Tajikistan-Krygystan-Kazakhastan-Russia Trade Route

The figure 4 highlights two major overland trade routes connecting Pakistan with Russia through multiple border crossings via Central Asia. One route begins at Torkham, passes through Afghanistan and Tajikistan, enters Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, and then proceeds to Russia through Veseloyarsk or

Troitsk, while the other starts from Islamabad via Torkham and Hairatan into Uzbekistan, continues through major cities such as Termez and Tashkent, enters Kazakhstan, and reaches Russia through Akkulakskiy or Astrakhan. Together, these corridors demonstrate Pakistan's strategic connectivity with Central Asia, enhance trade flexibility through multiple pathways, and provide alternative access points to different regions of Russia.

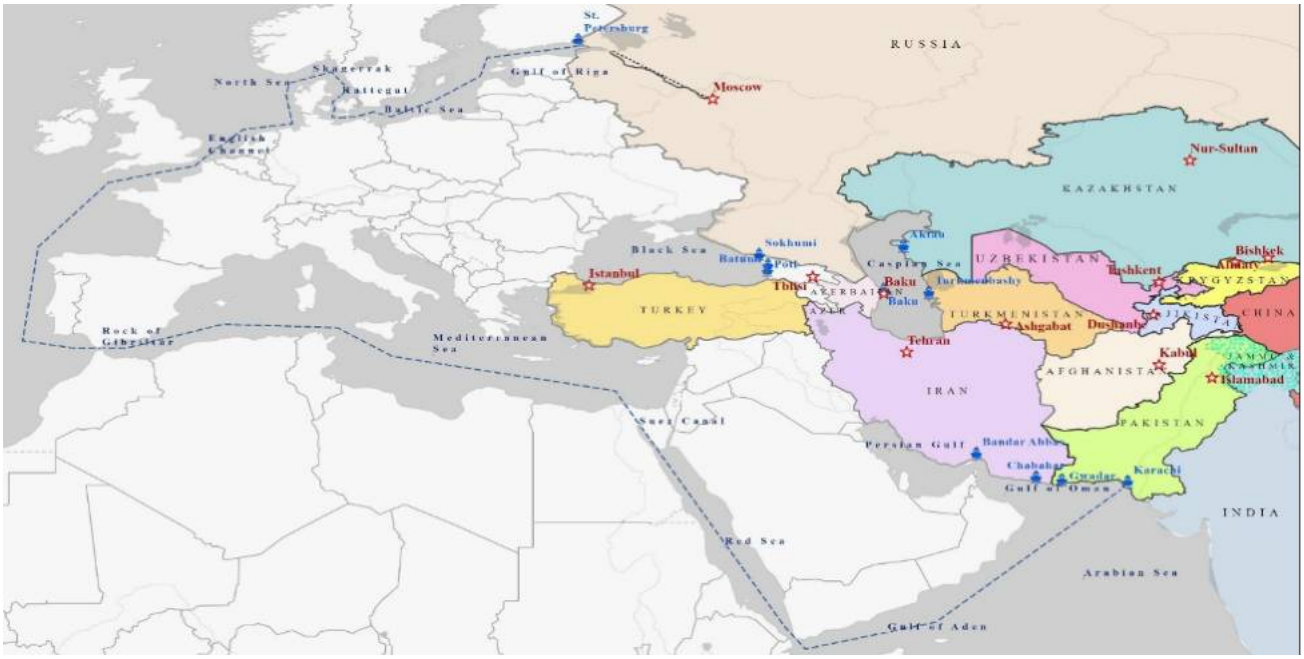
Figure 4: Map of Pakistan Transit Trade Route to Russia Via Afghanistan and Central Asia

Source: USAID| PREIA

4.2. Pakistan–Russia Maritime Corridor: Route and Connectivity

Figure 5 illustrates the sea trade route between Pakistan and Russia. This Sea Trade Route serves as a vital maritime corridor linking Pakistan with Europe, and Russia through a series of interconnected international waterways. This sea route originating from Karachi and Gwadar ports passes through the Arabian Sea, the Gulf of Aden, continuing via the Red Sea and Suez Canal to the Mediterranean Sea, then moving through the Atlantic Ocean, English Channel, the North Sea, and finally reaching Russia through the Baltic Sea, connecting to St. Petersburg and Moscow.

Figure 5: Map of Pakistan's Sea Trade Route to Russia



Source: USAID| PREIA

5. Pakistan–Iran–Turkey Railway Connectivity

The Islamabad–Tehran–Istanbul (ITI) Freight Train, was resumed in 2021 to enhance trade and regional connectivity between Pakistan, Iran, and Turkey. The project, launched under the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) framework and recognized by the United Nations as an international transport corridor, aims to significantly reduce freight time and costs. The route spans about 6,500 km across Pakistan, Iran, and Turkey, reducing transit time to around 11.5 days and providing a faster and more cost-effective rail link between South Asia and Europe.

Figure 6: Map of Pakistan-Iran-Turkey Railway Route

Source: ICIT

5.1. Export Opportunities for Pakistan in the Central Asian Republics and Russia

Untapped Market Potential

The analysis reveals significant gaps between Central Asian Republics' imports from the world and from Pakistan, indicating substantial untapped export potential. Despite strong global export performance, Pakistan's market share in CARs remains limited, particularly in high-demand products.

High-Potential Product Categories

Key export opportunities exist in pharmaceuticals, citrus fruits, rice, potatoes, sugar, textiles, sports goods, soaps, and processed foods. Products such as medicaments, mandarins, rice, and sugar show high demand in the CARs markets, while Pakistan has proven export capacity in these sectors.

Priority Markets in Central Asia

Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan emerge as the largest and most promising markets, followed by Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, where Pakistani exports have shown gradual growth. Turkmenistan, although smaller, also presents opportunities in selected products.

Deteriorating Security Situation in Afghanistan

The security environment in Afghanistan remains highly unstable, with rising terrorist activity, particularly by ISKP in the northern regions. Since northern Afghanistan serves as a critical transit route linking Pakistan with Central Asia, persistent insecurity poses a serious threat to the viability of regional trade corridors.

6. Pakistan's Export Opportunities, Potential, and Comparison of Key Economic Indicators with Central Asia and Russia (2024)

Pakistan's exports to the Central Asian Republics (CARs) remain limited despite considerable potential. The estimated export potential is about $436 million, while current exports are only around $202 million, indicating a large untapped market. Among the CARs, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan offer the greatest opportunities due to their larger economies, higher purchasing power, and sizeable populations. Beyond Central Asia, Russia represents an even larger market in the Eurasian region, with a GDP of about $2.09 trillion, a population exceeding 143 million, and relatively high per capita income, making it an important potential destination for Pakistan's exports.

Table 2: Pakistan's Export Potential and Key Economic Indicators (2024)

Countries	Pakistan Exports ($ in Million)	Pakistan Potential Exports ($ in Million)	GDP ($ in Billion)	GDP PCI USD	Population (Million)
Pakistan	.....	.....	380.04	1,512.50	251.27
Uzbekistan	103.65	187.00	101.81	2,800.03	36.36
Kazakhstan	41.87	210.00	288.44	14,006.97	20.59
Tajikistan	41.13	25.00	13.72	1,295.38	10.59
Kyrgyzstan	14.24	13.00	16.10	2,240.27	7.22
Turkmenistan	1.82	1.9.00	65.96	8,800.88	7.49
Russian Federation	68.64	142.00	2,091.56	14,442.46	143.53

Source: ITC & WDI

7. Challenges in Trade between Pakistan, the Central Asian Republics & Russia

Escalation of Militant Violence along Trade Routes

Ongoing violent extremism undermines investor confidence, disrupts logistics planning, and weakens transit reliability, limiting Pakistan's ability to use Afghanistan as a stable trade corridor.

Worsening Internal Security Conditions in Pakistan

Border provinces, especially Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan, have witnessed a sharp rise in terrorist incidents. Activities by TTP, Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISKP), and BLA-linked groups have disrupted trade routes, increased transportation risks, and raised security costs, directly affecting trade with Central Asia.

Cross-Border Tensions and Regional Security Risks

Frequent tensions between Pakistan and Afghanistan have led to temporary border closures, delaying goods movement and disrupting supply chains. Despite diplomatic efforts and third-party mediation, unresolved security concerns and the presence of militant groups such as Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) continue to undermine corridor reliability.

Collapse of Transit Trade and Regional Connectivity

Transit traffic through Pakistan to Afghanistan and Central Asia has declined sharply, weakening Pakistan's credibility as a transit hub. The near halt in trade with Afghanistan has further encouraged regional partners to seek alternative routes.

Loss of Export Markets and Trade Volumes

Trade disruptions have led to a significant decline in Pakistan's exports to Afghanistan and Central Asia, particularly in cement, pharmaceuticals, and perishable goods. Export volumes have fallen sharply, reducing Pakistan's presence in regional markets.

Payment and Financial Transaction Barriers

Pakistani exporters face serious payment constraints due to restrictions on the repatriation of foreign currency. The current limit of USD 5,000 per individual creates major difficulties for businesses involved in large-value transactions.

8. Policy Recommendation

Strengthening Transit Trade Governance

Establish a National Transit Trade Coordination Mechanism under a central authority to ensure alignment among federal and provincial stakeholders, harmonize transit regulations, and streamline decision-making. A clear institutional ownership will reduce fragmentation and improve efficiency in transit operations.

Improving Border Management and Customs Facilitation

Upgrade border infrastructure at key crossings such as Torkham, Chaman, and Ghulam Khan, as well as emerging terminals like Zhob Kamr-Ud-Din Karez and Badini Trade Terminal. Introduce risk-based inspections, digital customs clearance, pre-arrival processing, and electronic documentation to reduce transaction costs and improve corridor reliability.

Upgrading Transport and Logistics Infrastructure

Enhance intermodal connectivity and logistics services by upgrading roads linking border terminals to national highways and ports. Invest in rail freight, dry ports, and logistics hubs along transit routes to support bulk and long-haul cargo movement. Public–private partnerships can accelerate these investments.

Enhancing Regional Agreements and Trade Diplomacy

Strengthen bilateral and regional transit agreements with Afghanistan, Central Asian Republics, Iran, China, Turkey, and Russia. Address non-tariff barriers, promote mutual recognition of standards and transit documents, and position Pakistan as a reliable regional transit partner.

Promoting Alternative and Secure Corridors

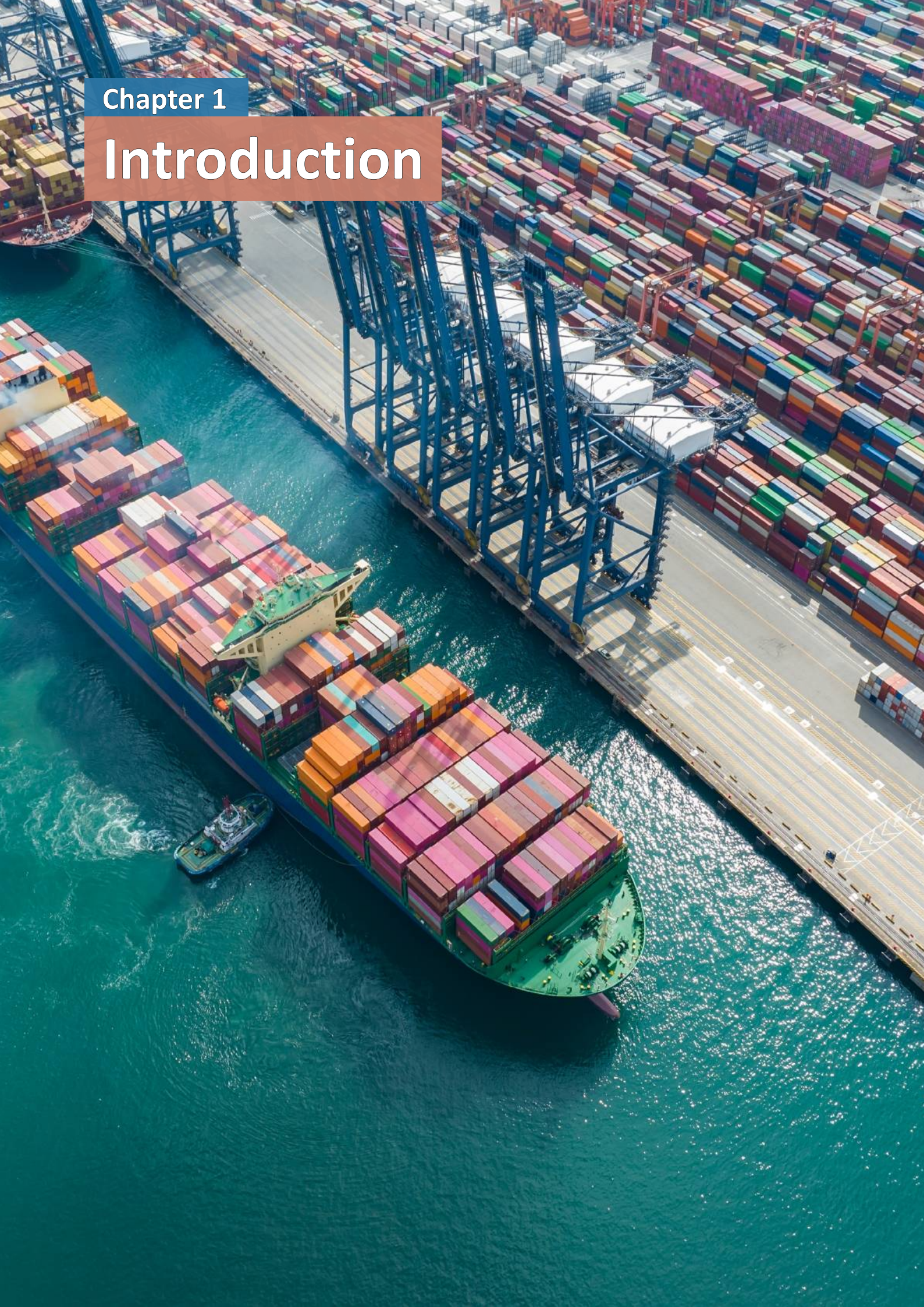
Diversify corridor strategies by developing routes via China and Iran alongside Afghanistan. Multiple corridors enhance resilience, reduce dependence on a single route, and strengthen Pakistan's negotiating position in regional trade.

Promote Dialogue over Coercive Measures

Security challenges should be addressed through diplomatic engagement, regional cooperation, and economic interdependence rather than restrictive or coercive measures, which can lead to long-term economic and strategic costs.

Developing Formal Payment Channels

Establish direct banking linkages and promote digital payment platforms to facilitate cross-border trade. Encourage banks to open correspondent accounts and provide incentives for financial institutions to operate in the region, reducing reliance on informal systems like hawala.



Chapter 1

Introduction

Introduction

1. An Overview of Pakistan

Pakistan, officially known as the Islamic Republic of Pakistan (Pakistan), is a federal parliamentary democracy and the fifth most populous country in the world, boasting a population exceeding 251[2] million. Geographically, Pakistan is bordered by India to the east, Afghanistan to the northwest, Iran to the west, and China to the north, while the Arabian Sea lies to the south, providing the country with a coastline stretching over 1,046 kilometers[3].

1.2: Demographic Outlook of Pakistan

The demographic indicators presented in the table below offer an overview of Pakistan's population trends between 2023 and 2024.

Table 1.1: Pakistan – Key Demographic Indicators 2023 Vs. 2024

Demographic Indicators	2023	2024
Population (Million)	247.50	251.27
Urban Population (Million)	94.15	96.40
Rural Population (Million)	153.35	154.87
Population Growth (%)	1.55	1.51
Population Density (People per square Kilometer of Land Area)	310.66*	316.13*
Birth Rate (per 1,000 people)	27.81	25.58
Death Rate (per 1,000 people)	6.47	6.71
Life Expectancy at Birth (Years)	67.65	67.94
Fertility Rate (Births per Woman)	3.61	3.19

Source: World Development Indicators (WDI)[4], macrotrends[5], Note* Population Density[6]

2. World Development Indicator (WDI), 2024.
3. Consulate General of Pakistan, Los Angeles.
4. Population, Urban Population, Rural population and Population Growth have been taken from WDI.
5. Population Density, Birth Rate, Death Rate, Life Expectancy and Fertility Rate have been taken from macrotrends.
6. Population Density data for 2023 and 2024 are unavailable; therefore, the value for 2021 (310.66*) was used in the 2023 column, and the value for 2022 (316.13*) was placed in the 2024 column.
.

1.3: Economic outlook of Pakistan

The key economic indicators for Pakistan in 2023 and 2024 are summarized in Table 1-2 below.

Table 1.2 Pakistan - Key Economic Indicators 2023 vs. 2024

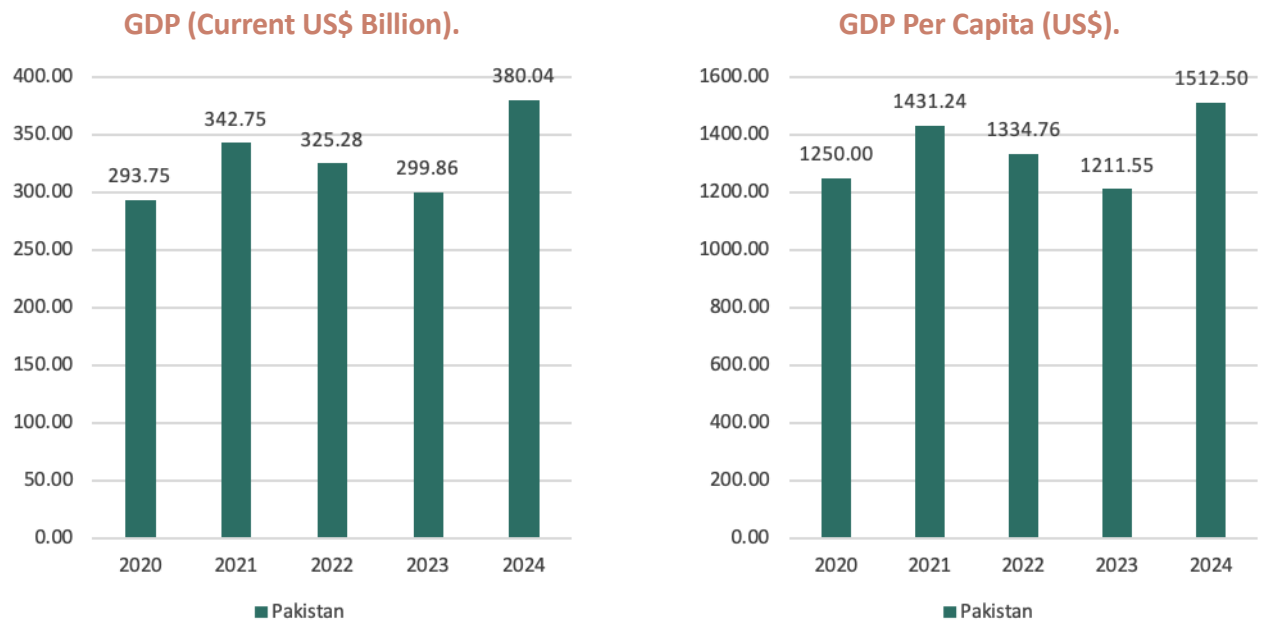
Economic Indicators	2023	2024
GDP ($ Billion)	299.86	380.04
GDP Growth (%)	-0.01	2.26
GDP Per Capita (US$)	1,211.55	1,512.50
Inflation (%)	30.77	12.63
Real Interest Rate (%)	22.00	13.00
Exchange Rate (Pakistanii Rufiyaa Per US$)	280.36	278.58
Trade Balance (US$ Billion)	-23.98	-27.20
Trade Balance in Goods (US$ Billion)	-21.66	-24.13
Trade Balance in Services (US$ Billions)	-2.33	-3.07
Current Account Balance (Bop, US$ Billion)	-1.04	0.56
FDI, Inflow (US$ Billion)	2.05	2.73

Source: UNCTAD[7], World Development Indicator (WDI)[8], Focus Economic[9].

1.4.1: GDP and GDP Per Capita of Pakistan

Figure 1-1 illustrates the GDP and GDP per capita for Pakistan 2020 to 2024. Pakistan's GDP showed moderate fluctuations, increasing from US$ 293.75 billion in 2020 to US$ 380.04 billion in 2024.

Figure 1.1: GDP and GDP Per Capita of Pakistan



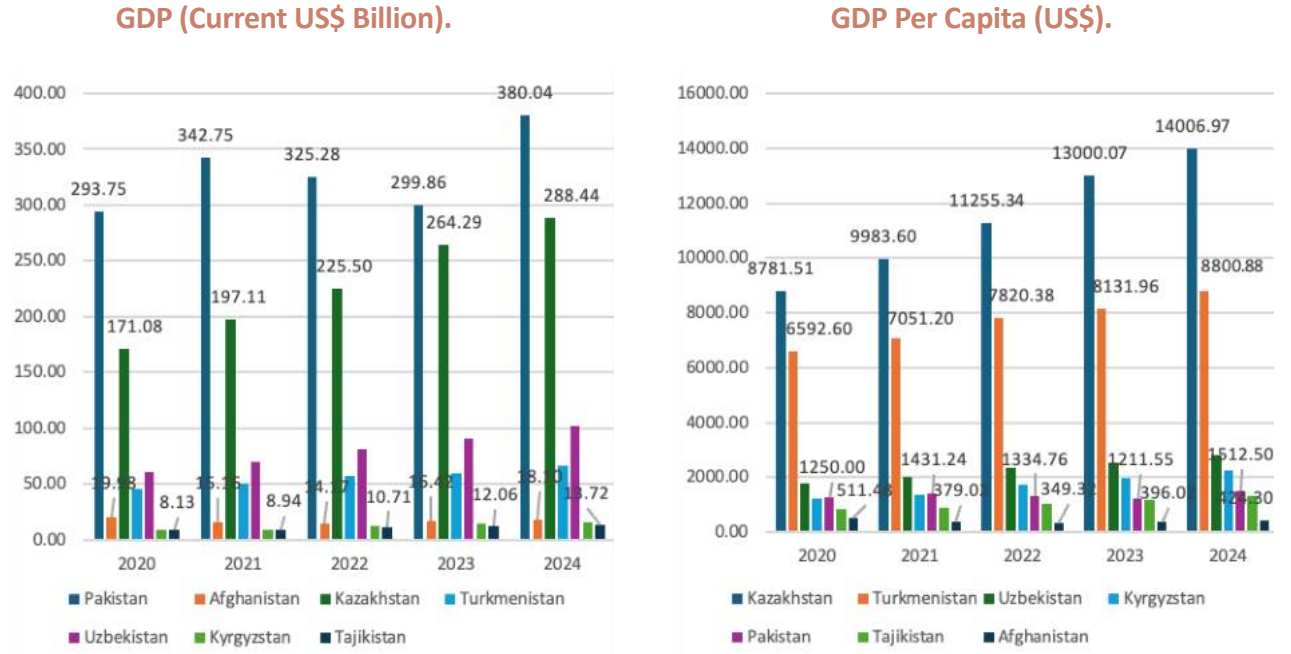
Source: UNCTAD

7. GDP, GDP Growth rate, GDP per capita, Trade balance of goods and services have been taken from UNCTAD.
8. Inflation, Exchange rate data, Current account Balance and FDI Inflow have been taken from World Development Indicator (WDI).
9. Real Interest Rate data has been taken from Focus Economic

1.4.2 GDP and GDP Per Capita of Afghanistan and Central Asian Republics from 2014 to 2023

Figure 1-2 presents the GDP and GDP per capita for Pakistan, Afghanistan, and the Central Asian Republics "Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan", and compares it to Pakistan from 2020 to 2024. Kazakhstan maintained the largest economy among the Central Asian countries, with output increasing from US$ 171.08 billion in 2020 to US$ 288.44 billion in 2024.

Figure 1.2: GDP and GDP Per Capita of Pakistan, Afghanistan and the Central Asian Republics

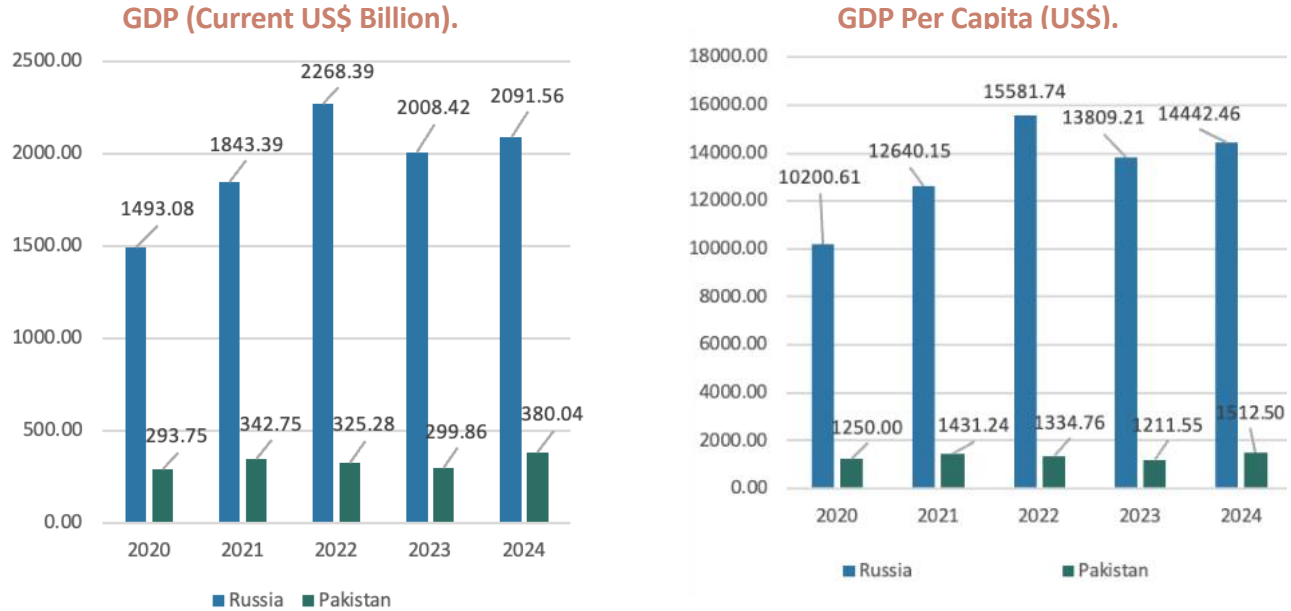


Source: UNCTAD

1.4.3 GDP and GDP Per Capita of The Russian Federation, 2020 to 2024

Figure 1-3 compares the GDP and GDP per capita of The Russian Federation and Pakistan from 2020 to 2024. Russia's output rose from US$ 1,493.08 billion to US$ 2,091.56 billion despite a temporary slowdown in 2023. Russia's per capita income grew from US$ 10,200.61 to US$ 14,442.46 while Pakistan's GDP per capita rose slightly from US$ 1,250 to US$ 1,512.50 over the same period.

Figure 1.3: Comparison of the GDP and GDP Per Capita of Russia and Pakistan

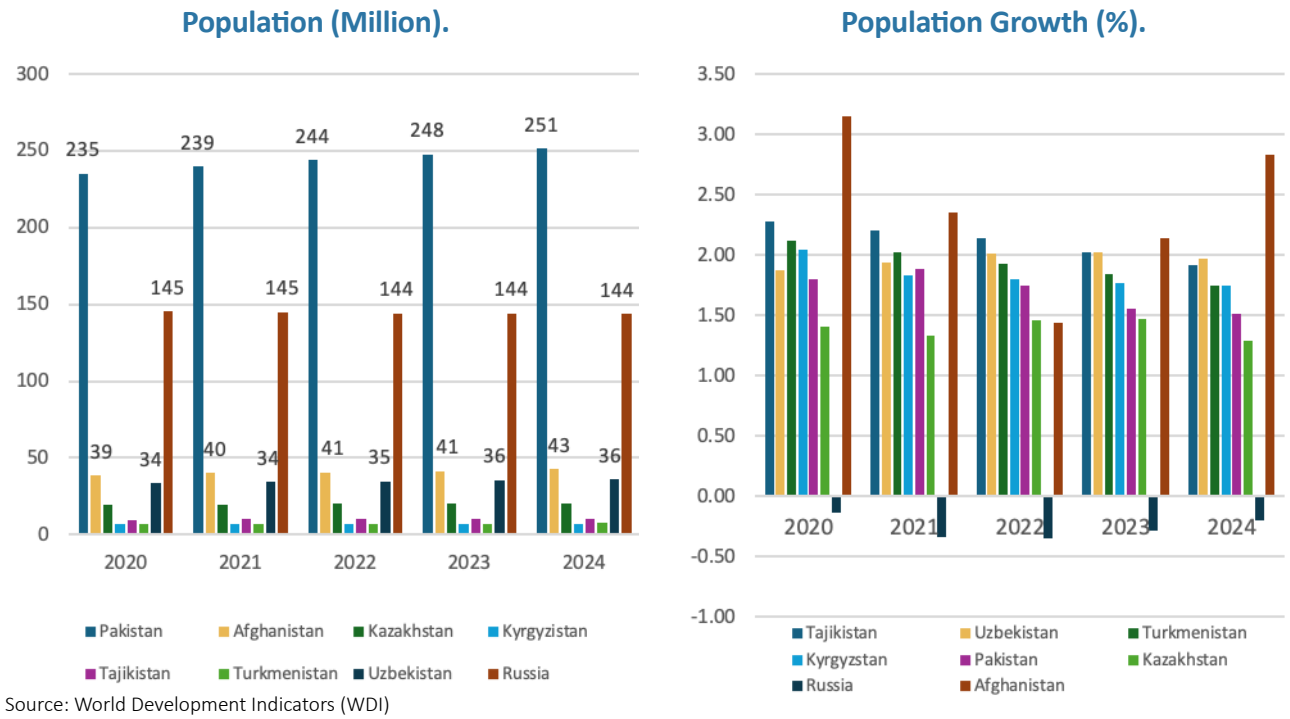


Source: UNCTAD

1.5: Population and Population Growth of Pakistan, Afghanistan, the Central Asian Republics & Russia from 2020 to 2024

Figure 1-3 presents the population and population growth rates of Pakistan, Afghanistan, the Central Asian Republics and Russia from 2020 to 2024, showing that Uzbekistan's population increased steadily from about 34 million in 2020 to nearly 37 million in 2024, supported by a growth rate that rose slightly from 1.87% to 1.97% over the period. Uzbekistan also has the largest population among the Central Asian republics. In contrast, Pakistan's population grew from 235 million in 2020 to 251 million in 2024, but its growth rate declined from 1.80% to 1.51%.

Figure 1.4: Total Population and Population Growth of Pakistan, Afghanistan, the Central Asian Republics and Russia



Source: World Development Indicators (WDI)

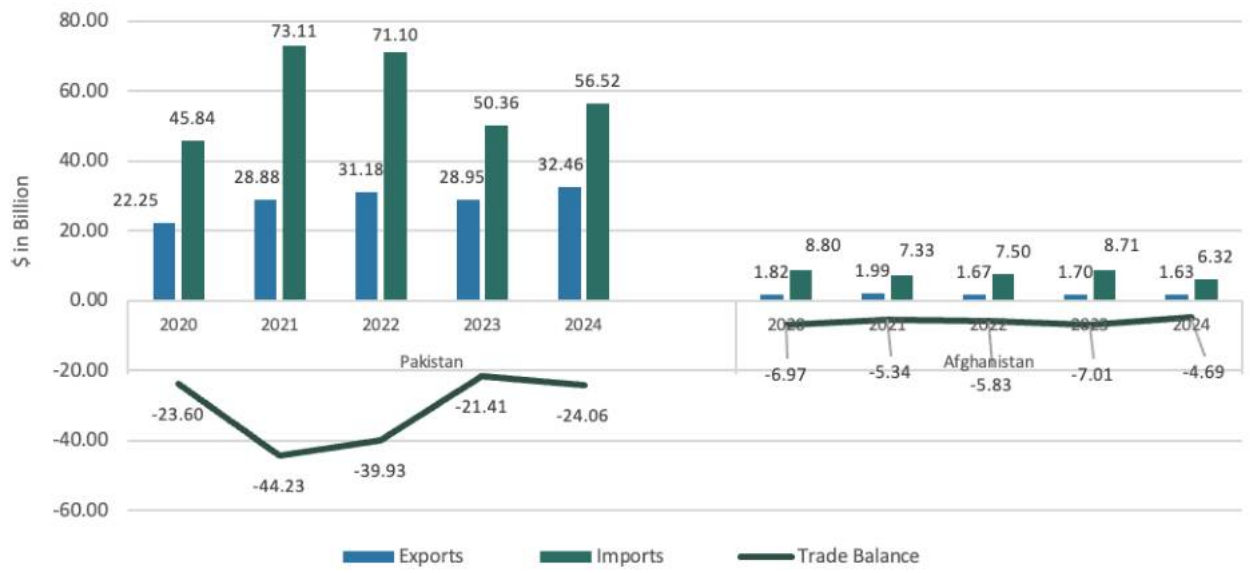
1.6 Trade Overview

This section presents a consolidated overview of the current trade between Pakistan, Afghanistan, the Central Asian Republics, and Russia. It examines trends in exports, imports, and overall trade dynamics, with particular emphasis on balance of trade outcomes over the period 2020–2024. The analysis highlights patterns of trade surpluses and deficits, shifts in commodity composition, and the influence of regional connectivity.

1.6.1 Trade Overview of Pakistan and Afghanistan

Pakistan's trade with Afghanistan is shown in the following graphs

Figure 1.5 Pakistan and Afghanistan's Balance of Trade (2020-2024)



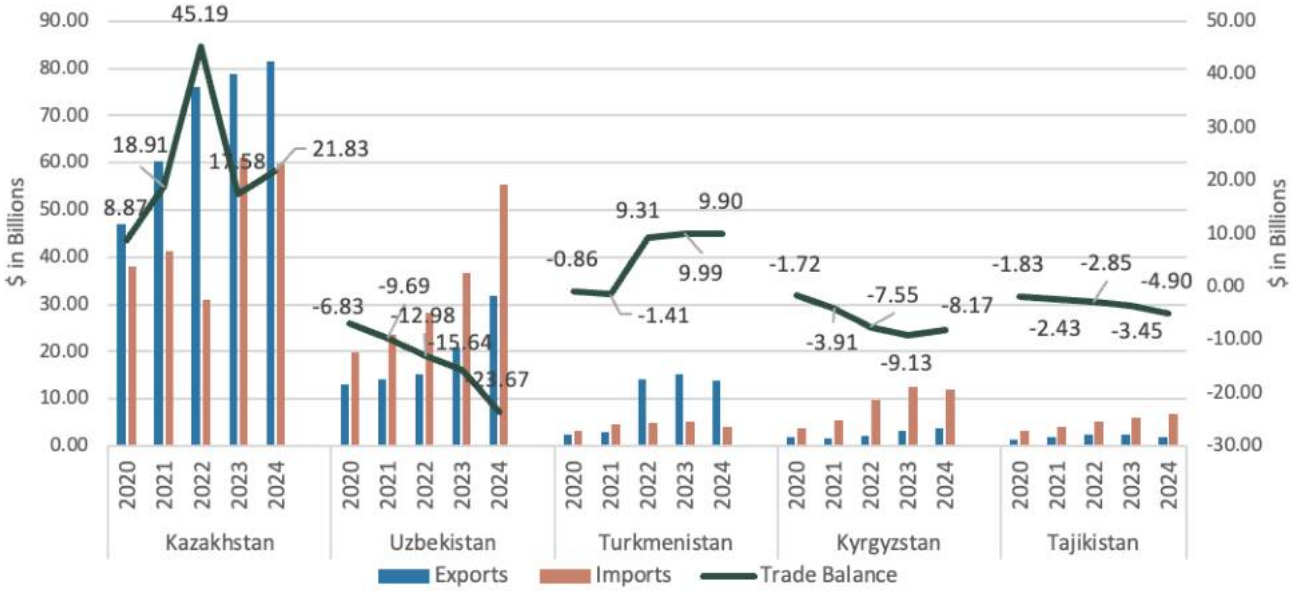
Source: ITC

1.6.2 Trade Overview of Central Asian Republics

Figure 1–4 show the trade values of the Central Asian Republics (CARs) for the period 2020–2024. In the case of Kazakhstan, the data shows a clear upward trend in exports of goods, rising from $46.95 billion in 2020 to $81.62 billion in 2024. Imports also fluctuated over the period, increasing from $38.08 billion in 2020 to a peak of $61.16 billion in 2023, before easing slightly to $59.79 billion in 2024. Throughout these years, Kazakhstan consistently maintained a trade surplus, ranging from $8.87 billion in 2020 to $45.19 billion in 2022, before settling at $21.83 billion in 2024.

Across the other Central Asian Republics, trade patterns vary. Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan consistently experienced trade deficits in goods. Uzbekistan had the largest deficit among the Central Asian Republics, which widened from $6.83 billion in 2020 to $23.67 billion in 2024. Kyrgyzstan's deficit grew from $1.72 billion in 2020 to a peak of $9.13 billion in 2023, slightly reducing to $8.17 billion in 2024, while Tajikistan's deficit steadily increased from $1.83 billion to $4.90 billion over the same period. In contrast, Turkmenistan, after minor deficits in 2020 ($0.86 billion) and 2021 ($1.41 billion), showed a positive shift, achieving a trade surplus from 2022 onward, reaching $9.90 billion in 2024.

Figure 1.6 Central Asian Republic's Balance of Trade (2020-2024)



Source: ITC

1.7: Comparison of Trade Routes to Afghanistan, Central Asia, Russia & Europe

This section explores the opportunities offered by the sea, rail, and road transit routes connecting Pakistan Afghanistan, Central Asia, Russia and Europe. Each route presents distinct advantages in terms of connectivity, and trade potential. By examining these strategic pathways, this section aims to determine which option—maritime shipping, railway corridors, overland routes or a multimodal approach —provides the most promising opportunity for strengthening Pakistan's trade linkages with Russia and Europe.

1.7.1 Comparison of Road, Rail and Sea Trade routes to Central Asia and Russia

The table …. compares Pakistan's trade connectivity with Afghanistan, the Central Asian countries, and Russia across three modes of transport: land routes, rail corridors, and sea routes. Land-based transit routes via Torkham and Chaman provide the shortest distances and quickest travel times for Central Asian destinations and Russia.

Rail routes, while covering longer distances and requiring more time, are a reliable option for bulk cargo and long-haul connectivity with Russia.

In contrast, the sea route from Karachi to Moscow involves the longest distance and transit time, but remains relevant for large-volume shipments where lower transport costs outweigh delivery speed.

Table 1.3: Road, Rail and Sea Trade routes to Afghanistan, Central Asia and Russia

Cities	Distance (km)	Approx. Traveling Time
Peshawar → Kabul	~ 282 km	~ 6 hr. 02 min
Ghulam Khan Border → Kabul	~ 266 km	~ 5 hr. 30 min
Quetta → Kandahar	~ 238 km	~ 4 hr. 23 min
Kamr-Ud-Din Karez → Kandahar	~ 433 km	~ 7 hr. 55 min
Kamr-Ud-Din Karez → Kabul	~ 476 km	~ 8 hr. 56 min
Angoor Ada → Ghazni	~ 185 km	~ 04 hr. 07 min
Pakistan Transit Trade Routes to Central Asia and Russia		
Torkham (Pakistan) → Dushanbe (Tajikistan)	~ 768 km	~ 15 hr. 13 min
Torkham (Pakistan) → Tashkent (Uzbekistan)	~ 1,337 km	~ 23 hr. 14 min
Torkham (Pakistan) → Mary (Turkmenistan)	~ 1,552 km	~ 27 hr. 00 min
Chaman (Pakistan) → Ashgabat (Turkmenistan)	~ 1,469 km	~ 19 hr. 18 min
Torkham (Pakistan) → Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan)	~ 2,190 km	~ 42 hr. 00 min
Torkham (Pakistan) → Almaty (Kazakhstan)	~ 2,445 km	~ 46 hr. 00 min
Islamabad (Pakistan) → Kapikule (Turkey)	~ 5,766 km	~ 67 hr. 00 min
Torkham → Veseloyarsk (Russia)	~ 3,687 km	~ 64 hr. 00 min
Pakistan Rail Route to Central Asia and Russia		
Islamabad (Pakistan) → Istanbul (Turkey)	~ 6,543 km	~ 130 hr. 00 min
Taftan (Pakistan) → Bolashak (Turkmenistan)	~ 4,886 km	~ 97 hr. 54 min
Taftan (Pakistan) → Moscow (Russia)	~ 7,196 km	~ 144 hr. 55 min
Pakistan Sea Route to Russia		
Karachi Sea Port → Moscow (Russia)	~ 13,658 km	~ 540 hr. 06 min (~ 22 days 12 hr)

Source: Google Map, OpenStreetMap

1.8: Scope of the Study

This study looks at the current and proposed trade routes to link Pakistan with Afghanistan, countries in Central Asia and Russia.

This report examines existing routes, their operational challenges, and infrastructural limitations, while also identifying opportunities to enhance Pakistan's role as a regional trade & transit hub.

The report begins with an assessment of Pakistan–Afghanistan transport links as a foundation for broader regional trade, it then expands to analyze corridors extending into Central Asia, and how these can be used to connect with Russia & beyond. The ultimate aim is to provide a comprehensive understanding of how these routes can strengthen Pakistan's trade competitiveness, expand export opportunities, and consolidate its strategic role in Eurasian connectivity.

1.9: Problem Statement

Despite Pakistan's strategic location as a natural trade corridor linking South Asia with Central Asia and Russia through Afghanistan, Iran and China, its transit trade potential remains largely underutilized. Weak infrastructure, limited regional connectivity, political uncertainties, and operational bottlenecks have restricted Pakistan's ability to fully benefit from its location. The lack of efficient border management, inadequate logistics facilities, and weak integration with regional trade frameworks are some of the factors that appear to hinder smooth trade flows.

Currently, Pakistan struggles to position itself as a competitive regional hub for transit trade, missing opportunities to diversify exports, support landlocked economies, and strengthen its role in Eurasian connectivity. Without addressing these gaps, Pakistan risks losing its strategic advantage in regional trade integration and long-term economic growth.

1.10: Broad Objectives of the Study

The study's broad objectives are:

- To analyze the trade corridors linking, Pakistan-Afghanistan, the Central Asian Republics (CARs), Russia & onwards to Europe.
- To examine the key border crossings and road networks that facilitate trade between Pakistan, Afghanistan and beyond.
- To assess Pakistan's access to CARs via Afghanistan, with a focus on identifying opportunities for enhancing connectivity with Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan.
- To explore the long-term potential for developing and expanding trade corridors that link Pakistan, Afghanistan, Central Asia, and Russia into an integrated regional trade network.

1.11: Research Questions of the Study

This study seeks to answer the following questions:

- How do the trade corridors extending from Pakistan through Afghanistan connect with the Central Asian Republics (CARs) and further into Russia?
- What are the key border crossings and road networks that facilitate trade between Pakistan and Afghanistan?
- How can Pakistan gain access to the Central Asian Republics via Afghanistan, and what opportunities exist for expanding connectivity with Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan & Russia?
- What is the long-term potential of developing and expanding trade corridors that link Pakistan, Afghanistan, Central Asia, and Russia into an integrated regional trade network?

1.12: Rationale for the Study

This study is being carried out to highlight the strategic significance of Pakistan's transit trade routes and their broader role in shaping regional trade dynamics. The study seeks to explain why strengthening the trade linkages is essential for Pakistan's future growth and integration into regional markets. The rationale is based on multiple considerations, including the need to improve regional connectivity, diversify Pakistan's trade portfolio, support neighboring landlocked economies, enhance domestic export competitiveness, and contribute to long-term regional peace and stability.

a) Regional Connectivity

One of the central reasons for undertaking this study is to strengthen regional connectivity. Afghanistan provides a crucial gateway for Pakistan to access Central Asia, and extending these trade corridors further can open direct routes towards Russia & Europe. Such linkages create opportunities to integrate Pakistan into wider regional supply chains and facilitate smoother trade flows across Eurasia.

b) Economic Diversification

Pakistan's existing export profile remains heavily concentrated in a few traditional markets and product categories. Trade routes offer an avenue to reduce this dependency by expanding into new geographies and diversifying trade opportunities. Strengthening trade corridors linking Pakistan to Central Asia and Russia will allow Pakistan to broaden its export base while generating new areas of cooperation in energy, raw materials, and industrial goods.

c) Support for Landlocked States

The study also emphasizes Pakistan's role in supporting neighboring landlocked countries such as Afghanistan and the Central Asian Republics. These countries rely heavily on access to seaports for imports and exports, and Pakistan's location makes it a natural facilitator. By ensuring smooth transit, Pakistan can foster stronger partnerships with these states, enhancing trust and interdependence. Such cooperation not only benefits landlocked countries but also contributes to Pakistan's regional leadership in trade facilitation.

d) Boosting Exports

Transit corridors are not only beneficial for external trade for landlocked countries but also have the potential to significantly boost Pakistan's exports. Improved transport, logistics, and customs infrastructure directly enhance the competitiveness of Pakistani goods in regional and international markets. Better connectivity reduces the cost of doing business, shortens delivery times, and allows exporters to expand their reach into new destinations. In this way, transit trade can act as a catalyst for Pakistan's own export growth and industrial development.

e) Regional Stability through Trade

Expanding economic cooperation through transit trade corridors fosters interdependence among countries, which in turn contributes to peace and stability in the region. Trade has historically served as a bridge between nations, creating incentives to maintain cooperative and stable relationships.

1.13: Methodology of the Study

To comprehensively evaluate Pakistan's transit trade linkages with Afghanistan, Central Asia, and Russia, the study adopts a multi-dimensional, desk-based analytical approach. The analysis is grounded in secondary data, international trade databases, and spatial mapping techniques. This approach allows for a systematic assessment of trade flows, corridor efficiency, and connectivity constraints while ensuring consistency, comparability, and policy relevance.

The methodology integrates trade statistics, route mapping, and infrastructure assessments to develop a holistic understanding of existing and potential transit corridors. The methodology is structured around the following key components:

a) Route and Corridor Analysis

The study conducts a detailed mapping and evaluation of major transit routes connecting Pakistan, Afghanistan, Central Asia, and Russia. Using Google Map, Open Railway Map, GPS visualizer, and

OpenStreetMap, Russia's Pivot to Asia and transport network data, each corridor is assessed in terms of distance, estimated travel time, and logistical feasibility.

b) Trade Data Analysis

Trade flow patterns were analyzed using export and import data obtained from ITC Trade Map, World development Indicators and UN Comtrade. This includes an assessment of trade volumes, commodity composition, partner country shares, and trends over time. The analysis supports an evidence-based evaluation of Pakistan's current and potential role as a transit hub for regional trade.

1.14: Organization of the Report

This report is structured in a manner to provide a comprehensive understanding of Pakistan's transit connectivity across different regions.

Chapter 2 explores Pakistan's trade routes with Afghanistan, outlining the major corridors, their operational relevance, and their role in facilitating bilateral and regional trade.

Chapter 3 examines Pakistan's connectivity with the Central Asian Republics through both Afghanistan and China, highlighting the potential of these corridors to enhance trade diversification and regional integration.

Chapter 4 extends the analysis to Russia , discussing both maritime and overland routes that pass through Central Asia and Iran, and their strategic importance for expanding Pakistan's trade network.

Chapter 5 focuses on regional railway connectivity and freight development projects, emphasizing the significance of rail linkages in strengthening cross-border trade, improving logistics efficiency, and supporting long-term economic cooperation with neighboring and regional countries.

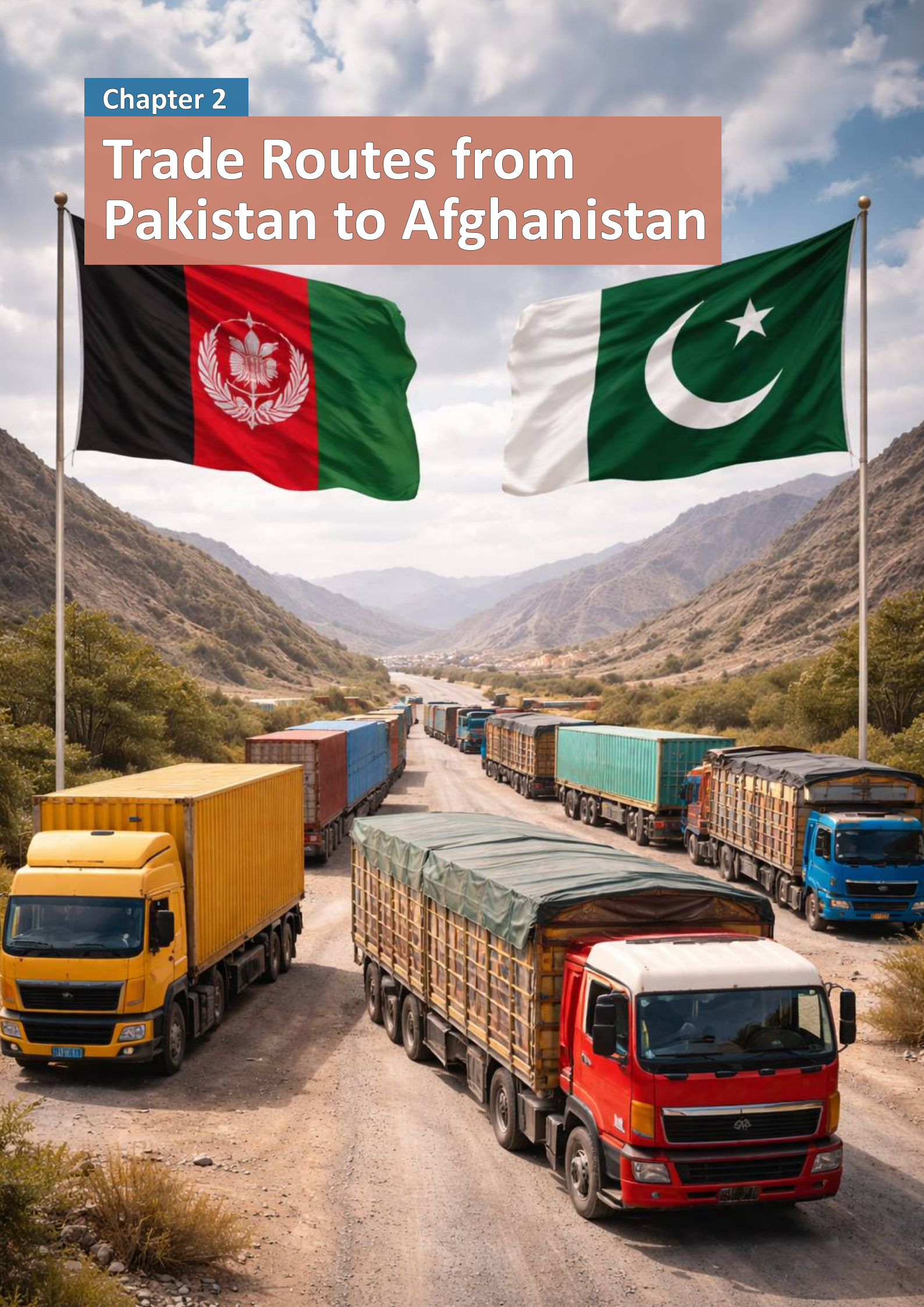
Chapter 6 analyzes trade opportunities for Pakistan in the Central Asian Republics (CARs). It presents an overview of trade between Pakistan and the CARs, examines the import & export structure of Central Asian countries from the global market, and identifies key export opportunities for Pakistani products. Using graphical and empirical analysis, Furthermore, it addresses the key challenges faced by Pakistan in utilizing transit trade routes through Afghanistan to enter the CAR markets.

Chapter 7 concludes the study by synthesizing the key findings from the comprehensive analysis of trade data, transit routes, and regional connectivity frameworks. It brings together insights derived from international trade databases, corridor mapping, and policy reviews to assess Pakistan's role and potential as a regional transit hub.

Chapter 8 provides policy recommendations, aimed at improving infrastructure, regulatory frameworks, and institutional coordination to optimize Pakistan's role as a regional trade and transit hub.

Chapter 2

Trade Routes from Pakistan to Afghanistan



Trade Routes from Pakistan to Afghanistan

2.1. Overview of Pakistan–Afghanistan Connectivity

This chapter provides an overview of Pakistan's major land trade corridors connecting with Afghanistan. These trade routes not only facilitate the movement of goods between the two countries but also act as strategic links for accessing Central Asian markets. The chapter highlights the significance of each trade corridor—such as Peshawar–Kabul, Ghulam Khan–Kabul, Quetta–Kandahar, Kamr-ud-Din Karez–Kandahar/ Kabul, Badini Trade Terminal–Qalat, and Angoor Adda–Ghazni—underscoring their role in strengthening trade integration, enhancing cross-border connectivity, and promoting regional economic cooperation.

2.2. Pakistan–Afghanistan Trade Routes Connecting Major Cities

Pakistan–Afghanistan Trade Routes play a crucial role in facilitating regional trade and connectivity. These routes enable the movement of goods between Pakistan and various parts of Afghanistan via key border crossings such as Torkham, Chaman, and Ghulam Khan. Each route links major Afghan cities like Kabul, Kandahar, and Herat. The following table presents the approximate distances and travel times from major Pakistani cities to key Afghan cities—Kabul and Kandahar.

Table 2.1: Distance from Major Pakistani Capital Cities to Kabul & Qandahar in Afghanistan

Countries	Pakistan Exports ($ in Million)	Pakistan Potential Exports ($ in Million)
Major Pakistani Cities to Kabul		
Peshawar → Kabul	~ 282 km	~ 06 hr. 02 min
Islamabad → Kabul	~ 471 km	~ 08 hr. 15 min
Quetta → Kabul	~ 701 km	~ 11 hr. 43 min
Lahore → Kabul	~ 803 km	~ 11 hr. 44 min
Karachi → Kabul	~ 1,395 km	~ 21 hr. 25 min
Major Pakistani Cities to Kandahar		
Quetta → Kandahar	~ 237 km	~ 04 hr. 22 min
Peshawar → Kandahar	~ 779 km	~ 13 hr. 42 min
Karachi → Kandahar	~ 919 km	~ 14 hr. 06 min
Islamabad → Kandahar	~ 1,063 km	~ 15 hr. 03 min
Lahore → Kandahar	~ 1,147 km	~ 17 hr. 07 min

Source: Google Mape

The figure 2.1 presents the key road networks connecting Pakistan's major cities—Karachi, Quetta, Lahore, Peshawar, and Islamabad—to Afghanistan's main commercial hubs, Kabul and Kandahar. It highlights the primary trade corridors, including the Peshawar–Torkham–Kabul route, which serves as the principal gateway to central and northern Afghanistan, and the Quetta–Chaman–Kandahar route, which provides vital access to southern Afghanistan. The map also indicates alternative links through Qila Saifullah and Zhob "Badini Trade Terminal & Kamr-Ud-Din Karez", offering potentially shorter connections toward Afghanistan's highways.

Major highways, main roads, and border terminals are clearly marked, underlining Pakistan's strategic role as a transit hub that facilitates direct access to Afghanistan's key economic centers, strengthening bilateral trade and regional connectivity. The details of these routes are provided in the following figure.

Figure 2.1: Map of Pakistan Transit Trade Routes to Afghanistan

Source: USAID| PREIA-Pakistan Regional Economic Integration Activity

2.3: Trade Route from Peshawar to Kabul

The trade route from Peshawar to Kabul is one of the busiest and most important corridors for bilateral and regional trade. It passes through the Torkham border, connecting Peshawar with Jalalabad and ultimately reaching Kabul. The details of this route are provided in the following table.

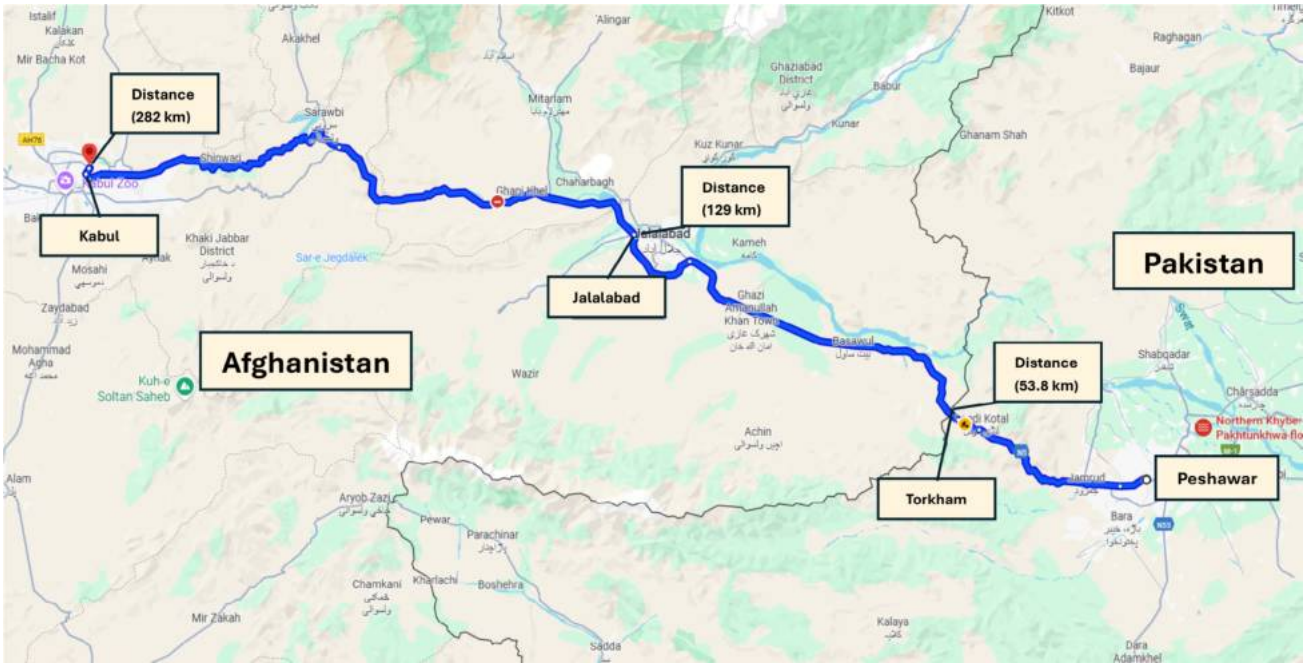
Table 2.2: Distance and Travel Time – Peshawar to Kabul

Cities	Distance (km)	Approx. Driving Time
Peshawar → Torkham	~ 53.8 km	~ 1 hr. 27 min
Peshawar → Jalalabad	~ 129 km	~ 2 hr. 57 min
Jalalabad → Kabul	~ 149 km	~ 3 hr. 07 min
Peshawar → Kabul	~ 282 km	~ 6 hr. 02 min

Source: Google Map

The figure 2.2 shows the trade route between Peshawar and Kabul.

Figure 2.2: Map of Trade Route – Peshawar to Kabul



Source: Google Map

2.4: Trade Route from Ghulam khan to Kabul

The Ghulam Khan border crossing in North Waziristan serves as a significant route for trade between Pakistan and Afghanistan. This corridor connects Pakistan to eastern Afghanistan, beginning at Ghulam Khan and proceeding through Khost and Gardez before reaching Kabul. It offers a relatively direct link for goods movement and regional connectivity, particularly benefiting the southern and southeastern parts of Afghanistan. The details of this route are presented in the following table.

Table 2.3: Distance and Travel Time – Ghulam Khan to Kabul

Cities	Distance (km)	Approx. Traveling Time
North Waziristan → Ghulam Khan	~ 33.3 km	~ 1 hr. 00 min
Ghulam Khan → Khost	~ 34.8 km	~ 0 hr. 55 min
Khost → Gardez	~ 106 km	~ 2 hr. 20 min
Gardez → Kabul	~ 127 km	~ 2 hr. 30 min
Ghulam Khan → Kabul	~ 266 km	~ 5 hr. 30 min
North Waziristan → Kabul	~ 300 km	~ 6 hr. 17 min

Source: Google Map

The figure 2.3 illustrates Pakistan's Trade Route from Ghulam Khan border (North Waziristan) to Kabul, Afghanistan. The route passes through key Afghan cities including Khost and Gardez before reaching Kabul. The total distance covered is approximately 407 kilometers,

Figure 2.3: Map of Trade Route – Ghulam Khan to Kabul

Source: Google Map

2.5: Trade Route from Quetta to Kandahar

The trade route from Quetta to Kandahar serves as a key corridor linking southern Pakistan with southern Afghanistan. This route passes through the Chaman–Spin Boldak border, facilitating trade flows to Kandahar and further on to western Afghanistan. The details of this route are provided in the following table.

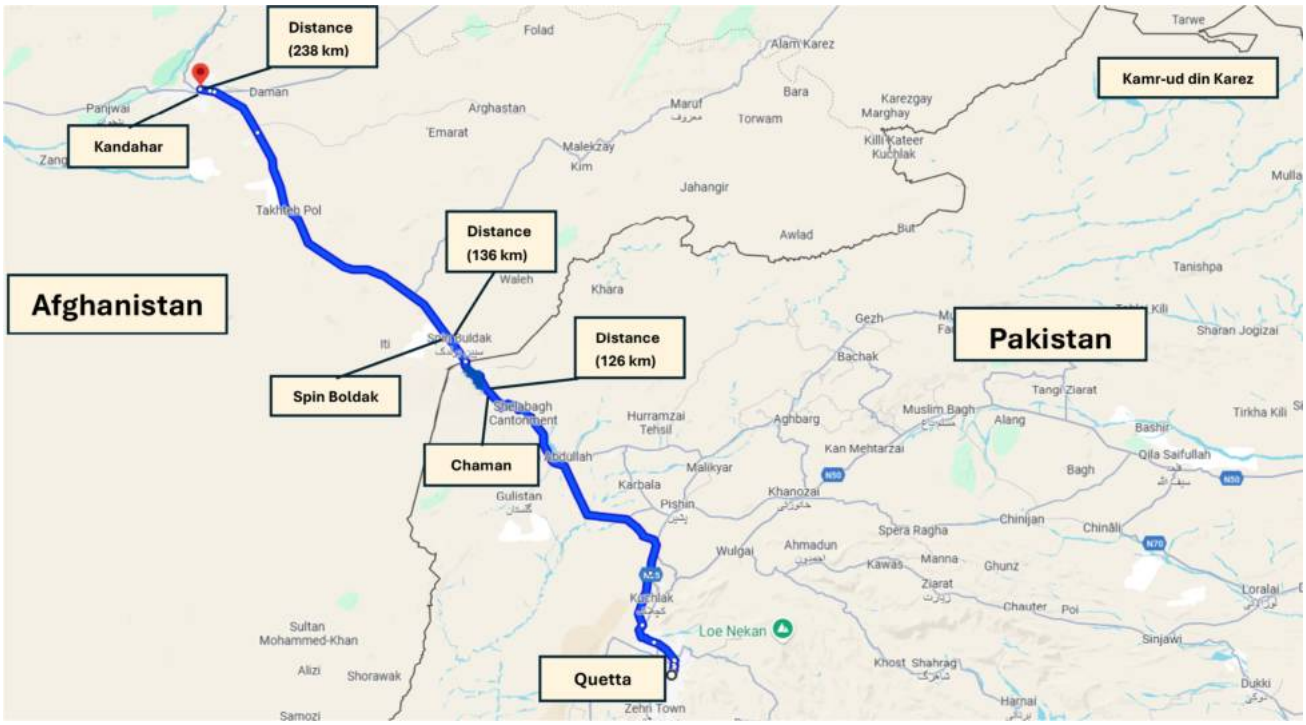
Table 2.4: Distance and Travel Time – Quetta to Kandahar

Cities	Distance (km)	Approx. Traveling Time
Quetta → Chaman	~ 126 km	~ 2 hr. 37 min
Quetta → Spin Boldak	~ 136 km	~ 2 hr. 53 min
Spin Boldak → Kandahar	~ 103 km	~ 1 hr. 37 min
Quetta → Kandahar	~ 238 km	~ 4 hr. 23 min

Source: Google Map

The map below 2.4 shows the trade route between Quetta and Kandahar. Once in Afghanistan, the route goes through Spin Boldak and then reaches Kandahar, a major city in Afghanistan. This route is important for trade between the two countries, especially for Pakistan to reach central Asian countries

Figure 2.4: Map of Trade Route – Quetta to Kabul



Source: Google Map

2.6: Trade Route from Kamr-Ud-Din Karez to Kandahar and Kabul

The Trade Route from Zhob's Kamr-Ud-Din Karez to Kandahar and Kabul offers a strategically significant corridor into Afghanistan. This route passes near Ghazni, a central Afghan city that lies almost equidistant between Kandahar and Kabul. Given its central location, the Kamr-Ud-Din Karez route has the potential to serve both major cities efficiently, making it a highly attractive and time-saving option. The details of these routes are provided in the following table.

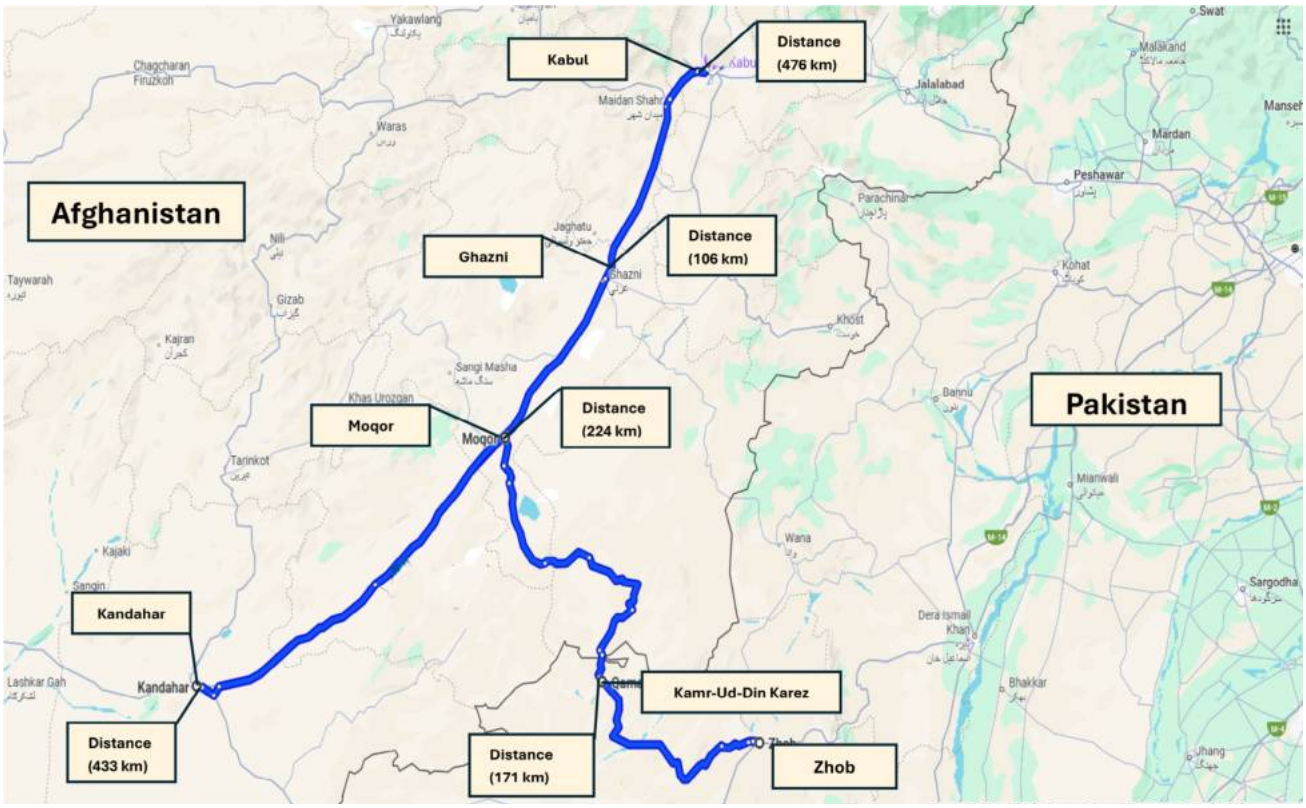
Table 2.5: Distance and Travel Time – Kamr-Ud-Din Karez to Kandahar and Kabul

Cities	Distance (km)	Approx. Traveling Time
Zhob → Kamr-Ud-Din Karez	~ 171 km	~ 4 hr. 59 min
Kamr-Ud-Din Karez → Moqor (Zero point)	~ 224 km	~ 4 hr. 41 min
Moqor → Kabul	~ 252 km	~ 4 hr. 09 min
Moqor → Kandahar	~ 252 km	~ 3 hr. 48 min
Moqor → Ghazni	~ 106 km	~ 1 hr. 30 min
Kamr-Ud-Din Karez → Kandahar	~ 433 km	~ 7 hr. 55 min
Kamr-Ud-Din Karez → Kabul	~ 476 km	~ 8 hr. 56 min

Source: Google Map

The Figure 2.5 shows the trade route between Zhob "Kamr-Ud-Din Karez" to Kandahar and Kabul. This route passes through the Kamr-Ud-Din Karez border point and extends via Moqor, which lies almost equidistant from both major Afghan cities. The full distance from the border to Kandahar is approximately 433 kilometers, while the distance to Kabul is about 476 kilometers.

Figure 2.5: Trade Route – Zhob (Kamr-Ud-Din Karez) to Kandahar and Kabul



Source: Google Map

2.7: Trade Route from Badini Trade Terminal to Qalat Afghanistan

The Trade Route from Qila Saifullah to the Badini Trade Terminal plays an important role in enhancing cross-border connectivity between Balochistan and southern Afghanistan. The route begins in Qila Saifullah, continues toward the Badini Trade Terminal, and proceeds to Kamr-Ud-Din Karez, from where it enters Afghanistan. On the Afghan side, it passes through Gelan District and into Zabul Province, eventually reaching Qalat, a key district situated on the Kandahar–Ghazni Highway, enabling direct access to Kandahar. The specific distances and travel times for this route are listed in the following table.

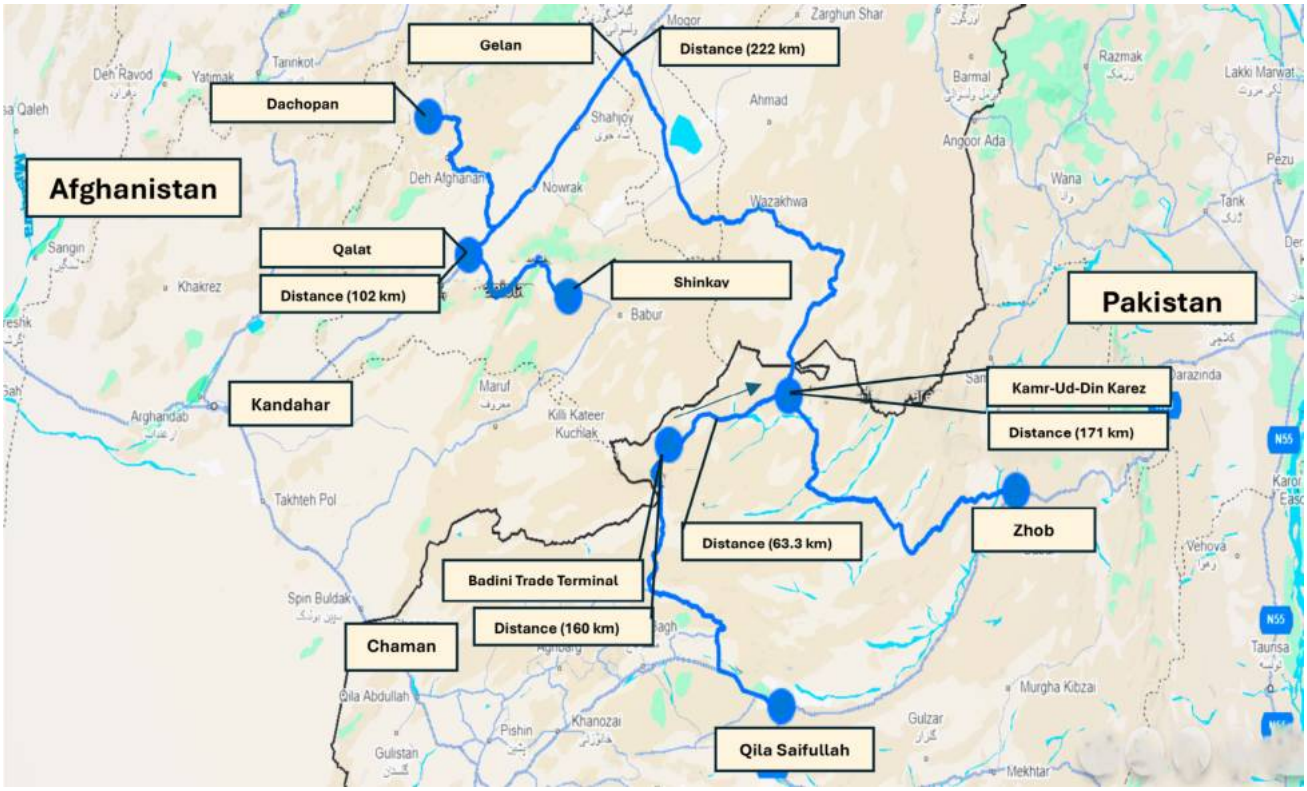
Table 2.6: Distance and Travel Time – Badini Trade Terminal to Qalat

Cities	Distance (km)	Approx. Traveling Time
Qila Saifullah → Badini Trade Terminal	~ 160 km	~ 3 hr. 40 min
Badini Trade Terminal → Kamr-Ud-Din Karez	~ 64.3 km	~ 1 hr. 43 min
Zhob → Kamr-Ud-Din Karez	~ 171 km	~ 4 hr. 59 min
Kamr-Ud-Din Karez →Gelan	~ 222 km	~ 4 hr. 44 min
Gelan → Qalat	~ 102 km	~ 1 hr. 39 min
Qalat → Kandahar	~ 135 km	~ 2 hr. 01 min
Kamr-Ud-Din Karez → Kandahar	~ 433 km	~ 7 hr. 55 min

Source: Google Map

The figure 2.6 shows the trade route between Badini Trade Terminal and Qalat.

Figure 2.6: Trade Route – Badini Trade Terminal to Qalat



Source: Google Map

2.8: Trade Route from Angoor Ada to Ghazni

The Trade Route from Angoor Adda to Ghazni serves as a strategically important corridor for enhancing bilateral trade and connectivity between Pakistan and Afghanistan. The Angoor Adda Border Terminal, located approximately 113 km from North Waziristan and about 199 km from Zhob District in Balochistan, occupies a vital geographical position linking the southern belt of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with western Balochistan. The route provides a shorter and more direct access for trade with Afghanistan's central province of Ghazni.

Table 2.7: Distance and Travel Time – Angoor Ada to Ghazni

Cities	Distance (km)	Approx. Ship Traveling Time
Zhob → Wana	~ 147 km	~ 03 hr. 12 min
Wana → Angoor Ada	~ 54 km	~ 01 hr. 00 min
North Waziristan → Angoor Ada	~ 113 km	~ 03 hr. 26 min
Angoor Ada → Ghazni	~ 185 km	~ 04 hr. 07 min
Zhob → Ghazni	~ 384 km	~ 08 hr. 08 min
North Waziristan → Ghazni	~ 298 km	~ 07 hr. 33 min

Source: Google Map

The Pakistan–Afghanistan Trade Route from Angoor Adda to Ghazni, is illustrated in the figure 2-7, The route originates from Angoor Adda Border Terminal in South Waziristan, which lies approximately 113 km from North Waziristan and 199 km from Zhob District. This strategic location allows the route to serve as a key linkage between Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan, enhancing Pakistan's internal connectivity and access to Afghanistan's central provinces. From Angoor Adda, the transit route extends into Afghanistan, passing through Paktika and Paktia provinces before reaching Ghazni, covering an approximate distance of 185 km.

Figure 2.7: Map of Trade Route – Angoor Ada to Ghazni

Source: Google Earth

Chapter 3

Pakistan's Transit Trade Corridors to Central Asia via Afghanistan

Pakistan's Transit Trade Corridors to Central Asia via Afghanistan

3.1: Pakistan–Afghanistan - Central Asia Trade Routes

Leveraging Afghanistan as a land bridge, Pakistan can access key Central Asian markets through multiple transit corridors, including those originating from Torkham, Ghulam Khan, Chaman, Badini Trade Terminal, and Zhob (Kamr-Ud-Din Karez). These gateways link Pakistan to Afghanistan's major urban and commercial hubs, such as Kabul and Kandahar, from where established road networks extend towards Central Asian countries Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan.

3.2: Pakistan–Afghanistan-Tajikistan Transit Trade Route

The Pakistan–Afghanistan-Tajikistan transit trade route provides an important regional trade link. Starting from Peshawar, the route enters Afghanistan through the Torkham border, passes via Kabul, and proceeds to Sher Khan Bandar before crossing into Tajikistan and reaching Dushanbe. The details of the distance and travel time are mentioned in the following table.

Table 3.1: Distance and Travel Time between Pakistan and Tajikistan

Cities	Distance (km)	Approx. Traveling Time
Torkham → Kabul	~ 231 km	~ 4 hr. 37 min
Kabul → Pul-e-Khumri	~ 231 km	~ 5 hr. 49 min
Pul-e-Khumri → Sher Khan Bandar	~ 167 km	~ 3 hr. 09 min
Sher Khan Bandar →Dushanbe	~ 181 km	~ 3 hr. 45 min
Torkham → Dushanbe	~ 768 km	~ 15 hr. 13 min

Source: Google Map

The Figure 3.1 Shows the Pakistan–Afghanistan-Tajikistan trade route. As shown in the map, one of the most direct routes begins from Peshawar in Pakistan, proceeding through the Torkham Border into Afghanistan. From there, the route passes through Kabul and extends northwards to Sher Khan Bandar, a key border crossing point, which connects directly to Tajikistan, ultimately reaching Dushanbe.

Another route transits though Uzbekistan before entering Tajikistan, this route runs from Pul-e-Khumri in Afghanistan to the Hairatan Border with Uzbekistan. After entering Uzbekistan, the route continues towards Sariasiya and subsequently crosses into Tajikistan, again leading to Dushanbe. Both routes provide Pakistan with access to Central Asia's markets.

Figure 3.1: Map of Pakistan's Transit Trade Route to Tajikistan Via Afghanistan

Source: USAID| PREIA

3.3: Pakistan–Afghanistan-Uzbekistan Trade Route

The Pakistan–Afghanistan-Uzbekistan trade route offers a faster and more cost-effective overland link. The details of this route are provided in the following table.

Table 3.2: Distance and Travel Time Pakistan-Afghanistan-Uzbekistan

Cities	Distance (km)	Approx. Traveling Time
Torkham → Kabul	~ 231 km	~ 4 hr. 37 min
Kabul → Pul-e-Khumri	~ 231 km	~ 5 hr. 49 min
Pul-e-Khumri → Mazar-e-Sharif	~ 197 km	~ 3 hr. 15 min
Mazar-e-Sharif→ Hairatan	~ 82.6 km	~ 1 hr. 17 min
Hairatan→ Guzar	~ 230 km	~ 3 hr. 48 min
Guzar → Tashkent	~ 470 km	~ 6 hr. 52 min
Torkham → Tashkent	~ 1337 km	~ 23 hr. 14 min

Source: Google Map

The figure 3.2 Shows the Pakistan–Afghanistan-Uzbekistan transit trade route. Starting from Peshawar, the route enters Afghanistan through the Torkham border, moves northward via Kabul, continues to Pul-e-Khumri, and proceeds to Mazar-e-Sharif entering Uzbekistan at the Hairatan border, passing through Guzar, and ultimately reaching Tashkent, the Uzbek capital.

The details of this route are provided in the following figure.

Figure 3.2: Pakistan-Afghanistan-Uzbekistan Transit Trade Route

Source: USAID| PREIA

3.4: Pakistan–Afghanistan-Turkmenistan Trade Route

The Pakistan–Afghanistan-Turkmenistan trade route via Afghanistan is a strategic road route that offers shorter transit times, lower transportation costs, and greater market accessibility.

Table 3.3: Distance and Travel Time Pakistan-Afghanistan-Turkmenistan Trade Route

Pakistan (Chaman) to Turkmenistan			Pakistan (Torkham) to Turkmenistan		
Cities	**Distance (km)**	**Approx. Traveling Time**	**Cities**	**Distance (km)**	**Approx. Traveling Time**
Chaman → Spin Boldak	~ 14.9 km	~ 0 hr. 32 min	Torkham → Kabul	~ 231 km	~ 4 hr. 37 min
Spin Boldak → Kandahar	~ 103 km	~ 1 hr. 36 min	Kabul → Pul-e-Khumri	~ 231 km	~ 5 hr. 49 min
Kandahar → Herat	~ 569 km	~ 8 hr. 21 min	Pul-e-Khumri → Mazar-e-Sharif	~ 197 km	~ 3 hr. 15 min
Herat → Towrghundi	~ 115 km	~ 1 hr. 57 min	Mazar-e-Sharif→ Aqineh	~ 225 km	~ 3 hr. 19 min
Towrghundi → Ashgabat	~ 670 km	~ 7 hr. 08 min	Aqineh→ Farap	~ 360 km	~ 5 hr. 56 min
Chaman → Ashgabat	~ 1469 km	~ 19 hr. 18 min	Farap→ Mary	~ 267 km	~ 6 hr. 27 min
…	…	…	Torkham → Mary	~ 1552 km	~ 27 hr. 00 min

Source: Google Map

The figure 3.3 Shows the Pakistan–Afghanistan-Turkmenistan trade route. There are two key transit trade routes connecting Pakistan to Turkmenistan through Afghanistan, both offering strategic access to Central Asian markets.

The Chaman route begins at the Chaman border crossing in Balochistan, leading into Spin Boldak in Afghanistan. From there, it proceeds to Kandahar, before continuing west to Herat. The route then reaches the Towrghundi border crossing into Turkmenistan, providing direct access to Ashgabat, the Turkmen capital.

The Torkham Route starts at the Torkham border in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, this route heads towards Kabul, the Afghan capital, and then proceeds north to Pul-e-Khumri. From there, it continues to Mazar-e-Sharif, one of Afghanistan's major commercial centers, before crossing into Turkmenistan at Aqineh. The route then reaches to Farap, an important logistics point, and further to Mary, a significant city in Turkmenistan. The details of these routes are provided in the following figure.

Figure 3.3: Map of Pakistan-Afghanistan-Turkmenistan Trade Route

Source: USAID| PREIA

3.5: Pakistan–Afghanistan- -Tajikistan-Kyrgyzstan Trade Route

The trade route from Pakistan to Kyrgyzstan passes through Afghanistan and then into Tajikistan before reaching Kyrgyzstan. The specific details of distance, travel time, and connectivity for this route are provided in the following table.

Table 3.4: Distance and Travel Time between Pakistan-Afghanistan-Tajikistan- Kyrgyzstan

Cities	Distance (km)	Approx. Traveling Time	Cities	Distance (km)	Approx. Traveling Time
Torkham → Kabul	~ 231 km	~ 04 hr. 37 min	Torkham → Kabul	~ 231 km	~ 4 hr. 37 min
Kabul → Pul-e-Khumri	~ 231 km	~ 05 hr. 49 min	Kabul → Pul-e-Khumri	~ 231 km	~ 5 hr. 49 min
Pul-e-Khumri → Sher Khan Bandar	~ 167 km	~ 03 hr. 09 min	Pul-e-Khumri → Mazar-e-Sharif	~ 197 km	~ 3 hr. 15 min
Sher Khan Bandar →Dushanbe	~ 181 km	~ 03 hr. 45 min	Mazar-e-Sharif→ Aqineh	~ 225 km	~ 3 hr. 19 min
Torkham → Dushanbe	~ 768 km	~ 15 hr. 13 min	Aqineh→ Farap	~ 360 km	~ 5 hr. 56 min
Dushanbe → Batken	~ 423 km	~ 07 hr. 08 min	Farap→ Mary	~ 267 km	~ 6 hr. 27 min
Batken → Jalal-Abad	~ 372 km	~ 08 hr. 32 min	Torkham → Mary	~ 1552 km	~ 27 hr. 00 min
Jalal-Abad → Bishkek	~ 627 km	~ 11 hr. 50 min	Farap→ Mary	~ 267 km	~ 6 hr. 27 min
Torkham → Bishkek	~ 2190 km	~ 42 hr. 00 min	Torkham → Mary	~ 1552 km	~ 27 hr. 00 min

Source: Google Map

The figure 3.4 illustrates the transit trade corridor linking Pakistan to Kyrgyzstan through Afghanistan and Tajikistan, the route passes through Kabul, the Afghan capital, before heading north to Pul-e-Khumri. From there, it continues to Sher Khan Bandar, an important border crossing into Tajikistan.

Once in Tajikistan, the corridor moves toward Dushanbe, the capital, which serves as a major regional trade hub. From Dushanbe, the route heads north into Kyrgyzstan via Batken and Jalal-Abad, finally reaching Bishkek, the Kyrgyz capital.

Figure 3.4: Map of Pakistan-Afghanistan-Tajikistan- Kyrgyzstan Trade Route

Source: USAID| PREIA

3.6: Pakistan–Afghanistan-Tajikistan-Kazakhstan Trade Route

The Pakistan–Afghanistan-Tajikistan-Kazakhstan trade route allows Pakistan to access Kazakhstan's markets directly by passing through Afghanistan and then connecting via different Central Asian countries, such as Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, or Tajikistan, depending on the chosen route. The details of distance, travel time, and connectivity for this route are provided in the following table.

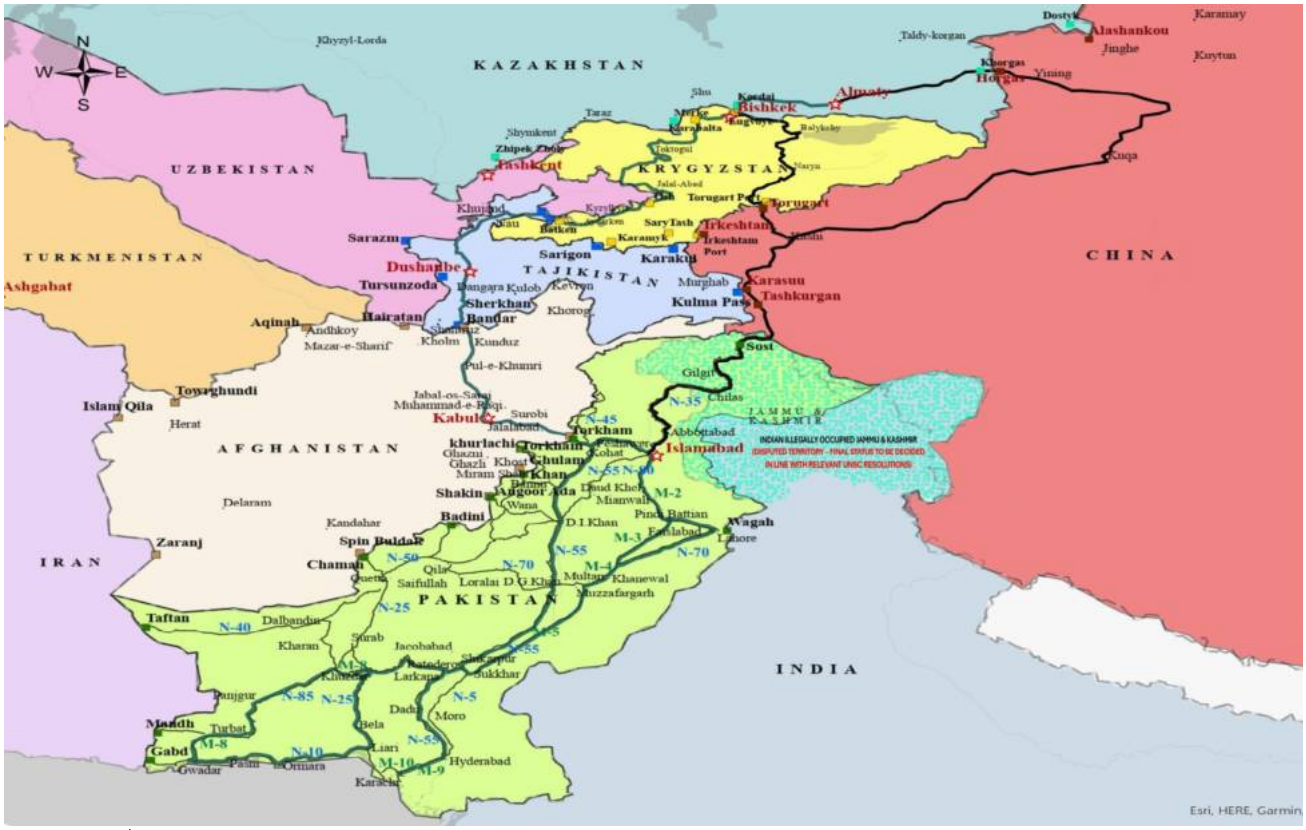
Table 3.5: Distance and Travel Time between Pakistan and Kazakhstan

Cities	Distance (km)	Approx. Traveling Time
Torkham → Kabul	~ 231 km	~ 04 hr. 37 min
Kabul → Pul-e-Khumri	~ 231 km	~ 05 hr. 49 min
Pul-e-Khumri → Sher Khan Bandar	~ 167 km	~ 03 hr. 09 min
Sher Khan Bandar → Dushanbe	~ 181 km	~ 03 hr. 45 min
Torkham → Dushanbe	~ 768 km	~ 15 hr. 13 min
Dushanbe → Batken	~ 423 km	~ 07 hr. 08 min
Batken → Jalal-Abad	~ 372 km	~ 08 hr. 32 min
Jalal-Abad → Bishkek	~ 627 km	~ 11 hr. 50 min
Bishkek → Almaty	~ 237 km	~ 04 hr. 12 min
Torkham → Almaty	~ 2445 km	~ 46 hr. 00 min

Source: Google Map

The Pakistan–Afghanistan-Tajikistan-Kazakhstan trade route allows Pakistan to access Kazakhstan's markets directly by passing through Afghanistan and then connecting via different Central Asian countries, such as Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, or Tajikistan, depending on the chosen route. The details of distance, travel time, and connectivity for this route are provided in the following table.

Figure 3.5: Map of Pakistan Transit Trade Route - Pakistan–Afghanistan-Tajikistan-Kazakhstan



Source: USAID| PREIA

3.7: Trade Route Through China

The Pakistan–Central Asia Transit Trade Route via China provides a strategically important overland connection linking Pakistan with the landlocked countries of Central Asia. This route serves as a viable and secure alternative to the traditional transit route through Afghanistan, offering greater reliability and continuity for trade flows. By passing through China, this corridor enables direct access to key Central Asian countries, including Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan.

Table 3.6: Distance and Travel Time between Pakistan and Central Asia Via China

Route 1 to Central Asia Via China			Route 2 to Central Asia Via China		
Pakistan → China → Kyrgyzstan → Kazakhstan			Pakistan → China → Tajikistan		
Cities	**Distance (km)**	**Approx. Traveling Time**	**Cities**	**Distance (km)**	**Approx. Traveling Time**
Peshawar → Islamabad (Pakistan)	~ 185 km	~ 02 hr. 45 min	Peshawar → Islamabad (Pakistan)	~ 185 km	~ 02 hr. 45 min
Islamabad → Abbottabad	~ 103 km	~ 02 hr. 03 min	Islamabad → Abbottabad	~ 103 km	~ 02 hr. 03 min
Abbottabad → Chilas	~ 258 km	~ 08 hr. 06 min	Abbottabad → Chilas	~ 258 km	~ 08 hr. 06 min
Chilas → Gilgit	~ 134 km	~ 03 hr. 01 min	Chilas → Gilgit	~ 134 km	~ 03 hr. 01 min
Gilgit → Sost	~ 180 km	~ 03 hr. 44 min	Gilgit → Sost	~ 180 km	~ 03 hr. 44 min
Peshawar → Sost	~ 744 km	~ 15 hr. 44 min	Peshawar → Sost	~ 744 km	~ 15 hr. 44 min
Batken → Jalal-Abad	~ 372 km	~ 08 hr. 32 min	Torkham → Mary	~ 1552 km	~ 27 hr. 00 min
Sost → Tashkurgan (China)	~ 208 km	~ 02 hr. 27 min	Sost → Tashkurgan (China)	~ 208 km	~ 02 hr. 27 min
Tashkurgan → Karasu	~ 62 km	~ 00 hr. 44 min	Tashkurgan → Karasu	~ 62 km	~ 00 hr. 44 min
Karasu → Kashi	~ 230 km	~ 04 hr. 09 min	Karasu → Kulma Pass	~ 15 km	~ 00 hr. 10 min
Kashi → Torugart	~ 166 km	~ 02 hr. 13 min	Peshawar → Kulma Pass	~ 1022 km	~ 12 hr. 17 min
Peshawar → Torugart	~ 1402 km	~ 17 hr. 09 min	Kulma Pass → Murghab (Tajikistan)	~ 90 km	~ 03 hr. 26 min
Torugart → Naryn (Kyrgyzstan)	~ 181 km	~ 02 hr. 49 min	Murghab → Khorog	~ 310 km	~ 06 hr. 24 min
Naryn → Balykchy	~ 179 km	~ 02 hr. 31 min	Khorog → Kevron	~ 230 km	~ 06 hr. 03 min
Balykchy → Bishkek	~ 185 km	~ 02 hr. 53 min	Kevron → Dushanbe	~ 364 km	~ 05 hr. 56 min
Peshawar → Bishkek	~ 1904 km	~ 24 hr. 15 min	Peshawar → Murghab	~ 1186 km	~ 17 hr. 47 min
Bishkek → Kordai (Kazakhstan)	~ 24.9 km	~ 01 hr. 14 min			
Kordai → Almaty	~ 211 km	~ 03 hr. 06 min			
Peshawar → Almaty	~ 2106 km	~ 26 hr. 47 min			

Source: Google Map, OpenStreetMap

Figure 3.6 illustrates the Pakistan–Central Asia transit trade routes via China.

Route 1 connects Pakistan to Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan via Sost, Tashkurgan, Kashi Torugart Pass, Naryn, Bishkek, and Almaty. This route provides access to Kazakhstan's well-developed infrastructure.

Route 2 links Pakistan to Tajikistan through Kulma Pass, Murghab, Khorog, and Kevron. The details of these transit trade routes to Central Asia through China are shown in the following Map.

Figure 3.6: Pakistan's Trade Route to Central Asia Via China

Source: USAID| PREIA

Chapter 4

Pakistan's Trade Corridors to Russia & Europe via Central Asia

Pakistan's Trade Corridors to Russia & Europe via Central Asia

4.1: Pakistan's Regional Transit Connectivity Framework

Pakistan's strategic location—linking South Asia, Central Asia, the Middle East, and Europe—positions it as a pivotal gateway for regional trade and transit. The country's emerging network of overland and maritime corridors can play a central role in enhancing trade connectivity with Russia, Turkey, and Europe. Overland routes through Afghanistan, Iran, and the Central Asian Republics provide direct access to Eurasian markets, while maritime corridors via the Arabian Sea link Pakistani ports to major destinations across the Red Sea, Mediterranean, the Indian Ocean, Africa, the North Sea, and Baltic Sea regions. This chapter presents a detailed analysis of both the road and sea-based transit trade routes linking Pakistan to Russia and Europe, highlighting their economic potential, geographical linkages, and strategic importance for sustainable regional trade integration.

4.2 Pakistan–Afghanistan-Central Asia -Russia Transit Trade Routes

The Pakistan–Russia Trade Route via Afghanistan and Central Asia serves as a strategic overland corridor linking Pakistan with key Central Asian republics and onward to Russia. By offering a shorter, cost-effective alternative to long maritime routes, this corridor supports regional economic coordination and strengthens Pakistan's role as a bridge between South Asia, Central Asia, and Europe.

To reach Russia Via Afghanistan and Central Asia, Pakistan has four trade route options passing through various countries, each offering unique logistics and strategic advantages. The details of these routes are presented in the following tables and figure.

4.2.1 The Pakistan-Afghanistan-Tajikistan-Krygystan-Kazakhastan-Russia Trade Route

The table 4.1 highlights two major trade routes connecting Pakistan with Russia through multiple border crossings. The journey begins at Torkham, the main crossing between Pakistan and Afghanistan, and then proceeds through Sher Khan Bandar, linking Afghanistan with Tajikistan. From Tajikistan, the route continues toward Batken, the crossing point into Kyrgyzstan, before reaching Kazakhstan through Bishkek and Almaty. At this stage, the corridor divides into two directions: one leading to Russia via the Veseloyarsk border post, and the other extending through Kazakhstan's northern region to the Troitsk border point in Russia. These crossings illustrate the strategic connectivity offered by Pakistan's overland routes, linking Pakistan with Central Asia and providing alternative gateways into Russia. The details of the route from Pakistan to Russia are shown in the following table.

Table 4.1: Distance and Travel Time between Pakistan and Russia

Cities	Distance (km)	Approx. Traveling Time
Islamabad → Peshawar (Pakistan)	~ 188 km	~ 2 hr. 25 min
Peshawar → Torkham	~ 54 km	~ 1 hr. 28 min
Torkham → Kabul (Afghanistan)	~ 231 km	~ 4 hr. 37 min
Kabul → Pul-e-Khumri	~ 231 km	~ 5 hr. 49 min
Pul-e-Khumri → SherKhan Bandar	~ 167 km	~ 3 hr. 09 min
SherKhan Bandar→Dushanbe	~ 181 km	~ 3 hr. 45 min
Torkham → Dushanbe (Tajikistan)	~ 768 km	~ 15 hr. 13 min
Dushanbe → Batken	~ 423 km	~ 07 hr. 08 min
Batken → Jalal-Abad	~ 372 km	~ 08 hr. 32 min
Jalal-Abad → Bishkek	~ 627 km	~ 11 hr. 50 min
Torkham → Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan)	~ 2135 km	~ 40 hr. 00 min
First Transit Trade Route Runs from Almaty (Kazakhstan) to Veseloyarsk (Russia)		
Bishkek → Almaty (Kazakhstan)	~ 237 km	~ 04 hr. 12 min
Almaty → TaldyKorgan	~ 263 km	~ 03 hr. 29 min
Taldy Korgan → Aktogay	~ 421 km	~ 08 hr. 04 min
Aktogay → Semey	~ 988 km	~ 13 hr. 11 min
Semey → Veseloyarsk	~ 126 km	~ 02 hr. 00 min
Torkham → Almaty	~ 2445 km	~ 46 hr. 00 min
Torkham → Veseloyarsk (Russia)	~ 3687 km	~ 64 hr. 00 min
Second Transit Trade Route Extends from Almaty (Kazakhstan) to Troitsk (Russia)		
Bishkek → Almaty (Kazakhstan)	~ 237 km	~ 04 hr. 12 min
Almaty → Mointy	~ 723 km	~ 08 hr. 49 min
Mointy → Karaganday	~ 349 km	~ 05 hr. 14 min
Karaganday → Nur-Sultan	~ 237 km	~ 03 hr. 11 min
Nur-Sultan → Kostanay	~ 697 km	~ 08 hr. 44 min
Kostanay → Troitsk	~ 184 km	~ 02 hr. 41 min
Torkham → Troitsk (Russia)	~ 4510 km	~ 67 hr. 00 min

Source: Google Map

4.2.2 Pakistan-Afghanistan-Uzbekistan-Kazakhstan-Russia Trade Route

Pakistan's trade route to Russia via Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan starts from Islamabad through Torkham into Afghanistan, the route proceeds to Hairatan, the main border crossing into Uzbekistan. From there, it connects through major Uzbek cities such as Termez and Tashkent before entering Kazakhstan. The corridor then divides into two directions: one leading through Zhipec Zoly, Shalkar, and Aktobe to reach Russia at Akkulakskiy, and the other extending from Termez through Qarshi, Bukhara, and Beyneu to enter Russia at Astrakhan. These dual pathways not only enhance trade flexibility but also provide Pakistan with alternate access points to different regions of Russia. The details of the route are provided in the following table.

Table 4.2: Distance and Travel Time between Pakistan and Russia

Cities	Distance (km)	Approx. Traveling Time
Islamabad → Peshawar (Pakistan)	~ 188 km	~ 02 hr. 25 min
Peshawar → Torkham	~ 54 km	~ 01 hr. 28 min
Torkham → Kabul (Afghanistan)	~ 231 km	~ 04 hr. 37 min
Kabul → Pul-e-Khumri	~ 231 km	~ 05 hr. 49 min
Pul-e-Khumri → Hairatan	~ 223 km	~ 03 hr. 27 min
Hairatan → Termiz	~ 16.2 km	~ 00 hr. 28 min
Torkham → Termiz (Uzbekistan)	~ 659 km	~ 12 hr. 48 min
Termiz → Sariasiya	~ 155 km	~ 02 hr. 47 min
Sariasiya → Jartepa	~ 441 km	~ 08 hr. 16 min
Jartepa → Tashkent	~ 308 km	~ 05 hr. 02 min
Tashkent → Zhipek Zoly	~ 38.8 km	~ 01 hr. 08 min
Torkham → Zhipec Zoly (Kazakhstan)	~ 1414 km	~ 26 hr. 00 min
First Transit Trade Route Runs from Tashkent (Uzbekistan) to Akbulaksky (Russia)		
Tashkent → Zhipec Zoly (Kazkhstan)	~ 38.8 km	~ 01 hr. 08 min
Zhipec Zoly → Shalkar	~ 1362 km	~ 17 hr. 24 min
Shalkar → Aktobe	~ 367 km	~ 06 hr. 39 min
Aktobe → Akbulaksky	~ 136 km	~ 01 hr. 58 min
Torkham → Akbulaksky (Russia)	~ 3277 km	~ 51 hr. 00 min
Second Transit Trade Route Extends from Termiz (Uzbekistan) to Astrakhan (Russia)		
Termiz → Qarshi (Uzbekistan)	~ 273 km	~ 04 hr. 33 min
Qarshi → Bukhara	~ 244 km	~ 04 hr. 13 min
Bukhara → Beyneu (Kazkhstan)	~ 1140 km	~ 16 hr. 04 min
Beyneu → Makat	~ 366 km	~ 04 hr. 32 min
Makat → kurmungazy	~ 801 km	~ 09 hr. 25 min
kurmungazy → Astrakhan (Russia)	~ 556 km	~ 08 hr. 13 min
Torkham → Astrakhan (Russia)	~ 4056 km	~ 58 hr. 00 min

Source: Google Map

The figure 4-1 shows the trade transit routes starting from the Torkham border in Pakistan, which is a key entry point into Afghanistan. From there, the main route divides into four different roads (represented by red lines on the map). These roads enter Afghanistan and then split into various directions to connect with different Central Asian countries. Ultimately, these diverse routes facilitate trade and transport, providing a vital overland corridor from Pakistan to Russia.

Figure 4.1: Map of Pakistan's Transit Trade Route to Russia Via Afghanistan and Central Asia

Source: USAID| PREIA

4.3 Pakistan–Russia Maritime Corridor: Route and Connectivity

Pakistan's sea trade route to Russia serves as an important maritime corridor connecting South Asia with Central Asia, Russia, and eventually Europe. This route originates from Pakistan's major seaports—Karachi and Gwadar—which act as key gateways for international trade. From these ports, the route extends into the Arabian Sea and continues through a series of major maritime passages linking Pakistan to global markets. Although this route is relatively extensive, it provides Pakistan with a viable and strategic option to access Russia and other European countries by sea.

The detailed structure of this sea trade route, including the main sea points, connecting channels, and intermediate maritime zones, is presented in the following table and map.

Table 4.3: Sea Route Distance and Travel Time between Pakistan and Russia

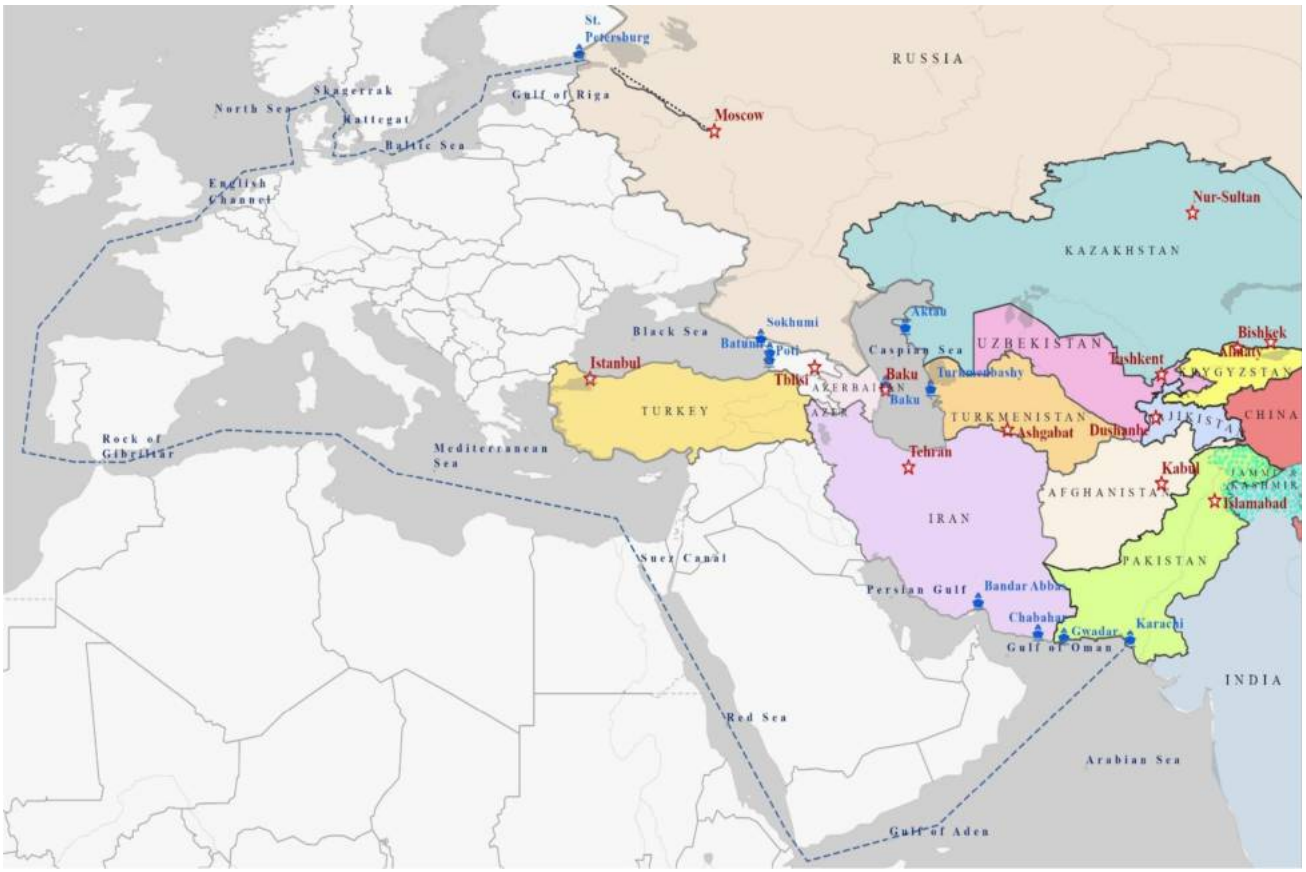
Cities	Distance (km)	Approx. Ship Traveling Time	Approx. Ship Traveling Days
Karachi Sea Port → Arabian Sea	~ 1412 km	~ 56 hr. 09 min	~ 2 days 08 hr.
Arabian Sea → Gulf of Aden	~ 3083 km	~ 121 hr. 19 min	~ 5 days 01 hr.
Gulf of Aden → Red Sea	~ 1586 km	~ 62 hr. 51 min	~ 2 days 14 hr.
Red Sea → Suez Canal	~ 1080 km	~ 42 hr. 11 min	~ 1 day 18 hr.
Suez Canal → Mediterranean Sea	~ 1806 km	~ 71 hr. 50 min	~ 3 days 00 hr.
Mediterranean Sea → Rock of Gibriltar	~ 2251 km	~ 89 hr. 50 min	~ 3 days 17 hr.
Rock of Gibriltar → English Channel	~ 2355 km	~ 92 hr. 38 min	~ 3 days 20 hr.
English Channel → North Sea	~ 934 km	~ 37 hr. 14 min	~ 1 day 13 hr.
North Sea → Baltic Sea	~ 1690 km	~ 66 hr. 40 min	~ 2 days 18 hr.
Baltic Sea → Gulf of Riga	~ 223 km	~ 08 hr. 45 min	~ 08 hr. 45 min
Gulf of Riga → St. Petersburg	~ 605 km	~ 23 hr. 21 min	~ 23 hr. 21 min
St. Petersburg → Moscow	~ 647 km	~ 25 hr. 29 min	~ 25 hr. 29 min
Karachi Sea Port → Moscow	~ 13,658 km	~ 540 hr. 06 min	~ 22 days 12 hr.

Source: Google Map

Figure 4.2 illustrates the sea route between Pakistan and Russia. This Sea Trade Route serves as a vital maritime corridor linking Pakistan Russia through a series of interconnected international waterways.

This route starts from Pakistan's principal seaports—Karachi and Gwadar—the route extends across the Arabian Sea, continues through the Gulf of Aden, and enters the Red Sea, providing access to the Suez Canal and onward to the Mediterranean Sea. From there, it passes through the Rock of Gibraltar, traverses the Atlantic Ocean, the English Channel, and the North Sea, eventually connecting through the Skagerrak, Kattegat, and Baltic Sea to the Gulf of Riga, and finally reaching St. Petersburg and Moscow in Russia.

Figure 4.2: Map of Pakistan's Sea Trade Route to Russia



Source: USAID| PREIA

4.4 Pakistan–Iran-Turkey Trade Route

The Pakistan–Iran-Turkey Trade Route serves as a vital overland corridor connecting South Asia with Europe through the Middle East. This route facilitates the movement of goods from Pakistan to Turkey by traversing Iran's extensive transport network, providing a reliable alternative to lengthy maritime routes. The corridor also complements the Islamabad–Tehran–Istanbul (ITI) railway project, reinforcing economic integration under the framework of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO). The detailed structure of this transit trade route, is presented in the following table and map.

Table 4.4: Distance and Travel Time between Pakistan and Turkey

Cities	Distance (km)	Approx. Ship Traveling Time
Islamabad → D.I. Khan (Pakistan)	~ 353 km	~ 04 hr. 04 min
D.I. Khan → Zhob	~ 219 km	~ 03 hr. 50 min
Zhob → Qila Saifullah	~ 147 km	~ 01 hr. 54 min
Qila Saifullah → Quetta	~ 191 km	~ 03 hr. 02 min
Quetta → Dalbandin	~ 348 km	~ 05 hr. 27 min
Dalbandin → Taftan	~ 289 km	~ 03 hr. 13 min
Taftan → Zahedan (Iran)	~ 96 km	~ 01 hr. 28 min
Zahedan → Kerman	~ 514 km	~ 06 hr. 02 min
Kerman → Yazd	~ 368 km	~ 04 hr. 04 min
Yazd → Tehran	~ 618 km	~ 06 hr. 49 min
Tehran → Tabriz	~ 650 km	~ 08 hr. 50 min
Tabriz → Bazargan	~ 273 km	~ 03 hr. 42 min
Bazargan → Gürbulak (Turkey)	~ 05 km	~ 00 hr. 17 min
Gürbulak → Erzurum	~ 310 km	~ 03 hr. 56 min
Erzurum → Tosya	~ 744 km	~ 08 hr. 40 min
Tosya → Duzee	~ 284 km	~ 03 hr. 04 min
Duzee → Istanbul	~ 213 km	~ 02 hr. 48 min
Istanbul → Kapıkule	~ 257 km	~ 03 hr. 04 min
Islamabad → Kapikule	~ 5766 km	~ 67 hr. 00 min

Source: Google Map

The Figure 4.3 illustrates the map of the Pakistan–Iran-Turkey Trade Route. This route serves as an important overland corridor linking South Asia with the Middle East and Europe. Covering an overall distance of approximately 5,879 kilometers, this route connects major economic centers across the three countries and provides a vital link that promotes regional connectivity and facilitates the movement of goods between Asia and Europe.

Figure 4.3: Map of Pakistan Transit Trade Route to Turkey Via Iran

Source: USAID| PREIA

4.5 Turkey–Central Asian Republics Connectivity through the Caspian Sea Route

The Caspian Sea Route, also referred to as the Trans-Caspian / Middle Corridor, represents a strategically significant multimodal transport corridor linking Turkey with the Central Asian Republics through the South Caucasus and the Caspian Sea. This route enhances east–west connectivity by integrating road, rail, and maritime (ferry) transport, thereby providing an efficient alternative to traditional northern and southern corridors.

The table below shows the approximate distance and Travel Time between Turkey and the Central Asian Republics. The overland segment from Kars (Turkey) to Tbilisi (Georgia) and Baku (Azerbaijan) covers approximately 956 km, forming the primary land bridge between Turkey and the Caspian Sea. Maritime crossings across the Caspian Sea are conducted via Baku–Turkmenbashi (Azerbaijan–Turkmenistan) and Baku–Kuryk (Azerbaijan–Kazakhstan), covering distances of approximately 364 km and 455 km, respectively. Further, details of Trade route are given in the following table.

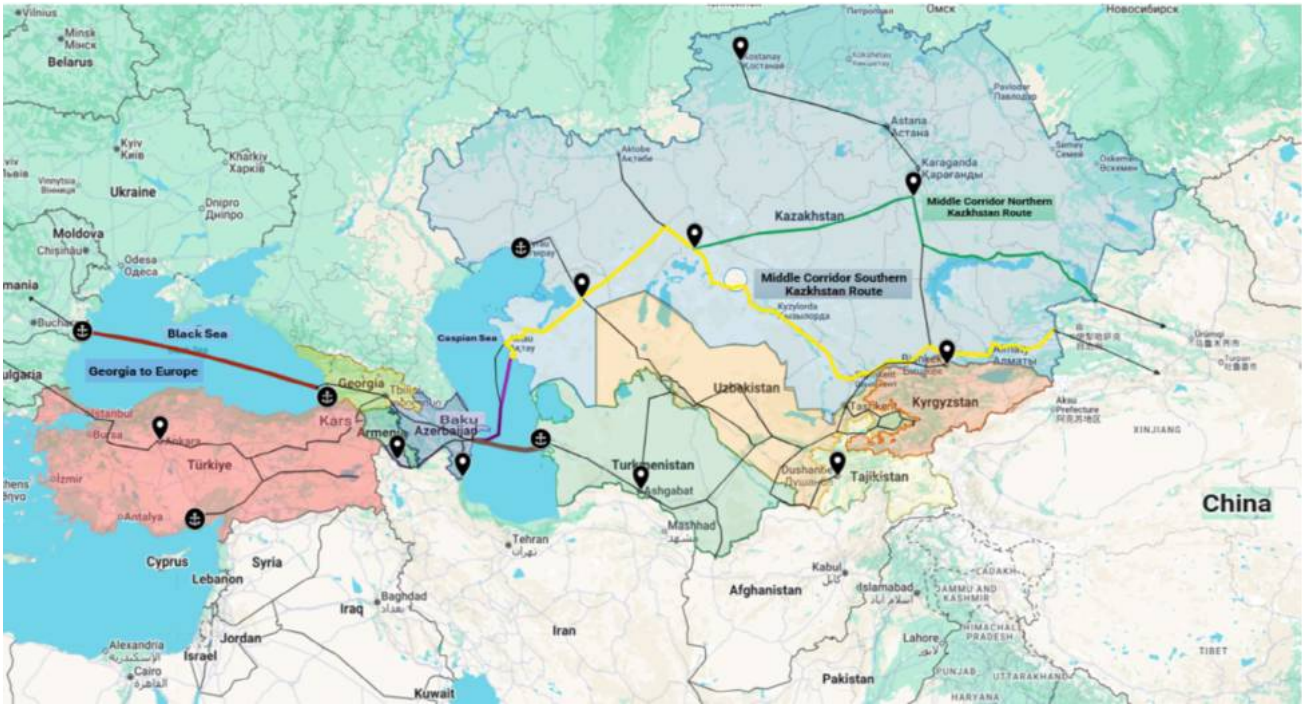
Table 4.5: Distance and Travel Time between Turkey and Central Asian Republics

Cities	Distance (km)	Approx. Traveling Time
Kars (Turkey) →Tbilisi (Georgia) → Baku (Azarbaijan)	~ 956 km	~ 13 hr. 46 min
Caspian Sea Crossing Point Azarbaijan to Turkmenistan (Baku Ferry → Turkmenbashi)	~ 364 km	~ 15 hr. 00 min
Caspian Sea Crossing Point Azarbaijan to Kazkhstan (Baku Ferry → Kuryk)	~ 455 km	~ 18 hr. 40 min
Caspian Sea (Port Aktau) → Middle Corridor Northern Kazakhstan Route → China	~ 4465 km	~ 63 hr. 00 min
Caspian Sea (Port Aktau) → Middle Corridor Southern Kazakhstan Route → China	~ 3751 km	~ 49 hr. 50 min
Black Sea Crossing Point (Georgia → Europe)	~ 1043 km	~ 41 hr. 32 min

Source: Google Map

The route-wise spatial alignment and geographic continuity of the corridor is presented in the following figure. The route originates in eastern Turkey, passing through Georgia and Azerbaijan, before crossing the Caspian Sea to reach Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan, and subsequently extending towards China via northern and southern alignments.

Figure 4.4: Map of Turkey's Trade Route to Central Asian Republics Via the Caspian Sea



Source: Google Map

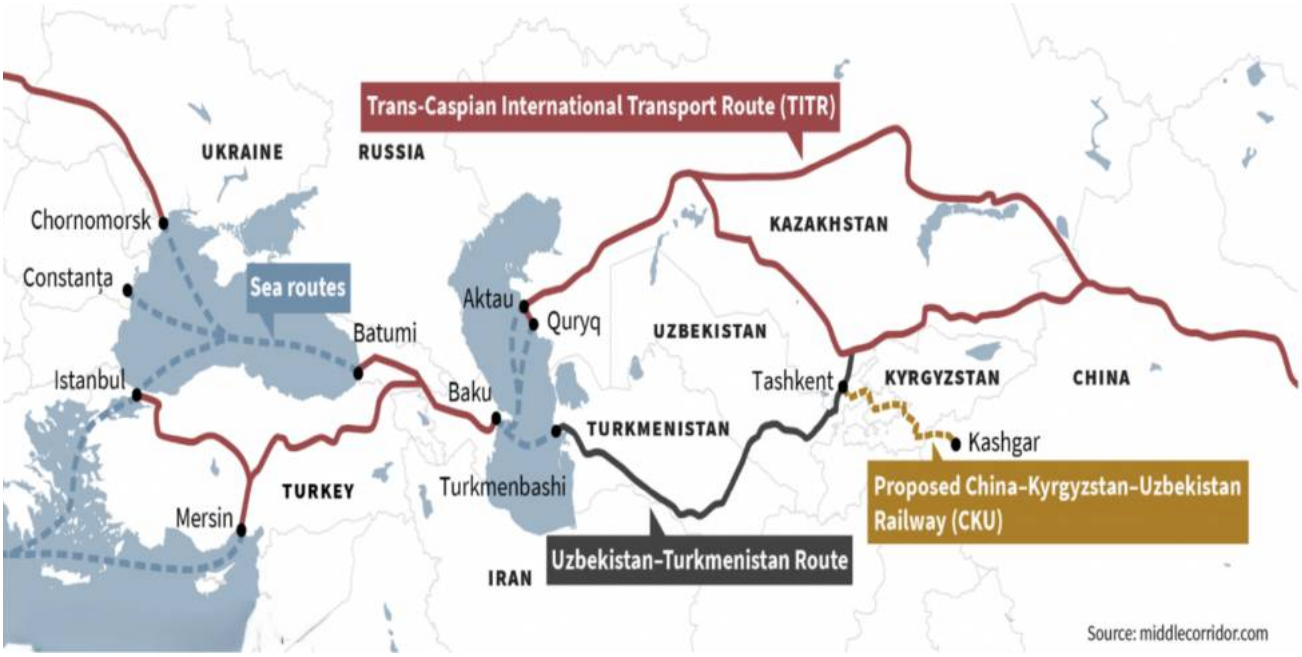
4.6: Middle Corridor Between China and the European Union

The Middle Corridor is a Western-backed investment initiative aimed at enhancing natural resource extraction and large-scale infrastructure development. It comprises an integrated network of ports, railways, and roadways designed to bypass Russia as a transit route for oil, natural gas, uranium, and other strategic raw materials. In parallel, the corridor facilitates expanded trade flows between China and the European Union, reducing logistical and political constraints associated with traditional transit routes.

The corridor links Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan across the Caspian Sea, with potential participation from other Central Asian countries, including Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. Investments in Kazakhstan connect the route eastward to China, while infrastructure development in Azerbaijan extends westward through Georgia and Turkey, providing access to European markets via the Black Sea and the Mediterranean Sea[10].

10. The Middle Corridor investment project: https://crudeaccountability.org/the-middle-corridor-repeating-colonial-practices-of-prioritizing-profit-over-people-in-central-asia/

Figure 4.5: The Middle Corridor Linking China with Europe



Source: middlecorridor.com

Chapter 5

Regional Railway Connectivity and Proposed Freight Development Projects

Regional Railway Connectivity and Proposed Freight Development Projects

5.1: Strategic Importance of Regional Rail Integration

Efficient railway connectivity plays a pivotal role in enhancing regional trade, economic integration, and sustainable transport logistics. This chapter outlines key railway projects that form the backbone of Pakistan's regional connectivity framework, including the Pakistan–Iran–Turkey railway corridor, Pakistan–Russia freight linkage, and proposed extensions toward Afghanistan and Uzbekistan. These initiatives are designed to reduce transit time, lower trade costs, and promote regional cooperation through improved infrastructure and logistics efficiency.

5.2: Pakistan–Iran–Turkey Railway Connectivity

The Islamabad–Tehran–Istanbul (ITI) Freight Train, was resumed in 2021 to enhance trade and regional connectivity between Pakistan, Iran, and Turkey. The project, launched under the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) framework and recognized by the United Nations as an international transport corridor, aims to significantly reduce freight time and costs.

The total rail route spans 6,500 km, covering approximately 1,990 km in Pakistan, 2,600 km in Iran, and 1,950 km in Turkey. The journey from Islamabad to Istanbul currently takes around 11.5 days, offering a faster and more cost-effective trade route.

This rail corridor is expected to strengthen economic cooperation among ECO member states, including Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, and has the potential to extend further into Europe through Istanbul's Marmaray Tunnel, providing a strategic link between Asia and Europe.

Figure 5.1: Map of the Pakistan-Iran-Turkey Railway Route

Source: ICIT

5.3: Pakistan-Russia Connectivity for Freight Movement

The commencement of freight rail transportation between Russia and Pakistan had been scheduled for March 2025. The decision followed the outcomes of the Third Caspian Economic Forum held in Tehran, where Russia and Iran signed a Practical Action Plan for Transport Cooperation 2025. This plan outlines the framework for enhancing regional logistics under the International North–South Transport Corridor (INSTC) and includes the extension of rail connectivity to Pakistan through Iran.

The initial shipments along this corridor will primarily consist of agricultural commodities, followed by expanded freight categories including grain and industrial products such as polypropylene and polyethylene. Simultaneously, return shipments from Pakistan to Russia are also being planned, the initiative is set to commence with the shipment of ten containers, expected to carry agro-based export products from Pakistan. The details of Rail route from Russia to Pakistan are shown in the following table and Map.

Table 5.1: Railway Route Distance and Travel Time between Pakistan and Russia

Cities	Distance (km)	Approx. Trans Traveling Time
Taftan → Ak- Yayla	~ 2,250 km	~ 45 hr. 30 min
Ak- Yayla → Bolashak	~ 2,636 km	~ 53 hr. 15 min
Bolashak → Aktobe	~ 603 km	~ 12 hr. 36 min
Aktobe → Samara	~ 676 km	~ 14 hr. 40 min
Samara → Moscow	~ 1,031 km	~ 21 hr. 26 min
Taftan → Moscow	~ 7,196 km	~ 144 hr. 55 min

Source: OpenRailwayMap, GPSvisualizer, and OpenStreetMap

The illustrated route in figure 5-2 establishes a strategic freight corridor linking Moscow (Russia) to Taftan (Pakistan) through Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Iran. This railway line forms part of the broader North–South International Transport Corridor (INSTC), designed to facilitate seamless cargo movement between Russia, Central Asia, the Middle East, and South Asia. The route begins in Moscow, passing through Aktobe and Bolashak in Kazakhstan, entering Turkmenistan and continuing to Ak-Yayla in northern Iran. From there, it traverses Iran's internal railway network via Tehran, reaching the Taftan border crossing into Pakistan, where it connects to the national rail system leading to Quetta, Karachi, and Gwadar ports.

Figure 5.2 Map of Pakistan-Russia Railway Connectivity

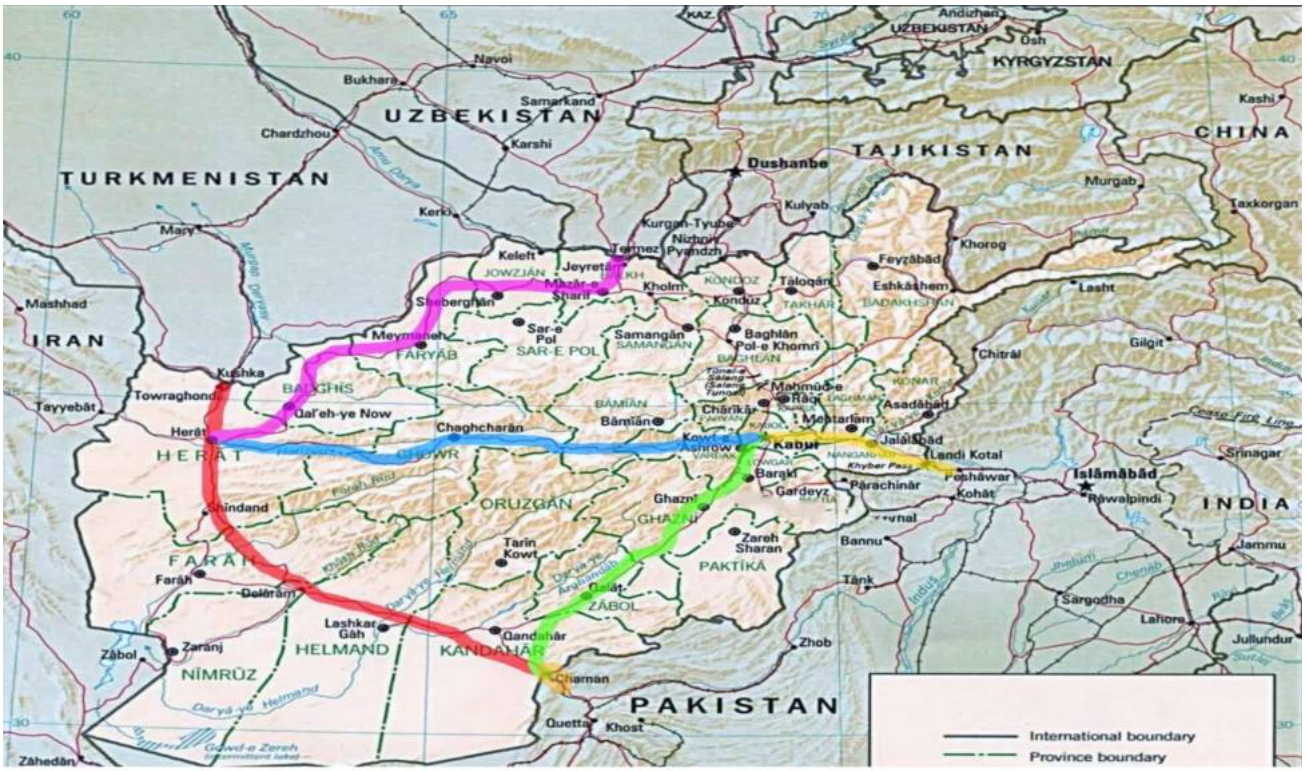
Source: Russia's Pivot to Asia

5.4 Pakistan–Afghanistan Proposed Railway Connectivity

The proposed Pakistan-Afghanistan railway route offers a more efficient and strategically significant pathway for enhancing regional connectivity between Pakistan, Afghanistan, Central Asia, and Russia. By establishing a continuous rail link across these regions, the corridor will provide Pakistan with direct access to Central Asian markets and onward to Russia, facilitating the movement of goods and reducing transportation time and costs. This railway network will connect the two countries through two major border corridors—Peshawar–Kabul, and Chaman–Kandahar—each serving as a vital gateway for trade and economic integration. The route is expected to strengthen regional supply chains, expand export opportunities, and promote greater economic cooperation across South and Central Asia.

So far, only one operational railway route has been established , connecting Iran's Khaf district to Herat in Afghanistan. This line serves as a critical foundation for Afghanistan's railway network and is planned to be extended further to major Afghan cities, including Kabul and Kandahar, to enhance domestic connectivity and regional trade integration. The details of this railway route are illustrated in the following map.

Figure 5.3: Map of Pakistan-Afghanistan Proposed Railway Connectivity



Source: Streamline Supply Chain

5.5 Pakistan–Afghanistan-Uzbekistan Proposed Railway Connectivity

The proposed Uzbekistan–Afghanistan–Pakistan (UAP) Railway Corridor, also known as the Trans-Afghan Railway Project, is gaining strategic importance amid shifting global trade dynamics following the Russia–Ukraine conflict. The project aims to establish a direct railway link connecting Termez (Uzbekistan) with Peshawar (Pakistan) through Afghanistan, providing Central Asia with access to Pakistan's seaports of Karachi & Gwadar.

The three countries signed a US$ 4.8 billion agreement to construct a 573 km rail line, which will support both freight and passenger services. The corridor is expected to enhance regional trade, and reduce transportation costs.

The Uzbekistan–Afghanistan–Pakistan (UAP) Railway will connect Central Asia and South Asia through the shortest and most cost-effective route, cutting delivery time and logistics expenses by up to 35%. This vital project will enable annual cargo movement of around 20 million tons, significantly improve connectivity and boost trade flows across the broader Eurasian region. The details of this transnational route are illustrated in the following map.

Figure 5.4: Pakistan–Afghanistan-Uzbekistan Proposed Railway Project

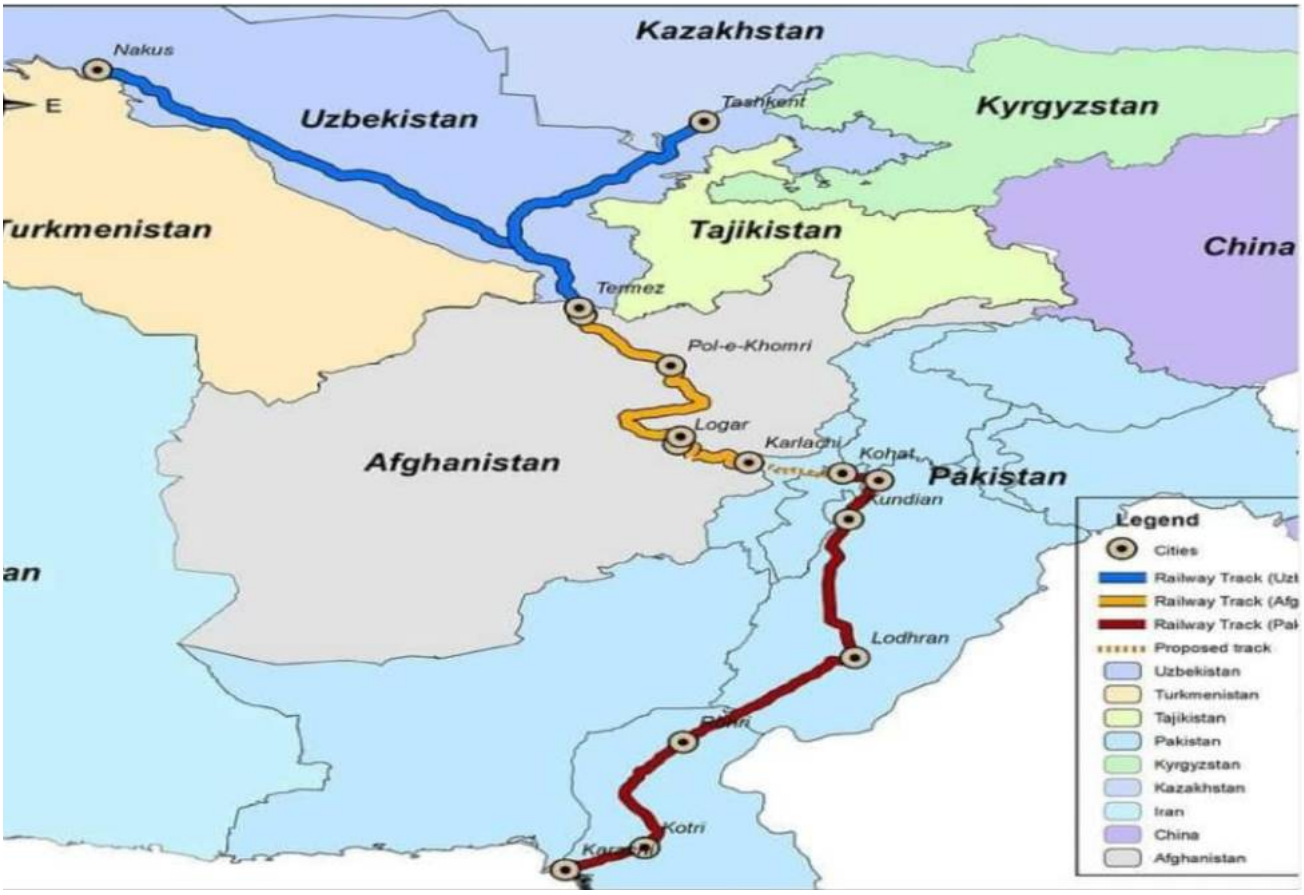
Source: https://stratheia.com/regional-connectivity-trans-afghan-railway-game-plan-for-pakistan/

5.5.1 Kohat–Kharlachi Proposed Railway Connectivity

The Kohat to Kharlachi Railway Development Project represents a crucial segment of the proposed Uzbekistan–Afghanistan–Pakistan (UAP) Railway Corridor. The 192 km Kohat–Kharlachi route via Parachinar railway line, was proposed in Pakistan's FY 2024–25 development budget, and is primarily designed for the transportation of coal and other bulk commodities.

As illustrated in Figure …, the Kohat–Kharlachi segment not only strengthens Pakistan's internal logistics network but also positions the country as a gateway for regional trade. Upstream, it connects to Afghanistan and Uzbekistan, facilitating coal imports and export transit; downstream, it links to the national rail grid, providing direct access to southern trade hubs. The successful implementation of this railway corridor is expected to significantly boost bilateral trade.

Figure 5.5: The Kohat–Kharlachi Proposed Railway Project



Source: https://www.facebook.com/PCRPress/posts/the-kohat-to-kharlachi-via-parachinar-railway-development-project-will-have-sign/988327112970293/

Chapter 6

Opportunities and Challenges in trade between Pakistan, the Central Asian Republics & Russia

Opportunities and Challenges in trade between Pakistan, the Central Asian Republics & Russia

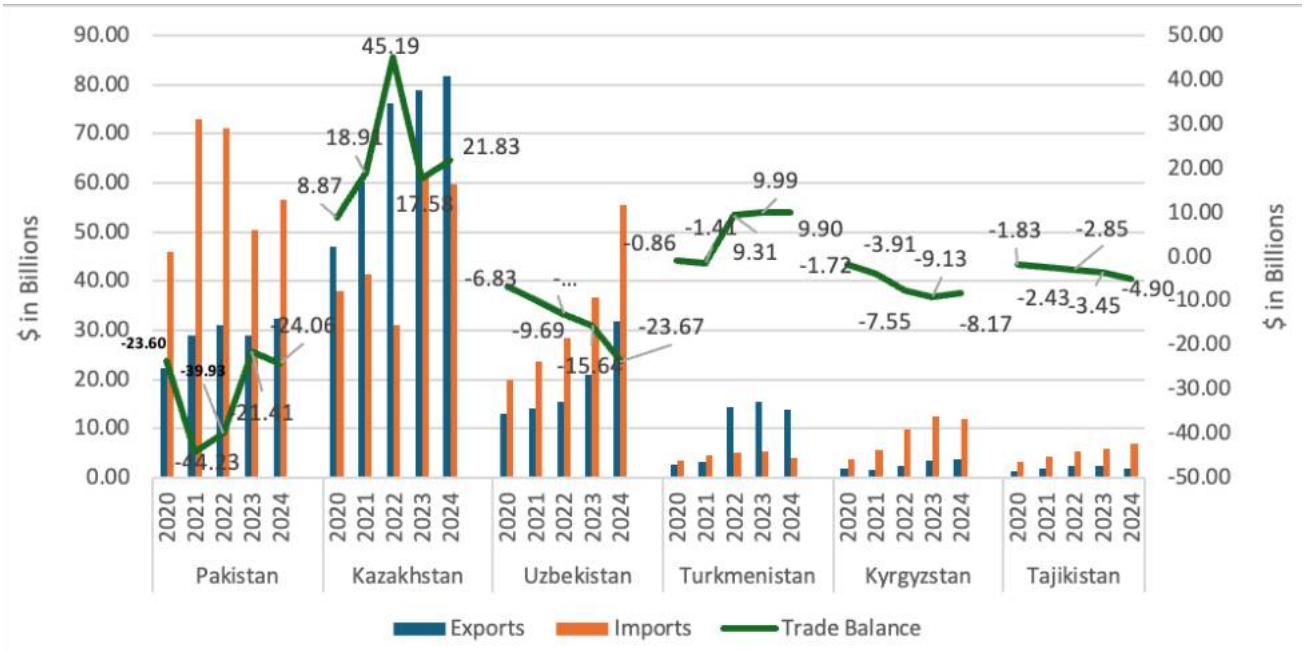
6.1: Trade Overview, Market Opportunities, and Key Challenges for Pakistan

This chapter examines the trade relationships between Pakistan and the Central Asian Republics (CARs). It further identifies key export opportunities for Pakistan, focusing on products where Central Asian Republics (CARs) exhibit significant import demand from global markets and where Pakistan's share remains comparatively low despite its export capacity. The chapter also presents a country-wise analysis to highlight variations in trade potential across individual Central Asian Republics (CARs). Finally, we discuss the major challenges faced by Pakistan in trading with the Central Asian Republics.

6.2: Trade Overview of Pakistan and Central Asian Republics (CARs)

The trade performance of Pakistan and Central Asian Republic over the period 2020–2024 shows contrasting trends in exports, imports, and trade balances. Pakistan consistently recorded a trade deficit throughout the period, as imports remained significantly higher than exports despite gradual export growth. Pakistan's exports increased from USD 22.25 million in 2020 to USD 32.46 million in 2024. Further details of this trade performance with the CARs are presented in the following figure.

Figure 6.1: Trade Trends between Pakistan and Central Asian Republics (CARs)



Source: ITC

6.3: Imports of Central Asian Republics from the World

An analysis of the 2024 import data indicates that China and Russia remain the dominant trading partners of the Central Asian Republics (CARs), collectively accounting for a significant share of total imports across the region. Other notable suppliers include Germany, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Türkiye, and Kazakhstan (intra-regional trade).

Among the five Central Asian Republics, Pakistan has the strongest relative position in Tajikistan (17th rank), followed by Kyrgyzstan (34th) and Uzbekistan (37th). Pakistan's weakest position is observed in Kazakhstan (59th) and Turkmenistan (48th).

In terms of export value, Uzbekistan imports the highest amount from Pakistan (USD 103.65 million), making it Pakistan's largest export destination among the CARs.

The detailed comparative import data for all five Central Asian Republics is presented in the following table.

Table 6.1: Country Wise Imports of Central Asian Republic

Ranks	Uzbekistan Imports from World 2024 (Values $ in Million)		Tajikistan Imports from World 2024 (Values $ in Million)		Kazakhstan Imports from World 2024 (Values $ in Million)		Kyrgyzstan Imports from World 2024 (Values $ in Million)		Turkmenistan Imports from World 2024 (Values $ in Million)	
	Total Imports	35,323.32	Total Imports	6,821.79	Total Imports	59,787.31	Total Imports	11,907.25	Total Imports	5,659.50
1	China	1,0328.96	Russian Federation	1,885.63	Russian Federation	1,8252.05	China	5,451.01	United Arab Emirates	1,721.23
2	Russian Federation	7,705.24	China	1,521.55	China	1,5153.47	Russian Federation	2,309.74	Türkiye	1,096.24
3	Kazakhstan	2,762.05	Kazakhstan	1,095.87	Germany	2,835.50	Kazakhstan	772.53	China	1,030.09
4	Korea, Republic of	1,855.98	Uzbekistan	380.33	United States of America	2,271.70	Uzbekistan	484.37	Kazakhstan	335.01
5	Türkiye	1,677.39	Switzerland	347.66	Korea, Republic of	1,908.71	Korea, Republic of	432.30	Germany	265.65
6	Turkmenistan	1,016.85	Iran, Islamic Republic of	263.92	France	1,860.56	Türkiye	361.25	Italy	118.04
7	Germany	980.12	Türkiye	192.02	Türkiye	1,658.66	United States of America	253.32	Netherlands	109.29
8	India	843.17	Belarus	167.93	Uzbekistan	1,305.70	Germany	251.44	Uzbekistan	95.34
9	Belarus	519.87	Korea, Republic of	133.35	Japan	1,278.23	Area Nes	201.52	Canada	84.92
10	United States of America	443.40	Germany	97.22	Italy	1,270.77	Japan	118.80	United States of America	82.23
11	Brazil	426.99	Japan	90.43	Belarus	745.10	Italy	104.46	France	80.26
12	Lithuania	421.47	United States of America	79.56	Viet Nam	654.45	India	89.49	Azerbaijan	80.24
13	Italy	368.34	India	62.78	Spain	652.09	Georgia	84.79	Ukraine	59.41

Ranks	Uzbekistan Imports from World 2024 (Values $ in Million)		Tajikistan Imports from World 2024 (Values $ in Million)		Kazakhstan Imports from World 2024 (Values $ in Million)		Kyrgyzstan Imports from World 2024 (Values $ in Million)		Turkmenistan Imports from World 2024 (Values $ in Million)	
	Total Imports	35,323.32	Total Imports	6,821.79	Total Imports	59,787.31	Total Imports	11,907.25	Total Imports	5,659.50
14	Iran, Islamic Republic of	332.74	Italy	49.41	Poland	639.06	Viet Nam	74.54	Korea, Republic of	56.29
15	Kyrgyzstan	327.03	United Arab Emirates	43.70	India	510.71	France	65.22	India	46.59
16	France	325.52	Ecuador	43.43	Switzerland	492.33	United Arab Emirates	62.61	Japan	36.96
17	Czech Republic	322.43	Pakistan (Rank 17th)	41.13	Ireland	471.28	Belarus	60.96	Denmark	35.66
18	Japan	304.75	Turkmenistan	34.07	Czech Republic	466.98	Poland	56.15	Austria	31.30
19	Poland	281.79	Netherlands	24.67	United Kingdom	464.67	United Kingdom	55.45	United Kingdom	30.42
20	United Arab Emirates	278.77	Austria	23.22	Kyrgyzstan	455.96	Lithuania	52.74	Poland	27.37
21	Netherlands	236.23	Ukraine	20.85	Netherlands	384.30	Iran, Islamic Republic of	40.17	Belgium	26.94
22	Switzerland	220.95	Tajikistan	18.89	Ukraine	325.38	Ukraine	39.54	Armenia	20.60
23	Georgia	220.25	Poland	18.17	Sweden	299.76	Canada	34.23	Czech Republic	18.85
24	Austria	188.55	Lithuania	18.08	Austria	276.66	Ecuador	30.31	Switzerland	16.46
25	Viet Nam	169.63	Argentina	14.35	Mexico	276.25	Austria	29.59	Malaysia	15.16
26	Thailand	165.53	Viet Nam	12.44	Canada	255.48	Taipei, Chinese	29.31	Singapore	14.16
27	Slovenia	164.32	United Kingdom	12.00	Belgium	245.78	Czech Republic	23.37	Lithuania	11.37
28	Mexico	156.07	Kyrgyzstan	11.11	Thailand	230.25	Netherlands	21.93	Spain	8.23
29	Ukraine	151.84	Belgium	9.91	Turkmenistan	220.69	Belgium	17.36	Hungary	8.01
30	Latvia	150.39	France	9.66	Tajikistan	217.52	Turkmenistan	17.23	Latvia	7.75
31	Finland	145.64	Czech Republic	8.62	Iran, Islamic Republic of	216.65	Switzerland	16.11	Kyrgyzstan	7.63
32	Tajikistan	145.38	Afghanistan	6.74	Hungary	190.51	Slovenia	15.79	Greece	6.93
33	Belgium	118.98	Canada	6.44	Indonesia	179.75	Spain	15.36	Slovenia	6.85

Ranks	Uzbekistan Imports from World 2024 (Values $ in Million)		Tajikistan Imports from World 2024 (Values $ in Million)		Kazakhstan Imports from World 2024 (Values $ in Million)		Kyrgyzstan Imports from World 2024 (Values $ in Million)		Turkmenistan Imports from World 2024 (Values $ in Million)	
	Total Imports	35,323.32	Total Imports	6,821.79	Total Imports	59,787.31	Total Imports	11,907.25	Total Imports	5,659.50
34	Estonia	118.65	Sweden	6.38	Brazil	164.13	Pakistan (Rank 34th)	14.24	Thailand	5.55
35	Singapore	108.72	Georgia	6.31	Finland	161.88	Thailand	14.02	Georgia	5.28
36	United Kingdom	104.79	Spain	5.91	United Arab Emirates	146.29	Mexico	13.69	Bulgaria	5.18
37	Pakistan (Rank 37th)	103.65	Azerbaijan	5.69	Malaysia	140.30	Hungary	13.45	Finland	5.04
38	Malaysia	92.61	Indonesia	5.63	Romania	138.36	Hong Kong, China	11.96	Indonesia	4.37
39	Ireland	84.22	Brazil	5.00	Slovakia	137.44	Latvia	11.76	Ireland	4.25
40	Spain	73.35	Serbia	3.54	Egypt	136.70	Finland	11.16	Brazil	4.18
41	Hungary	71.54	Malaysia	2.97	Denmark	126.09	Ireland	10.38	Sri Lanka	4.12
42	Hong Kong, China	65.69	Thailand	2.91	Taipei, Chinese	124.04	Bulgaria	8.86	Luxembourg	3.04
43	Indonesia	64.97	Finland	2.70	Bangladesh	119.06	Sweden	8.25	Tajikistan	2.69
44	Ecuador	57.60	Slovenia	2.45	Norway	118.35	Singapore	8.03	Saudi Arabia	2.54
45	Slovakia	54.92	Hungary	2.24	Ecuador	113.80	Romania	7.60	Moldova, Republic of	2.40
46	Bangladesh	45.99	Anguilla	2.11	Slovenia	99.95	Slovakia	7.56	Romania	2.12
47	Iceland	45.09	Bangladesh	1.85	Serbia	84.15	Denmark	7.19	Estonia	1.93
48	Bulgaria	45.05	Denmark	1.83	Lithuania	80.98	Kenya	6.69	Pakistan (Rank 48th)	1.82
49	Afghanistan	44.67	Romania	1.76	Georgia	72.18	Indonesia	5.33	Egypt	1.66
50	Azerbaijan	41.83	Latvia	1.59	Bulgaria	71.61	Serbia	5.16	Sweden	1.58
59	----	----	----	----	Pakistan (Rank 59th)	41.87	----	----	----	----

Source: ITC

6.4: Export Opportunities for Pakistan in the Central Asian Republics

This section analyzes the export opportunities for Pakistan in the Central Asian Republics (CARs) by providing a comprehensive product-wise assessment of trade patterns. It highlights key products with export potential by comparing each CAR country's imports from Pakistan with their total imports from the world, alongside Pakistan's global export performance. Through this comparative framework, the analysis identifies existing market gaps, reveals Pakistan's current market share, and quantifies the untapped potential for expanding Pakistani exports across CAR markets.

6.4.1: Imports of Central Asian Republics from Pakistan and the World

The 2024 trade data reveals a significant disparity between Central Asian Republics' (CARs) imports from Pakistan and their imports from the rest of the world, despite Pakistan being an active exporter of the same products globally. This highlights untapped export potential for Pakistan in CAR markets.

Medicaments (HS 300490) represent a major import item for CARs. In 2024, CARs imported approximately USD 2.69 billion worth of medicaments from the world, while imports from Pakistan remained limited at around USD 30.35 million. In contrast, Pakistan's global exports of medicaments exceeded USD 202.84 million.

A similar gap is evident in fresh or chilled potatoes (HS 070190). CARs imported approximately USD 79.28 million from the world in 2024, while imports from Pakistan declined to USD 15.87 million. During the same year, Pakistan exported USD 138.26 million worth of potatoes to the world.

Further detailed export opportunities for Pakistan in CARs markets across additional products and goods are presented in the following table.

Table 6.2: Imports of Central Asian Republics from Pakistan and the World

HS Code	Commodity	Central Asian Republic's imports from Pakistan			Pakistan's exports to world			Central Asian Republic's imports from world		
		2022 $ in Million	2023 $ in Million	2024 $ in Million	2022 $ in Million	2023 $ in Million	2024 $ in Million	2022 $ in Million	2023 $ in Million	2024 $ in Million
	Total Imports $ in Billion	**0.178**	**0.240**	**0.200**	**31.18**	**28.95**	**32.46**	**79.14**	**121.49**	**119.50**
300490	Medicaments consisting of mixed or unmixed products for therapeutic or prophylactic purposes, ...	19.83	23.98	30.35	145.25	138.88	202.84	2,210.17	2,361.99	2,687.39
080521	Fresh or dried mandarins incl. tangerines and satsumas (excl. clementines)	18.99	26.27	25.21	28.22	24.52	24.95	67.16	117.16	106.05
070190	Fresh or chilled potatoes (excl. seed)	47.25	33.36	15.87	216.53	140.43	138.26	83.16	91.09	79.28
300449	Medicaments containing alkaloids or derivatives thereof, not containing hormones, steroids ...	13.59	13.40	15.16	----	0.01	0.05	106.00	85.70	89.56
020210	Frozen bovine carcases and half-carcases	2.93	9.94	11.31	3.60	13.09	15.05	19.65	13.65	12.68
170199	Cane or beet sugar and chemically pure sucrose, in solid form (excl. cane and beet sugar containing ...	5.50	39.13	9.79	----	126.63	342.18	446.38	478.97	614.15
080520	Fresh or dried mandarins incl. tangerines and satsumas, clementines, wilkings and similar citrus ...	6.87	5.35	9.63	----	----	----	7.41	6.49	10.84

HS Code	Commodity	Central Asian Republic's imports from Pakistan			Pakistan's exports to world			Central Asian Republic's imports from world		
		2022 $ in Million	2023 $ in Million	2024 $ in Million	2022 $ in Million	2023 $ in Million	2024 $ in Million	2022 $ in Million	2023 $ in Million	2024 $ in Million
340120	Soap in the form of flakes, granules, powder, paste or in aqueous solution	6.21	6.32	6.36	20.01	12.12	11.42	20.89	22.92	21.34
761290	Casks, drums, cans, boxes and similar containers, incl. rigid tubular containers, of aluminium, ...	4.94	4.19	4.83	29.78	43.05	51.88	114.02	102.53	98.81
100630	Semi-milled or wholly milled rice, whether or not polished or glazed	2.64	12.58	3.89	1,715.22	2,125.80	3,260.55	28.76	64.16	44.79
520942	Denim, containing >= 85% cotton by weight and weighing > 200 g/m², made of yarn of different ...	0.00	0.85	3.20	489.82	429.66	508.81	1.80	1.32	3.63
611020	Jerseys, pullovers, cardigans, waistcoats and similar articles, of cotton, knitted or crocheted ...	0.73	1.97	2.68	93.77	72.47	87.17	99.10	94.49	78.20
300420	Medicaments containing antibiotics, put up in measured doses "incl. those for transdermal administration" ...	2.19	1.90	2.64	16.69	18.01	22.72	229.67	232.52	281.26
100620	Husked or brown rice	2.34	3.33	2.61	250.58	345.51	377.48	2.83	6.85	4.73
950699	Articles and equipment for sport and outdoor games n.e.s; swimming and paddling pools	1.09	2.09	2.47	38.29	37.21	36.19	20.50	40.43	53.92
620342	Men's or boys' trousers, bib and brace overalls, breeches and shorts, of cotton (excl. knitted ...	2.20	2.33	2.45	574.06	652.07	584.62	104.02	264.61	124.38
120740	Sesamum seeds, whether or not broken	0.57	2.69	2.44	148.06	417.39	345.96	4.31	6.31	6.32
620462	Women's or girls' trousers, bib and brace overalls, breeches and shorts of cotton (excl. knitted ...	1.47	3.36	2.38	177.04	204.68	212.84	100.78	158.33	111.88
340111	Soap and organic surface-active products and preparations, in the form of bars, cakes, moulded ...	1.34	1.49	2.33	14.00	16.48	11.98	59.82	64.13	57.40
070200	Tomatoes, fresh or chilled	0.42	1.33	2.15	1.13	8.06	4.30	66.85	65.00	76.42
610342	Men's or boys' trousers, bib and brace overalls, breeches and shorts of cotton, knitted or ...	0.78	1.38	1.79	75.48	70.47	92.57	73.93	53.29	58.93
020220	Frozen bovine cuts, with bone in (excl. carcases and half-carcases)	0.38	0.20	1.77	3.33	3.54	4.84	18.68	14.14	20.42
950662	Inflatable balls	0.58	1.55	1.74	236.71	235.79	248.28	3.42	10.44	11.15
300432	Medicaments containing corticosteroid hormones, their derivatives or structural analogues but ...	0.22	0.45	1.69	0.52	0.35	0.03	66.72	73.35	94.71
070700	Cucumbers and gherkins, fresh or chilled	0.58	0.70	1.69	0.01	0.06	0.13	14.40	15.11	17.46

Source: ITC

6.4.2: Country-wise Imports of Central Asian Republics from Pakistan and the Rest of the World

This section analyzes country-wise export opportunities for Pakistan in the Central Asian Republics by examining Uzbekistan's, Kazakhstan's, Tajikistan's, Kyrgyzstan's, and Turkmenistan's imports from Pakistan in comparison with their total imports from the world. The analysis compares these patterns with Pakistan's global export performance to identify existing market gaps and quantify the untapped export potential across CAR markets. Furthermore, the section ranks CAR countries based on their level of imports from Pakistan, highlighting priority markets and product segments where Pakistan can strategically expand its trade presence.

6.4.2.1: Uzbekistan's Imports from Pakistan and the Rest of the World

The 2024 trade data for Uzbekistan, the largest importing economy among the Central Asian Republics, show a clear imbalance between imports sourced from Pakistan and those sourced from the rest of the world, despite Pakistan's demonstrated export capacity in the same products.

Medicaments (HS 300490) constitute one of Uzbekistan's largest import items. In 2024, Uzbekistan imported approximately USD 1.11 billion worth of medicaments from the world, while imports from Pakistan were limited to USD 20.84 million. At the same time, Pakistan's global exports of medicaments reached USD 202.84 million.

A similar trend is observed for fresh or dried mandarins and citrus fruits (HS 080521). Uzbekistan imported around USD 30.08 million from the world in 2024, whereas imports from Pakistan amounted to USD 14.40 million. Although Pakistan is a competitive exporter of citrus products globally, with exports of nearly USD 24.95 million.

Further product-wise export opportunities for Pakistan in Uzbekistan are detailed in the following table.

Table 6.3: Uzbekistan's Imports from Pakistan and the Rest of the World

HS Code	Commodity	Uzbekistan's imports from Pakistan			Pakistan's exports to world			Uzbekistan's imports from world		
		2022 $ in Million	2023 $ in Million	2024 $ in Million	2022 $ in Million	2023 $ in Million	2024 $ in Million	2022 $ in Million	2023 $ in Million	2024 $ in Million
	Total Imports $ in Billion	**0.111**	**0.124**	**0.104**	**31.18**	**28.95**	**32.46**	**28.26**	**36.66**	**35.32**
300490	Medicaments consisting of mixed or unmixed products for therapeutic or prophylactic purposes, ...	13.74	17.20	20.84	145.25	138.88	202.84	952.52	1,016.73	1,114.92
080521	Fresh or dried mandarins incl. tangerines and satsumas (excl. clementines)	8.32	9.43	14.40	28.22	24.52	24.95	15.85	22.84	30.08
300449	Medicaments containing alkaloids or derivatives thereof, not containing hormones, steroids ...	10.21	9.56	11.36	0.00	0.01	0.05	55.02	46.42	49.49
020210	Frozen bovine carcases and half-carcases	2.93	9.94	11.31	3.60	13.09	15.05	17.61	11.98	11.69
070190	Fresh or chilled potatoes (excl. seed)	40.23	26.00	8.67	216.53	140.43	138.26	70.84	55.18	59.49
340120	Soap in the form of flakes, granules, powder, paste or in aqueous solution	5.38	5.23	5.54	20.01	12.12	11.42	8.91	10.16	10.12
761290	Casks, drums, cans, boxes and similar containers, incl. rigid tubular containers, of aluminium, ...	4.83	3.92	4.52	29.78	43.05	51.88	46.47	45.76	44.76

HS Code	Commodity	Uzbekistan's imports from Pakistan			Pakistan's exports to world			Uzbekistan's imports from world		
		2022 $ in Million	2023 $ in Million	2024 $ in Million	2022 $ in Million	2023 $ in Million	2024 $ in Million	2022 $ in Million	2023 $ in Million	2024 $ in Million
	Total Imports $ in Billion	**0.111**	**0.124**	**0.104**	**31.18**	**28.95**	**32.46**	**28.26**	**36.66**	**35.32**
520942	Denim, containing >= 85% cotton by weight and weighing > 200 g/m², made of yarn of different ...	0.00	0.85	3.20	489.82	429.66	508.81	1.70	1.24	3.41
120740	Sesamum seeds, whether or not broken	0.40	2.49	2.18	148.06	417.39	345.96	1.85	2.91	2.51
100630	Semi-milled or wholly milled rice, whether or not polished or glazed	1.51	11.17	2.05	1,715.22	2,125.80	3,260.55	1.78	31.47	13.64
300420	Medicaments containing antibiotics, put up in measured doses "incl. those for transdermal administration" ...	1.68	1.31	1.97	16.69	18.01	22.72	129.53	118.62	148.28
020220	Frozen bovine cuts, with bone in (excl. carcases and half-carcases)	0.38	0.20	1.77	3.33	3.54	4.84	14.63	7.09	13.34
842230	Machinery for filling, closing, sealing or labelling bottles, cans, boxes, bags or other containers; ...	0.00	0.00	1.48	2.61	3.04	1.88	45.78	64.22	90.10
950662	Inflatable balls	0.53	1.10	1.20	236.71	235.79	248.28	1.62	2.84	3.56
210690	Food preparations, n.e.s.	1.02	1.13	0.96	133.50	129.23	80.95	72.82	87.29	102.46
284700	Hydrogen peroxide, whether or not solidified with urea	2.55	1.48	0.94	2.88	1.10	1.32	17.20	11.41	6.20
830990	Stoppers, caps and lids, incl. screw caps and pouring stoppers, capsules for bottles, threaded ...	0.81	0.63	0.80	0.10	0.03	0.16	17.77	23.67	18.80
901890	Instruments and appliances used in medical, surgical or veterinary sciences, n.e.s.	0.33	0.76	0.72	445.15	448.68	446.63	76.84	93.41	88.40
220299	Non-alcoholic beverages (excl. water, fruit or vegetable juices, milk and beer)	0.01	0.00	0.66	0.13	0.17	1.51	8.23	11.77	13.29
300432	Medicaments containing corticosteroid hormones, their derivatives or structural analogues but ...	0.04	0.17	0.55	0.52	0.35	0.03	26.88	36.28	36.12
300439	Medicaments containing hormones or steroids used as hormones but not antibiotics, put up in ...	0.40	0.46	0.51	108.60	116.89	147.73	26.81	30.95	31.08
080211	Fresh or dried almonds in shell	0.00	0.18	0.40	0.01	0.14	0.00	2.85	4.34	3.61
844833	Spindles, spindle flyers, spinning rings and ring travellers, for machines of heading 8445	0.16	0.11	0.40	0.14	0.15	0.29	1.73	2.61	1.69
380290	Activated kieselguhr and other activated natural mineral products; animal black, whether or ...	0.51	0.25	0.39	0.92	0.51	1.00	1.45	1.46	1.27
620342	Men's or boys' trousers, bib and brace overalls, breeches and shorts, of cotton (excl. knitted ...	0.28	0.21	0.39	574.06	652.07	584.62	4.89	5.96	8.53

Source: ITC

6.4.2.2: Kazakhstan's Imports from Pakistan and the Rest of the World

In 2024, Kazakhstan emerged as the second-largest importing country within the Central Asian Republics in terms of imports from Pakistan.

Fresh or dried mandarins and citrus fruits (HS 080521) constitute a key import item for Kazakhstan. In 2024, Kazakhstan imported approximately USD 57.52 million from the world, while imports from Pakistan amounted to only USD 8.34 million. This is notable given Pakistan's global exports of USD 24.95 million for the same product.

A similar pattern is observed for Jerseys, pullovers, cardigans, waistcoats and similar articles, of cotton (HS 611020). Kazakhstan imported around USD 67.66 million from global markets in 2024, whereas imports from Pakistan were limited to USD 2.30 million. This is notable given Pakistan's global exports of USD 87.17 million for the same product.

Further product-wise export opportunities for Pakistan in Kazakhstan are presented in the following table.

Table 6.4: Kazakhstan's Imports from Pakistan and the Rest of the World

HS Code	Commodity	Kazakhstan's imports from Pakistan			Pakistan's exports to world			Kazakhstan's imports from world		
		2022 $ in Million	2023 $ in Million	2024 $ in Million	2022 $ in Million	2023 $ in Million	2024 $ in Million	2022 $ in Million	2023 $ in Million	2024 $ in Million
	Total Imports $ in Billion	**0.037**	**0.047**	**0.042**	**31.18**	**28.95**	**32.46**	**30.95**	**61.16**	**59.79**
080521	Fresh or dried mandarins incl. tangerines and satsumas (excl. clementines)	9.59	14.53	8.34	28.22	24.52	24.95	41.80	77.69	57.52
300449	Medicaments containing alkaloids or derivatives thereof, not containing hormones, steroids ...	3.38	3.85	3.80	0.00	0.01	0.05	47.17	36.28	36.93
611020	Jerseys, pullovers, cardigans, waistcoats and similar articles, of cotton, knitted or crocheted ...	0.67	1.91	2.30	93.77	72.47	87.17	72.69	86.11	67.66
300490	Medicaments consisting of mixed or unmixed products for therapeutic or prophylactic purposes, ...	2.06	1.90	2.19	145.25	138.88	202.84	982.48	1063.04	1276.74
340111	Soap and organic surface-active products and preparations, in the form of bars, cakes, moulded ...	1.07	1.19	2.11	14.00	16.48	11.98	30.42	29.13	26.05
620462	Women's or girls' trousers, bib and brace overalls, breeches and shorts of cotton (excl. knitted ...	1.28	3.15	2.00	177.04	204.68	212.84	90.70	150.84	99.84
620342	Men's or boys' trousers, bib and brace overalls, breeches and shorts, of cotton (excl. knitted ...	1.84	2.05	1.88	574.06	652.07	584.62	85.67	250.22	109.56
610342	Men's or boys' trousers, bib and brace overalls, breeches and shorts of cotton, knitted or ...	0.67	1.19	1.42	75.48	70.47	92.57	39.17	42.26	43.96
300432	Medicaments containing corticosteroid hormones, their derivatives or structural analogues but ...	0.15	0.24	1.05	0.52	0.35	0.03	36.20	32.84	53.47
392321	Sacks and bags, incl. cones, of polymers of ethylene	0.00	0.00	1.04	0.36	0.20	1.32	60.04	62.13	41.22

HS Code	Commodity	Kazakhstan's imports from Pakistan			Pakistan's exports to world			Kazakhstan's imports from world		
		2022 $ in Million	2023 $ in Million	2024 $ in Million	2022 $ in Million	2023 $ in Million	2024 $ in Million	2022 $ in Million	2023 $ in Million	2024 $ in Million
	Total Imports $ in Billion	**0.037**	**0.047**	**0.042**	**31.18**	**28.95**	**32.46**	**30.95**	**61.16**	**59.79**
950699	Articles and equipment for sport and outdoor games n.e.s; swimming and paddling pools	0.00	0.16	0.95	38.29	37.21	36.19	11.54	28.94	39.31
300510	Adhesive dressings and other articles having an adhesive layer, impregnated or covered with ...	0.96	0.55	0.95	1.46	1.14	2.10	6.65	3.66	5.38
170490	Sugar confectionery not containing cocoa, incl. white chocolate (excl. chewing gum)	0.36	0.72	0.94	71.03	71.67	59.90	104.06	120.17	129.95
100630	Semi-milled or wholly milled rice, whether or not polished or glazed	0.85	0.85	0.88	1,715.22	2,125.80	3,260.55	7.35	19.00	12.78
610910	T-shirts, singlets and other vests of cotton, knitted or crocheted	0.06	0.44	0.87	397.00	336.62	388.69	105.66	170.24	138.09
610462	Women's or girls' trousers, bib and brace overalls, breeches and shorts of cotton, knitted ...	0.15	0.56	0.81	38.40	28.10	38.07	26.48	32.36	35.82
420329	Gloves, mittens and mitts, of leather or composition leather (excl. special sports gloves)	0.44	0.68	0.73	299.13	273.29	308.31	3.56	3.71	3.96
360500	Matches (excl. pyrotechnic articles of heading 3604)	1.65	0.67	0.58	13.08	11.30	6.38	4.58	2.28	2.25
950662	Inflatable balls	0.00	0.40	0.51	236.71	235.79	248.28	1.30	6.82	6.74
611030	Jerseys, pullovers, cardigans, waistcoats and similar articles, of man-made fibres, knitted ...	0.40	0.42	0.40	10.10	9.30	15.78	90.54	343.29	113.48
300420	Medicaments containing antibiotics, put up in measured doses "incl. those for transdermal administration" ...	0.38	0.47	0.38	16.69	18.01	22.72	81.32	86.77	106.54
610220	Women's or girls' overcoats, car coats, capes, cloaks, anoraks, incl. ski jackets, windcheaters, ...	0.04	0.19	0.32	2.87	0.65	1.03	2.28	2.44	3.54
611610	Gloves, mittens and mitts, impregnated, coated, covered or laminated with plastics or rubber, ...	0.13	0.18	0.31	232.71	229.93	242.89	18.63	23.82	21.37
901849	Instruments and appliances used in dental sciences, n.e.s.	0.00	0.38	0.30	0.59	0.53	1.11	0.91	16.30	18.11
610120	Overcoats, car coats, capes, cloaks, anoraks, incl. ski jackets, windcheaters, wind-jackets ...	0.16	0.20	0.29	19.29	17.47	12.97	3.91	4.52	3.42

Source: ITC

6.4.2.3: Tajikistan's Imports from Pakistan and the Rest of the World

In 2024, Tajikistan remained a relatively small but growing market for Pakistani exports within the Central Asian Republics (CARs). While imports from Pakistan have shown some improvement across selected products.

Fresh or dried mandarins and citrus fruits (HS 080520) represent one of the key agri-based import items for Tajikistan. In 2024, Tajikistan imported approximately USD 10.84 million worth of citrus fruits from the world, whereas imports from Pakistan stood at around USD 9.63 million.

A similar positive trend is observed in cane or beet sugar and chemically pure sucrose (HS 170199). In 2024, Tajikistan's total imports from the world amounted to about USD 122.45 million, while imports from Pakistan reached USD 9.51 million. At the same time, Pakistan's global exports of sugar were substantial (USD 342.18 million).

For products such as medicaments (HS 300490), Tajikistan imported approximately USD 62.28 million from global markets in 2024, while imports from Pakistan were only USD 1.84 million. Despite Pakistan's global exports in this category (USD 202.84 million).

The detailed product-wise analysis of these trends is illustrated in the following table.

Table 6.5: Tajikistan's Imports from Pakistan and the Rest of the World

HS Code	Commodity	Tajikistan's imports from Pakistan			Pakistan's exports to world			Tajikistan's imports from world		
		2022 $ in Million	2023 $ in Million	2024 $ in Million	2022 $ in Million	2023 $ in Million	2024 $ in Million	2022 $ in Million	2023 $ in Million	2024 $ in Million
	Total Imports $ in Billion	**0.019**	**0.049**	**0.041**	**31.18**	**28.95**	**32.46**	**5.18**	**5.88**	**6.82**
080520	Fresh or dried mandarins incl. tangerines and satsumas, clementines, wilkings and similar citrus ...	6.87	5.35	9.63	----	----	----	7.41	6.49	10.84
170199	Cane or beet sugar and chemically pure sucrose, in solid form (excl. cane and beet sugar containing ...	0.00	21.19	9.51	0.00	126.63	342.18	94.11	93.51	122.45
070190	Fresh or chilled potatoes (excl. seed)	0.63	5.83	7.10	216.53	140.43	138.26	0.65	9.91	16.04
100620	Husked or brown rice	2.28	3.19	2.57	250.58	345.51	377.48	2.50	5.80	4.14
070200	Tomatoes, fresh or chilled	0.42	1.31	2.15	1.13	8.06	4.30	0.69	1.87	4.15
300490	Medicaments consisting of mixed or unmixed products for therapeutic or prophylactic purposes, ...	0.92	1.04	1.84	145.25	138.88	202.84	48.78	59.61	62.28
070700	Cucumbers and gherkins, fresh or chilled	0.53	0.60	1.64	0.01	0.06	0.13	0.54	0.94	2.15
040711	Fertilised eggs for incubation, of domestic fowls	0.09	0.16	0.88	7.71	11.36	10.00	4.41	7.43	10.39
070960	Fresh or chilled fruits of the genus Capsicum or Pimenta	0.31	0.62	0.68	0.25	0.39	0.25	0.38	0.78	0.96
300440	Medicaments containing alkaloids or derivatives thereof, not containing hormones, steroids ...	0.41	0.56	0.45	----	----	----	0.77	1.13	0.99

HS Code	Commodity	Tajikistan's imports from Pakistan			Pakistan's exports to world			Tajikistan's imports from world		
		----	0.77	1.13	0.99	2023 $ in Million	2024 $ in Million	2022 $ in Million	2023 $ in Million	2024 $ in Million
	Total Imports $ in Billion	**0.019**	**0.049**	**0.041**	**31.18**	**28.95**	**32.46**	**5.18**	**5.88**	**6.82**
152200	Degras; residues resulting from the treatment of fatty substances or animal or vegetable waxes	0.18	0.33	0.43	----	----	0.002	1.14	1.37	2.20
081050	Fresh kiwifruit	0.39	0.67	0.36	----	----	----	0.52	0.93	1.68
761290	Casks, drums, cans, boxes and similar containers, incl. rigid tubular containers, of aluminium, ...	0.11	0.28	0.31	29.78	43.05	51.88	2.08	1.91	5.13
040210	Milk and cream in solid forms, of a fat content by weight of <= 1,5%	0.24	0.24	0.25	2.69	4.66	4.32	0.62	1.87	3.48
340120	Soap in the form of flakes, granules, powder, paste or in aqueous solution	0.24	0.42	0.17	20.01	12.12	11.42	2.36	2.94	2.42
200989	Juice of fruit or vegetables, unfermented, whether or not containing added sugar or other sweetening ...	0.06	0.19	0.17	9.61	7.71	10.03	0.28	0.43	0.77
901890	Instruments and appliances used in medical, surgical or veterinary sciences, n.e.s.	0.17	0.05	0.17	445.15	448.68	446.63	2.71	5.90	5.12
340111	Soap and organic surface-active products and preparations, in the form of bars, cakes, moulded ...	0.13	0.13	0.16	14.00	16.48	11.98	6.12	8.66	7.12
843510	Presses, crushers and similar machinery used in the manufacture of wine, cider, fruit juices ...	0.00	0.00	0.16	0.00	0.01	0.02	0.63	0.02	0.23
080711	Fresh watermelons	0.32	0.79	0.16	0.58	1.90	0.90	1.68	0.84	0.36
732690	Articles of iron or steel, n.e.s. (excl. cast articles or articles of iron or steel wire)	0.08	0.13	0.15	7.05	8.03	5.80	11.48	12.81	10.79
630900	Worn clothing and clothing accessories, blankets and travelling rugs, household linen and articles ...	0.28	0.31	0.14	259.58	257.59	284.14	20.87	15.92	14.30
210690	Food preparations, n.e.s.	0.11	0.12	0.12	133.50	129.23	80.95	13.70	16.49	23.41
630629	Tents of textile materials (excl. of synthetic fibres, and umbrella and play tents)	0.42	0.00	0.11	94.69	108.75	97.53	0.46	0.11	0.19
071320	Dried, shelled chickpeas "garbanzos", whether or not skinned or split	0.01	0.07	0.10	0.07	0.09	0.16	1.47	2.13	1.81

Source: ITC

6.4.2.4: Kyrgyzstan's Imports from Pakistan and the Rest of the World

Kyrgyzstan remains a relatively small but strategically important market for Pakistani exports within the Central Asian Republics (CARs).

Medicaments (HS 300490) represent the largest import category from Pakistan for Kyrgyzstan. In 2024, Kyrgyzstan imported approximately USD 163.05 million worth of medicaments from the world, while imports from Pakistan amounted to around USD 5.30 million. Despite Pakistan's strong global exports in this category (USD 202.84 million), its share in Kyrgyzstan's pharmaceutical market remains relatively small.

Fresh or dried mandarins and citrus fruits (HS 080521) also constitute an important agri- export item for Pakistan. In 2024, Kyrgyzstan's total imports of citrus fruits from the world stood at about USD 17.04 million, whereas imports from Pakistan were USD 2.48 million.

The detailed product-wise analysis of these trends is illustrated in the following table.

Table 6.6: Kyrgyzstan's Imports from Pakistan and the Rest of the World

HS Code	Commodity	Kyrgyzstan's imports from Pakistan			Pakistan's exports to world			Kyrgyzstan's imports from world		
		2022 $ in Million	2023 $ in Million	2024 $ in Million	2022 $ in Million	2023 $ in Million	2024 $ in Million	2022 $ in Million	2023 $ in Million	2024 $ in Million
	Total Imports $ in Billion	**0.011**	**0.019**	**0.014**	**31.18**	**28.95**	**32.46**	**9.80**	**12.52**	**11.91**
300490	Medicaments consisting of mixed or unmixed products for therapeutic or prophylactic purposes, ...	2.99	3.70	5.30	145.25	138.88	202.84	167.33	156.12	163.05
080521	Fresh or dried mandarins incl. tangerines and satsumas (excl. clementines)	1.09	2.31	2.48	28.22	24.52	24.95	6.27	13.33	17.04
950699	Articles and equipment for sport and outdoor games n.e.s; swimming and paddling pools	1.02	1.81	1.35	38.29	37.21	36.19	2.91	3.59	2.68
100630	Semi-milled or wholly milled rice, whether or not polished or glazed	0.29	0.50	0.97	1,715.22	2,125.80	3,260.55	4.44	7.07	6.67
300450	Medicaments containing provitamins, vitamins, incl. natural concentrates and derivatives thereof ...	0.14	0.04	0.31	3.93	4.01	4.33	7.85	10.83	8.54
300420	Medicaments containing antibiotics, put up in measured doses "incl. those for transdermal administration" ...	0.13	0.12	0.30	16.69	18.01	22.72	13.26	17.88	18.74
871120	Motorcycles, incl. mopeds, with reciprocating internal combustion piston engine of a cylinder ...	0.00	0.07	0.25	7.12	17.94	24.38	0.04	0.19	1.00
821420	Manicure or pedicure sets and instruments, incl. nail files, of base metal (excl. ordinary ...	0.37	0.36	0.22	20.32	17.79	22.08	1.51	0.87	0.44
620342	Men's or boys' trousers, bib and brace overalls, breeches and shorts, of cotton (excl. knitted ...	0.09	0.07	0.18	574.06	652.07	584.62	11.46	4.91	4.35
090240	Black fermented tea and partly fermented tea, whether or not flavoured, in immediate packings ...	0.71	0.79	0.14	9.48	2.90	3.85	2.41	2.42	2.74
621600	Gloves, mittens and mitts, of all types of textile materials (excl. knitted or crocheted and ...	0.14	0.25	0.12	34.35	24.76	27.83	0.60	0.67	0.30

HS Code	Commodity	Kyrgyzstan's imports from Pakistan			Pakistan's exports to world			Kyrgyzstan's imports from world		
		2022 $ in Million	2023 $ in Million	2024 $ in Million	2022 $ in Million	2023 $ in Million	2024 $ in Million	2022 $ in Million	2023 $ in Million	2024 $ in Million
	Total Imports $ in Billion	**0.011**	**0.019**	**0.014**	**31.18**	**28.95**	**32.46**	**9.80**	**12.52**	**11.91**
610910	T-shirts, singlets and other vests of cotton, knitted or crocheted	0.01	0.07	0.12	397.00	336.62	388.69	22.60	12.69	6.81
950669	Balls (excl. inflatable, tennis balls, golf balls, and table-tennis balls)	0.14	0.31	0.11	15.48	20.70	19.58	0.44	0.73	0.36
420310	Articles of apparel, of leather or composition leather (excl. clothing accessories, footware ...	0.15	0.09	0.11	284.81	240.79	223.62	10.71	3.18	0.48
200989	Juice of fruit or vegetables, unfermented, whether or not containing added sugar or other sweetening ...	0.09	0.16	0.10	9.61	7.71	10.03	0.53	1.18	1.06
620462	Women's or girls' trousers, bib and brace overalls, breeches and shorts of cotton (excl. knitted ...	0.08	0.10	0.09	177.04	204.68	212.84	8.19	4.99	7.46
250100	Salts, incl. table salt and denatured salt, and pure sodium chloride, whether or not in aqueous ...	0.09	0.10	0.09	69.32	52.74	76.77	1.59	2.19	2.43
300432	Medicaments containing corticosteroid hormones, their derivatives or structural analogues but ...	0.04	0.05	0.08	0.52	0.35	0.03	2.90	3.46	4.06
610342	Men's or boys' trousers, bib and brace overalls, breeches and shorts of cotton, knitted or ...	0.07	0.10	0.08	75.48	70.47	92.57	33.63	9.43	12.00
901849	Instruments and appliances used in dental sciences, n.e.s.	0.04	0.04	0.08	0.59	0.53	1.11	0.70	0.93	0.73
100610	Rice in the husk, "paddy" or rough	0.00	0.08	0.08	1.31	0.53	23.77	0.11	0.12	0.42
821300	Scissors, tailors' shears and similar shears, and blades therefor, of base metal (excl. hedge ...	0.10	0.10	0.07	8.93	7.25	7.33	0.24	0.27	0.16
090230	Black fermented tea and partly fermented tea, whether or not flavoured, in immediate packings ...	0.06	0.02	0.06	10.44	11.93	15.25	6.55	5.49	2.83
820559	Hand tools, incl. glaziers' diamonds, of base metal, n.e.s.	0.02	0.04	0.06	3.46	2.70	3.63	1.93	0.78	0.87
630900	Worn clothing and clothing accessories, blankets and travelling rugs, household linen and articles ...	0.05	0.13	0.06	259.58	257.59	284.14	2.46	2.45	2.57

Source: ITC

6.4.2.5: Turkmenistan's Imports from Pakistan and the Rest of the World

Turkmenistan ranked as the fifth-largest importing country within the Central Asian Republics (CARs) in terms of imports from Pakistan. The trade pattern indicates a high degree of dependence on global suppliers, with Pakistan capturing only a marginal portion of Turkmenistan's import demand.

Soap and organic surface-active products (HS 340120) constitute one of the main items imported by Turkmenistan from Pakistan. In 2024, Turkmenistan imported approximately USD 1.59 million worth of soap from the world, while imports from Pakistan stood at about USD 0.54 million.

For cane or beet sugar and chemically pure sucrose (HS 170199), Turkmenistan imported USD 22.45 million from the world in 2024, but imports from Pakistan were only USD 0.29 million. Given Pakistan's strong global exports in this category (USD 342.18 million).

Similarly, in the case of medicaments (HS 300490), Turkmenistan imported approximately USD 70.41 million from global markets in 2024, while imports from Pakistan were just USD 0.18 million. Despite Pakistan's substantial global exports of pharmaceuticals (USD 202.84 million).

The detailed product-wise analysis is illustrated in the following table.

Table 6.7: Turkmenistan's Imports from Pakistan and the Rest of the World

HS Code	Commodity	Turkmenistan's imports from Pakistan			Pakistan's exports to world			Turkmenistan's imports from world		
		2022 $ in Million	2023 $ in Million	2024 $ in Million	2022 $ in Million	2023 $ in Million	2024 $ in Million	2022 $ in Million	2023 $ in Million	2024 $ in Million
	Total Imports $ in Billion	**0.001**	**0.002**	**0.002**	**31.18**	**28.95**	**32.46**	**4.94**	**5.27**	**5.66**
340120	Soap in the form of flakes, granules, powder, paste or in aqueous solution	0.42	0.52	0.54	20.01	12.12	11.42	1.62	1.20	1.59
284700	Hydrogen peroxide, whether or not solidified with urea	0.35	0.06	0.41	2.88	1.10	1.32	4.97	2.69	3.19
170199	Cane or beet sugar and chemically pure sucrose, in solid form (excl. cane and beet sugar containing ...	-----	0.82	0.29	0.00	126.63	342.18	37.36	46.95	22.45
300490	Medicaments consisting of mixed or unmixed products for therapeutic or prophylactic purposes, ...	0.12	0.15	0.18	145.25	138.88	202.84	59.06	66.50	70.41
090210	Green tea in immediate packings of <= 3 kg	-----	-----	0.12	0.78	0.74	1.16	0.98	1.48	0.96
300320	Medicaments containing antibiotics, not in measured doses or put up for retail sale (excl. ...	-----	-----	0.08	0.02	0.05	0.45	-----	0.02	0.09
300390	Medicaments consisting of two or more constituents mixed together for therapeutic or prophylactic ...	-----	0.03	0.05	6.03	2.18	3.43	0.20	0.16	0.10
701010	Glass ampoules	-----	-----	0.04	-----	-----	0.04	0.001	-----	0.04
300439	Medicaments containing hormones or steroids used as hormones but not antibiotics, put up in ...	0.20	0.00	0.04	108.60	116.89	147.73	2.03	0.42	2.10
090230	Black fermented tea and partly fermented tea, whether or not flavoured, in immediate packings ...	-----	-----	0.03	10.44	11.93	15.25	1.32	1.86	1.72
200919	Orange juice, unfermented, whether or not containing added sugar or other sweetening matter ...	-----	-----	0.01	4.80	3.93	6.48	0.03	0.25	0.01
300410	Medicaments containing penicillins or derivatives thereof with a penicillanic acid structure, ...	-----	-----	0.01	9.72	8.83	11.67	1.61	1.99	2.30
901890	Instruments and appliances used in medical, surgical or veterinary sciences, n.e.s.	-----	0.04	0.01	445.15	448.68	446.63	13.19	9.18	17.02

HS Code	Commodity	Turkmenistan's imports from Pakistan			Pakistan's exports to world			Turkmenistan's imports from world		
		2022 $ in Million	2023 $ in Million	2024 $ in Million	2022 $ in Million	2023 $ in Million	2024 $ in Million	2022 $ in Million	2023 $ in Million	2024 $ in Million
	Total Imports $ in Billion	**0.001**	**0.002**	**0.002**	**31.18**	**28.95**	**32.46**	**4.94**	**5.27**	**5.66**
250100	Salts, incl. table salt and denatured salt, and pure sodium chloride, whether or not in aqueous ...	-----	-----	0.01	69.32	52.74	76.77	0.07	0.10	0.15
250810	Bentonite	-----	-----	-----	0.13	0.30	0.24	0.03	0.07	0.06
251741	Marble granules, chippings and powder, whether or not heat-treated	-----	-----	-----	0.15	0.10	0.10	0.24	0.27	0.16
252220	Slaked lime	-----	-----	-----	0.03	0.04	0.07	0.01	0.06	0.01
252230	Hydraulic lime (excl. pure calcium oxide and calcium hydroxide)	-----	-----	-----	0.10	0.01	0.01	0.002	0.01	-----
252310	Cement clinkers	-----	-----	-----	49.55	108.43	148.77	0.01	0.12	-----
252390	Cement, whether or not coloured (excl. portland cement and aluminous cement)	-----	-----	-----	-----	0.01	-----	-----	-----	0.02
260111	Non-agglomerated iron ores and concentrates (excl. roasted iron pyrites)	-----	-----	-----	-----	18.04	42.11	0.32	0.91	0.65
260200	Manganese ores and concentrates, incl. ferruginous manganese ores and concentrates, with a ...	-----	-----	-----	-----	0.03	0.39	0.08	0.00	-----
270400	Coke and semi-coke of coal, of lignite or of peat, whether or not agglomerated; retort carbon	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	0.00	0.00	0.02	-----
271500	Bituminous mastics, cut-backs and other bituminous mixtures based on natural asphalt, on natural ...	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	0.00	0.39	0.47	0.16
271600	Electrical energy	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	0.02	0.00	0.00

Source: ITC

6.5: Imports of Russian Federation from Pakistan and the rest of the World

This section examines the import patterns of the Russian Federation from Pakistan in comparison with its imports from the rest of the world. The analysis aims to identify product-wise export opportunities for Pakistan in the Russian market by highlighting the gap between Russia's total import demand and Pakistan's current export supply. By comparing Russia's imports with Pakistan's global export performance in selected products, this section provides insights into potential areas where Pakistan could enhance its market presence in Russia. The detailed product-level analysis is presented in the following section.

6.5.1: Imports of Russian Federation from Pakistan and the World

The 2024 trade data reveal a significant disparity between Russian Federation imports from Pakistan and its imports from the rest of the world, despite Pakistan being an active exporter of the same products globally. This highlights untapped export potential for Pakistan in Russian markets.

Articles of apparel (HS 420310) represent a major import item for the Russian Federation. In 2024, the Russian Federation imported approximately USD 56.35 million worth of Articles of apparel from the world, while imports from Pakistan remained limited at around USD 17.19 million. In contrast, Pakistan's global exports of Articles of apparel exceeded USD 223.62 million.

A similar gap is evident in Instruments and appliances used in medical, surgical or veterinary sciences, n.e.s (HS 901890). The Russian Federation imported approximately USD 809.75 million from the world in 2024, while imports from Pakistan were limited to USD 7.66 million. During the same year, Pakistan exported USD 446.63 million worth of Medical Instruments and appliances to the world.

Further detailed export opportunities for Pakistan in Russian markets across additional products and goods are presented in the following table.

Table 6.8: Imports of The Russian Federation from Pakistan and the World

HS Code	Commodity	Russian Federation Imports from Pakistan			Pakistan's exports to the world			Russian Federation's imports from the world		
		2022 $ in Million	2023 $ in Million	2024 $ in Million	2022 $ in Million	2023 $ in Million	2024 $ in Million	2022 $ in Million	2023 $ in Million	2024 $ in Million
	Total Imports $ in Billion	**0.08**	**0.09**	**0.07**	**31.18**	**28.95**	**32.46**	**199.39**	**219.07**	**211.22**
420310	Articles of apparel, of leather or composition leather (excl. clothing accessories, footware ...	8.80	23.83	17.19	284.81	240.79	223.62	51.72	71.55	56.35
620322	Men's or boys' ensembles of cotton (excl. knitted or crocheted, ski ensembles and swimwear)	1.60	2.13	10.69	2043.71	1436.06	1980.74	19.75	26.44	33.68
901890	Instruments and appliances used in medical, surgical or veterinary sciences, n.e.s.	5.45	10.97	7.66	445.15	448.68	446.63	880.89	812.02	809.75
100630	Semi-milled or wholly milled rice, whether or not polished or glazed	1.78	1.63	4.37	1,715.22	2,125.80	3,260.55	101.54	100.68	115.11
520942	Denim, containing >= 85% cotton by weight and weighing > 200 g/m², made of yarn of different ...	2.62	6.66	2.20	489.82	429.66	508.81	66.03	18.41	7.35
950662	Inflatable balls	2.15	2.88	1.90	236.71	235.79	248.28	18.79	34.23	29.09

HS Code	Commodity	Russian Federation Imports from Pakistan			Pakistan's exports to the world			Russian Federation's imports from the world		
		2022 $ in Million	2023 $ in Million	2024 $ in Million	2022 $ in Million	2023 $ in Million	2024 $ in Million	2022 $ in Million	2023 $ in Million	2024 $ in Million
	Total Imports $ in Billion	**0.08**	**0.09**	**0.07**	**31.18**	**28.95**	**32.46**	**199.39**	**219.07**	**211.22**
080521	Fresh or dried mandarins incl. tangerines and satsumas (excl. clementines)	7.26	5.56	1.84	28.22	24.52	24.95	434.31	448.67	490.83
611610	Gloves, mittens and mitts, impregnated, coated, covered or laminated with plastics or rubber, ...	1.68	2.22	1.72	232.71	229.93	242.89	55.30	64.16	59.05
420329	Gloves, mittens and mitts, of leather or composition leather (excl. special sports gloves)	0.75	2.20	1.29	299.13	273.29	308.31	69.19	66.88	49.55
821420	Manicure or pedicure sets and instruments, incl. nail files, of base metal (excl. ordinary ...	0.53	0.37	1.17	20.32	17.79	22.08	13.26	14.81	13.62
620342	Men's or boys' trousers, bib and brace overalls, breeches and shorts, of cotton (excl. knitted ...	0.15	0.07	1.16	574.06	652.07	584.62	221.59	304.17	266.21
521011	Plain woven fabrics of cotton, containing predominantly, but < 85% cotton by weight, mixed ...	0.43	1.24	1.08	77.76	41.76	36.73	1.10	1.83	1.39
630231	Bedlinen of cotton (excl. printed, knitted or crocheted)	1.43	0.67	1.05	1121.20	1157.02	1359.60	39.54	40.95	40.60
521019	Woven fabrics of cotton, containing predominantly, but < 85% cotton by weight, mixed principally ...	1.64	2.41	1.05	31.35	22.61	27.51	1.68	2.47	1.11
520512	Single cotton yarn, of uncombed fibres, containing >= 85% cotton by weight and with a linear ...	0.44	0.95	0.97	491.09	600.90	335.60	184.27	137.93	123.23
250100	Salts, incl. table salt and denatured salt, and pure sodium chloride, whether or not in aqueous ...	0.24	0.51	0.61	69.32	52.74	76.77	57.53	39.63	43.37
070190	Fresh or chilled potatoes (excl. seed)	2.99	3.31	0.60	216.53	140.43	138.26	202.91	98.60	83.56
610590	Men's or boys' shirts of textile materials, knitted or crocheted (excl. of cotton or man-made ...	0.00	0.01	0.57	516.87	379.03	412.51	1.64	4.45	3.92
080529	Fresh or dried wilkings and similar citrus hybrids	9.72	1.63	0.50	86.35	49.96	62.65	43.12	27.72	43.61
610349	Men's or boys' trousers, bib and brace overalls, breeches and shorts of textile materials, ...	0.36	1.35	0.50	489.82	355.24	439.37	4.92	7.58	6.26
420321	Specially designed gloves for use in sport, of leather or composition leather	1.07	1.40	0.47	77.24	58.95	59.02	2.32	2.47	1.57
520612	Single cotton yarn containing predominantly, but < 85% cotton by weight, of uncombed fibres ...	0.33	0.45	0.42	14.08	6.82	6.37	30.58	22.48	18.44
611693	Gloves, mittens and mitts, of synthetic fibres, knitted or crocheted (excl. impregnated, coated, ...	0.06	0.56	0.42	25.15	20.67	28.63	76.26	57.26	45.59
611090	Jerseys, pullovers, cardigans, waistcoats and similar articles, of textile materials, knitted ...	0.12	1.18	0.39	857.43	598.89	669.80	17.10	17.22	16.19
630239	Bedlinen of textile materials (excl. of cotton and man-made fibres, printed, knitted or crocheted)	1.12	0.84	0.38	962.08	879.85	951.65	2.67	4.51	5.22

Source: ITC

6.6: Pakistan's Export Opportunities, Potential, and Comparison of Key Economic Indicators with Central Asia and Russia (2024)

The Central Asian Republics (CARs)—Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan—represent an emerging regional market with a combined GDP of approximately $480–500 billion. Collectively, these economies account for around 0.4%–0.5% of global GDP, based on an estimated global GDP of $111.11 trillion in 2024[11]. Although the region represents a relatively small share of the global economy, it offers important opportunities for Pakistan due to its geographic proximity, growing population, and increasing demand for imported goods.

According to the data presented in Table 6.9, Pakistan's current exports to the Central Asian Republics remain modest. However, the total export potential for Pakistan in CARs is estimated at approximately $436 million, compared to current exports of about $202 million, indicating that a substantial portion of the potential market remains untapped. Among the CAR economies, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan represent the largest opportunities, with export potential estimated at $210 million and $187 million respectively. Kazakhstan's relatively high GDP per capita of around $14,000 and a GDP size of $288 billion indicate stronger purchasing power and demand for higher-value products.

In addition to Central Asia, Russia represents a significantly larger economic market within the broader Eurasian region. Russia's nominal GDP is approximately $2.09 trillion, accounting for about 1.9% of global GDP, which is substantially larger than the combined economies of the Central Asian Republics. With a population of over 143 million and a GDP per capita exceeding $14,400, Russia offers strong purchasing power and a sizeable consumer market. The table indicates that Pakistan's current exports to Russia amount to approximately $68.6 million, while the estimated export potential is around $142 million, suggesting considerable room for expansion.

Table 6.9: Pakistan's Export Potential and Key Economic Indicators (2024)

Countries	Pakistan Exports ($ in Million)	Pakistan Exports Potential ($ in Million)	GDP ($ in Billion)	GDP PCI USD	Population (Million)
Pakistan	.....	.....	380.04	1,512.50	251.27
Uzbekistan	103.65	187.00	101.81	2,800.03	36.36
Kazakhstan	41.87	210.00	288.44	14,006.97	20.59
Tajikistan	41.13	25.00	13.72	1,295.38	10.59
Kyrgyzstan	14.24	13.00	16.10	2,240.27	7.22
Turkmenistan	1.82	1.9.00	65.96	8,800.88	7.49
Russian Federation	68.64	142.00	2,091.56	14,442.46	143.53

Source: ITC & WDI

11: IMF-based global GDP data: https://statisticstimes.com/economy/world-gdp.php

6.7: Challenges in Trade between Pakistan, the Central Asian Republics & Russia

Deteriorating security situation in Afghanistan:

The security environment in Afghanistan remains highly unstable, with a reported 9 percent increase in insecurity compared to the previous year. The rise in terrorist activities, particularly by the Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISKP) in northern Afghanistan, poses a serious threat to regional connectivity. This is especially concerning as the viability of trade corridors linking Pakistan to Central Asia depends heavily on security in northern Afghanistan, which serves as a key transit route[12].

Escalation of militant violence along northern trade corridors:

The increase in terrorist attacks in northern Afghanistan, including incidents in Kabul and adjacent regions, has heightened risks for cross-border movement of goods. Persistent violent extremism undermines investor confidence, transit reliability, and logistics planning. This constrains Pakistan's ability to utilize Afghanistan as a stable transit corridor for trade with Central Asian Republics[13].

Cross-Border Tensions and Regional Security Risks Affecting Trade Routes

Recent cross-border tensions between Pakistan and Afghanistan have resulted in temporary border closures, disrupting trade flows and delaying the movement of essential goods and supplies[14]. Although both countries have initiated dialogue to address concerns related to cross-border militancy, with mediation support from Qatar and Türkiye, progress remains limited and the issue continues to pose a serious challenge. In addition, the presence and activities of militant groups such as the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) along the Afghanistan–Pakistan border and in northern Afghanistan have further weakened the regional security environment, increased uncertainty and undermined the reliability of trade corridors linking Pakistan with Central Asia.

Financing Constraints and Institutional Challenges

In addition to security challenges, the infrastructure projects required for smooth trade face serious financing constraints due to its high estimated cost of USD 4.8–7 billion and the absence of firm commitments from major international financial institutions. This financing gap poses a significant risk to the project's timely implementation. While institutions such as the World Bank, ADB, and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) are potential financiers, only the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) has expressed willingness to engage through its RISE (Regional Infrastructure Supranational Entity) model based on building supranational infrastructure development mechanism which acts complementary to national development strengths[15]. Moreover, Afghanistan's lack of international recognition and ongoing sanctions further complicate financing by restricting asset utilization and investment flows.

Collapse of Transit Trade and Regional Connectivity

Transit trade through Pakistan to Afghanistan and onward to Central Asia has collapsed dramatically, with truck movements falling from around 100,000 annually before 2023 to only a few thousand in 2025. Trade with Uzbekistan has nearly halted, undermining Pakistan's credibility as a reliable transit corridor and encouraging regional partners to seek alternative routes[16].

12. ISKP Attacks Fall but Violence in Afghanistan Increases, Says UN Chief Afghanistan International, September 13, 2025, https://www.afintl.com/en/202509134457
13. ISKP Shifts Focus to Northern Afghanistan," Centre for Information Resilience, March 31, 2025, https://www.info-res.org/reports/iskp-shifts-focus-to-northern-afghanistan/.
14. Abuzar Afridi, "Border Closure Halts Bilateral Transit Trade," The Express Tribune, October 20, 2025, https://tribune.com.pk/story/2573196/border-closure-halts-bilateral-transit-trade.
15. RISE for Possible Financing of Trans-Afghanistan Regional Railway Project," March 28, 2021, https://www.isdb.org/hub/almaty/news/rise-for-possible-financing-of-trans-afghanistan-regional-railway-project.
16. Weaponizing the border and trade won't help https://crss.pk/weaponizing-the-border-and-trade-wont-help/?utm_source=chatgpt.com.

Loss of Export Markets and Trade Volumes

Disruptions in transit and bilateral trade have contributed to a sharp contraction in Pakistan's export volumes to Afghanistan and Central Asian markets, particularly in sectors like cement, pharmaceuticals, and perishable agricultural products. Projections suggest continued closures could shrink total bilateral trade to under $800 million by the end of this fiscal year. Further, added that Pakistan's exports, particularly cement, pharmaceuticals, and perishable food items, have declined by 35% year-on-year[17].

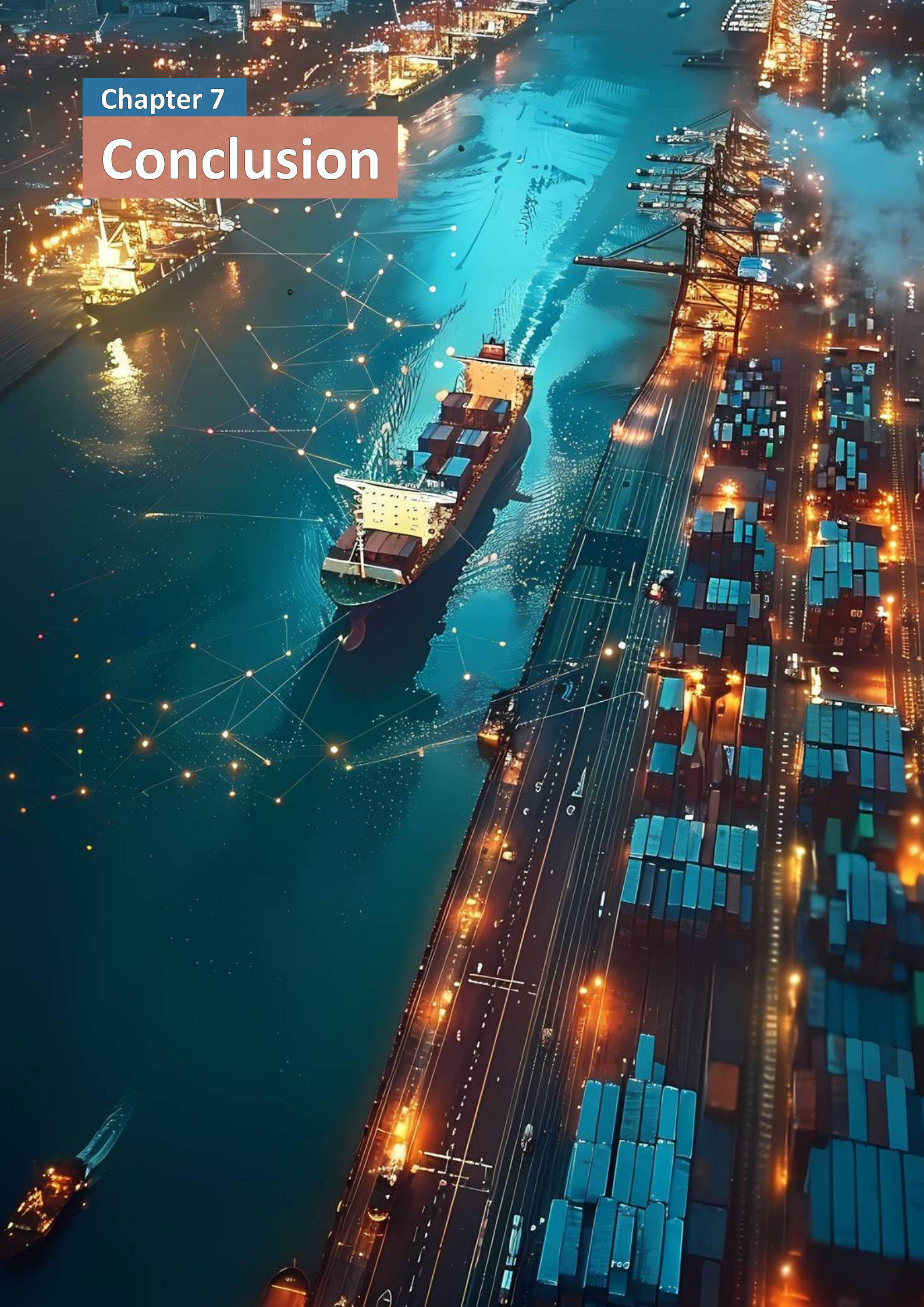
Pakistani Exporters face payment issue in the Afghan and Central Asian Markets:

One of the major challenges faced by Pakistani exporters in the Afghan and Central Asian markets is the restriction on the amount of money an individual can bring back to Pakistan. Currently, an exporter is allowed to bring only $5,000 USD per person. This creates a significant issue for businesses dealing in large transactions[18].

Diversion of Trade to Competing Routes

Uncertainty and recurrent border closures have prompted Afghan importers to shift trade routes to alternatives such as Iran's Chabahar port and other Central Asian corridors. This diversion erodes Pakistan's competitive advantage as a transit hub and diminishes long-term revenue from logistics, freight, and customs activities[19.]

17. Trade with Afghanistan plummets by 45% amid terrorism challenges, Dec 15, 2025, https://tradechr.onicle.com/trade-with-afghanistan-plummets-by-45-amid-terrorism-challenges-mian-zahid-hussain/?utm_source=chatgpt.com.
18. Pakistan-Afghanistan Bilateral Trade & Afghanistan's Trade with Other Regional Countries, May, 2025, https://www.pbc.org.pk/wp-content/uploads/Pak-Afghanistan-Bilateral-Trade.pdf.
19. Trade with Afghanistan plummets by 45% amid terrorism challenges



Chapter 7

Conclusion

Conclusion

This study provides a comprehensive assessment of Pakistan's trade potential with Afghanistan, Central Asia, and Russia by examining trade patterns, transport corridors, and regional connectivity frameworks. Drawing on multidimensional secondary data sources—including international trade databases, route mapping, and policy reviews—the analysis highlights Pakistan's strategic geographic position as a natural gateway linking South Asia with Central Asia and Russia.

The findings indicate that Pakistan possesses significant untapped potential to serve as a regional transit hub, particularly through land and rail corridors connecting Afghanistan, the Central Asian Republics & Russia. Comparative analysis of road, rail, and sea routes demonstrates that overland and rail-based connectivity offers substantial time advantages for regional trade. These routes provide the shortest distance and fastest transit times for trade with Afghanistan and Central Asia and are particularly suitable for time-sensitive, perishable, and smaller-volume cargo. In contrast, sea routes remain relevant for long-distance and bulk shipments to destinations such as Russia. However, the effectiveness of these corridors is constrained by infrastructure gaps, border inefficiencies, and regulatory bottlenecks.

Pakistan's transit trade with Afghanistan, Central Asia, and beyond presents a strategic opportunity to enhance regional integration, generate logistics-related revenues, and support export-led growth. Realizing this potential will depend on targeted policy reforms, infrastructure optimization, and sustained regional cooperation. By addressing existing constraints and leveraging its geographic advantage, Pakistan can play a pivotal role in facilitating trade across the wider Eurasian region.

The analysis of trade opportunities reveals considerable scope for expanding Pakistan's exports to the Central Asian Republics. Significant market gaps exist in high-potential sectors such as pharmaceuticals, agricultural products, textiles, processed foods, sports goods, and light engineering products. Despite Pakistan's strong global export capacity in many of these categories, its market share in the CARs remains limited. Countries such as Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan present promising opportunities for export diversification and market penetration, particularly in medicaments, citrus fruits, rice, sugar, garments, and selected industrial goods. These findings indicate that Pakistan can substantially enhance its trade presence in the region by aligning its export strategy with the CAR countries import demand.

The study further highlights substantial export opportunities for Pakistan in the Russian market. Analysis of Russia's import structure shows a significant gap between its imports from the world and imports from Pakistan in several product categories where Pakistan already has strong global export capacity. For instance, Russia imports large volumes of articles of apparel and medical and surgical instruments from the global market, while Pakistan's share in these imports remains relatively small despite being a competitive global exporter of these products. This disparity indicates considerable untapped export potential for Pakistan in Russia. Strengthening trade linkages, improving market access, and promoting Pakistani products in the Russian market could help bridge this gap and significantly expand bilateral trade.

A comparative assessment of economic indicators and export potential across Central Asia and Russia further reinforces the scope for Pakistan's export expansion. Although the Central Asian Republics collectively represent a relatively small share of the global economy, their geographic proximity and growing demand for imported goods present important opportunities for Pakistan. The estimated export potential of approximately $436 million in CARs—compared with current exports of about $202 million—suggests that a significant portion of the market remains untapped. Among these economies, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan

offer the largest opportunities due to their relatively larger economic size, higher purchasing power, and expanding consumer markets. At the same time, Russia, with a GDP of over $2 trillion, a population exceeding 143 million, and higher per capita income, represents an even larger and more lucrative market in the Eurasian region. Pakistan's current exports to Russia remain relatively low compared with the estimated export potential, indicating substantial room for growth through improved market access and stronger trade engagement.

At the same time, the study highlights several structural and operational challenges that constrain the realization of this potential. These include limited trade facilitation mechanisms, weak logistics and warehousing infrastructure, high transit and transportation costs, inconsistent customs procedures, and limited banking and financial connectivity. In addition, inadequate market intelligence, lack of product standardization, compliance issues, and limited business-to-business linkages further restrict Pakistan's export competitiveness in the Central Asian and Russian markets. Political uncertainties, security concerns along transit routes, and evolving regional trade dynamics also pose risks to sustained trade expansion.

Chapter 8

Policy Recommendation

Policy Recommendation

This chapter presents key policy recommendations aimed at strengthening Pakistan's role as a regional transit and trade hub linking Afghanistan, Central Asia, and Russia. Drawing on the study's analysis of trade patterns, transit corridors, and infrastructure constraints, it outlines priority actions to improve border management, logistics and transport infrastructure, institutional coordination, and regional cooperation. The recommendations focus on enhancing corridor efficiency, reducing trade costs, diversifying transit routes, and aligning transit development with Pakistan's broader trade and export competitiveness objectives.

Strengthening Transit Trade Governance and Institutional Coordination

One of the key constraints identified in the study is weak institutional coordination across agencies responsible for transit trade, including customs, border management authorities, transport departments, and trade-related institutions. To address this, Pakistan should establish a dedicated National Transit Trade Coordination Body under a central authority. This mechanism should ensure alignment between federal and provincial stakeholders, harmonize transit regulations, and streamline decision-making related to regional connectivity initiatives. Clear institutional ownership will reduce policy fragmentation and improve the efficiency of transit trade operations.

Improving Border Management and Customs Facilitation

Border crossings such as Torkham, Chaman, Ghulam Khan, and emerging terminals like Zhob Kamr-Ud-Din Karez and Badini Trade Terminal remain critical bottlenecks. The government needs to prioritize modernizing border infrastructure by expanding cargo handling capacity, introducing risk-based inspections, and fully implementing digital customs clearance systems. Implement the use of electronic documentation, pre-arrival processing, lower transaction costs, and enhance the reliability of Pakistan's transit corridors.

Upgrading Transport and Logistics Infrastructure

The study highlights that while Pakistan possesses extensive road and rail networks, gaps in intermodal connectivity and logistics services reduce corridor efficiency. Policy efforts should focus on upgrading key road corridors, particularly those linking border terminals with national highways and ports. In parallel, investment in rail freight infrastructure, dry ports, and logistics hubs along major transit routes is essential to support bulk trade and long-haul cargo movement towards Central Asia, , and Russia. Public–private partnerships can play a critical role in accelerating these investments.

Enhancing Regional Transit Agreements and Trade Diplomacy

Pakistan's transit trade potential depends heavily on effective regional cooperation. The government should actively strengthen and operationalize existing transit and trade agreements with Afghanistan, Central Asian Republics, Iran, China, Turkey, and Russia. This includes improving implementation of bilateral and regional frameworks, addressing non-tariff barriers, and promoting mutual recognition of standards and transit documents. Stronger trade diplomacy will help position Pakistan as a trusted and reliable transit partner within Eurasian connectivity networks.

Promoting Alternate and Secure Transit Corridors

Given geopolitical uncertainties and operational risks associated with certain routes, Pakistan should pursue a diversified corridor strategy. While Afghanistan remains a primary gateway to Central Asia, alternative routes via China and Iran should be further developed to ensure continuity of trade flows. Investing in multiple corridors enhances resilience, reduces dependency on a single route, and strengthens Pakistan's bargaining position in regional trade negotiations.

Leveraging Digitalization and Corridor Intelligence

To enhance planning and monitoring, Pakistan needs to invest in corridor intelligence systems that integrate trade data, route mapping, and logistics performance indicators. Using digital platforms, satellite mapping, and real-time tracking can help improve transparency, reduce uncertainty for traders, and support evidence-based policymaking. Such systems will also help identify emerging bottlenecks and guide future infrastructure and regulatory reforms.

Supporting Export Competitiveness through Transit Trade

Transit trade should be viewed not only as a service for landlocked countries but also as a tool to boost Pakistan's own exports. Policies should align transit development with export promotion strategies, focusing on reducing transport costs, improving delivery times, and expanding market access for Pakistani goods in Central Asia, Russia, and beyond. Special attention should be given to sectors with high regional demand, including agriculture, textiles, construction materials, and light manufacturing.

Ensuring Sustainability and Long-Term Regional Integration

Finally, transit trade policies should be embedded within a broader vision of sustainable regional integration. Promoting environmentally efficient transport modes, improving road safety, and encouraging inclusive development along transit corridors will enhance long-term benefits. By fostering economic interdependence through trade and connectivity, Pakistan can contribute to regional stability while securing durable economic gains.

Promote Dialogue over Coercive Measures

Sustainable security outcomes are more likely to be achieved through diplomatic engagement, regional cooperation, and economic interdependence, rather than weaponizing borders, which tends to inflict greater long-term economic and strategic costs on all sides.

Ensuring Continuity of Export and Transit Trade

Pakistan should adopt a trade-continuity policy that safeguards exports and transit trade even during periods of political or security tensions. This may include keeping designated trade corridors operational under enhanced security protocols, fast-tracking customs clearance for perishable and time-sensitive goods, and introducing contingency transit arrangements for key export sectors such as cement, pharmaceuticals, and agricultural products. Ensuring uninterrupted trade flows would help prevent further contraction of export volumes, protect Pakistan's market share in Afghanistan and Central Asia, and avoid long-term losses in bilateral trade, which is projected to fall below $800 million if disruptions persist.

More Formal Payment Channels:

To overcome the challenge of limited formal banking channels between Pakistan and Afghanistan, the government should focus on establishing direct banking linkages through bilateral agreements and promoting the use of digital payment platforms for cross-border trade. Encouraging banks to open correspondent accounts and offering incentives for financial institutions to operate in the region can help reduce reliance on informal systems like hawala.

References

References

OpenStreetMap https://umap.openstreetmap.fr/en/map/new/#5/33.983/52.075

GPS Visualizer https://www.gpsvisualizer.com/draw/

OpenRailwayMap https://www.openrailwaymap.org/

GoogleMap https://www.google.com/maps/@47.105887,50.1949377,8z/data=!5m1!1e2?entry=ttu&g_ep=egoymdi1mtayos4yikxmdsoasafqaw%3d%3d

Russia's Pivot to Asia https://russiaspivottoasia.com/russia-pakistan-direct-rail-freight-service-to-begin-in-march/

Regional Connectivity – Trans Afghan Railway: Game Plan for Pakistan, https://stratheia.com/regional-connectivity-trans-afghan-railway-game-plan-for-pakistan/

Streamline Supply Chain https://streamlinesupplychain.wordpress.com/tag/pakistan/

Institute of Contemporary Islamic Thought (ICIT) https://crescent.icit digital.org/articles/connectivity-the-new-buzzword-to-promote-trade-between-pakistan iran-and-turkey

Google My Maps https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=1b1-fEQAvTJHqbRTEu_FRHjSZeJ7X8Fc&ll=31.655090067470955%2C68.27922196519425&z=9

Google Earth https://earth.google.com web/@31.78554383,67.246479,-0a,431003.7540836d,30y,360h,0t,0r/data=CgRCAggCMigKJgokCiAxYjEtZkVRQXZUSkhxYlJURXVfRlJIalNaZUo3WDhGYyACOgMKATBCAggASggIjIaY_AcQAQ?authuser=0

Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) https://unece.org/DAM/trans/doc/2010/wp5/ECE-TRANS-WP5-GE2-04_ECO_MKahagh.pdf?utm_source=chatgpt.com

The Uzbekistan–Afghanistan–Pakistan (UAP) Railway: A Bridge to Geoeconomics https://issi.org.pk/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/IB_Asma_Siddiq_Dec_24_2025.pdf

ISKP Attacks Fall but Violence in Afghanistan Increases, Says UN Chief Afghanistan International, September 13, 2025, https://www.afintl.com/en/202509134457

Second Sight-Pakistan: Q3 Terror Surge," South Asia Terrorism Portal, Oct 7, 2025, https://satp.org/second-sight-volume-2-no-30.

Abuzar Afridi, "Border Closure Halts Bilateral Transit Trade," The Express Tribune, October 20, 2025, https://tribune.com.pk/story/2573196/border-closure-halts-bilateral-transit-trade.

RISE for Possible Financing of Trans-Afghanistan Regional Railway Project," March 28, 2021, https://www.isdb.org/hub/almaty/news/rise-for-possible-financing-of-trans-afghanistan-regional-railway-project.

The Pakistan Business Council

FOSTERING ECONOMIC GROWTH

(A Company set up under Section 42 of the Companies Ordinance 1984)

8th Floor, Dawood Centre, M.T. Khan Road,
Karachi, Pakistan

+92 21 3563 0528-29

+92 21 3563 0530

2nd Floor, 1-E (South) Jinnah Avenue,
Blue Area, Islamabad, Pakistan

+92 51 8444 008

+92 51 8444 009

www.pbc.org.pk