



## THE BENEFITS AND HARMS OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE UZBEKISTAN-CHINA RAILWAY FOR UZBEKISTAN

Azizbek B.Khoshimov

Student of University of world economy and diplomacy,  
Department of International Relations  
azizbek.xoshimov@gmail.com  
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**Abstract:** The construction of the Uzbekistan-China Railway has been considered a significant project for both Uzbekistan and China. This railway project will connect the two countries and provide easier access to the markets in China. The benefits of this project for Uzbekistan include increased trade, economic growth, and job opportunities. However, the construction of this railway also has potential harms, including environmental damage and cultural impacts. This paper examines the benefits and harms of the Uzbekistan-China Railway for Uzbekistan, concluding that the benefits outweigh the harms.

**Keywords:** Uzbekistan-China Railway, benefits, harms, trade, economic growth, job opportunities, environmental damage, cultural impacts, regional integration, Chinese market, Uzbek market, trade diversification, logistics, geopolitical risks, security concerns, financial risks.

### Introduction:

The construction<sup>1</sup> of the Uzbekistan-China Railway has been a significant project for both Uzbekistan and China. The railway will connect the two countries and provide easier access to the markets in China. This project has been considered a significant step towards enhancing the economic and trade relations between the two countries. The construction of this railway has the potential to bring numerous benefits to Uzbekistan, including increased trade, economic growth, and job opportunities. However, there are also potential harms associated with the construction of this railway, including environmental damage and cultural impacts. This paper examines the benefits and harms of the Uzbekistan-China Railway for Uzbekistan, concluding that the benefits outweigh the harms.

### Benefits of the Uzbekistan-China Railway for Uzbekistan:

The Uzbekistan-China Railway is expected to bring a wide range of benefits to Uzbekistan, including increased trade, economic growth, and job opportunities. Firstly, the railway will provide Uzbekistan with easier access<sup>2</sup> to the markets in China. This will enable Uzbekistan to export its goods to China more easily, which will help to increase the volume of trade between the two countries. This increased trade will lead to economic growth for Uzbekistan, as it will create new opportunities for businesses and increase tax revenues for the government.

Secondly, the construction of the Uzbekistan-China Railway will create job opportunities for the people of Uzbekistan. The railway project will require a significant amount of labor,

<sup>1</sup> The Diplomat. (2021). Uzbekistan-China Railway Project Inches Forward. Retrieved from <https://thediplomat.com/2021/07/uzbekistan-china-railway-project-inches-forward/>

<sup>2</sup> "Uzbekistan's New Railway to China Boosts Regional Trade Prospects" by The Jamestown Foundation

which will provide employment opportunities for the local population. This will help to reduce unemployment in Uzbekistan and improve the standard of living for its citizens.

Finally, the Uzbekistan-China Railway will help to improve the infrastructure<sup>3</sup> in Uzbekistan. The construction of the railway will require the development of new roads, bridges, and other infrastructure, which will help to improve the connectivity of Uzbekistan. This improved connectivity will make it easier for businesses to transport their goods across the country, which will help to promote economic growth.

Increased trade<sup>4</sup>: The construction of the Uzbekistan-China Railway will provide Uzbekistan with easier access to the Chinese market, which is one of the largest in the world.

Economic growth<sup>5</sup>: The increased trade between Uzbekistan and China will lead to economic growth for Uzbekistan. This will create new opportunities for businesses and increase tax revenues for the government, which can be used to fund infrastructure projects and social programs.

Regional integration<sup>6</sup>: The railway project will also help to promote regional integration and cooperation between Uzbekistan and other countries in the region, for example Kyrgyzstan.

Increased connectivity: The construction of the railway will increase connectivity between Uzbekistan and China, which will facilitate the movement of goods and people between the two countries. This will help to boost economic activity and promote regional integration.

Trade diversification<sup>7</sup>: The railway will provide Uzbekistan with access to new markets in China, which will help to diversify its trade and reduce its dependence on traditional markets in Russia and other neighboring countries.

Improved logistics<sup>8</sup>: The railway will provide a more efficient and cost-effective means of transporting goods between Uzbekistan and China, which will help to reduce transport costs and improve logistics for businesses.

### **Harms of the Uzbekistan-China Railway for Uzbekistan:**

While the benefits of the Uzbekistan-China Railway are significant, there are also potential harms associated with the construction of this railway. Firstly, the construction of the railway may cause environmental damage. The railway will require the clearing of large amounts of land, which could lead to deforestation and other environmental issues. Additionally, the construction of the railway may lead to soil erosion and water pollution.

Secondly, the construction of the Uzbekistan-China Railway may have cultural impacts<sup>9</sup> on the local population. The railway will pass through areas that are home to many different ethnic groups, and the construction of the railway may disrupt the cultural traditions and way of life of these communities. Additionally, the railway may lead to the displacement of people from their homes and land.

3 "Uzbekistan-China railway project: Challenges and Opportunities" by Silk Road Briefing

4 "Uzbekistan-China railway project marks milestone in regional connectivity" by Xinhua

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9 "Uzbekistan-China railway project: Challenges and Opportunities" by Silk Road Briefing

Although the Uzbekistan-China Railway has the potential to bring numerous benefits to Uzbekistan, there are also potential harms associated with the construction of this railway, including environmental damage and cultural impacts. Despite these potential harms, the benefits of the Uzbekistan-China Railway outweigh the harms. Additionally, the railway will help to improve the infrastructure in Uzbekistan and promote economic growth.

**Cost:**<sup>10</sup> The construction of the railway is a massive project that will require significant investment from the Uzbekistani government and its partners. The cost of the project may be prohibitive, and there is a risk that it may not be completed on time or within budget.

**Security concerns:** The railway will pass through areas that are considered to be politically unstable, such as the Xinjiang province in China. There is a risk that the railway may become a target for.

**Financial risks:** The construction of the railway is a major investment that carries significant financial risks. The project may face cost overruns or delays, which could lead to financial losses for the government and its partners.

**Geopolitical risks:** The railway project is a part of China's Belt and Road Initiative, which has sparked concerns about China's growing influence in the region. Some experts have warned that the project could lead to a debt trap for Uzbekistan, where it becomes heavily indebted to China and loses control over its own infrastructure.

**Conclusion:**

The Uzbekistan-China Railway project has the potential to bring significant benefits to Uzbekistan, such as increased connectivity, trade diversification, and job creation. However, the project also carries risks, such as environmental damage, cultural impacts, security concerns, financial risks, and geopolitical risks. It is important for stakeholders to carefully consider these risks and take steps to mitigate them as much as possible.

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<sup>10</sup> Uzbekistan-China Railway: A New Silk Road?" by Eurasianet



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4. "Uzbekistan's New Railway to China Boosts Regional Trade Prospects" by The Jamestown Foundation

