



## MODERN PARADIGMS OF THE INTERNATIONAL ECONOMY: INTEGRATION AND DIVERGENCE

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**Abstract:** This article analyzes contemporary paradigms of international economics, focusing on the processes of integration and divergence. It explores the trends of interconnectedness and differentiation among states, regions, and economic systems in the context of globalization. The interplay of international trade, financial markets, and economic policy is examined to assess the economic, social, and political implications of integration and divergence. The study aims to identify pathways toward achieving global economic balance and sustainable development.

**Keywords:** International economy, modern paradigms, integration processes, divergence trends, globalization, regional economic integration, national economic security, transnational corporations, international trade system, economic sustainability.

**Introduction.** Modern Paradigms of International Economics in the Context of Globalization The study is aimed at examining the complex interactions among states, regions, and economic systems. In recent decades, although the processes of global economic integration have accelerated, divergence trends have also intensified due to disparities in national economic policies and the uneven distribution of resources. This article analyzes the processes of integration (the convergence of global economic systems) and divergence (economic differentiation and the separation of national interests) in international economics.

The purpose of the research is to identify the economic, social, and political consequences of these processes and to outline pathways toward achieving global economic balance and sustainable development. The article considers global economic dynamics in a broader context, based on the interplay of international trade, financial markets, and economic policy.

**Relevance of the Topic.** In today's global economy, where interdependence among countries is steadily increasing, new paradigms of international economic relations are taking shape. In particular, integration (economic convergence, cooperation, and unification) and divergence (the widening of development gaps and economic



separation) — two opposing but simultaneously existing processes — remain at the center of modern economic analysis.

Global challenges such as globalization, digital technologies, global supply chains, and climate change, as well as protectionism, geopolitical conflicts, and pandemics, have deeply influenced international economic relations. As a result, while some countries achieve stability through economic integration, others face the risk of lagging further behind in development — in other words, divergence.

At the same time, regional integration projects such as the European Union (EU), ASEAN, and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), alongside divergent tendencies like the U.S.–China economic rivalry, “deglobalization,” and “reshoring” (returning production to home countries), make the global economic landscape increasingly complex and multifaceted.

Therefore, the scientific analysis of modern paradigms of international economics — particularly the processes of integration and divergence — is relevant not only from a theoretical perspective but also for practical policy-making, ensuring sustainable development, and reducing global inequalities. Within this context, the study of the topic holds significant importance for both modern economic science and the practice of international relations.

**Research Methodology.** This study is dedicated to analyzing the modern paradigms of international economics, with particular emphasis on integration and divergence processes. The methodological framework is based on a mixed-methods approach, combining both theoretical analysis and empirical research grounded in practical data. First, at the theoretical level, analytical-synthetic, comparative-historical, and logical generalization methods were applied. This enabled an in-depth study of the concepts of integration and divergence in international economics, their stages of development, their role within the global economic system, and the transformations driven by modern factors such as globalization, digitalization, and geopolitical conflicts. A systems approach was also employed to identify not only the contradictions but also the interconnections between integration and divergence processes.

Second, at the empirical level, statistical analysis, case studies, and comparative analysis based on the data of international organizations (World Bank, International Monetary Fund, United Nations, and UNCTAD) were conducted. Particular attention was given to economic blocs in various regions (Europe, Asia, Africa, Latin America) — such as the EU, ASEAN, and AfCFTA — and their degree of integration. Furthermore, divergence was assessed through key economic indicators (GDP, trade volumes, investment flows, Human Development Index) comparing developed and



developing countries.

Additionally, qualitative analysis was applied to evaluate recent global economic trends — including “deglobalization,” the restructuring of global supply chains, and the transition to a green economy — in the context of integration and divergence. Thus, the study provides a comprehensive examination of integration and divergence paradigms in international economics, combining theoretical depth, statistical reliability, and practical examples. The results are significant from both a scientific and applied perspective.

**Analysis and Results.** The research findings reveal that integration and divergence processes in international economics occur simultaneously — sometimes reinforcing each other and sometimes moving in opposite directions.

In the field of integration, regional economic blocs such as the European Union (EU), the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) have achieved considerable progress in trade, investment, and infrastructure. For example, in 2023, intra-EU trade accounted for more than 65% of the bloc’s total external trade. Similarly, trade among ASEAN countries has doubled since 2010, reflecting the economic effectiveness of regional integration. Moreover, cooperation in digital trade and the green economy is emerging as new areas of integration.

However, divergence processes are also advancing significantly. According to World Bank data, between 2020 and 2023 the income gap between developed countries and the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) widened by 15%. In particular, several countries in Africa and South Asia, lacking full access to global supply chains, fell sharply behind in the recovery process following global crises such as the pandemic and wars. At the same time, technological divergence has been expanding: while advanced economies are making substantial investments in artificial intelligence, green technologies, and automation, many developing countries remain dependent on traditional industries.

Interestingly, certain integration projects themselves may generate divergence. For example, although the European Union has achieved high levels of integration in external trade, significant disparities persist among its member states — such as between Germany and Greece or Poland and Portugal — in terms of production efficiency, innovation capacity, and investment levels. This phenomenon gives rise to what is often termed “internal divergence.”

Moreover, geopolitical factors strongly influence the dynamics of integration and divergence. The U.S.–China economic rivalry has triggered the emergence of new



paradigms such as “friend-shoring” and “secure trade,” which pose the risk of fragmenting the global trading system into competing blocs. This, in turn, intensifies selective integration while simultaneously reinforcing large-scale divergence tendencies.

In general, in the contemporary international economy, both integration and divergence coexist, and their interplay is of decisive importance for global economic stability, equitable development, and security.

The research findings indicate that not only trade and investment, but also knowledge exchange, digital infrastructure, climate policy, and institutional quality play a crucial role in ensuring the sustainability of integration processes. Therefore, future policies should focus on these factors in order to reduce divergence and promote qualitative integration.

Xulosa. Zamonaviy xalqaro iqtisodiyotda integratsiya va divergensiya — nafaqat qarama-qarshi, balki bir-birini shartlovchi va bir vaqtning o‘zida rivojlanayotgan asosiy paradigmalardir. Ushbu tadqiqot natijalari shuni ko‘rsatdiki, global iqtisodiy tizim bugungi kunda murakkab, ko‘p qirrali va dinamik jarayonlarga duch kelmoqda: bir tomonidan, mintaqaviy birlashmalar, raqamli savdo hamda yashil iqtisodiyot orqali mamlakatlar o‘rtasidagi hamkorlik kengayib bormoqda; ikkinchi tomonidan, geosiyosiy to‘qnashuvlar, texnologik tengsizliklar hamda global inqirozlar natijasida rivojlanish farqi tobora kengayib, divergensiya xavfi ortib bormoqda.

Tahlil qilingan ma’lumotlar shuni tasdiqladiki, integratsiya faqat savdo yoki investitsiya hajmi bilan emas, balki institutsional barqarorlik, raqamli infratuzilma, inson kapitali hamda barqaror rivojlanish siyosatlari orqali barqaror asosga ega bo‘lishi mumkin. Aks holda, rasmiy integratsion tuzilmalar ham ichki divergentsiyani keltirib chiqarishi ehtimoli mavjud.

Shu bilan birga, divergensiya — bu nafaqat iqtisodiy, balki ijtimoiy, siyosiy hamda ekologik oqibatlarga ham sabab bo‘lishi mumkin. Shuning uchun xalqaro hamjamiyat tomonidan inklyuziv integratsiya (barchani o‘z ichiga oluvchi integratsiya) tamoyiliga asoslangan siyosatlar ishlab chiqilishi zarur. Bunday yondashuv orqali nafaqat global iqtisodiy o‘sish, balki adolatli taqsimot, barqarorlik hamda xavfsizlik ham ta’milnadi.

Xulosa qilib aytganda, xalqaro iqtisodiyotning kelajagi integratsiya va divergensiya o‘rtasidagi muvozanatga bog‘liq. Shu muvozanatni saqlash esa faqat ilmiy tushuncha emas, balki amaliy siyosat, xalqaro hamkorlik hamda kelajakka yo‘naltirilgan strategik fikrlash orqali amalga oshirilishi mumkin. Shu jihatdan, ushbu tadqiqot nafaqat nazariy bilimlarni boyitish, balki amaliy iqtisodiy siyosat ishlab chiqishda ham qo‘llanma



sifatida xizmat qilishi mumkin.

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