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FOREIGN EXPERIENCE IN THE EFFECTIVE ORGANIZATION OF FREE ECONOMIC ZONES



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Abstract: In the modern era of rapid scientific and technological development, the practice of clustering free economic zones is becoming increasingly popular in Uzbekistan. Although this approach is relatively new for the country, its significance is becoming more evident. Foreign experience can serve as an important example for the effective implementation of clustering systems within free economic zones. This article examines the experiences of several countries in the effective organization of free economic zones and discusses their practical application.

Key words: Clustering, free economic zone, special economic zone, economic growth, globalization, foreign investments, network.

Аннотация: В современную эпоху стремительного развития науки и технологий практика кластеризации свободных экономических зон приобретает всё большую популярность в Узбекистане. Несмотря на то, что данный подход является относительно новым для нашей страны, его значимость становится всё более очевидной. Зарубежный опыт может служить важным примером эффективного применения кластерной системы в свободных экономических зонах. В данной статье рассматривается опыт ряда стран в области эффективной организации свободных экономических зон, а также анализируются возможности его практического применения.

Ключевые слова: Кластеризация, свободная экономическая зона, специальная экономическая зона, экономический рост, глобализация, иностранные инвестиции, сеть.

INTRODUCTION

Today, ensuring sustainable economic growth, producing competitive products with high added value, technologically modernizing enterprises, attracting foreign investment, creating new jobs, and ensuring their effective utilization play an important role in the economic development of countries around the world. In the context of globalization and increasing international capital mobility, the attraction of foreign investment creates significant opportunities for developing countries and regions to diversify sectors of the national economy and accelerate regional development.

LITERATURE REVIEW ON THE TOPIC

Free economic zones (SEZs) play an important role in the economic development of a country. When discussing SEZs, it is necessary to clearly understand their significance, objectives, and the sectors they encompass.

According to Doctor of Economic Sciences, Professor N. Tokhliyev, free economic zones are specific territories established on the basis of interstate agreements or special laws, where preferential tax, financial, and legal conditions are created for conducting economic and foreign economic activities [1]. These zones are

organized to attract both foreign and domestic entrepreneurs and to provide the necessary infrastructure for production and business operations.

In many cases, free economic zones are established in border regions, near international airports, port cities, or along major transportation routes. Such locations create favorable conditions for trade, logistics, investment attraction, and industrial development.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this study, the author employed several research methods, including monographic analysis, induction and deduction, scientific abstraction, and observation. These methods were used to analyze foreign experience in the organization of free economic zones and to evaluate their potential application in Uzbekistan.

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

As is well known, free economic zones are territories where special international legal and economic conditions are created. Although they remain an inseparable part of the country, these zones operate under specific regulations concerning land use, the establishment of firms and companies, the import and export of goods, infrastructure development, customs duties, tax privileges, currency circulation, and administrative procedures. All activities within free economic zones are carried out on the basis of specially established rules and simplified management mechanisms aimed at accelerating economic and business operations.

The establishment of free economic zones aims to attract new technologies and investments, create developed economic spaces, and accelerate the economic development of a country. Therefore, it is not entirely correct to consider free economic zones solely as a product of modern economic integration processes.

The history of free economic zones dates back to ancient times. The Phoenicians, Greeks, and Romans used free ports to develop trade by allowing merchant ships to enter and leave ports freely while ensuring their safety. During the 16th and 17th centuries, several European cities became known as “free trade cities.” Similarly, during the reign of Amir Temur, Samarkand functioned as an important free trade center, where caravan routes were protected by the state.

Today, free economic zones exist in various forms, including free warehouses, free customs zones, and scientific and technological zones

They In the USA technoparks in Japan called technopolises .

Special economic zones are mainly established to promote export-oriented production and attract foreign investment. One of the first modern free economic zones was established at Shannon Airport in Ireland in 1959. Later, similar zones were created in other countries, including the United Kingdom at Dog Island Airport.

Some free economic zones were organized on a much larger regional scale. Examples include the Manaus Free Economic Zone in Brazil and the Shenzhen Special Economic Zone in China. In global practice, free economic zones have been successfully established in both developed countries, such as Great Britain, Germany, the Netherlands, and the United States, as well as in developing countries, including Brazil, the Republic of Korea, Malaysia, and others.

China, in particular, widely used free economic zones as an important instrument for attracting foreign capital and accelerating economic development. By the end of the 20th century, free economic zones had also been established in countries such as the United Arab Emirates, Russia, and Poland. Examples include the Blagoveshchensk–Heihe cross-border economic cooperation zone organized jointly by Russia and China, as well as the “Yantar” Free Economic Zone located in the Kaliningrad region near the Baltic Sea.

According to available information, China currently ranks second in the world in terms of economic growth and overall economic capacity. This achievement has been largely driven by the country’s successful integration into the global economy and its ability to adapt quickly to changes in international business relations. China’s relatively low labor costs, disciplined workforce, and large-scale production system have enabled the country to manufacture a wide range of products at competitive prices and meet global market demand effectively.

In addition, China has become one of the largest investors on the African continent, considering Africa as one of its key strategic partners rather than focusing solely on Europe or America. Today, Chinese products can be found in almost every part of the world, and in the 21st century China has truly become known as “the world’s factory.” China accounts for a significant share of global industrial production, including approximately 50% of the world’s cameras, 30% of air conditioners, and around 20–25% of household appliances and other manufactured goods. The rapid development of free economic zones played a major role in achieving China’s economic progress (Figure 1).

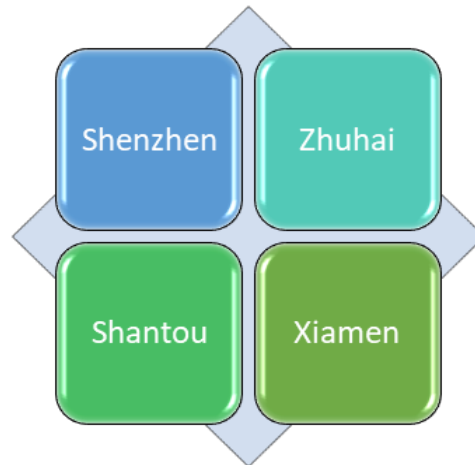


Figure 1. In China special economic zones [2]

At present, four major special economic zones are operating in China: Shenzhen, Zhuhai, Shantou, and Xiamen. In addition, China has established 14 free trade zones, 53 high-technology development zones, more than 70 scientific and technical zones designed for overseas specialists, and 38 export-oriented industrial zones.

Based on international experience, it would be appropriate for Uzbekistan to focus on the following sectors in the development of free economic zones:

- Developing a rating-based assessment system for evaluating investment environment attractiveness, management efficiency, investment activity, and the profitability of attracted investments within free economic zones;
- Formulating effective management strategies aimed at improving the investment position and attractiveness of free economic zones for potential and promising investors;
- Promoting the establishment and expansion of export-oriented production activities within free economic zones.
- Effectively utilizing the special 10-day visa-free entry and exit regime created for Afghan citizens in the Termez Free Economic Zone;
- Expanding opportunities in the Termez FEZ for Afghan citizens in areas such as medical treatment, trade, manufacturing, service provision, recreation, short-term education, obtaining international certificates, and other related activities through the establishment of specialized centers;
- Improving the organizational aspects of regional administrative and economic systems through the introduction of investment attractiveness maps and investment passports aimed at enhancing the investment environment.
- Increasing investment attraction in the Termez Free Economic Zone in order to ensure effective satisfaction of the population's needs, improve living standards, increase real incomes, and create new employment opportunities;
- Developing prospective indicators for the growth of the gross regional product of Surkhandarya Province by 2025 through effective management of investment potential and stability indicators, thereby contributing to the further progressive economic development of the country.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The experience of countries around the world demonstrates that the effective operation of free economic zones contributes significantly to economic development, the expansion of export-oriented production, the increase of export volumes, the creation of new jobs, and the promotion of national brands in international markets. Most importantly, free economic zones help improve the living standards and welfare of the population.

In general, the expansion of production activities within free economic zones plays an important role in providing employment opportunities for the population and supporting the economic development of regions and the country as a whole. In this regard, the regulatory and legal framework plays a crucial role in ensuring the effective functioning of free economic zones.

It is important to further improve the legal and organizational foundations of free economic zones, simplify their operational procedures, and develop industries based on the historical, natural, and economic potential of each region. Expanding the production of competitive goods and strengthening their position in global markets

will contribute to increasing production volumes, expanding exports, and attracting greater flows of foreign investment into the national economy.

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