

## **Analysis Of The Trend Of Deglobalisation And Disruption In International Trade**

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**Abstract:** *Deglobalisation reflects a shift from deep global integration toward more fragmented economic relations shaped by protectionist policies and geopolitical rivalry. This study investigates the trajectory, causes, and trade disruptions associated with this phenomenon using a qualitative explanatory design based on secondary data from academic literature, policy reports, and global economic analyses covering the post-World War II period to 2025. The analysis identifies patterns of declining interdependence through regionalisation, tariff expansion, and strategic trade restrictions. Results indicate that hegemonic competition among major powers, financial system fragmentation, and rising economic nationalism drive the transition toward deglobalisation. Evidence also shows that global supply chains are being restructured through friend-shoring and near-shoring strategies, while access to critical technologies and resources becomes increasingly restricted. Trade disruptions appear in the form of reduced efficiency, increased production costs, and unequal access to global markets, particularly affecting developing economies. The study concludes that deglobalisation represents a structural transformation in international trade, reshaping economic governance and altering the balance between global cooperation and national economic security.*

**Keywords:** *Deglobalisation, Hegemonic Competition, Trade Disruption, Protectionism, Global Supply Chain*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Global economic integration expanded rapidly during the late twentieth century as countries embraced liberalisation and export-oriented policies. Trade openness, capital mobility, and institutional cooperation fostered a dense network of interdependence among national economies. International organisations such as the World Trade Organization and the International Monetary Fund contributed to the standardisation of trade rules and financial governance, enabling countries to participate in a more predictable global system. This expansion coincided with technological progress in transportation and communication, which reduced transaction costs and increased the speed of cross-border exchanges. Empirical studies indicate that global value chains became the backbone of international production, linking developed and developing economies through complex networks of manufacturing and services (Baldwin, 2016). This condition raises a critical

question regarding whether contemporary global dynamics still reflect deep integration or signal a transition toward fragmentation shaped by geopolitical tensions and domestic priorities.

Recent developments suggest a shift in the trajectory of globalisation. Protectionist trade measures, strategic tariffs, and state intervention in key industries have re-emerged across major economies. These policies reflect changing priorities in which national resilience and economic sovereignty are emphasised. The global financial crisis of 2008 marked an early turning point by exposing vulnerabilities in interconnected financial systems. Subsequent disruptions, including the COVID-19 pandemic, intensified concerns over supply chain dependence and external shocks (Evenett & Baldwin, 2020). Political dynamics also contribute to this transformation, as governments increasingly adopt policies aligned with domestic political interests rather than multilateral commitments. The rise of economic nationalism has altered the policy orientation of several countries, particularly in advanced economies, leading to a reassessment of trade agreements and international cooperation (Rodrik, 2018). These patterns raise another question concerning the underlying causes of the recent shift toward deglobalisation and how geopolitical rivalry, ideological divergence, and economic security considerations interact in shaping this process.

Geopolitical competition plays a central role in redefining global economic relations. Strategic rivalry among major powers, especially between the United States and China, has introduced new dimensions into international trade. Trade disputes, export controls, and restrictions on advanced technologies demonstrate how economic tools are used to pursue political objectives. Research highlights that globalisation is increasingly influenced by security concerns, particularly in sectors such as semiconductors, energy, and digital infrastructure (Farrell & Newman, 2019). The concept of geoeconomics captures this intersection between economic policy and geopolitical strategy, where states leverage trade and finance to strengthen their global position. These developments are accompanied by the reconfiguration of production networks through practices such as near-shoring and friend-shoring, which prioritise politically aligned partners over cost efficiency. The relationship between these factors and the restructuring of global trade systems requires deeper analysis, particularly in understanding how they reshape patterns of interdependence.

The transformation of global trade structures also raises questions about the nature and extent of disruptions caused by deglobalisation. Supply chains that once operated on principles of efficiency and cost minimisation are being restructured to enhance resilience and security. This shift has implications for both developed and developing economies, as access to markets, technology, and resources becomes increasingly selective. Studies show that disruptions in global value chains can lead to significant economic losses, particularly for countries that rely heavily on exports and imported inputs (Antràs, 2020). The reorientation of trade flows toward regional or politically aligned networks may reduce the inclusiveness of globalisation, limiting opportunities for smaller economies to integrate into global markets. At the same time, competition over strategic resources such as rare earth elements and critical minerals introduces new challenges in maintaining stable supply chains.

Technological flows also face increasing restrictions as countries impose controls on the transfer of sensitive knowledge and innovation. Export bans on advanced technologies, investment screening mechanisms, and intellectual property regulations reflect a growing concern over technological dominance. These measures influence the pace of innovation diffusion and create asymmetries in technological capabilities across countries. The fragmentation of digital and technological ecosystems further complicates international collaboration, leading to the emergence of parallel systems shaped by geopolitical alignments (Kynge & Wheatley, 2021). These developments highlight the complexity of deglobalisation as a multidimensional process that extends beyond trade volumes to include political, technological, and institutional dimensions.

The evolving landscape of international trade also reflects changes in financial systems and currency usage. The dominance of traditional global financial institutions faces challenges as countries explore alternative payment systems and bilateral arrangements. This shift indicates a gradual reconfiguration of the global economic order, where financial interdependence becomes more fragmented. Such transformations influence the stability and predictability of international transactions, affecting both trade and investment flows. The interplay between financial restructuring and trade dynamics underscores the broader implications of deglobalisation for global economic governance.

These observations lead to a final question concerning how deglobalisation disrupts international trade structures in practical terms. The interaction between geopolitical competition, protectionist policies, and technological restrictions creates a complex environment for global commerce. Disruptions manifest in altered supply chains, constrained resource flows, and shifting trade partnerships. The consequences extend beyond economic efficiency, influencing global inequality, development trajectories, and the distribution of economic power. Understanding these dynamics requires an integrated perspective that considers economic, political, and technological factors as interconnected elements shaping the future of globalisation.

## **METHOD**

This study employs a qualitative and explanatory research design to examine the dynamics of deglobalisation and its implications for international trade. A qualitative approach allows for an in-depth interpretation of complex global phenomena that cannot be adequately captured through numerical measurement alone. The explanatory orientation supports the identification of causal linkages between geopolitical developments, economic policies, and structural changes in global trade systems. This approach aligns with interpretive traditions in international political economy that emphasise context, process, and institutional interaction in understanding global transformations (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Data are derived entirely from secondary sources to ensure a broad and historically grounded analysis. These sources include peer-reviewed academic journals, international policy reports, publications from multilateral institutions, and credible global news platforms. The selection of data follows a thematic relevance strategy, focusing on materials that address deglobalisation, trade policy shifts, geopolitical tensions, and global supply chain restructuring. This strategy ensures that the data corpus reflects both conceptual debates and empirical developments across regions and time periods. Secondary data analysis also enables the integration of diverse perspectives, which strengthens the analytical depth of the study (Johnston, 2017).

The temporal scope of the study extends from the post–World War II period to 2025. This range captures the evolution of globalisation from its institutional foundations to its contemporary transformations. The post-war era provides insight into the establishment of global economic

governance, while recent developments illustrate the emergence of fragmentation and protectionist tendencies. The inclusion of long-term historical data supports a comparative understanding of continuity and change in international trade patterns. Such longitudinal framing is essential for identifying structural shifts rather than short-term fluctuations (Jessop, 2013).

The analytical procedure involves thematic analysis, which focuses on identifying recurring patterns, relationships, and key drivers within the selected data. This method facilitates the organisation of complex information into coherent categories that reflect the core dimensions of deglobalisation. The analysis is structured into three interconnected themes: evidence of deglobalisation, causes of deglobalisation, and disruptions in international trade. Each theme is examined through a synthesis of empirical findings and theoretical insights, allowing for a comprehensive interpretation of how global economic relations are being reshaped. The use of thematic structuring enhances analytical clarity and ensures that each research question is addressed systematically within the broader explanatory framework (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Evidence of Deglobalisation**

Indicators of deglobalisation are increasingly visible through the reconfiguration of geopolitical alignments, the consolidation of regional economic blocs, and the transformation of global trade practices. The emergence and strengthening of organisations such as NATO, the European Union, ASEAN, OIC, and BRICS illustrate how countries pursue cooperation within selective groupings shaped by shared interests and strategic considerations. These institutional arrangements promote economic exchange, security coordination, and diplomatic engagement among member states. Their expansion also reflects a shift from universal multilateralism toward more segmented forms of cooperation. This pattern suggests that global integration is being restructured along regional and ideological lines rather than expanding uniformly across all nations (Acharya, 2017).

Regionalism contributes to both integration and fragmentation. Economic blocs facilitate trade liberalisation within their boundaries through preferential agreements and coordinated policies. These arrangements reduce transaction costs and enhance competitiveness among

member countries. At the same time, they may limit broader global integration by creating exclusive networks that prioritise internal linkages over external engagement. The proliferation of regional trade agreements has transformed the architecture of global commerce, replacing a singular global system with overlapping frameworks of cooperation (Baccini & Dür, 2012). This transformation reflects a shift in how states manage economic interdependence, balancing openness with strategic control.

Global shocks have played a decisive role in accelerating these changes. The financial crisis of 2008 exposed structural weaknesses in the global economic system, particularly in financial interdependence and regulatory coordination. This crisis triggered a reassessment of globalisation, as countries sought to stabilise domestic economies and reduce exposure to external volatility. The COVID-19 pandemic intensified these concerns by disrupting supply chains, limiting cross-border mobility, and highlighting the risks associated with concentrated production networks. Empirical evidence indicates that global trade growth slowed significantly following these events, reflecting a broader recalibration of economic priorities (Bonadio et al., 2021).

Armed conflicts and geopolitical tensions have further reinforced deglobalisation trends. The war in Ukraine and conflicts in the Middle East have reshaped trade routes, energy markets, and diplomatic relations. Sanctions imposed by major economies have restricted trade flows and financial transactions, creating barriers that undermine global integration. These developments illustrate how geopolitical instability influences economic behaviour, leading countries to prioritise security considerations over efficiency. The concept of slowbalisation captures this gradual decline in the pace of global integration, while reglobalisation reflects the restructuring of trade and production networks in response to changing geopolitical conditions (Gopinath, 2022).

Production strategies provide additional evidence of deglobalisation. Firms increasingly adopt friend-shoring and near-shoring practices, relocating production to countries perceived as politically stable or strategically aligned. This shift reduces dependence on distant suppliers and enhances supply chain resilience. It also reflects a broader transformation in the logic of global production, where risk management and political alignment gain importance alongside cost efficiency. Studies show that multinational corporations are redesigning supply chains to minimise

exposure to geopolitical risks, leading to a more regionalised structure of global production (Miroudot, 2020).

Trade policy developments further illustrate the move toward deglobalisation. Governments have expanded the use of tariffs, subsidies, and regulatory measures to protect domestic industries and strategic sectors. These policies signal a departure from the liberal trade framework that characterised earlier phases of globalisation. The resurgence of industrial policy highlights the role of the state in shaping economic outcomes, particularly in sectors deemed critical for national security and technological leadership. This shift reflects a broader reorientation of economic governance, where states actively intervene to secure competitive advantages (Aiginger & Rodrik, 2020).

Economic sanctions have become a prominent tool in this evolving landscape. Sanctions imposed on countries such as Iran and Russia demonstrate how economic measures are used to achieve political objectives. These actions disrupt trade flows, limit access to financial systems, and alter global supply chains. The increasing reliance on sanctions indicates a shift toward coercive economic strategies that challenge the principles of open trade. Research suggests that sanctions not only affect targeted countries but also create spillover effects that influence global markets and investment patterns (Dreger et al., 2016).

Tariff escalation reinforces these patterns. Major economies have implemented tariffs across a wide range of goods, often in response to geopolitical disputes or concerns about unfair trade practices. These measures contribute to trade diversion, where goods are sourced from alternative suppliers due to increased costs. This process reshapes global trade networks and introduces inefficiencies that affect both producers and consumers. The persistence of tariff barriers indicates a structural transformation in international economic relations, where protectionist measures become embedded in policy frameworks rather than temporary responses to specific challenges (Fajgelbaum et al., 2020).

The cumulative effect of these developments points to a redefinition of globalisation rather than its complete reversal. Economic integration continues to exist, yet it is increasingly mediated by geopolitical considerations, strategic interests, and institutional realignments. The evidence suggests that deglobalisation is characterised by selective integration, where countries maintain

economic ties within preferred networks while reducing dependence on broader global systems.

This transformation reshapes the nature of interdependence, creating a more complex and fragmented global economy.

### **Causes of Deglobalisation**

Deglobalisation emerges from the interaction of geopolitical rivalry, economic restructuring, and ideological transformation. The contemporary global order reflects increasing competition among major powers, especially the United States, China, and Russia. This rivalry extends beyond conventional trade disputes into areas such as technological dominance, financial systems, and control over strategic resources. The concept of great power competition explains how states seek to maximise influence by shaping global economic rules and institutions in their favour. This dynamic alters patterns of cooperation and encourages selective engagement rather than broad-based integration. Evidence shows that strategic competition leads to fragmentation in global governance, as countries align with specific blocs based on shared political and economic interests (Allison, 2017).

Economic factors also play a decisive role in accelerating deglobalisation. Structural imbalances in global trade, uneven distribution of gains, and vulnerabilities in supply chains have prompted countries to reconsider their level of openness. The global financial crisis highlighted systemic risks embedded in interconnected economies, prompting governments to strengthen domestic economic resilience. This shift is reflected in renewed industrial policies aimed at protecting strategic industries and reducing dependence on foreign inputs. The reorientation of economic policy toward resilience indicates a transition from efficiency-driven globalisation to security-oriented economic strategies (Tooze, 2018).

The international monetary system contributes to this transformation through its hierarchical structure. The dominance of the United States dollar in global transactions grants significant influence to the United States in shaping financial flows and imposing economic measures. The use of financial sanctions as a policy instrument has encouraged other countries to reduce reliance on dollar-based systems. Efforts to develop alternative payment mechanisms and bilateral currency arrangements reflect attempts to mitigate exposure to external control. Studies indicate that financial fragmentation is increasing as countries diversify their reserves and payment

infrastructures, signalling a gradual shift away from a unified global financial system (Eichengreen, 2011).

Exclusion from global financial networks has accelerated this process. Restrictions on access to systems such as international payment networks create incentives for affected countries to establish parallel systems. These developments reshape global financial architecture by introducing multiple centres of economic activity. The growing use of local currencies in trade transactions illustrates how financial practices adapt to geopolitical pressures. This transformation affects not only state actors but also multinational corporations, which must navigate a more complex financial environment. The resulting fragmentation reduces the predictability of global financial interactions and influences trade flows across regions (McDowell, 2021).

Political developments further reinforce deglobalisation trends. The rise of nationalist ideologies and the increasing influence of right-leaning political movements have reshaped domestic and international policy agendas. Governments prioritise national sovereignty, economic independence, and cultural identity in response to perceived challenges associated with globalisation. These priorities manifest in stricter immigration policies, reduced commitment to multilateral agreements, and increased support for domestic industries. Political narratives emphasising self-reliance contribute to a redefinition of global engagement, where international cooperation is evaluated through the lens of national interest (Norris & Inglehart, 2019).

Trade conflicts provide a clear illustration of how political and economic factors intersect. The trade war between the United States and China demonstrates the use of tariffs, export controls, and investment restrictions as tools of strategic competition. These measures extend beyond economic objectives and reflect broader concerns about technological leadership and national security. The escalation of trade barriers disrupts established supply chains and creates uncertainty in global markets. Research suggests that such conflicts lead to long-term adjustments in trade patterns, as firms seek alternative markets and production locations to mitigate risks (Bown, 2020).

Strategic industries intensify the drivers of deglobalisation by linking economic activity with national security considerations. Sectors such as energy, semiconductors, and rare earth elements are essential for modern economies and defence capabilities. Control over these resources provides strategic advantages, influencing geopolitical behaviour and trade decisions. Governments

increasingly implement policies to secure access to critical materials, including export restrictions, investment screening, and domestic production incentives. This trend reflects a broader shift in which economic policy is integrated with security objectives, altering the traditional boundaries between commerce and geopolitics (Blackwill & Harris, 2016).

Technological competition adds another dimension to this process. Innovation in digital infrastructure, artificial intelligence, and advanced manufacturing shapes the distribution of economic power. Countries seek to protect technological advantages by limiting knowledge transfer and controlling access to key technologies. These measures contribute to the emergence of parallel technological ecosystems, where standards, platforms, and supply chains diverge across geopolitical blocs. The fragmentation of technological systems affects global collaboration and reduces the efficiency of innovation diffusion. This development reinforces the broader pattern of selective integration that characterises deglobalisation (Segal, 2020).

Resource geopolitics further strengthens these trends. Rare earth elements and critical minerals are vital for industries such as renewable energy, electronics, and defence. Concentration of production in a limited number of countries creates dependencies that influence trade relations. Governments respond by diversifying supply sources, investing in domestic extraction, and forming strategic partnerships. These actions reshape global trade flows and contribute to the regionalisation of supply chains. The competition for resources illustrates how economic and environmental considerations intersect with geopolitical strategies, reinforcing the structural drivers of deglobalisation (Kalantzakos, 2020).

The combined influence of these factors demonstrates that deglobalisation is not driven by a single cause but by a complex interaction of forces. Geopolitical rivalry, financial restructuring, political transformation, and resource competition collectively reshape the global economic landscape. These dynamics lead to a more fragmented system in which countries balance integration with autonomy, creating new patterns of interdependence that differ from earlier phases of globalisation.

### **Disruptions in International Trade**

Deglobalisation reshapes international trade through structural changes in global supply chains and cross-border production networks. Contemporary trade systems were previously

organised around efficiency, cost minimisation, and comparative advantage. The emerging environment prioritises resilience, redundancy, and geopolitical alignment. Restrictions on technology exports illustrate this transformation, particularly in the semiconductor sector where advanced chips are treated as strategic assets. Export controls imposed by major economies limit the ability of certain countries to access high-end technologies, leading to fragmentation in production networks and reduced technological diffusion. Empirical evidence shows that such controls alter global innovation systems by concentrating advanced production capabilities within a smaller group of countries (Grossman et al., 2023). This transformation affects emerging economies that depend on technology imports to sustain industrial development and digital transformation.

The restructuring of supply chains reflects a shift from global optimisation toward regional and politically aligned configurations. Firms respond to uncertainty by diversifying production locations and reducing reliance on single-country suppliers. This process often involves relocating manufacturing activities to countries perceived as stable or strategically aligned. Such adjustments increase operational costs and reduce economies of scale, altering the efficiency of global trade. Research on global value chains indicates that fragmentation driven by geopolitical tensions leads to reduced productivity gains and slower trade growth across regions (Johnson & Noguera, 2017). The reorganisation of production networks signals a departure from deeply integrated global systems toward more segmented structures.

Control over strategic resources introduces another layer of disruption. Rare earth elements, critical minerals, and precious metals play a central role in modern industries, including renewable energy, electronics, and defence technologies. China's dominance in the production and processing of rare earth elements creates structural dependencies for importing countries. Export restrictions on these materials influence global supply chains by limiting availability and increasing uncertainty in procurement. Market responses to such restrictions include price volatility, stockpiling behaviour, and investment in alternative supply sources. Studies show that concentrated resource control can significantly affect global manufacturing output and technological development, particularly in sectors reliant on advanced materials (Humphries, 2021).

The restriction of silver and other critical inputs adds complexity to global trade dynamics. Silver is widely used in emerging technologies such as solar panels, semiconductors, and medical applications. Supply constraints driven by export controls or production limitations contribute to price fluctuations and market instability. These conditions affect both producers and consumers, creating ripple effects across multiple industries. The increasing importance of critical minerals in industrial strategies highlights how resource geopolitics shapes trade patterns and influences long-term economic planning (Mancheri et al., 2019).

Financial mechanisms within international trade also experience transformation under deglobalisation. The growing use of domestic currencies in cross-border transactions reflects a shift away from traditional global financial systems dominated by a single reserve currency. Countries facing financial restrictions or sanctions increasingly adopt bilateral payment arrangements to facilitate trade. These arrangements reduce dependence on established systems such as SWIFT and create alternative financial infrastructures. The diversification of currency usage introduces new dynamics into global trade, affecting exchange rate stability, transaction costs, and financial transparency. Research suggests that currency fragmentation alters global liquidity patterns and reshapes the role of financial institutions in facilitating trade (Ito & McCauley, 2020).

Trade relations among countries such as Russia, China, and India illustrate this transition. Transactions conducted in local currencies reduce exposure to external financial control and enhance economic sovereignty. This practice also introduces challenges related to currency convertibility, exchange rate risk, and limited global acceptance. The emergence of parallel financial systems indicates a broader shift toward a multipolar economic order in which financial power is distributed across multiple centres. This transformation influences trade flows by creating new channels of exchange while weakening traditional global networks.

Tariff escalation further intensifies disruptions in international trade. Governments impose tariffs not only for economic protection but also as instruments of geopolitical strategy. These measures affect trade volumes, pricing structures, and competitiveness across industries. High tariffs increase the cost of imported goods, leading firms to adjust sourcing strategies or pass costs to consumers. The redistribution of trade flows resulting from tariff barriers creates inefficiencies

and reduces the overall welfare gains associated with free trade. Empirical studies indicate that tariff increases during trade conflicts lead to measurable declines in trade volumes and shifts in production patterns across affected economies (Amiti et al., 2019).

Developing countries face significant challenges within this evolving trade environment. Limited access to advanced technologies, higher input costs, and restricted market opportunities constrain their ability to participate in global value chains. These constraints hinder industrial growth and reduce the potential for economic diversification. The fragmentation of global trade networks may also widen the gap between developed and developing economies, as access to resources and technologies becomes increasingly selective. The resulting inequalities highlight the broader implications of deglobalisation for global economic development.

The cumulative impact of these disruptions produces a fragmented trade environment characterised by uncertainty, reduced efficiency, and shifting patterns of interdependence. Trade systems continue to function, yet they operate under new constraints shaped by geopolitical competition, resource control, and financial realignment. This transformation reflects a redefinition of global trade rather than its decline, where integration persists within selective networks while broader global connectivity becomes more limited.

## **CONCLUSION**

Deglobalisation represents a structural transformation in the global economic system shaped by geopolitical competition, economic realignment, and ideological shifts. The transition from liberal trade frameworks toward protectionist strategies reflects changing priorities among states that increasingly emphasise national resilience and strategic autonomy. Evidence from regional alliances, tariff expansion, and economic sanctions shows that global integration is no longer driven solely by efficiency considerations. The reorganisation of global value chains through friend-shoring and near-shoring indicates a shift toward selective integration based on political alignment. This transformation redefines the nature of interdependence, where cooperation persists within limited networks rather than across a fully open global system. The growing role of the state in shaping trade policies highlights a move toward managed globalisation in which economic decisions are closely linked to security concerns and geopolitical interests.

The implications of this transformation are significant for international trade and global economic stability. Disruptions in supply chains, restricted access to strategic resources, and fragmentation of financial systems create a more uncertain and less efficient trade environment. Developing economies face increased challenges in accessing technology, integrating into global markets, and sustaining industrial growth. The emergence of parallel financial and technological systems signals a shift toward a multipolar global order with competing centres of influence. These changes reshape trade relationships and alter the distribution of economic power across regions. Deglobalisation does not imply the end of global trade but signals a reconfiguration in which integration becomes conditional and uneven. The future of international trade will depend on how states balance economic cooperation with strategic competition, as well as their ability to maintain stability within an increasingly fragmented global system.

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