

## Import Dynamics in the Central and Eastern European Countries

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### Abstract:

The dynamics of imports in Central and Eastern European countries are closely related to foreign direct investment and government policies. By reducing tariff and non-tariff barriers to imports and promoting trade and investment liberalization, governments can attract foreign capital and diversify the range of products and services available in the host economy. This interconnection between imports and foreign direct investment can have a positive impact on economic development and global integration, depending on national strategies and policies. The article examines the dynamics of imports in Central and Eastern European countries in relation to foreign direct investment and government policies and aims to identify trends, import differences, and adjustments made by each country to improve their economic development. The research highlights the ongoing evolution of international trade in the region and advocates for a strategic approach to trade and economic policy for economic expansion and resilience to external shocks.

**Keywords:** imports, foreign direct investment, emerging economies, tariff and non-tariff barriers.

**JEL Classification:** F15, F16, F62, F63.

### Introduction

Imports and foreign direct investment (FDI) are closely interlinked, exerting a significant impact on national economies. Foreign direct investment (FDI) sometimes leads to an increase in imports due to higher demand for consumer goods in the host country or the need to import raw materials and advanced industrial equipment. According to Dunning and Lundan (2008), the process of technology transfer and the integration of global value chains, where multinational firms produce goods in one country and import components from other countries, could potentially increase imports.

Foreign direct investment has the potential to change the import structure of a country and the type of goods and services that are imported. Foreign direct investment (FDI) firms often prioritise achieving production efficiency, which can lead to a focus on specialising in goods and services that align with their comparative advantages. Import profiles may therefore differ. With the emergence of globally competitive industries, the trade balance of the host country of these industries may see positive growth.

The impact of FDI on imports can also be analysed through local economic flows. Foreign investment stimulates local market demand for goods and services, thereby increasing domestic production. If local production is not able to meet the quantitative or qualitative requirements of foreign investors, FDI may lead to an increase in imports of intermediate or capital goods, according to Rodrik (1999), in order to encourage FDI, it may be necessary to increase imports first, which could help improve local production capacities.

Government policies have an impact on the linkages between foreign direct investment (FDI) and imports. Reducing import barriers, both tariff and non-tariff, and promoting trade liberalisation and international investment can facilitate foreign inflows. These policies have the potential to increase imports and increase the range of products and services offered by the host economy. Markusen (2002) demonstrates the positive impact of economic openness and high-quality foreign investment on product availability and the integration of global value chains.

The link between imports and foreign direct investment (FDI) is therefore influenced by national plans, policies and international economic exchanges and can have a positive impact on the economic growth and global integration of host countries. Given this evidence, we propose to investigate the evolution of imports from the EEA. This will be done with the latest IMF figures from 2013-2022.

## 1. Literature Review

The link between imports and foreign direct investment (FDI) flows is complex and multidimensional, with significant implications for national economies. FDI often brings with it an increase in imports, either through the need to import technologically advanced equipment and raw materials needed for production, or through increased demand for consumer goods in the host economy. Dunning and Lundan (2008) highlight how FDI can boost imports through technology transfer and the integration of global value chains, where multinational companies establish production in host economies, often requiring the import of specific components from other countries.

On the other hand, FDI can influence the structure of a country's imports, leading to changes in the types of goods and services imported. According to Helpman et al. (2004), companies undertaking FDI are often in search of production efficiency, which can lead to specialisation in the production of goods and services that benefit from comparative advantages and thus to a change in the profile of imports. This dynamic can have positive effects on the trade balance of the host country in the long run as internationally competitive industries develop.

Developing countries depend on international trade and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) to support their economies (Mahmood et al., 2020). Numerous studies demonstrate positive microeconomic evidence that foreign direct investment (FDI) favourably impacts the export performance of the host country (Farid et al., 2023; Atici and Gursoy, 2013). FDI has two main effects: it increases competition in the domestic market, resulting in conservative investments, and it enables the transfer of managerial and technological know-how to affiliates in the host country. This transfer of technology and information enhances the efficiency of investments and the productivity of local firms, thereby facilitating increased investment (Li and al. 2018). The theoretical literature suggests that foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows can, directly and indirectly, boost imports by increasing domestic capital, diffusing technologies and knowledge-based advancements, enhancing competitiveness, and strengthening import channels (Sahoo and Dash, 2022).

The impact of FDI on imports can also be analysed through the prism of spill-over effects on the local economy. Foreign investment can generate demand for local products and services, thereby stimulating domestic production. However, in cases where local production is insufficient to meet the qualitative or quantitative requirements of foreign investors, FDI can lead to an increase in imports of intermediate or capital goods. Rodrik (1999) discusses how adapting the economic structure to FDI may require substantial initial imports, which may subsequently stimulate the development of local capabilities.

Finally, the relationship between FDI and imports is deeply influenced by government policies. Trade liberalisation and FDI attraction policies, including the reduction of tariff and non-tariff barriers to imports, can facilitate the entry of foreign capital. These policies can not only increase the volume of imports but also diversify the range of products and services available in the host economy. Markusen (2002) highlights how policies geared towards economic openness and attracting FDI can improve access to high-quality goods and contribute to integration into global value chains.

Thus, the link between imports and FDI can be said to be characterised by a dynamic interaction, which can positively influence the economic development and global integration of host countries, depending on the strategies and policies adopted at national level and the specifics of international economic interactions.

On the basis of these observations, we propose to continue our investigative approach and to analyse the evolution of imports into CEE countries, using the latest data published by the International Monetary Fund for the period 2013-2022.

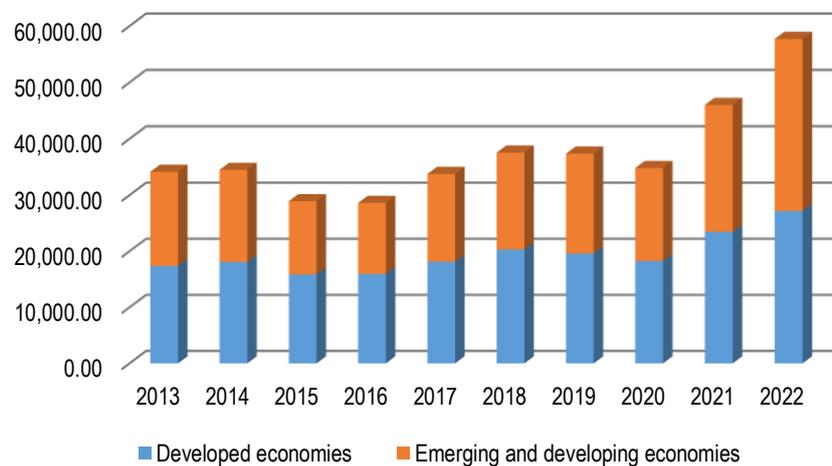
## 2. Impact of Foreign Direct Investment on Import Dynamics in Central and Eastern Europe. Case Studies

This section encapsulates the focus of the case studies on how foreign direct investment influences import patterns in the specified region.

Based on the context provided by the literature review, this article focuses on the complex and multidimensional relationship between imports and foreign direct investment (FDI), as well as the impact of government policies on these connections. Specifically, the research aims to analyze trends and significant differences in imports from Central and Eastern European countries, highlighting the adjustments made by each country to meet their development needs and goals. The analysis of the evolution of imports in CEE countries between 2013 and 2022 was made using the latest data published by the International Monetary Fund.

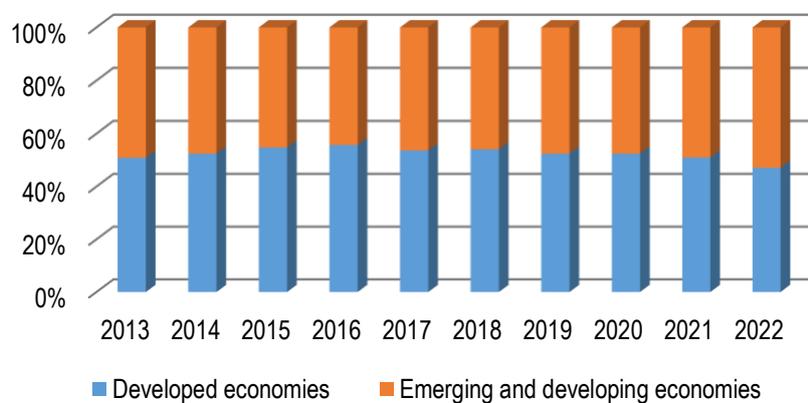
Over the period 2013-2022, Bulgaria's imports from developed and emerging economies showed an upward trend, reflecting deep global economic integration and diversification of the source of goods and services. In 2022, imports from developed economies reached \$57,956.01 million, compared to \$34,308.79 million in 2013, demonstrating significant growth and a strategic orientation towards developed markets. Imports from emerging economies also saw an increase, from \$26,440.16 million in 2013 to \$22,540.32 million in 2022, highlighting Bulgaria's efforts to diversify its trading partners and respond to domestic economic needs through access to a wider variety of markets (Figure 1 and 2).

Figure 1. Bulgaria. Evolution of CIF imports from economic partners by degree of economic development, 2013-2022, million USD



Source: processing after [www.imf.org](http://www.imf.org)

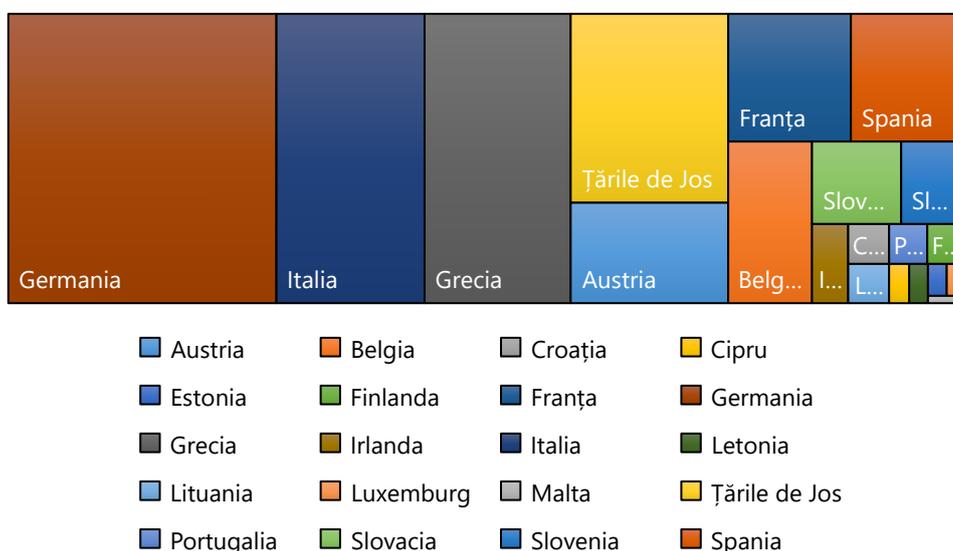
Figure 2. Bulgaria - Share of CIF imports from economic partners by degree of economic development, 2013-2022 (%)



Source: processing after [www.imf.org](http://www.imf.org)

Bulgaria's imports from Eurozone countries in 2022 reflected a strengthened economic integration within the European bloc, with a value of \$22,327.08 million, marking an increase from \$17,376.05 million in 2013. This increase underlines the importance of the European single market as a main source of imports for Bulgaria, facilitating access to goods and services essential to its economy. The shift towards the Eurozone also demonstrates the benefits of Bulgaria's membership in the European Union, including preferential access to markets and the opportunity to participate more actively in regional value chains (Figure 3).

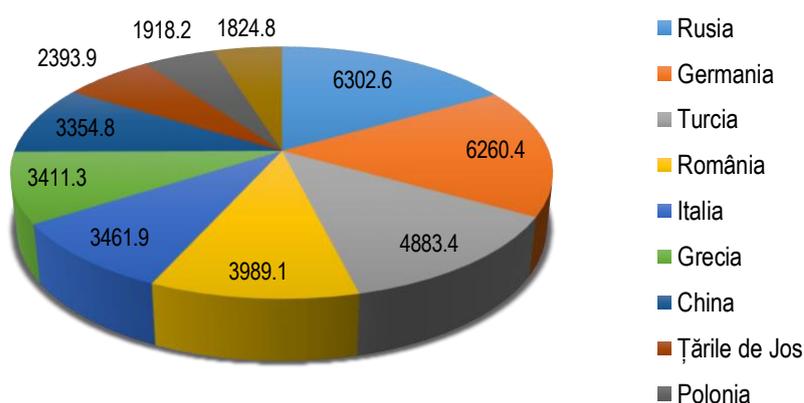
Figure 3. Bulgaria - CIF imports from Eurozone partners in 2022 (million USD)



Source: processing after [www.imf.org](http://www.imf.org)

Analysing Bulgaria's imports from the 10 most important partners in 2022, it can be seen that the country relies heavily on imports from EU member states such as Germany, Italy and Romania. This reliance reflects the close economic ties between Bulgaria and these countries, as well as Bulgaria's alignment with European value chains. Significant imports from these countries can be linked to the need for raw materials, components and advanced technology required for production for export, highlighting the role of imports in supporting Bulgaria's export activities (Figure 4).

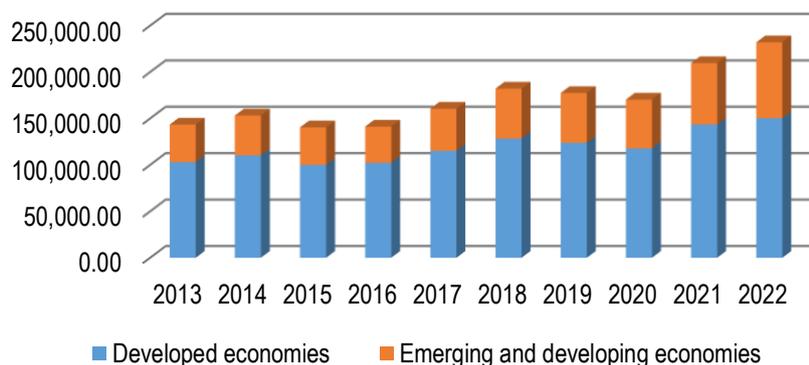
Figure 4. Bulgaria - Top 10 global partners for CIF imports in 2022 (USD million)



Source: processing after [www.imf.org](http://www.imf.org)

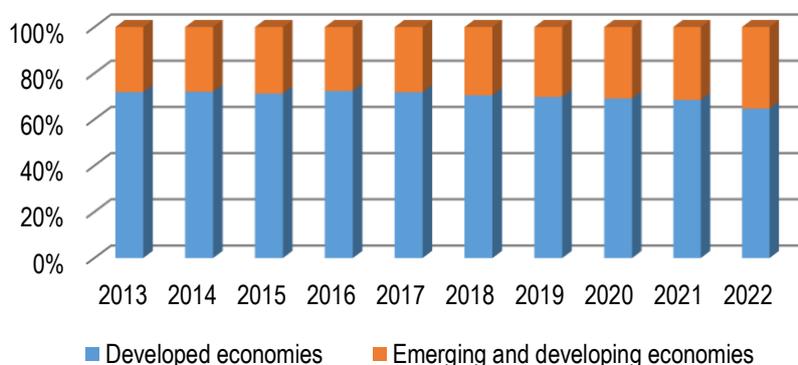
The evolution of Czech imports over the period 2013-2022 reflects the adaptability and interconnectivity of its economy with both developed and emerging economies. In 2022, total imports peaked at USD 236,662.59 million, marking a significant increase from 2013, when the value of imports was USD 144,334.98 million. This substantial increase highlights the Czech Republic's deep integration into global supply chains and its ability to attract goods and services from a wide range of international markets (Figures 5 and 6).

Figure 5. Czech Republic: CIF Imports by Partner Development, 2013-2022, million USD



Source: processing after [www.imf.org](http://www.imf.org)

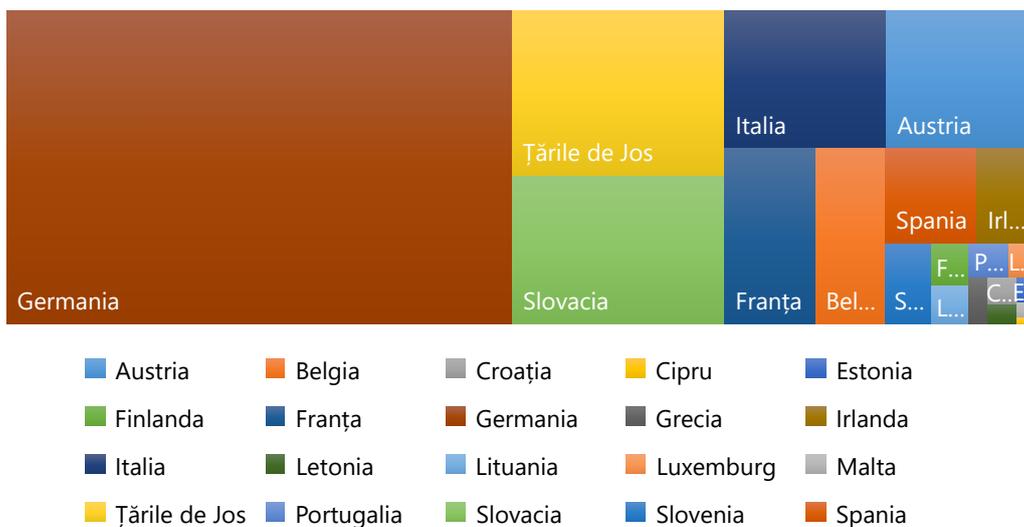
Figure 6. Czechia - Share of CIF imports from economic partners by degree of economic development, 2013-2022, (%)



Source: processing after [www.imf.org](http://www.imf.org)

Imports from the Eurozone in 2022 constituted a major component of Czech total imports, amounting to USD 131,117.67 million, demonstrating a significant dependence of the Czech Republic on its European partners. The Eurozone thus remains the main trading partner, reinforcing the close economic ties and mutual dependence between European economies. This interdependence underlines the role of European integration in facilitating trade and promoting economic growth (Figure 7).

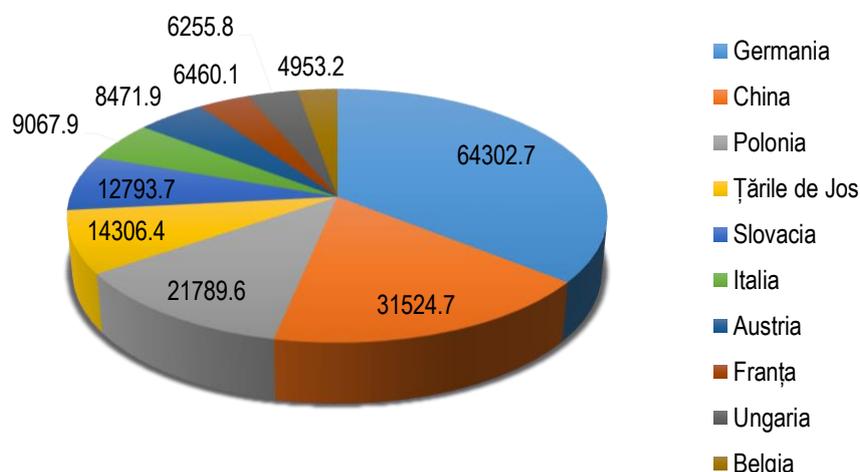
Figure 7. Czechia - CIF imports from Eurozone partners in 2022 (million USD)



Source: processing after [www.imf.org](http://www.imf.org)

Analysing imports from the ten most important partners in 2022, Germany stands out as the main supplier, with imports worth USD 64,302.69 million, followed by other countries such as Poland, Slovakia and China. This reflects not only geographical proximity and historical ties with certain countries, but also the crucial role of the Czech Republic in European and global industrial and technological value chains. The varied imports, from automotive components to advanced technology, underline Czech economic diversification and integration into the global economy (Figure 8).

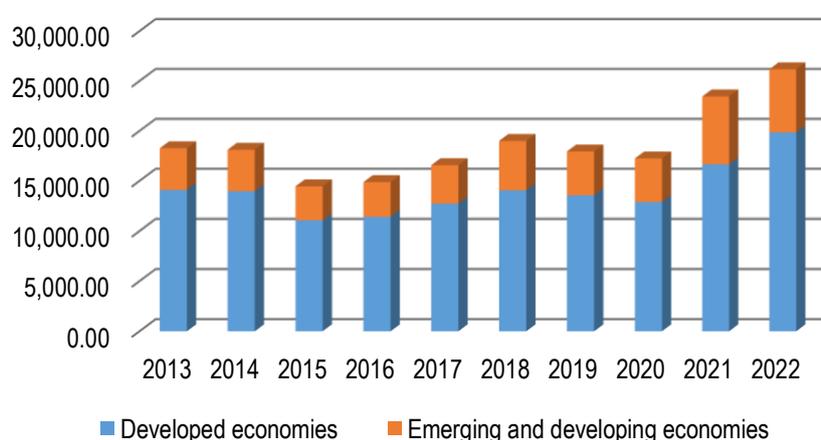
Figure 8. Czech Republic - Top 10 global partners for CIF imports in 2022 (USD million)



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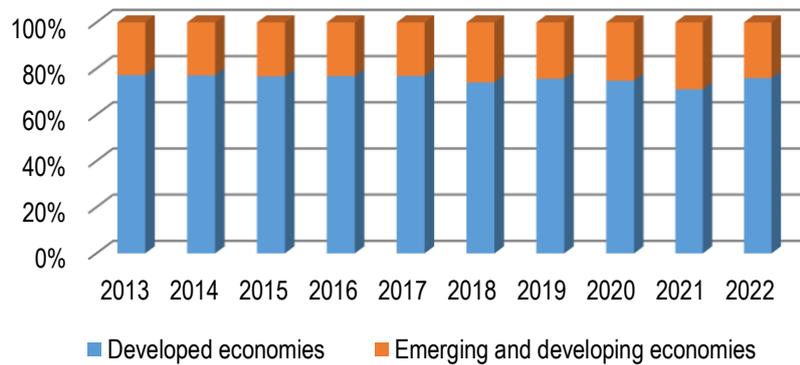
Estonia's imports from developed and emerging economies showed significant growth between 2013 and 2022, underlining the country's integration into global value chains and its economic dependence on foreign markets. In 2013, imports from developed economies were valued at \$14,104.00 million, rising to \$19,861.70 million in 2022. This growth reflects strengthening trade links with developed countries as well as Estonia's increased need for advanced technology and consumer goods. Imports from emerging and developing economies also increased from \$4,170.23 million in 2013 to \$6,318.32 million in 2022, demonstrating the diversification of Estonia's import sources and adaptation to changes in the global economy (Figures 9 and 10).

Figure 9. Estonia - Evolution of CIF imports from economic partners by degree of economic development, 2013-2022 (million USD)



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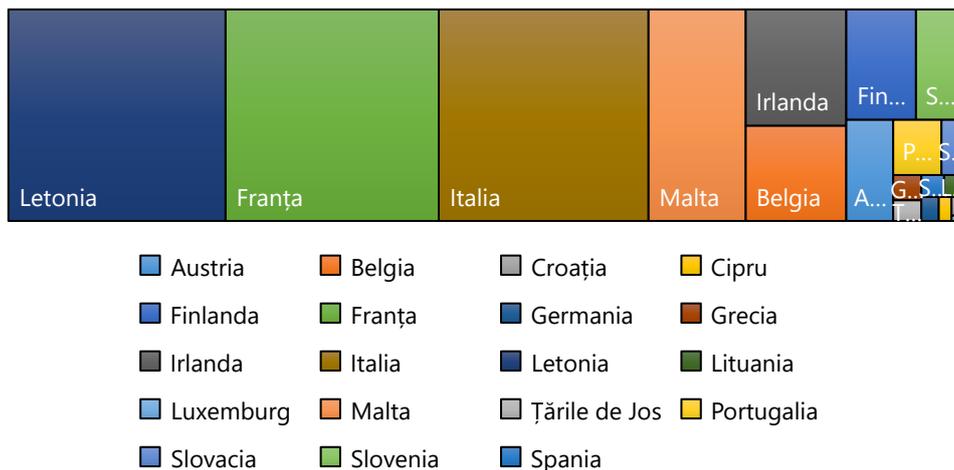
Figure 10. Estonia - Share of CIF imports from economic partners by degree of economic development, 2013-2022 (%)



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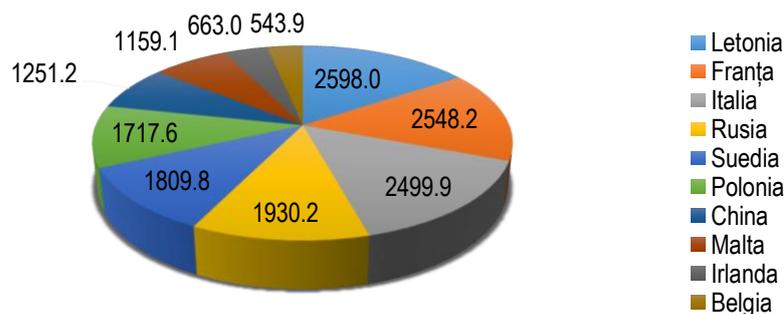
In 2022, Estonia's imports from Eurozone countries reached \$15,801.33 million, compared to \$10,547.91 million in 2013. This increase underlines the importance of the European single market for Estonia's economy, given that a significant proportion of its imports come from this area. Integration into the European Union and membership of the Eurozone facilitates Estonia's access to a wide range of goods and services, essential for its economic and technological development (Figure 11).

Figure 11. Estonia - CIF imports from Eurozone partners in 2022 (million USD)



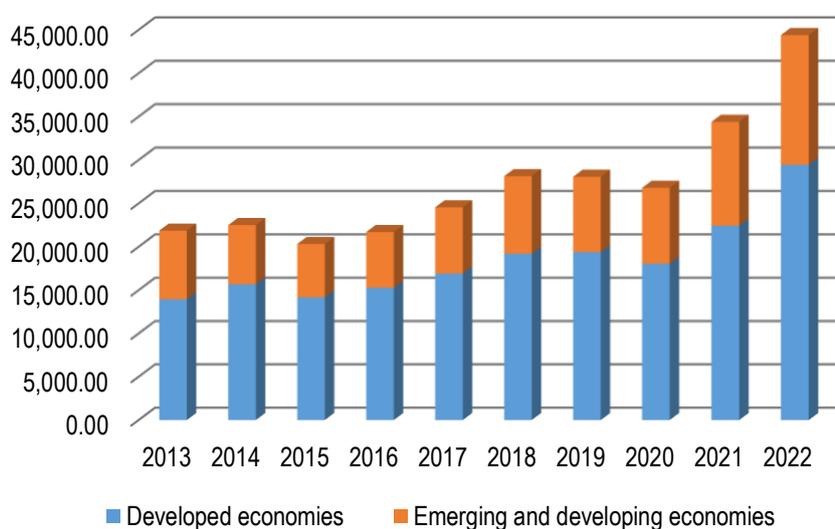
Looking at Estonia's imports from the 10 most important partners in 2022, there is a marked dependence on certain economies, especially European ones. Germany and Finland top the list, highlighting the strong economic ties and interdependence between Estonia and these countries. Significant imports from these nations underline Estonia's orientation towards advanced technology, high quality consumer goods and raw materials. This orientation reflects Estonia's strategy of securing access to key products for its economy while maintaining and developing close trade relations with its main economic partners (Figure 12).

Figure 12. Estonia - Top 10 world partners for CIF imports in 2022 (million USD)



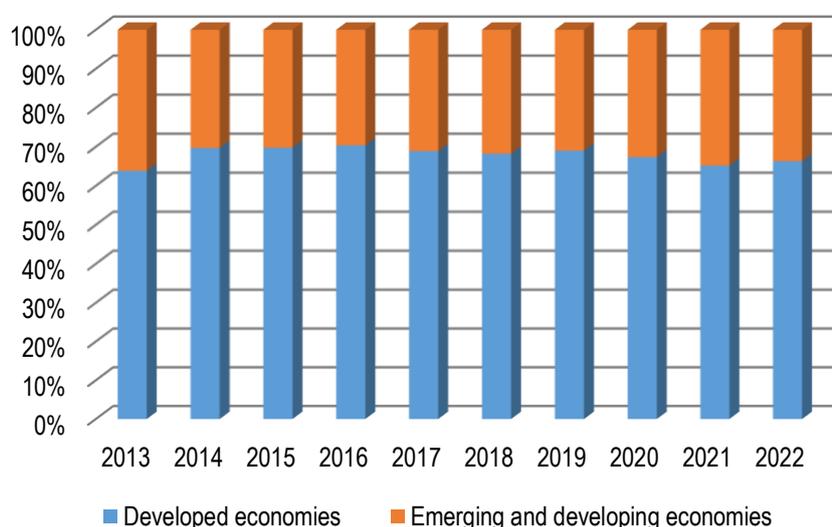
The evolution of Croatia's imports from 2013 to 2022 shows consistent growth from both developed and emerging economies, signalling a growing global economic interconnection. In 2022, imports from developed economies reached \$31,097.09 million, a significant increase from \$22,010.41 million in 2013, reflecting Croatia's strengthened dependence on advanced products and services from these countries. Similarly, imports from emerging and developing economies increased from \$7,902.25 million in 2013 to \$10,583.60 million in 2022, demonstrating a diversification of import sources and adaptation to new global market dynamics (Figure 13 and 14).

Figure 13. Croatia - Evolution of CIF imports from economic partners by degree of economic development, 2013-2022 (million USD)



Source: processing after [www.imf.org](http://www.imf.org)

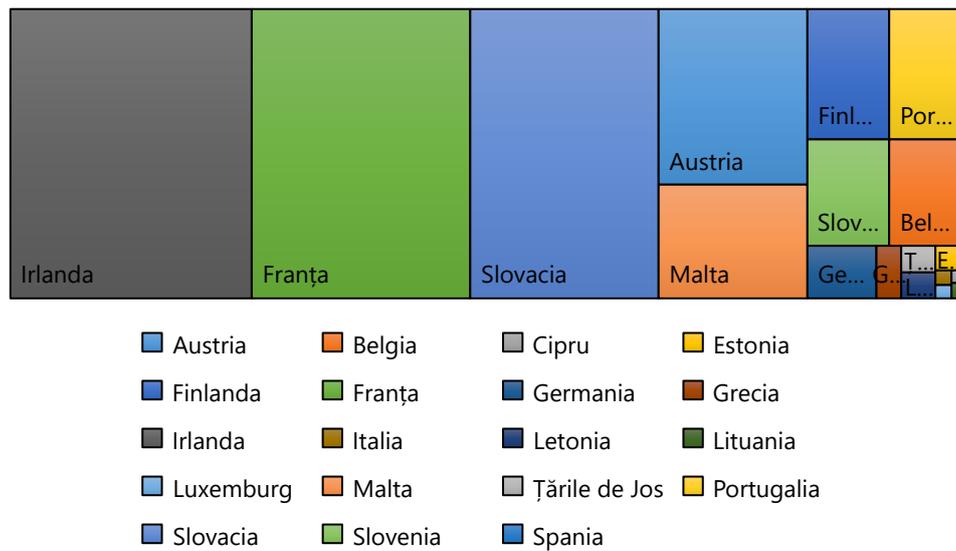
Figure 14. Croatia - Share of CIF imports from economic partners by degree of economic development, 2013-2022 (%)



Source: processing after [www.imf.org](http://www.imf.org)

In 2022, Croatia's imports from Eurozone countries totaled \$24,025.74 million, which shows deep economic integration with the European bloc and underlines the importance of this region as a main source of imports. This trend embodies the benefits of the European Single Market, providing access to a wide range of goods and services essential to the Croatian economy. The increase in imports from the Eurozone also reflects the close trade links and economic interdependence between Croatia and other EU Member States (Figure 15).

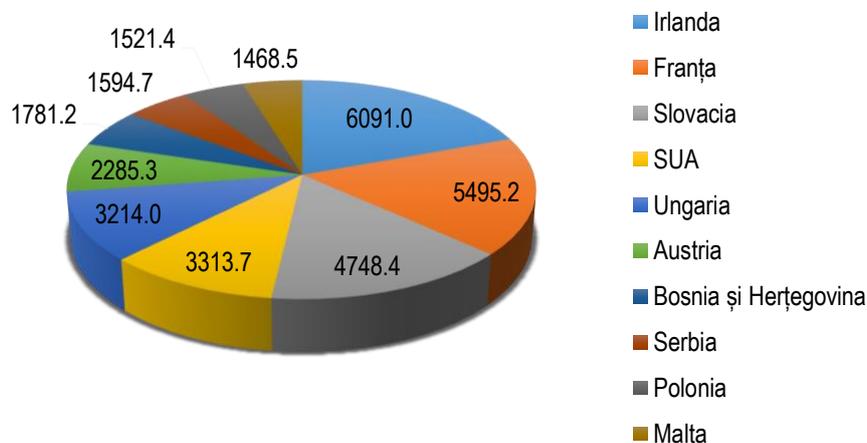
Figure 15. Croatia - CIF imports from Eurozone partners in 2022 (million USD)



Source: processing after [www.imf.org](http://www.imf.org)

Looking at imports from the 10 most important trading partners in 2022, there is a marked dependence on certain countries, notably Germany, Italy and Slovenia, which are among the main suppliers. For example, imports from Germany made up a significant share of Croatia's total imports, followed closely by Italy and Slovenia, showing strong economic ties and established trade preferences. This orientation reflects both geographical proximity and the strategic alignment of Croatia's economic interests with these countries, playing a key role in structuring supply chains and meeting domestic market requirements (Figure 16).

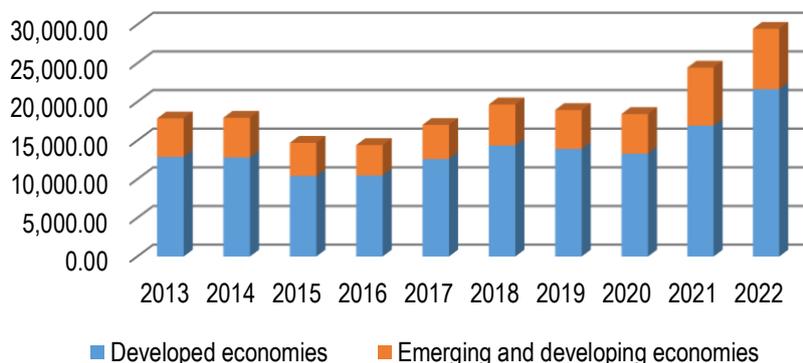
Figure 16. Croatia - Top 10 global partners for CIF imports in 2022 (USD million)



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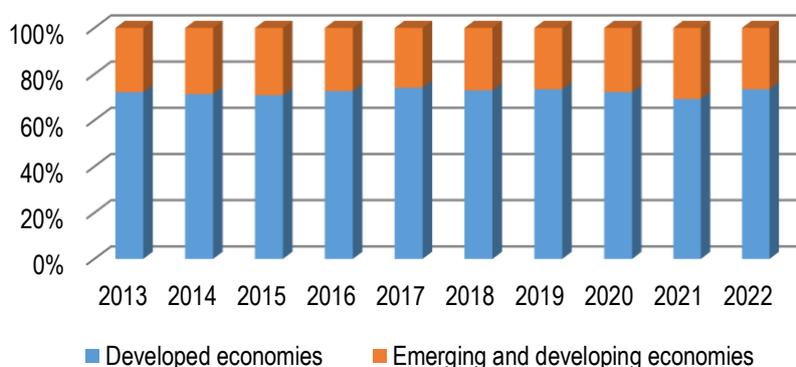
Latvia's imports from developed and emerging economies have shown a notable growth over the period 2013-2022, reflecting diversification and adaptation to domestic economic needs in the globalised exchange. In 2013, imports from developed economies were \$11,263.47 million, increasing to \$22,997.51 million in 2022, indicating an increasing orientation towards partners in developed countries for resources, advanced technologies and consumer goods. Simultaneously, imports from emerging economies increased from \$2,828.13 million in 2013 to \$5,600.65 million in 2022, demonstrating an increase in trade interactions with emerging markets, which is essential for diversifying import sources and exploiting cost-effective opportunities (Figure 17 and 18).

Figure 17. Latvia - Development of CIF imports from economic partners by degree of economic development, 2013-2022 (million USD)



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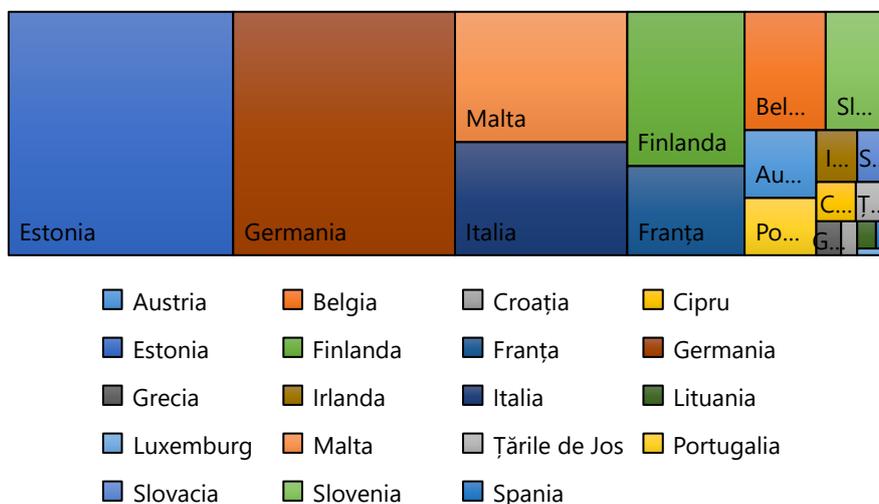
Figure 18. Latvia - Share of CIF imports from economic partners by degree of economic development, 2013-2022 (%)



Source: processing after [www.imf.org](http://www.imf.org)

In 2022, Latvia's imports from Eurozone countries reached \$18,301.51 million, representing a significant share of total imports and underlining the Eurozone's role as a primary source of goods and services for Latvia. This figure reflects not only the close economic and political ties between Latvia and the European Union, but also the benefits of European economic integration, such as access to a large and diversified market, economic stability and predictability of trade within the bloc (Figure 19).

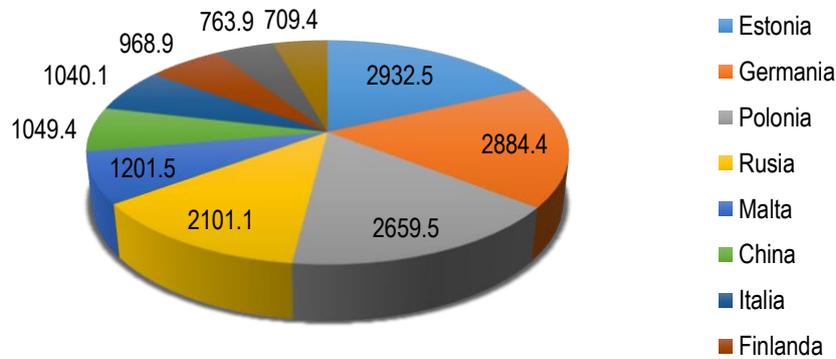
Figure 19. Latvia - CIF imports from Eurozone partners in 2022 (million USD)



Source: processing after [www.imf.org](http://www.imf.org)

Assessing imports from the top 10 partners in 2022, we see that Germany, Lithuania and Poland are among the largest suppliers, highlighting Latvia's dependence on neighbouring economies and the largest European economy. Imports from Germany were worth \$2,397.51 million, closely followed by Lithuania with \$2,218.72 million and Poland with \$1,600.65 million, indicating strong trade links and regional interdependence. This focus on key partners underlines the importance of regional supply chains and Latvia's integration into the European economy, as well as its need to access diverse markets to meet domestic demand (Figure 20).

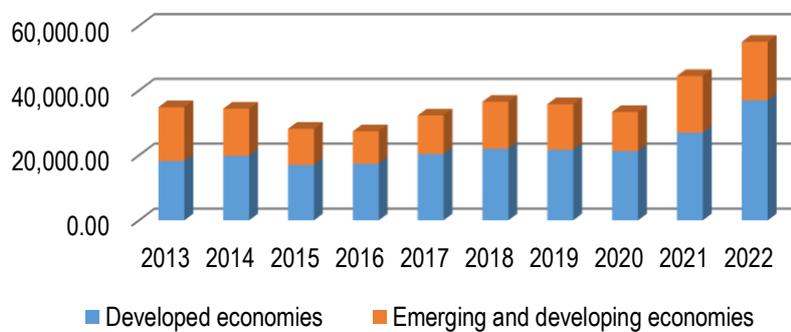
Figure 20. Latvia - Top 10 world partners for CIF imports in 2022 (USD million)



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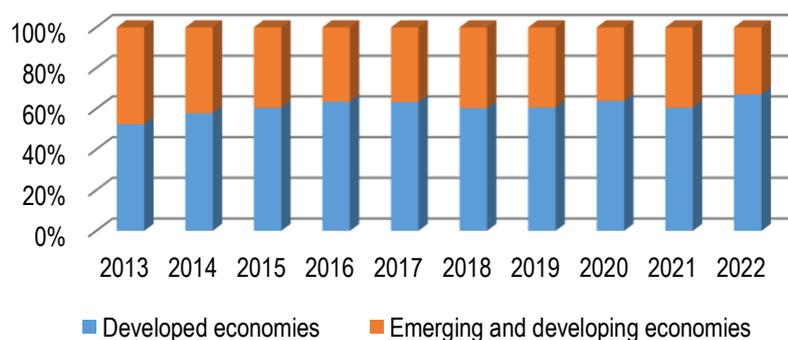
Lithuania's imports in the period 2013-2022 showed a marked development from both developed and emerging economies, reflecting its deep integration into the global economy and adaptability to international market changes. In 2022, imports from developed economies reached \$34,830.04 million, up from \$34,821.10 million in 2013, demonstrating continued growth and orientation towards developed markets for resources, technology and high-quality consumer goods. On the other hand, imports from emerging economies increased from \$16,603.68 million in 2013 to \$24,455.64 million in 2022, highlighting a diversification of import sources and Lithuania's increased ability to interact with dynamic emerging markets (Figure 21 and 22).

Figure 21. Lithuania: CIF Imports by Economic Partner Development, 2013-2022, million USD



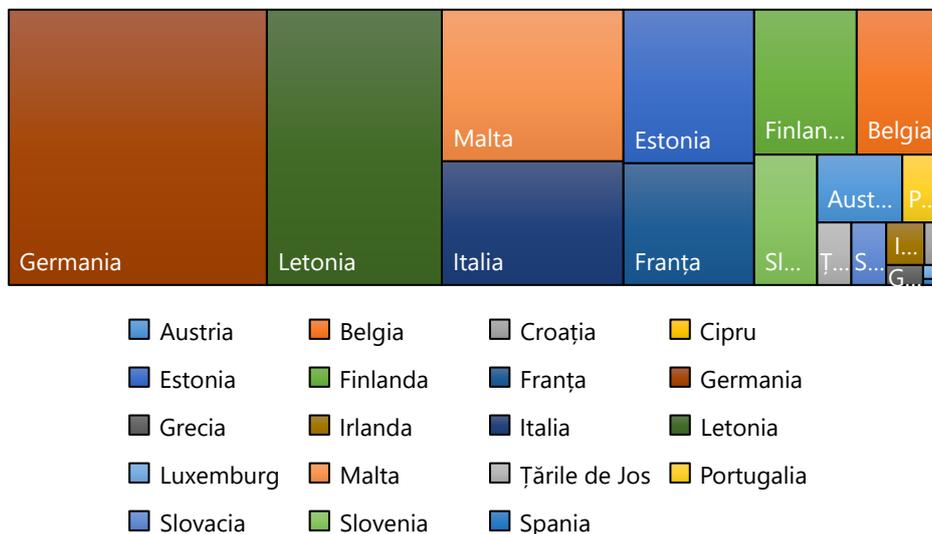
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Figure 22. Lithuania: Share of CIF Imports by Partner Development, 2013-2022, %



In 2022, Lithuania's imports from Eurozone countries totalled \$5,979.29 million, marking an increase from \$18,217.16 million in 2013, reflecting changes in the import structure and possibly a strategic shift by Lithuania towards diversifying import sources from outside the Eurozone. This development indicates Lithuania's adaptation to European and global economic dynamics, taking advantage of access to a wide range of markets to improve supply chain efficiency and meet domestic demand (Figure 23).

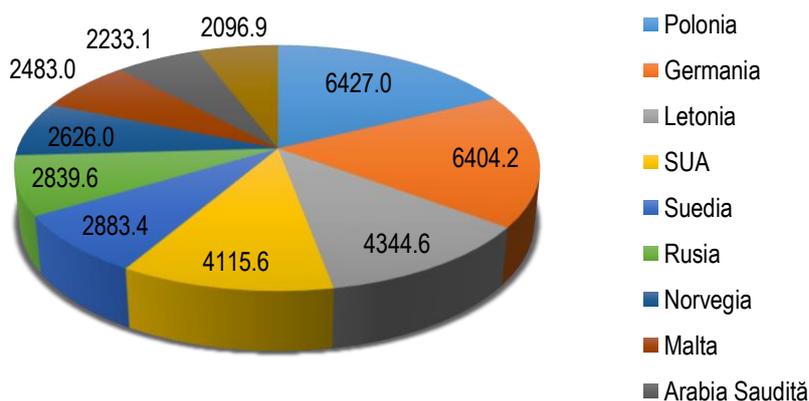
Figure 23. Lithuania - CIF imports from Eurozone partners in 2022 (million USD)



Source: processing after [www.imf.org](http://www.imf.org)

The analysis of imports from the 10 most important trading partners in 2022 shows a strong dependence and interconnection of Lithuania with key economies such as Russia, Germany and Poland. For example, imports from Russia constituted a significant share, closely followed by significant imports from Germany and Poland, highlighting Lithuania's strong and diversified economic ties. This distribution of import partners underlines Lithuania's strategic focus on strengthening and diversifying trade relations to support economic growth and respond effectively to domestic needs (Figure 24).

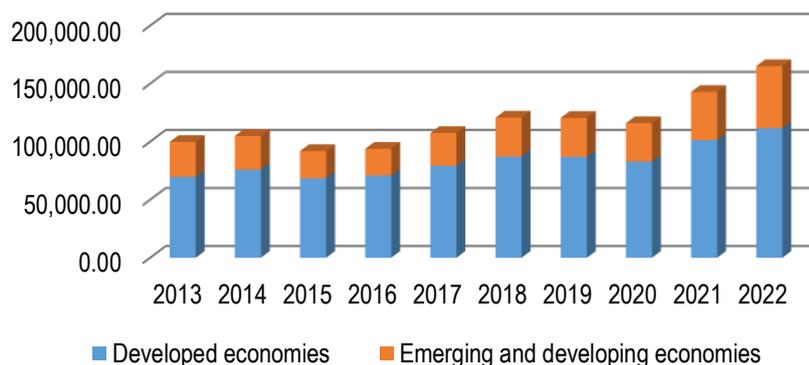
Figure 24. Lithuania - Top 10 world partners for CIF imports in 2022 (USD million)



Source: processing after [www.imf.org](http://www.imf.org)

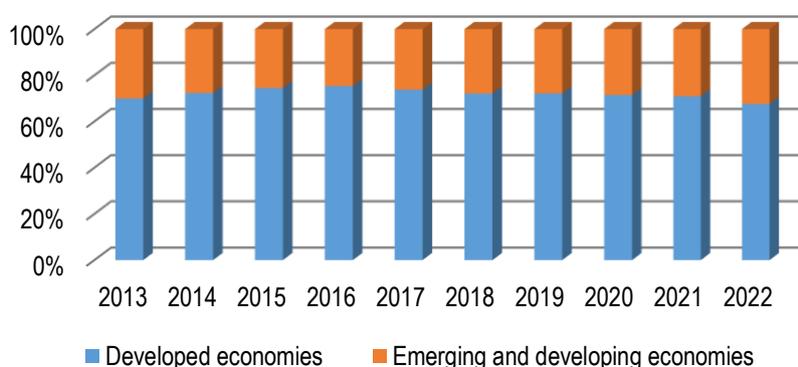
The evolution of Hungary's imports over the period 2013-2022 reflects an adaptability to global dynamics and a strengthening of trade links with both developed and emerging economies. In 2013, imports from developed economies were \$100,119.61 million, rising impressively to \$165,135.46 million in 2022. This growth underlines Hungary's dependence on advanced technology, raw materials and consumer goods from these economies. In parallel, imports from emerging and developing economies increased from \$29,968.54 million in 2013 to \$53,522.17 million in 2022, highlighting the diversification of import sources and Hungary's ability to exploit opportunities in a variety of markets (Figure 25 and 26).

Figure 25. Hungary: Evolution of CIF Imports by Partner Development, 2013-2022, million USD



Source: processing after [www.imf.org](http://www.imf.org)

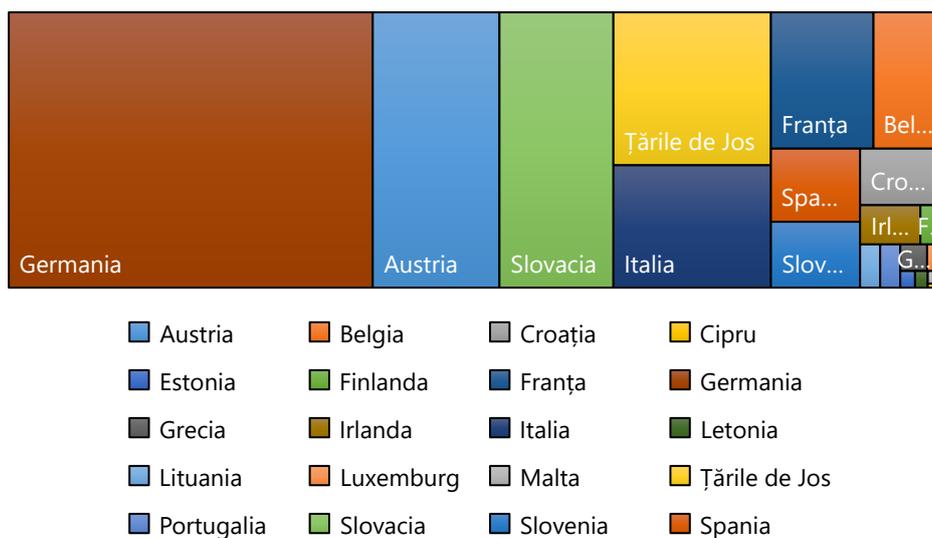
Figure 26. Hungary - Share of CIF imports from economic partners by degree of economic development, 2013-2022 (%)



Source: processing after [www.imf.org](http://www.imf.org)

In 2022, Hungary's imports from Eurozone countries reached \$88,034.45 million, demonstrating the key role of the European Union as a source of imports and the importance of European economic integration for Hungary. This significant amount reflects the close trade ties and economic interdependence between Hungary and the rest of the European bloc, highlighting the benefits of Hungary's EU membership, including access to a large and diversified market (Figure 27).

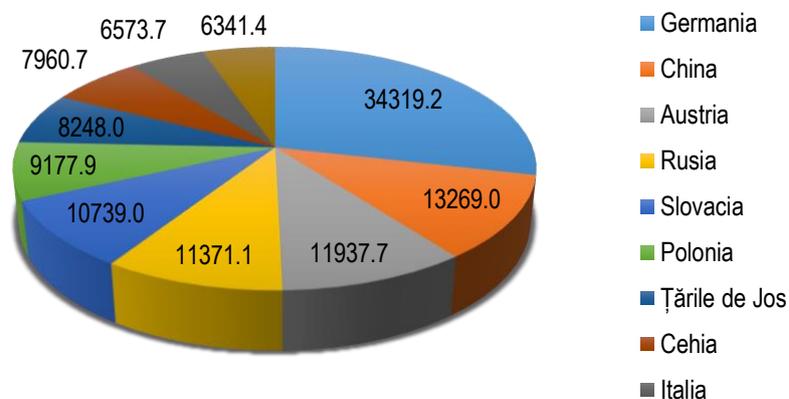
Figure 27. Hungary - CIF imports from Eurozone partners in 2022 (million USD)



Source: processing after [www.imf.org](http://www.imf.org)

Looking at imports from the top 10 partners in 2022, we see that Germany, China and Poland are among the largest suppliers, showing strong economic ties and established trade preferences. For example, imports from Germany, which are significant, underline the economic interdependence and close trade cooperation between Hungary and Germany. This distribution of imports reflects Hungary's strategic orientation towards strengthening and diversifying trade relations to support economic growth and respond effectively to domestic needs (Figure 28).

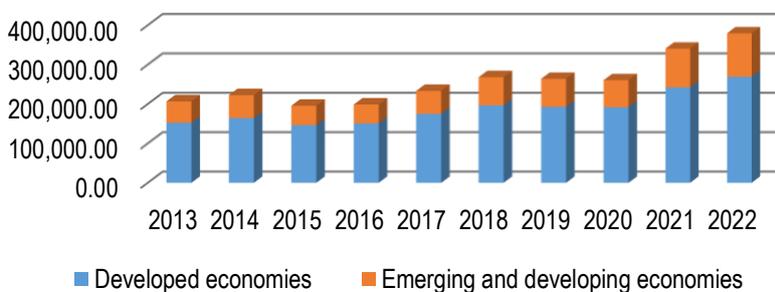
Figure 28. Hungary - Top 10 global partners for CIF imports in 2022 (USD million)



Source: processing after [www.imf.org](http://www.imf.org)

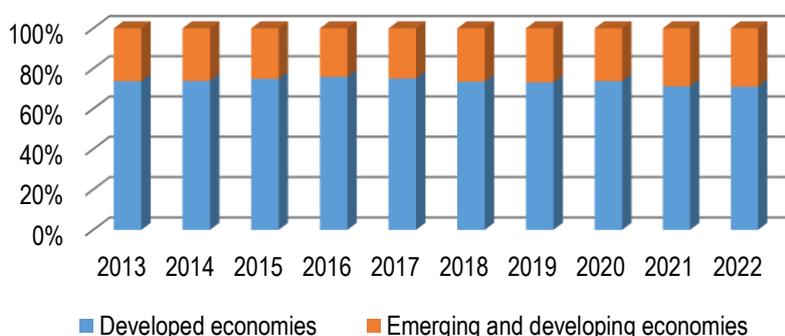
Poland's imports from developed and emerging economies showed significant growth between 2013 and 2022, reflecting a deep integration of the national economy into global value chains and adaptability to consumption and production needs. In 2013, imports from developed economies were \$207,660.24 million, increasing to \$243,522.95 million in 2022, demonstrating a shift towards advanced markets for technology, equipment and consumer goods. On the other hand, imports from emerging economies increased from \$54,526.75 million in 2013 to \$82,836.47 million in 2022, highlighting a diversification of import sources and an active search for opportunities in emerging markets (Figure 29 and 30).

Figure 29. Poland: CIF Imports by Partner Development, 2013-2022, USD million



Source: processing after [www.imf.org](http://www.imf.org)

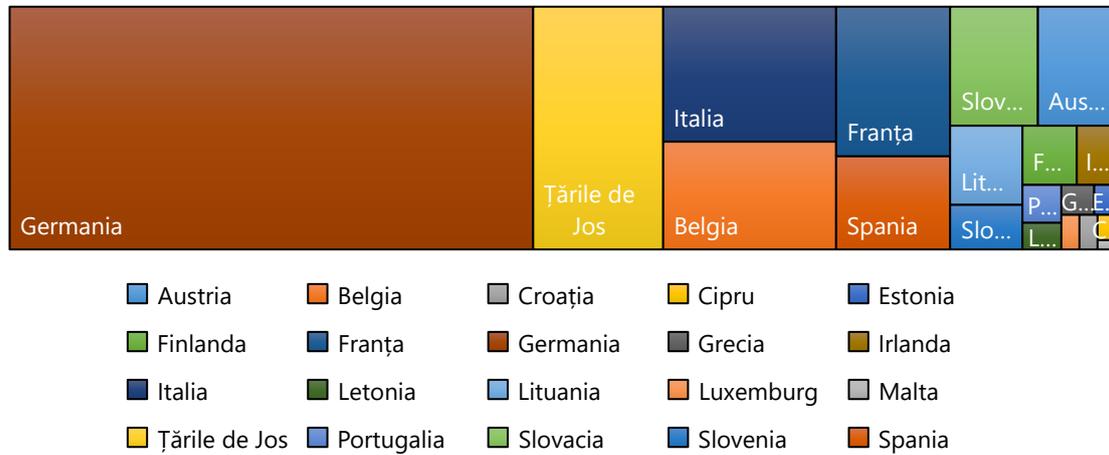
Figure 30. Poland - Share of CIF imports from economic partners by degree of economic development, 2013-2022, (%)



Source: processing after [www.imf.org](http://www.imf.org)

In 2022, Poland's imports from Eurozone countries totaled \$274,11.86 million, marking an impressive increase from 2013, when imports from the Eurozone were \$115,572.18 million. This development underlines the key role of the European Union as a major trading partner and source of imports for Poland, offering access to a wide range of products and services, as well as the advantages of a single market without trade barriers (Figure 31).

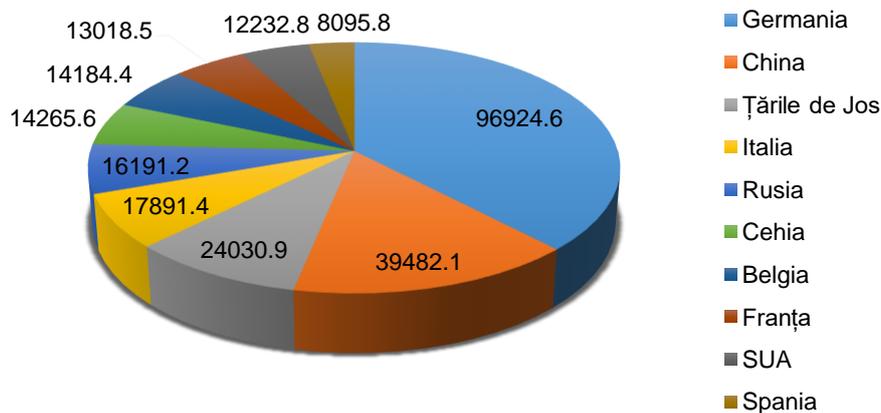
Figure 31. Poland - CIF imports from Eurozone partners in 2022 (million USD)



Source: processing after [www.imf.org](http://www.imf.org)

Analysis of imports from the ten most important trading partners in 2022 shows a marked dependence on certain countries, notably Germany, China and Russia. Imports from Germany, for example, were the highest, reflecting strong economic ties and interdependence between the two economies. This underlines the strategic importance of Germany for Polish supply chains, as well as the diversified role of China and Russia as suppliers of raw materials and consumer goods. The geographical distribution of imports demonstrates Poland's efforts to diversify its trading partners and to respond effectively to domestic market requirements (Figure 32).

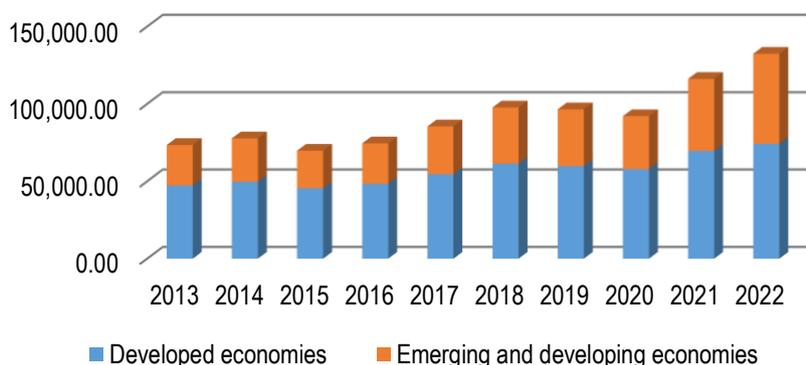
Figure 32. Poland - Top 10 global partners for CIF imports in 2022 (USD million)



Source: processing after [www.imf.org](http://www.imf.org)

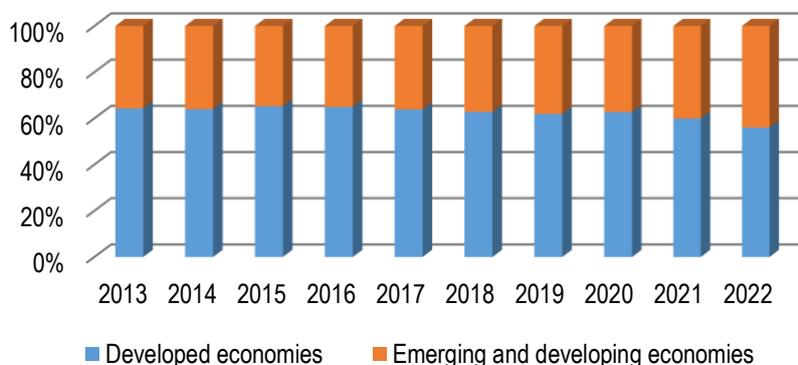
The evolution of Romania's imports from 2013 to 2022 reflects a strategic adaptation and diversification in its trade relations with both developed and emerging economies. Imports from developed economies increased significantly, from \$73,497.48 million in 2013 to \$74,223.83 million in 2022, demonstrating Romania's dependence on advanced technology, equipment and consumer goods from developed partners. Similarly, imports from emerging and developing economies increased from \$26,219.09 million in 2013 to \$58,227.33 million in 2022, highlighting Romania's efforts to diversify its import sources and explore new markets to improve economic competitiveness (Figure 33 and 34).

Figure 33. Romania - Evolution of CIF imports from economic partners by degree of economic development, 2013-2022 (USD million)



Source: processing after [www.imf.org](http://www.imf.org)

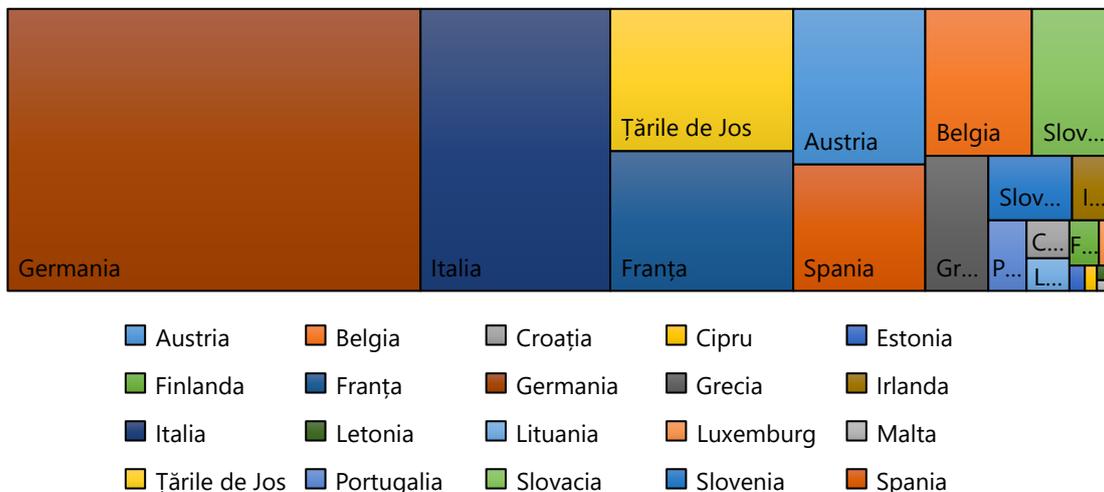
Figure 34. Romania - Share of CIF imports from economic partners by degree of economic development, 2013-2022 (%)



Source: processing after [www.imf.org](http://www.imf.org)

In 2022, imports from Eurozone countries accounted for a significant portion of Romania's total imports, reaching \$63,372.00 million, reflecting the crucial role of the European Union as a primary source of imports and Romania's deep economic integration into the European bloc. This orientation towards the Eurozone is essential for access to high quality goods and services, essential for domestic economic needs and for sustaining economic growth (Figure 35).

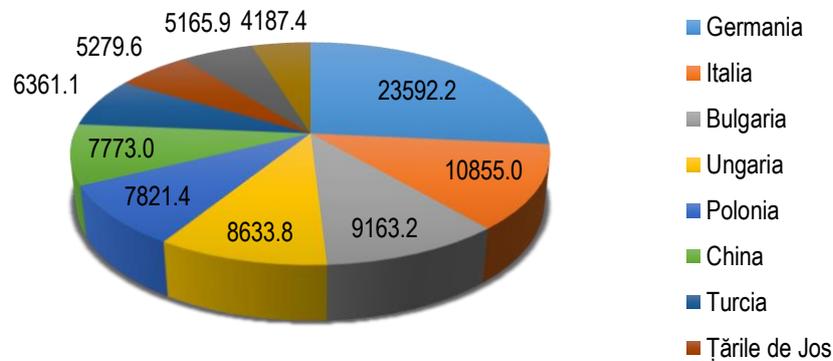
Figure 35. Romania - CIF imports from Eurozone partners in 2022 (USD million)



Source: processing after [www.imf.org](http://www.imf.org)

Analysing imports from the top 10 partners in 2022, Germany, Italy and Hungary are among the main suppliers, showing strong economic links and established trade interdependencies. For example, imports from Germany were the largest, closely followed by Italy and Hungary. This distribution of imports highlights Romania's strategic orientation towards strengthening and diversifying trade relations with key partners to support its development and growth needs (Figure 36).

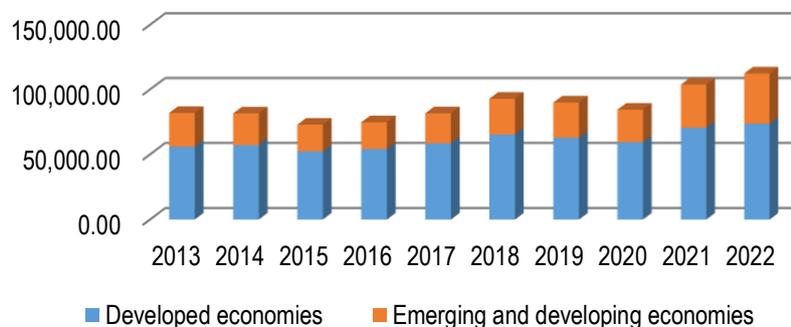
Figure 36. Romania - Top 10 global partners for CIF imports in 2022 (USD million)



Source: processing after [www.imf.org](http://www.imf.org)

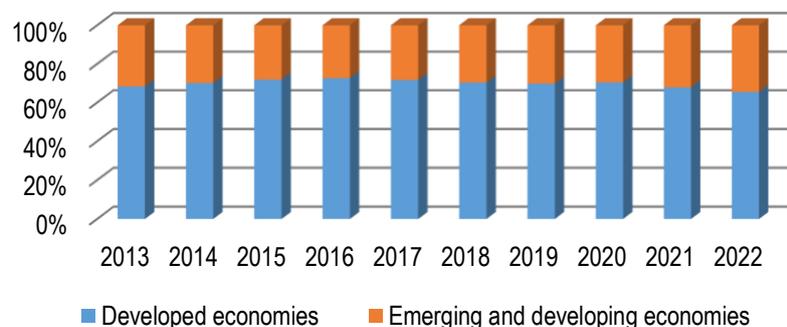
Slovakia's imports from developed and emerging economies over the period 2013-2022 have been growing steadily, reflecting an adaptation of the economy to consumption and production needs and deeper integration into global value chains. In 2013, imports from developed economies were \$81,913.19 million, and by 2022, they have increased to \$112,466.10 million. This growth indicates a strong orientation towards developed markets for access to advanced technology, equipment and consumer goods. At the same time, imports from emerging economies increased from \$25,938.41 million in 2013 to \$38,809.31 million in 2022, demonstrating the diversification of import sources and the search for cost-effective opportunities in emerging markets (Figure 37 and 38).

Figure 37. Slovakia: CIF Imports by Partner Development 2013-2022, million USD



Source: processing after [www.imf.org](http://www.imf.org)

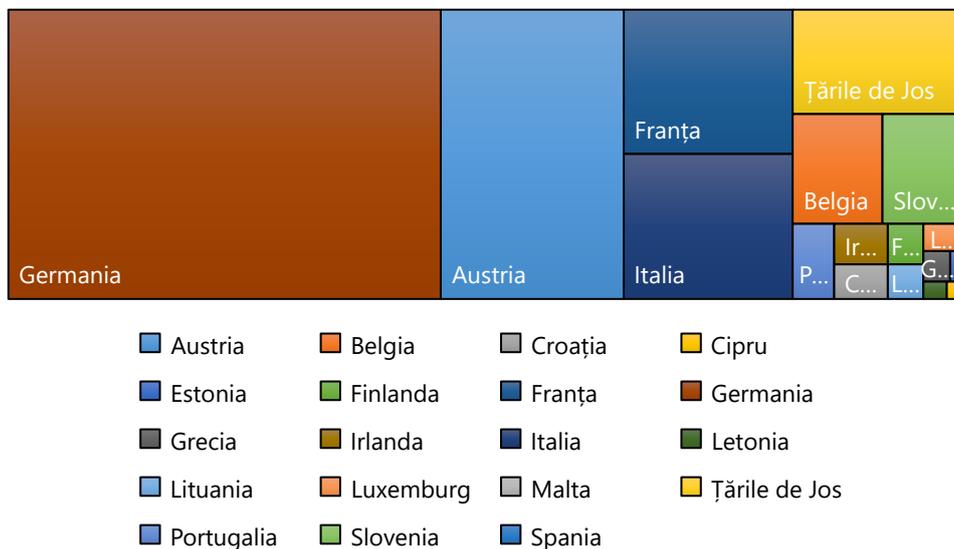
Figure 38. Slovakia: Share of CIF Imports by Partner Development, 2013-2022, %



Source: processing after [www.imf.org](http://www.imf.org)

In 2022, Slovakia's imports from Eurozone countries reached \$45,533.36 million, marking a significant increase compared to 2013, when they were \$33,910.17 million. This development highlights the importance of the European Union as a main source of imports and Slovakia's deep economic integration into the European bloc. Access to a large and diversified single market facilitates the procurement of goods and services essential for domestic economic needs, supporting Slovakia's growth and development (Figure 39).

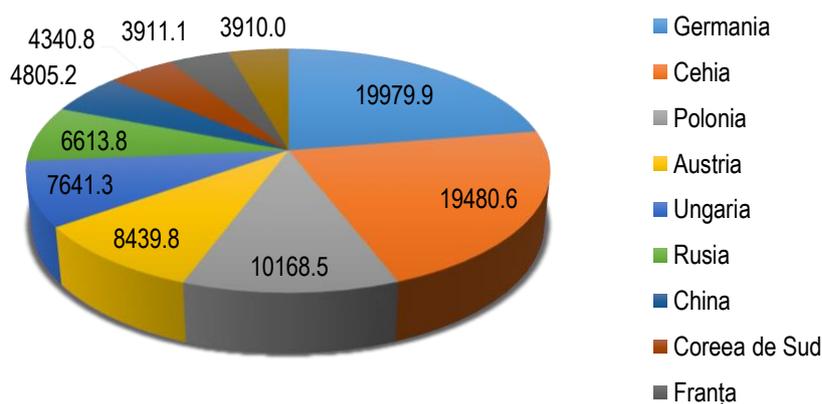
Figure 39. Slovakia - CIF imports from Eurozone partners in 2022 (million USD)



Source: processing after [www.imf.org](http://www.imf.org)

Analysing imports from the top 10 partners in 2022, we see that Germany, the Czech Republic and Poland are among the largest suppliers, highlighting close economic ties and interdependence within the region. Significant imports from these countries underline Slovakia's strategic orientation towards strengthening and diversifying trade relations with key partners. This distribution of imports reflects Slovakia's efforts to maximise its access to important markets and benefit from existing trade links, contributing to the country's sustainability and economic growth (Figure 40).

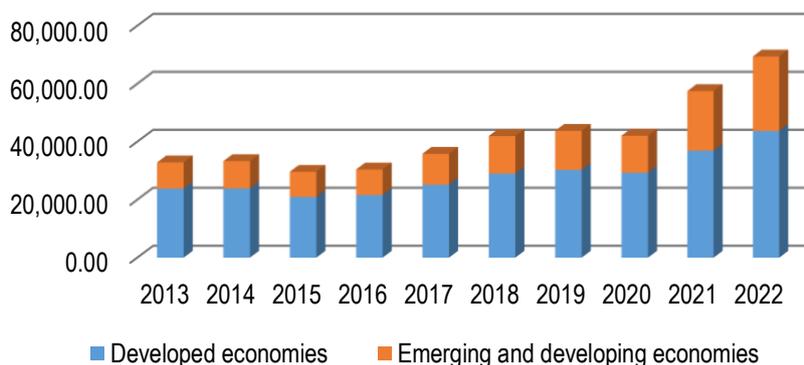
Figure 40. Slovakia - Top 10 world partners for CIF imports in 2022 (USD million)



Source: processing after [www.imf.org](http://www.imf.org)

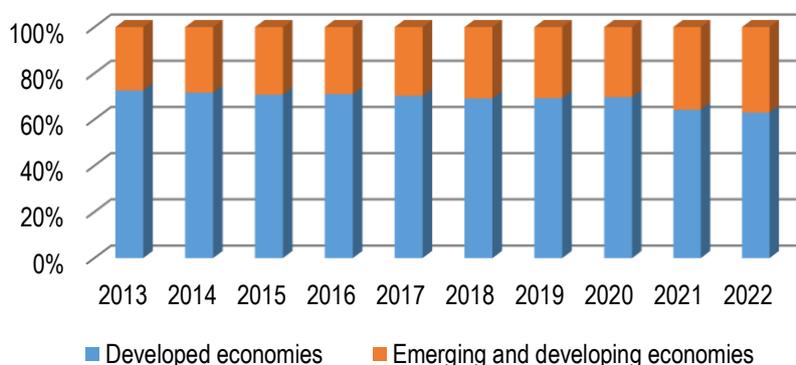
Slovenia's imports in the period 2013-2022 showed significant growth from both developed and emerging economies, highlighting the country's adaptability and integration into the global economy. In 2013, imports from developed economies amounted to \$23,858.47 million and by 2022 they have increased to \$36,202.54 million, demonstrating Slovenia's dependence on advanced products, technologies and services from these countries. At the same time, imports from emerging and developing economies increased from \$8,129.29 million in 2013 to \$22,561.61 million in 2022, highlighting the diversification of import sources and Slovenia's commitment to exploring opportunities in dynamic markets (Figure 41 and 42).

Figure 41. Slovenia: CIF Imports by Partner Development, 2013-2022, million USD



Source: processing after [www.imf.org](http://www.imf.org)

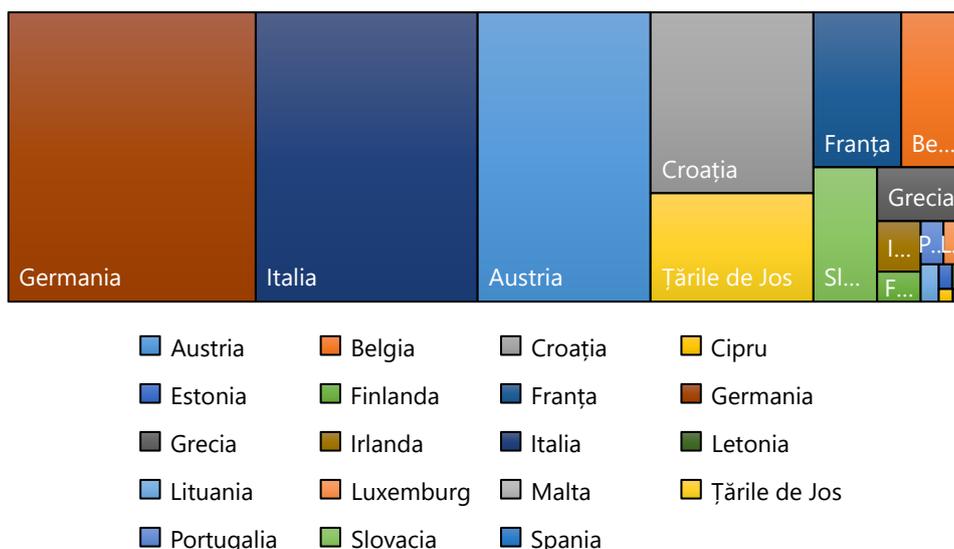
Figure 42. Slovenia: Share of CIF imports from economic partners by degree of economic development, 2013-2022, (%)



Source: processing after [www.imf.org](http://www.imf.org)

In 2022, Slovenia's imports from Eurozone countries accounted for a major share of total imports, reaching \$22,561.61 million, compared to \$9,043.58 million in 2013. This remarkable growth highlights the Eurozone's key role as a major source of imports for Slovenia, benefiting from the advantages of European economic integration and access to a large single market. This also reflects the close trade links and economic interdependence between Slovenia and the rest of the European bloc (Figure 43).

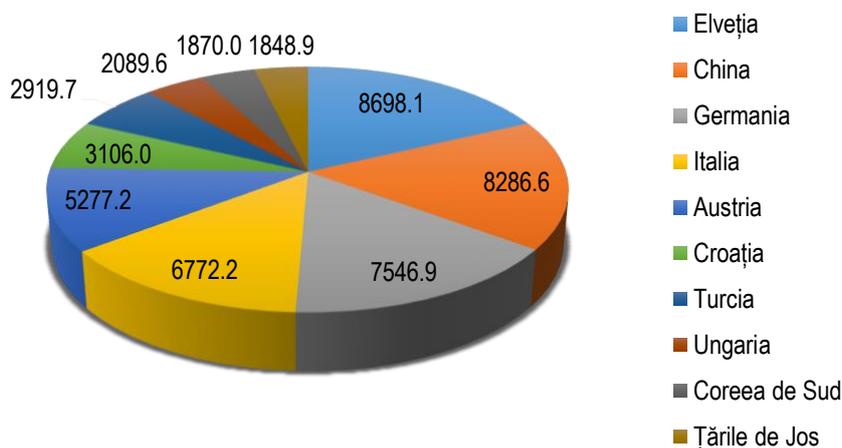
Figure 43. Slovenia - CIF imports from Eurozone partners in 2022 (million USD)



Source: processing after [www.imf.org](http://www.imf.org)

Analysing imports from the 10 most important partners in 2022, there is a strong dependence on Germany, Italy and Austria, which are among the main suppliers. Imports from Germany were significant, reaching \$9,691.11 million, closely followed by Italy with \$3,142.57 million and Austria with \$1,797.09 million. This distribution of imports underlines Slovenia's deep economic ties and established trade preferences, highlighting the strategic importance of these countries to the Slovenian economy, both for access to high quality products and technologies and for supporting supply chains in various industrial sectors (Figure 44)

Figure 44. Slovenia - Top 10 world partners for CIF imports in 2022 (USD million)



Source: processing after [www.imf.org](http://www.imf.org)

Comparative analysis of imports into Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries over the period 2013-2022 reveals interesting trends and significant differences reflecting divergences in economic strategies, levels of development and integration into global value chains. For example, countries such as Poland and Hungary have seen a remarkable increase in imports from developed economies, highlighting their dependence on advanced technology and consumer goods from these markets to sustain domestic economic growth and industrial development. In contrast, Slovenia and Slovakia show a strong orientation towards the Eurozone, underlining the importance of European integration and access to an enlarged single market for their economies. These differences highlight how each CEE country adjusts its trade and economic policies to best meet its development needs and objectives.

On the other hand, the growth of imports from emerging economies into CEE countries indicates a diversification of import sources and an active search for cost-effective opportunities in developing markets. This trend can be seen particularly in the case of Lithuania and Romania, which have shown an increased interest in emerging markets, possibly in response to the need to diversify their import sources in the context of global economic fluctuations and trade tensions. Diversification of import sources not only reduces dependence on a limited number of trading partners, but can also improve security of supply and give CEE economies access to a wider range of products and services, thus contributing to economic growth and resilience to external shocks. These differences and trends underline the complexity and dynamics of international trade in the EEC region and the need for a strategic approach in trade and economic policies.

## Conclusion

This paper studied the import dynamics of various Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries, examining the complex of trade relationships that these nations maintain with their top trading partners. By analyzing data spanning from 2013 to 2022, the research highlights the significant reliance of Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Croatia, Latvia, Hungary, Poland, Slovenia, and Slovakia on both European Union (EU) member countries and emerging economies. Notable trends include the steady growth of import values, the diversification of trade sources, and the adaptability of these economies to global market changes. The findings reveal a marked dependence on key suppliers such as Germany, Italy, and Poland, underscoring the importance of strategic economic policies in navigating the complexities of international trade. Through this comprehensive analysis, the study provides insights into the evolving economic landscapes of CEE countries, emphasizing their efforts to integrate into global value chains and bolster economic resilience.

An analysis of Bulgaria's imports from its top 10 trading partners in 2022 shows a significant dependence on imports from European Union (EU) member countries, including Germany, Italy and Romania. An examination of Czech imports from 2013 to 2022 illustrates the adaptability and interdependence of its economy with both developed and emerging countries. In 2022, the total value of imports reached USD 236,662.59 million, representing a substantial increase from the 2013 amount of USD 144,334.98 million.

Analysing Estonia's imports from its ten most important trading partners in 2022, it is evident that there is a significant dependence on certain economies, especially those located in Europe. Germany and Finland have become significant nations, demonstrating the strong economic ties and mutual dependence between Estonia and these countries. Examination of Croatia's imports from 2013 to 2022 shows a steady expansion of trade with both established and emerging countries, suggesting a growing interdependence within the global economy.

After analysing imports from the top 10 partners in 2022, it is clear that Germany is the leading supplier, providing imports worth USD 64,302.69 million. Poland, Slovakia and China are other notable countries in terms of imports. An examination of imports from the top ten trading partners in 2022 reveals a substantial reliance on some nations, including Germany, Italy and Slovenia, serving as key suppliers.

From 2013 to 2022, Latvia has seen a significant increase in its imports from both well-established and developing countries. The country's economic progress has been driven by its efforts to diversify its economy and meet local economic requirements in the context of a global market. An assessment of imports from the top ten crucial partners in 2022 highlights Germany, Lithuania and Poland as the main suppliers, underlining Latvia's dependence on neighbouring nations and Europe's largest economy. From 2013 to 2022, Hungary's import patterns demonstrate its ability to adapt to global change and increase trade links with both developed and developing countries. Poland registered a substantial growth in imports from both established and emerging economies over the period 2013 - 2022. This suggests that the nation's economy has effectively assimilated into global value networks and has the capacity to meet its consumption and production needs. Romania's import patterns from 2013 to 2022 indicate an intentional effort to change and expand trade links with developed and emerging countries. An analysis of imports into Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries between 2013 and 2022 reveals interesting trends and significant variations, highlighting differences in economic strategies, degree of development and involvement in global value chains. Poland and Hungary have seen a significant increase in imports from industrialised countries, indicating their dependence on advanced technology and consumer products from these markets to support local economic growth and industrial progress. Comparing Slovenia and Slovakia, it is clear that both nations prioritise the euro area, highlighting their commitment to European integration and the benefits of access to a larger single market for their economies. The differences between these Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries illustrate how each tailors its trade and economic strategies to align with its own requirements and development goals.

In conclusion, the increase in imports from developing countries to Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries suggests a desire to expand the origins of imports and actively seek profitable prospects in expanding markets. Lithuania and Romania have a strong tendency to diversify their import sources. These nations have shown a growing interest in developing economies, particularly as a means of offsetting the effects of global economic fluctuations and trade disputes.

Finally, these differences and patterns underline the complexity and continuing development of international trade in the EEC area, highlighting the need to adopt a strategic approach to trade and economic policy, consequently contributing to the expansion of the economy and strengthening their capacity to withstand external shocks.

#### Credit Authorship Contribution Statement

Mărgărita, I.A. conceptualized the study framework, conducted the literature review, performed the statistical analysis, and drafted the initial manuscript. Bratu, R.S. assisted in developing the research methodology, contributed to data collection, supported the statistical analysis, and provided critical feedback on the manuscript drafts. Both authors discussed the results, contributed to the final manuscript, and share equal responsibility for the work.

#### Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

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