



# Exploration of the Optimization Path for the Development of Comprehensive Foreign Trade Services in Henan Province — Based on a Survey Questionnaire of Small and Medium-sized Foreign Trade Enterprises in Henan Province

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**Abstract:** This paper starts from the necessity of the development of comprehensive foreign trade services in the context of economic globalization, and analyzes the dilemmas faced by the development of comprehensive foreign trade services in Henan Province through the research on the demand of small and medium-sized micro and medium-sized enterprises in Henan Province for comprehensive foreign trade services and the use of comprehensive foreign trade services, and explores effective paths such as the establishment of a comprehensive foreign trade services system in Henan Province, so as to promote the high-quality development of comprehensive foreign trade services in Henan Province.

**Keywords:** comprehensive foreign trade services; small and medium-sized micro foreign trade enterprises in Henan Province

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## 1. Introduction

With the in-depth development of global economic integration, comprehensive foreign trade services play an increasingly important role in promoting regional economic growth in foreign trade. Since 2013, when the State Council first put forward the concept of “comprehensive foreign trade services”, comprehensive foreign trade services have been formally emphasized and supported by the government. Since 2014, the government of Henan Province has introduced various policies and initiatives to support the development of foreign trade comprehensive service enterprises, and the development of foreign trade services in Henan Province has begun to show results, but the development situation is not optimistic. This paper analyzes the current situation of the development of foreign trade integrated service industry in Henan Province, randomly selects small and medium-sized enterprises in foreign trade in Henan Province to carry out questionnaire research, analyzes the problems of the development of foreign trade integrated services in Henan Province, and explores the optimization of the development path of foreign trade integrated services in Henan Province.[1]

## 2. The current situation of the development of comprehensive foreign trade services in Henan Province

In recent years, Henan Province has made relatively impressive achievements in the field of foreign trade. As far as the main body of foreign trade is concerned, the total amount of import and export of small and medium-sized enterprises has continued to rise. 2023, the number of foreign trade enterprises with import and export records in Henan Province was 11,844, of which 1,039 enterprises with a total import and export value of more than 50 million yuan accounted for 91.6% of the province's total value of import and export of foreign trade. 2024, from January to August, there were 11,506 enterprises with import and export records, and 640 enterprises with a total value of more than 50 million yuan, accounting for 87.5% of the province's total value of foreign trade and import. In January-August 2024, there were 11,506 enterprises with import and export records in Henan Province, and the total value of import and export was 640 enterprises above 50 million yuan, accounting for 87.5% of the total value of the province's foreign trade and import and export. At the same time, in order to meet the growing demand for specialized services of small and medium-sized foreign trade enterprises, comprehensive foreign trade service enterprises have emerged. This kind of enterprise with the help of modern information technology, integration of all kinds of foreign trade resources, for small and medium-sized micro foreign trade enterprises to provide one-stop, all-round foreign trade service solutions. As far as Henan Province is concerned, although the current volume of development of foreign trade comprehensive service enterprises is still limited, from 2019, Henan Yu Manchu Global Cross-border E-commerce Development Co. and other 7 companies were listed as the first batch of foreign trade comprehensive service enterprises, to 2021, Henan Province has cultivated and recognized three batches of a total of 36 provincial-level foreign trade comprehensive service enterprises, which has gradually become the backbone of the promotion

of the development of foreign trade in Henan Province.[2]

## **2.1 Analysis of the demand for comprehensive foreign trade services by small, medium and micro enterprises in Henan Province (based on the questionnaire)**

In order to gain a deeper understanding of the demand of SMEs for comprehensive foreign trade services and the degree of urgency for various types of projects of comprehensive foreign trade services, this paper carries out a questionnaire survey for SMEs and micro foreign trade enterprises in Henan Province, and through the questionnaire survey, collects opinions and suggestions from different types of enterprises to provide references for further improving the market of comprehensive foreign trade services. A total of 139 valid questionnaires were collected in this survey, involving 14 cities in Henan Province, such as Zhengzhou City, Luoyang City, Xuchang City, Xinyang City, Anyang City, etc. The survey covered a variety of aspects such as types of enterprises, export predicaments, import and export problems, use of integrated foreign trade services, service assistance, cost share, demand for the project, expectations for future development, government support, etc. The survey was conducted by the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation of the People's Republic of China (MOFTEC).

The proportion of production-oriented enterprises in the survey is the highest, reaching 58.99%, and the proportion of integrated industry and trade enterprises and pure foreign trade enterprises is relatively low, at 21.58% and 16.55% respectively. The questionnaire covers enterprises of different sizes, of which enterprises with more than 100 employees account for the highest proportion, reaching 43.88%, the proportion of enterprises with 50-100 and 10-50 employees is relatively close to that of enterprises with 10 employees or less, accounting for only 15.11%, and the proportion of enterprises with 10 employees or less is the smallest.

In the answer to the question of “the main reasons and difficulties affecting your enterprise's export”, the proportion of declining demand due to the sluggishness of the international market is the highest, amounting to 66.19%, followed by larger fluctuations in the exchange rate and international trade frictions affecting the implementation of the contract, which account for 54.68% and 35.97%, respectively. Lack of overseas marketing platform and labor cost increases lead to recruitment can account for 30.22% and 25.18% respectively. In addition, financing is difficult and expensive, insufficient investment in research and development affects the international competitiveness of products, import and export links cost more options accounted for 17.99%, 10.07%, 9.35% respectively.

From the results of the research, the survival situation of small and medium-sized micro foreign trade enterprises in Henan Province is grim at this stage, and it is particularly important to improve the ability of small and medium-sized micro foreign trade enterprises to cope with risks, and the authors believe that vigorously developing comprehensive foreign trade services can effectively promote the development of small and medium-sized micro foreign trade enterprises.

## **2.2 Use of Foreign Trade Integrated Services by Foreign Trade Enterprises in Henan Province (based on research questionnaire data)**

Of the 139 questionnaires recovered in this survey, 60.74% of the enterprises indicated that they had used comprehensive foreign trade services, while 39.26% of the enterprises indicated that they had not. Among them, the proportion of enterprises whose expenditure on comprehensive foreign trade services paid in that year accounted for 1%-5% of their total exports amounted to 78.82%, the proportion of enterprises whose expenditure accounted for 5%-10% was 17.65%, and the proportion of enterprises whose expenditure accounted for more than 10% was only 7%.

Nearly 40% of the enterprises did not use the integrated foreign trade services because 55.56% of the enterprises believe that the enterprise itself can complete the relevant business, 44.44% of the enterprises are concerned about the high cost of services, 40.74% of the enterprises do not understand the integrated foreign trade services, 20.37% of the enterprises are concerned that the quality of services can not meet the demand.

In the question of “what specific integrated foreign trade services are used”, the most frequently used integrated foreign trade services are customs declaration and inspection, accounting for 91.76%; followed by logistics and transportation, accounting for 71.76%; the use of tax rebate services accounts for only 14.12%; while the proportion of financing services and marketing is only 4.71% and 9.41% respectively. 4.71% and 9.41% respectively. From the above data, it can be seen that the comprehensive foreign trade services used by foreign trade enterprises in Henan Province are still more basic businesses.

In the research on the demand of foreign trade enterprises in Henan Province for comprehensive foreign trade services, more than 40% of the enterprises feedback that they need specialized domestic/international logistics services, customs clearance/export tax rebates/receipt and payment of remittances, 28.78% of the enterprises need comprehensive foreign trade services to provide order process inquiry services, and the demand for organizing and participating in international exhibitions and providing a cross-border e-commerce platform accounts for 27.34% and 23.74%, and the demand for online

and offline services accounts for only 4.71% and 9.41% respectively. 23.74%, and the demands for online ordering/settlement, efficient and convenient financing services, provision of professional appraisal organizations, and pushing information on administrative penalties of the same type of enterprises accounted for 16.55%, 15.11%, 11.51% and 9.35% respectively.

Feedback from the above research questionnaire can be seen, Henan Province, foreign trade enterprises to use foreign trade integrated services accounted for more than 60%, but the use of foreign integrated services project type is still simple customs clearance, inspection, logistics services, and other basic services, for marketing, financing and other services involved in less, in addition to the choice of foreign trade enterprises on the foreign trade integrated services is too cautious, worried about the foreign integrated services services of poor service quality, fees and other issues. However, from the research situation, Henan Province has a high level of foreign trade integrated services. However, from the research situation, the foreign trade enterprises in Henan Province have a greater demand for comprehensive foreign trade services, and even a more diversified need for the types of services.

### **3. Analysis of the Development Problems of Foreign Trade Comprehensive Services in Henan Province**

#### **3.1 Imbalance between supply and demand of comprehensive foreign trade services**

Although the number of foreign trade integrated service enterprises recognized by Henan Province has reached 36, the overall number is still scarce compared to the huge demand for foreign trade in Henan Province. Especially in some small and medium-sized cities or cross-border e-commerce and other specific industry sectors, there are fewer professional foreign trade integrated service providers to meet the needs of local enterprises. In particular, enterprises in some emerging industries may face the dilemma of limited choices when looking for suitable integrated foreign trade services. Taking Anyang City as an example, as of 2021, there is one provincial-level foreign trade integrated service enterprise and two other foreign trade agency enterprises in Anyang City, but the number of foreign trade enterprises filed in 2023 is more than 1,500, which appears to be a significantly small number of foreign trade integrated service enterprises in comparison. In addition, the quality of service varies, and the professional ability and service quality of some foreign trade comprehensive service enterprises need to be improved. In the customs declaration and inspection, tax rebate settlement and other links, there may be operation irregularities, low efficiency and other problems.[3]

#### **3.2 Lack of foreign trade professionals**

In the first three quarters of 2024, the number of enterprises with import and export records in Henan Province was 11,844, and the demand for foreign trade personnel in the province amounted to 35,000 people, for example, each of them needs 2-3 foreign trade personnel. The small and medium-sized enterprises in Henan Province generally face the lack of foreign trade personnel, engaged in foreign trade personnel with low business capacity, etc. From the customs declaration error point of view, the error rate of customs declaration in Henan Province is relatively high, and generally exists in the omission of transportation and insurance premiums, inaccurate classification of commodities, incorrect declaration of the mode of trade, wrong declaration of the value of the currency and other simple customs declaration items, which from the side of the reaction to the foreign trade agency personnel of low quality and professionalism is not strong. The problem of the foreign trade agency personnel is not high quality and professional.[4]

### **4. Research on the optimization path of the development of comprehensive foreign trade services in Henan Province**

#### **4.1 Government departments to take the lead in the establishment of comprehensive foreign trade service system in Henan Province**

First of all, the provincial government takes the lead in establishing the provincial foreign trade comprehensive service center entity operation, while introducing policies, each prefecture and city to establish entity foreign trade comprehensive service center, to realize the provincial, city, county / district three-level foreign comprehensive service center coverage, by such centers to collect the foreign trade market, trade barriers and other relevant information and release, to guide the enterprise to establish a foreign trade company, and to provide them with customs clearance, inspection and tax rebates for exports and other business, the initial build an entity framework; secondly, encourage provincial foreign trade integrated service enterprises and foreign trade departments in state-owned enterprises to develop foreign integrated service business, and improve the level of integrated service in and out of the province; furthermore, establish a cooperation mechanism with

larger domestic foreign trade integrated service companies, and provide integrated service business such as financing and credit guarantee for small and medium-sized enterprises in foreign trade in Henan Province, so as to drive the high-quality development of foreign trade in Henan Province.[5]

#### **4.2 Strengthen the cultivation of specialized foreign trade talents**

Henan Province can learn from the practice of developed cities to introduce talents, the development of talent introduction program, through the settlement and purchase of preferential housing, the introduction of talent bonus incentives for high-quality foreign trade personnel; in addition, the government can guide colleges and universities to strengthen the construction of international trade-related specialties through education policy, encourage colleges and universities to dynamically adjust the international trade curriculum according to the market demand, and increase the proportion of practical teaching.

### **5. Conclusion**

The emergence of the emerging industry of foreign trade integrated services is an innovation for the existing traditional foreign trade business model, which has positive significance for promoting the transformation and upgrading of traditional foreign trade in Henan Province. The development of comprehensive foreign trade services in Henan Province requires great attention and strong support from government departments at all levels to realize the high-quality development of comprehensive foreign trade services through the establishment of a comprehensive foreign trade services system in Henan Province, the development of information technology platforms, and the strengthening of synergies among government departments.

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