

THE ENGINEERED DEMAND: HOW BEHAVIORAL HABITS SHAPE GLOBAL TRADE FLOWS

Consumer demand patterns are not purely organic — they can be actively engineered through marketing, social influence and product design. Behavioral economists and marketers note that advertising and persuasion techniques create lasting habits and desires in consumers. Because trade flows ultimately respond to what people buy shifts in consumption habits reshuffle global trade. In other words engineered demand in markets (from sugary foods to tech gadgets) leads to predictable changes in imports and exports of those commodities. This topic is timely: in a globalized economy understanding how mass psychology and marketing drive demand is key to forecasting international trade.

Many historical examples illustrate how marketing-created habits transformed trade. In the early 20th century Edward Bernays famously created a market for cigarettes among American women by linking smoking to feminist ideals of independence. This “Torches of Freedom” campaign helped normalize smoking for women and expanded the tobacco trade. Likewise, sugar consumption has exploded through industrial-era marketing and cheap production. Only two centuries ago per-capita sugar intake was a few kilograms per year. Today many people in wealthy countries eat 30–45 kg annually [1]. By the mid-1800s sugar had become “the world’s most traded commodity” reflecting how cheaply produced sweeteners and aggressive promotion turned sugar into a global staple. In each case new habits (smoking, sweetened diets) drove up demand so strongly that global supply chains and trade routes adjusted to meet it.

Today’s emerging habits suggest new trade shifts ahead. The COVID-19 era cemented online shopping, home entertainment and remote work as consumer norms. Studies show over 90% of US and Chinese consumers now shop online monthly and time spent on home hobbies and media has jumped [2]. This fuels electronics imports, home furnishings and streaming services equipment while suppressing sectors like fast fashion (which saw a decline as more people stayed home). In parallel rising health and sustainability consciousness is rewiring diets. For example, plant-based and organic foods are gaining market share. Such shifts will redirect agricultural trade (e.g. more soy or almonds, less industrial meat) and even energy trade (demand for lithium and clean energy tech). In short, any habit influenced by marketing or culture — from screen time to snacking to eco-friendly choices — has a ripple effect on what goods countries import or export.

Understanding these links is crucial for economists and policymakers. Engineered consumer habits can create sudden surges or drops in demand (as with the smoking or sugar examples) which in turn cause trade flows to expand, contract or reroute. By tracing how modern persuasion and habit-forming strategies shape preferences we can better anticipate changes in global trade networks. In sum, the interplay of behavioral habits and engineered demand is an international market dynamics powerful driver.

References

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2. *Coggins, B.* State of the Consumer trends report 2025 / B. Coggins // TIME. — URL: https://time.com/6329462/history-sugar (date of access: 24.11.2025).

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DEVELOPMENT OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE AS A CONDITION FOR STRENGTHENING BELARUS COMPETITIVE POSITIONS ON THE GLOBAL TOURISM MARKET

Analysis of the Belarusian health and wellness tourism sector provides a concrete context for identifying priority development directions: infrastructure quality, investment flows, geographic concentration of facilities, and client volumes determine which indicators (occupancy rate, average check, investment efficiency, ROI — Return on Investment, NPS — Net Promoter Score) will be key for evaluating competitiveness and planning sustainable growth. The purpose of the abstract is to outline how infrastructure development and investment attraction directly influence the international competitiveness of Belarusian health and wellness tourism.

Statistical data show that by the end of 2024, Belarus hosted about 2,7 million organized tourists and excursionists, with revenues from tourism services approaching 2 billion BYN [2]. Outbound tourism dominates (86% of total), while inbound and domestic segments remain underdeveloped. This imbalance highlights the need for infrastructure modernization in health and wellness tourism, which can serve as a driver