“Parallel imports and their influence on firm performance and consumer satisfaction: Evidence from Kazakhstan”

AUTHORS	Gulashar Doskeyeva Sagyngaliy Aidarbayev

ARTICLE INFO	Gulashar Doskeyeva and Sagyngaliy Aidarbayev (2026). Parallel imports and their influence on firm performance and consumer satisfaction: Evidence from Kazakhstan. *Problems and Perspectives in Management*, *24*(2), 145-161. doi:10.21511/ppm.24(2).2026.11
DOI	http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.24(2).2026.11
RELEASED ON	Friday, 01 May 2026
RECEIVED ON	Sunday, 21 December 2025
ACCEPTED ON	Friday, 10 April 2026

JOURNAL	"Problems and Perspectives in Management"
ISSN PRINT	1727-7051
ISSN ONLINE	1810-5467
PUBLISHER	LLC “Consulting Publishing Company “Business Perspectives”
FOUNDER	LLC “Consulting Publishing Company “Business Perspectives”

NUMBER OF REFERENCES	NUMBER OF FIGURES	NUMBER OF TABLES
45	0	8

BUSINESS PERSPECTIVES

LLC "CPC "Business Perspectives"
Hryhorii Skovoroda lane, 10,
Sumy, 40022, Ukraine

www.businessperspectives.org

Gulashar Doskeyeva (Kazakhstan), **Sagyngaliy Aidarbayev** (China)

PARALLEL IMPORTS AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON FIRM PERFORMANCE AND CONSUMER SATISFACTION: EVIDENCE FROM KAZAKHSTAN

Abstract

The study examines how parallel imports affect company efficiency and consumer satisfaction in Kazakhstan amid shifting global supply chains and trade restrictions. It assesses their impact on business expectations and consumer perceptions by identifying price asymmetries, risks, and cost optimization effects linked to intermediary shipments. A quantitative survey was conducted using purposive sampling of legally registered firms involved in the sourcing and distributing branded goods (n = 50) and urban consumers who regularly purchase such products (n = 51), ensuring respondents' direct exposure to the relevant market mechanisms. The results confirm significant price asymmetry: consumers tend to perceive domestic prices as inflated, while firms only partially realize cost optimization opportunities through alternative supply channels. Specifically, 80.4% of consumers believe branded goods are more expensive domestically than abroad, whereas 70% of firms report negative economic effects from intermediary-based sourcing. The findings also reveal a substantial risk-reality gap. While 90.2% of consumers report encountering counterfeit goods, only 25% of firms identify counterfeiting as a primary risk. At the same time, evidence of proportional convergence between firm-level cost optimization (55%) and consumer price-oriented purchasing behavior (54.9%) suggests partial cost-price transmission under the current restrictive trademark regime.

This study provides recommendations for improving government policy on trademark regulation and parallel imports, as well as for refining companies' pricing strategies. The identified price asymmetry and discrepancies in perceived counterfeit risks underscore the need to strengthen consumer protection and optimize supply chains.

Keywords parallel imports, consumer satisfaction, price asymmetry, risk-reality gap, counterfeit goods, firm performance

JEL Classification E21, D12, D22, F13

Type of the article: Research Article

Received on: 21st of December, 2025
Accepted on: 10th of April, 2026
Published on: 1st of May, 2026

Gulashar Doskeyeva, Dr. of Economics, Professor, Department of Public Administration, School of Law and Public Policy, Narxoz University, Kazakhstan. (Corresponding author)

Sagyngaliy Aidarbayev, Dr. of Law, Professor, Institute of Social Sciences and Humanities, Harbin Institute of Technology, China.

Conflict of interest statement:
Author(s) reported no conflict of interest

INTRODUCTION

Amid structural change in international trade and the instability of global supply chains, ensuring the sustainability of commodity markets has gained particular relevance. One of the mechanisms actively discussed in the framework of trade policy is parallel import – the import of original branded products into the domestic market through alternative channels without the consent of the intellectual property holder or the official distributor. This practice becomes possible when applying the principle of international exhaustion of intellectual property rights and is considered a mechanism for increasing competition, expanding the range of goods, and increasing their accessibility to consumers.

For Kazakhstan, the problem of parallel imports is of particular relevance, since the country's economy is characterized by a high share of imported products in domestic consumption. A significant share of

goods enters the market through official distribution networks of international manufacturers, which, given the limited number of suppliers and the high concentration of supply channels, may lead to price differences between markets and reduce the availability of certain product categories for consumers. In these conditions, against the background of changes in international trade, the transformation of logistics chains, and the redistribution of trade flows, parallel imports are becoming increasingly important as a tool for diversifying supply chains, maintaining a competitive environment, and increasing the availability of goods to consumers in Kazakhstan. However, its distribution affects the interests of various market participants and may have ambiguous consequences. The emergence of alternative supply channels increases competitive pressure on official distributors and affects price dynamics, while simultaneously changing the operating conditions of companies, their economic results, and incentives to invest in the development of service infrastructure and after-sales services. These changes can affect both the performance of firms and consumers' perceptions of the availability, quality, and reliability of goods.

A key problem is the limited understanding of how parallel imports affect Kazakhstan's commodity markets, company performance, and consumer satisfaction. There is also a lack of empirical evidence on how expanding parallel supply channels influence competition and how consumers perceive the quality and availability of goods. This makes it difficult to design balanced market regulation policies and to evaluate the long-term economic impact of parallel imports.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

Parallel import, as a special form of cross-border trade, is defined as the import of original goods without the direct permission of the copyright holder, which is carried out through alternative distribution channels and is inconsistent with the official distribution networks of the manufacturer. This phenomenon is actively discussed in both the economic and legal literature, as it affects issues of international regulation, intellectual property protection, and consumer access to goods.

A number of studies emphasize that parallel imports can be a means of increasing product availability and strengthening the competitive environment. Thus, Kanavos and Vandoros (2010), and Li et al. (2025) note the potential of parallel imports to reduce barriers to market entry, thereby expanding market share and contributing to expanding the range of products for consumers, which can positively correlate with indicators of the material well-being of the population, provided that product quality standards are met.

Mukayev et al. (2023) emphasize the correlation between expanding the range of socially significant goods, the possibility of purchasing them at lower prices, and increasing the availability of key goods to households, which potentially enhances the material component of the quality of life of the population, including economic activity and consumption. In contrast, De Loecker et al. (2020) indicate a possible deterioration in the quality of goods and a decrease in the level of after-sales service as a result of service discrimination on the part of manufacturers, which may offset the positive effect for consumers if proper regulation is not in place. In addition, parallel imports, on the one hand, create additional jobs in the logistics, trade, and distribution sectors, support the functioning of firms dependent on imported goods, and thus can contribute to the formation and maintenance of employment (Doskeyeva et al., 2019; Kussaiynkyzy & Doskeyeva, 2021). On the other hand, the dynamics of price competition may put pressure on local producers and distributors. Thus, according to Granlund (2022) and Danzon and Furukawa (2018), the appearance of goods imported through parallel channels often leads to lower market prices, which provides short-term benefits to consumers, but negatively affects the profitability of official distributors and manufacturers. This market situation leads to unfair competition due to unequal business conditions. According to Zhang et al. (2021), parallel import participants often work at lower costs to meet standards, allowing them to compete asymmetrically with firms that incur higher costs for marketing, service, and brand maintenance. As a result, companies operating through official channels may be forced to rethink marketing strategies and pricing policies,

http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.24(2).2026.11

optimizing costs, which is not always possible without losing product quality or volume of investment (De Loecker et al., 2020), or completely withdraw from the market under the pressure of increased competition (Wang et al., 2023). In addition, as noted by Hoekman and Shepherd (2017) and Hummels and Schaur (2013), firms often face increasing transaction costs associated with finding alternative suppliers, changing logistics routes, and currency risks. Li et al. (2022) and Engau and Hoffmann (2011) believe that, in the context of parallel imports, firms should adapt their strategic development and, at the same time, key management tasks should focus on diversifying supplies, increasing logistics flexibility, and tightening product quality control.

As for Kazakhstani companies, they have special risks in terms of cross-border trade within the EAEU. As noted by Shokamanov and Demesinova (2025), Kazakhstani companies, using differences in tax regimes, logistics, and exchange rates, compete not only with each other but also with companies from other countries, creating unequal conditions for doing business within the EAEU.

Another frequently discussed aspect of parallel import is its legal ambiguity. Zhang (2022) believes that despite the legalization of this mechanism for certain product groups, companies continue to face risks related to intellectual property rights protection, product certification, and warranty obligations. A. Nurmagambetov and Z. Nurmagambetov (2024) note that Kazakhstani firms within the EAEU face uncertainty in the field of intellectual property rights protection, especially regarding trademarks and warranty obligations. The lack of direct contractual relations with copyright holders complicates the issues of after-sales service and product quality responsibility. According to Wang et al. (2023) and Ishikawa et al. (2020), this situation increases the legal and reputational risks for companies operating with parallel imports, as well as creates additional costs associated with certification and technical regulation. In addition, parallel imports influence firms' decisions in licensing, product development, warranty policy, and supply chain management. According to Li et al. (2021) and Han et al. (2023), the long-term planning of firms operating in parallel imports is complicated by high uncertainty: changes in the legislative framework and the external economic environment may at any time limit or expand the possibilities of parallel imports. In this regard, companies are increasingly moving towards adaptive strategies focused on short- and medium-term goals.

The next important and frequently discussed aspect of parallel imports is its significant impact on consumer behavior in parallel trading and "grey" markets. According to Wu and Zhao (2021), consumers are often willing to purchase counterfeit luxury brand products, assuming a certain benefit. In contrast, Li et al. (2022) believe that, despite the consumer benefits of counterfeit goods, some consumers have a negative attitude towards unofficial sales channels, as parallel imports increase the risk of receiving goods that are not adapted to the requirements of the local market or do not meet consumer expectations. Fasii et al. (2024) emphasize that such a situation can negatively affect the reputation of a company, even if it is not formally a manufacturer of products. Ensuring that products meet consumer expectations and national standards remains a key task for companies. Goods imported through parallel channels may differ in configuration, labeling language, and operating conditions. Agaev (2025) believes that the negative impression of consumers in such cases is reflected primarily on the seller, and not on the manufacturer. This forces seller-companies to invest in additional quality control, customer consultation, and after-sales service development. In such cases, according to Iravani et al. (2016) and Ishikawa et al. (2020), increasing the level of service (guarantees, customer support, and after-sales service) may partially offset the negative impact of parallel imports on the profits of official manufacturers and distributors. Service is also considered a key element of firms' strategic behavior in the context of loosening control over supply channels.

In the economic literature, the risks associated with parallel imports are often considered in the context of industrial organization and regulatory economics, as it is advisable to analyze them through the prism of price and institutional market mechanisms. In this regard, the above-mentioned risks associated with parallel imports underscore three important, interrelated but analytically distinct concepts.

Price asymmetry is the discrepancy between the final prices perceived by consumers and cost estimates in the supply chain at the firm level. According to Eyster et al. (2021), Remer (2015), and Theodoulou (2023), the price asymmetry occurs when consumers evaluate the final price as a reflection of costs or a "fair" margin, and when the actual costs of companies, such as logistics, quality control, and service costs, are not observed by the market. Parallel imports enhance this effect by lowering the observed price and increasing the seller's actual costs. This divergence is a documented outcome of restrictive vertical distribution systems (Xia et al., 2004).

Risk-reality gap is the discrepancy between expected regulatory risks (business) and actual market exposure (consumers). As Bin-Husayn et al. (2025) and Cao et al. (2024) noted, the risk–reality gap increases with parallel imports, since in such cases, regulatory risks are often blurred or postponed, and their negative consequences are felt by sellers of goods rather than manufacturers. This separation follows established distinctions between perceived and actual risk in regulatory economics, where institutional narratives often diverge from market realities (Rothschild & Stiglitz, 1976).

Cost-price transmission is the partial pass-through of cost optimization at the firm level to consumer price behavior. According to this concept, when importing in parallel, firms incur additional costs for service, quality control, and consumer advice and cannot fully shift these costs to price due to price competition (Weyl & Fabinger, 2013; De Loecker et al., 2020). Partial transmission aligns with empirical evidence that cost reductions under imperfect competition are incompletely passed through to final prices (Weyl & Fabinger, 2013).

Despite growing interest in parallel imports and their impact on the functioning of markets, a number of key economic mechanisms related to this phenomenon remain poorly understood, in particular in the context of Kazakhstan. In addition, there is practically no analysis of such conceptual aspects as price asymmetry, reflecting differences in prices for identical goods in different markets; the gap between perceived and actual risks (risk–reality gap), which characterizes the discrepancy between consumers' expectations regarding the quality or reliability of goods and the actual characteristics of products supplied through alternative supply channels; as well as cost–price transmission, which determines the degree and speed of reflection of changes in supply costs in final prices for consumers. The lack of empirical studies considering these concepts in relation to the Kazakh market limits the possibilities of a comprehensive understanding of the economic consequences of parallel imports and their impact on price dynamics, company behavior, and consumer perception of goods. In this regard, the relevance of this study, intended for analyzing how these concepts, widely used in industrial organization and regulatory economics, manifest themselves in Kazakhstan, is beyond doubt.

This study aims to examine how the restrictive trademark exhaustion regime affects price formation, risk perceptions, and supply-demand interactions in markets for branded goods. Specifically, the study investigates whether institutional restrictions on distribution channels generate price asymmetries between firms and consumers, distort perceptions of counterfeit risks, and influence the transmission of cost conditions from firms to consumer purchasing behavior.

The following research questions and hypotheses are formulated in the framework of the study:

RQ1 *(Price asymmetry). How do consumers' views of domestic prices for branded goods compare with firms' assessment of the economic impact of intermediary-based supply under a restrictive trademark regime?*

RQ2 *(Risk–reality gap). How large is the gap between businesses' perceptions of counterfeit risk and consumers' actual experiences with counterfeit goods?*

RQ3 *(Cost–price transmission). Is there an association between firms' perceptions of cost optimization and consumers' tendency toward price-oriented purchasing behavior?*

H1: *(Price asymmetry between business and consumers) posits the existence of a systematic asymmetry between business-level econom-*

http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.24(2).2026.11

ic assessments of distribution channels and consumers' perceptions of price levels under the current restrictive trademark exhaustion regime.

H2: *(Risk–reality gap in counterfeit exposure) tests whether a discrepancy exists between business expectations regarding counterfeit risks and the actual consumer experience of counterfeit goods.*

H3: *(Cost–price transmission between firms and consumers) examines whether cost optimization effects perceived at the firm level are reflected in price-oriented purchasing behavior on the consumer side, indicating a partial transmission of economic benefits from supply to demand.*

2. METHODS

The study followed a multi-step research algorithm. First, two structured online surveys (B2B and B2C) were administered via Google Forms in September 2025 to collect cross-sectional data from purposively selected firms and consumers. Second, the datasets were cleaned, coded, and processed in IBM SPSS Statistics 26, with descriptive statistics used to profile respondents and summarize key indicators. Third, inferential tests (including χ^2 goodness-of-fit, exact binomial tests, and two-sample proportion tests) were applied to assess behavioral patterns and compare aligned indicators across independent samples. Analytical results were then synthesized to identify convergence and divergence in supply-side and demand-side perceptions of parallel imports.

The empirical analysis is based on two independent samples representing business enterprises (B2B) and final consumers (B2C). All respondents participated voluntarily and anonymously, providing informed consent through the Google Forms interface before completing the survey. No personal or identifying information was collected, and all data were stored and analyzed in aggregated form. As the study involved minimal risk and no vulnerable groups, separate institutional ethical approval was not required under national survey-research standards.

The study applied purposive sampling based on predefined institutional and behavioral criteria, selecting firms that were legally registered, sectorally relevant, and directly involved in the sourcing and distribution of trademarked goods, and consumers who regularly purchased branded products and had experience with cross-border price comparisons, thereby ensuring substantive exposure to parallel import mechanisms rather than population-level representativeness. Purposive sampling is methodologically appropriate when the unit of analysis must satisfy predefined institutional and behavioral criteria, ensuring analytical relevance and construct validity over probabilistic coverage, particularly in business and consumer market studies (Coyne, 1997; Saunders et al., 2023).

The respondent selection criteria were defined in accordance with the objectives of the study and included legally registered firms operating in the trade, manufacturing, and service sectors that are directly involved in sourcing and distribution activities. Additional criteria included the predominance of medium-sized enterprises, participation in import operations, and the use of intermediary channels for procurement. These criteria ensured that the sample consisted of firms whose activities are directly related to the sourcing and distribution of trademarked goods, thereby increasing the relevance of the collected data for the purposes of the study.

All participating units are legally registered business entities (n = 50). The sectoral composition includes trade enterprises (n = 20), manufacturing firms (n = 17), and service providers (n = 13). In terms of firm size, small enterprises with fewer than 50 employees account for n = 15, medium-sized firms with 50–250 employees represent n = 25, and large enterprises with more than 250 employees comprise n = 10 of the sample. Geographically, the firms operate across Kazakhstan and neighboring EAEU countries, with n = 35 reporting the import of foreign components or finished goods as a core business input. With regard to supply chain structure, n = 35 firms receive goods through intermediaries (non-trademark holders), n = 13 source directly from manufacturers, and n = 2 did not provide a definitive response to the sourcing model question (Table 1).

Table 1. Structural characteristics of the business sample (B2B)

Indicator	Category	n
Legal status	Legally registered business entities	50
Sector	Trade enterprises	20
	Manufacturing firms	17
	Service providers	13
Firm size	Small (< 50 employees)	15
	Medium (50–250 employees)	25
	Large (> 250 employees)	10
Geographic scope	Operations in Kazakhstan and EAEU countries	50
Import dependence	Import of foreign components or finished goods as a core input	35
Supply chain structure	Sourcing through intermediaries (non-trademark holders)	35
	Direct sourcing from manufacturers	13
	No definitive response	2

The selection of respondents for the B2C sample (n = 51) was based on criteria ensuring that participants had relevant experience with branded product markets. The sample included predominantly urban consumers with a high level of education, who regularly purchase branded goods and have experience comparing prices across countries. These criteria ensured that respondents were directly exposed to market dynamics, including branded product distribution and parallel import channels, thereby increasing data relevance and reliability for the study.

The consumer age distribution is as follows: 20–30 years (n = 20), 31–50 years (n = 23), and 51 years and above (n = 8). Educational attainment is dominated by tertiary or university-level education (n = 36), while n = 8 hold secondary education and n = 7 possess postgraduate degrees. Geographically, respondents are distributed across the major urban centers of Kazakhstan: Almaty (n = 18), Astana (n = 13), Shymkent (n = 11), and Aktau (n = 9). In terms of consumer behavior, n = 44 respondents report regular purchases of branded trademarked goods (Table 2).

Two structured surveys were conducted as part of a scientific research project examining price dynamics and market behavior related to trademarked goods. For hypothesis testing, only those questionnaire items directly corresponding to constructs H1–H3 were used in the analysis, with the full list of selected items provided in Appendix A.

A B2B questionnaire targeted firms involved in sourcing and distributing branded products, while a B2C questionnaire captured consumer perceptions of domestic and foreign prices, exposure to counterfeit goods, and purchasing criteria. The B2B instrument consisted of sequential sections on respondent eligibility, firm characteristics, sourcing channels, perceived economic effects, and risk assessments related to parallel imports, thereby enabling a systematic evaluation of organizational practices and cost–risk considerations. The B2C instrument included screening items, demographic indicators, comparative price-perception measures, counterfeit-exposure items, and dominant purchasing factors, allowing for a structured assessment of consumer behavior and market perceptions.

Table 2. Structural characteristics of the consumer sample (B2B)

Indicator	Category	n
Age group	20–30 years	20
	31–50 years	23
	51 years and above	8
Education level	Secondary education	8
	Tertiary / university education	36
	Postgraduate education	7
City of residence	Almaty	18
	Astana	13
	Shymkent	11
	Aktau	9
Consumer behavior	Regular purchase of branded trademarked goods	44

http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.24(2).2026.11

The data were processed and statistically analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics, version 26. Statistical tests were selected according to the study's cross-sectional design, the categorical nature of the variables, and the use of independent B2B and B2C samples. Goodness-of-fit χ^2 tests and exact binomial tests were applied to consumer data to assess whether dominant perceptions and experiences differ from neutral benchmark distributions, thereby establishing non-random outcome patterns. To examine proportional convergence between supply-side and demand-side responses, two-sample tests for equality of proportions were employed, which are methodologically appropriate for comparing conceptually aligned but independently observed aggregates. Firm-level variables with multiple-response or interpretive functions were analyzed descriptively to provide contextual contrast rather than probabilistic inference, ensuring coherence between statistical methods and the conceptual scope of the hypotheses.

The study protocol, including the survey instruments and data collection procedures, was reviewed and approved by the institutional ethics committee, and all participants provided informed consent prior to participation. Both instruments were administered online via Google Forms. Participation was voluntary and anonymous, no financial incentives were provided, and informed consent was obtained electronically prior to survey completion. The resulting data have not been previously published or utilized in other studies.

3. RESULTS

On the consumer side (B2C), price perceptions reveal a pronounced dissatisfaction with domestic price levels. A total of 54.9% of respondents indicated that prices for socially significant goods are substantially higher than in foreign markets, while an additional 25.5% assessed them as slightly higher, yielding a cumulative share of 80.4% of consumers perceiving domestic prices as inflated. Only 11.8% regarded prices as approximately equal, and 5.9% considered them lower than abroad (Table 3).

On the business side (B2B), procurement through intermediaries is predominantly evaluated as economically unfavorable. 70% of firms reported a negative impact of intermediary-based supply on their enterprise performance, whereas only 10% observed a positive effect, and 20% indicated no significant influence (Table 4).

The goodness-of-fit χ^2 test decisively rejects the null hypothesis of no dominant perception of overpricing (H_0: $p = 0.50$), with $\chi^2(1) = 18.85$ and $p < 0.001$, indicating that consumers overwhelmingly perceive domestic prices as inflated. Combined with the B2B evidence that 70% of firms assess intermediary-based sourcing as economically detrimental, these results provide strong empirical support for H1 and confirm a pronounced price asymmetry embedded in the nationally restrictive trademark exhaustion regime rather than arising from competitive market.

Table 3. Consumer perception of price levels (B2C, H1): Compared to foreign markets, what are domestic prices for socially significant branded goods?

Price perception	%
Substantially higher	54.9
Slightly higher	25.5
Approximately equal	11.8
Lower	5.9
Total	100.0

Table 4. Economic effect of intermediary-based supply (B2B, H1): How does sourcing through intermediaries affect your firm's economic performance?

Business assessment	%
Negative	70.0
Positive	10.0
No effect	20.0
Total	100.0

The B2C evidence demonstrates extremely high real exposure to counterfeit products. 78.4% of consumers reported encountering counterfeit goods under well-known brands repeatedly, while 11.8% had experienced such incidents at least once. In total, 90.2% of respondents have faced counterfeit products in practice, whereas only 5.9% reported no such experience (Table 5).

By contrast, on the B2B side, counterfeit risk is perceived as only one component within a broader spectrum of regulatory and operational risks. Within the multiple-response structure, 25.0% of firms pointed to an increased probability of counterfeit goods, while 40.0% emphasized reputational and legal risks, and 35.0% stressed violations of technical regulation requirements. Notably, 20.0% of firms declared that they do not perceive any significant risks at all in relation to parallel-imported products (Table 6).

An exact binomial test was conducted on the dichotomized consumer variable (encountered vs. not encountered counterfeit goods), excluding uncertain responses. The null hypothesis of random exposure (H_0: $p = 0.50$) was decisively rejected, with an observed proportion of $\hat{p} = 0.902$ (46/51) and $p < 1 \times 10^{-8}$, indicating an extremely high and non-random incidence of counterfeit encounters. The marked divergence between widespread consumer exposure to counterfeit goods and the comparatively moderate level of counterfeit risk perceived by businesses provides strong empirical support for H2, indicating a substantial risk–reality gap that challenges the regulatory narrative linking potential counterfeit proliferation primarily to the legalization of parallel imports and instead suggests that counterfeit circulation is a structural characteristic of the prevailing restrictive regime.

On the B2B side, perceptions of cost optimization through parallel imports are mixed but economically significant. 15.0% of firms reported a substantial reduction in costs, while 40.0% indicated that the effect exists but remains limited. Consequently, 55.0% of firms acknowledge some degree of cost-saving potential. At the same time, 10.0% stated that parallel imports increase costs, and a relatively high share (30.0%) expressed uncertainty (Table 7).

Table 5. Consumer exposure to counterfeit goods (B2C, H2): Have you personally encountered counterfeit goods under known brands?

Exposure to counterfeit	%
Yes, repeatedly	78.4
Yes, once	11.8
No	5.9
Uncertain	3.9
Total	100.0

Table 6. Business perception of parallel import risks (B2B, H2): What risks do you associate with parallel-imported goods?

Risk type	% of firms
Increased counterfeit probability	25.0
Reputational & legal risks	40.0
Technical regulation violations	35.0
No risks perceived	20.0

Table 7. Cost optimization effect of parallel imports (B2B, H3): How do parallel imports affect your procurement costs?

Assessment	%
Substantial cost reduction	15.0
Limited cost reduction	40.0
No effect	5.0
Costs increase	10.0
Uncertain	30.0
Total	100.0

http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.24(2).2026.11

Table 8. Consumer price orientation in purchasing decisions (B2C, H3): What factor most influences your purchasing decisions?

Decision criterion	%
Price-oriented	33.3
Price-quality trade-off	21.6
Brand-oriented	13.7
Reviews/ratings	25.5
Uncertain	5.9
Total	100.0

On the B2C side, purchasing decisions exhibit strong price rationality. 33.3% of consumers reported that they primarily orient their decisions toward price, while an additional 21.6% rely on price–quality considerations. Thus, 54.9% of respondents demonstrate clearly price-sensitive purchasing behavior (Table 8).

A two-sample test for equality of proportions was conducted to compare the share of firms reporting cost optimization through parallel imports (55.0%) with the proportion of consumers exhibiting price-oriented purchasing behavior (54.9%). The test revealed no statistically significant difference between the two proportions ($Z = 0.008$, $p = 0.994$), indicating near-perfect proportional convergence. This result supports H3 and suggests partial transmission of firm-level cost advantages to consumer price sensitivity under conditions of constrained official distribution.

The near numerical equivalence between the share of firms recognizing cost optimization (55.0%) and the proportion of consumers displaying price-oriented behavior (54.9%) empirically supports H3. This result indicates that economic incentives formed at the business level are at least partially transmitted to the demand side, and that price competition plays a central role in shaping consumer responses under conditions of constrained official distribution.

4. DISCUSSION

Our research provides a systematic comparative assessment of business and consumer visions of parallel import liberalization and reveals the continuing perception asymmetry between stakeholders, which forms a kind of regulatory blind spot under the current national trademark rights exhaustion regime. Combining comparable B2B and B2C data, empirical analysis confirms the hypotheses put forward and shows that differences in perception are not accidental or marginal deviations, but represent a structural feature of the existing regulatory environment. The predominance of statistically significant results and considerable effect sizes highlights both the analytical reliability of the findings and their practical significance for intellectual property and competition policy.

Firstly, the results of the study confirm the first hypothesis (H1) about the existence of a price asymmetry between consumers' perception of prices and firms' price estimates. A distinctive feature of our findings is that consumers demonstrate a stable perception of overpricing in the domestic market, while companies are only partially aware of the potential for cost reduction through alternative supply channels. This discrepancy indicates the presence of a structural price asymmetry and suggests that existing restrictions in the distribution system may lead to losses of consumer welfare, which are not fully perceived by the supply side.

Our results are consistent with the conclusions of a number of studies. For example, Alnes and Haugom (2024) showed that consumers perceive price changes asymmetrically: price increases in the form of surcharges are perceived as less fair than equivalent price reductions in the form of discounts. This asymmetry increases as price differences increase. For manufacturers, this creates a dilemma between short-term revenue increases and long-term costs associated with lower consumer confidence. Similar conclusions are presented in the study by Vomberg et al. (2025), which shows that algorithmic pricing can reduce consumer confidence and increase price search time due to perceived unfairness. Overall, previous research highlights that the perception of

price fairness is an important factor explaining why consumers consider prices to be overpriced. This perception is often associated with information asymmetries between firms and consumers regarding cost structures and pricing mechanisms.

Secondly, the results of the analysis confirm the second hypothesis (H2), related to the discrepancy between business perceptions and actual consumer behavior regarding counterfeit products. Our results show that the prevalence of counterfeit goods among consumers remains high even under the current restrictive regime. This contradicts regulators' widespread assumption that the increase in counterfeiting may be caused by the liberalization of parallel imports. On the contrary, the findings indicate that the proliferation of counterfeit products is a consequence of existing market structures and the affordability of goods, rather than a direct result of trade liberalization.

These conclusions are supported by a number of international studies (Mukherjee & Datta, 2025; Razmus et al., 2024; Jones et al., 2022), which show that the purchase of counterfeit goods is a global phenomenon and is observed in markets regardless of the level of trade liberalization. The prevalence of counterfeit products is explained by a combination of price factors, the availability of goods, and consumer behavior.

Thirdly, the results of the study confirm the third hypothesis (H3) about the impact of cost optimization of firms on consumer decisions. Our analysis revealed a marked discrepancy between the limited willingness of consumers to pay a premium for products sold through official distribution channels and the high degree of regulatory uncertainty reported by companies. This may indicate a gradual decline in the legitimacy of traditional trademark-based distribution models.

In other words, the results show that consumers are not willing to pay a higher price just for the product belonging to the official supply chain, even despite the expectations of companies. This conclusion is consistent with studies that consider willingness to pay (WTP) a price premium as a reflection of brand trust, authenticity, and perceived value, rather than just differences in supply channels (Fatma & Khan, 2024; Selin et al., 2024; Leckie et al., 2023). At the same time, the influence of the brand and its legitimacy on the price premium may weaken in conditions of high regulatory uncertainty and weak signals of trust from sales channels. This indicates a growing discrepancy between the formal legal protection of the brand and the perceived value of the products on the part of consumers. In this regard, companies should pay more attention to developing the non-financial advantages of official sales channels – such as guarantees, after-sales service, and transparency of the origin of goods – rather than relying solely on the strength of the brand. For government agencies, an important focus is to reduce regulatory uncertainty and increase transparency of distribution rules, as stable institutional conditions are a key factor in maintaining trust in brands and price premiums.

In addition, the results of the study revealed strong internal correlations between estimates of costs, risks, and strategic consequences at the company level. This indicates the existence of a consistent cognitive structure for the perception of parallel imports in the business environment. This result is consistent with strategic and institutional risk studies (Mao et al., 2025; Zhou et al., 2023; Chen et al., 2024), according to which companies form integrated assessments combining financial, legal, and strategic factors in the face of regulatory uncertainty. In contrast to approaches that view business responses as fragmented or situational, our results indicate a high degree of consistency and interpretability of corporate expectations, which confirms the endogenous and sustainable nature of companies' attitudes towards parallel imports.

The results obtained allow us to formulate a number of practical recommendations for key market participants.

1. It is advisable for government agencies to consider the possibility of adjusting the current trademark regulation regime and parallel import mechanisms to reduce the identified price asymmetry in the domestic market. The high prevalence of counterfeit products in the perception of consumers highlights the need for increased surveillance and preventive measures, as well as increased transparency of cross-border commodity flows.

http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.24(2).2026.11

2. For businesses, the research results emphasize the need to optimize logistics and procurement strategies aimed at reducing dependence on intermediaries and transaction costs. In addition, it is recommended to adapt the pricing policy, taking into account the pronounced sensitivity of consumers to the price, and to introduce more effective tools for verifying the authenticity of products to minimize reputational and operational risks.

3. An important area for consumers and civil society institutions is the development of information mechanisms that raise awareness of the risks of counterfeiting and ways to protect rights. This can reduce market imbalances and create a more transparent competitive environment.

4. For the scientific and expert community, it is promising to further study the mechanisms of transmission of price fluctuations under the restrictive trademark regime, as well as to quantify the gap between subjective perception and the objective structure of risks in the branded products market. Future research can also be based on the results of this study by expanding the sample at the company level to improve statistical efficiency and industry differentiation, applying longitudinal models to account for perception dynamics after legislative changes, integrating objective indicators such as price indices and data on seizures of counterfeit products, conducting comparative analysis in the EAEU member States and other emerging economies, as well as the use of structural analysis methods, mathematical modeling for formal verification of hidden attitudes identified in business data.

In general, from a theoretical point of view, the study introduces and empirically substantiates the concept of "regulatory blind spots" in the literature on trademark rights exhaustion and competition policy. The results show that formally consistent regulatory regimes can create systematic differences in perception between stakeholder groups. From a practical point of view, the findings provide policymakers in the EAEU countries with an empirical basis for a possible revision of strict exhaustion regimes and the implementation of phased liberalization strategies in certain product categories. Such reforms should be accompanied by targeted investments in improving the quality of law enforcement, market surveillance, and transparent stakeholder engagement to reduce legal uncertainty for firms and restore consumer confidence.

Overall, the results of the study indicate the expediency of a gradual and empirical transition to an international regime of exhaustion of trademark rights in certain product segments characterized by high price arbitrage, while strengthening institutional enforcement mechanisms and market supervision.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to analyze the impact of the restrictive trademark exhaustion regime on companies' business expectations and consumer perceptions by identifying price asymmetries, assessing risks, and analyzing the cost reduction effect of using intermediary supply chains. The results obtained confirm the existence of a price asymmetry: consumers perceive the cost of branded products on the domestic market as higher than on foreign sites, while companies only partially use the opportunities to reduce costs associated with alternative logistics routes. Empirical data indicated a pronounced imbalance: 80.4% of consumer respondents believed that the prices of branded goods in the country exceed foreign indicators, while 70% of companies noted the adverse economic consequences of working through intermediary supply channels. The analysis also revealed a significant discrepancy between the perception of threats and their actual assessment. Thus, 90.2% of buyers have encountered counterfeit products, while only 25% of business representatives considered counterfeit products as a key risk. Additionally, a relative proportionality has been established between cost reduction at the company level (55%) and cost-oriented purchasing behavior (54.9%), which indicates a partial transfer of savings to the final price under the current restrictive trademark use regime.

The identified differences in risk perception indicate the need for a more coordinated policy in trademark regulation, management of product quality in supply flows, and stronger consumer protection mechanisms. This involves improving government regulatory frameworks and optimizing corporate supply strategies. The prospects for further research are related to an econometric analysis of price fluctuations in parallel imports, a comparison of regulatory regimes in countries with comparable institutional environments, and an expansion of the empirical base using panel data to assess long-term effects on firms and consumers.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Conceptualization: Gulashar Doskeyeva, Sagyngaliy Aidarbayev.
Data curation: Gulashar Doskeyeva, Sagyngaliy Aidarbayev.
Formal analysis: Gulashar Doskeyeva, Sagyngaliy Aidarbayev.
Funding acquisition: Gulashar Doskeyeva, Sagyngaliy Aidarbayev.
Investigation: Gulashar Doskeyeva, Sagyngaliy Aidarbayev.
Methodology: Gulashar Doskeyeva, Sagyngaliy Aidarbayev.
Project administration: Sagyngaliy Aidarbayev.
Resources: Gulashar Doskeyeva, Sagyngaliy Aidarbayev.
Software: Gulashar Doskeyeva, Sagyngaliy Aidarbayev.
Supervision: Gulashar Doskeyeva, Sagyngaliy Aidarbayev.
Validation: Gulashar Doskeyeva, Sagyngaliy Aidarbayev.
Visualization: Gulashar Doskeyeva, Sagyngaliy Aidarbayev.
Writing – original draft: Gulashar Doskeyeva, Sagyngaliy Aidarbayev.
Writing – review & editing: Gulashar Doskeyeva, Sagyngaliy Aidarbayev.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This research is funded by the Science Committee of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan (Grant No. AP23489368).

REFERENCES

1. Agaev, R. (2025). The impact of parallel imports on the auto parts market. *IRE Journals*. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/393140931
2. Alnes, P. K., & Haugom, E. (2024). The effects of price framing and magnitude of price differences on perceived fairness when switching from static to variable pricing. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2024.103952
3. Bin-Husayn, A. R., Abdullah, M., & Rimmel, G. (2025). Risk perception and risk management: A systematic review. *Journal of Risk Research*. Retrieved from https://ideas.repec.org/a/taf/jriskr/v27y2024i10p1290-1307.html
4. Cao, J., Jiang, H., Ren, X., & Shi, J. (2024). Consumers' risk perception, market demand, and firm innovation: Evidence from China. *PLoS ONE, 19*(5), e0301802. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0301802
5. Chen, J. V. (2024). The managerial perception of uncertainty and cost elasticity. *Journal of Accounting and Economics, 77*(1), 101613. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jacceco.2023.101613
6. Coyne, I. T. (1997). Sampling in qualitative research: Purposeful and theoretical sampling; merging or clear boundaries? *Journal of Advanced Nursing, 26*(3), 623-630. Retrieved from https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/9378886/
7. Danzon, P. M., & Furukawa, M. F. (2018). International price comparisons for pharmaceuticals: evidence for the U.S. and Europe. *Journal of Health Economics, 59,* 74-84. https://doi.org/10.2165/00019053-199814001-00014
8. De Loecker, J., Eeckhout, J., & Unger, G. (2020). The rise of market power and the macroeconomic implications. *Quarterly Journal of Economics, 135*(2), 561-644. https://doi.org/10.1093/qje/qjz041
9. Doskeyeva, G., Zh., Baitalassova, K. A., Omarkhan, D. N., Bekova, R. Z., & Rakhimbekova, A. E. (2019). Assessment of the Current State of Employment in the Regions of Kazakhstan. *Academy of Strategic Management Jour-*

http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.24(2).2026.11

nal, *18*(6), 61-65. Retrieved from https://www.abacademies.org/articles/assessment-of-the-current-state-of-employment-in-the-regions-of-kazakhstan-8649.html

10. Engau, C., & Hoffmann, V. (2011). Corporate Response Strategies to Regulatory Uncertainty: Evidence from Uncertainty about Post-Kyoto Regulation. *Policy Sciences, 44*(1), 53-80 https://doi.org/10.1007/s11077-010-9116-0
11. Eyster, E., Madarász, K., & Michaillat, P. (2021). Pricing under fairness concerns. *Journal of the European Economic Association, 19*(3), 1853-1898. https://doi.org/10.1093/jeea/jvaa041
12. Fasii, B., Vysochyn, D., & Fasii, A. (2024). Parallel Imports: Striking a Delicate Balance in a Multifaceted Environment. *Lex Portus*. https://doi.org/10.62821/lp10302
13. Fatma, M., & Khan, I. (2024). Brand authenticity and consumers' willingness to pay a premium price (WPP): The mediating role of brand identification. *Journal of Brand Management, Palgrave Macmillan, 31*(5), 469-481. https://doi.org/10.1057/s41262-024-00353-0
14. Granlund, D. (2022). Direct and indirect savings from parallel imports in Sweden. *Health Economics Review, 12,* 46. https://doi.org/10.1186/s13561-022-00391-x
15. Han, X., Yue, B., & He, Z (2023). Thriving in uncertainty: examining the relationship between perceived environmental uncertainty and corporate ecoinnovation through the lens of dynamic capabilities. *Frontiers in Environmental Science, 11,* 1196997. https://doi.org/10.3389/fenvs.2023.1196997
16. Hoekman, B., & Shepherd, B. (2017). Services productivity, trade policy, and manufacturing exports. *World Economy, 40*(3), 499-516. https://doi.org/10.1111/twec.12333
17. Hummels, D., & Schaur, G. (2013). Time as a Trade Barrier. *American Economic Review, 103*(7), 2935-59. https://doi.org/10.1257/aer.103.7.2935
18. Iravani, F., Dasu, S., & Ahmadi, R. (2016). Beyond price mechanisms: How much can service help manage the competition from gray markets? *European Journal of Operational Research, 252*(3), 789-800. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ejor.2016.02.006
19. Ishikawa, J., Morita, H., & Mukunoki, H. (2020). Parallel imports and repair services. *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization, 172,* 137-160. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jebo.2020.01.024
20. Jones, T., Vazquez, J., Davis, K., & Thompson, M. (2022). Parallel imports and exhaustion doctrine. *Journal of International Commercial Law and Technology, 3*(1), 1-4.
21. Kanavos, P., & Vandoros, S. (2010). Competition in prescription drug markets: is parallel trade the answer? *Managerial and Decision Economics, 31*(5), 325-338. https://doi.org/10.1002/mde.1486
22. Kussaiynkyzy, A., & Doskeyeva, G. Zh. (2021). Modernising the mechanism of state regulation of women's employment in the innovation sphere of Kazakhstan. *Public Policy and Administration, 20*(4). https://doi.org/10.13165/VPA-21-20-4-07
23. Leckie, C., Dwivedi, A., & Johnson, L. W. (2023). Credibility and price premium-based competitiveness for industrial brands. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services, 74.* https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2023.103418
24. Li, H., Shao, J., Zhu, S. X., & Xiang, X. (2025). Retailers' parallel importation and service provision in a supply chain: Incentives and impacts. *International Journal of Production Economics.* https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijpe.2025.109678
25. Li, H., Wang, J., Qing, Q., & Hong, X. (2021). An analysis of technology licensing and parallel importation under different market structures. *European Journal of Operational Research, 281*(1), 132-143. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ejor.2020.07.008
26. Li, K. J., Zhang, J., & Schaefer, R. (2022). Parallel imports of status goods: A strategic analysis of aesthetic design. *Production and Operations Management, 31*(5), 2268-2288. https://doi.org/10.1111/poms.13680
27. Mao, F., Yuan, Y., & Zhang, F. (2025). Firm-level perception of uncertainty, risk aversion, and corporate real estate investment: Evidence from China's listed firms. *Economic Analysis and Policy, 85,* 1428-1441. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eap.2025.02.002
28. Mukayev, A., Satpayeva, Z., Kangalakova, D., Doskeyeva, G., & de Matos Pedro, E. (2023). Assessment of the population's quality of life in Kazakhstan during COVID-19: The effectiveness of public policy. *Problems and Perspectives in Management, 21*(3), 69-83. https://doi.org/10.21511/ppm.21(3).2023.06
29. Mukherjee, S., & Datta B. (2025, January). Counterfeit conundrum: Insights into bottom of the pyramid consumer behavior in India. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services, 82,* 104114. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2024.104114
30. Nurmagambetov, Z., & Nurmagambetov, A. (2024). Exhaustion of trademark rights in Kazakhstan under regional exhaustion in the Eurasian Economic Union. *Access to Justice in Eastern Europe, 7*(2), 191-211. https://doi.org/10.33327/AJEE-18-7.2-a000220
31. Razmus, W., Grabner-Kräuter, S., & Adamczyk, G. (2024). Counterfeit brands and Machiavellianism: Consequences of counterfeit use for social perception. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services, 76,* 103579. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2023.103579
32. Remer, M. (2015). An empirical investigation of the determinants of asymmetric pricing. *International Journal of Industrial Organization, 42*(C), 46-56. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijindorg.2015.07.002
33. Rothschild, M., & Stiglitz, J. (1976). Equilibrium in competitive insurance markets: An essay on the economics of imperfect information. *Quarterly Journal of Economics, 90*(4), 629-649. https://doi.org/10.2307/1885326

34. Saunders, M., Lewis, P., & Thornhill, A. (2023). *Research methods for business students* (9th ed.). Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/240218229_Research_Methods_for_Business

35. Selin, Ş., Ustabaş, A., & Fındıklı, M. A. (2024). The effect of corporate discourses in brand awareness and legitimacy: The rhetorical analysis of an automobile brand. *Asia Pacific Management Review, 29*(4), 427-440. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.apmrv.2024.08.001

36. Shokamanov, Yu. K., & Demesinova, A. A. (2025). The influence of structural changes in the import of Kazakhstan from the EAEU countries on the development of the manufacturing industry of Kazakhstan. *Statistics, Accounting and Audit, 3*(98), 5-16. https://doi.org/10.51579/1563-2415.2025.-3.01

37. Theodoulou, I. (2023). *Cost Pass Through and Asymmetric Price Transmission* (Ph.D. thesis). Retrieved from https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/id/eprint/126682

38. Vomberg, A., Homburg, C., & Sarantopoulos, P. (2025). Algorithmic pricing: Effects on consumer trust and price search. *International Journal of Research in Marketing, 42*(4), Part B, December 2025, 1166-1186. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijresmar.2024.10.006

39. Wang, M., Huang, H., & Liu, F. (2023). To adapt or to standardize? Cross-market green product design under parallel importation impact. *Transportation Research Part E: Logistics and Transportation Review, 174,* 103133. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tre.2023.103133

40. Weyl, E. G., & Fabinger, M. (2013). Pass-Through as an Economic Tool: Principles of Incidence under Imperfect Competition. *Journal of Political Economy, 121*(3), http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1324426

41. Wu, Q., & Zhao, S. (2021). Determinants of Consumers' Willingness to Buy Counterfeit Luxury Products: An Empirical Test of Linear and Inverted U-Shaped Relationship. *Sustainability, 13*(3), 1194. https://doi.org/10.3390/su13031194

42. Xia, L., Monroe, K. B., & Cox, J. L. (2004). The price is unfair! A conceptual framework of price fairness perceptions. *Journal of Marketing, 68*(4), 1-15. https://doi.org/10.1509/jmkg.68.4.1.42733

43. Zhang, Y. (2022). Limits of Law in the Multilevel System: Explaining the European Commission's Toleration of Noncompliance Concerning Pharmaceutical Parallel Trade. JCMS: *Journal of Common Market Studies, 60,* 1001-1018. https://doi.org/10.1111/jcms.13295

44. Zhang, Y., Zhang, S. & Feng, H. (2021). The impacts of money-back guarantees in the presence of parallel importation. *European Journal of Operational Research, 295*(1), 170-182. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ejor.2021.02.057

45. Zhou, H., Zhang, X., & Ruan, R. (2023). Firm's perception of economic policy uncertainty and corporate innovation efficiency. *Journal of Innovation & Knowledge, 8*(3), 100371. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jik.2023.100371

http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.24(2).2026.11

APPENDIX A

B2B QUESTIONNAIRE

Business Survey for Firms Engaged in Sourcing and Distribution of Trademarked Goods

Section A. Screening

- Is your firm legally registered? ☐Yes ☐No
- Does your firm import foreign components or finished branded goods? ☐Yes ☐No
- Is your firm involved in sourcing or distributing trademarked goods? ☐Yes ☐No
- Do you agree to participate voluntarily and anonymously? ☐Yes ☐No

Section B. Firm Profile

Sector of activity

☐ Trade
☐ Manufacturing
☐ Services

Firm size (number of employees)

☐ < 50
☐ 50–250
☐ 250

Geographic scope of operations

☐ Kazakhstan only
☐ Kazakhstan + EAEU countries
☐ Wider international operations

Primary sourcing channel

☐ Directly from manufacturers
☐ Through intermediaries
☐ Both
☐ Not sure

Section C. Economic Effects

How does sourcing through intermediaries affect your firm's economic performance?

☐ Negative effect
☐ No effect
☐ Positive effect

Section D. Risk Perceptions
(Multiple responses allowed)

What risks do you associate with parallel-imported goods?

☐ Increased probability of counterfeit goods
☐ Reputational or legal risks
☐ Violations of technical regulation requirements
☐ No significant risks perceived
☐ Other (specify)

Section E. Cost Effects (H3)

How do parallel imports affect your procurement costs?

☐ Substantial cost reduction
☐ Limited cost reduction
☐ No effect
☐ Cost increase
☐ Uncertain

B2C QUESTIONNAIRE

Consumer Survey on Branded Goods and Market Perceptions

Section A. Screening / Eligibility

- Do you regularly purchase branded trademarked goods? ☐Yes ☐No
- Have you ever compared domestic and foreign prices for the same branded goods? ☐Yes ☐No
- Do you agree to participate voluntarily and anonymously? ☐Yes ☐No

Section B. Demographic Profile

Age group

☐ 20–30
☐ 31–50
☐ 51+

Education level

☐ Secondary
☐ Tertiary / University
☐ Postgraduate

City of residence

☐ Almaty
☐ Astana
☐ Shymkent
☐ Aktau
☐ Other

http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.24(2).2026.11

Section C. Price Perceptions

Compared to foreign markets, domestic prices for socially significant branded goods are:

☐ Substantially higher
☐ Slightly higher
☐ Approximately equal
☐ Lower

Section D. Counterfeit Exposure

Have you personally encountered counterfeit goods under known brands?

☐ Yes, repeatedly
☐ Yes, once
☐ No
☐ Not sure

Section E. Purchasing Criteria

What factor most influences your purchasing decisions?

☐ Price
☐ Price–quality balance
☐ Brand reputation
☐ Customer reviews/ratings
☐ Not sure

http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.24(2).2026.11