

# Descartes' Study Reveals Tariffs and Trade Barriers as Top Concern of 48% of Supply Chain Leaders



Jackson Wood, Director, Industry Strategy at Descartes

Descartes Systems Group, the global leader in uniting logistics-intensive businesses in commerce, released findings from its 2024 Supply Chain Intelligence Report: Escalating Challenges for Global Supply Chain Leaders survey, which examined the most significant global trade challenges facing logistics and supply chain leaders today. The study showed that 48% of respondents identified rising tariffs and trade barriers as their top concern, closely followed by supply chain disruptions at 45% and geopolitical instability at 41%. Moreover, tariffs and trade barriers ranked as the priority issue regardless of company size, as respondents at companies with less than 250 employees, 251-500, 501-1,000, 1,001-50,000 and 50,000+ employees all cited it as the most significant issue they are currently facing.

These challenges and others (see Figure 1) highlight the need among organizations involved in international trade to sharpen their supply chain analytics practices to help build more resilient supply chain networks, including having robust, technology-enabled insights to keep pace with frequent and complex tariff updates, quickly find new markets, secure better sources of supply and acquire timely and high quality competitive intelligence.

Results also showed that the impact of top global trade challenges on organizations can potentially vary by factors

other than company size, including business growth, country and industry. For example, tariffs and trade barriers were more concerning for companies expecting greater than 15% growth (51%) than for those companies with shrinking/limited to no growth (43%).

“Evolving tariffs and trade policies are one of a number of complex issues requiring organizations to build more resilience into their supply chains through compliance, technology and strategic planning,” said Jackson Wood, Director, Industry Strategy at Descartes. “With the potential for the incoming U.S. administration to impose new and additional tariffs on a wide variety of goods and countries of origin, U.S. importers may need to significantly re-engineer their sourcing strategies to mitigate potentially higher costs.”

Descartes and SAPIO Research surveyed 978 supply chain intelligence leaders in key trading nations across Europe, North and South America, and Asia-Pacific. The goal was to understand the nature of the global trade challenges they were facing and to identify if concerns varied by factors such as country, industry, company size and business growth. Respondents are members of company leadership teams, from management level to Chief Executive Officer or Owner. To learn more, read the 2024 Supply Chain Intelligence Report: Escalating Challenges for Global Supply Chain Leaders report.

Learn more about Descartes' global trade intelligence solutions at [www.descartes.com](http://www.descartes.com)

## About Descartes

Descartes is the global leader in providing on-demand, software-as-a-service solutions focused on improving the productivity, security and sustainability of logistics-intensive businesses. Customers use our modular, software-as-a-service solutions to route, track and help improve the safety, performance and compliance of delivery resources; plan, allocate and execute shipments; rate, audit and pay transportation invoices; access global trade data; file customs and security documents for imports and exports; and complete numerous other logistics processes by participating in the world's largest, collaborative multimodal logistics community. Our headquarters are in Waterloo, Ontario, Canada and we have offices and partners around the world.

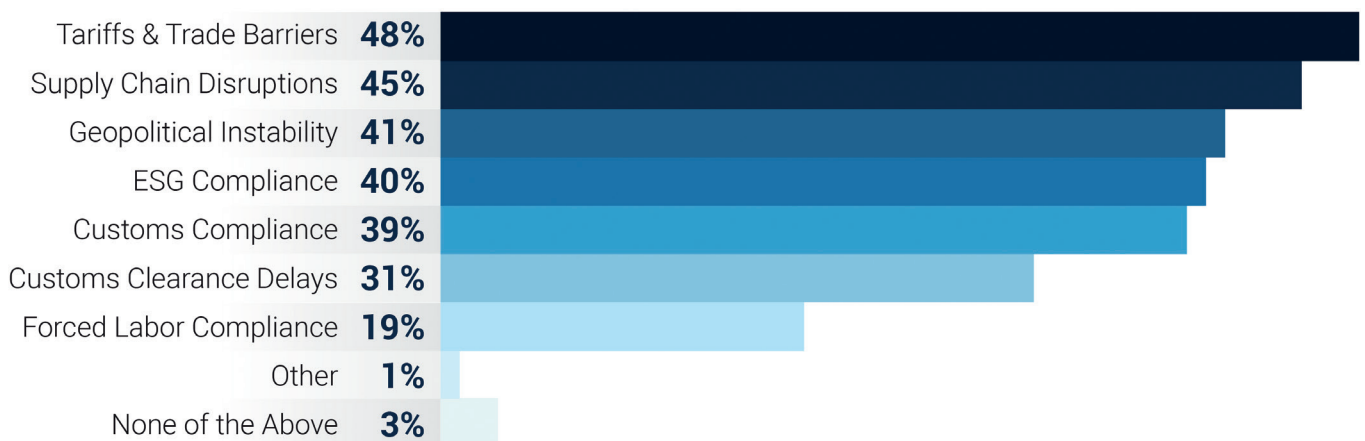


Figure 1: Respondents' top challenges in international trade operations  
Source: Descartes/SAPIO