



Günümüz Koşullarında Bağımsız Devletler Topluluğu Ülkelerinde Ekonomik Entegrasyon

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Öz

Sovyet dönemi sonrası BDT ülkelerinde yaşanan entegrasyon sürecinin değerlendirilmesi açısından günümüzdeki iş ilişkilerinin incelenmesi önem taşımaktadır. Bu konu karmaşıklığı ve gelişli niteliğiyle Bağımsız Devletler Topluluğundaki genel durumdan farklılık arz etmektedir. Bu nedenle, ticari ve iktisadi işbirliğinin reel durumu, entegrasyon sürecinin değerlendirilmesi ve bağımsız devletler arasındaki işbirliğini iyileştirecek yeni ve etkili yaklaşımların geliştirilmesi ile bu yaklaşımların uygulama şekil ve yöntemleri üzerine tarafsız bir çalışmaya ihtiyaç vardır. Çalışmamızda BDT devletleri arasında, mevcut koşullarda ekonomik entegrasyon sağlanması yolunda ticari ve ekonomik işbirliği ve ekonomik entegrasyon kapsamında var olan sorunlar üzerinde durulmuştur. Vurgulamak gerekir ki, eski Sovyetler Birliğinden gelen bir işbirliğinin devamı olarak, entegrasyon sürecinde ticari, ekonomik ve siyasi ilişkilerin yürütülmesinde en önemli etken Rusya'nın rolü olacaktır. Bu nedenle, çalışmada özellikle Rusya'nın günümüzdeki ekonomik gelişimi ve bölge üzerindeki rolü ele alınmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Bağımsız Devletler İşbirliği, Содружество Независимых Государств, - Entegrasyon, Ekonomik Birlik, Gümrük Birliği.

Economic integration of the CIS countries in modern conditions.

Abstract

The study of integration processes in the CIS countries at the present time is essential for the real estimation of economic interrelation in the post-Soviet space. This present topic with its complexity and inconsistency differs from overall situation in the Commonwealth of Independent States. There is a need for objective study of the real state of trade and economic cooperation, assessment of the prospects of the integration process and the development of the new effective approaches aiming to improve cooperation of independent States and forms and methods of their implementation. In the present article the following aspects are considered: the level of trade and economic cooperation of independent States in modern conditions and the integration of the Association with the countries of the CIS and problems of economic integration. Considered that the most important role in the integration processes in the CIS countries plays Russia, the nature of its trade and economic relations and political relations with partners in the post-Soviet space will provide the impact on the viability of the integration Association. Therefore, the article focuses on the current state of economic development of Russia itself and its role in the region.

Keywords: Commonwealth of Independent States, Integration, Economic Union, Customs Union.

1.The collapse of the USSR and the emergence of CIS.

As a result of the collapse of the Soviet Union 15 new independent States were emerged on the world map, 12 of them became the member of the regional integration Association of the CIS. The main reasons for the Soviet collapse were the socio-economic and political reasons. The socio –economic reasons include the monopoly of state ownership, resulting in the lack of competition, financial interest of the worker to increase productivity. – the allocation of huge financial funds for the development of the military-industrial complex to the detriment of other sectors of the economy. Forced collectivism in agriculture. The economy of the state has failed to ensure the country has a high standard of living, which would be consistent with the standard of living of the developed countries. By the end of the 80s the economy of the state was so weak and ineffective that the unexpected decrease in oil prices had resulted in economic disaster. For political reasons the collapse of the USSR can be attributed to the authoritarian government, censorship, ideological prohibitions and restrictions, absence of the freedom of expression depending on ideological policy. Isolation of the state had resulted in the feeling of absence of freedom and openness. There was a so-called "iron curtain" that divided the planet into two parts: the USSR and the rest of the world.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union had changed the geopolitical and geo-economic situation of the countries of the Commonwealth. The ratio of internal and external factors of economic development had changed as well as the mere nature of economic relations. Liberalization of foreign trade opened the way for foreign markets and large number of enterprises and business structures. Their interests made a huge impact and became a decisive factor determining export and import transactions of CIS countries. The openness of domestic markets for goods and capital from foreign countries had led to the saturation by import products, which resulted in a decisive influence of world markets on the prices and structure of the industries in CIS countries. As a result, a lot of goods produced in the CIS turned out to be uncompetitive, which caused a reduction in their manufacturing and, therefore, significant structural changes in the economy. Thereby had started the development of the industries which products were in demand in the market of the countries outside of the CIS. Upon the formation of the new independent States, committed to create an open market economy, the post-Soviet space had been experiencing profound economic transformation. If the initial regulatory framework inherited from Soviet Union was more or less the same then as the result of the new legislative process in the CIS there was targeted and then consolidated significant differences in the economic strategy. The transition to market relations is carried out according to different scenarios and with different intensity.

The CIS as a supranational organization has a small number of "touch points" between its members. It makes the leaders of Commonwealth countries look for alternative integration options. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the downturn in trade relations between the CIS countries had



been unequal: when one weakened, the other, on the contrary, grew stronger. The present situation had led to regionalization of the economic space of the CIS. The regionalization process had been formally executed. There were formed the following integration groups: the Union state of Belarus and Russia (SBR), Customs Union (CU), The Organization of Central Asian Cooperation (OCAC), Association of Georgia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Moldova (GUUAM), Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC).

Among all of these organizations could be highlighted a special role of EEC, as it is considered the core of Eurasian regional group. The CIS has formed several organizations with more specific goals and issues: Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) which includes Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The task of the CSTO is the coordination and unification of efforts in the fight against international terrorism and extremism, drug traffic and psychotropic substances. Due to this organization, created on October 7, 2002, Russia had retained its military presence in Central Asia.

The purposes of creating the abovementioned integration associations of the CIS countries are remarkably different. It is supposed to consider each of the unions as relatively independent subject of integration, despite the fact that the same countries are simultaneously presented in different regional Association. While considering the integration processes it becomes obvious that although the CIS are officially announced the priority partners of the Russian Federation, in fact they are not. The passive attitude of economic policy of the Russian Federation in respect to the CIS countries could be explained by the numerous reasons. In first place, the economy of Russia is oriented on a closer collaboration with developed countries due to its resource orientation. Due to the absence of a specific model of economic transformation, the attention of the Russian government was mainly focused on domestic political and economic problems. Secondly the leadership of the CIS formally accepted the key role of Russia in the post-Soviet period, but in fact it is not like that. In some CIS countries anti-Russian policy is still actively conducted. In third place during the 90s' Russia has sought to move away from the old stereotypes of Imperial behavior. In the capitals of some CIS countries such stereotypes are constantly discussed and used as a mechanism of political pressure. As a result, in the CIS the situation was paradoxical: on the one hand, the CIS countries are in need of economic potential of the Russian Federation, and on the other – due to the lack of real national economic motivations the ruling elite prefers the deepening of economic relations with more developed countries.

2. The current state of trade-economic relations

As a result of active development of these processes a reorientation of economic ties of the States of the Commonwealth took place. In the early 90s' the barter with the present member of CIS reached 0,21 of their total GDP, while in EU countries this figure was only 0,14. In 2015, the barter between CIS countries amounted to only 0.06 of the total GDP. In 1993, in the total volume of export operations of the CIS countries the share of these



countries had amounted to 0,315, of the import – 0,435. In export-import operations of the EU countries the share of exports to EU countries accounted for 0,617 shares, and the share of import 0.611. Thus the tendency of economic relations, manifested in the CIS, contradicts to the global experience of integration. Almost in all CIS countries the turnover growth outside the Commonwealth exceeds the rate of turnover within the CIS. With the exception of Belarus and Tajikistan, where external trade is characterized by a steady trend of strengthening of barter relations with the CIS countries. Analysis of the geographic structure of export and import of the CIS countries shows that the direction of reorientation of economic ties within the Commonwealth and structural reforms in the foreign trade relations of the CIS countries has led to a regionalization of trade and disintegration processes in the CIS integrally.

Export and Imports CIS countries (millions US dollars)

	2000			2014			2015		
	Total	Of which		Total	Of which		Total	Of which	
		CIS countries	Other countries		CIS countries	Other countries		CIS countries	Other countries
Exports									
Azerbaijan	1745	235	1510	21827	838	20991	10619	467	10152
Armenia	300	73	227	1547	357	1190	1345	240	1105
Belarus	7326	4399	2927	36081	21108	14973	24576	12935	11641
Kazakhstan	8812	2337	6475	79460	11053	68407	42758	7342	35416
Kyrgyzstan	511	214	297	1884	894	990	1304	469	835
Moldova	472	276	196	2340	736	1604	1803	454	1349
Russia	103,1	13,8	89,3	497,8	64,0	433,8	316,6	41,4	275,2
Tajikistan	784	374	410	977	246	731	804	208	596
Ukraine	14573	4498	10075	53902	14882	39020	34523	7113	27410
CIS, total	137,7	26,3	111,4	695,8	114,0	581,8	434,3	70,6	363,7
Imports									
Azerbaijan	1745	235	1510	21829	838	20991	10619	467	10152
Armenia	885	174	711	4424	1363	3061	2968	1058	1910
Belarus	8646	6070	2576	40502	24187	16315	27410	16710	10700
Kazakhstan	5040	2732	2308	41296	17547	23749	27857	11793	16064
Kyrgyzstan	558	302	256	5735	2779	2956	3682	1964	1718
Moldova	776	260	516	5317	1449	3868	3634	917	2717
Russia	33,9	11,6	22,3	286,7	32,8	253,9	167,8	19,5	148,3
Tajikistan	675	560	115	4298	2160	2138	3134	1671	1463
Ukraine	13956	8040	5916	54429	17277	37152	34274	9649	24625
CIS, total	65,6	30,1	35,5	451,9	101,7	350,2	278,9	65	213,9

Source: Interstate statistical of the CIS



In the import structure of the CIS countries could be noticed a focus on the current consumer needs. The main place in the CIS imports is food products, agricultural raw materials, products of consumer goods industry and household appliances. The trend in the reorientation of economic relations of the CIS countries is the de-industrialization of internal and external relations. The model of integration into the world economy of the CIS countries which is based on the exchange of non-renewable mineral resources on consumer goods is creating obstacles to the progressive structural alterations in their economies. It creates the formation of an inefficient production structure with predominant development of the fuel and raw materials industries. Further development of economic relations with similar orientation will lead to unilateral dependence on developed countries.

Thus, the analysis allows identifying the main causes of reorientation of economic ties of the CIS from the near abroad to the far. The export of the CIS countries outside it is regarded as the main source of freely convertible currency. The existence of real opportunities in high-tech and science-intensive products of high quality which cannot be produced in the domestic market of the CIS countries. Acquisition of better quality raw materials taking into consideration that internal price is exceeding the global. Intention to enter the global market. Preference of partners from countries outside the CIS due to their solvency and reliability. Higher transport taxes and other charges on the domestic market. The unstable situation in some CIS countries, the presence of regions with growing social tensions and armed conflicts.

The general trend in the economy of the Commonwealth is the reduction of growth of GDP. However, a comparison of reductions in GDP and capital investments shows that in all CIS countries except Azerbaijan, the depth of the decrease in investment in fixed assets is significantly higher than GDP. This shows that simultaneously with the decrease of GDP growth there had been a dramatic change in the structure of their end use. Deep decline in investment activity in the conditions of liberalization of foreign trade led to a relevant increase in the export of raw materials.

The increase in the relative density of exports in GDP in all countries except Azerbaijan and Georgia and obtaining international loans had given the opportunity to increase the share of import from CIS countries in the GDP in all countries except Uzbekistan, which consists of consumer goods mainly of products of light manufacturing and food industry. Thus, the use of resource savings in final consumption in the countries of the Commonwealth took place not through changes in the structure of national industries but through the intensification of their trade with the world market. The present situation has brought to reduction in resource supply of industry and agriculture of the CIS countries and to decrease in demand for these products, which consequently resulted in significant decrease in the volume of production in 1991 – 1996 in all States of the Commonwealth, except Uzbekistan, where was observed increase of manufactured products.

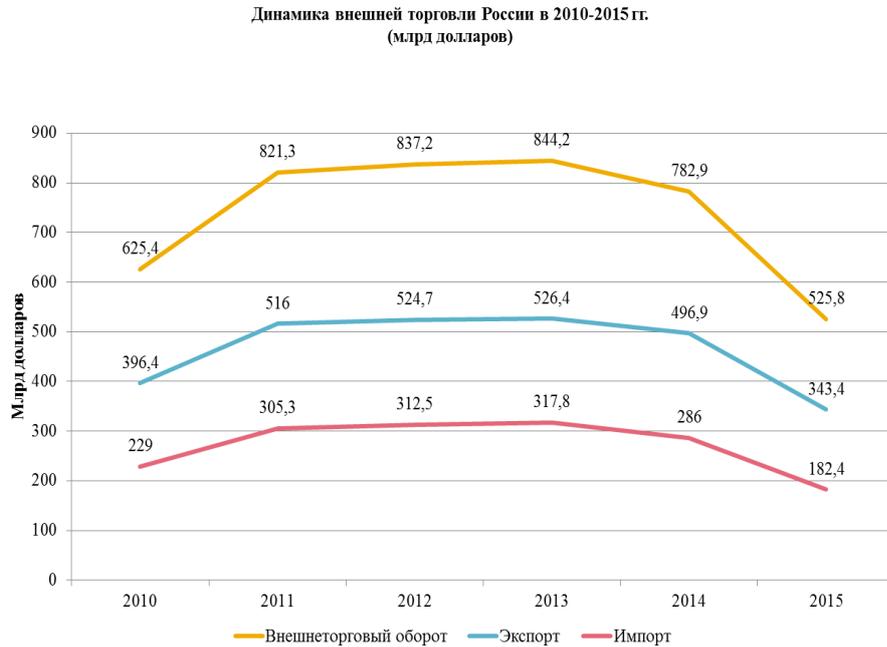


3.Foreign trade Russia and the CIS

Depending on how the CIS countries are establishing the relationships with Russian Federation it is possible to distinguish several groups of countries. In the short to medium term of critically dependence on external assistance, particularly Russian, are Armenia, Belarus and Tajikistan. The second group consists of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova and Ukraine, which also significantly depended on cooperation with Russia, but have more balanced foreign economic relations. The third group of countries which economic dependence on relations with Russia is much weaker and is still decreasing, includes Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan.(4)

Analyzing the economic relations between Russia and CIS countries for 2015 could be noticed the following situation: decline in oil prices, ruble devaluation and aggravation of the relations with the trade partner countries. In the result of the worsening of economic situation in the country the strongest downturn was demonstrated in foreign trade. According to customs agencies, in January-December 2015 foreign trade turnover of Russia had amounted to 530,4 billion, declining compared to the 2014 year by 33.2%. Indicators in 2015 were the lowest in five years. The export of Russia amounted 345,9 billion, decreasing by 31.1%, while import was 184,5 billion decreasing by 36.7 %.

Dynamics of foreign trade of Russia in 2010-2015 (billion U.S. dollars)



Foreign trade turnover Export Import

Source: Interstate statistical of the CIS

The structure of foreign trade according to country groups for the year remained unchanged – 12% is a share of the CIS countries and 88% occur in foreign countries. Foreign trade turnover also decreased in equal measure -

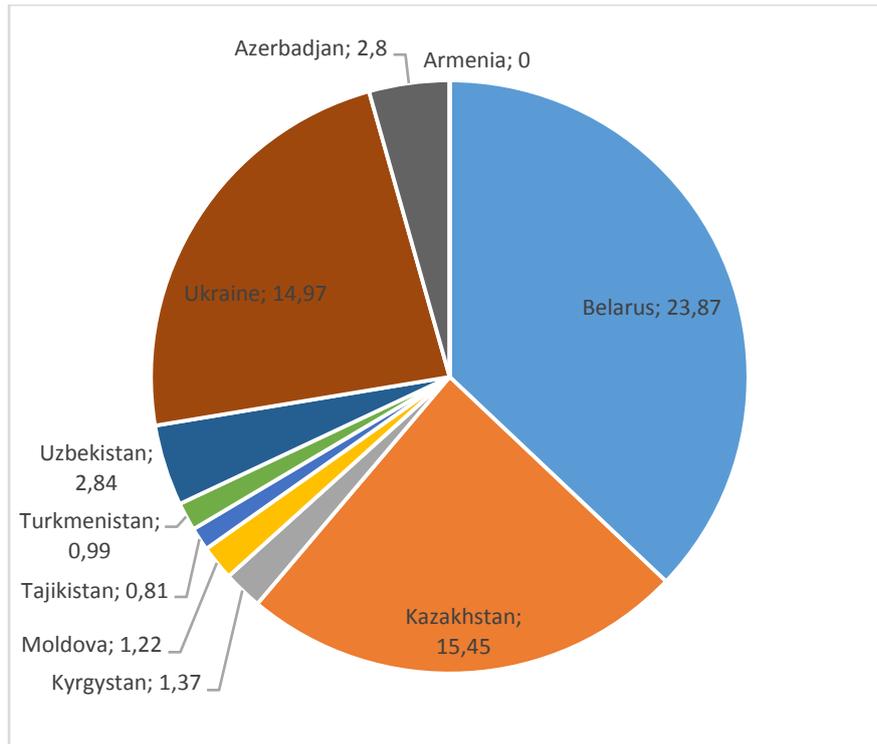


about 30%. Despite the fact that 2015 has been proclaimed the course for the revitalization of trade with the countries of the former Soviet Union, as well as further development of the EEU, trade with the CIS countries has declined significantly – by 30% in export and 27% in import. Due to the strong economic dependence on Russia economy Commonwealth countries have also experienced the negative effect. In addition, in 2015 there has been a decline not only in oil prices, but also in many other resources, including ferrous and nonferrous metals.

Foreign trade indicators have declined with all the CIS countries: Belarus, the main trade partner it fell by 24% in export and 30% in import. Particularly, has decreased the cost volume of exports of mineral fuels, metals, chemical products. Russia became to import less machinery and equipment, textiles and metals from Belarus. Apart from this after the introduction of Russia a grocery embargo, the export of Belarusian meat, milk, vegetables and fruits has increased significantly. However, due to the devaluation of the ruble the import growing could only be expressed in physical terms.

Structure of the foreign trade turnover between Russia and CIS countries

(billion of U.S. dollars)



Source: Interstate statistical of the CIS

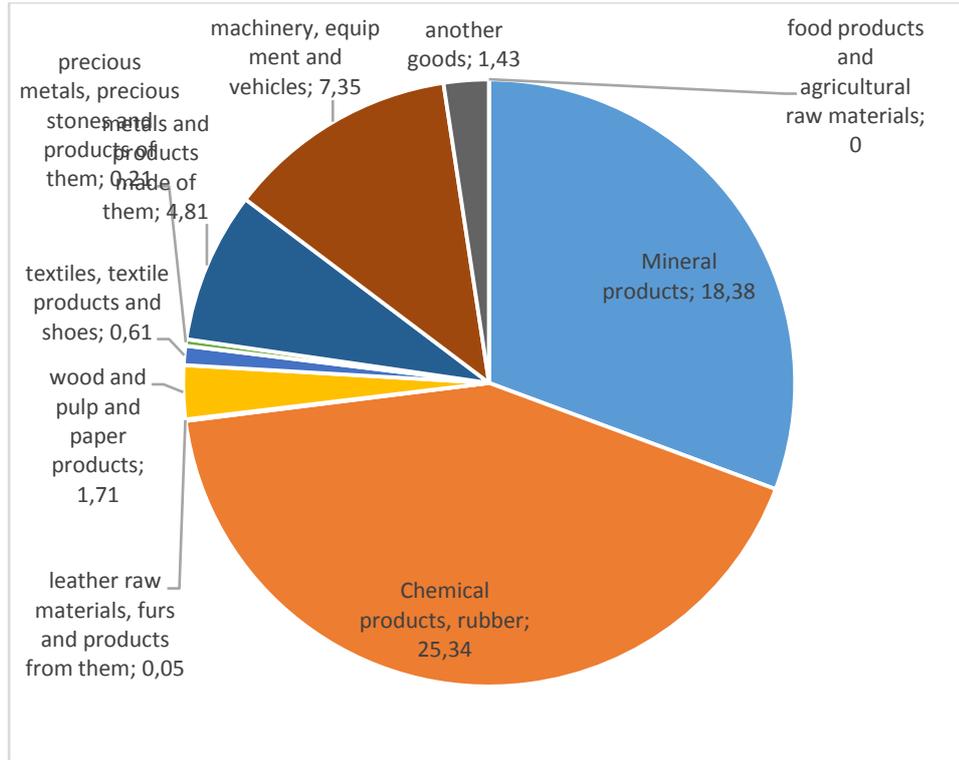
Trade with Kazakhstan has decreased by 24% for export and 35% for import – the recession also affected the supply of machinery and equipment, mineral products and metals. Separately should be said about Ukraine,



which is still one of the three largest partners of Russia among the CIS countries. Political conflict over the annexation of Crimea by Russia and hostilities in the Donbas has resulted in serious economic consequences for the economies of two countries. Sanctions and reciprocal non-tariff restrictions on the supply of certain goods - the so-called "trade wars" have become the reason that the foreign trade turnover between the countries fell by 46%. At the end of the year the countries' leadership almost terminated economic relations, Russia has suspended a free trade area with Ukraine within the CIS (Ukrainian goods are now not duty-free), and has also imposed a food embargo. Ukraine also enacted a ban on certain goods from Russia, including food products, cigarettes, and certain types of engineering products.

In the commodity market of export to the CIS countries, the leading role remains in fuel and energy sphere. Their share is 39.5% (in January-December 2014 was 43.6%). In this case, the decline in export in cost and physical term: physical volume of crude oil export has decreased by 5.2%, oil products 13.6%, natural gas 15.2%. The export of machinery and equipment has amounted of 7.35 billion dollars declining by 29.5%. Also it was observed a decrease in export of metals and timber.

Commodity structure of export from Russia to CIS countries (billions of U.S. dollars)



Source: Interstate statistical of the CIS

In the commodity structure of import from CIS countries has been a slight change – a 5% decline in the share of purchased main product groups -



machinery and equipment – up to 81.8 billion dollars. Its import in cost term has declined by 49.3 percent. The main decline had affected car industry – physical volume of the deliveries has decreased by 58.6 %. One of the main reasons for the dramatic reduction in import was the weakening of the ruble, causing the increase of the cost of the car brands assembled abroad. The CIS countries were and still remain the closest and the most important economic partners for Russia, interested in buying not only primary commodities but also technology, integrated products including high-tech.

4. Problems of integration of the CIS countries

After the collapse of the Soviet Union in the CIS countries have been more opportunities for integration than there are now. Inter-Republican economic ties remained stable, and between the newborn countries there were no trade barriers, at first there was a single currency, acted a unified technical standards, certificates of quality of goods, etc. The whole post Soviet space was connected by the developed transport and communications infrastructure; it had unified energy system and the common language of international communication. However, it was overlooked two important circumstances. First, the transition from the command-distributive economy to the market would move the national economy of the CIS countries in a completely different coordinate system, where there are fundamentally new rules. There were unknown to the former Soviet republics factors of national competitiveness; the free choice of economic partners, not only in neighborhood but also in foreign countries; the asymmetry of national economic interests, due to the different level of technical and economic development of the countries, different by their structure of production, and many others.

Secondly, the actual integration is not possible for all countries. The fact is that the basis for a real integration of national economies is the high level of industrialization and diversification of production and of exchange, when the countries are mutually complement each other in a wide range of goods and services, when intra-industry trade reaches a high level, supplementing and even displacing inter-industry trade. Only at this stage of technical and economic development the countries become closely attached to each other by thousands of commercial, industrial, financial and other relations and turn more and more into the whole economic system. It is clear that such splicing is achieved only at a very advanced stage of development of the manufacturing industry and especially in its high-tech industries. On the contrary, agrarian countries which are producing the similar range of products become not complementary partners, but more competitors. Therefore, they do not open towards each other, but instead they seek new markets for their goods in more developed regions of the world. This pattern of international economic integration is proved by half a century of practice.

It is not surprising that, despite all efforts and some examples of relatively successful economic interaction of the CIS countries on a bilateral basis, the economic space of the Commonwealth has been steadily spreading down.



Universally recognized indicator of the intensity of inter-country economic relations is the share of their mutual trade in the total trade turnover with all countries of the world. This indicator reflects the level of technical and economic development of partner countries, exchange of investments, and the state of production cooperation of enterprises, and many other aspects of real merger of the national economies.

More important, from the point of view of integration, the percentage of the volume of bilateral trade (or mutual export) by country partners to the total volume of their GDP. This indicator characterizes the degree of economic openness of the countries to each other. As mentioned above in the CIS countries this indicator has fallen to 6.4% since 1990. This means that national economies are still separating from each other. In other words, their disintegration is steadily deepened. The situation is compounded by the fact that intra-CIS trade, the share of finished products, especially machinery and vehicles is steadily decreasing, while the share of basic resources grows.

From 2010 to 2015, the proportion of the underlying resources in a mutual CIS export had increased by 2.1%, including fuel and raw materials – it nearly quadrupled. At the same time, the share of machinery and transport vehicles has fallen by 1.6 times while light industry products - by 2.4 times. This occurs primarily because of the lack of competitiveness of local finished products in comparison to the similar products imported from abroad. Ordinary consumers and investors prefer buying though expensive, but quality and reliable products produced in developed countries where competition forces producers to constantly improve their products.

Goods imported from abroad 'squeeze out' the finished product of intra-regional trade of the Commonwealth countries, which leads to an increase of the share of fuel and raw materials, metals and other basic goods. Thus, the objective background for the integration of national economies here are not improving, but deteriorating. On the one hand, for mutual trade remain more agricultural and fuel commodities, which, as already mentioned, do not contribute to the integration of national economies. On the other hand, such products are most competitive in the world markets, because their quality is determined mainly by the nature and therefore is more or less the same, while its production cost in the Commonwealth is quite low in comparison to the world standards. Russia as a leading country in the CIS still has not become an attractive country for real integration. The internal development model of Russia as the item-raw is a brake on economic growth for Russia itself. Desirable condition of integration of Russia and CIS countries is the exemplary solution of problems of their own development. The most part is a typical post-Soviet problem, more or less common to all former Soviet republics. In other words, the influence in historical space requires the full leadership. Leaderships should able to serve as a benchmark for the development of typologically close countries. Despite the evidence of this approach, all post-Soviet periods of Russia's desire for leadership to a greater extent was based on the exploitation of the common themes of the past and purely quantitative predominance of resource, than



on attractive image of the future or the successful model of national modernization.

As the Russian Federation and other CIS countries had a favorable period for national modernization. This period was from 2000-2008, when the countries of the CIS exporters were receiving huge profits from the sale of energy to foreign markets. These countries include primarily Russia, Kazakhstan, and Azerbaijan. But the period of high prices for energy has ended, and exporting countries of the CIS have remained "raw". The relative success of economic development in the period of high prices for energy is not national but exclusively apical success, aggravating corruption and social stratification. Russia and other CIS countries which are exporting energy resources, had missed the favorable moment, and are currently in a period of low energy prices and therefore in a deep economic crisis. This type of success does not attract the neighboring countries, but repels them. The gas conflict of Russia with the CIS countries additionally provides negative impact on integration processes. The aim of the Russian Gazprom to establish control over gas transportation systems of these countries has not been reached. The main transit countries, through which Russian gas is supplied to consumers, are Belarus, Ukraine and Georgia. Based on the reaction of those countries to pressure "Gazprom" lies the desire as quickly as possible to eliminate dependence on Russian gas. Every country does this in different ways. Georgia and Ukraine, through the construction of new pipelines and gas transportation from Turkey, Transcaucasia and Iran, Belarus by diversifying fuel balance. All three countries oppose the control of Gazprom over the gas transportation system. The most severely the possibility of joint control over the gas transportation system was rejected by the Ukraine, whose position in this matter is most important. As for the political side of the question, the result of the energy pressure is not null, but negative.

Generally it can be noted that currently effective economic, political and social integration in the post-Soviet space is less intensive due to the lack of genuine interest by the CIS countries. However, according to expert opinion, a unifying idea in the framework of the CIS hasn't exhausted yet. Crisis is experiencing not the members of Commonwealth but the approach to the organization of economic cooperation between them. A new model of integration needs to take into account the crucial role of not only economic, but also other structures in the development of economic relations within the CIS. The economic policy of the states, institutional and legal aspects of cooperation has significantly changed.

Conclusion



An actual integration of the CIS countries is possible only on the voluntary basis in the process of ripening of the objective conditions. Economic, social and political goals, which are pursuing today by the states of the CIS, are often different, sometimes contradictory, stemming from the prevailing understanding of national interests and not at least from the interests of certain elite groups.(2) Still do not exist objective conditions for real economic integration on a market basis in CIS countries. States are in systemic socio-economic crisis where the reform processes of the economic and social relations is not yet completed. The global integration practice shows that actually could be integrated national economies with different structures and levels of development, with the similarity of national economic policies, economic conditions, legislative base, as well as with an awareness of the priority of integration.

For many decades the national economy of the countries of Commonwealth, which are now sovereign states were interrelated and complemented each other. CIS countries have a material, historical, cultural bases for integration. For its realization it is necessary to develop effective joint integration development model.

Each new independent states of the CIS has its own political system and model of integration, its level of understanding of democracy and economic freedom, its own path to the market and integration into the world community. It is essential to find a mechanism of interstate cooperation especially in economic policy. Otherwise, the gap between the sovereign countries will increase, which is jeopardizing with unpredictable geopolitical consequences.

A dominant role in the CIS retains Russia. Many of the CIS republics entirely depend on Russian supplies of energy resources. It accounts for more than 60% of the total GDP and industrial production in the Commonwealth. Russia ,as a leading country in the former Soviet Union, in order to achieve real integration with the CIS countries , should become an example of a democratic state where the rule of law and respect for human rights are obeyed.

The degree of Russian influence in the CIS countries will depend on real progress in the development of Russian society and what can Russia offer as a role model, on the one hand, and as a contribution to the re-creation of the common economic space on the other.

Further deepening economic integration of Russia and CIS countries is inextricably connected with the process of overcoming the consequences of the economic crisis, harmonization and coordination between countries in terms of solving economic problems, improving the legal framework of their relationship and the mechanism of its implementation.

Kaynakça

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