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Thematic area: political processes, international relations, regional studies (USA).

**Driving Factors shaping U.S. Congress Sanctions Policy towards Russia**

The paper is devoted to the study of the formation of the American sanctions' mechanism against Russia. The subject of the research is US Congress sanction policy of the US Congress is the processes of discussing sanctions bills, the object - all structural elements of domestic political activity in the formation and initiation of restrictive measures against Russia, primarily the decision-making process.

The **relevance** of the study is determined by the insufficient scholarship on the domestic political and economic aspects of the formation of the US sanctions regime, especially in relation to Russia. Identifying the reasons, institutions and mechanisms that form restrictive measures allows us to predict the likelihood of introducing new ones.

At this stage, most researchers pay attention to the impact and effectiveness of the introduction of restrictive measures. In studying the formation of the sanctioning mechanism, the focus is on the role of the executive branch, but the legislative position is overlooked, although it directly affects the White House, encouraging additional measures and limiting its space for negotiation. International scholars also view sanctions as an element of US foreign policy, which seems to be a certain simplification of reality. The introduction of any restrictive measure is the result of interaction between institutions, which remains outside the field of research of scientists, both Russian and foreign.

The hypothesis of the research was that the key factors in the discussion of sanctions measures are inter-party struggle, rivalry between the branches of government, as well as the private interests of both members of Congress and economic and political actors. The author believes that the findings of the study allow us to rethink the place of Russia in the decision-making process in the United States.

The theoretical and methodological foundations of this work are the structural and functional approach of T. Parsons that allow to consider the institutional structure, determine the functions of all actors and identify the key factors of the sanction mechanism. The institutional approach was used to analyze the formal activities of the legislature and its interaction with the executive branch and pressure groups. At the stage of analyzing the relationship of institutions, a systematic approach was used to determine the general system of interaction within the political system. At the stage of determining specific stages of the discussion, a comprehensive analysis of structured (sanctions bills texts, reports of lobbyists) and unstructured sources (more than 3 thousand news articles by The Hill and RollCall) was used, which can be attributed to a historical approach.

Research period: 2010-2020. The year 2010 was chosen as the beginning of the study period, since it was the time wheb an active discussion began on the creation of the Magnitsky list, which laid the foundation for the modern structure of the sanctions mechanism against Russia. The study focused on the sanctions bills of 2012 (the Magnitsky list and the abolition of the Jackson-Vanik amendment), 2014 (the introduction of individual and sectoral restrictive measures), 2017 (the codification of all previous sanctions and the introduction of additional ones), as well as an attempt to ban President D. Trump to lift restrictive measures against O. Deripaska. The study also takes into account unsuccessful initiatives to impose sanctions, as they provide information on factors that have a negative impact on

The research structure was formed as follows:

• consideration of the role of the Congress in shaping the sanctions policy towards Russia and determination of the factors influencing their activities;

• detailed study, description and visualization of the process of discussing draft laws;

• identification of the key factors that influenced the fate of the measures;

• classification of these factors and the formation of a decision tree, ie. their consistent influence on each other;

• a description of the structure of political and economic interest groups and the degree of their influence on the discussion of decision-making.

**Research results**

The following factors were identified:

• Initiators of the bill (bills can be introduced for the sake of getting attention);

• Leadership position (leaders can use procedural tools to slow down or speed up the discussion). Thus, many members of Congress who are indifferent to the agenda wait for the signal from the leaders, and when it comes, they support the measure of party loyalty;

• The position of the leaders of the committees (similar). Personalities played a special role: R. Corker, B. Menendez and other leaders;

• Position

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Thematic area: political processes, international relations, regional studies (USA).

Factors of the adoption of sanctions against Russia in the US Congress

The report is devoted to the study of the formation of the American sanctions mechanism against Russia. The subject of the research is the sanctions policy of the US Congress is the processes of discussing sanctions bills, the object of all structural elements of domestic political activity for the formation and initiation of restrictive measures against Russia, primarily the decision-making process.

The relevance of the study is determined by the insufficient study of the domestic political and economic aspects of the formation of the US sanctions regime, especially in relation to Russia. Identifying the reasons, institutions and mechanisms that form restrictive measures allows us to predict the likelihood of introducing new ones.

At this stage, most researchers pay attention to the impact and effectiveness of the introduction of restrictive measures. In studying the formation of the sanctions mechanism, the focus is on the role of the executive branch, but the legislative position is overlooked, although it directly affects the White House, encouraging additional measures and imposing restrictions on their mitigation. International scholars also view sanctions as an element of US foreign policy, which is seen as a certain simplification of reality. The introduction of any restrictive measure is the result of internal processes of interaction between institutions, which remain outside the field of research of scientists, both Russian and foreign.

As a hypothesis, the theory was put forward that in the discussion of sanctions measures, inter-party struggle, rivalry between the branches of government, as well as the private interests of both members of Congress and economic and political actors were of key importance. The author believes that the findings of the study allow us to rethink the place of Russia in the decision-making process in the United States.

The theoretical and methodological foundations of this work are the structural and functional approach of T. Parsons, since it allows you to consider the institutional structure, determine the functions of all actors and identify the key factors of the sanction mechanism. The institutional approach was used to analyze the formal activities of the legislature and its interaction with the executive branch and pressure groups. At the stage of analyzing the relationship of institutions, a systematic approach was also used to determine the general system of interaction within the political system. At the stage of determining specific stages of the discussion, a comprehensive analysis of structured (texts of sanctions bills, reports of lobbyists) and unstructured sources (more than 3 thousand news articles by The Hill and RollCall) was used, which can be attributed to a historical approach.

Research period: 2010-2020. The year 2010 was chosen as the beginning of the study period, since it was then that an active discussion began on the creation of the Magnitsky list, which laid the foundation for the modern structure of the sanctions mechanism against Russia.

The study focused on the sanctions bills of 2012 (the Magnitsky list and the abolition of the Jackson-Vanik amendment), 2014 (the introduction of individual and sectoral restrictive measures), 2017 (the codification of all previous sanctions and the introduction of additional ones), as well as an attempt to ban President D. Trump to lift restrictive measures against O. Deripaska. The study also takes into account unsuccessful initiatives to impose sanctions, as they provide information on factors that have a negative impact on

The research structure was formed as follows:

• consideration of the role of the Congress in shaping the sanctions policy towards Russia and determination of the factors influencing their activities;

• detailed study, description and visualization of the process of discussing draft laws;

• identification of the key factors that influenced the fate of the measures;

• classification of these factors and the formation of a decision tree, ie. their consistent influence on each other;

• a description of the structure of political and economic interest groups and the degree of their influence on the discussion of decision-making.

Research results

The following factors were identified, which cannot be detailed in the application format:

• Initiators of the bill (bills can be introduced for the sake of getting attention);

• Leadership position (leaders can use procedural tools to slow down or speed up the discussion). Thus, many members of Congress who are indifferent to the agenda wait for the signal from the leaders, and when it comes, they support the measure of party loyalty;

• The position of the leaders of the committees (similar). Their ersonalities played a special role: R. Corker, B. Menendez and other leaders;

• The position of the executive power (the President can persuade members of Congress not to limit his ability to negotiate). For example, in the spring of 2017 Secretary of State R. Tillerson persuaded the Senate to postpone the discussion of sanctions, promising to put pressure on Russia;

• Political situation (proximity of elections or negotiation crisis);

• Party competition (the desire of the opposition party to diminish the authority of the President);

• Competition between Chambers (the Senate is often more independent from the President than the House of Representatives);

• Relevance of the agenda (discussion of the budget and major reforms takes up all the time of the Congress). Thus, the discussion of sanctions in 2014 was delayed due to the budget discussions;

• The presence of some unrelated topics in the discussion (in 2014, the discussion of sanctions moved to the discussion of the IMF reform, which slowed down the discussion of immediate sanctions);

• Personal interests and convictions of members of Congress (hawkish members demand the supply of weapons, liberals - punishment for violation of human rights);

• Achieving a compromise (almost all sanctions were the result of a compromise) For example, in 2017, the sanctions were adopted only after they were combined with sanctions against Iran and North Korea.

• Position of interest groups: negotiations on mitigating draft laws to prevent economic losses and vice versa, introducing additional sanctions to overcome competition with Russian companies. So, at certain points, the American space company Tesla was lobbying for sanctions on the supply of Russian RD-180s. It should be noted here that direct lobbying during the period of active discussion of sanctions was, firstly, as a rule, directed against sanctions, i.e. the companies asked for the softening of specific points, and, secondly, it did not have a significant impact, since private interests cannot significantly change the intended political course.

It is worth noting that these factors are characteristic of the legislative process as a whole, but their study in the context of sanctions allows us to identify the factors influencing the policy towards Russia.

Th presentation will include the visualization materials that are currently being prepared: a timeline for discussions of sanctions, a classification of factors affecting the adoption of sanctions measures in the format of a decision tree. (can be provisionally provided upon request in January 2022).

As the study showed, despite the fact that crises in relations with Russia became an immediate reason for the discussion of sanctions, the very discussion of draft laws depended on the aforementioned reasons, and usually they, and not Russia's actions, determined the fate of the proposed measures.