**Prospects of trade and economic cooperation between the EAEU and the East African Community and the Economic Community of Central African States: analysis of mutual export-import competitiveness**

The authors emphasize the major role of the trade in ensuring sustainable socio-economic development. For the non-complex economies with small domestic markets, international trade is one of the most important tools for modernization and well-being. Limited success of members of the East African Community (EAS) and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) in building resilient and developed economies is connected with various internal reasons such as underdevelopment of national institutions, high corruptions, underinvestment in productive capacities, infrastructure and human capital, mono-product structure of the economy, etc. At the same time, they do not make maximum use of the international trade opportunities. Their export quota, defined as the share of the export in the GDP, is near 20%. At the same time, the LDCs’ export is very concentrated. The five largest export product groups account for approximately 80% of the total export that seriously decrease resilience and benefits from international trade.

The current work contributes to further developing the results of the surveys “Prospects of trade and economic cooperation between the Russia and the Least Developed Countries (LDCs): analysis of mutual export-import competitiveness” and “Competition in export markets as a factor of economic development of the least developed countries (LDCs)” presented at the XXIII and XXII April conferences of HSE.

The Russian Federation and its’ Eurasian integration partners are interested in developing cooperation with the EAS and the ECCAS members s in political and economic areas. At the moment, the political cooperation is significantly more successful than economic one. Settling this imbalance is crucial for Russia to ensure its role as in important partner of the EAS and the ECCAS in midterm.

The analysis of the structure of the trade of Russia (+other EAEU countries) with the EAS and the ECCAS made by the authors revealed that today Russia is only 33-34rd largest trade partner of these countries. In some largest export product groups Russia is a competitor to the EAS and the ECCAS. At the same time, study of competitiveness of the Russian and Eurasian export products in the EAS and the ECCAS markets based on the EAS and the ECCAS import demand structure showed that the potential of the trade cooperation between Russia and the EAEU, on the one hand, and the EAS and the ECCAS, on the other hand, is seriously underutilized. Another important issue is that the the EAS and the ECCAS are also interested in increasing and diversifying their exports to the Russian and Eurasian markets.

In the study the authors argues that cooperation with Russia and the EAEU can contribute to increasing the EAS and the ECCAS resilience and development. But to sustain such cooperation many problems should be solved starting from bridging information gap and up to providing special financial support to the export-import trade. The introduction of special mechanism of business cooperation between the EAEU Business Council and the EAS and the ECCAS business community would contribute to settle this issue.

Chronology of the study is 2006-2021.