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Alexei N. Shavel

Belarusian State University, Faculty of Geography, Leningradskaya str. 16, 220030 Minsk, Republik of Belarus; e-mail: alexxxshavel@gmail.com

THE PECULIARITIES OF GEOGRAPHICAL AND COMMODITY STRUCTURE OF EXPORTS OF THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS

Szawiel A. N. **Struktura geograficzna i towarowa eksportu Republiki Białoruskiej.** Przeanalizowano zmiany w strukturze geograficznej i towarowej eksportu Republiki Białoruś. Określono tendencje dynamiki białoruskiego eksportu na szczeblu makroregionów i kontynentów świata. Przedstawiono zmiany układu przestrzennego eksportu Białorusi i jej regionów w latach 2000–2012.

Шавель А. Н. **Особенности географической и товарной структуры экспорта Республики Беларусь.** Рассмотрены динамика и сдвиги в географической и товарной структуре экспорта Республики Беларусь. Показаны основные изменения структуры белорусского экспорта на уровне континентов и макрорегионов мира. Проанализированы территориальные особенности динамики экспорта Республики Беларусь и ее регионов в 2000–2012 гг.

Key words: exports, imports, foreign trade, the export quota, regional and commodity structure, export potential of regions

Słowa kluczowe: eksport, import, obroty handlu zagranicznego, kwota eksportowa, struktura regionalna i towarowa, potencjał eksportowy regionów

Ключевые слова: экспорт, импорт, внешнеторговый оборот, экспортная квота, региональная и товарная структура, экспортный потенциал регионов

Abstract

This article evaluates changes in the geographical and commodity structure of exports of the Republic of Belarus. The main changes in the Belarusian exports level of macroregions and continents of the world are considered. Analyzed territorial features of exports of Belarus and its regions in 2000–2012.

INTRODUCTION

The most important aspect of studying foreign trade is its geographical distribution. Geographical factor plays a key role in the formation of international trade, which is determined by the position of the state space, the number of bordering countries, having access to the sea, being on major transit transport routes, natural resource potential, capacity of the domestic market, remoteness (closeness) with countries of high and low socio-economic development. These factors determine the effectiveness of foreign trade on the basis of sufficient objective conditions for its development. On the other hand, the geography of international relations of the country depends on the scale of the economy and the level of its innovative development that defines the competitiveness of goods in foreign markets. An important factor in the development of foreign trade is the involvement of the state in the international division of labor and participation in international economic and trade unions and organizations.

Any country with a low capacity of the domestic market tends to develop foreign trade, realizing the surplus of products to other countries. Deepening international specialization and strengthening the exchange of goods between two countries have become the factors in the development of the world economy. Territorial distribution of exports and imports of goods determines relatively stable geographical structure of foreign trade. Nowadays many countries have formed the number of key trade partners. The decrease of goods competitiveness can lead to the problems with its implementation on traditional markets. This situation forces the country to diversify its trade partners, to develop the trade with geographically distant countries. Accordingly the urgent task of economy-geographical science is to analyze the current geographical structure of foreign trade in the country, the factors of its formation and dynamics.

Economy-geographical analysis of foreign trade mainly focuses on identifying geographically stable trade flows and on explaining the space-time shifts. Analysis of the regional peculiarities of foreign trade should be based on two key points:

- assessment of the geographical distribution of foreign trade in the context of continents, countries and macroregions;
- identification of geographical characteristics of foreign trade of the administrative regions of the country.

In Belarus, the problems of evaluation of the territorial structure of foreign trade and its dynamics almost are not studied. The most significant studies of peculiarities of the foreign trade development were held by the scientists of the Belarusian State University (Minsk). One of the first significant studies became the dissertation of the doctor of geographical sciences E. A. ANTIPOVA (1995), called "Geography of foreign economic relations of the Republic of Belarus in the new economic environment (by the example of the chemical industry)". It was an example of sectoral economy-geographical analysis of foreign trade. But mostly the problems of foreign trade development were engaged in academic economists. Among them stands out the doctor of economic sciences E. L. DAVYDENKO (1997, 2010) who deals with the problems of increasing the efficiency of foreign economic activity of the country, analysis of foreign policy of countries with small open economy. The candidate of economic sciences V. V. YURIK (2001, 2010) studies the commodity and geographical structure of exports and imports, the problems of customs and tariff regulation of foreign trade.

The studies of foreign trade role in sustainable socio-economic development are widely represented in the works of the director of the Institute of Economics of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus A. E. Dayneko and the staff of the Research Center of the institute for privatization and management (I. E. Tochitskaya, D. E. Kruk). Doctor of economic sciences A. E. DAYNEKO (2011) considers that Belarus needs to modernize the economy based on a major role in the foreign trade of the countries of "the nearest European environment" – Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Poland. Inaccessibility of developed European markets for goods produced in these countries predetermined the necessity of strengthening further mutual interest in expanding and deepening economic cooperation due to the transition from simple trade to interstate cooperation. Within the report by the UN project "Belarus: The impact of trade policies on human development" I. E. TOCHITSKAYA and D. E. KRUK (2011) try to identify the correlation between foreign trade and human development. The authors try to consolidate the role of foreign trade (for example, trade of food and light industry output) as an indirect factor of poverty reduction, increasing and equitable distribution of income.

This article focuses on the identification of geographical changes (at the level of continents, countries and macroregions) in the exports of goods and analyzing the factors that have caused them.

DYNAMICS OF FOREIGN TRADE TURN OVER AND ITS STRUCTURAL FEATURES

The Republic of Belarus in foreign political and economic spheres traditionally intensively cooperates with the former republics of the USSR mainly in the functioning of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). The key factor of development of foreign economic relations of Belarus is currently the formation of the Customs Union (CU) and the Single Economic Space (SES) with the perspective of creating the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU). The proximity to the European Union (EU) causes the formation of the second vector of foreign trade cooperation. This situation causes established in economic geography consideration of the distribution of trade flows of the country on the main directions of the CIS and the CU, the EU and the rest of the world.

The national economy of Belarus is quite involved in the system of international trade and dependent on transformation processes and phenomena occurring in the world markets. One of the major problems facing modern economy of Belarus is searching for new markets for the manufactured products. Historically, formed in conditions of well-coordinated cooperation in the framework of the USSR and its high-capacity internal market economy of Belarus after independence faced with the problem of the sale of their products on foreign markets. A characteristic feature of the Belarusian economy can be called its export orientation: by main producing goods exports range from 70 to 90% of the production volume. On the external markets is implemented 90–95% of tractors and automobiles, 70–75% of metal-cutting machines, 70–80% of refrigerators and freezers, about 50% of TV sets, 80–90% of potash fertilizers, 60–80% of chemical fibers and threads, 65–70% of oil products. This fact makes similar economy of the Republic of Belarus with other export-oriented states (for example, with a "new industrial countries" of Eastern and South-Eastern Asia, South America) (OZIEM, SHAVEL, SIDORENKO, 2012). To a greater extent it concerns orientation of economy and organization of foreign trade activities.

At the same time the modern structure of economy of Belarus, poor supply of fuel, energy and metallic-ore mineral resources, the absence of a number of the major productions in the necessary volume (passenger cars, computer equipment, chemicals), low cost of light industry products on the world market forced a significant volume of products import to Belarus.

The exports of Belarus has developed quite rapidly (he grew more than 6 times from 2000 to 2012), but is still slower than import (table 1). The only period of foreign trade recession was in 2009, and it coincided with the global economic crisis, which resulted in a general reduction of demand for output.

In the last decade Belarus has had significant imbalances in foreign trade of goods, which formed up to 2010. These imbalances resulted in one-time devaluation of the Belarusian ruble (in 2009 by 25% and in 2011 almost 3 times). It has contributed to the improvement of payment balance of republic in 2012, when on the background of almost complete lack of growth of imports was able to bring the balance of foreign trade in goods to zero.

Table 1. Dynamics of commodity exports and imports of Belarus in 2000–2012 (compiled by the author from *Vneshniaya torgovlia Respubliki Belarus*, 2010–2013)
Tabela 1. Dynamika eksportu i importu towarów z Białorusi w okresie 2000–2012 (opracowanie własne na podstawie: *Vneshniaya torgovlia Respubliki Belarus*, 2010–2013)

Years / Elements	2000	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Exports, bln. USD	7,3	16,0	19,7	24,3	32,6	21,3	25,3	41,4	46,1
to CIS countries, %	60,0	44,2	43,6	46,2	44,1	43,7	53,9	49,2	51,4
to non-CIS countries, %	40,0	55,8	56,4	53,8	55,9	56,3	46,1	50,8	48,6
Exports in GDP, %	59	53	53	54	54	43	46	78	73
Imports, bln. USD	8,7	16,7	22,4	28,7	39,4	28,6	34,9	45,8	46,4
from CIS countries, %	70,2	66,7	64,9	66,3	65,9	63,8	58,9	61,4	65,0
from non-CIS countries, %	29,8	33,3	35,1	33,7	34,1	36,2	41,1	38,6	35,0
Imports in GDP, %	68	55	60	63	65	58	63	85	73
Balance, bln. USD	-1,3	-0,7	-2,6	-4,4	-6,8	-7,3	-9,6	-4,3	-0,4
with CIS countries, bln. USD	-1,7	-4,1	-5,9	-7,8	-11,6	-8,9	-6,9	-7,7	-6,5
with non-CIS countries, bln. USD	-0,4	3,4	3,3	3,4	4,8	1,6	-2,7	-3,4	6,1

In the geographical structure of exports the share of CIS countries and countries outside the CIS was almost equal, while in the beginning of the 2000s exports to the CIS countries was dominated by 1.5 times. Import imbalances persist, as the main part of raw material imports from CIS countries. The role of the CIS member states increased due to expansion of volumes of raw material imports from the Russian Federation.

One of the indicator of economy openness of country and its involvement in the world economy is export and import quota. Export / import quota is a quantitative indicator of the importance of exports (imports) to the economy. It can be calculated as the ratio of the volume of exports (imports) in physical or value terms to the volume of domestic production for a certain period (in %).

Only in the last years of the economic crisis (2008–2009) the value of the export quota has dropped below 50%, but in recent years this number exceeded 70%. This demonstrates the importance of exports in GDP of the country. In the conditions of the passive balance of payment and increase of the external accounts payable key task for the country's economy becomes stable realization of Belarusian output on foreign markets. Given the significance of foreign trade quotas, which in 2011 reached 163%, we can understand how great the role of foreign trade for the development of economy of the Republic of Belarus.

Modern tendencies of internationalization of the world economy leads to the fact that geography of international trade expands to the maximum limits. The Republic of Belarus in this regard is no an exception that is expressed in increasing the number of foreign trade partners. For example, if in 2000 Belarus maintained trade relations with 154 countries of the world (exports were carried out in 126 countries),then in 2012 the geography of foreign trade included nearly 200 countries (exports – in more than 150 countries).

The most important factors of exports development and expansion of its geography is the commodity structure of foreign trade and trends of world demand. Table 2 shows the dynamics of main commodity groups position in exports of Belarus.

Table 2. Dynamics of commodity structure of Belarusian exports in 2000–2012, % (compiled by the author *Vneshniaya torgovlia Respubliki Belarus*, 2010–2013)
Tabela 2. Dynamika struktury towarowej eksportu białoruskiego w latach 2000–2012,% (opracowanie własne na podstawie: *Vneshniaya torgovlia Respubliki Belarus*, 2010–2013)

Year Group of products	2000	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Food products and raw materials for its production	6,9	8,3	7,5	7,5	6,8	10,7	12,9	9,5	10,7
Mineral products	20,2	35,4	38,8	35,6	37,5	37,9	28,2	35,5	36,0
Products of the chemical industry, including chemical fibers and threads	19,8	15,0	14,4	14,7	19,0	18,2	19,8	21,0	21,6
Textiles and textile products, leather raw materials, furs and products from them	7,1	4,3	3,8	3,3	2,8	2,7	3,4	2,4	2,4
Wood and pulp and paper products	4,3	3,5	2,8	3,1	2,3	2,3	2,6	2,0	2,9
Black, nonferrous metals and products from them	7,2	7,5	7,6	8,1	7,9	6,9	7,6	6,0	5,5
Machinery, equipment and vehicles	25,2	20,3	20,0	22,3	18,9	15,7	19,0	19,7	17,9
Other types of products	9,3	5,7	5,1	5,4	4,8	5,6	3,0	3,9	2,6

The main tendency in the commodity structure of the Belarusian exports is the decline of the share of investment products with high added value and growth of mineral commodity trade (for example, oil and oil products, building materials etc). Over the last decade, the commodity structure of Belarusian exports has changed significantly, which is reflected in its structural transformation: significantly increased the share in exports of mineral products (by 15.8%), food products (by 3.8%) on the background of reduction of machinery (by 7.3%) and light industry output (4.7%). These changes are caused by the increase of oil products trade, mainly with the EU countries, expansion of Belarusian food products on the Russian market, the loss of competitiveness of machinery.

The current trends are typical for countries with significant natural resource potential, to which Belarus does not apply. In many ways the structural changes caused by the dynamics of demand for Belarusian products on the Russian market, and also a direction of development of the Belarusian economy. Overall, these trends are evaluated as negative, worsen the resource orientation of the Belarusian economy. This fact is also due to the world market situation: there is a high demand for mineral commodity, but the machinery is displaced in the traditional markets by the competitors, forcing many companies to work "on a warehouse" or to cut production. The Republic of Belarus, which is traditionally considered one of the leading machinery states in Eastern Europe, this name has lost. Along with this negatively affected on the economy of the Republic the fall in exports of goods with high added value, which includes machinery. Therefore the main challenge for the exports development program is the work on diversification of sales markets for Belarusian products and development of new geographically remote markets. This would return the previous production and welfare of the biggest machinery enterprises that would be beneficial impact on the economy of the whole country.

CONTINENTAL STRUCTURE OF EXPORT COMMODITY FLOWS OF BELARUS

Traditional in economic-geographical science is to consider the distribution of the phenomenon at the level of the continents and parts of the world. For foreign trade such analysis can explain a number of geographical features, to reveal how the intercontinental trade and economic relations of the country are established, or country develop a transcontinental trade. The main limiting factor of activation of foreign trade relations with countries located on other continents is the lack of a direct outlet to the world ocean in Belarus.

On the whole, Belarus has a stable continental exports structure, during analyzed period has undergone little changes. The main export flows are concentrated in the European region (86,7%), while the share of other in recent years has decreased (table 3).

It is connected with the formation of the CU and the SES and with high demand for the products of the Belarusian oil refining in the European countries (the Netherlands, Germany, the UK, Latvia). A slight decline of the European region share caused by negative consequences of the world financial crisis. As a result of these events occurred short activization of relations with Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, China, Venezuela. This was due to the growth of the share of Asia and South America in the geographical structure of

Table 3. Continental structure of the Belarusian exports during 2000–2012,% (calculated by the author on *Vneshniaya torgovlia Respubliki Belarus*, 2010–2013)
Tabela 3. Struktura białoruskiego eksportu wg kontynentów w okresie 2000–2012,% (opracowanie własne na podstawie: *Vneshniaya torgovlia Respubliki Belarus*, 2010–2013)

Years / Continents	2000	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Total, mln. USD	7326,4	15979,3	19733,7	24275,3	32570,8	21304,2	25283,5	41418,7	46059,9
Europe	87,87	87,36	87,92	87,45	85,92	84,51	81,51	84,11	86,70
Asia	7,24	8,47	7,40	8,16	8,05	10,33	11,34	9,75	8,15
North America	1,77	1,84	2,45	1,58	0,75	0,38	0,78	0,48	0,42
South America	1,07	1,23	1,16	1,88	4,26	3,48	4,35	3,96	2,45
Africa	1,80	0,68	0,55	0,64	0,94	1,21	1,04	0,85	0,63
Australia and Oceania	0,03	0,04	0,13	0,05	0,08	0,06	0,06	0,07	0,11

exports, however, this trend was not sustainable, and by 2012 all returned to their seats. Concluded agreements with these countries enabled to redirect commodity flows and to avoid a deeper recession in the Belarusian economy. At the same time reflect the gradual reduction of the North American region share in exports, associated first with the existence of economic sanctions by the US against a number of large enterprises (in particular, concern of chemical industry "Belneftekhim"). The share of Africa, Australia and Oceania in exports remains insignificant.

In general, during the analyzed period the exports of goods grew faster than import. The highest rates of the growth for 2000–2012 was in Asia, South America, Australia and Oceania, but in volume they fell far short of the European region. Dynamic tendencies were caused by the reorientation of export flows from traditional markets to those where there was a possibility of production distribution. In this situation, many Belarusian producers have had to look for partners in developing countries, territorially remote from the Republic of Belarus.

Table 4. Annual exports growth rates in continental areas in 2000–2012 (calculated by the author on *Vneshniaya torgovlia Respubliki Belarus*, 2010–2013)
Tabela 4. Roczne tempo wzrostu eksportu wg kontynentów w latach 2000–2012 (opracowanie własne na podstawie: *Vneshniaya torgovlia Respubliki Belarus*, 2010–2013)

Continents Years	2006/ 2005	2007/ 2006	2008/ 2007	2009/ 2008	2010/ 2009	2011/ 2010	2012/ 2011	2012/ 2000
Totally exports	1,23	1,23	1,34	0,65	1,19	1,64	1,11	6,29
Europe	1,24	1,22	1,32	0,64	1,14	1,69	1,15	6,20
Asia	1,08	1,36	1,32	0,84	1,30	1,41	0,93	7,08
North America	1,65	0,79	0,64	0,33	2,45	1,00	0,98	1,50
South America	1,17	1,99	3,03	0,54	1,48	1,49	0,69	14,36
Africa	0,99	1,44	1,97	0,84	1,02	1,34	0,82	2,19
Australia and Oceania	4,25	0,51	2,05	0,48	1,28	1,88	1,75	23,00

The annual national exports growth rates are determined by the state of trade relations with European countries, so these two values are not much different. During this period in two stages – in 2008–2009 and 2011–2012 – there was a decrease of exports volumes on several continents. The decline of exports in 2008–2009 was connected with the consequences of the global financial crisis and falling demand for machinery with accumulation of output in the warehouses. In 2011 the decrease of exports to Asia, Africa, South and North America were due to an increase of sales of goods in Europe, which eliminated the need to use markets geographically remote from Belarus countries. Increase of volumes of oil refining given preferential deliveries it from the Russian Federation allowed to increase the volume of exports to Europe. Thus, taking into account current trends, the continental structure of Belarusian exports with the creation of the EAEU will be stable unless there is a need to search for new markets for Belarusian production outside the European region (table 4).

MACROREGIONAL STRUCTURE AND GEOGRAPHICAL DISPLACEMENTS OF EXPORTS

If a continental structure of foreign trade during 2000–2012 in general was stable, then macroregional structure undergone a number of changes. The consideration of the Belarusian exports in the context of the macroregions of the world, allocated by the UN, will be incomplete if don't add to them the most important for Belarus integration formation: the CIS, the CU and the EU. The main trendances characterizing this trend can be attributed (table 5):

- the reduction of the share of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (by 13.7%) on the background of decline in the foreign trade of Belarus with the countries of the CU (13.8%), but mostly with the Russian Federation;
- the most intensive increase in the share is typical for Western European countries (by 14.7%) and the EU (by 9.5%);
- in addition to European countries increased exports to the countries of South and Central Asia and South America on the background of reduction of the share of East Asia and North America.

Table 5. Dynamics of the exports structure by macroregions in 2000–2012,% (calculated by the author on *Vneshniaya torgovlia Respubliki Belarus*, 2010–2013)
Tabela 5. Dynamika struktury eksportu według makroregionów w latach 2000–2012 (opracowanie własne na podstawie: *Vneshniaya torgovlia Respubliki Belarus*, 2010–2013)

Macroregions Years	2000	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Central and Eastern Europe	64,7	49,6	48,6	50,2	49,2	45,6	55,4	49,9	51,0
The Commonwealth of Independent States	60,0	44,2	43,6	46,2	44,1	43,7	53,9	49,2	51,4
The Customs Union	51,0	37,1	36,1	38,2	33,5	33,0	41,6	36,9	37,2
Northern Europe	15,5	14,5	15,1	14,7	15,2	14,9	10,9	13,0	12,9
Southern Europe	1,6	1,6	1,3	1,2	1,5	1,2	1,4	1,9	1,8
Western Europe	6,2	22,0	23,3	21,6	20,1	22,9	14,6	20,1	20,9
The European Union	28,5	44,8	46,2	43,8	43,5	43,7	30,3	38,2	38,0
East Asia	3,0	3,1	2,3	2,5	2,1	1,1	2,2	1,9	1,4
South and Central Asia	2,2	3,8	3,2	3,7	3,5	6,1	5,3	5,0	4,4
Southeast Asia	0,9	0,6	0,8	0,6	0,9	0,8	1,4	1,3	1,1
West Asia	1,2	1,0	1,2	1,4	1,5	2,3	2,6	1,6	1,4
North America	1,8	1,8	2,5	1,6	0,7	0,4	0,8	0,5	0,4
South America	1,1	1,2	1,2	1,9	4,3	3,5	4,4	4,0	2,4
East Africa	0,2	0,2	0,0	0,1	0,0	0,1	0,0	0,1	0,0
Central Africa	0,1	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,1	0,1	0,1	0,1	0,0
North Africa	1,3	0,4	0,3	0,3	0,5	0,7	0,4	0,2	0,4
South Africa	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,1	0,2	0,0	0,1	0,0	0,1
West Africa	0,1	0,1	0,2	0,1	0,2	0,3	0,4	0,5	0,2
Australia and Oceania	0,0	0,0	0,1	0,1	0,1	0,1	0,1	0,1	0,1

The dominant role of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe in the Belarusian exports in the early 2000s was the consequence of the presence preserved close cooperative ties with the countries of the former USSR and the difficult situation with the development of marketing and sales. In this period the enterprises weakly sought to diversify supplies of manufactured products to external markets, which was due to a worse situation in the processing industries of the Russian and Ukrainian economies. These countries actively bought Belarusian products that did not cause problems with its implementation. However the growth of Russian economy on the background of increasing the profitability of commodity exports has led to increasing competition on the Russian market for Belarusian goods from Western and Chinese manufacturers. With the European manufacturers Belarusian products could not compete in quality, and with Chinese – at a price. In this regard there was a significant reduction in the share of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe in 2000–2005, and later were characterized by insignificant fluctuations caused by local factors. Along with the mentioned tendency of growth of exports to the countries of Western Europe, accompanied by the reformation of the commodity structure of exports and sectoral structure of the Belarusian economy. In this period significant funds were invested in the modernization of Belarusian oil refining plants which, along with the low prices for oil on tolling schemes led to the increase of processing and exports of oil products. Subsequently there was a refusal of tolling schemes of processing in favor of market mechanisms, and Belarus had the opportunity of free realization of oil products at own discretion. The main consumers were the Netherlands, Germany, the UK, Latvia, Lithuania. Further structural variations were associated with the volumes of oil supplies from the Russian Federation and its products to the European market. In addition to oil to the European markets were supplied products of chemical industry (chemical raw materials and fibers, plastics, rubber products). But in the exports of other significant position for Belarusian economy – potash fertilizers – the share of European region remains insignificant.

Important trends in the development of foreign trade of Belarus by macroregions should be noted the increase of exports in South, Southeast and Central Asia. In these countries Belarusian products competitive on the price factor, therefore, a significant amount of engineering products (mine dump trucks, tractors, commercial vehicles) and potash fertilizers are realized on the markets of India, Pakistan, Vietnam, Thailand, Indonesia. Establishment of close relations with Venezuela led to a significant increase of the Belarusian exports to the countries of South America in the late 2000s. However, sufficient territorial remoteness, management change and satisfaction of basic needs for the goods produced in Belarus resulted in the decrease of exports to Venezuela and South American. The main partner in this macroregion is Brazil, which imports from Belarus potash fertilizers, tires, tractors and mine dump trucks.

According to table 5, we can note the relative imbalance of macroregional territorial structure of the Belarusian exports. To assess the sustainability of geographical patterns we can use the statistic indicator such as average quadratic deviation. According to calculations (table 6) most exposed to fluctuations of the Belarusian exports to EU countries and Western Europe, Central and Eastern Europe and the CU. Unsustainable exports to Northern Europe, South America, South and Central Asia are observed. Redistribution of export flows from the countries of Central and Eastern Europe in Western Europe led to volatility in the share of these regions.

Table 6. The variability of the macroregional structure of foreign trade of Belarus in 2005–2012 (value average quadratic deviation of the share of the region in Belarusian exports) (calculated by the author on *Vneshniaya torgovlia Respubliki Belarus*, 2010–2013)

Table 6. Współczynnik zmienności makroregionalnej struktury handlu zagranicznego Białorusi w okresie 2005–2012 (wartość średniego kwadratowego odchylenia udziału regionu w eksporcie Białorusi) (opracowanie własne na podstawie: *Vneshniaya torgovlia Respubliki Belarus*, 2010–2013)

Macroregions	Deviation in the exports	Macroregions	Deviation in the exports
The European Union	4,918	West Asia	0,514
Eastern Europe	2,576	Southeast Asia	0,275
Western Europe	2,559	Southern Europe	0,266
The Customs Union	2,510	North Africa	0,128
Northern Europe	1,406	West Africa	0,126
South America	1,253	East Africa	0,048
South and Central Asia	0,941	South Africa	0,042
North America	0,726	Australia and Oceania	0,029
East Asia	0,579	Central Africa	0,022

Most intensive growth of exports was observed in the pre-crisis years (2008 and 2010), when trade intensively developed in all areas (table 7). In 2009 and 2011, with the decline in exports to key macroregions there was a slight increase in certain regions of Africa and Asia. In general for the period from 2000 to 2012 the highest growth rates were characteristic for exports to Central and Western Europe (21.2 times), South America (the volume of exports grew by 14.4 times), South and Central Asia (12.7 times), Australia and Oceania (23 times).

Table 7. Dynamics of the Belarusian exports by macroregions of the world in 2000–2012 (calculated by the author on *Vneshniaya torgovlia Respubliki Belarus*, 2010–2013)
Tabela 7. Dynamika eksportu białoruskiego w układzie makroregionów świata w latach 2000–2012 (opracowanie własne na podstawie: *Vneshniaya torgovlia Respubliki Belarus*, 2010–2013)

Macroregions Years	2006/2005	2007/2006	2008/2007	2009/2008	2010/2009	2011/2010	2012/2011	2012/2000
The world in general	1,23	1,23	1,34	0,65	1,18	1,64	1,12	6,3
Eastern Europe	1,21	1,27	1,32	0,61	1,43	1,47	1,15	5,0
The Customs Union	1,20	1,30	1,18	0,64	1,48	1,46	1,13	4,6
Northern Europe	1,29	1,19	1,39	0,64	0,86	1,95	1,12	5,3
Southern Europe	0,96	1,17	1,69	0,50	1,38	2,31	1,07	7,1
Western Europe	1,31	1,14	1,25	0,74	0,75	2,26	1,17	21,2
The European Union	1,27	1,17	1,34	0,66	0,82	2,07	1,12	8,4
East Asia	0,92	1,31	1,15	0,35	2,34	1,42	0,80	2,9
South and Central Asia	1,03	1,44	1,28	1,13	1,01	1,56	0,98	12,7
South-east Asia	1,64	0,95	2,06	0,54	2,12	1,53	0,93	7,7
West Asia	1,41	1,49	1,43	1,02	1,29	1,03	0,94	6,9
North America	1,65	0,79	0,64	0,33	2,45	1,00	0,98	1,5
South America	1,17	1,99	3,03	0,54	1,48	1,49	0,69	14,4
East Africa	0,37	1,35	0,85	2,51	0,30	2,99	0,46	0,9
Central Africa	1,98	1,02	2,79	0,59	1,62	1,08	0,55	1,3
North Africa	0,92	1,58	1,90	0,90	0,77	0,92	1,60	1,7
South Africa	1,48	4,98	2,51	0,12	2,68	0,89	1,67	9,8
West Africa	1,81	0,91	2,07	1,09	1,57	1,76	0,42	8,0
Australia and Oceania	4,25	0,51	2,05	0,48	1,28	1,88	1,75	23,0

Based on the trends of changes in the macroregional structure of exports of Belarusian goods is possible to allocate following groups of regions on the specifics of its dynamics:
- regions unstable growth of exports (West Africa, South-East Asia);
- regions unstable reduction of exports (Western Europe, Southern Europe, South and Central Asia, West Asia);
- the unstable regions of decline in exports (Eastern Europe, Northern Europe, Eastern Asia);
- regions progressive reductions in exports (North America, Northern Africa);
- regions steadily small amounts of Belarusian exports (East Africa, Central Africa, southern Africa, Australia and Oceania).

The main regularities in the formation of the geographic structure of Belarusian foreign trade in the context of the macroregions of the world are:
- the major trade flows from Belarus is concentrated on the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, which accounted for half of exports;
- an important role in the Belarusian exports plays the markets of Western and Northern Europe, which account for 1/3 of exported from Belarus goods and practically the whole volume of exported oil and oil products;
- after an intense growth of exports to South America in 2009–2011, the share of this region in the foreign trade turnover of the Republic started to decrease;
- macroregional exports structure is more dynamic than import structure; the regions with the most variable structure of exports are Central and Eastern, Western and Northern Europe, South America and Asia.

In macroregional structure of foreign trade of Belarus confirmed by the trends identified at the level of the continents. Main export flows are concentrated in the countries of Central and Eastern, Western and Northern Europe.

TRANSFORMATION OF THE GEOGRAPHICAL STRUCTURE OF THE BELARUSIAN EXPORTS

Geographical structure of foreign trade of the Republic of Belarus was formed in the conditions of the transition period (1990–2000). After the Soviet collapse most of the independent countries are faced not only with the problem to establish trade relations with new partners, but also with the need to restore economic ties within the CIS. This period in the Belarusian economy was manifested by the downturn in economic activity, reduction of the GDP, hyperinflation. With the stabilization of the situation in the industrial production, which is only in the early 2000s reached the level of 1990, the situation in foreign trade began to improve. But quite a long period of time was spent on the restoration of the lost positions, which was reflected in the geography of foreign trade partners.

On the background of trends typical to the geographical structure of exports we can single out four time periods in the development of foreign trade:
- transition period (1991–1999);
- stabilization period (2000–2004);
- transformation period (2005–2009);
- period of formation of a new export policy (from 2010 till present).

The selection of these periods caused by sustainability trends in the geographical structure of exports. In the transition period (1990–2000) Belarus was engaged in establishing broken after the collapse of the USSR foreign trade relations. This period was characterized by sufficient fluctuations in the share of the main export partners, its concentration in a limited number of countries and increase in the share of the Russian Federation. In the 1990s most of the exports concentrated on the countries bordering Belarus: Russia, Ukraine, Poland, Latvia and Lithuania. However until 1998 when there was an economic default in the Russian Federation its share increased and the maximum was 67.6% of Belarusian exports of goods. After that the volume of exports fell by 1/5 which was a consequence of the concentration of trade flows to Russia. This led to the further diversification of exports and reduction of the share of the Russian Federation to 50.6% in 2000 and to 35.8% in 2005.

The stabilization period (2000–2004) was characterized by minor changes in the territorial structure of export flows. The lack of serious fluctuations of national economy, the restoration of machine building production, stable demand for Belarusian products in traditional markets allowed not to think about the need to expand the geographical structure of exports or to reduce dependence on the main foreign trade partner. In this period the share of the Russian Federation was stable and had insignificant fluctuations in the range of 45–50%. The main foreign trade flows from Belarus were sent to Latvia, Poland, Lithuania, Ukraine, and Germany. The share of the United Kingdom has increased in 2004 to 8.3% which was connected with the redistribution of oil products trade. The share of other countries remained small and structural changes occurred between the abovementioned states and were small.

The transformation period (2005–2009) the geographic structure of foreign trade (table 8) was correlated with the changing conditions of oil refining: the Russian Federation in 2004 declined from tolling schemes of interaction with the Belarusian refineries and fully passed on market terms of trade. Belarus has then ecessity to ensure implementation of the produced oil products, whose share rose to 1/3 in the commodity structure of exports. Correspondingly the share of the Russian Federation reduced by 11.3% and the share of the Netherlands increased (in 2003 it was 4.1%, in 2004 – 6,7%, in 2005 – 15.1%).

Table 8. The dynamics of the role of the most important partners in the Belarusian exports in 2000–2012, % (with the turnover more than 1% of the total) (calculated by the author on *Vneshniaya torgovlia Respubliki Belarus*, 2010–2013)
Table 8. Dynamika udziału najważniejszych partnerów w białoruskim eksporcie w latach 2000–2012,% (przy obrotach ponad 1% ogółu) (opracowanie własne na podstawie: *Vneshniaya torgovlia Respubliki Belarus*, 2010–2013)

Country/formation Years	2000	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
CIS countries	60,0	44,2	43,6	46,2	44,1	43,7	53,9	49,2	51,4
Non-CIS countries	40,0	55,8	56,4	53,8	55,9	56,3	46,1	50,8	48,6
The Customs Union	50,9	36,9	36,0	38,1	33,5	33,0	41,2	36,7	37,2
The European Union	28,5	44,6	46,1	43,7	43,5	43,7	30,1	37,9	38,0
Brazil	0,9	1,0	1,1	1,5	3,3	2,1	2,8	3,0	1,7
Venezuela	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,2	0,5	1,1	1,2	0,5	0,6
Germany	3,2	4,4	3,8	3,0	2,5	4,6	1,8	4,4	3,8
India	0,5	1,2	0,6	0,4	1,0	2,3	1,3	0,8	0,6
Italy	1,0	1,0	0,9	0,8	1,0	0,9	0,8	1,3	1,5

Kazakhstan	0,3	1,1	1,3	1,5	1,1	1,5	1,8	1,6	1,8
China	1,9	2,7	2,0	2,0	1,9	0,8	1,9	1,5	0,9
Latvia	6,4	2,0	2,3	4,1	6,6	7,8	3,7	7,6	7,1
Lithuania	4,8	2,2	2,2	2,3	1,9	1,7	1,8	2,1	2,6
Netherlands	1,8	15,1	17,7	17,6	16,6	17,4	11,3	14,8	16,4
Poland	3,8	5,3	5,2	5,1	5,5	3,9	3,5	2,7	2,1
Russia	50,6	35,8	34,7	36,6	32,4	31,5	39,4	35,0	35,4
United Kingdom	1,3	7,0	7,5	6,3	4,4	3,8	3,7	1,0	1,2
United States	1,3	1,6	2,3	1,4	0,4	0,2	0,3	0,2	0,2
Ukraine	7,6	5,7	6,3	6,1	8,5	7,9	10,1	10,0	12,1
France	0,5	1,7	1,0	0,3	0,3	0,3	0,2	0,2	0,2
Sweden	0,2	1,6	1,9	0,3	0,3	0,3	0,3	0,2	0,2
Estonia	2,0	0,7	0,5	0,9	1,0	0,6	0,5	1,4	1,1

Later the global financial crisis has jeopardized the trade of Belarusian goods on the traditional markets. In 2008–2009 the share of the key partners of Belarus in exports have decreased: the Russian Federation (by 4.2%), Brazil (1.2%), China (1.1%), the United Kingdom (2.5%), Poland (1.6%). There was the redistribution of exports to the markets of Germany, Latvia, India, Venezuela and to several countries in Central and South-Eastern Asia and Africa. In this period Belarusian producers faced tough competition on foreign markets and were forced to seek new territories for product distribution.

Since 2010 began the period of the formation of a new export policy associated with the formation of the CU and SES. There are good conditions of trade with the Russian Federation which was manifested in the growth of export volumes and return its share on the pre-crisis level. Further tendencies in the Belarusian exports are determined by the development of trilateral cooperation within the CU and SES, the decision on the accession of Belarus to the WTO and the economic situation in the Russian Federation.

In the geographical structure of the Belarusian exports in 2000–2012 has seen a number of transformations which can be seen in table 8. In particular the ratio of CIS countries and others in the volume of exports has changed. In the early 2000s CIS 1.5 times exceeded the rest of the world in trade with Belarus. Since 2005 the situation has changed on the opposite with a difference about 10% in favor of non-CIS countries. With the formation of the customs Union and the single economic space the ratio between them was leveled. This ratio was formed thanks to the growth of Belarusian exports to the CU and its reduction to the EU.

The top five countries in terms of Belarusian exports in 2012 entered the Russian Federation (35.4%), the Netherlands (16.4%), Ukraine (12.1%), Latvia (7.1%) and Germany (3.8%). Some countries playing a sufficient role in Belarusian exports in the early and mid-2000s it has lost. Among them are the United Kingdom, the USA, France, Sweden, Lithuania. At the same time the main change was due to the reduction in the share of the Russian Federation on the background of growth of the share of the Netherlands, Ukraine and Latvia, whence comes to the country the main volume of revenue of "petrodollars".

EXPORT POTENTIAL OF THE BELARUSIAN REGIONS AND TENDENCIES OF ITS DEVELOPMENT

The regions of the Republic of Belarus (6 regions and Minsk) rather strongly differentiated according to the level of development of foreign trade. Their foreign trade potential is determined by the structure of production, the demand for products in the external markets and the limited domestic market. For the period 2000–2012 regional exports structure has not undergone any serious changes (table 9).

Compared to 2000 in the regional structure of the Belarusian exports only two regions, Minsk-city and Minsk region, has increased its share. The strongest decline in exports was recorded in respect of the Gomel region (-4.5%). The structural changes caused by the success of the trade of certain types of industrial products: machinery and equipment, transport means and spare parts to them, etc. The most significant changes in the regional structure have occurred in 2008 and 2009. The share of almost all areas declined against a background increase the share of Minsk-city (+15.5%). The restructuring took place due to the transformation of oil products trade principles: Minsk had the opportunity to provide the functions of an

Table 9. Regional structure of the Belarusian exports in 2000–2012,% (calculated by the author on *Vneshniaya torgovlia Respubliki Belarus*, 2010–2013)
Tabela 9. Regionalna struktura białoruskiego eksportu w latach 2000–2012 (opracowanie własne na podstawie: *Vneshniaya torgovlia Respubliki Belarus*, 2010–2013)

Regions Years	2000	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Brest	5,7	6,2	5,7	5,4	5,0	5,8	6,4	5,1	5,1
Vitebsk	9,1	12,6	12,1	13,0	10,9	5,9	6,9	6,5	8,7
Gomel	16,3	21,6	20,6	22,1	22,2	13,8	10,8	12,5	11,8
Grodno	7,2	5,8	5,6	5,8	4,8	5,9	6,6	5,5	4,8
Minsk-city	36,6	29,9	33,5	32,0	31,8	47,3	44,1	47,8	46,6
Minsk	16,2	18,4	16,0	15,1	19,7	15,6	18,5	17,2	17,3
Mogilev	9,0	5,5	6,5	6,5	5,4	5,7	6,8	5,5	5,7

intermediary at sale in foreign markets. Accordingly the share of the regions where the oil refineries are situated reduced.

Let us consider in more detail the geographical structure of foreign trade of Belarusian regions. Table 10 provides data on the distribution of exports by regions among the key partners of the Republic in two years – 2000 and 2012.

Initially the table 10 pays attention to a high concentration of region exports. In particular 12 leading partners of the Republic account for over 90% of exports volume of Minsk-city, Brest and Vitebsk regions. At the same time over the past period it has increased in all regions except the Grodno region. The increase in total export concentration of regions is not always accompanied by processes of more equal internal redistribution of exports volumes between key partners. Consider the territorial peculiarities of export regions in more detail.

Table 10. Changes in the territorial structure of foreign trade of Belarus in 2000 and 2012, % (indicate the percentage of countries that have foreign trade turnover with the Republic more than 1%) (calculated by the author on *Vneshniaya torgovlia Respubliki Belarus*, 2010–2013)
Tabela 10. Zmiany w strukturze terytorialnej handlu zagranicznego Białorusi w latach 2000 i 2012,% (podano procent krajów, które w handlu zagranicznym z Republiką mają obrót większy niż 1%) (opracowanie własne na podstawie: *Vneshniaya torgovlia Respubliki Belarus*, 2010–2013)

	Brest region		Vitebsk region		Gomel Region		Grodno region		Minsk region		Minsk-city		Mogilev region	
Country	2000	2012	2000	2012	2000	2012	2000	2012	2000	2012	2000	2012	2000	2012
Brazil	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	1,2	6,0	10,3	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,3
Germany	5,6	2,2	2,8	0,6	2,4	27,6	4,6	2,3	3,7	1,1	3,3	0,5	4,2	1,6
Italy	2,6	0,1	1,6	0,2	1,6	1,9	1,3	0,1	0,6	0,4	0,8	2,7	1,3	0,3
Kazakhstan	0,4	3,6	0,0	1,1	0,2	2,1	0,1	2,6	0,5	1,6	0,3	1,1	0,3	6,7
Lithuania	1,0	0,3	15,5	2,6	8,7	0,8	4,3	0,2	1,4	0,3	5,7	9,2	0,8	0,5
Latvia	2,1	1,1	7,0	1,7	1,2	3,3	11,0	4,5	2,2	1,3	4,5	3,1	1,4	1,6
Netherlands	1,1	0,3	0,9	41,6	1,8	0,1	7,5	0,6	1,3	5,5	0,8	27,7	0,7	0,3
Poland	3,5	1,3	2,9	1,7	7,8	3,1	12,2	4,9	5,2	2,7	1,4	1,9	2,3	1,0
Russia	71,2	80,5	46,4	36,6	42,1	41,1	48,7	60,0	42,6	36,6	58,1	23,0	74,7	69,0
United Kingdom	0,0	0,1	0,1	3,6	4,5	0,3	0,3	0,3	0,0	0,0	0,6	2,0	0,0	0,0
Ukraine	2,9	4,2	11,3	2,8	7,1	5,5	2,3	3,8	4,1	12,0	6,8	19,5	2,4	7,3
Estonia	0,1	0,1	3,0	1,1	1,1	0,2	0,1	0,2	1,0	0,2	1,1	1,2	0,3	0,1
Totally	90,5	93,6	91,5	93,7	78,6	85,9	92,4	80,7	68,6	72,0	83,5	91,8	88,4	88,9

Brest region has a high concentration of exports (93.6% of the volume falls on 12 partners). The region has in the exports volume the highest share of the Russian Federation (80.5%) among the regions of Belarus, despite the territorial remoteness from her (among other regions). Key factors in the development of this interaction are the economic specialization of the region and its position on key transport artery of the Republic – the trans-european corridor № 2 Berlin – Brest – Minsk – Moscow. The important factor of development of foreign trade of the region is the availability of common borders with the EU countries (Poland) and Ukraine. The region exports a wide range of finished products: gas and electric stoves, incandescent lamps, fish products, wood and articles of wood, clothing, fabric and yarn, furniture, meat and dairy products. The most famous brands of the region – "Savushkin product" (dairy products), "Gefest" (gas and electric cookers) , "Santa Bremor" (fish products) (in Brest), "Pinskdrev" (wood products and furniture, Pinsk). The main volumes of almost all of the mentioned items are sent to the Russian Federation, where there is a steady demand for it. Much of this demand is supported by the presence of joint ventures operating in the free economic zone "Brest". Besides traditional partners of the region are Ukraine, Kazakhstan, whose share in recent years increased. At the same time the share of EU countries (Germany, Italy, Poland) were gradually reduced. Accordingly in the territorial structure of export of the Brest region the CIS countries play a key role.

Vitebsk region has the maximum concentration of exports (93.7%) among all regions of Belarus. The region borders with the highest number of countries (Russia, Latvia and Lithuania). Its territory is crossed by transport corridors № 2 "Berlin – Minsk – Moscow" and № 9 "Helsinki – St. Petersburg – Odessa", which intersect in Orsha. The main exports of the region is distributed among the Netherlands (41.6%), the share of which in the early 2000s was less than 1%, and the Russian Federation (36.6%). Export potential of the region in the beginning of the XXI century was much higher than at present. Now the main exports of the region are the oil products produced at the Novopolotsk oil refinery. Their main volume of output is sent to the Netherlands. With the redistribution of oil products supplies to the foreign market, due to the reduction of the share of Latvia, Lithuania, Ukraine, Germany, the share of the United Kingdom increased. Apart from oil products in the commodity structure of exports of region has an important place the chemical raw materials (ethylene, polymers), carpets and linen fabric, glass, footwear, chemical fibers and threads, liquefied gas. The most famous brands of the region – "Naftan-Polymir" (motor fuels, oils and lubricants, synthetic fibers, Novopolotsk), "Belwest", "Marko" (footwear), "Vityaz" (TV equipment) (Vitebsk), Belarusian linen (flax products, Orsha). Most of this production is sent to the Russian Federation.

Gomel region has the second largest industrial potential, which determines its international specialization. The basic commodity positions of the region's exports are crude oil (100% of the production volume) and oil products, ferrous metals and metal cord, phosphate fertilizers, liquid gas, salt, chemical fibers and yarns. Leading brands of the region – "Gomselmash" (production of forage and grain harvesters), "Belarusneft" (oil extraction and processing of natural gas), "Spartak" (candies and sweets), "Crystal" (jewelery) (all of them situated in Gomel), "Polesie" (cooking salt), "Mozyr oil refinery" (motor fuel) (both in Mozyr), the "Belarusian metallurgical plant" (metal cord, steel bars and pipes, Zhlobin), "Svetlogorskhimvolokno" (chemical fiber, Svetlogorsk). Important role in contrast to the above mentioned areas in the Gomel region, a significant share of the export of machines and mechanisms (about 1/3 of the Republican volume). The basic volume of these products is sent to the Russian Federation (41,1%). Important foreign trade partner of the region is Germany (27,6%), which is implemented by all extracted oil in Belarus. Important partners of the region are Ukraine, Lithuania, Poland, Kazakhstan. Major changes in the geographical structure of the region's exports were due to the refusal of processing of own extracted oil and steady demand for machine building products in the Russian Federation and Ukraine.

Grodno region is inferior in industrial potential to other regions of the country. A significant volume of the gross regional product is generated in agriculture, which operates mainly on the domestic market. The basis of the export potential of the region is the products of chemical industry (nitrogen fertilizers, nitrogen-containing compounds, chemical fibers and threads, varnishes and paints, synthetic resins and plastics), fabrics, clothing, glassware. The most famous brands – "GrodnoAzot" (production of nitrogen fertilizers and synthetic fibers), "Conte" (hosiery), "Grodno tobacco factory "Neman" (cigarettes) (all in Grodno), "Lidskoe beer" (beer and soft drinks), "Lidselmash" (potato harvesters and seeders) (in Lida), "Glassworks "Neman" (glassware, Berezovka). In the geographical structure of the region there is a tendency of exports concentration to the Russian Federation which accounted for 3/5 of its volume. Along with this has significantly decreased the share of the traditional regional partners with which it has common borders: Poland and Lithuania. Also decreased the share of other EU countries (the Netherlands, Germany, Latvia), but the role of Kazakhstan and Ukraine on the contrary increased. The region is slightly used a favorable economic-geographical position: direct access to the EU is not expressed by the intensive turnover.

Minsk region occupies a central position in the Republic, has high industrial and agricultural potential. On the territory of the region are key roads and railways, but the region does not have direct access to the external borders. The main volume of the region's exports are potash fertilizers, sugar, medicines, mine dump trucks, spare parts for cars, plastic products, meat and meat products, furniture and wood products, leather. The largest brands of the region – "Belaruskalij" (extraction of potash ore, Soligorsk), BelAZ (mine dump trucks, Zhodino), "Borisovdrev" (furniture and wood products), "BATE" (starters and generators for the automotive and agricultural machinery, both in Borisov). The share of traditional partners in exports (Russia, Germany, Poland, Latvia and Lithuania) decreased from 55.1% to 42.0%. Difficulties with sales of products on the Russian market led to reduction of its share by 6% to 36.6%. The reorientation of trade flows fell on the Ukrainian market (growth by 7.9%). With the growth of production volumes and prices for potash fertilizers increased role of Brazil (4.3%). The increase of the share of the Netherlands (by 4.2%) due to the beginning of oil products trade. Export to the Republic of Kazakhstan is gradually increased.

Mogilev region is located on the East of the Republic and has a common border with the Russian Federation. This fact is the main advantage in foreign trade of region. On the other hand an open border stimulates the development of the shuttle and spontaneous trade and the arrival of Russian Federation citizens for shopping on the territory of the region. Transport routes in the region have republican value. The main routes are transport corridor № 9 Helsinki – St. Petersburg – Mogilev – Odessa with a branch № 9B Gomel – Minsk – Klaipeda. The merchandise exports of the region are cement and construction materials, tyres, chemical fibres and threads, motors and generators, clothing, various polymers, plastics, steel pipes and agricultural machines. The most famous brands of the Mogilev region – "Belshina" (automobile and tractor tires, Bobruisk), "Mogilevliftmash" (elevator equipment), Mogilevkhimvolokno" (synthetic fibers), "Mogotex" (textiles), "Babushkina Krynka" (dairy products) (Mogilev). Key foreign trade partner of the region is the Russian Federation (69,0% of exports). The region has a small volume of exports with EU countries, which are gradually being reduced. However, in recent years the share of Kazakhstan (6.4%) and Ukraine (4.9%) has increased to 6.7 % and 7.3%.

The most powerful economic potential among regions has Minsk-city. Minsk has a fairly good transport-geographical position: here the largest railways and roads of the Republic (the trans-european transport corridors № 2 and the branch № 9B) are crossed and the most comprehensive infrastructure for foreign trade (commodity exchange, National Bank, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and so on) is situated. Diversified industry provides the production of a wide range of products. At the same time the highest share of machinery in the commodity structure of Belarusian regions exports is in Minsk. In the current situation the world market demand for this type of production is the most unstable and largely determined by the price and quality indicators. The world economic crisis has given a new look at the competitiveness of machine building products produced in Belarus. In these conditions many enterprises could not withstand the competition and output started accumulated in warehouses. Therefore exports of machine building products was determined in many respects the dynamics of the territorial structure of foreign trade of Minsk. The key products of the region include trucks, tractors, buses, utility vehicles, petroleum products, refrigerators and freezers, internal combustion engines and components to automobile and agricultural machinery, medicines, building materials, etc. The most well-known brands of Minsk are MAZ (car dumpers, truck tractors, buses), "MTZ" (tractors), "Atlant" (refrigerators and freezers, various household appliances), "Gorizont" (television equipment), "MMZ" (diesel engines), "Belkommunmash" (communal machinery), "Serge", "Milavitsa" (underwear), "Belita-Vitex" (cosmetics), "Keramin" (sanitary ceramics).

The combination of the factors that were mentioned above determines the territorial peculiarities of exports of Minsk. Due to the problems with sales of machine-building production the share of the Russian Federation in the export of the region is the lowest (23,0%) which was gradually reduced last years. The increase of the share of EU countries is due to the beginning of oil products trade produced in Novopolotsk and Mozyr through the Belarusian commodity exchange and individual traders. Therefore significantly increased the share of such countries as the Netherlands, Latvia, Italy. The growth of the share of Ukraine in exports is also associated with increased sales of petroleum products, as well as increasing sales of products machinery on its territory. The share of the remaining countries in the exports of Minsk remains insignificant.

CONCLUSION

From the key tendencies that determine the dynamics of Belarusian regions exports can be distinguished next ones:

- reduction of the share of the Russian Federation in almost all regions, which coincides with republic trend; in the basis of this trend is the decrease of demand for Belarusian goods, conditioned by the growth of competition from Russian, Chinese and Western European manufacturers;
- increase of the share of several European countries in exports due to the restructuring of the commodity structure of exports; the major part of the Belarusian oil and oil products sell in the Netherlands, Germany, Latvia, Italy and the United Kingdom;
- the current territorial structure of foreign trade is quite stable; further transformations are possible if the problems with sales of the Belarusian machinery goods are saved. In this connection it can be more actively entering of Belarusian goods to the markets of Asia, South America and Africa.

On the whole the geographical structure of Belarusian exports has formed, but it is possible the subsequent transformation taking into account the establishment of the Eurasian Economic Union. The main foreign trade partner for export remains the Russian Federation, but at the same time the role of the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Ukraine, Latvia, Brazil in the Belarusian exports has grown.

The main risks for the development of the Belarusian exports are:

- sustainability of economic growth of the Russian economy, which accounts for the bulk of trade turnover;
- normalization of the situation in Ukraine, which market is the third most important for exporters;
- perspectives of political and economic relations with EU countries, which are also the major consumers of Belarusian goods;
- solving the issue of Belarus joining the World Trade Organization (WTO), which has already included the Russian Federation and plans to join the Republic of Kazakhstan – partners of Belarus in the Customs Union and the Single Economic Space.

Further changes in the geographic structure of foreign trade will occur within its territorial differentiation and will be caused by the sharing of benefits from the development of relations in the framework of the Common economic space and the emerging Eurasian Economic Union.

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