



UNIVERSIDAD  
DE MÁLAGA

**DOCTORAL THESIS**

**THE ROLE OF THE MODELS OF STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP IN THE  
NEW WORLD ORDER. EURO-RUSSIAN RELATIONS AND THE  
EURASIAN ECONOMIC UNION IN STRATEGIC PERSPECTIVE**

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## Programa de Doctorado en Economía y Empresa

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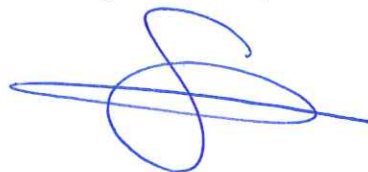
Por la presente, en primer lugar, el director Dr. Pablo Podadera Rivera y el tutor Dr. Salvador Pérez Moreno, de la tesis doctoral titulada "The role of the Models of Strategic Partnership in the New World Order. Euro-Russian Relations and the Eurasian Economic Union in Strategic Perspective" elaborada por Anna Garashchuk, con la que se aspira al grado de DOCTORA con mención internacional por la Universidad de Málaga, informan que dicha tesis ha sido realizada bajo su supervisión para la lectura y defensa en la Facultad de Ciencias Económicas y Empresariales de la Universidad de Málaga.

En segundo lugar, el director Dr. Pablo Podadera Rivera y el tutor Dr. Salvador Pérez Moreno, informan que los artículos principales que avalan la presente tesis que son: "Heterogeneity of the European Union's Strategic Partners: Can They Still Be Compatible?", aceptado para la publicación en *European Review* y "Strategic Partner's Attractiveness Index for the European Union. Can the Eurasian Economic Union headed by Russia become strategic partner for the EU?", aceptado para la publicación en la *Revista de Economía Mundial*, no han sido usados para avalar tesis anteriores.

Málaga, 30 de mayo de 2019



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## ABSTRACT

*Before the conflict in Ukraine, the EU-Russian relationship was developing in the format of a Strategic Partnership, and Russia was in fact already considered to be one of the EU's ten strategic partners. However, the main problem of this emerging concept of European Union Foreign Policy was that there was neither an official definition of strategic partnership nor any common criteria for being chosen as a strategic partner.*

*It is worth mentioning that before the crisis in Ukraine, Russia had not only developed a sense of integration with the European Union but had also promoted the same idea with regard to post-Soviet land space, and as a result the Eurasian Economic Union was created. Thus, when discussing EU-Russian relations we should take into account the new Actor on the international arena, the Eurasian Economic Union.*

*The present doctoral thesis, composed of three independent chapters, represents a kind of trilogy where each segment has a life of its own consisting of a specific object of research, specific objectives, hypothesis, methodology and conclusions. However, they are united by the same goal of elaborating a conceptual model of strategic partners' election to the EU, and on the basis of this model and Gravity Models to prove the rationality of establishment of a strategic partnership between the European Union and the Eurasian Economic Union from the economic, political, social, and cultural points of view.*

*The first chapter aims at analyzing the phenomenon of strategic partnership together with the EU's concept of strategic partnership, to offer a comprehensive definition of the term 'strategic partnership', to suggest key factors affecting the election of the EU's strategic partners; and on the basis of principals components obtained in this research to construct a Binary Logistic Model of Strategic Partners Election for the EU. In order to compare the results obtained by this model the research has been completed by the addition the following techniques: synthetic index and cluster analysis.*

*The second chapter aims at analysing if the strategic partnership between the EU and Russia failed in 2014, together with other factors, such as parties' GDPs per capita, distance between them, devaluation of Russian currency, sanctions and oil prices have had an impact on their bilateral trade. This investigation was carried out by applying the Gravity Model.*

*The third chapter aims at researching the new Eurasian project on the post - Soviet space - the Eurasian Economic Union - with a view to propose a strategic partnership with the EU. Applying the technique of the Gravity Model, we discovered not only which factors influence foreign trade cooperation with various integration blocks but also analysed those groups of countries aimed*

*at deciding which partners the Eurasian Economic Union should develop strategic partnerships with.*

*Finally we provide a series of conclusions obtained from the three chapters on the basis of empirical analysis where we justify the necessity for establishing a strategic partnership between the European and Eurasians Economic Unions. Furthermore, in accordance with these conclusions a range of limitations and future lines of research has been highlighted.*

## Acknowledgments

*Success is not final, failure is not fatal:  
it is the courage to continue that counts.*

*Winston Churchill*

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# INTRODUCTION

## 1. Antecedents and Context

Strategic partnership occupies a special position in contrast to other types of foreign relations. Even though the term is increasingly used in international documents, negotiations, scientific literature and the press, a satisfying and fully coherent ‘working definition’ for its use has not yet been precisely established (Kim, 2012).

In order to research the phenomenon of strategic partnership and the EU’s interpretation of the term we have examined the articles and works of the following main authors, among many others: Biscop, S. and Renard, T.; Blanco L.; Gratius, S.; Grevi, S.; Kay, S.; Kim, G.; Lessa, A. C; Quevedo Flores, J. A.

Speaking about the European concept of strategic partnership it should be mentioned that there is neither a clear definition of philosophy (Jain, 2008; Renard, 2010) nor any hardfast manual of criteria to follow for being chosen as one of the EU’s strategic partners. However, the EU has nevertheless awarded the special status of strategic partnership to ten countries including Russia (see Figure 1).

**Figure 1. Map of EU’s Ten Strategic Partners**



Source: Garcia Toni J. (2012), p. 21

It is worth mentioning that the EU tries to institutionalize and legitimize the Strategic Partnership with its partners. Nevertheless, while the EU's partners increasingly work directly with EU institutions, the Treaty of Lisbon and other EU innovations have done little to diminish the EU's institutional complexity and to facilitate the collaboration with the EU as with a coherent and united actor on the international stage. Thus, despite continual institutional rejigging in Brussels, at the end of the day all policy-making in the EU still depends on the consent of member states, and as the result, the EU's strategic partners have to develop strong bilateral relationships with individual EU member states. In this regard, Hamilton (2010) draws attention to ex USA Secretary Clinton's remark towards its European colleagues that the system was designed in such way that it was impossible to have strategic dialogue.

Although Blanco (2016) suggests focusing on strategic partnership functions rather than on its definition, in our research we have felt obliged to give our own operative definition of this phenomenon with a view to supplying the term with indicators which will allow us to measure it. The innovativeness of our research consists in the fact that at the moment there is neither any model nor any empirical framework for selecting UE's strategic partners. Thus, on the basis of categories and indicators proposed by European Strategic Partnership Observations (ESPO) (2012) led by Grevi. Gratius (2011) and some other significant factors, a conceptual model for strategic partnership election by the EU has been proposed. Accordingly, the model has been tested by regional integration organizations including the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) with the purpose of justifying the feasibility of strategic partnership between the EU and the EAEU, taking into account the interdependencies in their geopolitical, geostrategic and energy dimensions.

Even though Mogherini (2016) announced that Russia is no longer EU's strategic partner and the European Council decided to suspend talks on a new EU-Russian Strategic Partnership Agreement due to the situation in Ukraine, according to Voynikov (2015) the freezing of relations did not mean the cancellation of common projects. Voynikov went on to define the current EU-Russia 'cooperation' as a 'forced strategic partnership', concluding that the partnership between them continues to exist – "but in a frozen state."

In order to research the EU-Russia strategic partnership and reasons of its failure we have examined the articles and works of the following main authors, among many others: Blanco L.; De la Cámara Hermoso, M; Haluani, M.; Lavrov, S.; Libman, A; Voynikov V.

Voynikov highlights the five key issues in current EU-Russian relations:

- The Negotiation of a new EU-Russian Strategic Agreement
- The visa issues

- EU-Russia energy dialogue
- Settlement of the Ukraine crisis
- The new architecture of relations due to creation the EAEU

Regarding this last point, it should be mentioned that since the collapse of the USSR the Russian Federation has been promoting integration not only with the European Union but also with countries that formerly constituted the old Soviet bloc and now form the Post-Soviet area. As a result, the EAEU was created with the view of becoming a kind of efficient bridge between European and Asian parts of the Eurasian continent. Thus, when talking about Euro-Russian relations it would be more reasonable to analyze them taking into account the EAEU.

Nowadays the EAEU is made up of five member-states (see Figure 2).

**Figure 2. Map of the EAEU Member-States.**



Source: Posted by [China Briefing](#), Dezan Shira & Associates, 2018.



In the real world, two main approaches to integration in the former Soviet area can be highlighted: some political powers, especially European and North American, consider it as a process of expansion of Russian hegemony and restoration of the USSR; others define it as open regionalism of neighbouring countries. In order to research the relationship with countries of the EAEU both among themselves and with members of the EU, we have examined books and articles of the following authors, among others: Bond, I.; Dragneva, R.; Erokhin, V.; Kirkham, K.; Kuzmina, E.; Limban, L.; Satpayev, D.; Sivickiy, A.; Vasiliva, A.; Vinokurov, E.

However, it is obvious that the EAEU has to find strategic partners for its own future development, taking into consideration its small number of members and the weak economies of some member-states. Erokhin (2014) stresses that today BRICS seems to be the only alternative for the EAUU but we argue that Russia and the EAEU would better off renewing and reintegrating its relationship with the European Union, taking into account the common commercial interests, necessity for advanced technologies and the modernization of its economies, as well as its infrastructure, geographic proximity and common historical-cultural roots.

As our thesis aims at proving the feasibility of a strategic partnership between the EU and the EAEU not only for the benefit of the EU but for the EAEU as well, we decided to test the Gravity Model which allowed us to discover potential partners among integration groups including the EU for the EAEU based on common economic interests, taking into consideration the articles of the following authors: Borodin, K. and Stokov, A.; Thi Thanh D. *et al.*; Chernov, N.

In addition, it is worth mentioning such global geostrategic and geo-economic issues as the role of strategic partnership, regional integration organizations, and international institutions in the new multipolar world order; the distribution of forces in the international stage, and the role of emerging powers; and a comparison of strategic partnership with regional integration among others. All of these considerations have joined to form the overall thrust of our thesis. In order to research such important global issues we have examined books and articles of the following authors among others: Brzezinski, Z.; Bull, H.; Filipovic, M.; Hernandez, U. *et al.*; Peña, F.

The new stage of development of the world order can be characterized as transitory. After the disappearance of the bipolar world system, the concept of multipolarity has not acquired clear features yet. However, no matter in which direction the international system will develop, the position of the EAEU and the EU in the international hierarchy nevertheless depends on the realization of its economic, military and demographic potential and its resources. In this regard, the fact that the EU and Russia both are in favor of a multipolar system can be a starting point towards convergence on the means of renewed cooperation and constructive engagement that is in every party's interest. In EU's documents the term "efficient multipolarity" is presented and the common

position is formulated in the European Security Strategy of 2003: “In a world of global threats, global markets and global information media, our security and prosperity depend on the existence of an effective system based on multilateralism. We have as a goal to create a stronger global community with effective institutions and to operate according to the rules of the new world order. In the strategy of National Security of Russia to 2020, it is said that “National interests of the Russian Federation in the long term are concluded in the transformation of the Russian Federation into a world power whose actions serve to support a foundation of strategic stability and relationships of mutual benefits with its partners in a multipolar world”.

Thus, the positions of the EU and Russia concerning what should be the new world order largely concur, and this common desire to translate the principles of multipolarity into reality could provide a strong reason for joining forces in the future despite their current opposition and disagreement about what might be the best approach toward international security and other global issues.

It cannot be ignored that the EU and Russia are powerful players on the regional and global level. The destiny of all Eurasia depends on their relationship: will there be integration between the countries of the EU and the EAEU (led by the Russia) – or will irreconcilable differences potentially leading to a final separation emerge?

## **2. Structure and Objectives**

The thesis is made up of three interrelated Chapters. In the First Chapter we have analysed the phenomenon of strategic partnership in the new world order and the EU’s concept of strategic partnership, with a view to elaborate on a conceptual model of strategic partner election for the EU. The purpose of this Chapter was to prove the feasibility of a strategic partnership between the EU and the EAEU – emphasizing the position of the EU.

In the Second Chapter we analysed the EU-Russia relationship in the changing context of the strategic partnership, which the parties had developed before the crisis in Ukraine and then their relations after the annexation of Crimea, when mutual sanctions were imposed.

In the Third Chapter the EAEU was analysed together with its relationships with the EU. In this Chapter the purpose was to point out the EAEU’s potential partners and to demonstrate the feasibility of a strategic partnership between the EU and the EAEU from the standpoint of the EAEU.

The objectives of the thesis are shown in Table 1.

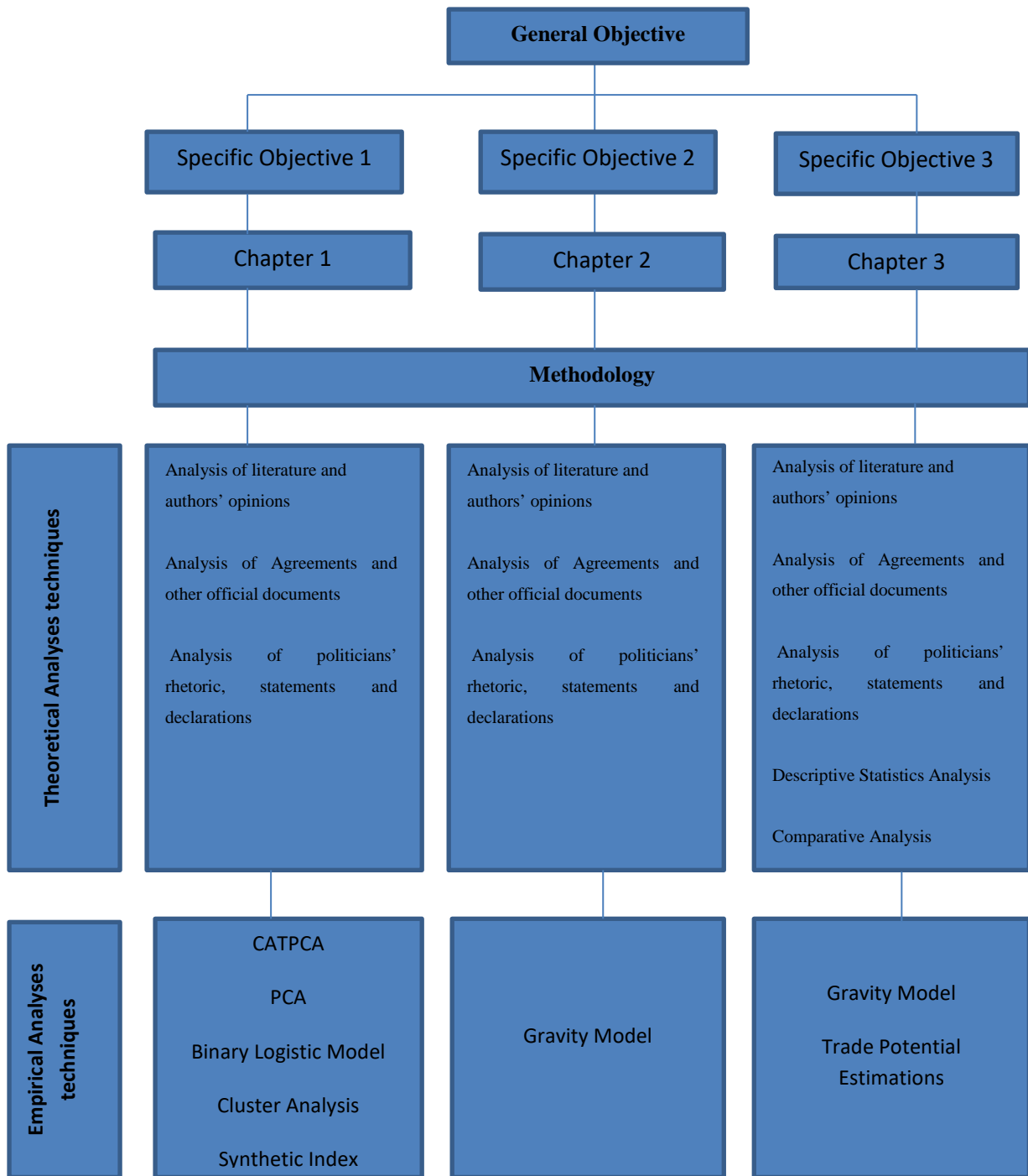
**Table 1. Research Objectives**

<b>General Objective</b>	To elaborate the conceptual model of strategic partners election for the EU and on the basis of this model and Gravity Models to prove the rationality of establishment of a strategic partnership between the European Union and the Eurasian Economic Union from the economic, political, social, and cultural points of view.
<b>Specific objectives:</b>	
Specific Objective 1	To research the phenomenon of the strategic partnership in international relations, its role in the new world order and to analyse the concept of the European Union’s strategic partnership and its “special ten” giving our own operational definition of the strategic partnership with a view to flesh out the term with indicators and propose the conceptual model of strategic partners election for the EU.
Specific Objective 2	To research the EU-Russian relationship in a format of strategic partnerships and in the context of the sanction war with a view to estimate the effect of strategic partnership together with other factors such as market size, distance, sanctions, oil prices, exchange rates on its bilateral trade.
Specific Objective 3	To research the EAEU as a new actor on the international stage and its relations with the EU and other regional organizations and groups of countries with a view to point out its potential partners and also estimate the effect of market size, distance, sanction, oil prices, difference in value on its bilateral trade with commercial partners.

Source: Own Elaboration

The thesis consists of an introduction, three chapters, conclusions and bibliography. Its main part, i.e. three chapters, in coherence with objectives and methodology is shown in Figure 3.

**Figure 3. Chapters in Coherence with Objectives and Methodology**



Source: Own Elaboration

The more detailed information about the methodology is described in next heading.



### 3. Methodology

In our thesis both positive and normative approaches were applied. The positive approach served to explain things as they really are, and we planned to use it with a view to analyzing the actual situation of the European Union's conception of strategic partnership including its relations with Russia and a new political and economic actor - the EAEU - on the international stage.

The normative approach was crucial for our research because it is based on the elaboration of some ideal model of political or economic organization and its realization in practice. Its main advantage is that the basis of such an approach is the human ideal that defines the spirit of political action oriented towards the commonwealth. The disadvantage of normative approach occurs in its idealization of political and economic reality, failing to take into account the fact that, in practice, governmental policy does not necessarily result in actions designed for the greater good of the commonwealth. This approach tends, in effect, to distract us from the selfish motivation and opportunistic behavior of many political actors. Moreover, some conceptions are purely subjective and depend on such dubious factors as social status, ideology, and particular, of idiosyncratic features of every state, nation, political leader or citizen. In International Policy Studies the normative approach takes the part of a theoretical approach called "the idealism" or "the utopianism" in scientific literature (Edward, 2001). However, despite the disadvantages mentioned above, the normative approach brings into Political Economy its ethics-based origin and tries to humanize the whole. In our research we will also take into account the EU's 'values' which are on the one hand said to be highly important for European-Union's leaders but which on the other were mostly ignored during the selection of "special ten strategic partners".

In the 21st century the institutional approach – defined by the power of institutions and international organisms – is used with increasing frequency. According to Morgan *et al.* (2014) the rise of neo-institutionalism in organization studies is part of a wider turn toward institutionalism across the social sciences. Neo-institutionalism focuses on survey of institutions, characterized as places where different social actors carry out their practices and based on the following core promises: methodological individualism; limitation of human intelligence; opportunistic behavior introduced by Williamson (1993), who characterized it as self-interest-seeking-with-guile; comparison of existing and inefficient institutions with alternative institutions which are run efficiently. In 1996 Hall and Taylor discussed three types of institutionalism, and more recently V. Schmidt (2008, 2010) and others (Hay (2006), Blyth (2002)) added a fourth type (discursive or constructivist institutionalism), which arises from, in Schmidt's words (2010), 'taking ideas and discourse seriously', p.1. Ideas refer to a wide range of ideational factors such as ideology, collective

beliefs, values, norms, worldviews and identities (Morgan *et al.*, 2014). In our research the variables related to such international political institutions as the UN, international economic institutions such as WTO, IMF, military alliances such as NATO, informal political clubs such as BRICS, G8, and G20. The institutional-juridical base that the EU has established with their partners was included.

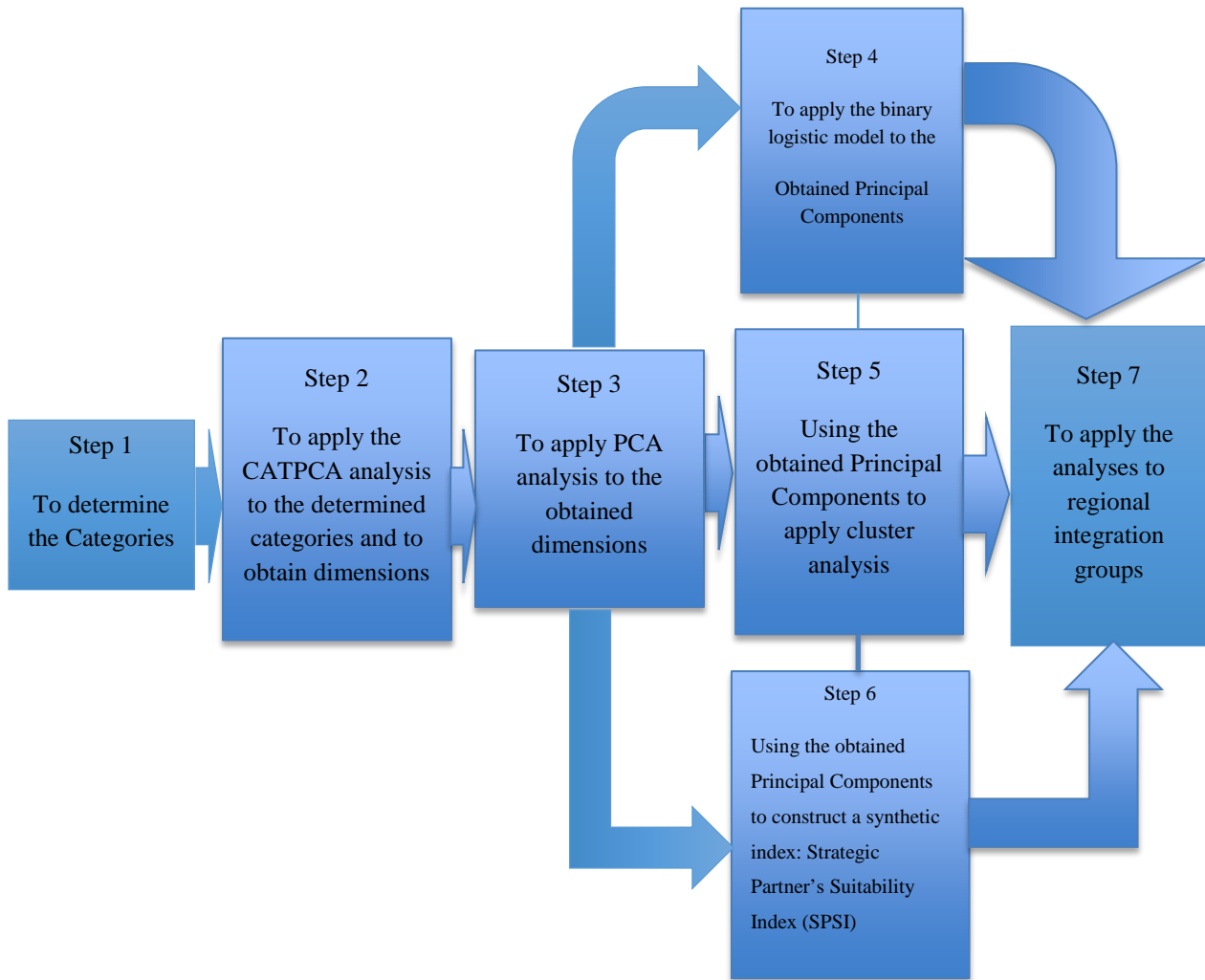
Moreover as neo-institutionalism focuses on a survey of institutions, characterized as places where different social actors carry out their practices and assumes the comparison of existing efficient and inefficient institutions, this approach was applied in our research in order to analyse the EAEU's institutions and to compare them with those of the EU.

It is worth mentioning that in our research both theoretical and empirical methods were applied. Regarding the theoretical, we would like to highlight the following:

- Analysis of literature and authors' opinions
- Analysis of Agreements and other official documents
- Analysis of descriptive statistics data
- Comparative analysis
- Analysis of politicians' rhetoric, statements and declarations

As for empirical techniques, while observing the literature relating to our theme we found a small number of works, which offered a model of strategic partners related to the relationship between countries. The indicators presented in the debate on strategic partnership do not seem to be convincing (Gratius, 2011a). However, in the first chapter, on the basis of indicators proposed by the European Strategic Partnerships Observatory (ESPO) and some other indicators which were added with a regard for relevant literature about strategic partnership and EU' official documents, several empirical techniques were utilized (see Figure 4.).

**Figure 4. Scheme of Empirical Analyses Step by Step for the First Chapter.**



Source: Own Elaboration

Our research was completed by analyses of the EAEU and Euro-Russian relationship in the format of strategic partnership. In the second chapter, in order to estimate the impact of the strategic partnership together with other important factors such as market size, distance, oil prices, exchange rates and sanctions on bilateral trade between Russia and the EU, the Gravity Model, which has been used as a workhorse for analysing the determinants of bilateral trade flows (Head and Mayer, 2013), was applied.

In the third chapter we also applied the Gravity Model in order to estimate Integration Blocks' Gravity Effects on bilateral trade with the EAEU together with other factors such as market size, distance, sanctions, oil prices, economic freedom and difference in values, which could have an

impact on the EAEU's trade with its partners. Moreover, on the basis of the Gravity Model, estimates of the trade potential for the integration blocks were calculated.

Thus, by applying the technique of the Gravity Model not only did we find out which factors influence EAEU's bilateral trade, but also we were able to conduct our analysis of foreign trade cooperation with various integration blocks and groups of countries aimed at discerning which partners the EAEU should develop strategic partnerships with.

#### **4. Process of elaboration**

The elaboration of the thesis was a long and laborious process that included the following activities:

- Assistance of different Courses, Seminars and Workshops with view to get theoretical and empirical knowledge necessary to elaborate the thesis
- Internships abroad with a view to improve research and language skills
- Participation in International Conferences with a view to and receive feedback from other researchers and improve our research
- Publication of articles with a view to spread the results of our research, enrich academic CV and fulfil the requirements in PhD program in Economics and Business, Universidad de Málaga, Spain

##### **4.1. Courses, Seminars and Workshops**

During the elaboration of the thesis the following Courses, Seminars and Workshops were attended:

- Seminar “Modelos de duración” (4 hours)
- Seminar “Modelos de elección discreta” (4 hours)
- Seminar “La metodología socio-técnica MACBETH de apoyo multicriterio a la decisión” (1.5 hours)
- Course “Introducción al uso de STATA en la Estimación de Modelos Económicos” (10 hours)
- Seminars organized by PhD Program in Economics and Business (7 hours)
- Workshop “How to Design a Successful Dissertation” (2 hours)
- Course “Introducción a los modelos de variable dependiente cualitativa con STATA” (2 hours)



- Course “Introducción a los Modelos de Datos Panel” (2 hours)
- Seminar “Economía del Medio Ambiente” (1.5 hours)
- Seminar “Economía de los Recursos Naturales” (1.5 hours)
- Seminar “Recomendación en entornos Web basada en modelos de decisión participativa” (1.5 hours)
- Seminar “International Economics: Selected Topics” (1.5 hours)
- Course “II Curso de Aplicación de la Política de Competencia de la Unión Europea” (6 hours)
- Course “Jornadas "Otra economía está en marcha"” (25 hours)
- Conference “Financial Stability and Public Intervention” (2 days conference)
- Seminar “La Sostenibilidad desde una perspectiva Multicriterio (1.5 hours)
- Seminar “Corporate Finance: Current Trends in Research and Policy” (11 hours)
- Seminar “Teoría e Interpretación de los modelos Probit y Logit” (6 hours)
- Course “Curso de especialización en estrategias de competitividad” (6 credits)
- Seminar “A Policy Mix of Equality-Led Development and Public Investment”, University of Greenwich, London (1.5 hours)
- Seminar "Will Austerity Work?", City University, London (1.5 hours)
- Seminar “Trade off Flexibility-Stability in the Eurozone”, London School of Economics, University of London (1.5 hours)
- Seminar “Central Banking and Crises” (3 hours)

Courses for improving English skills:

- Course “Comunicación Oral” (60 hours)
- Course “Inglés para la Docencia” (40 hours)
- Course “Inglés Académico” (60 hours)

#### **4.2. Internships abroad**

During the thesis elaboration two internships were undergone, three months duration each of them. The first one took place in Cambridge University (from 09.03.2016 till 09.06.2016) under the supervision of Dr. Philip Arestis (Department of Land Economy). The main objective of that internship was to move forward with empirical framework of the First Chapter and to improve academic English for writing articles. During the internship was written the paper “Conceptual

Model of Strategic Partner's Attractiveness for the EU. Can the Eurasian Economic Union headed by Russia become strategic partner for the European Union?", which was presented in "Conference Developments in Economic Theory and Policy". Moreover, we started working on the elaboration of the first article "Strategic Partner Election: Proposal for a Binary Logistic Model for the EU". In addition, it is worth mentioning that during the stay in University of Cambridge several seminars were assisted.

The second internship took place in University of National and World Economy in Sofia, Bulgaria (from 01.10.2018-31.12.2018) under the supervision of Dr. Paskal Zhelev. The main objective of the internship is to finish designing the thesis and writing the article The Eurasian Economic Union in Search of Strategic Partners: Integration Blocks' Gravity Effects. Moreover, it was given the lecture "The Eurasian Economic Union on the International Stage" for students in Global Business Master.

### 4.3 Conferences

During the elaboration of the thesis we participated in the following International Conferences:

- On June 27 of 2014 in the 11th International Conference Developments in Economic Theory and Policy, which took place in Bilbao, the paper titled "Euro-Russian relationship and Eurasian Union in Strategic Key" was presented
- On June 23 of 2016 in the 13th International Conference Developments in Economic Theory and Policy, which took place in Bilbao, the paper titled "Conceptual Model of Strategic Partner's Attractiveness for the EU. Can the Eurasian Economic Union headed by Russia become strategic partner for the European Union?" was presented.
- On May 11 of 2017 in the International Conference World Economy Meeting XIX, which took place in Huelva, the paper "Strategic Partnership in New Multipolar World Order: European Union's 'Three-Step Strategy'" was presented.
- On June 22 of 2018 in XIV Simposio Hispano-Ruso Retos Actuales para las Políticas Económicas y Sociales de Rusia y España, which took place in Sevilla, the paper "Europa y Rusia en el Contexto de la Guerra de Sanciones: las Consecuencias del Fracaso de Asociación Estratégica en las Relaciones Hispano-Rusas" was presented.
- On July 4 of 2018 in ASPELT 2018: XXXII International Conference of Applied Economics, which took place in Huelva, the paper "Strategic Partnership in New Multipolar World

Order: European Union’s ‘Three-Step Strategy’. Theory and Empirical Evidence in the European Union from Multidimensional Approach” was presented.

#### 4.4. Publications

During the elaboration of the thesis were written several articles: some of them are published or accepted for publication while the others are still in the process of sending to journals or looking for answer (see Table 2.)

**Table 2. Articles Balance**

Number	Article	Journal and Indexing	Present Situation	Thesis Chapter
1.	“Heterogeneity of the European Union’s Strategic Partners: Can They Still Be Compatible?”	European Review (Indexed: JCR; SSCI; Scopus; ASSIA; ERIHPLUS) Impact Factor JCR 0.434 in 2017	Accepted for Publication	1
2.	“Conception of the strategic partnership between the European Union and the Russia Federation. Reasons of its failure.”	Atlantic Review of Economics, (Indexed in ABI/INFORM, EconLit, DOAJ )	Published	2
3.	“The Eurasian Economic Union: Prospective Regional Integration in the Post-Soviet Space or just Geopolitical Project?”	Eastern Journal of European Studies (EJES) (Indexed Scopus; EBSCO; Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI); Index Copernicus; Open J Gate; RePEc; Social Sciences; Information Space; Ulrichsweb	Published	3
4.	“The Eurasian Economic Union and its potential relationship with the European Union.”	Revista Universitaria Europea (RUE) (Indexed: Erihplus, Latindex, EBSCO, DICE, ISOC, resh, Dialnet, Compludoc)	Published	3
5.	“Strategic Partner’s Attractiveness Index for the European Union. Can the Eurasian Economic Union headed by Russia become strategic partner for the EU?”	Revista de Economía Mundial (indexed JCR)	Accepted for Publication	1 and 3
6.	“Strategic Partner Election: Proposal For a Binary Logistic Model For the EU”	Asia Europe Journal (indexed JCR)	In the process of sending to journals and	1

			looking for answer	
7.	The Eurasian Economic Union in Search of Strategic Partners: Integration Blocks' Gravity Effects	Asia Europe Journal (indexed JCR)	In the process of sending to journals and looking for answer	3
	- Published			
	- Accepted			
	- In the process of sending to journals or looking for answer			

Source: Own Elaboration

Moreover, it is worth mentioning that at the end of 2018 on the basis of the second chapter of the present doctoral thesis, in book titled “España y Rusia: políticas económicas y sociales”, Moscú, ILA RAN, ISBN 978-5-6040484-4-3, it was published the chapter “Europa y Rusia en la guerra de sanciones: las consecuencias del fracaso de asociación estratégica”, pages 119-132.

## **CHAPTER 1.**

**Strategic Partnership in New Multipolar World Order: European Union's  
'Three Step Strategy'. Theory and Empirical Evidence in the European Union  
from a multidimensional approach.**

## 1. Introduction

The new stage of development of the World Order can be characterized as transitory. For the most states, multilateralism is becoming the principle of their foreign policy. The developing countries try to carve more power from the international system by means of collaborations within a lower degree of formalization and institutionalization ‘G groups’ or the BRICS group and by means of bilateral, regional and inter-regional cooperation. The ‘strategic partnerships’, not necessarily being informal and relying upon low institutionalized relationships, seem to match with this new scenario. Thus, it is no wonder that for many powerful Agents, including the EU, such strategic partnerships have become an important bilateral means of fostering international cooperation form over the past decade.

It is worth mentioning that the adoption of the European Security Strategy was a significant step in the Common Foreign and Security Policy given that it was the first time when the EU officially defined the threats to its security. In this document the perceived necessity of turning into the ‘Global Actor’ of World Security was reflected, along with the need for collaboration with other core Actors, inasmuch as there was no country that would be able to solve global problems alone. It mandates that “The threats which we share with our closest partners are common. International cooperation is imperative. There is a need for our objectives to be pursued by means of multilateral cooperation in the international organizations and partnerships with key Agents” (European Council, 2003, p. 13).

Thus, the strategic partnership was considered as a tool for achieving effective multilateralism and, subsequently, the status of strategic partner was awarded to ten countries: Canada, Japan, USA, Brazil, China, India, Russia, Mexico, South Korea and South Africa. Nevertheless, these partners are unequal in size, political perspective and practice, and resource endowments. Some of them are traditional partners from the Post-Second World War bilateral system such as Canada, Japan and the USA, while the others are emerging countries, labelled as BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa). Some of them are global powers such as the USA, China and Russia, while the others are regional powers. However, despite these differences, the EU is applying a common strategy toward them all by launching common action plans, establishing multidimensional cooperation at every level, developing the institutional and juridical bases, and coordinating frequent summits.

The main objective of this Chapter is to research the phenomenon of the strategic partnership in international relations, its role in the new world order and to analyse the concept of the European Union’s strategic partnership and its “special ten” giving our own operational definition of the

strategic partnership with a view to flesh out the term with indicators and propose the conceptual model of strategic partners election for the EU.

Within the theoretical framework of our research the Strategic Partnership in New Multipolar World Order was analysed (under the first heading) and the EU's conception of Strategic Partnership was investigated (under the second heading).

Within the empirical framework we have carried out research in 143 viable countries and, thus, our research is not limited just to the EU's 'Special Ten'. Moreover, consequently, the six regional integration organizations, including the EAEU, were added in the analysis. In line with this framework first the Categorical Principal Component Analysis was applied; second, the traditional Principal Component Analysis was applied; third, the Binary Logistic Model was tested; fourth, the Strategic Partner's Suitability Index (SPSI) was elaborated; fifth, the Cluster Analysis was applied.

The originality of this research consists in the fact that until now there have been neither specific criteria nor any models for the election of the EU's strategic partners, nor an official definition of strategic partnership. Thus, on the basis of this this research not only do we aim to prove that in spite of political crises in EU-Russian relationships Russia continues being its core partner and the EAEU is strategically important for the EU, but also offer methodology for choosing EU's strategic partners with a view to make its choice more science-based applied to empirical evidence.

## **2. Strategic Partnership in New Multipolar World Order**

In this heading we analyse the term of strategic partnership in new multipolar world order. By starting with its definition and finishing with different interpretation of the term that leads to misunderstanding between partners, the idea is to give our own definition in order to consequently fill it up with indicators.

### **2. 1. Origins and Definition of Strategic Partnership**

Strategic Partnership occupies a special position in terms of international documents, negotiations, scientific literature and in the media; it has not been researched completely in the social sciences. Strategic partnership is for all intents and purposes, post-Cold War phenomenon. Thus, according to Kay (2000), the term first appeared in the continents of Europe and Asia, which had been forced to react to the end of the 'bipolar order' (brought on by the collapse of

the USSR), developing new strategies for communicating with the ‘unique superpower’ (now the USA). Following Sangtu (2006), “While the United States uses strategic partnerships to widen its influence and strengthen its unipolar primacy, China and Russia exploit them to aggregate their respective influence and pursue a multi-polarity, as they share an interest in enhancing their political role in the international arena” (p. 208). However, usually the term just signifies the establishment of long-term friendly relations in the commercial field and economic contacts between governments, and is used to refer to “the most favored nation treatment” (Kim, 2012, p. 40).

According to Renard (2010), “There is not any official definition of what is meant by strategic partners” (p. 18). Jain (2008), in his turn, argued even before Renard, that despite the fact that the label had been frequently used in the past there was not any official definition of strategic partnership. Nevertheless, some scholars who have studied this phenomenon have given the examples of the term being used in in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and have tried to formulate their own definitions regarding Strategic Partnership.

Thus, for instance, Lessa (2010) maintains that this concept can have a clear definition and that Brazil has been implementing strategic partnerships since the 1970s. While discussing the use of this expression in the context of Brazilian foreign policy, he argues that ‘Strategic Partnerships’ are “priority political and economic relations, reciprocally compensatory, established on the basis of an accumulation of bilateral relations of a universal nature” (Lessa, 1998, p. 119). But the main problem with Lessa’s (op. cit.) argument is the fact that he assumes that the old cooperation agreements of the past were the same as the strategic partnerships which we observe today.

Ismael and Kreutz (2001) stress that the Soviet-Iraqi cooperation in the 1980s was officially called ‘Strategic Partnership’. Hubbell (1999), argues that former 1990s Secretary of State Madeine Allbright, used the term ‘Strategic Cooperation’ and ‘Strategic Partnership’ to address the USA-China relationship and that her choice of words supposedly caused some concern to other Asian partners of the USA.

Emerson (2001) understands strategic partnership as a kind of relationship, which “involves two actors that are powerful and capable of taking strategic action together” (p. 45), but does not discuss what strategic action means.

Routledge Encyclopedia of Political Economy Eds. Barry Jones (2001) defines a strategic partnership between states as a political instrument to facilitate the intensification of the economic relationship between the parts involved. In this regard, Peña (2010) draws attention to some of the confusion that exists between what is meant by an agreement on strategic partnership and what an agreement on commercial preferences consists of.

Maihold (2010), for example, studies the significance of the two words of the term by



analyzing them separately. So, following his logic, the 'Partnership' is a cultural ideal for the collective form of the relationship, and the Strategy is based on cooperation between (economic) agents that have decided to produce something together in order to achieve common objectives. Ultimately, such cooperation means arriving at common benefits and success for both parties. Nevertheless, Grevi (2010) considers that all definitions of 'Strategic Partnership', based on the division of its significance in terms of 'Partnership' and 'Strategic', still fail to encompass completely the political reality. Following Grevi's definition of the term:

“Strategic partnerships are those that both parties regard as essential to achieve their basic goals. This is because the cooperation of strategic partners can lead to win-win games and, conversely, because such partners are those who could inflict most harm to one another were relations to turn sour. (...) Strategic partnerships are therefore important bilateral means to pursue core goals. As such, they may concern pivotal global but also regional actors. What matters is that they deliver” (p.3).

Gupta and Azad (2011) define a strategic partnership as a long-term interaction between two countries based on political, economic, social and historical factors.

Quevedo Flores (2012) argues that the concept of Strategic Partnership in general terms can be defined as an alliance between two or more States, aimed at mutual benefits based on identification of cooperating synergies between both parties. They also stress that Strategic Partnerships are comprehensive and do not fragment into specialized endeavours involving just one economic, political or security theme, and this is vital given that the crucial interests of the parties are immersed in all of these different fields combined. Thus, Quevedo Flores (op. cit.) highlights the necessity of a multidimensional approach toward Strategic Partnership. Furthermore, it is argued that Strategic Partnership requires a high level of cooperation where the relations of dependency and subordination transform into associations of a higher level and in this regard it becomes necessary to have a certain degree of affinity between complementary partners. This is the happy situation that evolves by virtue of the belief that the desired aim is to have partnerships with those countries, which share common values, and with whom there is mutually shared confidence. According to the authors, the success or failure of Strategic Partnership depends on the level of cooperation among complementary partners regarding joint interests at the international level.

Vasiliev (2014) defines Strategic Partnership as the destination toward which the agent intends to concentrate its main resources for achieving the primary strategic objective. And, in this regard, it is impossible to maintain a relationship with many agents in the frame of Strategic Partnership.

Authors such as Gupta and Azad (2011) Flores (2012), and Vasiliev (2014),

distinguish economic, political, demographic, historical, social, and cultural factors, among others, which influence the choice of strategic partners and, which is particularly important, its multidimensional character of impact. Vasiliev (2014), accordingly highlights the special role of geographic proximity and as an example he gives the relation of Strategic Partnership between the USA and Mexico with their 2000 miles of common border.

Thus, summarizing the above-mentioned definitions, we attempt to give our own operative definition of Strategic Partnership as per below, with a view to flush it out subsequently with indicators.

*The Strategic Partnership is understood to mean the long-term bilateral cooperation for mutual benefits and equality of rights and mutual respect between states, international organizations, political blocks and unions. All these have a relevant economic and geopolitical weight at regional and/or international levels, based on the common economical and/or geopolitical interests and preferably (even though not compulsory) on the common values and historical-cultural roots, which aim at achieving common strategic objectives.*

## **2.2. Role of Strategic Partnership and International Institutions in New World Order**

The 20<sup>th</sup> century has been characterized as the epoch of the power of international institutions and organizations. An actual ‘global governance system’ has been in the works since the end of the Second World War with the emergence of the United Nations (UN) and other international organizations such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (actually created one year before the UN), and the World Trade Organization (WTO), among others.

So it can be concluded that such international institutions have had a main role in the formation of a new world order. Thus, following North (1991), when structuring and organizing the agent’s behavior, the institutions involved generate a certain socioeconomic ‘order’, which influences, to a large extent, their functioning and economic performance. Bull (1995) argues that the International Society is based on a number of fundamental institutions. Thus, according to him, a group of states “co-operate in the working of institutions such as the forms of procedures of international law, the machinery of diplomacy and general international organizations, and the customs and conventions of war.” (p. 13). Hernandez *et al.* (2009) stresses that States usually tend to move towards cooperation either when the benefits derived from it are relevant, or when marginal profits derived from collective action are higher than the profits obtained from unilateral action.

Peña (2010) argues that the new realities of power distribution in the international system help us to understand the consolidation of new forms of policy-making in the international realm. In this regard, these new forms of a lower degree institutionalization such as G7, G20 and BRICS<sup>1</sup> could be interpreted as a reflection of the current scenario, when the emerging countries try to get more power in the International System through new dimensions of cooperation; and multilateralism is becoming the principle behind the foreign policy of most States. Philipovic (2011) highlights the dissatisfaction with the global financial and economic order on the part of BRIC countries, which, criticizing G7 leadership, called for introducing new principles and a new organization of the world financial system and wanted to see the G20 reinforced and elevated to a heads-of-state and heads-of-government level, above the finance ministerial status it had for a long time.

However, current international institutions are quite passive in resolving problems and conflicts. The question related to the necessity in UN reforms, despite the latest discussion, still remains unresolved. The main problem of the current system is that it is still unclear how to eliminate its biggest shortcoming, namely the lack of an effective mechanism to force governments to fulfill their obligations under the rules of international law.

It is worth mentioning that the new stage of development of the World Order can be characterized as transitory. After the disappearance of the bipolar world system the multi-polarity variant has not acquired clear features yet. The unipolar system, in its turn, could not take place for it was built through the international institutions that assumed multilateral participation. It has been proved that there is no country, no matter how strong it is that could ensure the peace in the world alone.

However, it is very difficult to realize in practice the effective multi-polarity. First, the poles of the new system should be approximately equal. This requires that the US sacrifice its national interests and reduce its military potential (which is quite difficult to imagine in practice) while other poles of the world, such as China, Russia and the European Union, increase. Secondly, it is clear that the current system of international institutions must be reformed according to the new distribution of world power.

In any case, no matter in which direction the international system will develop, the position of its Global Actors in the international hierarchy depends on the realization of its economic, military and demographic potentials and its resources. There are two main options to develop this potential: to become stronger through the other international participants or to unite constructively one's own

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<sup>1</sup> Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa

potential with another actor's potential. It can be said that the second option is the form of true strategic partnership. In the new multipolar world order it will be important to occupy a key position.

And in this case, the strategic partnership not only is an instrument to acquire all possible benefits from the bilateral relations, but also a measure to occupy higher positions on the international stage.

### **2.3. Strategic Partnership VS Regional Integration**

It should be considered that regional integration is first and foremost a “geographical” process: it is about integrating regions, and is consequently a very different process with respect to strategic partnerships.

However, analyzing the term Strategic Partnership, the following questions emerge: how such a term correlates with regional integration and if the Strategic Partnership can exist without integration? Before answering these questions we should research different approaches towards regional integration. The main problem is that in the social sciences there is no common approach towards regional integration. Thus, the exponents of the classic school (Wiener and Diez, 2005) state that the existence of supranational institutions is an essential criterion for regional integration. The neo-functionalists, led by Haass (2008), while also considering supranationalism as an important criterion for integration, propose another approach. In their view, the collaboration in the policy ‘bottom up’ encourages the development of collaboration in policy ‘top down’. Other scholars, such as Balassa (1964), investigate the integration from the Political Economy point of view and draw attention to the process of the merging of national economies into one coherent regional economic complex. To paraphrase Balassa, total or full economic integration involves harmonization of the financial system by establishing a single currency, coupled with unification of the economic policies of the participating countries and common economic institutions. Although it should be noted that some scholars, like Baldwin (2012), explored Balassa's theory and empirically showed that in no regional integration arrangement were Balassa's ‘stages’ actually followed.

In Gratius's (2011a) words “The signing of free trade agreements with the EU is an exception rather than the norm; apparently it is not a precondition for a country to be upgraded as a strategic partner.” (p. 1). Nevertheless, the EU has had free trade agreements with some strategic partners while with others the agreements remain in the process of negotiation. In any case it should be mentioned that economic and political barriers obstruct the development of collaborations between Parties on all issues, from economic to cultural and education fields. We should also take into account that the EU applies the concept of the Strategic Partnerships towards third countries - that is

to say, according to the European approach, when the countries achieve the total economic integration they turn into ‘a unitary whole’ and do not need the concept of Strategic Partnership any more.

Comparing both terms we can say that Strategic Partnership is the agreement (formal or informal) between countries that reflects the partners’ willingness to collaborate long-term in the fields of common benefits; while Regional Integration is a longtime process of elimination of economic and political barriers in the region aimed at developing national economics and acquiring mutual benefits by means of abolition of duty rates, specialization of labor, cooperation, etc. Taking into account the coincidence of characteristics of strategic partnership and regional integration we can conclude that the Strategic Partnership cannot be developed without a certain level of integration between partners, while advanced integration is the deep form of strategic partnership. Strategic Partnership cannot be a goal but can be the instrument for achieving objectives. Thus, for instance, the main objective of the Conception of Strategic Partnership between the EU and Russia was the creation of four common spaces from Lisbon to Vladivostok, i.e., the deep integration between parties.

Finally we should mention that the main difference between the terms is that for Strategic Partnership the existence of a supranational component is not essential. In this regard, Strategic Partnership arranges strong collaboration on a wide range of questions, avoiding the derogation of parties’ sovereignty, and consequently leaving more space for political movement and protection of national interests.

#### **2.4 Misunderstanding between strategic partners**

The absence of an official definition of Strategic Partnership frequently provokes misunderstanding between partners. Thus, even when countries recognized each other as strategic partners and the treaty of strategic partnership was signed, if the parties involved continue to have different approaches and interpretations of what the partnership actually entails, then obviously the fulfillment of the development of their relations can be hampered by this fact. In this regard, for instance, the different interpretation of the strategic partnership between the EU and Russia first led to isolation and then to open confrontation.

Moreover, it is worth observing that the strategic partnership between the USA and the EU is still informal, and the New Transatlantic Agenda of 1995 continues to be the frame for the USA-EU relationship. Thus, it can be concluded that the USA prefers to define their ‘transatlantic relationship’ by offering only a sidelong reference to the expression ‘strategic partnership’. The State

Department describes the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) as ‘building on economic and a strategic relationship’<sup>2</sup> with the EU. In this regard, Blanco (2016) called strategic partnership “the new joker” in the language of international politics and stressed the necessity of recognizing how other argents besides the EU conceptualize and employ this term. In this context, he argues that not only empirical research is needed but also the further development and operationalization of approaches that take into account the different meanings of ‘strategic partnership’ as it appears in varying usage. The nations’ different understanding of strategic partnership is reflected in the Table 3.

**Table 3. Different Approaches towards Strategic Partnership**

Country/Union	EU	USA	Russia	China
<b>Basis of strategic partnership</b>	Mutual interests Common strategic objections Market economic principles Common values Human rights, Democracy Rule of law Stability Multilateralism	Mutual interests Shared goals Common values and US believes Stability and legitimate international order	Equality, Pragmatism Respect towards the partner’s interests Common approach to key security problems Multi-polarity world	Stability Long-term and win-win, cooperation, Mutual respect Mutual benefits Equal footing Multi-Polarity New World Order, Democratization of international relations, Impede hegemony, Multilateralism, building of a more favorable World Order, Non-interference Different development models

<sup>2</sup> US Department of State 2013.

<b>Character of partnership</b>	Based on Common Values	Based on Common Values	Pragmatic	Pragmatic
<b>Mechanisms</b>	Bilateral dialogue with key partners  Multilateral approach (collaboration with international organizations), Regional issues (collaboration with regional groups)	Strategic bilateral and regional dialogues;  Policy of 'Disaggregated State' aimed at engagement to reach foreign citizens directly	Strategic bilateral and regional dialogues, new multilateral arrangement such as BRICS and G20, people-to-people cooperation	Strategic bilateral and regional dialogues, new multilateral arrangement such as BRICS and G20, people-to-people cooperation
<b>Priorities and perspectives</b>	Depending on the partner: security with NATO and the USA; financial and monetary connection with China; energy dialogue with Russia, etc.	Depending on the partner: historical alliances with NATO; to manage difficult ties with Russia and China; to promote Euro-Atlantic integration with Romania, Bulgaria, Georgia and Ukraine; to build a regional architecture of supportive ties in East Asia and the Pacific, to improve relations with Nigeria, Angola, South Africa and Vietnam, etc.	Security and commercial fields, modernization of Russia's economy. Special role of strategic partnership with China and India aimed to strength collaboration in the commercial and security fields.	The Sino-Russian Strategic Partnership of Coordination and the Sino-Pakistani All-weather Strategic Partnership are unique and unparalleled. And regarding the rest, 'comprehensive strategic partnerships' seem to have more importance than apparently more limited, mere 'strategic partnerships'.
<b>Strategic partners</b>	List of official 'Special Ten' (key countries). Regional (such as ASEAN AARC CARICOME)  international organization (ONU, Security Council)	There is not an official list.  More than 50 countries	There is not an official list.  After the conflict in Ukraine Russia crossed over from the EU and others 'West World' counties to all BRICS, countries of Latin America and partners of ASEAN	47 countries, the EU, ASEAN, and African Union (AU)

Source: Own elaboration on the basis of official documents.

Observing Table 3 it can be concluded that Russia and China concur in a pragmatic approach towards strategic partnership while that of the EU's and the USA is more tightly based on common values. It seems that multilateralism is a basis of strategic partnership for the USA, the EU, Russia





and China, but for Russia and China this idea of multilateralism really means multi-polarity. After analyzing four approaches towards strategic partnership, it is worth mentioning that only the EU has a clear official list of its strategic partners, and if China at least defines the priorities between strategic partners, the USA has used the term in a chaotic and unmethodical way. Thus, according to Hamilton (2015) the term 'strategic dialogue' has been used to signal its intent to improve relations, as with Nigeria, Angola, South Africa, and Vietnam, or to manage difficult ties, as with Russia and China. Moreover, Hamilton highlights that it has cobbled together a variety of partnership arrangements to deal more effectively with adversaries such as Iran and North Korea.

As we can observe, the economics and mutual economic benefits remain the basis for strategic partnerships. Nevertheless, with time, the focus of the partnerships has expanded to include horizontal, multilateral, and foreign policy issues. As examples of such extension, the following may be suggested: the EU-China 2020 Strategic Agenda for Cooperation which started with security and peace and the EU-Japan relations which were strengthened with common security and defense policy exercises.

Despite the imperfection of the strategic partnership concept, many countries have decided that pursuing identified strategic partnerships might pay dividends for their national interest. In this regard, Zhongping and Jing (2014) argue that while China has avoided war or serious confrontation with major powers, it has nevertheless obtained enormous economic benefits from these partnerships, and has successfully steered into a new multipolar world. Nonetheless, at the same time the authors stress that the biggest deficiency of China's strategic partnership policy is that it has not prepared itself to become a great power in the future. In this regard, they point out that building strategic partnerships is almost the only method China employs in managing important bilateral relations, however, its strategic partnership diplomacy has fallen short of framing some of the most important and conflict-prone relations, such as the Sino-Japanese or the Sino-US relationships, despite attempts to move towards a strategic partnership with the US. Thus, according to Zhongping and Jing the strategic partnership network needs to be upgraded and this can only be accomplished as part of a broader design that goes beyond strategic partnerships themselves.

It is logical to assume that Strategic Partnership should have a high efficiency, which would be impossible to achieve via a different type of relationship. And if in the commercial field efficiency can be measured by such indicators as volume of investments, volume of commercial trade, number of joint venture companies, etc., it is quite difficult to find appropriate indicators for estimating the efficiency in political, security or cultural fields. Moreover, it must be remembered that strategic partnership, being an essential instrument that enables dialogues and cooperation for effective multilateralism, is a long-term investment, which should not be abandoned because of



transient difficulties. Thus, the problematic partnership between the EU and Russia has a high-gain or high-loss possibility for both parties. Furthermore, it should be added that after the crisis of 2008 the EU's attractiveness as a strategic partner might have diminished.

### **3. European Union's Concept of Strategic Partnership**

In this heading we analyse the EU's concept of strategic partnership taking into consideration its particular features and problems. By starting with its history and finishing with its criticism, the idea is to offer suggestions for improving this concept.

#### **3.1. Formation of European Union's Concept in its official documents**

The first official document where the EU highlighted its intention to develop strategic partnerships with those countries which would concur with EU's norms and values and also to pursue its objectives by means of both international cooperation in international organizations and through the Strategic Partnership with the core actors was the European Security Strategy (ESS) of 2003.

Thus, the Strategic Partnership was characterized as a new instrument of the European Union's Foreign Policy towards key countries at the international level. According to the ESS of 2003 it was primarily proposed the development of strategic relationships with the USA and Russia, where the discovery of *common values*<sup>3</sup> would presumably lead to a Strategic Partnership. Also the necessity of developing Strategic Partnerships with Canada, Japan, China and India was mentioned. With respect to the neighboring countries of the Near East and partners of Latin America and Africa (although relationships with them were considered as an important component of Foreign Policy, and the necessity of developing such relationships was admitted) - the ESS did not in any way mention plans for the development of a Strategic Partnerships with those nations. Nevertheless, it can be concluded that the document is more political than strategic and quite imprecise given that it does not explain which values and objectives exactly the EU would be obliged to share with its partners.

The report of EU's Foreign Policy of 2008 describes in general terms the status of its relations with strategic partners. Thus, the EU highlighted the high status of the USA as a key

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<sup>3</sup> European Common (or Shared) Values are understood to mean human dignity; freedom; democracy; equality; the rule of law; and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. These are values EU Member States have in common. They form the fabric of our Union that binds countries, communities and people together (Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union).

partner, stated that relations with Canada and Japan had a close and long-term mutual affinity and reported that relations with China had been significantly augmented. Russia continued to be considered as an important partner in international questions, whereas its relationship with India still had space for development. It is worth mentioning that in the report of 2008, as compared with 2003, the importance of relationships with such partners as Brazil, South Africa, Switzerland and Norway had significantly increased.

In EU Global Strategy of 2016 such threats as terrorism, economic volatility, climate change and energy insecurity were highlighted. All three - the Security and Defense Implementation Plan, European Defense Action Plan, and the EU-NATO Joint Declaration – were aimed at enhancing the Security of the EU. Thus, Mogherini (2016) argues that the Strategy nurtures the ambition of strategic autonomy for the EU. Common interests, principles, and values, multilateralism and reformed global governance continue to be the priorities of EU Foreign Policy. Yet the conception of Strategic Partnership does not form part of Global Strategy in and of itself, Mogherini encourages all concerned to keep deepening the transatlantic bond and partnership with NATO, to connect with new players and explore new formats, to invest in regional orders, and to further cooperation among and within regions, while in the meantime confirming and strengthening relationships with EU partners.

The more detailed description of the term of strategic partnership in the EU’s official documents is summarized in Table 4.

**Table 4. Strategic Partnership in the EU’s Official Documents**

Document	Year	Description
Presidency Conclusions of the Cologne European Council  Declaration on Chechnya  Common Strategy of the European Union on Russia  Speech made by Javier Solana in Stockholm	1998-1999	The first appearance of the term ‘Strategic Partnership’ in the EU’s official documents. The term was used in relation to Russia where Russia was considered to be EU’s strategic partner and was therefore willing to help and support the country to overcome its financial crisis, including through food aid.
Declaration of RIO	1999	Aimed at establishing the Strategic Partnership with Latin America and Caribbean based on common values and interests, and historical-cultural roots.
European Security Strategy (ESS)	2003	The EU’s intention to pursue its objectives by means of both international cooperation in international organizations and through the

		<p>Strategic Partnership with the core actors was stressed.</p> <p>The EU highlighted its intention to develop Strategic Partnerships with those countries which would concur with the EU's norms and values.</p> <p>The Strategy primarily proposed the development of strategic relationships with the USA and Russia.</p> <p>The necessity of developing Strategic Partnerships with Canada, Japan, China and India was mentioned.</p>
Report of EU's Foreign Policy	2008	<p>The high status of the USA as a key partner was stressed.</p> <p>Russia continued to be considered as important partner.</p> <p>Relations with China were significantly increased. A close and long-term mutual affinity for relations with Canada and Japan was highlighted.</p> <p>The importance of relationships with Brazil, South Africa, Switzerland and Norway was strongly stressed.</p>
Lisbon Treaty	2009	<p>It was mentioned that the partnership should be based on normative convergence. Thus the legal basis for establishing partnerships was indirectly indicated</p>
EU Global Strategy	2016	<p>Common interests, values, and principles, multilateralism and reformed global governance continue to remain the priorities of EU Foreign Policy.</p> <p>The transatlantic bond and partnership with NATO must continue to deepen.</p> <p>Intentions to connect with new players and explore new formats were declared, as well as plans to invest in regional orders, and to breed further cooperation among and within regions, while in the meantime strengthening relationships with EU partners.</p>

Source: Own elaboration on the basis of EU's official documents

### 3.2. European Union's 'Three-Step Strategy'

Following Gratius (2011a), the EU has developed a strategic partnership first of all, with traditional post-second world war Western powers (Canada, Japan, the USA); second, with regional and interregional organizations (SAARC, NATO, African Union and others); finally, with individual special partners in a multi-polar, bilateral world order (BRICSAMS<sup>4</sup>). This approach has been termed '*Three-Step Strategy*'.

<sup>4</sup> Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Mexico and South Korea

### 3.2.1. The EU's Traditional Strategic partners

After Second World War, the USA, Western Europe, Canada and Japan became loyal allies in the fight against the Soviet Union and communist ideology. Thus, speaking about partnership with traditional the EU partners, it should be mentioned that it has been a long-term, time-honored relationship based on common values.

When the Soviet Union collapsed, the majority of countries of Eastern Europe decided to unite with Western Europe rather than with Russia, and, accordingly, the EU became the largest transatlantic partner of the USA. Thus, Burghardt (2006) argues that the EU-USA relationship has been and remains the most powerful, combining some 60% of the world's GDP, the most comprehensive and the strategically most important relationship in the world because of major converging concerns, largely compatible values and over-lapping interests. He stresses that The EU and the USA share common objectives with regard to coherent strategies for the promotion of peace, stability and economic development around the globe and cannot accept any other alternative to the EU-USA relationship. Vale de Almeida (2010), ambassador of the European Union to the United States, highlights that the EU and the USA share strategic objectives on the most important foreign policy issues and cooperate closely on diplomatic solutions. It can be observed that the vast quantity of areas in which these argents cooperate derives from the huge number of goals that they share, which in turn is a reflection on the compatibility of values that characterizes this bilateral relationship.

Notwithstanding, the new American administration seems not to pursue the same line which previous administrations established with foreign partners. Thus, according to Demertzis *at al.* (2017) the current administration not only aims at reducing the USA's role as an anchor of the global multilateral system but also is probably on course to challenge it by imposing protectionist measures. In this regard, nowadays the USA is drawing back from globalization and liberal values. Moreover, even the USA's military commitment to NATO is being questioned. China, Mexico and even Europe seem to be considered by the USA as rivals rather as allies. In such circumstances the EU cannot count on the USA in building efficient multilateralism and should seek for support from its other traditional partners or from emerging powers in the Multipolar New Order.

Regarding the EU-Canada strategic partnership, it is worth mentioning that this has been a long-term relationship marked by the Strategic Partnership Agreement and a number of other key agreements and declarations. Long and Paterson (2015) highlight Canada's preoccupation with the possibility of being absorbed into the USA, and, in this regard, Europe together with Japan were considered as another option in Canada's attempt to strategically pivot away from the USA. Merand

(2015) stresses that regarding the specific challenges for the transatlantic area, the EU-USA/Canada relationship is not about widening, but about deepening the already-strong existing bond.

During a long period of time the EU-Japan relationship was dominated by economic friction, and smooth-running political relations emerged very slowly. Nowadays, Japan's strategy seems to have taken on a more global look, enhancing its alliance with the USA, and promoting strategic partnerships with countries within a broad-based arc of 'freedom of prosperity'. According to Japan's National Security Strategy of 2014, Japan will further strengthen its relations with Europe, including cooperation with the EU, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). De Prado (2014) argues that the EU and Japan are developing compatible strategic capabilities, which facilitate greater bilateral, regional and global collaboration. Following Japan's National Security Strategy it can be understood that the strategic partnership between Japan and the EU is based on sharing universal values of freedom, democracy, respect for fundamental human rights and the rule of law, and principles such as market economy, aimed at taking a leading role in ensuring the peace, stability and prosperity of the international community.

### **3.2.2. BRICSAMS EU's partners in a Multipolar World**

Following European Council (2010) The European Union's strategic partnerships with key players in the world provide a useful instrument for pursuing European objectives and interests such as enhancing trade with strategic partners through Free Trade Agreements, economic recovery, job creation and EU's security. In this regard, the full participation of emerging economies in the international system should allow its benefits to be spread in a balanced manner and its responsibilities to be shared evenly.

Grevi (2010) forecasts that despite the transatlantic relationship will remain the most important partnership for the foreseeable future, the indicators on the development of the so-called BRICs (Brazil, Russia, India, and China) have shown the increased relevance with regard to the EU's strategic partnerships with them as a precondition for global governance of common challenges. The competition between emerging powers and the EU may also be due to the lack of formats and limited options the EU can offer in terms of co-leadership. To this end, the strategic nature of the EU's partnerships with emerging countries lies in the way they allow the EU to pursue its goals and spread its norms at the international level.

Nevertheless it is difficult to speak about equal relationships between the EU and the BRICS countries, taking into account the different level of economic development, the political system, an

incompatibility with EU's values, and different goals and interests at the international stage, among other important issues. In this regard, the EU-Russian strategic partnership seems to be the most problematic.<sup>5</sup>

Strategic partnership with India, like the EU- Russia strategic partnership, was created as an asymmetrical relationship, in which the EU became the one who should show its partner the way towards development, whereas the EU-China relationship does not seem to be asymmetric. Thus, Rocha-Pino (2013) argues that the different meanings that each Actor gives to the concepts of sovereignty, global security, and Human Rights have not been an obstruction for establishing cooperation nexuses between the EU and China. Blanco (2016) in his turn also points out that the EU seems much more cautious in this case in presenting the element of 'shared values' as a justification for the implementation of the strategic partnership between partners and stresses its symmetrical nature. Demertzis et al. (2017) discuss whether the EU and China are willing and able to jointly support the multilateral system as the USA steps back from its central role and if they can act in a coordinated manner as the EU and the USA have done in the past, but at the same time they admit that this will be rather difficult, taking into account that European and Chinese economic systems are much more different from each other than the European and American economic systems.

Regarding the EU-Brazil strategic partnership, Gratius (2008) argues that the EU is Brazil's most important foreign partner, but this is an asymmetrical relationship, since trade relations with Brazil don't have the same importance to the EU. While Brazil, Mexico, South Africa and South Korea do not have the 'gap of values' with the EU, their entrance into the group of 'privileged partners' of the EU seems to be justified by a similar worldview rather than by common economic or geostrategic interests. For these countries the strategic partnership with the EU serves rather for the elevation of their status at the international stage than for obtaining of concrete economic and political benefits.

Thus, it can be concluded that the EU is trying to maintain a very difficult relationship with certain key agents, while always having to manage the dilemma of disagreements regarding the EU's values and norms and the will to obtain maximal commercial benefits from bilateral relationships. The EU needs a kind of approach and strategy that allows it to develop a viable relationship with these states (Russian, Chinese and Indian cases), without focusing overmuch on the incompatibility of core values.

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<sup>5</sup> The description of strategic partnership between Russia and the EU in details is presented in the following Chapter 2.

### 3.2.3. Regional and Interregional Organizations

The EU's intention was to develop strategic bilateral relationships not only with its key partners but also with certain multilateral, regional and interregional organizations, such as the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the Council of Europe (CoE), the Southern Common Market (Mercosur), the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the African Union (AU), with the purpose of reinforcing auspices of a global government.

An example of inter-regional strategic relations of the EU is the Declaration of RIO of 1999<sup>6</sup> where the triumph of the bioregional Strategic Partnership between Latin America, the Caribbean (LAC) and the EU, based on common interests, shared values and deep historical-cultural heritage aimed at increasing the welfare of their societies while fulfilling the principle of sustainable development and acquiring benefits from the opportunities, was proclaimed. All of this has occurred in a world that is in the process of becoming more and more globalized and is now operating more in a spirit of equity, respect, alliance and cooperation between its various regions.

Regarding this intermixed EU's strategy, which presupposes a combination of bilateral and multilateral approaches towards strategic partnership, experts do not seem to agree with each other. Thus, Grevi (2010) argues that bilateral and multilateral partnerships should be seen as something connected instead of representing alternative levels. Bendiek and Kramer (2010) stress the uncertainties with regard to the relationship between bilateral 'strategic partnerships' and the EU's inter-regional 'strategies' (i.e. between EU-Brazil and EU-Mercosur or EU-China, EU-India and EU-ASEAN, etc.), which in the past had led to undesirable levels of competition. Quevedo Flores (2012) perceives the EU's conception as languishing in a confused state, given that it implies the mixing of partnerships with multilateral institutions, regional groups and individual Actors. De Vasconcelos (2009), by contrary, argues that the multilateral objective and bilateral approach of EU's concept of strategic partnerships is in fact totally coherent because in such a way the EU promotes the common understanding of shared global responsibility for global peace and security among different strategic partners.

Gonzales (2011) supposes that for the EU it would be better to focus on the multilateral network given that in such a way that it might become easier to assert its ambitions as a global power while Gratius (2011b) argues that the EU's strategic partners are so heterogeneous as to represent a collective response to multilateralism, and the bilateral approach should be applied, taking into consideration the necessities of each country. Demertzis et al. (2017) points out that strategically the EU should continue its bilateral trade and investment relationship with its partner but the bilateral

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<sup>6</sup> Declaration of RIO (1999) available at <https://eulacfoundation.org/en/documents/1999-rio-declaration>.



deals should be designed as stepping stones rather than obstacles to the multilateral issues.

### 3.3. Institutionalization of the European Union's Strategic Partners

Pałasz (2015) stresses the three main elements of the EU's approach to Strategic Partnership:

- Promoting trade and investment
- Promoting multilateralism and strengthen international cooperation
- Border-sharing in security matters

Following Pałasz, the procedure used to form new Strategic Partnership starts with a Commission's formal proposal through a Commission communication, which then is transferred to the Council of the Member States for their approval to establish the partnership. The EU Parliament approves the proposal and, finally, in agreement with the partner, a joint statement is made to formally announce the partnership. Such a mechanism was applied for establishing Strategic Partnerships with China, India South Africa, Brazil, and Mexico. The EU-South Korea Strategic Partnership did not follow this procedure and it was announced at a summit without the formal proposal.

It is worth mentioning that for carrying out the Strategic Partnership in practice it is necessary to prepare an efficient jurisdictional and institutional basis with the partner in question. The institutional framework usually reflects the characteristics of the strategic partnership. Strategic partnerships can be institutionalised in different ways. Thus, according to Zhongping and Jing (2014) the mechanisms established between Russia and China are the most comprehensive and effective which include the Sino-Russian Regular Presidents' (together with a hotline for direct communication between them) and Ministers' meetings, the Energy Negotiators' Meeting, and the People-to-People Cooperation Committee.

The EU has institutionalized ways of understanding foreign policy and structuring relations around a document – in this case, a strategic partnership document. Regarding the jurisdictional basis of the Strategic Partnership, Pałasz (2015) highlights a so-called “holy trinity” of agreements: modernized trade and investment agreements, an all-encompassing political agreement, and a framework participation agreement, which would allow partners to participate in EU crisis management operations. It is worth mentioning that the EU has signed all three agreements only with South Korea. The jurisdictional basis with EU's ‘Special Ten’ is presented in Table 5.



**Table 5. EU's Jurisdictional Basis with Its 'Special Ten'**

EU's 'Special Ten'	Date or Current Situation	Jurisdictional Basis of Strategic Partnership
Brazil	1992	EC-Brazil Framework Cooperation Agreement
	1995	EU-Mercosur Framework Cooperation Agreement
	2004	Agreement for Scientific and Technological Cooperation
	2008	Joint Action Plan
	Negotiations have not been finished yet	Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement with Mercosur
Canada	1959	Agreement between the Government of Canada and the European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM) for Co-operation in the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy
	1976	Framework Agreement for Commercial and Economic Cooperation between Canada and the European Community
	1990	Declaration on Transatlantic Relations
	1996	Joint Political Declaration and Action
	2016	Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA)
	The European Parliament voted in favour of CETA in 2017. But the EU national parliaments must approve CETA before it can take full effect.	Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA).
China	Sighed in 2013	EU-China 2020 Strategic Agenda for Cooperation
India	1993	Joint Political Statement

	1994	Cooperation Agreement
	2005	Joint Action Plan
	2016	Joint Declaration
	2016	EU-India Agenda for Action 2020
Japan	1991	Hague Declaration,
	2001	Joint Action Plan.
	Negotiations were launched in 2013	Free trade agreement (FTA)/economic partnership agreement (EPA)
	Negotiations were launched in 2013	Framework Participation Agreement (FPA)
	Negotiations were launched in 2013	Strategic Partnership Agreement
Mexico	1975	Cooperation Agreement
	Replaced previous Agreement in 1991	Framework Agreement
	1995	Joint Solemn Declaration
	Signed in 1997 and in force since 2000	Global Agreement (the Economic Partnership, Political Coordination and Cooperation Agreement)
	Negotiations since 2016	Updating to the Global Agreement.
Russia	Concluded in 1993 and entered into force in 1997	Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA)
	Adopted in 2005 and suspended in 2014 due to Ukrainian crisis	Road Maps for the Common Spaces

	Negotiations started in 2008 and were suspended in 2014 due to crisis in Ukraine	New Strategic Partnership Agreement
South Africa	1999	Trade Development and Cooperation Agreement (TDCA)
	2007	Joint Action Plan
	2016	Southern African Economic Partnership Agreement (SADC EPA) together with Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia and Swaziland
South Korea	2010	Framework Agreement
	Has been applied since July 2011 and formally entered into force in 2015.	Free Trade Agreement (FTA)
US	1995	New Transatlantic Agenda
	Negotiations have not been finished yet	Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP)

Source: Own elaboration on the basis of EU's official documents

By observing the Table 5, it can be concluded that the EU not only extends and renews the jurisdictional basis with key partners but also actively carries out agreements with certain region and inter-regional organizations.

### 3.4. Criticism and Uncertainties of EU's Concept of Strategic Partnership

By analyzing different opinions among politicians and scholars it can be concluded that they do not concur with regard to EU's conception of Strategic Partnership and EU's Foreign Strategy. Thus the ex-EU Foreign Policy Chief Javier Solana (2003) proposes to focus on the common strategic approach where it is expected to develop the capacities of security in an efficient manner beyond the traditional economic and social relations. Franco Hijuelos (2010) stresses that the EU considers that a bilateral Strategic Partnership by means of political dialogue with third countries facilitates the projection of matching interests and common values for the rest of the world. Quevedo Flores (2012) also points out the EU's interests and values as a basis for strategic partnership and the

general framework of all such partnerships is the global government. He highlights three solid pillars of strategic partnership: reciprocity, which produces real mutual benefits; coherence between the EU and Members States; and cohesion within the EU itself. Vahl (2001), besides acknowledging common interests and a common understanding as core factors of Strategic Partnership, also stresses the important role of the element 'equality of size'.

Grevi (2010) recommends the EU to define exactly what its primary interests and main objectives are, as well as which strategic partnerships would help to achieve them. He also proposes to identify some kind of specific evaluative criteria instead of having just a rigid list of strategic partners; while Biscop and Renard (2010) confirm that there are at present very little established criteria in the choice of partners. For one thing, according to them, strategic partners must have the capacity to exert a significant influence on global or regional issues. The authors speak about the lack of substantial clarity in the concept, which risks provoking confusion within the EU and abroad. They worry that the concept can be used in a frivolous or misleading way and consider such situation as a very real danger.

Khandekar (2011) points out that the EU has not yet managed to unravel why a group of 'ten lucky countries' were clustered together under the 'strategic banner'. Gratius (2011 a) argues, in her turn, that the EU should take into account the existence of different 'classes' and 'levels' of strategic partners, and in this regard, the instruments and strategies also must be different according to the necessities of each country. Thus, she stresses that in the EU's conception of strategic partnership partners should take into account the best individual approach towards each partner.

It should be mentioned that in the EU's conception of Strategic Partnership 'common values', such as essential criteria for choosing strategic partners, despite the frequent rhetoric of its political leaders, have a problematic nature, when one considers the ambiguities or downright neglect with respect to Human Rights and other democratic principles in such countries as China, Russia and India, which are officially declared by the EU as its strategic partners.

In conclusion, we cannot but agree with Gratius's (2011b) words that while there is neither any standard definition nor any criteria or indicators declared by the EU that would allow one to determine if a partner is strategic or not, when speaking about the EU's Conception of Strategic Partnership it would be better to mean the special status which the EU confers to other countries on the basis of political consideration.

#### **4. Empirical evidence from multidimensional approach**

In this heading, we provide the empirical evidence with an aim to make EU's choice of strategic partners more science-based. It is worth mentioning that as until this moment there is no any model for selecting strategic partners this is the first attempt to offer original methodology.

##### **4.1. Data and Methods**

While observing the literature relating to our theme we can find a small number of works which may offer a model of strategic partners related to the relationship between countries. The indicators offered in the debate on strategic partnership do not seem to be convincing (Gratius, 2011b). These indicators are the following: the power position of strategic partner; a regional power status; natural partners based on values; particular member states interests; core interests.

The European Strategic Partnerships Observatory (ESPO), launched by FRIDE and the Egmont Institute in 2012, is a policy-oriented, web-based and networked platform. It aims to provide information, analysis and debate on the EU's relations with a selected range of key global and regional partners. The platform offers a database with indicators of the EU's strategic partners distributed by categories. The categories offered by ESPO are the following: Economy; Trade and Investments; Demography and Populations; Research, Innovation and Education; Military; Energy, Environment and Resources; Public Perception; Politics and Global Government.

Gupta and Azad (2011) propose the Hierarchy Model for the selection of India's strategic partnership based on Analytic Hierarchy Process. Although the model was elaborated for India, its categories have a common character and partly coincide with categories proposed by ESPO and, consequently, can be used for other countries. The criteria offered by them are the following: Economics; Politics; Defense; Technology; People to People.

It is worth mentioning that unlike Gupta and Azad (2011), in order to avoid the subjectivity of experts' assessments for our research we have chosen the quantitative method of analysis and we have selected the indicators proposed by ESPO and those offered in the debate on strategic partnership described by Gratius (2011b), and we have added some other indicators related to values of the EU (taking into account the 2003 European Security Strategy, where the EU highlights the strategic partnerships with countries which share EU's norms and values), common historical-cultural roots (taking into account the Declaration of RIO of 1999 about the strategic partnership between the EU and LAC (Latin America and Caribbean), which is based on deep cultural inheritance and common interests and values), absence of discriminating actions between partners (taking into account the negative European-Russian strategic partnership experience), the partner's

jurisdictional-institutional base (taking into consideration the neo-institutional approach) and the common border factor (Vasiliev, 2014). The methodology of our research is presented in Table 6.

**Table 6. Methodology of research.**

Type of analyses	Quantitate
Techniques	CATPCA, PCA, Binary Logistic Model, Synthetic Index, Cluster Analysis
Coverage of research	International
Number of items	143 countries, including 10 official strategic partners of the UE, and 6 regional associations
Research period	2009-2014
Software	SPSS
Base of date	World bank, ESPO, Eurostat, Economical Forums, Official Data and Webpages

Source: Own elaboration

For our model we investigated 143 countries. Countries, which according to the Pareto Rule of 80-20, revealed less than the required 80 per cent of information were excluded, as well as indicators which brought to light less than 80 per cent of information about the countries in question.

First of all, the variables were arranged into the following groups: economic, commercial, political, social, common values, geographical-cultural, juridical, institutional and discriminative. Secondly, for every group the Categorical Principal Components Analysis (CATPCA) was applied, and we obtained the following 14 dimensions: partner's economical weight, partner's economic freedom, common commercial interests, partner's sustainable governance, partner's political weight, partner's social development, collaboration in science and education, common values, partner's geographical closeness, common historical-cultural roots, common legal basis, common institutional basis, economic adversarial relationship and obstruction regarding a free circulation of citizens. Thirdly, the Principal Components Analysis (PCA) was applied, which led us to three principal components. Then, on the basis of the three principal components, which we obtained, the Binary Logistic Model was then applied. Finally, the same methodology was applied for regional associations with the additions the following technics: synthetic index and cluster analysis (see Table 7).

**Table 7. Variables and Methods**

Object								
Country				Regional Integration Associations (Economic Unions)				
Category								
Economic	Commercial	Political	Social	Common Values	Geographical-Cultural	Juridical	Institutional	Discriminative
Indicator (variable)								
Logarithm of GDP (in billion \$)	Flow out with EU	Membership in Security Council, (times)	GDP per capita (\$)	Human Rights and Participation Index	Common Border with EU, (km)	Ranking according to the type of Treatment of Association	Number of Embassies of the EU in country	Absence of Discriminative Actions, Visas with EU
Global Competitiveness Index	Investment of the EU to the country (billion EUR)	Level of participation in clubs of interests	Prosperity Index	Coincidence of Political Regime	Common Continent	Treaty of Common Trade with the EU	EU's Missions on other country	Absence of Discriminative Actions, WTO pretensions
Economic Freedom Index	Country's Export to the UE (EUR)	World Bank Vote (% of all votes)	Shanghai Ranking of the best University	Membership in NATO	Coincidence of Religion	Number of treaties with EU	Representation of country in Brussels	Absence of Discriminative Actions or Sanctions
Foreign Direct Investments that enter in country, (million \$)	Import from the EU to the country (EUR)	IMF Vote (% of all votes)	Number of Erasmus students of all levels		Common Language		Number of EU's Persons working in embassy	
Foreign Direct Investments that the country makes in other countries, (million \$)	Energy Import to the EU (EUR), G27	Average of Political Stability and Absence of Violence	Ranking of Human Development		European Roots (% of population)			
Gold and Money Reserves (million \$)	Trade with EU Ranking	Global Presence Ranking	Number of published articles					
WTO Member		Transparency / No Corruption						

					UN Budget (% of GDP)									
<b>CATPCA (CAtegorical Principal Components Analysis)</b>														
<b>Dimensions</b>														
DE1	DE1	DC1	DP1	DP2	DS1	DS2	DCV1	DGC1	DGC2	DJ1	DI1	Dis1	Dis2	
Partner's Economical weight	Partner's Economical Freedom	Common commercial interests	Partner's Political weight	Partner's political freedom	Partner's social development	Science-Education Collaboration	Common Values	Partner's geographical closeness	Common historical-cultural roots	Common legal basis	Common institutional basis	Economic pretensions	Visas discriminations	
<b>PCA (Principal Components Analysis)</b>														
<b>Components</b>														
				COM1	COM2			COM3						
				Strategic Partnership Component	Partner in Spirit Component			Good Neighbour (Institutional Component)						
				<b>Binary Logistic Model</b>										
				<b>Synthetic Index</b>										
				<b>Cluster Analysis</b>										

Source: Own Elaboration



The investigated regional integrations associations are the following: Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), the Southern Common Market (Mercosur), the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), and the Central American Integration System (SICA). The organizations were chosen according to criteria requiring them to demonstrate that at least they had managed to reach a high level of integration (for example, they had created a viable economic or geopolitical union, or they are going to create) and limiting every regional organization to having as a member not more than one of EU's official strategic partners. As further research is carried out, more regional and inter-regional organizations will be included. The detailed information about investigated regional integration associations is shown in Table 8.

**Table 8. Research Regional Integration Associations (Organizations)**

<b>Regional Organization</b>	<b>Abbreviation</b>	<b>Year of Establishment</b>	<b>Members</b>
Association of Southeast Asian Nations	ASEAN	1967	Cambodia, Brunei, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam.
Caribbean Community	CARICOM	1973	Antigua & Barbuda, Belize, Commonwealth of Dominica, Grenada, Republic of Haiti, Montserrat, Federation of St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Commonwealth of the Bahamas, Barbados, Co-operative Republic of Guyana, Jamaica, Republic of Suriname, Republic of Trinidad & Tobago
Eurasian Economic Union	EAEU	2015	Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia
Southern Common Market (Spanish: Mercado Común del Sur; Portuguese: Mercado	Mercosur	1991	Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, Venezuela (suspended in 2016)

Comum do Sul)			
South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation	SAARC	1985	Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, the Maldives, Pakistan, Sri Lanka
Central American Integration System (Spanish: Sistema de la Integración Centroamericana)	SICA	1993	Belize, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama

Source: Own elaboration on the basis of official data

The main hypotheses of our research are the following:

- **First:** Despite the EU's rhetoric about common shared values with its strategic partners, the dimensions of the political and economic weight of the partner together with common commercial interests remains the primary indicator for being chosen as one of the EU's strategic partners.
- **Second:** Not all EU's '*special ten*' are really strategical
- **Third:** There are countries outside the EU's special list to whom this status should have been awarded
- **Fourth:** The ASEAN, the EAEU, the Mercosur and the SAARC are attractive as strategic regional partners for the EU.
- **Fifth:** The regional organizations are more attractive as strategic partner for the EU than any of its members without participation in the regional integration associations.
- **Sixth:** The EU's strategic partners are too heterogeneous to represent a collective response to multilateralism, and that is why the bilateral approach should be applied toward every partner.

## 4.2. Results of Analyses

As it was above mentioned the following types of analyses and technics were applied in our research: CATPCA, PCA, Binary Logistic Model, Synthetic Index and Cluster Analysis.

#### 4.2.1. CATPCA and PCA

CATPCA was developed for the purpose of analyzing data which can render a mixed measurement level such as nominal, ordinal or numeric which may not have a linear relationship with each other (Kemalbay and Korkmazoğlu, 2013). Thus, offering different types of variables, this type of analysis was chosen for our research. As the result of CATPCA we obtained 14 dimensions (see table 9).

**Table 9. Dimensions Obtained by CATPCA.**

**Model resume: total Cronbach's alpha based on total eigenvalues.**

Dimension	Cronbach's Alpha	Explained Variance		Description of dimension	Indicators (variables) which have significant weight according to every category
		Total (Eigenvalues)	% of Variance		
<b>ECONOMIC CATEGORY</b>					
1	.813	3.294	47.06%	DE1. Partner's Economic weight	Log of GDP (billion \$), Global Competitiveness Index, Economic Freedom Index, Foreign Direct flowin (million \$), Foreign Direct flow out (million \$), Gold and Money Reserves (million \$)
2	.367	1.459	20.84%	DE2. Partner's Economic Freedom	WTO Membership, Economic Freedom Index,
Total	.921 <sup>a</sup>	4.753	67.90%		
<b>COMERCIAL CATEGORY</b>					
1	.872	3.654	60.90%	DC1.Common commercial interests	Flow out with EU, and Flow in with EU (billion EUR), Export, Import, Trade, G27 export to the EU (billion EUR)
Total	.872	3.654	60.90%		
<b>POLITICAL CATEGORY</b>					
1	.913	4.965	62.06%	DP1. Partner's Political weight	Membership in Security Council (times), Level of participation in

					clubs of interests, World Bank Vote (% of all votes), IMF Vote (% of all votes), Global Presence Ranking, UN Budget (% of GDP)
2	.509	1.804	22.55%	DP2. Partner's sustainable government	Political Stability and Absence of Violence, Transparency / No Corruption
Total	.974a	6.768	84.61%		
<b>SOCIAL CATEGORY</b>					
1	.863	3.563	59.39%	DS1. Partner's social development	GDP per capita (\$), Prosperity Index, Shanghai Ranking of the best University, Human Development Index, Number of published articles
2	.478	1.661	27.69%	DS2. Science-Education Collaboration	Number of Erasmus students of all levels, Number of published articles
Total	.970a	5.225	87.08%		
<b>GEOGRAPHICAL-CULTURAL</b>					
1	.781	2.664	53.28%	DGC1. Partner's geographical closeness with EU	Common Border with EU, (km), Common Continent, European Roots (% of population)
2	.401	1.471	29.42%	DGC2. Partner's common historical-cultural roots	Coincidence of Religion, Common Language
Total	.948a	4.135	82.70%		
<b>COMMON VALUES</b>					
1	.750	2.001	0.667	DCV1. Partner's common Values with EU	Human Rights and Participation Index, Coincidence of Political Regime, Membership in NATO
Total	.750	2.001	1.001		
<b>COMMON JURISDICTIONAL BASIS</b>					
1	.753	2.007	66.900	DJ1. Partner's Common jurisdictional basis	Ranking according to the type of Treaty of Association, Number of treaties with EU, Treaty of

				with EU	Common Trade with the EU
Total	.753	2.007	66.900		
<b>COMMON INSTITUTIONAL BASIS</b>					
1	.701	2.076	51.90%	DII.Common institutional basis with EU	Number of Embassies of the EU in country, EU's Missions on other country, Representation of country in Brussels, Number of EU's Persons working in embassy
Total	.701	2.076	51.90%		
<b>DISCRIMINATIVE</b>					
1	.300	1.250	41.68%	Dis.1 Absence of Economic pretensions with EU	Absence of Discriminative Actions: WTO pretensions, Absence of Sanction
2	.070	1.049	34.98%	Dis.2 Absence of Visas discriminations	Absence of Discriminative Actions: Visas with EU, Absence of Sanction
Total	.848a	2.300	76.65%		

Sources: Own calculations on the basis of SPSS

George and Mallery (2003) give the following rules of thumb: “\_ > .9 Excellent, \_ > .8 – Good, \_ > .7 – Acceptable, \_ > .6 – Questionable, \_ > .5 – Poor, and \_ < .5 – Unacceptable” (p. 231). All our categories have no less than acceptable Total Cronbach’s Alpha.

Then for obtained 14 Dimensioned we applied traditional Principal Components Analysis. The KMO and Bartlett’s Test is presented in Table 10.

**Table 10. KMO and Bartlett’s Test**

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.800
Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity	Aprox. Chi-Square	1235.657
	df	91
	Sig.	.000

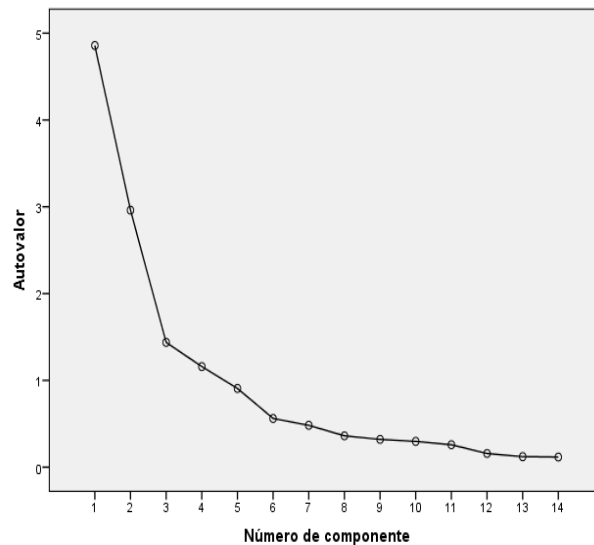
Sources: Own calculations on the basis of SPSS

Observing Table 10 we can see that our Kaiser-Olkin Measure is 0.8, which, following Kaiser, is meritorious. Total Variance Explained is presented in Table 11.

**Table 11. Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis**

Total Variance Explained									
Component	Initial Eigen values			Extraction Sums of Squared Loading			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	4.858	34.702	34.702	4.858	34.702	34.702	4.082	29.16	29.16
2	2.961	21.149	55.851	2.961	21.149	55.851	3.143	22.448	51.608
3	1.438	10.269	66.12	1.438	10.269	66.12	2.032	14.512	66.12
4	1.159	8.279	74.399						
5	0.907	6.481	80.879						
6	0.561	4.008	84.888						
7	0.482	3.445	88.333						
8	0.361	2.581	90.914						
9	0.32	2.287	93.2						
10	0.297	2.124	95.325						
11	0.259	1.848	97.173						
12	0.158	1.125	98.298						
13	0.121	0.867	99.166						
14	0.117	0.834	100						

**Figure 5. Extraction of Principal Components**



Sources: Own calculations on the basis of SPSS

We decided to extract the first three components, which explain about 66 per cent of total variance due to an abrupt change of the slope beginning after the third component (see Figure5, Table 11).

The results of PC analysis are presented in Table 12.

**Table 12. Rotated Component Matrix**

Dimension	Component		
	COM 1	COM 2	COM 3
DE1. Partner's Economic weight	.885	.228	.087
DE2. Partner's Economic Freedom	-.171	.676	.041
DC1.Common commercial interests	.856	-.018	.284
DP1. Partner's Political weight	.931	-.022	.030
DP2. Partner's sustainable governance	.078	.845	-.070
DS1. Partner's social development	.761	.464	.044
DS2. Science-Education Collaboration	.438	-.621	.131
DGC1. Partner's geographical closeness	.099	.090	.851
DGC2. Partner's common historical-cultural roots	-.007	.488	.071
DCV1. Partner's common Values with EU	.376	.688	.232
DJ1. Common jurisdictional basis	.166	.212	.850
DII.Common institutional basis	.574	-.210	.560
Dis1. Absence of Economic mutual pretensions	-.522	.221	-.285
Dis.2 Absence Visas discriminations	.335	.677	.129

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

Rotation converged in 5 iterations.

Sources: Own calculations on the basis of SPSS

Observing the Table 12 it can be noted that the first component (COM1) explains the amount of total variance and provides the highest weights in variables; and also describes the country's economic and political position in the world, its partner's social development and its common commercial interest with the EU. Moreover it should be mentioned that the EU develops a

common institutional understanding with these countries, although, unfortunately, both sides retain certain mutually exclusive claims in the commercial sphere.

Analysing the second component (COM2), we can say that it describes the country's sustainable governance, economic freedom and common values. We can therefore conclude that this component embraces the countries with whom the EU shares common values and with whom it has a common point of view regarding the direction and development of the international system. We have called this component *Partner in Spirit Component*.

The third component (COM3) describes in general terms the country's geographical proximity with the EU. It is worth mentioning that with these countries in particular, the EU actively develops a jurisdictional-institutional basis. We have called this component *Good Neighbour Component*.

The results by all researched countries are in Appendix A, Table A1. The results by the first twelve countries are presented in Table 13.

**Table 13. Ranking by Countries in COM1, COM2, and COM3.**

Ranking	Country	Component 1 (COM1)	Country	Component 2 (COM2)	Country	Component 3 (COM3)
1	United States	5.031	Iceland	3.027	Bosnia and Herzegovina	3.143
2	China	4.871	Norway	2.357	Ukraine	3.074
3	Japan	3.667	New Zealand	2.331	Norway	3.011
4	Canada	3.133	Switzerland	1.893	Macedonia FYR	3.001
5	Russian Federation	3.088	Barbados	1.881	Albania	2.878
6	Brazil	2.514	Australia	1.837	Moldova	2.716
7	India	2.130	Brunei Darussalam	1.782	Turkey	2.497
8	Switzerland	1.941	Costa Rica	1.578	Russian Federation	2.493
9	Korea Rep.	1.777	Canada	1.563	Montenegro	2.357



10	Australia	1.775	Singapore	1.561	Serbia	2.331
11	Hong Kong SAR China	1.435	Hong Kong SAR China	1.513	Switzerland	2.048
12	Mexico	1.395	Chile	1.465	Georgia	2.003
			--EU's Official Strategic Partner			

Sources: Own calculations on the basis of SPSS

Observing Table 13 we can say that the EU's official strategic partners have high positions and are situated very close to each other only in the first component (except South Africa, that being 31th, is quite far away from the rest of EU's strategic partners), which proves our theory and the fact that the indicators for our research were chosen correctly. Therefore we have called this component the *Strategic Partnership Component*. Thus, we should conclude that despite the rhetoric of EU's leaders about human rights and common values, the most important criteria for choosing strategic partners for the EU was the partner's economic and political weight together with mutual commercial interests. So, we can affirm our first hypothesis.

Regarding the second component, only Canada attained a high position in the ranking. The USA, South Korea, Mexico and South Africa have positive values while Russia and China occupy the worst position in the ranking.

The close neighbors and potential EU members are situated in the third component. From all EU's declared strategic partners just Russia has a high position in the ranking. Although this component does not make the country strategic, it adds a special value to a country with a high strategic component, taking into account that, being close neighbors, two powerful agents have to consider each other's respective positions, given that it is impossible to resolve separately such common problems as regional conflicts, terrorism, international crime, illegal emigration, and ecological problems, among others.

However, it should be recalled that although close neighbours are strongly encouraged to collaborate, on the other hand, proximity can also generate specific problems, in particular when the collaborating partners are interested in keeping an "area of influence", what we can observe nowadays in EU-Russian relations referring to the situation in Ukraine.

On the basis of the coefficients mentioned in Table 10, three principal components were calculated for regional groups. The results by all researched regional organizations can be found in Appendix A, Table A2.

The results obtained by the regional groups were included in the ranking by countries in COM1, COM2, and COM3 (see Table 14).

**Table 14. Ranking by Countries and Regional Organizations in COM1, COM2, and COM3.**

Rank	Country/Regional group	Comp. 1.	Country/Regional group	Comp. 2.	Country/Regional group	Comp. 3.
1	United States	5.031	Iceland	3.027	Bosnia and Herzegovina	3.143
2	China	4.871	Norway	2.357	Ukraine	3.074
3	Mercosur	3.799	New Zealand	2.331	Norway	3.011
4	Japan	3.667	Switzerland	1.893	Macedonia FYR	3.001
5	EAEU	3.235	Barbados	1.881	Albania	2.878
6	Canada	3.133	Australia	1.837	Moldova	2.716
7	Russian Federation	3.088	Brunei Darussalam	1.782	Turkey	2.497
8	ASEAN	3.054	Costa Rica	1.578	Russian Federation	2.493
9	SAARC	2.529	Canada	1.563	Montenegro	2.357
10	Brazil	2.514	Singapore	1.561	Serbia	2.331
11	India	2.130	Hong Kong SAR China	1.513	EAEU	2.064
12	Switzerland	1.942	Chile	1.465	Switzerland	2.048
13	Korea Rep.	1.777	Bahamas The	1.420	Georgia	2.003
14	Australia	1.775	Qatar	1.386	Israel	1.777
15	Hong Kong SAR China	1.435	Mauritius	1.344	Iceland	1.690
16	Mexico	1.395	Montenegro	1.280	Morocco	1.678
	-- Official EU's Strategic Partner					
	-- Regional Integration Associations					

Source: Own calculations

Observing the Table 14 it can be concluded that ASEAN, EAEU, Mercosur and SAARC have high value in Strategic Component. Regarding the Spiritual Partnership Component, neither regional group has a high position in the ranking. Mercosur probably has a lower score in the Second Component due to Venezuela's membership. Despite the fact that Venezuela was suspended in 2016, our research included data until 2014 when it was one of the Mercosur's members. The EAEU has a high score not only in the Strategic Component but also in the Good Neighbour Component.

#### 4.2.2. Binary Logistic Model

On the basis of three obtained principal components the Binary Logistic Model was applied.

Logistic regression was proposed in the late 1960s and early 1970s (Cabrera, 1994) and since that time, the use of logistic regression has increased in the social sciences (e.g., Janik and Kravitz, 1994; Tolman and Weisz, 1995; Chuang, 1997). Despite the fact that today there are several sophisticated alternatives to the logistic regression techniques that were available then, such as decision trees and neural networks (Reed P. and Wu Y., 2013), this statistical tool has been increasingly exploited, especially over the last two decades (Oommen, Baise, and Vogel, 2011). Moreover, it should also be noted that the Binary Logistic Model has been frequently used to predict events in economics (Karp, 2009; Boyacioglu, Kara, and Baykan, 2009) and the political sciences (King, Tomz and Wittenberg, 2000).

Generally, the logistic function can be written as:

$$F(x) = \frac{1}{1+e^{-(\beta_0+\beta_1)}} \quad (1)$$

Where  $F(x)$  is interpreted as the probability of the dependent variable equaling a 'success' or 'case' rather than 'non-case'

In our case the dependent variable of logistic regression is binary and contains data coded 0 or 1 (i.e. the dependent variable obtains 1 if the country is to become UE's strategic partner and 0 if not.). The variables in the equation are presented in Table 15.

**Table 15. Variables in the Equation**

		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp (B)
Step 1 <sup>a</sup>	COM1	3.287	1.075	9.354	1	.002	26.767
	COM2	-.954	.713	1.787	1	.181	.385
	COM3	.220	.637	.119	1	.730	1.246
	Constant	-5.273	1.337	15.559	1	.000	.005
Step 2 <sup>a</sup>	COM1	3.266	1.062	9.464	1	.002	26.217
	COM2	-.900	.674	1.783	1	.182	.407
	Constant	-5.226	1.309	15.937	1	.000	.005
Step 3 <sup>a</sup>	COM1	2.801	.773	13.117	1	.000	16.456
	Constant	-5.022	1.175	18.254	1	.000	.007

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: COM1, COM2, COM3.

Sources: Own calculations on the basis of SPSS

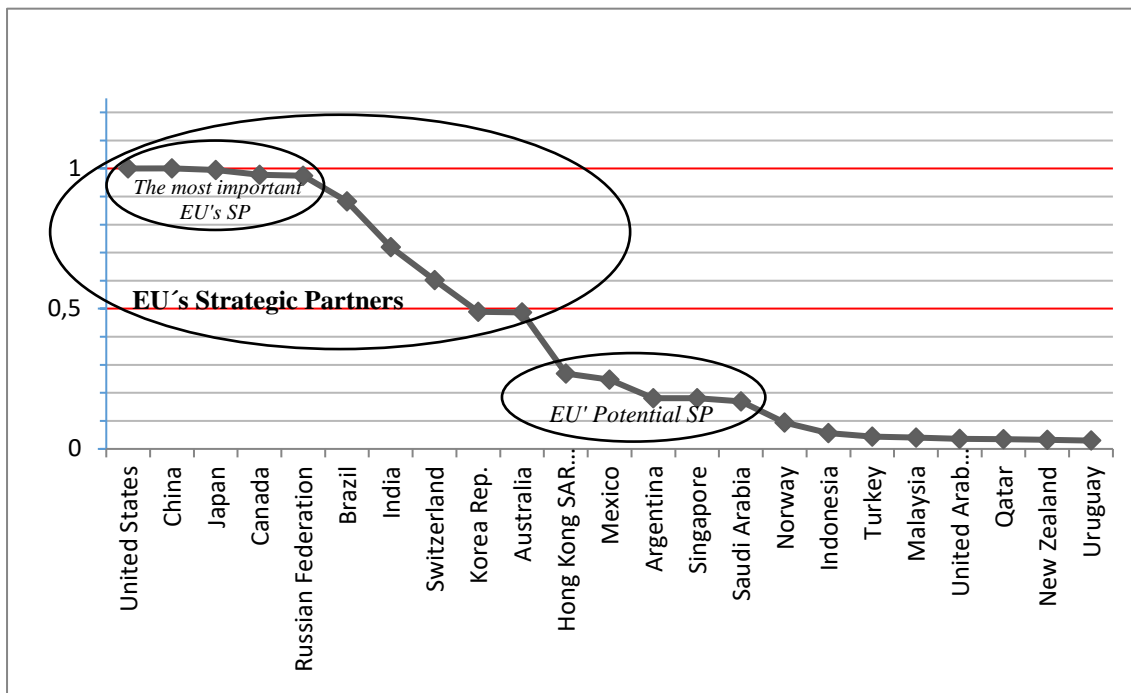
Observing the Table 15, it can be concluded that for our model just the first principal component (COM 1) added significantly to the model (Sig.=.0003) and the logistic function for our case can be written as:

$$F(x) = \frac{1}{1+e^{-(5.02+2.8*COM1)}} \quad (2)$$

Where F(x) is interpreted as the probability of the dependent variable equaling a 'country will become EU's strategic partner' rather than 'country will not become EU's strategic partner'.

The results of the Binary Logistic Model country by country on the basis of strategic component are presented in Figure 6. The probability for all researched countries can be found in Appendix A, Table A1.

**Figure 6. Probability of Becoming EU's Strategic Partner by country**



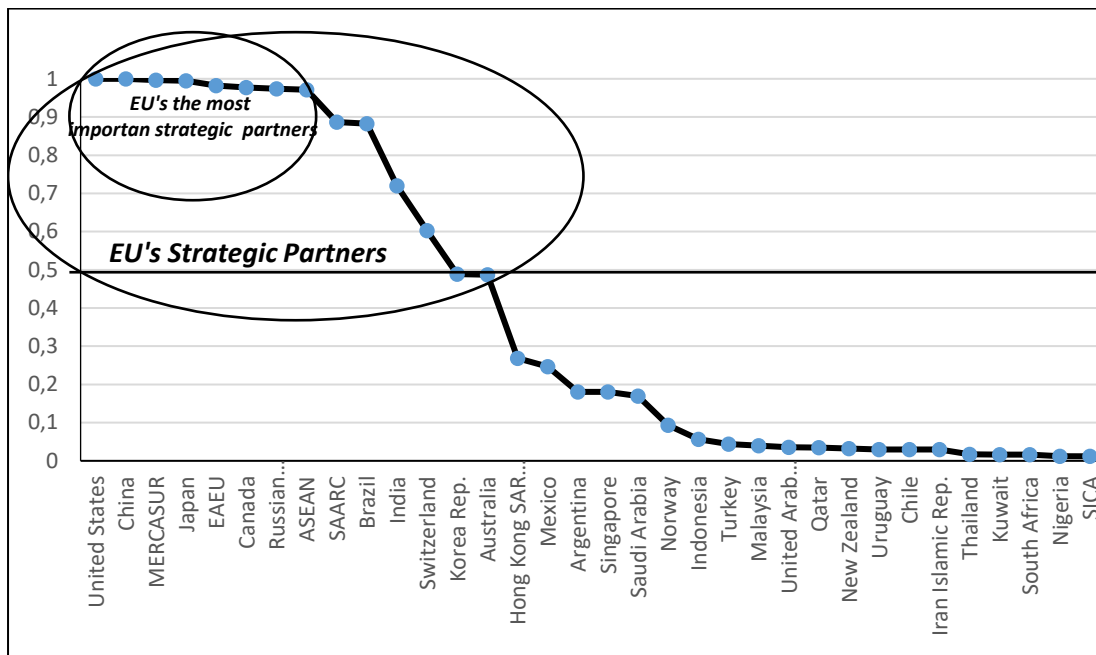
Sources: Own calculations on the basis of SPSS

Observing Figure 6, it can be concluded that in spite of fact that a new list of EU's strategic partners obtained by applying the Binary Logistic Model almost matches the official list of 'Special Ten' some differences can be noted. Thus, according to the model, Switzerland should be awarded the status of being EU's strategic partner with a probability of 60 per cent. Australia together with South Korea are practically strategic with a probability of 49 per cent and, taking into account the significant interval with the next group of countries called 'Potencial Strategic Partners', they also should be included in the list. So, our new list of 'Special Ten' comprises the following: USA, China, Japan, Canada, Russia, Brazil, India, Switzerland, South Korea and Australia. Mexico is situated in the group of 'EU's Potential Strategic Partners' together with Hong Kong, Argentina, Singapore and Saudi Arabia. South Africa is not presented on the graph and probably obtained its special status due to another particular EU's motive. In this way, we can prove our second and third hypotheses.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that the USA, Japan, Canada and Russia represent a particular group with a probability of more than 95 per cent, which we have called the most important EU's Strategic Partners with whom the EU should develop the preferential strategic partnerships.

On the basis of the Strategic Component, the Binary Logistic Component was also applied for regional integration associations (see Figure 7). The probability for all researched regional organizations can be found in Appendix A, Table A2.

**Figure 7. Probability of Becoming EU’s Strategic Partner, Including Regional Organizations**



Sources: Own Elaboration on the basis of data obtained by Binary Logistic Model

Mercosur, the EAEU and the ASEAN have the highest probability of becoming the EU’s most important strategic partners. The SAARC have considerable potential towards becoming EU’s strategic partners, while SICA and CARICOM are not interesting for the EU as Strategic Partners. The CARICOM is not represented in the graph due to its low possibility of becoming EU’s strategic partner (0.6%).

It should be assumed that according to the results of Binary Logistic Model all of six investigated regional groups are more attractive as strategic partners for the EU than any of its already established members taken separately. The most regional organization with the most potential is Mercosur. Thus, Brazil, being an EU’s official strategic partner with probability 88.3%, together with Mercosur becomes the most important EU’s strategic partner with probability 99.6% (the probability increased in 11.3%). The EAEU despite the high probability to become EU’s strategic partner (98.3%) is not so fertile a regional organization. Thus, Russia without the EAEU is

one of the most the most important of EU's strategic partners with a probability of 97.4% and together with the EAEU the probability increases by 0.9%. Regarding the ASEAN, it can be also be considered as one of the most important strategic partner of the EU with the probability of 97.2%. Its potential and synergetic effect as regional organization is very high, taking into consideration that none of its members is an official EU strategic partner. The most attractive member of this regional organization is Singapore with a probability of 18% to become EU's strategic partner. Thus, the synergetic effect of the ASEAN increased by 79%. The SAARC, in its turn -- according to the calculations --becomes the EU's strategic partner with a probability of 89%. India without the SAARC is an official strategic partner of the EU with a probability of 72%. Thus, the SAARC increased its probability to become the EU's strategic partner by 17% compared to India.

From all accumulated date, it is clear that in terms of regional organizations, the EAEU has the lowest synergetic effect due to the high position of Russia and low positions of the rest of its members. Thus the EAEU just added 0.9% compared with 11.3% of the Mercosur, 17% of SAARC and 72% of the ASEAN. It confirms the theory that the creation of the EEU is not so much an economic project but rather a geopolitical one aimed at consolidating its role as a leading power. The ASEAN, in its turn, has the highest synergetic effect as a regional organization.

#### 4.2.3. Synthetic Index

In spite of the fact that only the first component was significant for the Binary Logistic Model, the other two components are not irrelevant for our research. The EU, while deciding which strategic partners to choose, should also take into account the common values, as well as the level of development of a juridical and institutional base. Otherwise, the concept of EU's Strategic Partnership runs the risk of turning into more of a programmatic partnership than strategic. Thus on the basis of the three components the synthetic index has been elaborated.

In order to construct Strategic Partner's Suitability Index (SPSI) for the EU we have given weight to every component on the basis of total variance as explained. The system of thus assessing partial indicators based on a clear-cut total variance for every factor has been already used by many authors in different economic fields (Iglesias et al., 2000).

$$SPSI = 0.52(Comp1) + 0.32(Comp2) + 0.16(Comp3) \quad (3)$$

The results by countries and regional organizations with respect to the Strategic Partner's Suitability Index (SPSI) are presented in Table 16. The results for all researched countries and regional organizations can be found in Appendix A, Table A1 and A2.

**Table 16. Top 30 of EU's Strategic Partners**

<b>Ranking</b>	<b>Country/Regional Organization</b>	<b>Strategic Partner's Suitability Index (SPSI)</b>
1	United States	2.643
2	Canada	2.074
3	Switzerland	1.943
4	Japan	1.767
5	Norway	1.747
6	Mercosur	1.565
7	Australia	1.501
8	China	1.356
9	Russian Federation	1.337
10	Brazil	1.181
11	Iceland	1.151
12	EAEU	1.149
13	Hong Kong SAR China	1.035
14	Korea Rep.	1.033
15	ASEAN	1.023
16	Singapore	0.987
17	New Zealand	0.930
18	Chile	0.892
19	Mexico	0.794
20	Argentina	0.677
21	Turkey	0.661
22	Israel	0.657
23	Uruguay	0.570
24	Qatar	0.547



25	India	0.527
26	Costa Rica	0.522
27	South Africa	0.463
28	United Arab Emirates	0.438
29	SAARC	0.437
30	SICA	0.430
	-- Official EU's Strategic Partner	
	-- Regional Group	

Sources: Own calculations

By observing Table 16 it can be highlighted that the Mercosur has the highest position in the ranking compared with the rest of investigated regional organizations. Its position is higher than Brazil's, Argentina's or Uruguay's. Thus it can be concluded that according to the SPSI, the Mercosur is more suitable as EU's strategic partner than any of its members taken separately. Regarding the ASEAN it can be said that its position in the ranking mostly coheres with its member Singapore. As for the EAEU, the SAARC and the SICA, they seem to be less suitable as EU's strategic partners than any of their members taken separately (Russia is more suitable than the EAEU, India is more suitable than the SAARC, Costa Rica is more suitable than the SICA). Probably many regional groups, as well as some of the official strategic partners of the EU (China, India, Russia), were penalized for colliding with EU's norms and values. The CARICOM is not presented in the Table 14 due to its very low position in the ranking (it is the 41st), which virtually matches its members' position, the Bahamas (which is 40<sup>th</sup> in the ranking). So it can be summarized that, according to the SPSI, not all of the six investigated regional organizations were more suitable as EU's Strategic Partner than any of its members lacking participation in integration groups. The suitability of regional organization depends on the each individual case.

#### 4.2.4 Cluster Analysis

Another way to encompass three principal components can be by applying cluster analysis. The Cluster Analysis was carried out with SPSS software using the K-means Cluster Procedure. The first Component has the largest F contributing the greatest separation between clusters (see Table 17).

**Table 17. ANOVA**

	Cluster		Error		F	Sig.
	Mean Square	df	Mean Square	df		
Comp_1	23.550	6	.284	142	83.044	.000
Comp_2	19.956	6	.322	142	61.919	.000
Comp_3	17.294	6	.311	142	55.602	.000

Sources: Own calculations on the basis of SPSS

It was decided to stop with seven clusters this seems to give the most realistic results for us. Thus, the division on seven clusters first allowed us to discard a huge number of counties and, second, to concentrate on the countries, which are of some interest as EU's strategic partners. The number of cases in each cluster is presented in Table 18.

**Table 18. Number of Cases in****Each Cluster**

Cluster	1	1.000
	2	14.000
	3	62.000
	4	5.000
	5	6.000
	6	56.000
	7	5.000
Valid		149.000
Missing		0.000

Sources: Own calculations on the basis of SPSS

The second, third and sixth clusters have a low value of the Strategic Component (Comp\_1) (see Table 19) and that is why we can conclude that they are not interesting for the EU as Strategic Partners and, consequently, these countries were removed from our further investigation. Countries of the second cluster with a strong Good Neighbour Component (Comp\_2) could be defined either as potential EU's members or partners for the EU's Good Neighbour policy.

**Table 19. Initial Clusters' Centres**

	Cluster						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Comp_1	4.87136	-.20058	.61416	5.03131	3.08809	-.17392	1.94150
Comp_2	-3.36958	-.12522	.98581	.31401	-2.08649	-1.99574	1.89304
Comp_3	-.61673	3.07420	-1.22908	-.45794	2.49266	-.36859	2.04756

Sources: Own calculations on the basis of SPSS

Distribution of countries and regional organizations by the clusters with high Strategic Component is presented in Table 20.

**Table 20. Distribution by cluster**

Cluster	1	4	5	7
<b>Countries/Regional Organization</b>	China	Brazil Canada Japan Korea Rep.  United States	ASEAN EAEU India Mercosur  Russian Federation  SAARC	Australia Chile Iceland Norway  Switzerland

Sources: Own elaboration

Observing the Table 20 it can be concluded that ASEAN, EAEU, Mercosur and SAARC have high value in Strategic Component while SICA and CARICOM are not interesting for the EU as strategic partners. Mexico and South Africa, being official strategic partners of the EU, seem to be almost irrelevant, according to cluster analysis.

The fifth cluster represents countries with a strong strategic component with whom the EU has developed a jurisdictional-institutional basis but which doesn't jibe with EU norms and values (the Partner in Spirit Component (Comp\_3 is negative). Thus, it can be said that they are strategically attractive partners for the EU but with a problematic nature regarding common values.

Mercosur is probably situated in fifth cluster due to Venezuela's membership that was suspended in 2016.

The first cluster also represents countries strategically attractive for the EU but with low coherence regarding common values; however, the difference of this cluster is that with these countries the EU does not have a strong jurisdictional-institutional basis. Only China is situated in the first cluster, and this is what makes it special in comparison with other partners.

The fourth cluster includes five partners of the EU's 'Special Ten' which are strategic for the EU's and have a positive Partner in Spirit Component although the jurisdictional-institutional basis with these partners is not so well-developed. Finally, in the seventh cluster are situated countries, which despite the fact that their Strategic Component is not so high in comparison with the other three clusters, have very high coherence with EU's norms and values and a strong jurisdictional-institutional basis with EU. It should be said that they are EU's potential strategic partners and the basis of their relationships are common values.

## 5. Conclusions

In this chapter we have investigated the term of strategic partnership together with the EU's conception of strategic partnership, and we have given our own definition of this term.

Under the empirical framework on the basis of CATPCA and PCA three principal components were obtained. The first component has been called the Strategic Component, the second one - the Spiritual Partnership Component and the last one - the Good Neighbour Component.

The EU's 'Special Ten' occupy the highest position and are situated close to each other only in the Strategic Component which represents the political and economic weight of each partner together with their common interests, especially those of a commercial nature, with the EU. Moreover, only this component was significant was the Binary Logistic Model. In this regard, it can be concluded that despite the EU leaders' rhetoric about the importance of common values, the main indicator in choosing its strategic partners was the partner's economic and political weight together with its commercial interests (the first hypothesis is proved).

According to the Binary Logistic Model South Africa should not be declared as EU's strategic partner while Switzerland and Australia should be included in the EU's special list. Mexico is situated in the group of 'EU's Potential Strategic Partners'. However, it should not be forgotten that Switzerland (like Norway) has already a very peculiar relation with the EU being member of the EU single market and of the Schengen area, which goes beyond a strategic partnership. Nevertheless,

we argue that due to the high status and importance of Switzerland has not been explicitly stated at the international level this country should be either included in the list of EU's strategic partners or any other higher official status should be awarded.

The cluster analysis also has demonstrated that Mexico and South Africa are not of sufficient strategic interest to qualify as EU's official strategic partners. Thus, the second and third hypotheses have been proved.

It is worth mentioning that the USA, Japan, Canada and Russia represent a particular group with a probability of more than 95 per cent, which we have called the most important EU's Strategic Partners with whom the EU should develop the preferential strategic partnerships. Thus, despite the political crisis in EU-Russian relationships Russia continues being strategically important for the EU.

By adding the regional integration organizations into analysis, the Binary Logistic Model has shown that while SICA and CARICOM are not interesting for the EU as Strategic Partners, the Mercosur, the EAEU and the ASEAN have the highest probability to reach this goal. The SAARC have sufficient probability to turn into EU's strategic partner. The regional organization with the most potential is Mercosur. The cluster analysis also confirmed that the ASEAN, the EAEU, the Mercosur and the SAARC are attractive as strategic regional partners for EU, while SICA and CARICOM do not represent the strategic interest. So our forth hypothesis was also proved. The ASEAN has the highest synergetic effect as a regional organization, taking into consideration that none of its members is an official EU's strategic partner. From all investigated regional organizations the EAEU has the lowest synergetic effect as a regional organization. So it can be concluded that despite the high probability to become EU's strategic partner, the EAEU is not so viable as a regional organization.

According to the model it can be assumed that all six investigated regional organisations became more attractive as EU's strategic partners than any of its present members. In this regard it can be concluded that for the EU it is more effective to develop strategic partnerships with regional organizations than to build bilateral relations with any of its current members. Moreover, regional organizations give possibility for the less attractive members to become more strategic for the EU (fifth hypothesis is proved).

While only the strategic component was significant for the Binary Logistic Model, in order to carry out the Strategic Partnership in practice it is also important to have an efficient jurisdictional and institutional basis with a partner, and, according to EU's concept, to match with EU's norms and values. In this regard, taking into account the three components, the Strategic Partner's Suitability Index (SPSI) was elaborated and consequently applied for regional organization. Russia and China

being the last in the rank in Second Component were penalized by mismatching with EU's values.

According to the SPSI, the Mercosur is more suitable as EU's strategic partner than any of its present members. Regarding the ASEAN it can be said that its position in the ranking is in virtual agreement with its member Singapore. The CARICOM also nearly converges with one of its member's position, that of the Bahamas. As for the EAEU, the SAARC and the SICA, they seem to be less suitable as EU's strategic partner than any of their members, inasmuch as they were probably penalized for mismatching with EU's norms and values. So, if the EU takes into consideration common values and geographic proximity while choosing its strategic partners the suitability of regional organization depends on each separate and individual case. Thus, in this scenario the fifth hypothesis cannot be proved.

The cluster analysis has confirmed that the EU's strategic partners are too heterogeneous for designing a collective response to multilateralism (sixth hypothesis has been proved). At least there are two different groups of strategic partners: the first one, which concurs with EU norms and values and the second one, which from the beginning has had a problematic nature regarding common values.

## 6. Appendix A. Results for All Researched Countries and Regional Organizations

**Table A1. Results for All Researched Countries**

Country	COM.1	COM. 2	COM. 3	SPSI	Probability
Afghanistan	-0.486	-1.930	-0.008	-0.871	0.002
Albania	-0.706	0.551	2.878	0.269	0.001
Algeria	0.015	-0.818	0.577	-0.162	0.007
Angola	-0.398	-0.429	-0.492	-0.423	0.002
Argentina	1.253	-0.196	0.553	0.677	0.181
Armenia	-0.722	0.063	1.421	-0.128	0.001
Australia	1.775	1.837	-0.060	1.501	0.487
Azerbaijan	-0.132	-0.589	0.591	-0.163	0.005
Bahamas The	0.024	1.420	-0.956	0.314	0.007
Bahrain	-0.122	0.801	-1.272	-0.011	0.005
Bangladesh	0.032	-0.799	-0.277	-0.283	0.007
Barbados	-0.220	1.881	-0.381	0.427	0.004
Belarus	-0.469	-0.738	1.415	-0.254	0.002
Belize	-0.795	0.730	-0.269	-0.223	0.001
Benin	-0.465	0.024	-0.583	-0.327	0.002
Bhutan	-0.715	0.115	-0.892	-0.478	0.001
Bolivia	-0.419	0.245	-0.375	-0.199	0.002
Bosnia and Herzegovina	-0.628	-0.610	3.143	-0.019	0.001
Botswana	-0.151	1.053	-0.550	0.171	0.004
Brazil	2.514	-0.310	-0.172	1.181	0.883
Brunei Darussalam	0.141	1.782	-1.530	0.399	0.010
Burkina Faso	-0.494	-0.173	-0.470	-0.388	0.002
Burundi	-0.752	-0.414	-0.315	-0.574	0.001
Cabo Verde	-0.676	1.136	-0.516	-0.071	0.001
Cambodia	-0.354	-0.301	-0.580	-0.373	0.002
Cameroon	-0.411	-0.443	-0.220	-0.391	0.002
Canada	3.133	1.563	-0.345	2.074	0.977
Central African Republic	-0.792	-0.743	-0.451	-0.722	0.001
Chad	-0.744	-0.768	-0.327	-0.685	0.001
Chile	0.546	1.465	0.873	0.892	0.030
China	4.871	-3.370	-0.617	1.356	1.000
Colombia	0.179	0.001	0.142	0.116	0.011
Congo Dem. Rep.	-0.527	-0.705	-0.059	-0.509	0.002
Congo Rep.	-0.433	-0.264	-0.776	-0.433	0.002
Costa Rica	0.070	1.578	-0.122	0.522	0.008
Cote d'Ivoire	-0.365	-1.070	-0.051	-0.540	0.002
Cuba	-0.290	-0.439	-0.421	-0.359	0.003
Djibouti	-0.740	-0.264	-0.533	-0.554	0.001
Dominica	-0.779	1.259	-0.818	-0.133	0.001

Dominican Republic	-0.282	0.487	-0.364	-0.049	0.003
Ecuador	-0.481	0.183	0.180	-0.163	0.002
Egypt Arab Rep.	0.011	-1.284	1.198	-0.214	0.007
El Salvador	-0.324	0.931	0.002	0.130	0.003
Equatorial Guinea	-0.188	-0.219	-1.159	-0.353	0.004
Eritrea	-0.864	-1.176	-0.558	-0.915	0.001
Ethiopia	-0.130	-1.539	-0.189	-0.590	0.005
Fiji	-0.717	0.501	-0.625	-0.312	0.001
Gabon	-0.319	0.013	-0.608	-0.259	0.003
Gambia The	-0.772	0.118	-0.969	-0.518	0.001
Georgia	-0.560	0.445	2.003	0.172	0.001
Ghana	-0.081	0.253	-0.447	-0.032	0.005
Guatemala	-0.413	0.706	0.059	0.021	0.002
Guinea	-0.628	-1.213	-0.339	-0.769	0.001
Guinea-Bissau	-0.678	-0.622	-0.365	-0.610	0.001
Guyana	-0.520	0.169	-0.319	-0.267	0.002
Haiti	-0.766	-0.395	-0.310	-0.574	0.001
Honduras	-0.476	0.615	0.142	-0.028	0.002
Hong Kong SAR China	1.435	1.513	-1.220	1.035	0.269
Iceland	-0.170	3.027	1.690	1.151	0.004
India	2.130	-1.745	-0.138	0.527	0.720
Indonesia	0.788	-0.685	-0.062	0.181	0.057
Iran Islamic Rep.	0.545	-1.930	-0.664	-0.440	0.029
Iraq	0.099	-1.869	-0.099	-0.563	0.009
Israel	0.204	0.833	1.777	0.657	0.012
Jamaica	-0.239	0.284	-0.160	-0.059	0.003
Japan	3.667	-0.005	-0.866	1.767	0.995
Jordan	-0.329	-0.180	1.030	-0.064	0.003
Kazakhstan	0.074	-0.434	0.582	-0.007	0.008
Kenya	-0.349	-0.465	0.170	-0.303	0.002
Korea Rep.	1.777	0.533	-0.385	1.033	0.489
Kuwait	0.326	0.806	-1.240	0.229	0.016
Kyrgyz Republic	-0.625	-0.296	0.069	-0.409	0.001
Lao PDR	-0.559	-0.047	-0.864	-0.444	0.001
Lebanon	-0.417	-0.708	1.031	-0.278	0.002
Lesotho	-0.752	0.365	-0.039	-0.280	0.001
Liberia	-0.515	-0.677	-0.335	-0.538	0.002
Libya	-0.046	-1.487	-0.345	-0.555	0.006
Macedonia FYR	-0.611	0.608	3.001	0.357	0.001
Madagascar	-0.554	-0.223	-0.045	-0.367	0.001
Malawi	-0.586	0.143	-0.492	-0.338	0.001
Malaysia	0.659	0.427	-0.362	0.421	0.040
Maldives	-0.801	0.205	-0.867	-0.489	0.001
Mali	-0.505	-0.078	-0.444	-0.358	0.002
Mauritania	-0.600	-0.728	-0.189	-0.575	0.001



Mauritius	0.007	1.345	-0.536	0.348	0.007
Mexico	1.395	0.021	0.385	0.794	0.247
Moldova	-0.763	0.072	2.716	0.061	0.001
Mongolia	-0.517	0.338	-0.454	-0.233	0.002
Montenegro	-0.700	1.279	2.357	0.423	0.001
Morocco	-0.335	-0.347	1.678	-0.017	0.003
Mozambique	-0.419	-0.181	-0.155	-0.300	0.002
Myanmar	-0.283	-1.896	-0.778	-0.878	0.003
Namibia	-0.353	0.704	-0.280	-0.003	0.002
Nepal	-0.568	-0.714	0.038	-0.518	0.001
New Zealand	0.579	2.331	-0.730	0.930	0.032
Nicaragua	-0.391	0.557	0.428	0.043	0.002
Niger	-0.492	-0.471	-0.590	-0.501	0.002
Nigeria	0.227	-0.922	-0.071	-0.189	0.012
Norway	0.983	2.357	3.011	1.747	0.094
Oman	-0.128	0.488	-0.970	-0.065	0.005
Pakistan	0.000	-1.264	0.107	-0.388	0.007
Panama	-0.115	1.238	-0.186	0.307	0.005
Papua New Guinea	-0.468	-0.310	-0.327	-0.395	0.002
Paraguay	-0.232	0.707	-0.438	0.035	0.003
Peru	-0.094	0.258	0.020	0.037	0.005
Philippines	0.027	-0.032	-0.188	-0.026	0.007
Qatar	0.610	1.386	-1.338	0.547	0.035
Russian Federation	3.088	-2.086	2.493	1.337	0.974
Rwanda	-0.450	0.156	-0.573	-0.276	0.002
Saudi Arabia	1.227	-0.266	-0.997	0.393	0.170
Senegal	-0.254	-0.110	-0.191	-0.198	0.003
Serbia	0.045	-0.129	2.331	0.355	0.007
Seychelles	-0.433	1.055	-0.644	0.009	0.002
Sierra Leone	-0.562	-0.437	-0.590	-0.526	0.001
Singapore	1.253	1.561	-1.026	0.987	0.181
South Africa	0.320	0.472	0.909	0.463	0.016
Sri Lanka	-0.150	-0.036	-0.495	-0.169	0.004
Sudan	-0.174	-1.996	-0.369	-0.788	0.004
Suriname	-0.616	0.767	-0.623	-0.174	0.001
Swaziland	-0.707	0.043	-0.285	-0.400	0.001
Switzerland	1.942	1.893	2.048	1.943	0.602
Syrian Arab Republic	-0.115	-2.017	0.664	-0.599	0.005
Tajikistan	-0.654	-0.479	-0.077	-0.506	0.001
Tanzania	-0.269	0.071	-0.452	-0.189	0.003
Thailand	0.355	-0.300	-0.341	0.034	0.017
Timor-Leste	-0.629	-0.209	-0.556	-0.483	0.001
Togo	-0.601	-0.394	-0.492	-0.517	0.001
Tonga	-0.904	0.612	-0.738	-0.392	0.001
Trinidad and Tobago	-0.138	0.842	-0.773	0.074	0.004



Tunisia	-0.192	-0.718	0.978	-0.173	0.004
Turkey	0.696	-0.314	2.497	0.661	0.044
Turkmenistan	-0.376	-1.007	-0.860	-0.655	0.002
Uganda	-0.418	-0.176	-0.278	-0.318	0.002
Ukraine	-0.201	-0.125	3.074	0.348	0.004
United Arab Emirates	0.614	0.986	-1.229	0.438	0.036
United States	5.031	0.314	-0.458	2.643	1.000
Uruguay	0.548	1.173	-0.564	0.570	0.030
Uzbekistan	-0.340	-1.238	-0.327	-0.625	0.003
Venezuela RB	0.119	-0.052	-0.393	-0.018	0.009
Vietnam	-0.030	-0.390	0.300	-0.093	0.006
Yemen Rep.	-0.770	-0.938	-0.153	-0.725	0.001
Zambia	-0.319	0.268	-0.387	-0.142	0.003
Zimbabwe	-0.535	-1.034	-0.147	-0.633	0.001

Source: Own calculations on the basis of SPSS

**Table A2. Results for All Researched Regional Organizations**

<b>Regional Organization</b>	<b>COM.1</b>	<b>COM.2</b>	<b>COM.3</b>	<b>SPSI</b>	<b>Probability</b>
ASEAN	3.054	-2.069	0.603	1.023	0.972
CARICOM	-0.059	0.778	0.590	0.313	0.006
EAEU	3.235	-2.699	2.064	1.149	0.983
MERCOSUR	3.799	-1.612	0.657	1.565	0.996
SAARC	2.529	-2.959	0.429	0.437	0.887
SICA	0.216	0.633	0.718	0.430	0.012

Source: Own calculations on the basis of SPSS

## CAPÍTULO 2

### **El caso de la asociación estratégica entre la UE y Rusia: las consecuencias de su fracaso en el formato de la guerra de sanciones.**

*La crisis es un juicio.*

*El juicio implica los esfuerzos de todas las partes con el objetivo de resolver el problema.*

*La crisis no es un final, sino que es una fase extrema de la lucha que se pierde o se gana.*

*En caso de la victoria se crean promesas para una nueva etapa de desarrollo.*

S.B. Pereslegin

## 1. Introducción

La relación entre la Federación Rusa y la Unión Europea tiene importancia fundamental, pero es enormemente compleja y difícil. La UE y la FR son jugadores poderosos a nivel regional y global. El tema es actual porque de las relaciones euro-rusas depende el destino de todo el continente euroasiático; si será integrado entre los países de la UE y de la FR o si vuelven a aparecer las líneas de separación.

De momento ambas partes están en una situación crítica; la crisis política en Ucrania acabó con el concepto de asociación estratégica que las partes habían desarrollado durante tanto tiempo. El objetivo de este capítulo es analizar las relaciones euro-rusas antes y después de la crisis. Además, la investigación se enfoca en el caso concreto de las relaciones euro-rusas en el contexto de la guerra de sanciones.

El capítulo está compuesto por tres apartados. En el primer apartado analizamos las relaciones entre Rusia y la UE antes de las sanciones, cuando el concepto de la asociación estratégica estaba en vigor; fue entonces cuando surgieron los principales desacuerdos, consecuencia de los cuales nos encontramos con la situación actual. El segundo apartado tiene por objetivo analizar las relaciones euro-rusas después de la aplicación de las sanciones, que quedaron bastante afectadas por la mencionada política de sanciones mutuas. El tercer apartado tiene como destino contribuir a la evidencia empírica con el fin de averiguar qué factores influyeron en el intercambio comercial entre Rusia y la EU, incluyendo la aspirada asociación estratégica que fue proclamada en 2009 y que acabó en 2014 debido al conflicto en Ucrania y anexión de Crimea.

En cuanto a la metodología, hemos analizado la literatura coherente para profundizar en el marco teórico y la estadística descriptiva y herramienta econométrica para desarrollar el marco empírico. Además, cabe destacar la aplicación del modelo de Gravitación con el objetivo de analizar cómo el intercambio comercial euro-ruso fue afectado por las sanciones, junto con otros factores tales como la devaluación de la moneda rusa y los precios del petróleo.

Concluimos finalmente que, a pesar de toda la gravedad de la situación actual, los líderes rusos y europeos deberían comprender que en las condiciones del mundo globalizado, la guerra de las sanciones no permite el desarrollo sostenible del continente euroasiático, obstaculizando el comercio, el intercambio de tecnologías o el turismo y la comunicación entre las personas, por lo que se hace necesario encontrar una posible solución lo antes posible. La integración y colaboración activa internacional puede traer muchos más beneficios para ambas partes usando las ventajas competitivas que tiene cada uno y minimizando sus defectos. En este sentido, la UE y Rusia deberían estar interesadas en la construcción de una Europa unida, fuerte y próspera.

## 2. UE y Rusia en el formato de asociación estratégica

Antes del conflicto en Ucrania las relaciones entre Rusia y la UE estaban desarrollándose en el formato de asociación estratégica. El año de establecimiento de dicha asociación debe considerarse 2009, año en que la UE incluyó a Rusia en la lista oficial de sus socios estratégicos. No obstante, hay que mencionar que por primera vez el término de asociación estratégica apareció en los documentos oficiales de la UE en 1998<sup>7</sup> donde la UE confirmó la necesidad de considerar a Rusia como su socio estratégico. Por lo tanto, fue en las relaciones mantenidas con Moscú cuando la UE aplicó el término por primera y única vez durante los años noventa. El término ni siquiera figura en la relaciones transatlánticas que eran más importantes para la UE (Podadera Rivera and Garashchuk; 2016a).

Además cabe destacar que desde la disolución de la Unión Soviética las relaciones de la asociación estratégica entre la UE y Rusia han pasado varias etapas pasando por los cambios drásticos. Así, si antes el gobierno ruso debilitado por su enorme deuda exterior, la inestabilidad política y financiera y la guerra en Chechenia tenía que doblegarse siempre ante los planteamientos occidentales, en la última década la situación ha vuelto a cambiar totalmente. Hoy en día, Moscú realiza su propia política independiente y ya no intenta seguir las normas y principios de Bruselas. En esta situación es difícil para ambas partes ir al compromiso, pero no tienen otra opción teniendo en cuenta la interdependencia de las economías y el amplio círculo de contactos que han establecido durante más de 20 años casi en todos los campos de colaboración.

En este apartado analizamos las relaciones entre la UE y Rusia desde su inicio hasta la crisis de 2014, cuando Rusia fue expulsada de la lista de los diez socios estratégicos de la UE.

### 2.1. El inicio de las relaciones entre la UE y Rusia

El comienzo del establecimiento de las relaciones entre la FR y la UE deberíamos considerarlo en el año 1994, cuando ambas partes firmaron El Acuerdo sobre la Asociación y Cooperación (AAC)<sup>8</sup> en Corfú, que entró en vigor en diciembre de 1997. El acuerdo tenía un contenido fundamentalmente económico (aunque abordaba también, someramente, otros ámbitos como la cultura y la lucha contra la criminalidad organizada), concediéndose ambas partes la cláusula de nación más favorecida y la aplicación de una parte de las reglas del GATT, si bien se daba a éstas un carácter provisional hasta que Rusia ingresara en la OMC.

<sup>7</sup> El artículo 111 de la Presidencia del Consejo Europeo de Viena (11-12 de diciembre): “El Consejo Europeo ha tenido una discusión a fondo sobre la política hacia Rusia. Eso reafirma la importancia de Rusia como un socio estratégico de la Unión demostrado en el cumbre de UE-Rusia el 27 de Octubre en Viena.

<sup>8</sup> El documento completo (en ruso) se puede ver en <http://docs.pravo.ru/document/view/18560573/16243964>

Desde el punto de vista institucional el AAC, establecía una densa red de contactos políticos y económicos a diversos niveles, entre ellos dos reuniones Cumbre anuales, y reuniones del Consejo Permanente de Cooperación a nivel ministerial en formato “troika”<sup>9</sup> (sobre Asuntos Exteriores, Energía, Educación y Cultura, etc.).

En el Artículo 1 de la AAC podemos subrayar los siguientes puntos:

- Reforzar libertades políticas y económicas
- Apoyar los esfuerzos de Rusia de consolidar su democracia y desarrollar su economía y completar su transición en el mercado económico

De ahí podemos sacar la conclusión de que inicialmente las relaciones entre la UE y Rusia se percibían como una relación asimétrica donde Rusia era un país que necesitaba ayuda y asesoramiento y la UE era su socio con los recursos, conocimientos y experiencia necesaria para llevar Rusia a una situación político-económica más estable. Dicha tesis también puede estar confirmada por la primera estrategia hacia Rusia que, según Haukkala (2000), ya había sido elaborada en 1995 y que se correspondía con las conclusiones del anexo 8 del Consejo Europeo de la Presidencia de Madrid. Así, el Consejo Europeo determinó sus compromisos de establecer “una asociación sólida con Rusia a fin de promover el proceso de reformas democráticas y económicas, lograr un mayor respeto de los derechos humanos, consolidar la paz, estabilidad y seguridad para evitar las nuevas líneas de división en Europa y conseguir la integración entera de Rusia en la comunidad de naciones libres y democráticas”.

La aprobación de “*La Estrategia colectiva de la Unión Europea hacia la Federación Rusa*”<sup>10</sup> de 1999 contenía la formulación de las tareas más concretas. Así, el párrafo “El fortalecimiento de la democracia, los principios del Estado de Derecho e instituciones estatales” del documento estratégico de la UE estaba dividido en dos posiciones: “el fortalecimiento de los principios del estado de Derecho e instituciones estatales” y “el fortalecimiento de la sociedad civil”. En el primer punto se reflejaba la intención de apoyar las reformas institucionales necesarias para la creación de una administración eficiente y moderna en los tres poderes de Estado. En concreto, por vía del aumento del poder en las estructuras independientes judiciales, estatales y administrativas, el apoyo en la organización de las elecciones presidenciales y parlamentarias libres y justas de 1999-2000, el apoyo a Rusia en sus intentos de cumplir sus obligaciones en el campo de Derechos Humanos, etc. En cuanto a la sociedad civil, se marcaba la racionalidad de apoyar las organizaciones

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<sup>9</sup> Este término fue usado en la UE cuando se refería a un grupo integrado por el Ministro de Asuntos Exteriores del Estado miembro que ejerza la Presidencia del Consejo de Ministros, el Secretario General del Consejo de la Unión Europea, que también ocupó el cargo de Alto Representante de la Política Exterior y de Seguridad Común (PESC), y la Comisaria Europea de Relaciones Exteriores.

<sup>10</sup> El documento completo (en ruso) se puede ver en <http://docs.cntd.ru/document/901888713>

independientes no estatales, favorecer la libertad de los medios de comunicación, etc.

Tal atención a esta temática provocó una notable irritación en los círculos políticos y de expertos rusos. Esta posición de Bruselas a lo mejor podía encontrar el apoyo de una Rusia débil y destruida después de la caída de la URSS del siglo pasado, pero para la nueva Rusia recuperada, que poco a poco conquistaba el estatus de potencia emergente e independiente en el área internacional, tal política de la UE ponía en dudas su nuevo estatus.

En este contexto, con la aprobación de “*La Estrategia del desarrollo de las relaciones entre la Federación Rusa y la Unión Europea a medio plazo (2000-2010)*”<sup>11</sup> Rusia por primera vez demandó los cambios en las relaciones con la UE. Así el Artículo 1.1 explicaba los nuevos términos en la relación donde:

“Rusia debería preservar su libertad e implementar sus políticas domésticas y exteriores. (...) Asociación con la UE puede manifestarse por sí mismo en los esfuerzos conjuntos para establecer un sistema de seguridad colectiva en Europa sobre la base de igualdad sin líneas de división (...) teniendo un alto nivel de la confianza mutua y cooperación en la política y en la economía.”

No obstante, se puede concluir que desde su inicio hasta los años 1999-2000 las relaciones entre Rusia y la UE se desarrollaban bajo el modelo asimétrico donde la UE consideraba a Rusia más como un objeto de su política que un sujeto independiente de las relaciones internacionales.

## **2.2. El cambio de tono por parte de Rusia en las relaciones con la UE**

La idea de una Rusia fuerte y asertiva que continuamente reclama el status de gran potencia, se suele asociar con la llegada al poder de Vladimir Putin y su duradera presidencia. Así en junio de 2000 Putin aprobó el Concepto de la *Política Exterior de la Federación Rusa*<sup>12</sup> donde podemos observar una evidente declaración política de recuperación del estatus de Rusia como una gran potencia y sus objetivos de la política exterior:

“Garantizar la solvente seguridad del país, preservar y fortalecer su soberanía e integridad territorial, lograr unas posiciones firmes y prestigiosas en la comunidad mundial, lo más plenamente compatibles con los intereses de la Federación Rusa como una gran potencia,

<sup>11</sup> El documento completo (en ruso) está disponible en [https://mgimo.ru/files2/y11\\_2013/243404/4.4.strategy\\_russia\\_relations\\_eu.htm](https://mgimo.ru/files2/y11_2013/243404/4.4.strategy_russia_relations_eu.htm)

<sup>12</sup> El documento completo (en ruso) está disponible en: <http://docs.cntd.ru/document/901764263>

como uno de los centros más influyentes del mundo moderno y que son necesarias para el crecimiento de su potencial político, económico, intelectual y potencial”

En el transcurso de la cumbre entre la UE y Rusia de 2000<sup>13</sup>, en la Declaración Conjunta fue afirmado que “La UE desea promover una convergencia de los intereses aún más estrecha con Rusia y un alto nivel de estabilidad y seguridad de Europa en su conjunto. La UE reafirmó que podía que Rusia estuviera invitada a participar en las operaciones de gestión de crisis en el futuro.” Por lo tanto, podemos concluir que hubo señales de un verdadero cambio en las relaciones con Rusia.

No obstante, deberíamos mencionar que el AAC se concluyó cuando las circunstancias, tanto de Rusia como de la UE (que entonces contaba con solo 15 miembros), eran muy distintas de las actuales y la UE todavía no había desarrollado algunas políticas como la Política Común de Seguridad y Defensa y de Justicia e Interior. Por ello, en la Cumbre de San Petersburgo de mayo de 2003 se decidió impulsar la cooperación en cuatro áreas principales, denominadas “los Cuatro Espacios Comunes”. Fue en la cumbre de 2003 cuando el presidente ruso Vladimir Putin elevó las expectativas del AAC y de esas cumbres hacia la consolidación de una “Asociación Estratégica” euro-rusa, aludiendo a las celebraciones tricentenarias de la creación de esa ciudad. “Los Cuatro Espacios Comunes se suponen:

- El Espacio Común Económico para entablar como objetivo final un mercado integral entre la UE y la FR. La creación del espacio está dirigida a fortalecer el comercio y las inversiones internas y extranjeras. La colaboración energética, colaboración en la defensa del medio ambiente y el desarrollo de la red común de transporte europeo también están incluidos en el Espacio Común Económico.
- El Espacio Común de Libertad, Seguridad y Justicia con miras a promover el libre movimiento de personas, combatir el terrorismo y el crimen organizado internacional, así como proteger los derechos humanos. En el futuro las partes esperan cancelar el régimen de visados.
- El Espacio Común de Seguridad Exterior. Tiene como destino fortalecer la colaboración en el área internacional, subrayando la importancia de los organismos internacionales tales como la ONU, la OSCE, el Consejo Europeo. Esta área, en particular, apunta a aplacar las diferencias en las percepciones y actuaciones entre la UE y la FR en situaciones como la del Medio Oriente (Israel-Palestina, Irán), Kosovo, no-proliferación de armas no-convencionales, reformas de las Naciones Unidas, en aras de desarrollar mecanismos prácticos de resolver esas y otras crisis.
- El Espacio Común de Investigación y Educación, incluyendo Aspectos Culturales, a fin de

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<sup>13</sup> Disponible en <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/39422>



fortalecer la cooperación científico-tecnológica euro-rusa, desarrollar programas de intercambio y establecer el Instituto Diplomático de Moscú.

Cabe destacar que los años 2004-2005 constituyeron un reto importante en las relaciones euro-rusas. Por un lado, hay que mencionar la ampliación de la UE hacia el Este debido a la inclusión de países del Báltico y Polonia. En realidad, esta aplicación complicó las relaciones euro-rusas al crear una nueva geografía de Europa donde los países que antes formaban parte de la antigua Unión Soviética fueron incluidos en el área de influencia de Occidente. Más aún, tenemos que reconocer que aquel suceso sigue teniendo consecuencias hasta el día de hoy a la luz de la crisis en Ucrania. No obstante, aquella época coincidió con la fase inicial del segundo mandato de Vladimir Putin y con la adopción de un discurso muy asertivo de la política exterior. Así, el 1 de junio de 2004 Rusia y la UE lanzaron una *Declaración Conjunta*<sup>14</sup>, de 27 de abril de 2004, proclamando que:

“La Unión Europea y la Federación de Rusia reconocen las oportunidades para seguir fortaleciendo su asociación estratégica ofrecida por la aplicación de la UE. (...) La interdependencia de Rusia y la UE, derivada de nuestra proximidad y el aumento de los vínculos políticos, económicos y culturales alcanzará un nuevo nivel con la ampliación de la UE. (...) La ampliación de la UE se acercara más a la UE y Rusia en una Europa sin líneas, en particular, por la creación de un espacio común de libertad, seguridad y justicia.”

Por otro lado cabe mencionar la Política Europea de Vecindad que fue iniciada desde 2004, justo después de la ampliación de la UE, proponiendo una serie de políticas y prioridades establecidas para terceros países que son los sucesores occidentales de la Antigua Unión Soviética, así como los países de la región del Mediterráneo y África del Norte. En consecuencia, la Política Europea de Vecindad ha sido objeto de varias revisiones, en particular, la más reciente tuvo lugar en mayo de 2009 con el lanzamiento de la Asociación Oriental<sup>15</sup> dirigida a los seis países, ex miembros de la URSS (Azerbaiyán, Armenia, Bielorrusia, Georgia, Moldavia y Ucrania).

Sin embargo, la UE malinterpretó la Agenda de Rusia al proponerle que accediera a su Política Europea de Vecindad. En este sentido, De Bardeleben (2011) argumenta que la Política Europea de Vecindad tenía varias características que hizo difícil que Rusia accediera:

- En primer lugar, la iniciativa fue formulada unilateralmente por la UE, lo que hacía que Rusia fuese objeto de la política en vez de coautora de la estrategia conjunta para estabilizar

<sup>14</sup> Disponible (en ruso) en <https://www.academia.edu>

<sup>15</sup> The Eastern Partnership (EaP) en inglés

la nueva frontera oriental de la UE. Eso, a su vez, contradice a otra iniciativa anterior que pretendía tratar las cuestiones regionales – la Dimensión septentrional<sup>16</sup> - que a pesar de que fue iniciada por los países nórdicos (en particular por Finlandia) incluía a Rusia desde las primeras etapas como un socio igualitario.

- En segundo lugar, la naturaleza bilateral de la política no ofrecía un enfoque “regional” que Rusia ayudaría a configurar en el futuro.
- Finalmente, Rusia se sentía infeliz por haberse involucrado en la misma categoría que los países que obviamente poseían menos poder y estatus de la región.

De hecho, cabe destacar que aunque Rusia no forma parte de la Política Europea de Vecindad tal cual, sigue participando en muchas actividades y proyectos en Cooperación Transfronteriza bajo la Política Europea de Vecindad.<sup>17</sup> Por lo tanto podemos concluir que la UE no solo desarrollaba las relaciones con Rusia bajo el concepto de la asociación estratégica sino también bajo el marco de la Política Europea de Vecindad.

La cumbre entre la UE y Rusia, que tuvo lugar el día 10 de mayo de 2005, fue un episodio importante en sus relaciones ya que ambas partes acordaron las Hojas de Ruta para la implementación de Cuatro Espacios Comunes creados en 2003. En el contexto de las Hojas de Ruta para el Espacio Común Económico el objetivo de los socios es reforzar la idea de establecer “un mercado abierto e integrado entre la UE y Rusia”<sup>18</sup>. El diálogo en el marco de esos Cuatro Espacios fue muy intenso y constituyó una sólida base para la cooperación en asuntos concretos. Entre los principales logros de este diálogo figuran:

- La firma y entrada en vigor (junio de 2007) de los Acuerdos de Facilitación de Visados y de Readmisión de inmigrantes ilegales.
- La negociación de un Protocolo sobre la abolición gradual de las tasas por vuelos comerciales sobre Siberia (que está, no obstante, pendiente de firma)
- Un acuerdo en materia veterinaria que evitó la prohibición rusa de importaciones de carne de la UE, tras la adhesión de Rumanía y Bulgaria.
- La conclusión de un acuerdo sobre Pesca y Conservación en el Mar Báltico.
- Firma de un Acuerdo de Cooperación sobre Control de Fronteras entre la nueva Agencia

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<sup>16</sup> The Northern Dimension en inglés

<sup>17</sup> Por ejemplo, Rusia es parte de los programas *South East Finland-Russia Programme*, *Estonia-Russia Programme*, *Latvia-Russia Programm*, *Lithuania-Russia*, *Poland-Russia*, más información está en [https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/neighbourhood/cross-border-cooperation\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/neighbourhood/cross-border-cooperation_en)

<sup>18</sup> Council of the European Union (2005) 15th EU-Russia Summit: Road Maps [8799/05 ADD 1 (Presse 110)], Brussels, 11 May 2005

Europea FRONTEX y el Servicio de Guardia de Fronteras ruso.

- Establecimiento de puntos de contacto entre el Ministerio del Interior ruso y EUROPOL.
- El establecimiento de un mecanismo de alerta temprana entre la Comisión Europea y el Ministerio ruso de Energía sobre posibles interrupciones en los suministros de gas y petróleo.
- La firma de un Memorando de Entendimiento entre Rusia y el Centro Europeo de Drogas y Adicción a las Drogas.
- La firma de un Acuerdo sobre comercio de ciertos productos de acero.
- La apertura en Moscú de un Instituto de Estudios Europeos en el Instituto Estatal ruso de Relaciones Internacionales (MGIMO), financiado conjuntamente por la Comisión Europea y el Instituto.

Sin embargo, el diálogo en el marco de los Cuatro Espacios carecía de una visión estratégica de conjunto y tenía sus limitaciones. No ha sido posible solucionar una serie de problemas ocasionados por la introducción de medidas proteccionistas por parte rusa en diversos sectores (incremento de aranceles, problemas aduaneros, limitación de acceso de las inversiones extranjeras en sectores denominados “estratégicos”, aplicación restrictiva de la legislación sanitaria y fitosanitaria, etc.).

En cuanto a la Hoja de Ruta para el Espacio Común de libertad, seguridad y justicia también fueron marcados unos principios sobre la base de los cuales este Espacio Común tenía que funcionar. Entre los principales figuran los siguientes:

- Igualdad entre los socios y el respeto mutuo de los intereses;
- Cumplimiento de los valores comunes, en particular para la democracia y el Estado de derecho así como para su aplicación transparente y eficaz para sistemas judiciales independientes;
- El respeto de los Derechos Humanos, incluyendo los derechos de las personas pertenecientes a minorías, adherencia de la implementación efectiva, en particular de las Naciones Unidas y Convenios del Consejo de Europa, así como los protocolos relacionados y los compromisos de la Organización para la Seguridad y la Cooperación en Europa (OSCE) en este campo;
- El respeto para la implementación de los principios y normas generalmente reconocidos por Derecho Internacional, incluyendo provisiones humanitarias;
- El respeto de la libertad fundamental, incluyendo los medios de comunicación libres e independientes

Teniendo en cuenta el documento mencionado arriba podemos concluir que la UE, por un lado, reconoció las relaciones con Rusia basadas sobre la idea de igualdad y consideración de los intereses individuales de Rusia pero, por otro lado, seguía impulsando sus intereses a través del

reconocimiento de una serie de principios normativos por parte de Rusia. Los años 2008-2009 se caracterizan como el periodo de la crisis y el nuevo desarrollo. Esta etapa se empezó con evaluaciones no consensuales de la eficacia de la asociación estratégica durante la resolución de la crisis en Georgia, pero que se desarrolló rápidamente en el contexto en que las partes reafirmaron la existencia de la asociación estratégica.

Tres años después de la crisis de 2005-2006 que llevó a la perturbación del transporte de gas hacia Europa Occidental, las divergencias entre Rusia y Ucrania sobre los precios del gas volvieron a escalar en 2009 al provocar un nuevo conflicto que alimentó críticas sobre la dependencia energética de Rusia por parte de la UE.

El día 12 de mayo de 2009 Rusia lanzó *La Estrategia Nacional de Seguridad de la Federación de Rusia para 2020*<sup>19</sup>. Las relaciones con la UE (como solía suceder) estaban mencionadas. El Artículo 16 del documento dice lo siguiente:

“La Federación Rusa está a favor del fortalecimiento de los mecanismos de cooperación con la Unión Europea por todos los medios posibles, incluyendo la formación continua de los espacios comunes en los campos económico, educativo, científico y cultural, y en términos de seguridad interna y externa. Los intereses de Rusia a largo plazo se benefician de la creación de un sistema abierto de seguridad colectiva euro-atlántica sobre una base legal clara y de tratados.”

Durante la cumbre del día 1 de junio de 2010, que tuvo lugar en Rostov del Don, ambas partes lanzaron la Asociación UE-Rusia para su Modernización.<sup>20</sup>

En el transcurso de la cumbre bilateral, en Nizhny Nóvgorod el día 10 de junio de 2011<sup>21</sup>, las observaciones de Van Rompuy balanceaban el optimismo con una pizca de crítica constatando lo siguiente:

“Las relaciones euro-rusas están disfrutando su mejor momento del año. Podemos contar con un historial de la confianza aumentada y el dialogo constructivo. (...) A pesar de los compromisos personales e iniciativas del presidente Medvedev todavía quedan unas

<sup>19</sup> El documento completo (en ruso) está disponible en: [http://www.consultant.ru/document/cons\\_doc\\_LAW\\_87685/d1fcf035bcf1df96d5e7b9950129df5461a23ed5/](http://www.consultant.ru/document/cons_doc_LAW_87685/d1fcf035bcf1df96d5e7b9950129df5461a23ed5/)

<sup>20</sup> *EU-Russia Partnership for Modernization*, en inglés

<sup>21</sup> El contenido completo de la cumbre está disponible en: <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/11531>

preocupaciones por parte de nuestros miembros y entre ciudadanos europeos sobre la situación con los Derechos Humanos.”

Durante el año 2012 las relaciones entre Rusia y la UE permanecían estables, estaban enfocadas sobre todo en los siguientes aspectos:

- El conflicto en Siria.
- El tercer paquete energético.
- El nuevo acuerdo sobre la circulación sin visado.
- El nuevo marco para remplazar el AAC.

Hemos de reconocer que durante la historia de relaciones euro-rusas Rusia ha experimentado una drástica transformación, y para el año 2012 ya no era un país endeudado, sino que poseía las terceras mayores reservas monetarias exteriores del mundo, y con sus enormes recursos energéticos se convirtió en un socio estratégico de primer orden.

En la nueva redacción de la Concepción de la política exterior de Rusia, confirmada por Vladimir Putin en febrero de 2013, se establece que el principal objetivo estratégico hacia la UE es la creación del espacio económico y humanitario común del Atlántico hacia el Océano Pacífico. El ex Presidente de la Comisión de la UE (hasta 2014), José Manuel Borroso, a su vez, confirmó este objetivo con sus propias palabras en marzo de 2013, en el curso de la conferencia sobre los problemas de colaboración entre la FR y la UE en Moscú: “Pienso que es importante tomar decisiones concretas relacionadas con la vida cotidiana, política y comercial con visión a largo plazo. Tal visión a largo plazo consiste en la creación del espacio económico y humanitario común desde Lisboa hasta Vladivostok con el desplazamiento libre de personas, el intercambio libre de productos y servicios en general, en una estrecha colaboración”.<sup>22</sup> No obstante, debido a la crisis en Ucrania en 2014 dicho objetivo nunca se ha llevado a la práctica.

### **2.3. Evolución y crítica de las relaciones euro-rusas en formato de la asociación estratégica**

A pesar la crisis política en las relaciones euro-rusas, cabe destacar que bajo formato de asociación estratégica los socios han progresado bastante en diferentes campos de colaboración. Entre los más significantes logros merece la pena subrayar los siguientes: elaboración del programa

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<sup>22</sup> Encuentro entre el Gobierno de Rusia y la Comisión Europea, que tuvo lugar en Moscú, el día 22 de Marzo en 2013, disponible en: <http://archive.government.ru/eng/docs/23459/>

"Asociación para Modernización" con el objetivo de traspasar las tecnologías europeas para modernizar la producción en Rusia; simplificación del régimen de visados para ciudadanos rusos y europeos; expansión de las relaciones en otros campos, aparte de la colaboración en el campo económico y energético a través de programas y proyectos en los ámbitos de cultura, educación y ecología.

Por otro lado, durante sus relaciones bajo este formato también se ha acumulado una larga lista de las pretensiones recíprocas (ver Tabla 21).

**Tabla 21. Problemas entre la UE y FR antes de la crisis política de 2014**

Campo problemático	Pretensiones	
	Por parte de la UE	Por parte de la FR
<b>Economía</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incumplimiento de las reglas de la OMC (impuestos para utilización de los vehículos importados)</li> <li>• La existencia de tarifas por parte de Rusia para las empresas europeas por los vuelos en el territorio de Siberia</li> </ul>	
<b>Energía</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• La monopolización estatal de los sectores energéticos</li> <li>• La disminución de los precios domésticos a los portadores energéticos en comparación con los precios mundiales</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “El tercer paquete energético” con carácter discriminatorio a las empresas rusas, que fue aprobado por la UE después de que las empresas rusas habían invertido dinero en la industria.</li> </ul>
<b>Sociedad Civil y Derechos Humanos</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• El incumplimiento de los Derechos Humanos (la vulneración de derechos de las minorías étnicas y sexuales)</li> <li>• Problemas del desarrollo de la sociedad civil e independencia de los medios de comunicación, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• La vulneración de los Derechos de las minorías rusas en los países Bálticos</li> <li>• El atraso por parte de la UE en la cuestión sobre la exención del régimen de visados</li> <li>• Los problemas relacionados con la circulación de los ciudadanos y el tránsito de los cargos en el territorio de Kaliningrado</li> </ul>
<b>Seguridad y relaciones internacionales</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• La involucración en los conflictos en el área postsoviética</li> <li>• La existencia de las bases militares rusas en los territorios ex soviéticos (en los Estados no reconocidos, como Abjasia, Osetia de Sur o Transnistria)</li> <li>• Incumplimiento de las obligaciones indicadas en el Convenio sobre fuerzas armadas convencionales en Europa y aumento de gastos militares por parte de Rusia</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• El intento por parte de la UE de disminuir la influencia y liderazgo de Rusia en el área postsoviética</li> <li>• La expansión de la OTAN</li> </ul>

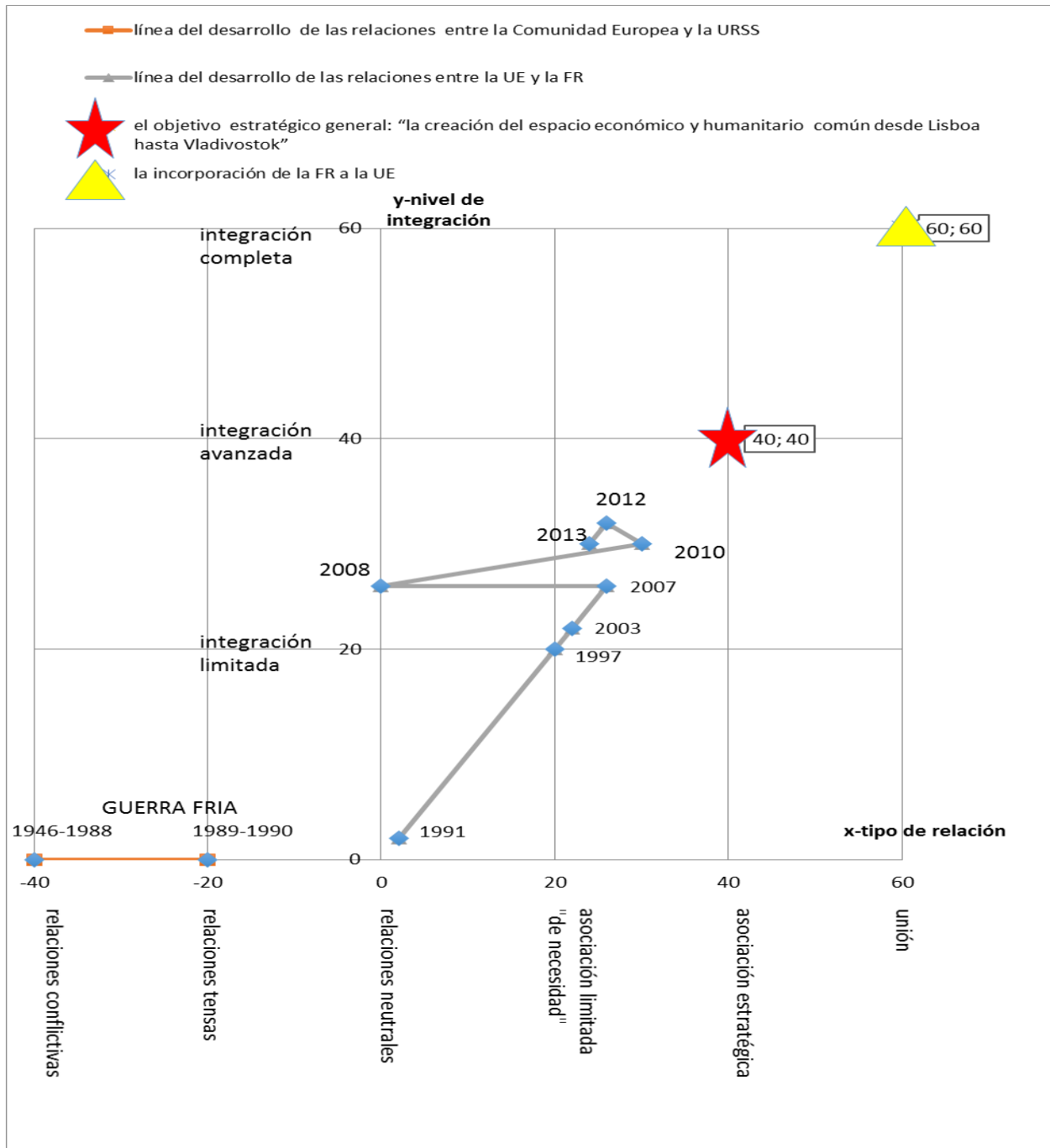
<b>Otros campos incluyendo aspectos culturales</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• El desacato de los valores de la UE</li> <li>• Nacionalismo ruso y aislamiento.</li> <li>• Renuncia por parte de la población rusa a pertenecer a la Comunidad Europea</li> <li>• Alto nivel de corrupción y blanqueo de capital</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• La atención exagerada por parte de la UE hacia las cuestiones internas de Rusia y la concentración en los valores comunes</li> <li>• La actitud prejuzgada hacia la FR por parte de los algunos nuevos miembros de la UE</li> <li>• Prejuicios contra la creación de la Unión Económica Euroasiática</li> </ul>
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Fuente: Elaboración propia



La evolución de las relaciones euro-rusas se representa en la Figura 8.

**Figura 8. Evolución de las relaciones euro-rusas antes de la crisis de 2014**



Fuente: Elaboración propia

El eje “x” representa el tipo de relaciones mientras que el eje “y” demuestra el nivel de integración. El punto “40:40” representa la integración avanzada entre Rusia y la UE, o sea, la verdadera asociación estratégica entre las partes destinada a crear el espacio económico y humanitario común desde Lisboa hasta Vladivostok. El punto 60:60 representa una integración completa, o sea, un escenario si Rusia se hubiera incorporado a la UE. En este punto las partes alcanzan un nivel superior de la integración y se convierten en “un todo único” y por lo tanto no necesitan más el concepto de la asociación estratégica. Los puntos en la línea representan eventos más importantes en la historia de las relaciones entre los socios:

- 1989 – La URSS y la Comunidad Europea firmaron el Acuerdo sobre el Comercio y Colaboración Económica y Comercial
- 1991 – La Caída de la URSS; El comienzo del programa de Colaboración entre los socios; La inauguración de la Representación de la Comisión Europea en el territorio de la FR
- 1997 – Entró en vigor el Acuerdo de Asociación y Cooperación
- 2003 – La firma del Acuerdo sobre la creación de cuatro espacios comunes
- 2007 --La firma y entrada en vigor de los Acuerdos de Facilitación de Visados y de Readmisión de inmigrantes ilegales
- 2008 – La crisis en las relaciones euro-rusas debido al conflicto entre la FR y Georgia
- 2010 – La FR comienza el nuevo programa “La Asociación por Modernización”
- 2012 – La FR entró en la OMC; La llegada al poder de V. Putin
- 2013 – La etapa que se caracteriza como la época de pretensiones mutuas. La UE acusa a la FR en el incumplimiento de las normas de la OMC y la monopolización del sector energético por “Gazprom”. La FR considera las acciones por parte de la UE como discriminatorias (“El tercer paquete energético” y la obstaculización de la exención de visados).

No obstante, el concepto de asociación estratégica entre la UE y la FR desde el principio padecía de las carencias de significado y tenía sus limitaciones. Así, para la mayoría de los autores la asociación estratégica entre la UE y FR siempre ha tenido un carácter problemático incluso algunos autores no admitían su existencia. Smith and Timmins (2003) negaron llamar relaciones euro-rusas a la verdadera asociación estratégica y según ellos las relaciones deberían estar definidas como asociación pragmática. De Wilde and Pellon (2006, p.123) definen las relaciones euro-rusas como "un verdadero

desafío desde el punto de vista de los valores en común". Kempe and Smith (2006) también subrayan la existencia de un vacío entre ambos socios en cuestiones relacionadas con la estructura de las instituciones democráticas, los derechos de la sociedad civil y el concepto de la soberanía de los Estados. El ministro ruso de relaciones exteriores Lavrov (2013) llamó a las relaciones euro-rusas la asociación "de necesidad", lo que significaba que las partes desarrollaban las relaciones como de mutuo interés ignorando los desacuerdos en campos problemáticos, considerando tal situación bastante peligrosa. Razvan-Alexandu (2015) subraya que la UE no puede obligar a Rusia seguir sus normas y debería usar un enfoque especial para construir una positiva relación bilateral con este socio. Blanco (2016) argumenta que para Rusia la asociación estratégica fue un marco atractivo para neutralizar la asimetría en las relaciones Euro-rusas al final del siglo veinte. El mencionado autor no está de acuerdo con aquellos que consideran que la diferencia en los valores excluye la existencia de la asociación estratégica y para él las relaciones euro-rusas son muy ambiciosas y aunque la incoherencia en los valores complica las relaciones al mismo tiempo es la condición para su existencia.

## **2.4. Los factores que tuvieron influencia en la relación de asociación estratégica entre la UE y Rusia**

Tras analizar las opiniones de otros autores, hemos destacado e investigado los principales factores que tuvieron un gran impacto en la asociación estratégica entre la UE y Rusia. Dichos factores se puede dividir en:

- Políticos
- Económicos
- Socio-culturales

### **2.4.1. Factores políticos**

Entre los factores políticos se puede subrayar los siguientes: la interpretación del término de asociación estratégica, la estructura del sistema político y las relaciones con los terceros países y organizaciones internacionales.

Analizando los enfoques sobre la asociación estratégica por parte de la UE y de FR hay que concluir que los socios ponen diferentes acentos en su interpretación. Así, según el ex Presidente de Rusia, Dimitri Medvedev, la base de la asociación estratégica con la UE es “la igualdad, el pragmatismo, el respeto de los intereses de las partes y el enfoque común sobre los problemas claves de la seguridad”, mientras que para los líderes de la UE es “estabilidad y los valores comunes.” Interpretando el término de asociación estratégica, cada parte se centra en los aspectos que le parecen más problemáticos. Se puede decir que el enfoque de Rusia es más pragmático, con el acento en la existencia de los intereses comunes, el gran número de las esferas de colaboración, igualdad, la coincidencia de los enfoques sobre la seguridad. Aunque los líderes de la UE también destacan intereses comunes, sobre todo, intereses económicos y el gran número de las esferas de colaboración, están enfocados, sobre todo, en los valores comunes que deben compartir los socios estratégicos. A este respecto, cabe mencionar que la UE intentaba ejercer un “poder normativo” (Manners, 2002) hacia, no solo sus socios estratégicos, sino también hacia los países de su Política Europea de Vecindad, presentándose como una “fuerza para el bien”. Sin embargo, este enfoque normativo muchas veces iba de la mano de sus intereses pragmáticos.

Así que se puede concluir que para la FR la asociación estratégica no puede desarrollarse si los socios no encuentran el enfoque común sobre la seguridad, mientras que para la UE la asociación estratégica no puede desarrollarse si, según su postura, el socio no comparte su paradigma de valores. De ahí que podríamos suponer que la asociación estratégica verdadera entre la UE y la FR fuera imposible hasta que las partes resolvieran esta contradicción. Pero entonces la asociación estratégica entre la UE y China sería totalmente absurda teniendo en cuenta que los valores con este socio incluso son más contradictorios que con Rusia. Sin embargo, a pesar de eso, Rusia y China fueron incluidos en la lista oficial de “10 Socios estratégicos” de la UE.

De ahí que concluimos que la diferencia de interpretación del término indudablemente provoca impactos negativos en las relaciones entre los socios, aunque no se puede decir que la interpretación común es condición imprescindible para establecer oficialmente la asociación estratégica. Es de notar que, en la práctica, la influencia negativa de la interpretación diferente se puede ver disminuida si los socios van a respetar el punto de vista de cada uno e intentar adaptar su interpretación respectivamente.

El otro factor es la estructura del sistema político de los socios. Suponemos que los principios parecidos de la estructura del sistema político es un factor importante que favorece el desarrollo de las relaciones entre socios.

La Unión Europea es un sistema político único que siempre está en proceso de desarrollo y provoca muchas discusiones sobre su origen judicial. La estructura institucional y el proceso de toma de decisiones de la UE son muy complejos y no permiten adjuntarlos a categoría alguna de las organizaciones internacionales tradicionales.

Además, hay que notar que la UE tiene un gran número de desacuerdos entre sus miembros sobre la política exterior relacionada con Rusia. Los desacuerdos entre los miembros aumentaron, sobre todo, con la gran ampliación de la UE de 2004. Así, las relaciones negativas bilaterales entre la FR por un lado y los Países Bálticos y Polonia por otro, fueron transmitidas al nivel de la UE. Precisamente por eso, se puede decir que las relaciones bilaterales rusas con algunos miembros de la UE se desarrollan de forma más dinámica y con más éxito que las relaciones en general con la UE.

La FR y la UE representan dos enfoques contrarios en la estructura del sistema político. La gobernanza de la UE se caracteriza como descentralizada y de multinivel, mientras que la gobernanza de la FR se caracteriza como centralizada y se basa en la verticalidad del poder. Los diferentes enfoques influyen en la política exterior de los socios. Por un lado, el proceso lento y complicado de toma de decisiones y de conciliación de intereses no permite a la UE elaborar una política unida sobre Rusia, que a su vez obstaculiza el desarrollo de las relaciones con ella. Hay que tener en cuenta que la UE tiene un gran número de desacuerdos entre sus miembros sobre la política exterior relacionada con Rusia. No obstante, la guerra en Ucrania parece que unió los países de la EU contra política de Rusia y las sanciones contra ella fueron aprobadas en todo el territorio de la UE.

Las relaciones con terceros países y organizaciones internacionales son muy importantes en el contexto de la asociación estratégica entre la UE y FR. A partir de la caída de la URSS la FR emprendió importantes lazos institucionales con la esfera euro-atlántica. La membresía rusa en la Organización para la Seguridad y la Cooperación en Europa (la OSCE), el Consejo de Europa (el CE), G-8, Consejo OTAN-Rusia y su diálogo con la UE para encarrilar una “Asociación Estratégica” con esta última, revelaba la magnitud de la disposición tanto por parte de Rusia como por parte de la comunidad euro-atlántica de cooperar en materia vital para su respectivo desarrollo socio-económico, tecnológico e industrial. No obstante, a pesar de la voluntad a las considerables expectativas políticas y económicas, que en la última década del siglo pasado tal cooperación ha traído consigo, las relaciones entre la UE/OTAN, por un lado y la FR por el otro, sus relaciones de facto iban deteriorándose a partir de 2003 de modo preocupante y perjudicial para los lazos institucionales ya establecidos para garantizar el desarrollo socio-económico de todos los países involucrados (Haluani M, 2009).

EE. UU es un socio estratégico tradicional de la UE a partir de la época de guerra fría; Gracias al Plan Marshall los países europeos se recuperaron después de la Segunda Guerra Mundial y recibieron recursos financieros suficientes para el desarrollo económico. En otras palabras, el alto estatus actual económico y social de la UE se debe en parte a la ayuda y apoyo de EE.UU. Se puede decir que hoy en día la seguridad en el Continente Europeo se debe a la OTAN liderada por EE.UU. Tal posición de ninguna manera satisface a la FR que está en contra de la ampliación de la OTAN al Este. Es más, la FR considera a la OTAN como principal amenaza de su seguridad y de sus intereses nacionales. El enfrentamiento entre la FR y la OTAN siempre han tenido una influencia muy negativa en las relaciones entre Moscú y Bruselas. Y la verdadera asociación estratégica no puede excluir la colaboración en una esfera tan importante como es la Seguridad Exterior.

#### **2.4.2. Factores económicos**

Entre los factores económicos que influyen en la relación entre la UE y la FR se puede destacar los siguientes: la interdependencia de las economías de los socios, el nivel del desarrollo económico y la crisis económico-financiera.

La interdependencia de las economías de los socios durante muchos años estimulaba el acercamiento de la UE y la FR. Es más, se puede decir que la interdependencia es el factor que balanceaba el impacto negativo de los desacuerdos entre la UE y la FR en el campo de seguridad. Sin embargo, después de la guerra en Ucrania las partes intentaron disminuir, por todos los medios, la interdependencia. Así la UE intentó diversificar los proveedores de materias primas mientras que la FR intentó aumentar el número de los consumidores de sus recursos en Asia y diversificar los importadores de tecnologías y productos manufacturados.

La economía de la FR en comparación con la economía de la UE es bastante retrasada. La UE considera a Rusia como el principal proveedor de materias primas, pero es evidente que el apoyo solo en exportaciones de recursos naturales no favorece al desarrollo en general de la economía rusa. El nivel de desarrollo económico también produce impacto en las relaciones entre socios. La asociación estratégica supone la igualdad en las relaciones. Analizando la retórica de los líderes rusos se puede decir que la FR considera la igualdad como el criterio imprescindible en las relaciones con la UE. Sin embargo, hay que notar que la igualdad supone el nivel equivalente del desarrollo económico, social y cultural de los socios.

Finalmente, cabe mencionar el factor de la crisis económica. Ante todo, hemos de reconocer que tanto Rusia como la UE en alguna etapa de su existencia han pasado por una crisis económica. A este respecto, la crisis mundial de 2008 tocó gravemente la UE y ha demostrado que no es un modelo ideal y próspero de integración regional y que ninguna unión es inmune a los problemas económicos y financieros. Así, Vovenda (2012) resalta que las crisis en varios estados de la UE nos han demostrado no solo los errores acumulados y contradicciones en los mecanismos financieros de la UE, sino también su dependencia sobre una serie de cuestiones de sus socios exteriores incluyendo a Rusia. Trenin (2014), a su vez, acentúa que el éxito de los partidos de los euroescépticos y nacionalistas en las elecciones de mayo de 2014 al Parlamento Europeo demuestra que el proyecto europeo necesita una revitalización seria y de no hacerlo la UE corre un gran riesgo de desintegración.

Rusia, a su vez, ha pasado por varias crisis. Crisis de 1998, que culminó con el cese de pagos, una de las crisis más graves en la historia del país, las principales causas de la cual han sido una enorme deuda externa derivada de la quiebra de las economías asiáticas, los bajos precios en las materias primas, una política económica ineficaz y la construcción de una pirámide de obligaciones estatales a corto plazo. Rusia no estaba tan gravemente afectada por la crisis mundial de 2008 como por ejemplo la UE, pero en 2015 Rusia se sumergió en una fuerte crisis económica provocada por la caída de los precios en el petróleo, la situación geopolítica que llevó al país a la guerra de sanciones contra el Mundo Occidental y el estancamiento de la economía rusa en general.

La crisis económica afecta, en primer lugar, a las relaciones comerciales entre los países. Así, las crisis de 1998 y 2008 provocaron unas drásticas caídas del intercambio comercial euro-ruso.<sup>23</sup> En segundo lugar, las crisis económicas influyen negativamente en la colaboración en otros campos, tales como, por ejemplo, el campo ecológico, cultural y la colaboración científica y educativa debido al corte de financiación de los proyectos y programas. Por lo tanto, podemos concluir que la crisis económica influye negativamente en la asociación estratégica.

No obstante, en un mundo globalizado y de economías correlacionadas, la crisis económica de un país afecta directamente o indirectamente a la economía de su socio. En este sentido, una crisis económica debería llevar al acercamiento y colaboración de los países, sobre todo los países cuyas economías tienen un alto nivel de la interdependencia, como, por ejemplo, en el caso de relaciones euro-

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<sup>23</sup> La caída del intercambio comercial entre Rusia y la UE provocada por las crisis de 1998 y 2008 se puede observar en la Figura 12 del Capítulo 3.

rusas. Por lo tanto, la crisis económica debería unir a los países y promover la colaboración sobre la gestión de la crisis y la ayuda humanitaria.

A día de hoy se puede decir que la UE todavía no se ha recuperado completamente de la crisis mundial de 2008 y sigue sobreviviendo a sus consecuencias. Mientras tanto, Rusia va paulatinamente saliendo de la crisis de 2015. A este respecto, si las partes logran resolver el desacuerdo sobre la situación en Ucrania, la crisis económica sería una razón más para apostar por la asociación estratégica a fin de prevenir la inestabilidad económica en la región y juntos construir una Europa económicamente estable y prospera a través de la gestión de la crisis.

### **2.4.3. Factores socio-culturales**

Entre los factores socio-culturales que influye en las relaciones euro-rusas se puede destacar los siguientes: los valores que comparten los socios, los estereotipos histórico-culturales y la identidad especial rusa. El modelo de democracia liberal prevaleciente en Europa no ha existido nunca en Rusia. El país solo ha conocido regímenes políticos sumamente autoritarios, con la excepción de las frustradas experiencias de la “perestroika” y la confusa y caótica liberalización de Boris Yeltsin. De ahí que solo una minoría de ciudadanos rusos se sientan hoy en día identificados con los “valores” europeos. Aunque la Constitución de la FR la determina como el estado del derecho y democrático, en la práctica los principios y derechos humanos en muchos casos no se cumplen.

Los estereotipos histórico-culturales son un factor muy importante que influye en el desarrollo de las relaciones euro-rusas. Los estereotipos son difíciles de cambiar porque se han formado durante siglos y se han enraizado fuertemente en nuestra mentalidad. Si antes Rusia todavía era considerada como amenaza para algunos países de la UE, después de la anexión de Crimea este estereotipo ha arraigado profundamente en la mente de los pueblos de la UE

Investigando las relaciones entre la UE y la FR también es importante aclarar cómo la FR considera a la UE y cómo se desarrolló el discurso sobre su propia identidad nacional. Debido a su localización geográfica única que une Europa y Asia como si fuera un puente entre dos partes del mismo continente, Rusia tiene la identidad especial de no poderse considera ni totalmente como europea ni asiática. Tal identidad especial está reflejada en el escudo de Rusia: así el águila tiene dos cabezas con coronas pequeñas, una cabeza mira hacia el Este, mientras que otra hacia al Oeste; aunque el pájaro tiene el cuerpo unido con una corona grande arriba que representa la unidad de poder del imperio. Según los datos oficiales, solo el 23% del territorio ruso está en Europa (el 40% del territorio de toda Europa).



Sin embargo, en Europa vive el 78% de la población rusa y aquí se encuentra la capital con sus instituciones gubernamentales. Así que se puede decir que el centro político-económico de Rusia está en Europa. No obstante, según la opinión pública organizada por el Centro Levada en 2016, el 59% de los rusos no se consideraron que Rusia es parte de Europa.<sup>24</sup> Además según la encuesta que tuvo lugar en los Estados de la UE la mayoría de las respuestas (excepto los polacos) tampoco consideraron a Rusia como parte de Europa.<sup>25</sup>

En conclusión, se puede decir que la asociación estratégica basada solo en los intereses económicos y beneficios comunes con diferentes valores y mentalidades, sistemas políticos, desarrollos económicos, enfoques sobre seguridad y objetivos en la arena internacional no ha podido durar mucho tiempo. Es decir, la problemática desde el principio de la asociación estratégica entre Rusia y la UE, primero llevó hacia el enfriamiento y estancamiento de las relaciones y luego se convirtió en el abierto enfrentamiento político y económico con la guerra de sanciones, suponiendo una verdadera "bomba de tiempo".

### **3. La UE y Rusia en la guerra de sanciones**

Este apartado hemos investigado los siguientes aspectos de la famosa guerra de sanciones entre la UE y Rusia: en primer lugar, el marco teórico donde hemos analizado la literatura actual sobre la política de las sanciones; en segundo lugar, los motivos que llevaron a las partes a la guerra de sanciones, la cronología de la implementación de las sanciones por parte de la UE a la Federación de Rusia y la respuesta del gobierno ruso; finalmente, los resultados y las consecuencias de la guerra de sanciones sobre la base de la literatura relevante.

#### **3.1. ¿Para qué sirven las sanciones?**

En teoría las sanciones normalmente se imponen con el objetivo de cambiar el comportamiento del país sancionado (instrumento coercitivo), limitar su comportamiento (efecto limitador) o enviarle un mensaje (efecto de señal) (Giumelli y Paul, 2013). Según Giumelli (2011) las sanciones han sido consideradas como una política alternativa a la fuerza militar o diplomacia en situaciones donde «no

<sup>24</sup> <https://echo.msk.ru/blog/rusplt/1709436-echo/>

<sup>25</sup> <https://sputnik.by/society/20180221/1033779620/russia-chast-europe-opros-zapadnye-strany-mnenie.html>

hacer nada» no es una opción. Bahgeri y Akbarpour (2016) afirman que las sanciones son tales medidas que se adaptan antes de recurrir a la violencia o la guerra. Siguiendo a Delevic (1998) “las sanciones son menos glamurosas que la diplomacia y menos decisivas que la guerra”, p. 187. Aghabakhshi y Afsharirad (1995) subrayan que las sanciones son las medidas coercitivas que se adoptan por país o por grupo de países contra un estado que ha violado la Ley Internacional o aceptado estandartes de moral con el objetivo de obligar al país agresor cesar sus acciones o por lo menos poner fin a su inaceptable comportamiento a medidas de negociación.

La demanda de los criterios que el país sancionado debe cumplir para que las sanciones estén levantadas es la parte vital del proceso de imponer las sanciones (Veebel y Markus, 2015). En este sentido, Veebel and Markus subraya que los objetivos de las sanciones coercitivas tienen que ser bien definidos, realistas, medibles y abiertamente comunicados al país sancionado para evitar falsas expectativas y reacciones erróneas. Según Groves (2007) las sanciones deben tener «una razonable perspectiva de éxito». Sin embargo, Veebel and Markus (2015) afirma que en muchas ocasiones a parte de una demanda oficial también existe «una agenda ocultada» que contiene unos objetivos que no son adecuados para un marco oficial (por ejemplo el cambio de régimen político) o que no están apoyados por todos los miembros de coalición multilateral.

Las sanciones se pueden usar para transmitir un señal al país agresor. Así Brzoska (2002) subraya que las sanciones pueden tener por objetivo comunicar al país sancionado que su comportamiento no va a estar tolerado. Veebel and Markus (2015) afirma que las sanciones también pueden ser interpretadas como una expresión del poder económico y político en el ámbito internacional, por parte de un país que impone las sanciones y que de esa manera envía una señal a sus aliados sobre su credibilidad e influencia global.

Sin embargo las señales muchas veces se quedan mal interpretadas o incomprendidas por los Estados sancionados. Además, las sanciones pueden provocar efectos contrarios a los que esperaba el país imponiéndolas. Así Galtung (1967) destaca que, a menudo, las sanciones pueden contrariamente provocar el apoyo del gobierno del país sancionando e incrementar el nacionalismo. Hufbauer *et al.* (2007) afirma que las sanciones pueden ser destinadas a enviar una señal a la audiencia doméstica para confirmar que están de acuerdo con los intereses vitales de nación.

La literatura demuestra que las sanciones impuestas en Estados democráticos funcionan mejor que en los no democráticos. Así Verdier y Woo (2011) afirman que mientras que las democracias tienen que ser castigadas, las autocracias deberían ser recompensadas. Sin embargo, Lektzian y Souva

(2003) destacan que las autocracias son más vulnerables a las sanciones que las democracias. Además, Lektzian y Souva también admiten que los Estados democráticos imponen más sanciones que los países de cualquier otro régimen, debido a que ellos persiguen objetivos democráticos y respetan los derechos humanos, representando los intereses de diferentes grupos que influyen en las decisiones de sus líderes.

Hoy día se pueden destacar diferentes tipos de sanciones y prácticas de imposición. En términos generales, las sanciones se puede dividir en unilaterales y multilaterales (Abbasifard, 2007). Según su contenido, las sanciones pueden ser económicas y no económicas. Las sanciones económicas son destinadas a influir en el intercambio comercial del país sancionado con el objetivo de castigarlo por razones políticas o militares (Dekhoda, 1982). Según Galtung (1967) las sanciones económicas se puede definir como «las acciones iniciadas por uno o varios actores internacionales contra a uno o varios otros con el objetivo de castigarlos al modo de privarles de algún valor o/y obligar a los actores-receptores a obedecer ciertas normas importantes para los actores-remitentes» (Haddadi, 2003). Zarif y Mirzaee (1997) destacan que las sanciones económicas no están destinadas contra la gente para situaciones difíciles, sino que tienen como objetivo cambiar la actitud y la política del gobierno. Dekhoda (1982) subraya que las sanciones económicas se usan como un instrumento para lograr los objetivos políticos.

Sin embargo, se ha demostrado que las sanciones económicas son más bien ineficientes en el mundo globalizado donde el suministro de los recursos puede ser sustituido en la mayoría de los casos. Dizaji y Van Bergeijk (2013) afirman que las sanciones económicas son útiles solo a corto plazo y que a largo plazo son ineficientes, teniendo en cuenta que los países suelen adaptarse a la nueva situación. Así, Veebel and Markus (2015) afirma que el tiempo juega contra las sanciones y si a largo plazo se consigue la estagnación de la economía del país sancionado eso no puede ser considerado como un éxito. Tostensen and Beate (2002) destacan que las sanciones inteligentes son más eficientes en obligar a las élites políticas cumplir las normas impuestas por las comunidades internacionales y en proteger los grupos sociales vulnerables.

No obstante, Giumelli y Paul (2013), tras analizar los casos de sanciones por parte de la UE en Bielorrusia, Irán, Myanmar y Siria, han llegado a la conclusión de que en ninguno de estos casos se logró el objetivo de cambiar el comportamiento del país sancionado. Por lo tanto, se puede concluir que en la práctica es difícil para la UE obligar a un país fuera de la Unión a cumplir las normas imponiéndole

las sanciones, debido a la falta de coherencia de las opiniones tanto dentro de la UE como por la falta de cooperación por parte de otros actores a nivel internacional.

### 3. 2. Origen y cronología de la imposición de las sanciones mutuas

Tal y como hemos observado en los apartados anteriores, las resoluciones entre la UE y Rusia siempre han ido acompañadas de ambigüedades y desacuerdos. Se puede decir que la crisis en Ucrania fue precedida de competición entre las partes por la orientación geoeconómica de Ucrania. Las raíces de la crisis radican en la guerra de 2008 entre Rusia y Georgia que acabó con la perspectiva de ampliación de la OTAN, no solo para Georgia sino también para Ucrania. A este respecto, el objetivo principal de política rusa en Ucrania ha sido prevenir su asociación con la OTAN e idealmente conseguir su reunificación con lo que Moscú consideraba como un “Mundo Ruso”.

El problema principal reside en que tanto la UE como Rusia veían a Ucrania como un eslabón clave de su propio proyecto geopolítico. Así, la UE a través de su programa de Asociación Oriental lanzado en 2009 pretendía asociar políticamente y económicamente a Ucrania (así como otras cinco antiguas repúblicas soviéticas) con el “Mundo Occidental”, proporcionando de esta manera una “zona de confort” en sus fronteras orientales. Rusia, a su vez, planeaba atraer a Ucrania junto con otras ex repúblicas a su proyecto de integración regional – la Unión Económica Euroasiática.<sup>26</sup> No obstante, según Trenin (2014) si Rusia por lo menos consideraba la posibilidad de que Ucrania se iba a asociar con ambas uniones, para la UE la asociación de Ucrania no era un tema de especulación con los terceros países. Aunque para él ambas partes veían la elección de Ucrania como un juego de suma cero, el autor sostiene que fue el programa de la Asociación Oriental de la UE la raíz de la crisis en Ucrania, pretendiendo la exclusividad de las relaciones con Ucrania, al dejar muy poco espacio para el compromiso con Moscú sobre esta cuestión.

Además, cabe destacar que la crisis en Ucrania también coincidió con el periodo de rivalidad o incluso enfrentamiento, entre Rusia y EE.UU. A pesar de que después de la disolución de la Unión Soviética parecía que a Rusia le consentían integrarse a la economía e instituciones occidentales, eso de ninguna manera suponía permitirle disfrutar de tales privilegios postimperiales como una zona de influencia, sobre todo, en el espacio postsoviético. Por lo tanto, la política rusa hacia sus vecinos, como, por ejemplo, los Estados del Báltico, Ucrania, Bielorrusia, Moldavia, estaba considerada como

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<sup>26</sup> La integración en el espacio postsoviético y la Unión Económica Euroasiática están detalladamente descritas en el siguiente capítulo.

el elemento de su “neoimperialismo”. Cuando los EE.UU otorgaron su apoyo de gran difusión a Kiev, los medios de comunicación rusos declararon que Washington dirigía las actividades de las autoridades ucranianas. Tras granjearse el apoyo de sus aliados en Europa Oriental, Obama inició una serie de medidas para restablecer una línea de separación en los Estados del Báltico, Polonia y Rumania. Trenin (2014) destaca que las relaciones entre Rusia y EE.UU se han convertido en esencialmente adversas como en los días de la Guerra Fría, o mejor dicho, comparadas con el Gran Juego ruso-británico<sup>27</sup>, pero esta vez desigual y asimétrico, prediciendo que tales países como Moldavia y Georgia serán los próximos campos de batalla en el nuevo Gran Juego estadounidense-ruso. Podemos resumir, que a día de hoy Rusia desafía abiertamente el orden dominado por EE.UU y no está dispuesta a ceder con respecto a sus principios, mientras tanto no se puede esperar que EE.UU. reconozca la zona de influencia de Rusia en Ucrania o en cualquier otra parte de Eurasia.

Se puede concluir que las relaciones euro-rusas, camufladas bajo el concepto de la asociación estratégica, realmente siempre iban acompañadas por la competencia y lucha por la influencia en el espacio postsoviético, que con la crisis en Ucrania han cobrado su mayor impulso. Además, no debe olvidarse que la UE contaba con el apoyo de gran difusión por parte de EE.UU y sus otros aliados de Occidente, lo que ha tenido una notable presencia en el conflicto ucraniano.

En Marzo de 2014 la UE impuso las sanciones en forma de restricciones para viajar y la congelación de activos de algunos oficiales rusos y ucranianos implicados en la violación de derechos humanos y corrupción en Ucrania.<sup>28</sup> Las sanciones fueron impuestas como reacción por parte de los líderes europeos contra la anexión de la península de Crimea, con el objetivo de devolver la integridad territorial y estabilidad económica en Ucrania y prevenir la posible presión e influencia por parte de Rusia en los estados-vecinos en el futuro.

A pesar de las protestas por parte de algunos políticos europeos que afirmaban que las sanciones tienen un potencial económico bajo y podían dañar las economías de determinados Estados de la UE, las sanciones contra Rusia fueron ampliadas. Así, en julio de 2014 la UE anunció la implementación de las sanciones económicas contra determinados sectores de la industria rusa, tales como los sectores de defensa, financiero y energético<sup>29</sup>, con el objetivo de aumentar el efecto y la presión en la economía rusa. Además, más tarde fue restringido el acceso de Rusia al mercado financiero de la UE, fue impuesto

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<sup>27</sup> La lucha por la supremacía entre Rusia y Gran Bretaña en el siglo diecinueve

<sup>28</sup> Consejo de la Unión Europea, Decisión 2014/145/CFSP (17 de Marzo 2014)

<sup>29</sup> Consejo de la Unión Europea, Decisión 2014/508/CFSP (30 de Julio 2014)

el embargo en el comercio de armas y artículos relacionados y fueron prohibidas las importaciones desde Crimea.<sup>30</sup>

En septiembre de 2014 la guerra de sanciones alcanzó un nuevo nivel cuando los líderes europeos aprobaron las nuevas sanciones adicionales prohibiendo que las empresas petroleras, controladas por el gobierno ruso y las empresas de defensa borrarán el dinero en los mercados financieros europeos e interrumpiesen las inversiones extranjeras.<sup>31</sup>

En junio de 2015, las sanciones contra Rusia fueron prolongadas hasta enero de 2016. No obstante, algunos miembros de la UE, como por ejemplo Eslovenia, se mantuvieron escépticos aunque tuvieron que unirse a las sanciones.<sup>32</sup> En julio de 2015 los países de la UE llegaron al acuerdo sobre sanciones adicionales contra determinados sectores de la industria rusa.

Desde entonces las siguientes restricciones están en vigor:<sup>33</sup>

- El embargo en las importaciones y exportaciones de armas y artículos relacionados y las materias y tecnologías que pudieran ser usadas para el ejército ruso o producción para el ejército<sup>34</sup>
- Las exportaciones de determinados equipamientos relacionados con el sector de la energía hacia Rusia necesitan una autorización especial por parte de los Estados miembros, en caso de que los artículos estuviesen destinados para la prospección y producción de petróleo en aguas profundas y de petróleo en el Ártico o la denegación de las licencias para proyectos de petróleo de esquisto.
- Las empresas y nacionales de la UE ya no pueden comprar o vender nuevas obligaciones, acciones o instrumentos financieros parecidos emitidos por las tres grandes empresas de sector energético, las tres grandes empresas de la defensa y los cinco grandes bancos estatales de Rusia,<sup>35</sup> está prohibido proporcionar tales instrumentos financieros como intermediación; además a estos cinco bancos no se les permite conceder préstamos.<sup>36</sup> Durante los siguientes años las sanciones contra Rusia se prolongaban cada seis meses. La última prórroga fue aprobada en marzo de 2018 hasta septiembre de 2018.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Consejo de la Unión Europea, Decisión 2014/386/CFSP (19 de Diciembre 2014)

<sup>31</sup> Consejo de la Unión Europea, Decisión 2014/658/CFSP (12 de Septiembre 2014)

<sup>32</sup> Boris Cerni and Dina Khrennikova, "Slovenia Wants End to EU Sanctions on Russia That Hurt Trade," *www.bloomberg.com* (July 2015) // [http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2015-07-27/slovenia-](http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2015-07-27/slovenia)

<sup>33</sup> [https://europa.eu/newsroom/highlights/special-coverage/eu-sanctions-against-russia-over-ukraine-crisis\\_en](https://europa.eu/newsroom/highlights/special-coverage/eu-sanctions-against-russia-over-ukraine-crisis_en)

<sup>34</sup> Consejo de la Unión Europea, Regulación 833/2014 (31 de Julio 2014)

<sup>35</sup> Consejo de la Unión Europea, Regulación 1290/2014 (4 de Diciembre 2014)

<sup>36</sup> Consejo de la Unión Europea, Regulación 960/2014 (8 de Septiembre 2014)

<sup>37</sup> <https://www.golos-ameriki.ru/a/eu-russia-sanctions/4294612.html>

Rusia, por su parte, contestó a las sanciones de la UE tomando medidas de represalia contra los funcionarios europeos de alto rango y los Estados miembros en marzo de 2014.

En agosto de 2014, Vladimir Putin firmó el decreto «sobre la implementación de determinadas medidas especiales económicas para la seguridad de Rusia»<sup>38</sup>, que suponía el embargo en las importaciones de productos agrícolas procedentes de los países que implementaron las sanciones contra Rusia para un año.<sup>39</sup> El embargo en las frutas, verduras, carne, pescado, leche y productos lácteos además de a la UE se extendía a Noruega, los Estados Unidos, Canadá y Australia.<sup>40</sup>

Posteriormente, las sanciones fueron prolongadas y extendidas a nuevos países tales como Albania, Montenegro, Islandia, Liechtenstein y Ucrania, además de incluir una lista más amplia de productos prohibidos (Khordad News, 2015). Tales medidas eran destinadas a dañar la economía agrícola de la UE, teniendo en cuenta que en 2013 para la UE Rusia era el segundo mercado agrícola más grande, consumiendo el 2,9 % de las exportaciones agrícolas (European Parliament, 2014), superado solo por los Estados Unidos.

Sin embargo, los países de la UE, igual que las otras economías occidentales sancionadas por Rusia, intentaron introducir sus productos a través de la re-exportación a los terceros países tales como Bielorrusia o Serbia (Liefert, W. y Liefert, O., 2015). No obstante, este flujo de productos sancionados fue interrumpido por las autoridades rusas que aumentaron el control en las aduanas para prevenir la penetración de los artículos ilegales, sobre todo desde la UE a través de los terceros países.

Las estrategias adoptadas por el gobierno ruso contra las sanciones impuestas por la UE y otros países de Mundo Occidental se puede resumir en las siguientes medidas:

- Embargo en determinados productos alimenticios.
- Sustitución de los productos embargados por los productos procedentes de los países vecinos (sobre todo de la Unión Económica Euroasiática), América Latina, China, Turquía, etc.
- Promoción de la producción de los productos alimenticios domésticos.
- Establecimiento de fondos de ayuda para los negocios dañados por las sanciones.

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<sup>38</sup> [https://ria.ru/trend/Russia\\_sanctions\\_reaction\\_06082014/](https://ria.ru/trend/Russia_sanctions_reaction_06082014/)

<sup>39</sup> On measures to implement the Russian President's Executive Order "On Extending Certain Special Economic Measures in the Interest of Ensuring the Security of the Russian Federation, Government of Russia (August 2014)// <http://government.ru/docs/14195/>

<sup>40</sup> Resolution of the Government of the Russian Federation no. 835 of 08.21.2014, On additional measures to regulate the import of meat of cattle and poultry, Government of Russia (21 August 2014)// <http://government.ru/docs/all/92613/>



- Promoción de la integración regional entre los países de la Unión Económica Euroasiática.
- Devolución del rublo para arreglar el déficit del presupuesto del gobierno.
- Reorientación hacia Asia y aumento de los vínculos con los países BRICS (creación del Nuevo Banco de Desarrollo, etc.)
- Sustitución del dólar en el intercambio comercial con otros países usando monedas nacionales y su reemplazamiento por el oro en las reservas nacionales.

### **3.3. Resultados y consecuencias de la guerra de las sanciones**

Después del conflicto en Ucrania, los países del Mundo Occidental han intentado aislar a Rusia de las principales instituciones y recursos financieros. Como resultado, Rusia fue primero expulsada del G8 y las negociaciones sobre la integración de Rusia en la OCDE fueron congeladas. Después Mogherini (2014) declaró que Rusia ya no era un socio estratégico de la UE. Además, fueron suspendidas las negociaciones sobre el régimen sin visados y sobre el nuevo Acuerdo con la UE.

No obstante, Kirkham (2016) subraya que Rusia siempre ha sido tratada con recelo y, de facto, siempre ha sido excluida de la expansión institucional, tanto desde el punto de vista político-económico (El Banco Mundial y el FMI) como militar (expansión de la OTAN y su acercamiento hacia sus fronteras). Y por lo tanto, Europa no ha dejado a Rusia otra opción que el proyecto de integración con los países post-soviéticos. Puede ser debido a ello, que el aumento del aislamiento del Mundo Occidental no haya sido una sorpresa tan grande para Rusia. Además, ya es casi imposible aislar completamente a un país teniendo en cuenta la gran cantidad de países y multipolaridad del nuevo orden mundial.

Respondiendo al aislamiento, Rusia ha intentado diversificar los mercados fortaleciendo los vínculos con los países BRICS como una alternativa de recursos financieros (en 2014 fue creado el Nuevo Banco de Desarrollo de los BRICS); promoviendo la integración con la nueva Unión Económica Euroasiática y desarrollando las relaciones con América Latina y los países ASEAN.

Una de las medidas, por parte de Rusia, fue fortalecer, apoyar y promover la producción doméstica con el objetivo de disminuir la independencia de las importaciones. Wengle (2016) afirma la concesión entre el embargo y la agenda rusa de seguridad alimenticias. Así, las sanciones han aumentado la producción doméstica en algunos productos como la carne de cerdo, aves y productos lácteos, mientras que la promoción de producción doméstica de carne de ternera no ha tenido éxito. No obstante, según



(Agra Europe, 2015) los precios en estos productos se han incrementado drásticamente debido a los altos costes de producción.

Por su parte, los productos sancionados que no se podían producir en el territorio ruso empezaron a importarse desde los mercados alternativos. Así, según Word Food Moscow (2017)<sup>41</sup>, después de la implementación del embargo las importaciones desde Serbia, Egipto, Pakistán y América de Sur, sobre todo Chile, Argentina y Brasil, han crecido significativamente.

Es necesario mencionar que los países de la Unión Económica Euroasiática al no participar en el embargo también han salido beneficiados de la política rusa de diversificación de las importaciones agrarias y alimenticias. Así, las importaciones agrarias a Rusia han crecido, sobre todo, desde Bielorrusia, Armenia y Kirguistán. Además, según las observaciones del Parlamento Europeo (2017), mientras que las exportaciones de los productos agrícolas sancionados a Rusia cayeron drásticamente en 2014 (-22,3% para productos agrícolas y -42,2% productos embargados) las exportaciones a la Unión Económica Euroasiática aumentaron (+7,3% y +5,1% respectivamente). Aparte de los países de la UEEA, Rusia también aumentó importaciones desde otros países vecinos y cercanos tales como Georgia, Serbia y Turquía.

Las sanciones por parte de Rusia contra los países del Mundo Occidental tuvieron el máximo impacto en el sector agrario-alimenticio. Según los datos de Parlamento Europeo (2017), midiendo en términos absolutos el valor de los productos embargados en 2013, los más afectados fueron Lituania, Polonia, Alemania, Países Bajos, Dinamarca, España, Finlandia, Bélgica y Francia.

En esta situación, con el objetivo de suavizar el impacto negativo de las sanciones en el sector agrario-alimenticio, la UE ha movilizadado una respuesta colectiva a través del uso de apropiados mecanismos de mercado, conjuntamente con la Política Agraria Común a fin de estabilizar el mercado interno (Boulanger *et al.*, 2016). Las empresas europeas afectadas por las sanciones han recibido ayudas por parte de la UE. Además, en la búsqueda de nuevos mercados, la UE ha promovido la negociaciones sobre las zonas de libre comercio y acuerdos sobre las normas fitosanitarias con terceros países. Como resultado, según el Parlamento Europeo (2017) las exportaciones en el sector agro-alimenticio aumentaron en un 2% en 2016 comparado con el año anterior. Los mejores resultados fueron alcanzados con los siguientes países: China (+13,3%), Japón (+7,4%), los Estados Unidos (+5,5%), Suiza (+2,4).

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<sup>41</sup> <http://www.world-food.ru/en-GB/press/news/2638.aspx>

No obstante, no hay que olvidar que las sanciones fueron aplicadas en el período de estagnación de la economía rusa, que posteriormente se convirtió en recesión debido a otros factores económicos internos y externos tales como el shock de precios del petróleo, devaluación de la moneda rusa, fuga de capitales, corrupción etc. Así, muchos autores afirman que el impacto negativo de la caída de los precios del petróleo en la economía rusa (Rautava, 2004; Ito, 2010; Tuzova y Qayum, 2016). Dreyer y Luengo-Cabrera (2015) confirma que la fuga de capitales en 2014 fue incluso más severa que durante la crisis económica mundial de 2008. A este respecto, el Parlamento Europeo subraya que es difícil superar el afecto de las sanciones de otros factores que influyeron negativamente en la economía rusa. Además, es imprescindible pero bastante complicado incluir y observar en los modelos econométricos todas las conexiones inter-sectoriales y cadenas de valor que fueron afectadas por las sanciones.

Sin embargo, varios institutos de investigación ya han proporcionado las primeras evaluaciones de potenciales costes e impactos de las sanciones. Según el informe del Parlamento Europeo (2017) y EU Observer, la Comisión Europea ha valorado el daño por las sanciones en la economía europea en 40 mil millones EUR (-0,3 % de PIB de la UE) en 2014 y 50 mil millones EUR (-0,4% de PIB de la UE) en 2015. Según las estimaciones del Institute of Economic Forecasting el potencial impacto de las sanciones en la economía rusa representa entre 8-10% de su PIB y el impacto para la UE es 0,5% de su PIB. Mientras tanto, Havlik (2014) concluye que la economía de Ucrania ha tenido el impacto más drástico por el conflicto, afirmando que las sanciones han costado a Ucrania más del 10% de su PIB en 2014 frente al -0,1% del PIB para la UE. Según este autor, las pérdidas para Rusia son de 20 mil millones EUR en 2014, 30 mil millones en 2015 y 50 mil millones en 2016. Gurvich y Prilepskiy (2015) subrayan que el impacto de las sanciones financieras fue 3,3 veces menos que el efecto de la caída de los precios en petróleo. Tuzova y Qayum (2016), Dreger *et al.* (2016) y Ahn y Ludema (2017), a su vez, suponen que el impacto de las sanciones financieras ha sido casi insignificante en la devaluación del rublo ruso frente a la drástica caída de los precios del petróleo en 2015. Bond *et al.* (2015) afirman que las sanciones van a tener más bien el efecto a corto plazo que a largo plazo. Peters (2017) predice que ya que las sanciones fueron destinadas a dañar el sector energético de Rusia esto provocará la subida de los precios en los países de la UE.

Siguiendo a Veebel and Markus (2015) y las sanciones impuestas por la UE, a pesar de que lograron provocar la estagnación económica en Rusia, no alcanzaron a dañar suficientemente las áreas claves de la industria rusa tales como las exportaciones de petróleo, gas y otras materias primas y, por

supuesto, no cumplieron su principal objetivo: devolver la integridad territorial a Ucrania y acabar con el conflicto en los territorios de Ucrania Oriental. Por lo tanto, los autores plantean una duda sobre si los objetivos iniciales de las sanciones contra Rusia eran irrealistas desde el comienzo.

En conclusión, hay que subrayar que tanto Rusia como la UE han logrado adaptarse frente las mutuas sanciones. A pesar de la guerra de las sanciones las relaciones comerciales entre ellos siguen en vigor debido a la fuerte interdependencia energética y de vecindad. Así, Giumelli (2017) afirma que no todos los sectores fueron afectados por las sanciones de la misma manera.

Aunque el estatus de asociación estratégica fue suspendida, los socios siguen siendo estratégicos respectivamente, teniendo en cuenta la aproximación geográfica, dependencia de materias primas, necesidad de modernización por parte de Rusia, fuertes vínculos establecidos entre los ciudadanos y el alto estatus de ambas partes a nivel internacional. En este sentido, Voynikov (2015) afirma que a pesar de la situación actual ni Rusia ni la UE están en posición de suspender la asociación estratégica definiendo sus relaciones como «la relación estratégica forzada». Además no hay que olvidar que la guerra de las sanciones no puede durar siempre y tarde o temprano las partes tendrán que llegar a un acuerdo. Desde esta perspectiva, por tanto, es importante preservar los vínculos tanto económicos como políticos.

#### **4. Evidencia Empírica: Aplicación del Modelo de Gravitación**

En este apartado hemos aplicado el modelo de Gravitación para estimar el efecto de la asociación estratégica de forma conjunta con otros factores tales como el crecimiento del PIB per capita tanto ruso como el de la UE, la distancia entre los capitales, las sanciones, la devaluación de la moneda rusa y los precios del petróleo en el intercambio comercial euro-ruso.

##### **4.1. Metodología**

Los modelos de Gravitación representan unas de los más estables interrelaciones empíricas en los análisis económicos (Head y Mayer, 2013). Dichos modelos están basados en la expresión de Newton de la Gravedad: la fuerza que atrae dos cuerpos es directamente proporcional a la deferencia de sus masas e inversamente proporcional al cuadrado de la distancia que los separa. Esta expresión se traslada en economía para representar, por ejemplo, flujos comerciales entre dos puntos geográficos, midiendo la

masa de los “cuerpos” como el PIB y la población y la distancia en términos físicos, por ejemplo, en kilómetros.

El modelo de gravitación fue aplicado por primera vez por un economista danés Tinbergen en 1962, para analizar las corrientes de extranjeros. En su modelo la variable dependiente es el intercambio comercial entre dos países A y B y las variables independientes son el PIB y la distancia.

Krugman y Obstfeld (2005) también han utilizado el modelo de Gravitación para las corrientes comerciales y han descrito el modelo de la siguiente manera:

$$T_{ij} = \frac{AY_iY_j}{D_{ij}} \quad (1)$$

Donde:

$T_{ij}$  es la corriente comercial desde el país de origen  $i$  hacia el país de destino  $j$

$Y_i, Y_j$  son el tamaño económico de dos países (PIBs de los países)

$D$  es la distancia entre los países  $i$  y  $j$  en términos físicos.

En lo sucesivo, los investigadores añadieron diferentes variables ficticias al modelo básico, como por ejemplo, idioma en común, la frontera en común, pertenencia a algún bloque de integración regional, etc. Así, por ejemplo, los modelos de Gravitación se han usado con frecuencia para estimar los efectos de los agrupaciones de integración y los acuerdos internacionales multilaterales y bilaterales en el comercio internacional (Paas, 2004; Rose, 2004). Martínez-Zarzoso y Nowak-Lehmann (2004) aplicaron el modelo para analizar el intercambio comercial entre el Mercosur y la UE con la perspectiva del potencial acuerdo de libre comercio. Rahman (2009) intentó analizar el intercambio comercial de Australia con los 50 países usando los datos de panel. Borodin y Stokov (2015) utilizaron el modelo de Gravitación para analizar el intercambio internacional para la Unión Aduanera (el predecesor de la Unión Económica Euroasiática) y los países de la Comunidad de Países Independientes. Chernov (2017) aplicó el modelo para analizar los corrientes comerciales de Rusia con diferentes agrupaciones de investigación. Thanh Binh *et al.* (2017) analizando los flujos comerciales de Vietnam añadió asociación estratégica al modelo pero la variable no le salió significativa.

## 4.2. Variables e hipótesis

Además de las variables tradicionales para el modelo de Gravitación tales como PIB y población de los socios y distancia entre las capitales de los socios, hemos incluido al modelo los factores que pudieron haber influido en el intercambio entre Rusia y países de la UE, tales como el precio de petróleo, sanciones, intercambio de la moneda y asociación estratégica proclamada en 2009 y suspendida en 2014. La descripción detallada de las variables se puede ver en la Tabla 22.

**Tabla 22. Variables de Capítulo 2**

Abreviación	Descripción	Base de datos
Trade	Variable dependiente, logaritmo. Flujo comercial (exportaciones e importaciones) entre Rusia y los países de la UE	Trade Map
DIST	Variable independiente, logaritmo. Distancia entre capitales Rusia y los países de la UE en km	World Distance Calculator <sup>42</sup>
GDP_RUS	Variable independiente, logaritmo. PIB de Rusia, constante a 2010.	World Bank
GDP_P	Variable independiente, logaritmo. PIB del país de la UE, constante a 2010.	World Bank
POP_RUS	Variable independiente, logaritmo. Población de Rusia	World Bank
POP_P	Variable independiente, logaritmo. Población de país de la UE	World Bank
PP	Variable independiente. Precio del petróleo per barril de la marca Brent.	Statista <sup>43</sup>
EXCH	Variable independiente. Intercambio de moneda (rublo en euro)	Statista
SANCT	Variable independiente ficticia. Sanciones entre Rusia y la UE Si hay sanciones es 1, si no hay sanciones es 0.	Información oficial
SP	Variable independiente ficticia. Asociación estratégica entre Rusia y la UE Si hay asociación estratégica es 1, si no hay es 0.	Información oficial

Fuente: Elaboración propia

<sup>42</sup> [https://distancecalculator.globefeed.com/World\\_Distance\\_Calculator.asp](https://distancecalculator.globefeed.com/World_Distance_Calculator.asp)

<sup>43</sup> <https://es.statista.com/>

De acuerdo con la literatura, fueron destacadas las siguientes hipótesis:

1. Hipótesis 1: El incremento de los PIBs per cápita (de Rusia y de país de la UE) influye positivamente en el flujo comercial entre Rusia y los países de la UE
2. Hipótesis 2: Hay un efecto negativo de la distancia en el flujo comercial entre Rusia y los países de la UE
3. Hipótesis 3: Hay un efecto negativo de las sanciones en el flujo comercial entre Rusia y los países de la UE
4. Hipótesis 4: El incremento de los precios en el petróleo influye positivamente en el flujo comercial entre Rusia y los países de la UE
5. Hipótesis 5: Hay un efecto positivo de devaluación del rublo en el flujo comercial entre Rusia y los países de la UE
6. Hipótesis 6: Hay un efecto positivo de asociación estratégica en el flujo comercial entre Rusia y los países de la UE

El Periodo de investigación va desde 2001 de 2017. El modelo y los resultados están presentados en el siguiente apartado.

### 4.3. Modelo y resultados

En este trabajo, se plantea un Panel Dinámico con el fin de recoger las relaciones a corto y largo plazo entre las variables implicadas, mediante la siguiente especificación de un Modelo de Corrección por el Error (MCE). Este modelo o mecanismo fue utilizado, por primera vez, en el análisis de series temporales por Sargan (1984)<sup>1</sup>:

$$\Delta y_{it} = \delta \Delta y_{it-1} + \Delta X'_{it} \beta_X - \alpha_j [y_{it-1} - \delta_i - Z'_i \beta_Z^* - X'_{it} \beta_X^*] + \Delta \varepsilon_{it} \quad (2)$$

donde  $y_{it}$  hace referencia a la observación  $it$ -ésima de la variable endógena,  $X'_{it}$  hace referencia a la observación  $it$ -ésima en las  $k_x$  variables explicativas consideradas exógenas,  $Z'_i$  hace referencia a la observación  $i$ -ésima en las  $k_z$  variables que toman el mismo valor en el tiempo,  $\delta_i$  recoge los efectos específicos inobservables en las unidades transversales. La variable  $\varepsilon_{it}$  representa el término de perturbación

idiosincrásico que debe cumplir los supuestos básicos habituales en un modelo de regresión. Los parámetros a corto plazo vienen dados por  $\beta_X$  y los parámetros a largo plazo por  $\beta_Z^*$  y  $\beta_X^*$ . Entre corchetes figura el Vector de Cointegración.

En nuestra aplicación, la variable endógena viene dada por el flujo comercial entre Rusia y los países de la Unión Europea,  $\text{Log}(\text{TRADE}_{it})$ .  $X'_{it}$  viene definida por las siguientes variables:  $\text{Log}(\text{GDP}_{P_{it}}/\text{POP}_{P_{it}})$ ,  $\text{Log}(\text{GDP}_{\text{RUS}_{it}}/\text{POP}_{\text{RUS}_{it}})$ ,  $\text{SP}_{it}$ ,  $\text{SANCT}_{it}$  y  $\text{Log}(\text{EXCH}_{it})$ . Finalmente,  $Z'_i$  sólo viene definida por una única variable,  $\text{Log}(\text{DIST}_i)$ . Cabe destacar que Chipre y Países Bajos al distorsionar los resultados fueron omitidos del modelo y, por lo tanto, finalmente hemos considerado 26 países de la UE.

Para llegar a la especificación (2) hay que seguir tres etapas:

- 2 Comprobar que las series temporales (no estacionarias) son integradas de orden 1 (prueba de raíz unitaria de Dickey y Fuller, 1976). En este caso, los contrastes aplicados se han adaptado al Panel de Datos.
- 3 Estimar el vector o vectores de cointegración y verificar que los residuos de los correspondientes vectores son estacionarios (prueba de Engle-Granger, 1987). En esta ocasión, se vuelve a aplicar la prueba de raíz unitaria.
- 4 Especificar el modelo dinámico (MCE) con las variables en diferencias o incrementos, incorporando el vector de cointegración (especificación 2). Es necesario que el vector o vectores de cointegración sean significativos. La justificación de este modelo radica en que la estimación e inferencia son válidas al trabajar en un entorno estacionario (variables transformadas en diferencias). Asimismo, conseguimos una mejor capacidad explicativa del flujo comercial al poder incorporar retardos de la variable endógena en dicho modelo.

En relación a la primera etapa, en el apéndice B figuran los gráficos de las correspondientes variables que cambian en el tiempo. En dichos gráficos se puede apreciar el carácter no estacionario de las variables, lo que implica la necesidad de establecer relaciones de cointegración, para evitar relaciones espúreas. En el apéndice B figuran los contrastes de raíces unitarias para todas las variables que cambian en el tiempo aplicados a los niveles. En todos los casos, se acepta la hipótesis nula de una raíz unitaria. Asimismo, se ha comprobado que también se rechaza la existencia de dos raíces unitarias.

En la segunda etapa, se ha planteado tres vectores de Cointegración que representan relaciones a

largo plazo, de ahora en adelante: LP\_1, LP\_2 y LP\_3. El hecho de utilizar tres vectores de Cointegración permite paliar el problema de la multicolinealidad. Las tres relaciones permiten explicar el intercambio comercial entre Rusia y los países de la Unión Europea, que denominamos  $\text{Log}(\text{TRADE}_{it})$  bajo un escenario de no estacionariedad.

El vector de cointegración, LP\_1, establece una relación a largo plazo entre  $\text{log}(\text{TRADE}_{it})$  y las variables  $\text{LOG}(\text{PIB\_RUS/POP\_RUS})$  y  $\text{SANT}$ . El vector de cointegración, LP\_2, supone una relación a largo plazo entre  $\text{log}(\text{TRADE}_{it})$  y las variables  $\text{SP}$  y  $\text{LOG}(\text{EXCH})$ . Finalmente, el último vector de cointegración, LP\_3, determina la relación a largo plazo entre  $\text{log}(\text{TRADE}_{ij}/\text{POP\_P}_{it})$  y las variables  $\text{LOG}(\text{PIB\_CURRENT\_P/POP\_P})$ ,  $\text{LOG}(\text{DIST})$  y  $\text{LOG}(\text{PP})$ . Las tres relaciones se han determinado probando con diferentes versiones del Panel Estático y comprobando que no hay raíces unitarias en los residuos de los modelos y que los signos de los coeficientes son los correctos.

Para la estimación de los dos primeros vectores de cointegración, se ha hecho uso de un Panel de Efectos Fijos, es decir, se ha supuesto que la heterogeneidad entre los países está correlacionada con las variables explicativas. En el caso del tercer vector de cointegración, su estimación se ha llevado a cabo bajo un Panel de Efectos Aleatorios ya que, de esta manera, se puede cuantificar el efecto de la variable  $\text{Log}(\text{DIST}_i)$ . Asimismo, con el fin de garantizar la robusted de los estimadores de los errores estándar de los coeficientes, se ha utilizado una estimación de la Matriz de White de varianzas y covarianzas para las unidades transversales (corregida de los grados de libertad). Parte de los resultados de las estimaciones de los tres paneles estáticos (vectores de cointegración) figuran en las tablas 23, 24 y 25 respectivamente. En dichas tablas figuran los coeficientes estimados, los valores del estadístico *t-student* y el *p-valor*. En todos los casos, los coeficientes muestran los signos correctos y son claramente significativos al 5%.

**Table 23. Vector de Cointegración LP\_1 (Fixed Effects Model)**

Dependent variable:  $\text{log}(\text{TRADE}_{it})$

Independent variable	Coefficient	t-statistic	P-value
$\text{LOG}(\text{PIB\_RUS/POP\_RUS})$	0.777734	52.60125	0.0000
SANT	-0.189489	-8.585548	0.0000

Note: Cluster-Robust Standar Errors: White cross-section standard errors & covariance (d.f. corrected).  $R^2 = 0.967492$ .



**Table 24. Vector de Cointegración LP\_2 (Fixed Effects Model)**Dependent variable:  $\log(\text{TRADE}_{it})$ 

Independent variable	Coefficient	t-statistic	P-value
SP	0.464351	10.28811	0.0000
LOG(EXCH)	0.666507	9.083929	0.0000

Note: Cluster-Robust Standar Errors: White cross-section standard errors & covariance (d.f. corrected).  $R^2 = 0.904484$ .**Table 25. Vector de Cointegración LP\_3 (Random Effects Model)**Dependent variable:  $\log(\text{TRADE}_{it}/\text{POP\_P}_{it})$ 

Independent variable	Coefficient	t-statistic	P-value
LOG(PIB_CURRENT_P/POP_P)	0.406019	4.711676	0.0000
LOG(DIST)	-1.711645	-6.339601	0.0000
LOG(PP)	0.696195	10.23752	0.0000

Note: Cluster-Robust Standar Errors: White cross-section standard errors & covariance (d.f. corrected).  $R^2 = 0.700031$ .

Asimismo, se ha aplicado el contraste de raíces unitarias sobre los residuos de los modelos estáticos bajo efectos fijos y aleatorios (véase el Apéndice C, tablas C7, C8 y C9 respectivamente). En ninguno de los casos se admite una raíz unitaria (ya sea común o específica para cada país). Los resultados muestran que el panel estático estimado puede ser apropiado para representar una posible relación a largo plazo entre las variables de interés, por lo que su estimación se puede considerar consistente y se descartaría la existencia de una regresión espuria. Por lo tanto, podemos confirmar todas nuestras hipótesis mencionadas en el apartado anterior.

En la tercera y última etapa, se formula el Modelo de Corrección por el Error (MCE) incorporando inicialmente los tres vectores de cointegración. Este modelo permite mejorar la capacidad explicativa del flujo comercial ya que no sólo tiene en cuenta la dinámica a largo plazo (vectores de cointegración) sino también la dinámica a corto plazo (resto de términos de la especificación 2) con objeto de reducir al máximo el tamaño de la variabilidad del término de perturbación. Así que, el paso

siguiente, sería comprobar que dichas relaciones funcionan en el Modelo de Corrección por el Error y sus respectivos coeficientes son significativos y negativos.

En la tabla 26 figura el Modelo de Corrección del Error, tal y como se recoge en la especificación (2). El modelo se ha estimado por el Método Generalizado de los Momentos aplicando una diferencia a la especificación (2) similar al estimador de *Arellano-Bond* utilizando como instrumento adicional  $\Delta\text{LOG}(\text{TRADE}_{it-2}/\text{POP\_RUS}_{it-2})$  además de las variables que figuran en el modelo. Nótese que una diferencia a la especificación (2) equivaldría a modelizar la aceleración de las tasas interanuales del flujo comercial entre Rusia y los Países de la Unión Europea. Esta sobrediferenciación favorece la estacionariedad de las variables aunque puede reducir la eficiencia.

**Table 26. Error Correction Model: Panel Generalized Method of Moments**

Dependent variable:  $\Delta\text{LOG}(\text{TRADE}_{it})$

Independent variable	Coefficient	t-statistic	P-value
$\Delta\text{LOG}(\text{TRADE}_{it-1})$	0.049519	5.427988	0.0000
$\Delta\text{LOG}(\text{PIB\_P}/\text{POP\_P})$	0.427040	8.446927	0.0000
$\Delta\text{LOG}(\text{PIB\_RUS}/\text{POP\_P})$	0.568470	8.741116	0.0003
$\Delta\text{LOG}(\text{PP})$	0.287140	6.003857	0.0000
LP_1	-0.453459	-4.207788	0.0000
LP_2	---	---	---
LP_3	-0.372422	-3.574770	0.0004

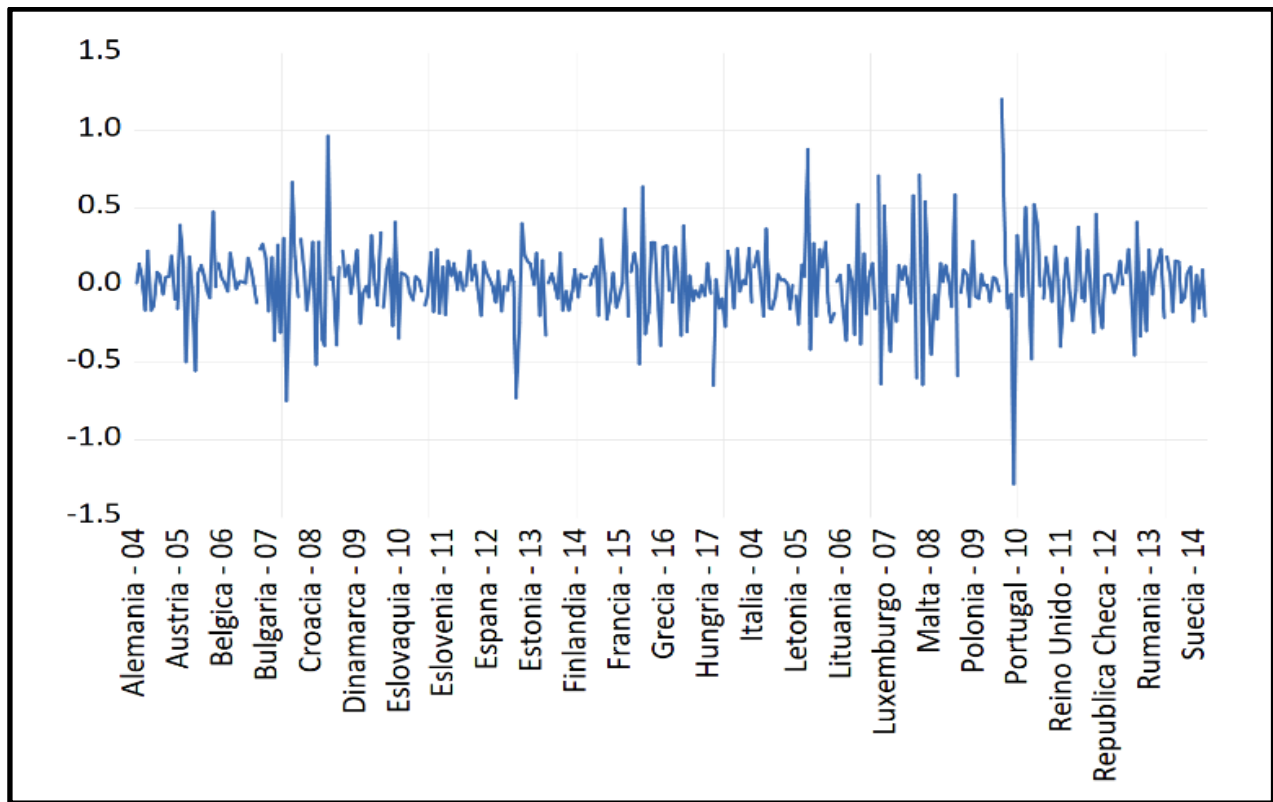
Cluster-Robust Standar Errors: White cross-section standard errors & covariance (d.f. corrected).

J-Statistic=25.57488. Prob (J-Statistic)= 0,180316.  $R^2=0,913$  (en niveles). SE = 0.261074.

Como se puede apreciar, el ajuste es muy bueno, alcanzando un  $R^2$  del 91.3%. Cabe destacar que la especificación del modelo de Corrección por el Error no muestra problemas de especificación. Véase que los instrumentos utilizados son ortogonales según el contraste *J-Statistic*. Asimismo, si el modelo correcto es la especificación 1, el test de *Arellano-Bond* permite verificar que hay autocorrelación en los residuos del modelo, de orden 1, pero no de orden 2 (véase tabla B10 del Apéndice B).

En este MCE no ha resultado significativo el vector de cointegración LP\_2 que relaciona el flujo comercial con el tipo de cambio y el hecho de que haya asociación estratégica. Igualmente, el PIB per cápita y el Precio del Petróleo (PP) son variables que influyen en el corto y largo plazo. Sin embargo, la distancia entre países (DIST) y las sanciones (SANCT) influyen en el largo plazo. En la figura 9 se muestran los residuos del modelo, donde se aprecia claramente que son estacionarios.

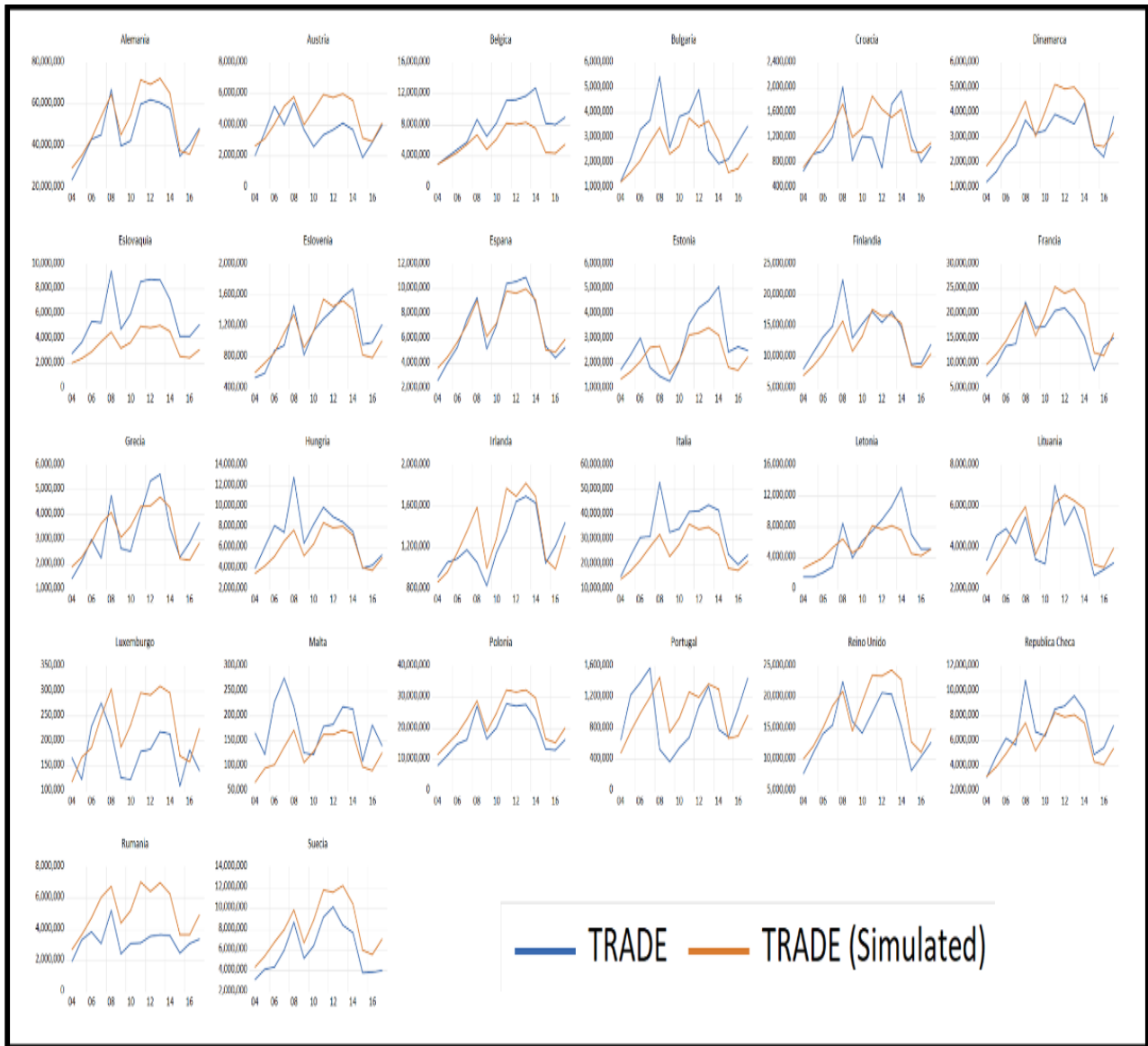
**Figura 9. Residuos del Modelo de Corrección por Error**



Fuente: Cálculos propios

En la figura 10 se muestran los resultados de simular la variable **TRADE<sub>it</sub>** con el Modelo de Corrección del Error para los 26 países.

**Figura 10. Simulaciones de TRADE (26 países) con el MCE**



Fuente: Elaboración propia

Por último, señalar que el resultado de que el vector de cointegración LP\_2 que relaciona el flujo comercial con el tipo de cambio y la asociación estratégica no salió significativo en el Modelo de Corrección por el Error no significa que no haya una relación entre estas variables. Dicha relación existe a largo plazo, pero no es necesaria en el MCE incorporando los otros dos vectores de cointegración (LP\_1 y LP\_3). De hecho, dicha relación a largo plazo funciona cuando no se incorporan dichos vectores cointegración.

## 5. Conclusiones

Ante todo, hemos de reconocer que durante casi treinta años de relaciones euro-rusas, Rusia ha pasado una drástica transformación desde un Estado debilitado por su enorme deuda exterior, la inestabilidad política y financiera después de la disolución de la Unión Soviética y la guerra en Chechenia, hasta un país que realiza su política independiente basada sobre la idea de volver a convertir Rusia en un poderoso actor en el ámbito internacional.

Como hemos observado, la UE y Rusia subrayaron sus intereses pragmáticos y prioridades desde el principio de su colaboración. Así, mientras que para Rusia la prioridad era crear un sistema europeo común de la seguridad colectiva, para la UE parecía que lo más importante era ejercer su “poder normativo” hacia sus socios y países vecinos, incluyendo Rusia, presentándose como una “fuerza para lo bien” a fin de fortalecer la Democracia, los principios e instituciones del Estado de Derecho.

Sin embargo, las partes lograron formar una amplia red de instituciones y empezaron a construir la aspirada asociación estratégica que estaba destinada a llevarles hacia la libre circulación de personas, capitales, bienes y servicios.

No obstante, la asociación estratégica basada únicamente en los intereses económicos comunes con valores, sistemas políticos, desarrollos económicos, enfoques sobre seguridad y objetivos en el terreno internacional diferentes no ha podido durar mucho tiempo. El conflicto en Ucrania ha sido la culminación de los antiguos problemas y desacuerdos que finalmente no solo acabó con el concepto de la asociación estratégica sino que llevó a las partes hasta el abierto enfrentamiento en el ámbito internacional imponiéndose sanciones económicas mutuamente.

El embargo por parte de Rusia en la producción agrícola, industrias de carne, pescado y productos lácteos procedentes de la UE provocó la drástica caída de las importaciones europeas. No obstante, tanto la UE como Rusia se han adaptado a las condiciones impuestas debido a la guerra de sanciones. Así, la UE pudo lograr el crecimiento de las exportaciones agrícolas a través de la diversificación de mercados con ayuda de la Política Agrícola Común (PAC). Rusia, a su vez, consiguió sustituir los artículos embargados por la producción doméstica y las importaciones desde destinos alternativos. Como resultado, se incrementó la producción doméstica de ciertos productos y se aumentaron las exportaciones, sobre todo desde la Unión Económica Euroasiática, otros países cercanos, como Serbia, Turquía, Egipto y América Latina.

Se puede concluir que, aunque las sanciones contra Rusia perjudicaron la economía rusa, su principal objetivo, el de devolver la unidad territorial a Ucrania, no fue logrado. Además, es difícil

separar el daño a la economía rusa provocado por las sanciones europeas de otros factores que tuvieron impacto negativo en la situación económica en Rusia como, por ejemplo, la caída de los precios en el petróleo. Muchos autores afirman que la caída de los precios del petróleo provocó mucho más daño en la economía rusa que las sanciones de la UE.

En este capítulo hemos aplicado Panel Dinámico con el fin de recoger las relaciones a corto y largo plazo entre las variables implicadas. Para evitar la multicolinealidad entre las variables hemos hecho tres ejecuciones. La aplicación del modelo de Gravitación ha confirmado el efecto negativo de distancia y sanciones en el flujo comercial entre Rusia y España. Por otro lado, el modelo augura que hay efecto positivo del crecimiento del PIB per cápita tanto de Rusia como de la UE, de devolución de la moneda rusa y de crecimiento de precios de petróleo en el flujo comercial euro-ruso. Además, a pesar de que muchos autores afirman que una verdadera asociación estratégica entre Rusia y la UE nunca ha existido, el modelo ha demostrado que hubo un efecto positivo de asociación estratégica en el flujo comercial entre las partes. Por lo tanto, todas nuestras hipótesis han sido confirmadas. En el modelo final, denominado Modelo de Corrección del Error, hemos intentado incluir los tres vectores con todas las variables. Aunque el vector de cointegración LP\_2 que relaciona el flujo comercial con el tipo de cambio y el hecho de que haya asociación estratégica no salió significativo, eso no significa que no haya una relación entre estas variables sino que no son los factores principales que influyen en el flujo comercial entre los socios y que con otros dos vectores que salieron significativos es suficiente para explicar la variable dependiente. Además, cabe destacar que el  $R^2$  del modelo final es muy alto, 91%, lo que demuestra que el modelo puede ser considerado como fiable.

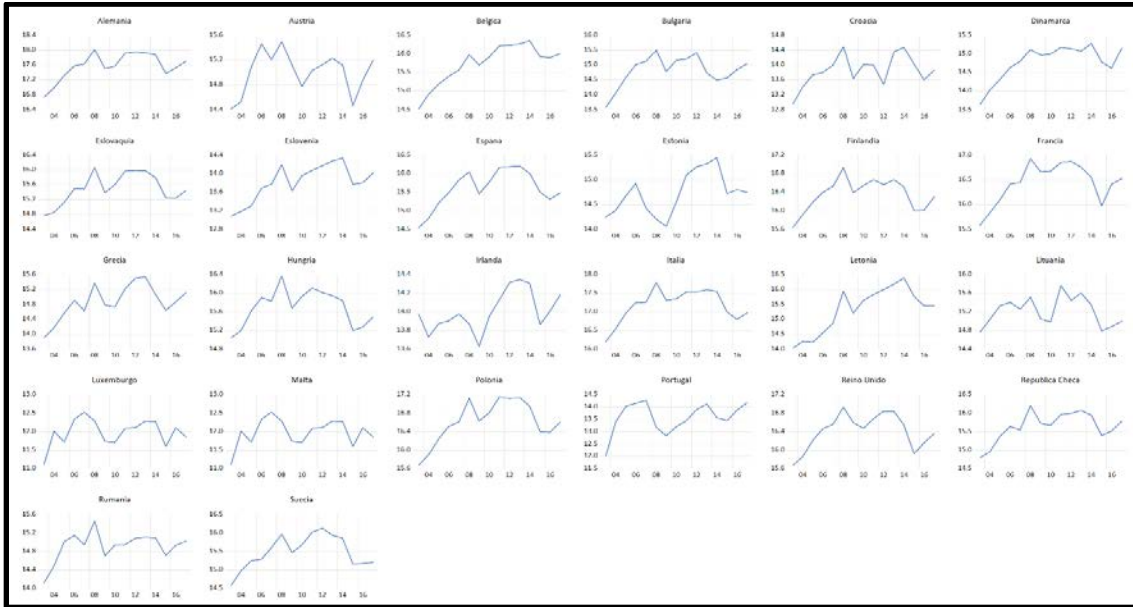
Para terminar nos gustaría subrayar que a pesar de las sanciones Rusia y la UE no pueden perder los lazos establecidos durante muchos años en el campo económico, científico y cultural. Asimismo, solo en colaboración con Rusia se puede lograr la estabilidad y seguridad en Europa. Así que tarde o temprano las partes deberían llegar al acuerdo y acabar con la destructiva guerra de sanciones.

Por lo tanto, cualesquiera que fueran los flujos y reflujos que acompañan las relaciones entre Rusia y la UE, por una serie de razones fundamentales, no se presenta otra alternativa que no sea la de dar un contenido real a la tesis sobre la asociación estratégica entre las partes.

## 6. Apéndices

### 6.1 Apéndice B. Gráficos

**Gráfico B1. Log(TRADE/POP\_RUS)**



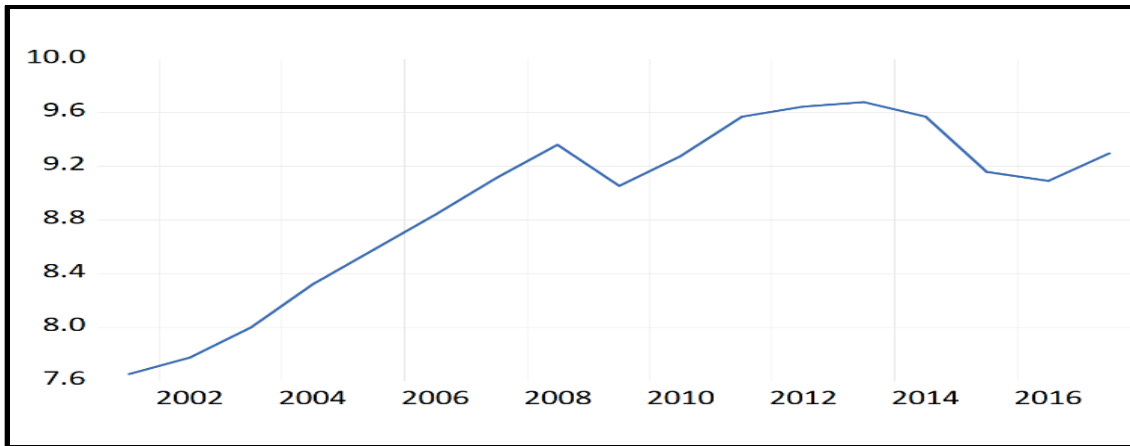
Fuente: Elaboración propia

**Gráfico B2. Log(TRADE/POP\_P)**



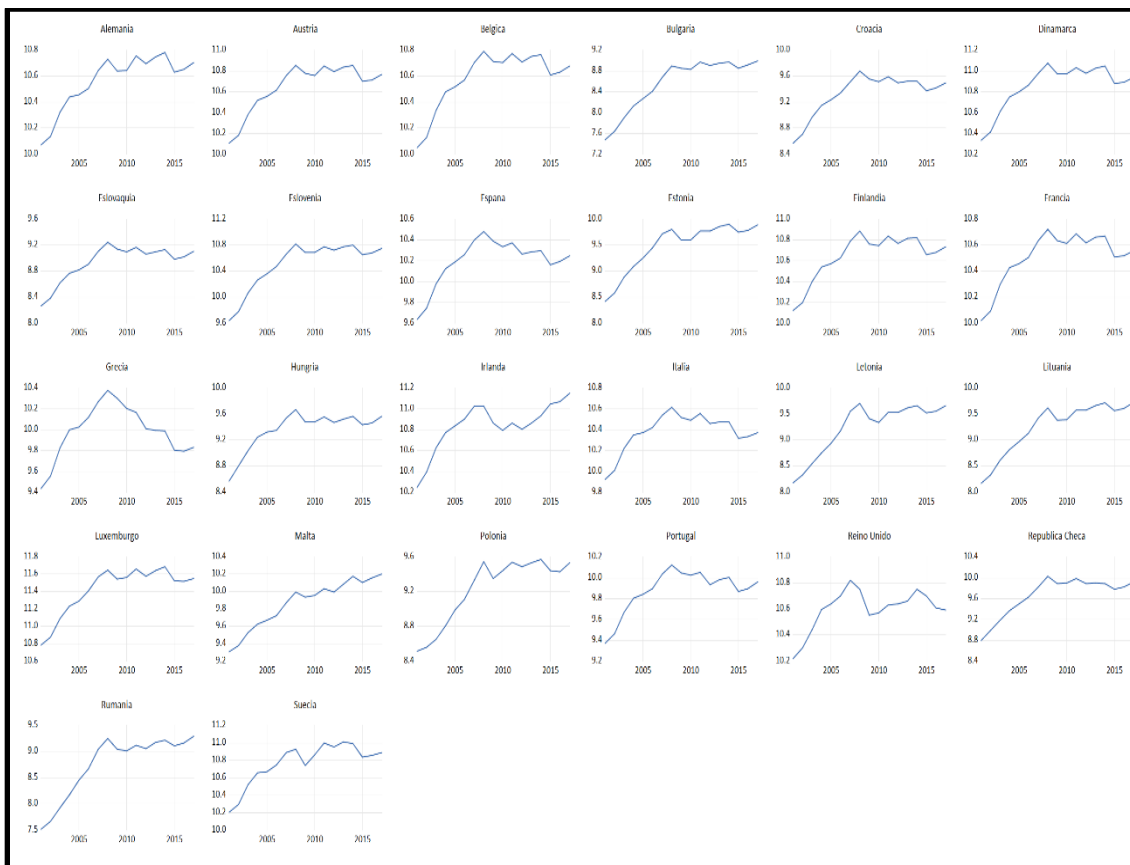
Fuente: Elaboración propia

**Gráfico B3. Log(PIB\_RUS/POP\_RUS)**



Fuente: Elaboración propia

**Gráfico B4. Log(PIB\_P/POP\_P)**

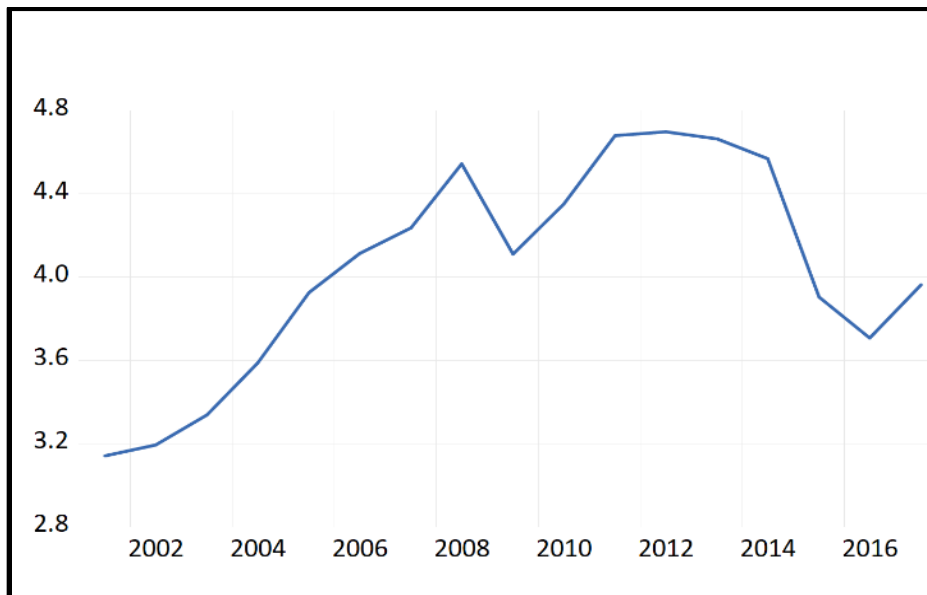


Fuente: Elaboración propia



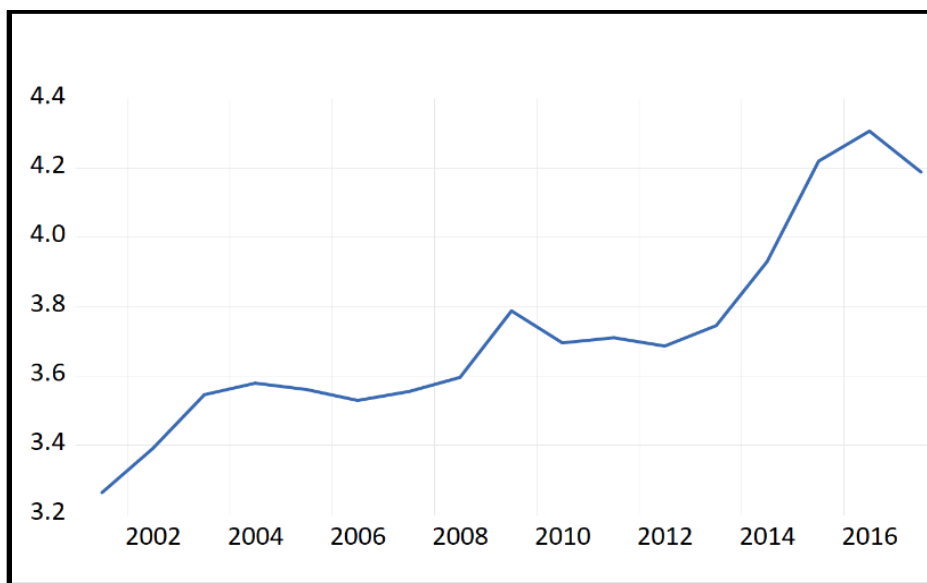


**Gráfico B5. Log(PP)**



Fuente: Elaboración propia

**Gráfico B6. Log(EXCH)**



Fuente: Elaboración propia

## 6.2 Apéndice C. Resultados estadísticos

**Table C1. Panel unit root test (summary): Log(TRADE)**

Null Hypothesis: Unit root (assumes common unit root process)

Test	Statistic	P-value	Cross-sections	Obs.
Breitung t-stat	0.65607	<b>0.7441</b>	26	386

Null Hypothesis: Unit root (assumes individual unit root process)

Test	Statistic	P-value	Cross-sections	Obs.
ADF - Fisher	37.6162	<b>0.9331</b>	26	412
PP - Fisher	24.3740	<b>0.9996</b>	26	416

Note: Probabilities for Fisher tests are computed using an asymptotic Chi-square distribution. All other tests assume asymptotic normality.

**Table C2. Panel unit root test (summary): Log(TRADE/POP\_P)**

Null Hypothesis: Unit root (assumes common unit root process)

Test	Statistic	P-value	Cross-sections	Obs.
Breitung t-stat	0.64698	<b>0.7412</b>	26	386

Null Hypothesis: Unit root (assumes individual unit root process)

Test	Statistic	P-value	Cross-sections	Obs.
ADF - Fisher	37.5434	<b>0.9343</b>	26	412
PP - Fisher	24.1538	<b>0.9997</b>	26	416

Note: Probabilities for Fisher tests are computed using an asymptotic Chi-square distribution. All other tests assume asymptotic normality.

**Table C3. Panel unit root test (summary): Log(PIB\_RUS/POP\_RUS)**

Null Hypothesis: Unit root (assumes common unit root process)

Test	Statistic	P-value	Cross-sections	Obs.
Breitung t-stat	1.06351	<b>0.8562</b>	1	15

Null Hypothesis: Unit root (assumes individual unit root process)

Test	Statistic	P-value	Cross-sections	Obs.
ADF - Fisher	0.14118	0.9318	1	16
PP - Fisher	0.05174	0.9745	1	16

Note: Probabilities for Fisher tests are computed using an asymptotic Chi-square distribution. All other tests assume asymptotic normality.

**Table C4. Panel unit root test (summary): Log(PIB\_P/POP\_P)**

Null Hypothesis: Unit root (assumes common unit root process)

Test	Statistic	P-value	Cross-sections	Obs.
Breitung t-stat	2.14382	<b>0.9840</b>	26	362

Null Hypothesis: Unit root (assumes individual unit root process)

Test	Statistic	P-value	Cross-sections	Obs.
ADF - Fisher	37.5383	<b>0.9344</b>	26	388
PP - Fisher	82.7062	0.0043	26	416

Note: Probabilities for Fisher tests are computed using an asymptotic Chi-square distribution. All other tests assume asymptotic normality.

**Table C5. Panel unit root test (summary): Log(PP)**

Null Hypothesis: Unit root (assumes common unit root process)

Test	Statistic	P-value	Cross-sections	Obs.
Breitung t-stat	0.75984	<b>0.7763</b>	1	15

Null Hypothesis: Unit root (assumes individual unit root process)

Test	Statistic	P-value	Cross-sections	Obs.
ADF - Fisher	0.18650	<b>0.9110</b>	1	16
PP - Fisher	0.13788	<b>0.9334</b>	1	16

Note: Probabilities for Fisher tests are computed using an asymptotic Chi-square distribution. All other tests assume asymptotic normality.

**Table C6. Panel unit root test (summary): Log(EXCH)**

Null Hypothesis: Unit root (assumes common unit root process)

Test	Statistic	P-value	Cross-sections	Obs.
Levin, Lin & Chu t*	-1.30753	<b>0.0955</b>	1	13

Null Hypothesis: Unit root (assumes individual unit root process)

Test	Statistic	P-value	Cross-sections	Obs.
ADF - Fisher	3.50592	<b>0.1733</b>	1	14
PP - Fisher	0.81636	<b>0.6649</b>	1	16

Note: Probabilities for Fisher tests are computed using an asymptotic Chi-square distribution. All other tests assume asymptotic normality.

**Table C7. Panel unit root test (summary). Residual Static Panel 1.**

Null Hypothesis: Unit root (assumes common unit root process)

Model	Test	Statistic	P-value	Cross-sections	Obs.
LP_1	Levin, Lin & Chu t*	-6.05187	<b>0.0000</b>	26	416

Null Hypothesis: Unit root (assumes individual unit root process)

Model	Test	Statistic	P-value	Cross-sections	Obs.
LP_1	ADF - Fisher	107.604	<b>0.0000</b>	26	416
LP_1	PP - Fisher	111.222	<b>0.0000</b>	26	416

Note: Probabilities for Fisher tests are computed using an asymptotic Chi-square distribution. All other tests assume asymptotic normality.

**Table C8. Panel unit root test (summary). Residual Static Panel 2.**

Null Hypothesis: Unit root (assumes common unit root process)

Model	Test	Statistic	P-value	Cross-sections	Obs.
LP_2	Levin, Lin & Chu t*	-6.05369	<b>0.0000</b>	26	416

Null Hypothesis: Unit root (assumes individual unit root process)

Model	Test	Statistic	P-value	Cross-sections	Obs.
LP_2	ADF - Fisher	101.277	<b>0.0000</b>	26	416
LP_2	PP - Fisher	100.181	<b>0.0000</b>	26	416

Note: Probabilities for Fisher tests are computed using an asymptotic Chi-square distribution. All other tests assume asymptotic normality.

**Table C9. Panel unit root test (summary). Residual Static Panel 3.**

Null Hypothesis: Unit root (assumes common unit root process)

Model	Test	Statistic	P-value	Cross-sections	Obs.
LP_3	Levin, Lin & Chu t*	-3.24466	<b>0.0000</b>	26	416

Null Hypothesis: Unit root (assumes individual unit root process)

Model	Test	Statistic	P-value	Cross-sections	Obs.
LP_3	ADF - Fisher	86.4550	<b>0.0000</b>	26	416
LP_3	PP - Fisher	88.5203	<b>0.0000</b>	26	416

Note: Probabilities for Fisher tests are computed using an asymptotic Chi-square distribution. All other tests assume asymptotic normality.

**Table C10. Arellano-Bond Serial Correlation Test: Residual ECM**

Null Hypothesis: No autocorrelation in residual model

Model	Test order	m-Statistic	rho	SE(rho)	P-value
ECM	AR(1)	-3.200663	-8.308550	2.595884	<b>0.0014</b>
ECM	AR(2)	0.384154	0.468150	1.218651	<b>0.7009</b>

Note: Probabilities for Fisher tests are computed using an asymptotic Chi-square distribution.

All other tests assume asymptotic normality.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **The Eurasian Economic Union in Search of Strategic Partners: Integration Blocks' Gravity Effects**

## 1. Introduction

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Baltic States joined the EU while the rest of the former members attempted to create different regional organizations in the Post-Soviet Space. Some countries hesitated between the incorporation into the EU and the integration proposed by Russia. And it is worth recognizing that the EU created a strong competition for the RF to become the main integrator in the region. However, the RF has not abandoned the idea of continuing to promote the integration in the post-Soviet Space.

After several failed attempts at integration during the post-Soviet area, in 2007 Belarus, Kazakstan and Russia finally reached agreement on the issue of creating a ‘Customs Union’. Consequently, on that basis, i.e. the establishment of the Customs Union, the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) came into operation in 2015 augmented by the further accession of Armenia and Kyrgyzstan in the same year.

Within the theoretical part of our research we analyse the integration in the Post-Soviet Space and the role and perspectives of a new agent in the region, the EEU on the international scene and its criticism (under the first heading) and we proceed to research the EAEU’s legal institutional and economic frameworks and finally its foreign activity including the possibility of establishment strategic partnership between the EAEU and the EU (under the second heading). As for methodological techniques, a review of the relevant literature, descriptive statistics and comparative analysis were applied.

However, the EAEU is a young organization, which puts limitations on practical research methods. Because of this scarcity of empirical evidence, the majority of the authors, while analysing Eurasian integration, have been guided by points of reference to absolute historicism, ideological statements and declarations. Thus, for instance, Libman (2012) highlights that relevant Russian studies have weak theoretical foundations and are often “full of descriptive statistics, but almost never contain original research (e.g. interviews, detailed case studies, or econometric analysis)” (p. 239). In this regard, the present research aims to ‘fill that gap’ with econometric analysis by applying the Gravity Model.

As our thesis aims to prove the feasibility of strategic partnership between the EU and the EAEU not only on the part of the EU but on the part of the EAEU as well in this chapter the affiliation of EAEU’s trade partners to regional organization (including the EU) or group of country (including BRICS) was added to the model. Thus, applying the technique of the Gravity Mode, we discovered not only which factors influence foreign trade cooperation with various integration blocks but also analysed those



groups of countries aimed at deciding which partners the Eurasian Economic Union should develop strategic partnerships with.

## **2. Historical Theoretical Framework: The EAEU as a New Integration Project on the Post-Soviet Space**

In this heading we analyse the new regional project on the post-Soviet space –the Eurasian Economic Union with a view to consequently propose the strategic partnership with the EU. We start with analysis of integration on the post-Soviet Space, then we proceed to specific features of the EAEU and finally we finish with chronology of formation of the EAEU and its criticism.

### **2.1. Evolution of integration on the Post-Soviet Space**

After the dissolution of the USSR, the RF promoted the integration on the Post-Soviet Space. However, it is worth mentioning that despite its ambitions to become the main integrator in the area, the RF has not always been the only initiator of all projects: there was also the proposition promoted by other post-Soviet countries, which did not agree with the Russian domination, like the GUAM (Organization for Democracy and Economic Development). The projects of integration in the post-Soviet Space are represented in Table D (see Appendix D).

Observing Table D, we can argue that most integration attempts were not successful. Several reasons for these failures can be mentioned. First and foremost, it is worth stressing that most integration projects in the post-Soviet Space, unless the SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organization), were between former members. Thus, from this point of view, it can be said that the SCO is the most progressive form and has prospects because it admits the incorporation of other powerful agents in the region. Second, the economic level of the member countries and the political regime were quite different. Even some states (such as Uzbekistan, Belarus or Turkmenistan) still kept some elements of planned economy; the speed of reform also differed (however, the diversity among participating countries was not greater than among EU members during the 2004 enlargement), (Chubik and Pelipas, 2004). Third, the collapse of the USSR and the creation of independent countries caused territorial disputes in the post-Soviet area, which, on its turn, became a serious obstacle for the integration processes in the region. Moreover, Russia's recovery and reinforcement of its position on the international stage and its claims for

leadership in the region had a contradictory impact (there were both allies and opponents). Fourth, and finally, despite all agreements, there was competition between some members (like ‘sugar wars’ between Russia and Ukraine), which influenced their mutual exchange.

Thus, speaking of integration in the Post-Soviet area, it can be concluded that the integration existed on paper while in reality it did not present any political or economic power (Obydenkova, 2011; Libman and Vinokurov, 2012a; Hansen, 2013). Even perhaps the most famous organization in the post-Soviet space, that being the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), has managed merely to ensure a ‘civilized divorce’.<sup>44</sup> The failure can be partly explained by the fact that Russia -- as well as other nascent post-Soviet states – after being economically destroyed by the collapse of the Soviet Empire, had to focus on solving their own domestic problems rather than to opt for precarious and costly integration projects at that time. Kirkham (2016) argues that stripped of any substantial financial resources these countries saw Western economies as future investors and, therefore, Eurasian integration was not economically prioritised.

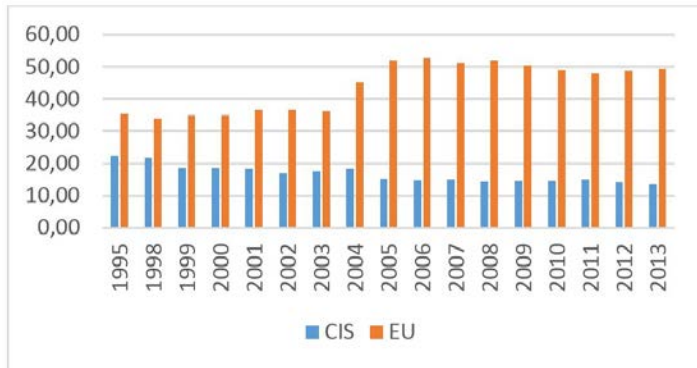
Thus, the failure of the post-Soviet integration processes is confirmed and despite the fact that the RF chose the CIS countries as priority partners, its role as a main integrative leader did not have any success. Other world powers, as the USA, the EU and China try to influence the region by creating a tough competition for Russia. As a result, commercial relations with the CIS showed a negative dynamic and the weight of exchange with the CIS in the common trade of the RF kept declining year after year (see figure 11), despite the growth on mutual exchange being the main indicator of the efficiency of integration processes in the world practice.

The exchange between Russia and the CIS with respect to Russian common trade since 1995 decreased from 22.5% to 16.6%, while the trade with the European Union grew fast turning it into the main commercial partner of the Russian Federation. In 2006 the trade with the EU reached its maximum of 52.7% of all the Russian trade, decreasing slightly by 2013 to 49.5 % (see Figure 11).

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<sup>44</sup> The term was applied by Putin on the Conference of 2005 during which he stated that unlike the European countries, which worked together for integration in the format of the EU, the CIS was established with the only purpose of ensuring the ‘civilized divorce’ of the Soviet Union.

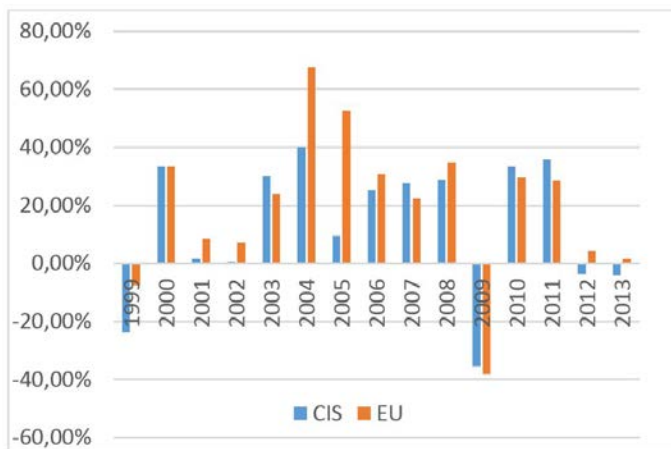
**Figure 11. Russia's Trade with the CIS and the EU (in %).**



Source: Elaboration on the basis of Russtat: available at <http://www.gks.ru>

The worst periods for the trade growth regarding previous years were in 1999 (due to the collapse in the RF in 1998) and 2009 (due to the world crisis of 2008). The strongest growth of the Euro-Russian trade was registered in 2004-2005; it was then when the partners rapidly developed the idea to create common spaces.<sup>45</sup> The trade with the CIS started to show negative results starting in 2011, which, related to Russia's incorporation to the WTO, led to a tougher competition for the enterprises of the post-Soviet Area (see Figure 12).

**Figure 12. Growth of Russia's Trade with the CIS and the EU Respective Previous Years (in %).**



Source: Elaboration on the basis of Russtat: available at <http://www.gks.ru>.

<sup>45</sup> In 2003, the EU and the RF signed the agreement on the creation of four Common Spaces: Economic Common Space; Common Space of Freedom, Security and Justice; Common Space on External Security; Common Space on Research, Education, Culture. However in 2014 the agreement was frozen due to the crisis in Ukraine.

This kind of situation cannot satisfy in any way the ambitions of the Russian Federation. Therefore, it can be said that the new integration in the area of the former Soviet Union based on the EAEC is an attempt on behalf of Russia to return to leadership in the region and strengthen its positions at the international level.

## **2.2. The EAEU as a specific model of integration**

By analyzing the classic literature on integration (Wiener and Diez, 2005), we can assume that the existence of supranational institutions is a compulsory criterion for the construction of regional integration. However, in East Asia, the mere idea of limitation of sovereignty, in this case, its delegation to supranational level is compared to the revival of colonization. The ideal of East Asia's integration is not a universal and maximum possible integration, but a selective and controlled integration in an economy under the control of sovereign national governments (Boykov, 2007). Baldwin (2012) argues that one of the lessons of Europe's experience is that institutions produce feedback effects that favour deeper institutions, even if these forces are not strong enough to induce members to accept higher levels of supranationality.

When comparing European and Eurasian integration, it is necessary to take into account that Europe has a mature political culture, political cooperation of social groups and citizen movements, and formalized channels created to protect common interests, while in Asia, vertical communication and lack of differentiation of interests prevail (Avery and Poole, 2007).

The Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) was created according to the World Trade Organization rules using the experience of the European Union. Thus, on the one hand, from the very beginning, in order to create the new Union, they chose the European model whose essential criteria, according to Wiener and Diez (2005), are supranational institutions, integration's complexity (starting with economic field to other areas of cooperation) and forming common 'demos'<sup>46</sup>.

Even though the EAEU was created on the basis of EU's model it has its particular characteristics that distinguish the EAEU from other integration entities. Thus, according to Podadera Rivera and Garashchuk (2017) we can mention the following particular characteristics and features of the EAEU:

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<sup>46</sup>It means the society of integrative community with the loyalty towards the common political centre

- *Special location*

It is necessary to take into account the specific location of the EAEU, which involves both European and Asian traditions, that makes the integration softer and less deep than the one we can observe in the European Union. According to Hettne (1999), the Asian model allows only partial and selective usage of supranational decision-making methods and from this point of view, integration in the area of the former Soviet Union rather acquires Asian features than European. Different ethnic groups, cultures, religions and mentalities require a special approach towards the integration which would respect interests of all participants. Moreover the strategic location postulated the special mission of integration: to become a link between Europe and Asia-Pacific region.

- *Common Soviet members' past*

Another special characteristic that distinguishes the EAEU from other integration entities, is the fact that the union consists of countries that used to form part of the same country. Thus, speaking of integration process, firstly it is about restoring old links that existed between the members. Actually, after the fall of the USSR, the relationships between the former Soviet republics have never been totally broken: they maintained free movement of people, rules of the labour market, provided regime of obtaining citizenship, etc. Moreover, the majority of Eurasian Union population used to be citizens of the USSR and therefore they have not lost their soviet identity, which in its turn could facilitate forming 'common demos'<sup>47</sup>. Nevertheless, scholars argue that these ties will disappear over time as the common Soviet culture. In turn, these states will become part of either Europe or the Islamic world (Gleason, 2010; Malashenko, 2011; Tsygankov, 2012). Moreover Kirkham (2016) emphasizes that some of these inherited Soviet values have a negative impact on the current political systems of the post-Soviet states, resulting in bureaucratic inflexibility, non-market driven ways of doing business, corruption and monopolisation of strategic industries. She also suggests that the EAEU authorities should work diligently for the construction of a common identity by launching cultural projects in order to battle Russo-phobia.

- *Prevalence of Russia*

Libman and Obydenkova (2013) prove that the concerns of Russian hegemony influence those countries that most actively participate in Eurasian regionalism. Economic (Russian GDP is 304 times higher than Kyrgyz, 200 times higher than Armenian, 30 times higher than Belarusian and 9 times higher than Kazakh, World Bank Data, 2013) and military prevalence of Russia in comparison with

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<sup>47</sup> It means the society of integrative community with the loyalty towards the common political centre

other members of the Union can cause concerns in view of weaker participants. In such situation Grinberg (2013) highlights that for Russia it is hard to be a partner with equal rights. The economic and military prevalence of Russia in comparison with other members of the Union can cause concerns with weaker participants. It should be noted that most regions have a hegemon. It means that a country has a dominant position by virtue of certain military, economic or political resources that it possesses (McKeown, 2009). Thus, the USA is a hegemon in North America, Brazil in South America, Germany, France in the EU, etc. Comparative regionalism studies have shown that these hegemons, or regional plutocrats, defined as economically dominant states able to provide substantial benefits to other members (Hancock, 2009), have historically been required for successful regional economic integration (Mattli, 1999). In the Eurasian region, Russia is clearly the plutocrat. Thus, Libman and Obydenkova (2013) prove that the concerns of Russian hegemony influence those countries that most actively participate in Eurasian regionalism. Meanwhile, others argue that Russia is not sufficiently strong to entice other states to join regional organizations (Libman, 2007).

- *Authoritarian members' regime*

According to Melnykovska *et al.* (2012), Cameron and Orenstein (2012), and Vanderhill (2013), Russian uses regionalism like a tool to support fellow regimes. While Libman (2007), Allison (2008) and Collins (2009) assume that the leaders of the Eurasian integration countries are against domestic opposition to protect them and to ensure the mutual support of authoritarian regimes rather than for real common economic benefits. Bugajsky (2008) believes that if the Eurasian countries are ruled by fellow autocrats it is easier for Russia to control them. Libman and Obydenkova (2014) criticize this perspective, proving that members with autocratic regimes become problematic partners for Russia due to low credibility that this commitment makes.

- *Different members' goals and level of economic development, similar economic structure and weak economic base*

Unfortunately, many scholars concur that the members of the EEU have different goals in terms of the Eurasian integration: the regionalism contradicts nation-building projects, that for Russia the creation of the EAEU is not so much an economic project but rather a geopolitical one with a purpose to remove post-Soviet countries from the economic alternative of associating with the EU and also China and indeed to consolidate its role as leading power (Kubicek, 2009; Trenin, 2011; Savietz, 2012; Zagorski, 2015; Satpayev, 2015; Sivickiy, 2015, Podadera Rivera and Garashchuk, 2016b).

Sushko (2004) and Savietz (2012), for instance, stress that Russia uses Eurasian integration as a tool for its foreign policy in order to enhance control of the neighbouring countries. Furthermore they all highlight that the economy of the EAUU is rather weak. Thus, Sivickiy (2015) argues that the members have different economic level of development as well as different market-economy transformation in their national economies; this ranges from a serious obstacle to the successful implementation of the EAEU project (the economy of Belarus still is dominated by the state). Moreover, Russia and Kazakhstan are oriented distinctly towards raw materials while Belarus inherited a developed manufacturing industry from the USSR; also it is only Russia that is a member of the WTO. To modernize their economies, Russia and Kazakhstan, need to access to new technologies and there is no way to achieve this goal through the Eurasian integration. As for the economies in transition, their rates have been very fluctuant. This is the result of high dependence on global market, particularly global demand on natural resources and primary products (Nica and Potcovaru, 2014).

### **2.3. Formation of the EAEU and its Criticism**

From the economic point of view, integration is the process by which we search for the gradual elimination of discriminatory measures between economic units and the formation of a common market between the different States (Balassa, 1964). Total or full economic integration involves harmonization of the financial system with the establishment of the single currency, unification of economic policies of the participating countries and common economic institutions. Nevertheless, it should be noted that some scholars like Baldwin (2012) explored Balassa's (1964) theory and empirically showed that Balassa's (op.cit.) 'stages' were not followed in any regional integration arrangement. The stages of the construction of the Eurasian Union, according to Balassa (1980), are present in Table 27.

**Table 27. Integration in the Post-Soviet Area on the Basis of EAEC (According to Balassa)**

Depth	Characteristics					Work from (year)	Participants
	There is neither customs tariff nor barriers for free trade	Common exterior customs tariff	Free movement of factors of production	Harmonization of economic policies. Common currency	Common Institutions and unification of policies		
Area of free trade	X					2011	Armenia Belarus Kazakhstan Kyrgyzstan Russia Tajikistan Uzbekistan
Customs Union	X	X				2010	Armenia Belarus Kazakhstan Kyrgyzstan Russia
Common market (Common Economic Space)	X	X	X			2012	Armenia Belarus Kazakhstan Kyrgyzstan Russia
Economic Union	X	X	X	There is neither harmonization of economic policies nor common currency		2015	Armenia Belarus Kazakhstan Kyrgyzstan Russia
Total Economic Integration					There are common institutions		

Source: Based on Balassa's 'stages' (1980, p. 860)



Observing Table 27, we can conclude that, for the EAEU, the characteristic of the harmonization of economic policies and common currency has not been followed in practice. At the same time, the existence of the EAEU's common institutions points out the total economic integration.

The idea of a Eurasian Union with a clear focus on economic matters came from Nursultan Nazarbayev, President of the Republic of Kazakhstan<sup>48</sup> and, consequently, the project was borrowed by Vladimir Putin, Russian President, as a “model of a powerful, supranational association capable of becoming one of the poles of the modern world” and a bridge “between Europe and the dynamic Asia-Pacific Region”.<sup>49</sup> In October 2007 the “Troika” (Belarus, Kazakhstan and Russia) — the three countries that still form the nucleus of the regional integration (Vinokurov, 2010) — signed the Agreement on the establishment of the customs union (CU). The Common Customs Tariff went into force in 2010.<sup>50</sup> Thus the CU can be considered as the EAEU's predecessor. Subsequently, Armenia and Kirgizstan joined the organization in 2015. However, according to Vinokurov (2017), the EAEU is still best viewed as a functioning customs union with a rich additional agenda.

Nevertheless, the EAEU does seem to have been welcomed by Western countries. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia, with its anti-democratic regime and imperialistic ambitions, has continued to be considered as potentially dangerous to Western countries (Brzezinski, 1994). From this standpoint, the EAEU is seen as a manifestation of the “post-imperial syndrome” (Van Herpen, 2014, p. 56) or as a neo-imperialist function of the Russian Federation (Shevtsova, 2009; Trenin, 2011; Tsygankov, 2014). In this regard, Bond (2017) highlights that the EU has taken a largely negative approach to the EEU which it sees through the prism of Russia's political ambitions.

It is worth noting that a large number of these authors remain sceptical regarding the EAEU's aims, intentions and life expectancy. Thus Borodkin (2011) argues that the EAEU project is criticized for being very costly and weak in its conceptual dimension, which makes some authors hesitate about its viability and longevity. Dragneva (2016), in her turn, concludes that despite the continued lip-service paid to an ambitious Eurasian integration agenda, hegemonic behaviour and limited attention to the quality of institutions have so far posed serious concerns about its long-term future.

According to Asanbekov (2014) the Eurasian integration was created as a geopolitical response

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<sup>48</sup> The speech was given in March 1994 in Moscow State University

<sup>49</sup> Putin's words cited in Golam, 2013, p. 162.

<sup>50</sup> The evolution of Eurasian integration is described in more detail in the following surveys: Libman and Vinokurov (2012); Hancock and Libman (2016), and Podadera Rivera and Garashchuk (2016b)

to the EU enlargement towards the East, and China's expansionistic tendencies towards Central Asian countries. Recently, some scholars have argued that integrating with the EU would be more advantageous than joining Russia for post-soviet independent states (Movchan and Guicci, 2011; Shepotylo, 2013).

In spite of being criticized, the EAEU nonetheless is considered as the most ambitious and the most successful model for regional integration in the post-Soviet arena (Hartwell, 2013; Kuzmina, 2015; Zagorski 2015). Nevertheless, Hartwell (2013) stresses that the EAEU enters the most difficult phase of its existence; and the policymakers have to decide how deep should this integration be. Should it include a monetary union or should it remain focused on trade and labor flows only?

Vinokurov (2017) points out that EAEU is best viewed not as an exception to the general rules, but rather as a functioning regional integration block with its own successes and problems. Moreover, not all researchers perceive the EAEU just as a tool for a neo-imperial drive for Russian hegemony in the post-Soviet space. Thus, Dragneva and Wolczuk (2013) argue the EAEU cannot be viewed solely through the prism of Russia's hegemonic ambition in the region and, from their point of view, Eurasian regionalism is not a product of Russian hegemonic ambitions but rather a setting that exhibits a "tendency for states to form regional groupings" in order to receive protection from the negative impacts of globalisation by institutionalising relationships. According to Mankoff (2012) the aim of this integration is to conduct domestic reforms, and to strengthen the region's role in the global, political, and economic arena with no ambition to overthrow the existing international world order by undermining the West. Such authors as Vasilieva and Lagutina (2011) and Tkachuk (2014) argue that the Eurasian region has acquired "global" features, with integration as not solely a linear interaction between the states but an attempt to achieve a qualitatively new level of cooperation.

The history of European integration is a testament to the importance of convergence of member states' interests at different stages of integration. This convergence will be even more salient for the Eurasian integration process, because so far it has been more reliant on initiatives and agreements between heads of state. The convergence of preferences in key policy areas (such as trade regulation) will therefore be a crucial factor in the progress of Eurasian economic integration (Blockmans *et al.*, 2012). Zagorski (2015), for example, highlights that the EAEU is different from its predecessor organizations and thanks to its limited circle of participants of only three states, it is possible to develop a comprehensive set of rules in a short period of time. Moreover, the EAEU represents the first integration project in the post-Soviet region that actually has an *acquis*.

With regard to the methodology, Dragneva and Wolczuk (2013), for example, have attempted to apply a neo-institutional and neo-functional approach to analysing the financial benefits that the EAEU would bring to its member-states. Kirkham (2016) has pioneered in applying the neo-Gramscian approach to analysing the potential for the EAEU as a Russian counter-hegemonic initiative that presupposes the analysis of four core elements: the institutional design, the capitalist system, geopolitics and cultural leadership, delivering the results via SWOT-analysis. Nevertheless, the lack of empirical evidence, due to the fact that the EAEU is an infant project, seems to be the main shortcoming uncovered in recent research. Although Borodin and Stokov (2015) have provided empirical evidence by using the Gravity Model to assess the existing trends in trade between member-states, their analysis was made before the Customs Union was formed within the Eurasian Economic Community, which is why they did not consider the Union as a coherent whole.

In addition, it is worth stressing that institutions play a vital role in formation of regional organizations, and, in this regard, the future success of the EAEU depends considerably on the efficiency and efficacy of its institutions, especially taking into account that the present geopolitical situation does not promote its development. The description and analysis of EAEU's institutions are presented under a later heading.

### **3. Institutional Framework and Economic Development: EAEU's Institutional basis and its Domestic and Foreign Economic Activity.**

In this heading we analyse EAEU's legal and institutional bases and its domestic and foreign activity. We start with analysis of its institutions as the essential element for functioning any regional organization and building up relations with other agents on regional and international levels. Then we proceed to analysis of EAEU's economic development and its relations with other countries and organizations. Finally, we admit the possibility of establishment of strategic partnership between the EAEU and the EU.

### 3.1. EAEU's Legal and Institutional bases

The Eurasian Economic Union Treaty entered into being on January 1, 2015. Today, according to the Treaty, the Eurasian Economic Union members prefer to be limited to the economic objectives (article 4): creation of conditions for the member countries' economies development; the claim for the creation of the common market of goods, services, capital and human resources in the framework of a proper Union; the multilateral modernization, cooperation and competitiveness growth of national economies in the global economy (Agreement on the Eurasian Union Economic, article 4). Although Dragneva (2016) points out that the Treaty on the EAEU reversed the trend towards high institutionalisation, strengthening the protection of state sovereignty in line with traditional, intergovernmental patterns of inter-state relations, Kalinichenko (2015) counter-argues that the Treaty was criticised for being weak from an international, legal and constitutional point of view.

In the Agreement of the Eurasian Economic Union, the main institutional basis of the Union, its regulation of work and functions are established (see Table 28).

**Table 28. EAEU's Institutions Competence**

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Composition</b>	<b>Meetings frequency</b>	<b>Competence</b>
Supreme Eurasian Economic Council	Heads of States-members and people invited by the President of Council: experts, members of the Governing Commission, the president of the College of the Commission	No less than once a year	It is the superior institution. To investigate the main issues of the functioning of the Union, to develop the strategy, directions and prospects of development of integration, and to make decisions related to the realization of the objectives of the Union.
Eurasian Intergovernmental Council	Heads of Government of the states-members and other individuals and experts invited	No less than twice a year	Ensure and control the fulfilment of the present Agreement, international agreements, and decisions of the Supreme Council, to give instructions to the Commission, to accept the draft budgets of the Union, etc

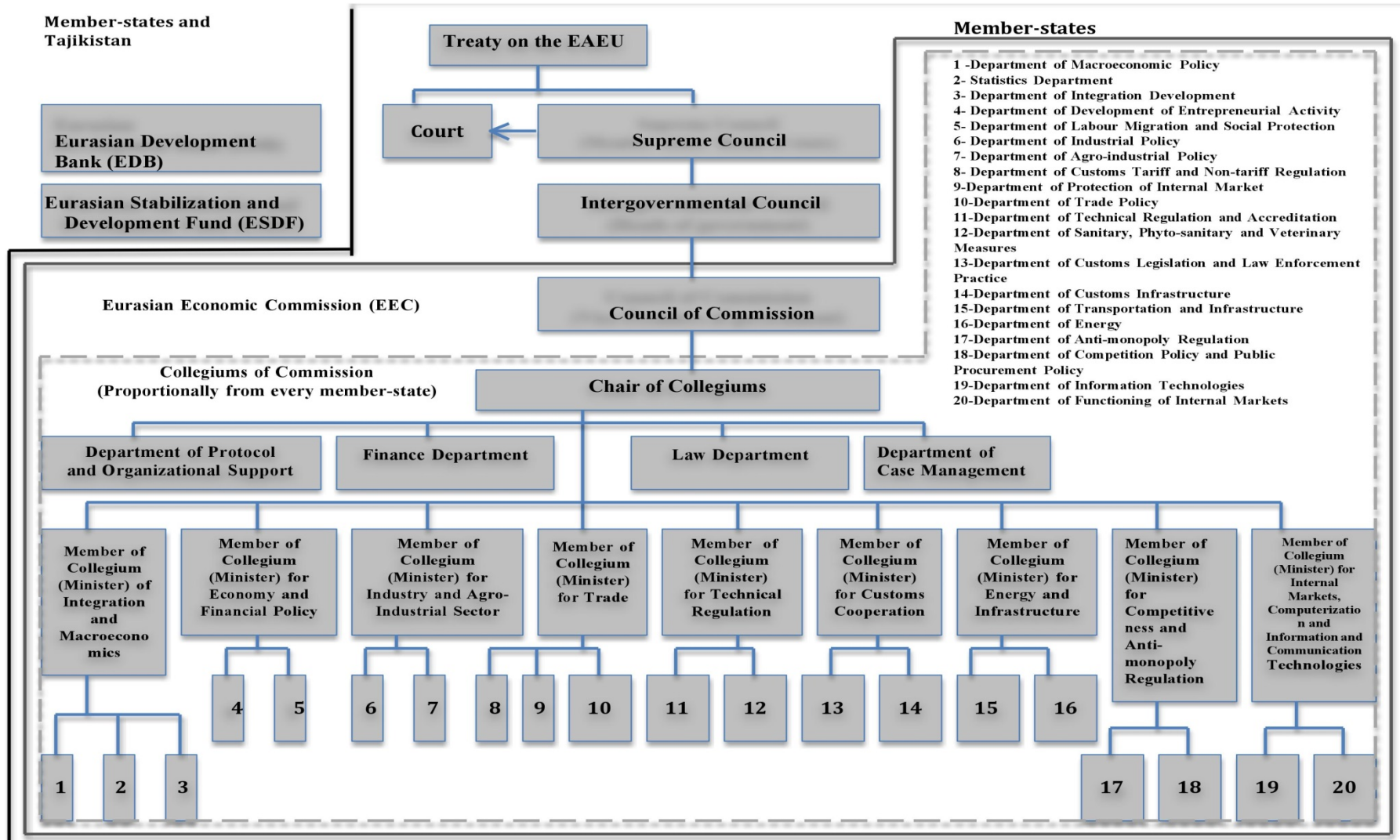
Eurasian Economic Commission	Collegiate body, the executive body of the Commission and Council that organizes the departments of the Commission composed of experts and officials	Permanent	Ensure the conditions of the daily operation and development of the Union, to elaborate proposals in the framework of the integration within the Union
Court of the Eurasian Economic Union	Judges, officials	Permanent	Ensure the common application by the countries-members and organs of the Union of international agreements within the Union, international agreements with third countries and decisions of the organs of the Union.

Source: Based on the Agreement (Articles 8, 12, 14-17) and the annex therein.

Looking at Table 28, we can say that the EAEU’s institutional bodies were modelled using the example of the EU (Podadera Rivera and Garashchuk, 2016b; Kirkham, 2016) owing to the fact that, despite its deficiencies, the EU was seen as the only successfully functioning model for deep integration (Valovaya, 2012; Borodin and Stokov, 2015). Hancock (2009) considers Eurasia a rare example of what one could call ‘plutocratic’ regional agreements, where the smaller members delegate the decision-making power not to a supranational body, but to a larger member. Brusis (2014), in turn, argues that the formal design of institutions of Eurasian Economic Union is hardly unusual due to the Eurasian organizations used to imitate the EU in terms of the names and the goals of regional integration agreements. However, Kazharski (2012) maintains that while copying the institutional framework does not seem to be difficult, the ultimate challenge will reside in its actual content.

The more detailed description of the “family” of EAEU’s institutions, made up of the Supreme Council, the Intergovernmental Council, the Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC) and the Court is shown in Figure 13.

Figure 13. EAEU's Institutions



Source: Own Elaboration on the Basis of Official Data

Although the leaders of the EAEU have been regularly negotiating the creation of the Eurasian parliament, looking at Figure 12, its absence remains noteworthy. Sivickiy (2015) argues that Belarus and Kazakhstan continue to block Russia's suggestions of forming a Eurasian parliament because they do not want politicization and see it as a direct threat to their national sovereignty. So, in talking about Eurasian institutions, the absence of the direct representative of the citizens of the Union can be considered as one of its main shortcomings and challenges right up until today.

The Supreme Council is the main body of the EAEU and it is made up of the heads (presidents) of member-states. This institution is responsible for consideration of strategy, prospects and directions for developing of integration. The Supreme Council holds meetings no less than once a year.

The Intergovernmental Council, which comprises the heads of the governments of the member-states, is convened no less than twice a year. The main functions of this institution include monitoring implementation of the Treaty on the EAEU and decisions made by the EEC and the approval of budget projects. Moreover, the Intergovernmental Council is empowered to veto the decisions made by the Collegiums and the Council of the EEC.

The EEC has been working since February of 2012 and constitutes a permanent supranational institute by being a regulatory body of the EAEU. The main objective of the EEC is to ensure conditions for developing economic integration within the EAEU. The EEC is a bicameral body. All competencies of the Commission comprise over 140 functions. The EEC's main executive body is the Council, comprising 10 members (ministers), with each member state represented by 2 such ministers. The Council provides overall guidance to the EEC and regulation of the integration processes. The Council is supported by work of Collegiums. The Collegiums is an executive body of the EEC composed of representatives on the basis of equal representation by every EAEU's member-state. The representatives are referred to as Ministers, and, since they are appointed by the Supreme Council, aim at leading the work of departments of the EEC. The Chair Collegiums is appointed for four years in alphabetical order and as of now the representative from Armenia occupies this post. Vinokurov (2017) points out that such a representation scheme diminishes Russia's role as the region's leading state in Eurasian Economic Union affairs. Dragneva (2016) highlights that the supranational nature of the Collegium has been best exemplified by its power to decide certain issues by qualified majority and, in this regard, the EAEU's mode of decision-making remains strongly intergovernmental as well as centred on the highest level of state authority.

In addition it is worth mentioning that the EEC is actively engaged not only with EAEU's



member-states but also with the third countries in order to attract new partners for collaboration and possible participation in Eurasian integration projects. The EEC interacts within the EAEU at both levels: at intergovernmental (by working with national authorities) and at the business sector level.

The Court, composed of two judges from every member-state, is a judicial body of the EAEU. Although the Court acts on the basis of the Treaty on the EAEU, the Statute of EAEU's Court (The Annex 2 to the Treaty on EAEU) and the Regulation of the Union's Court, it should not be considered as a totally independent institution due to the fact that the Supreme Council appoints the judges. According to paragraph 49 of Chapter IV of the Statute, it is empowered to deal with cases related to the implementation of EAEU's Law on the application both by the member-states and the economic entities.

However, it is worth calling attention to the two main limitations of the Court. First of all, the competence of the Court to deal with the implementation of international treaties of the Union with the third party was not directly stipulated in the Statute. Consequently, the member-states cannot count on the support of the Court in case of the detection of violations in these treaties. Secondly, the Court faces the challenge of the primacy of the National Law over its legislation in case of conflict between them. In this regard, the Court cannot be considered as a supranational institution. Nevertheless, a similar situation has also arisen in some EU's member-states. Thus, for instance, during a period of almost twenty years Germany did not recognize the supremacy of European Law until the EU's Court expanded its legislation of Human Rights in the entire integration grouping to a level comparable to that of German Constitution. At any rate, it is needs to be stressed that the adaptation of common legislation to national Laws is a long, cumbersome process that cannot be achieved overnight.

With regard to the Eurasian Development Bank (EDB) and Eurasian Stabilization and Development Fund (ESDF), first of all it is worth mentioning that they are not directly affiliated to the EAEU's institutions. They are independent institutions composed by EAEU's states plus Tajikistan with their own membership and administration. The EDB and the ESDF, being key elements of financial infrastructure of Eurasian integration, aim at ensuring the financial support for the integration between member-states and its economic development and stability.

It is noteworthy that the EDB is not limited by the participants from the post-Soviet space. The Bank is also open for collaboration with all interested shareholders from all over the world. Thus, for instance, during 2013-2014 the idea of creating the Shanghai Cooperation Organization's Development Bank on the basis of the EDB was discussed. However, this project was eventually abandoned due to a conflict of interest among the partners and the start of a new more attractive and ambitious project --the



creation of the BRICS Development Bank.

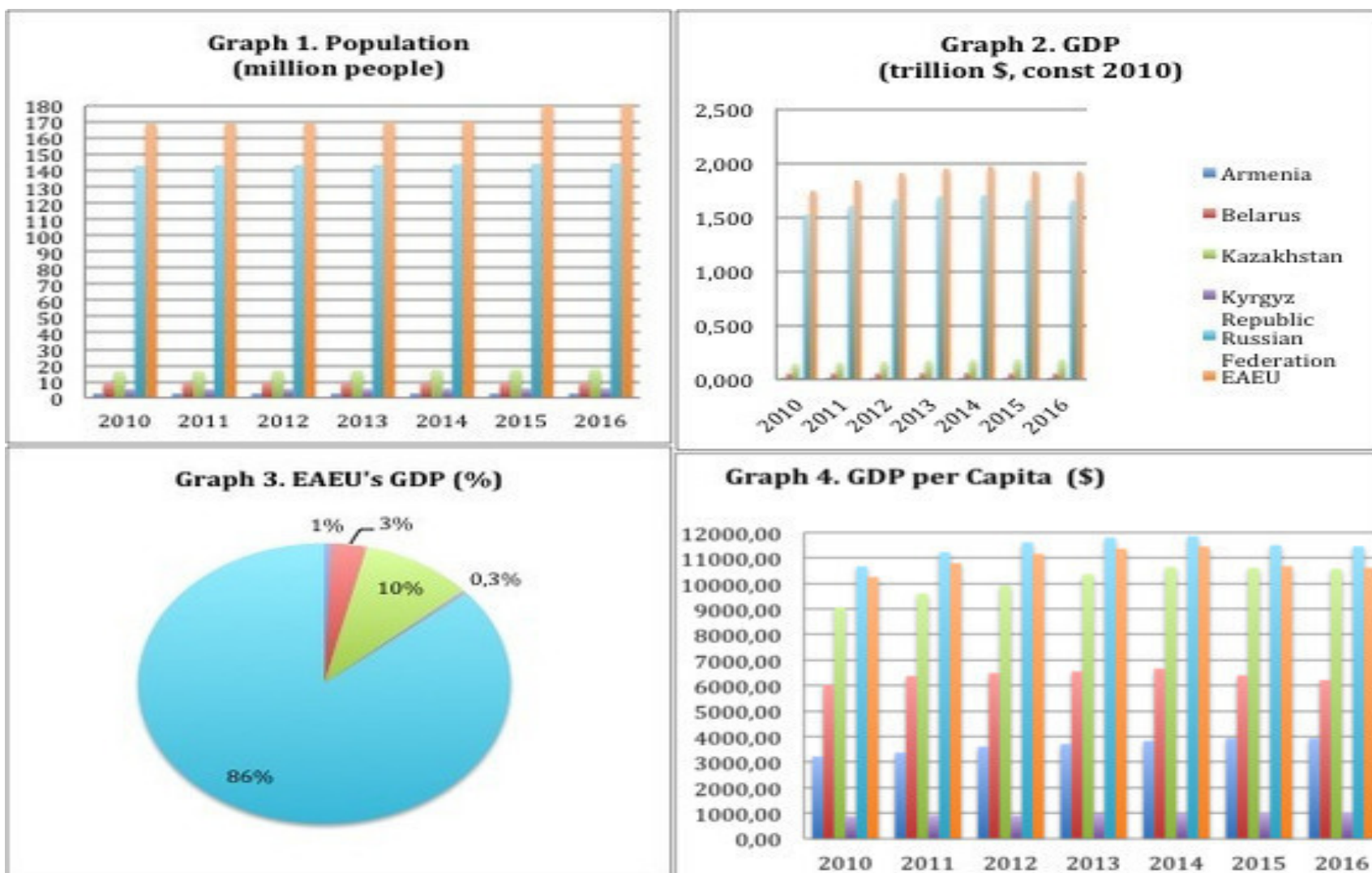
So to sum up, it should be said that despite the trend towards high institutionalisation with signs of supranationality that characterize “deep” integration, the EAEU’s bodies with their predominance of vertical powers and a weak delegation of the authority are nevertheless flexible and respectful towards the member-states’ sovereignty, accompanied by decision-making equality, and limited to economic issues. In this regard, Kirkham (2016) recommends the EAEU’s members to develop democratic practices alongside their institutional base in order to avoid institutional paralysis.

However, it should not be forgotten that a deeper integration does not always mean more a effective and beneficial project for all members, and from this point of view for the EAEU it might be more convenient to adapt the practices of regional groupings with a lower level of integration which presupposes less institutionalization, such as the NAFTA, MERCOSUR or ASEAN rather than to pursue the implementation of the EU’s model with its higher level of supranationality and consolidation of economic and political policies. Even so, in spite of the EAEU’s institutions being an already functioning entity, its formation has not yet been completed. Its success and development will depend first and foremost on its contribution to the economic prosperity of the Union and wellbeing of its member-states. The economic framework of the EAEU is accordingly analysed under the next heading.

### **3.2. EAEU’s Domestic and Foreign Economic Activity.**

It should be admitted that today the EAEU is a new regional project of integration in the post-Soviet space with its GDP of almost 2 trillion \$ and a population of 182 million people (See Figure 14, Graphs, 1,2,3,4).

Figure 14. Main information about the EAEU<sup>51</sup>



Source: Elaboration on the basis of World Bank data

<sup>51</sup> From 2010 until 2015 the Customs Union (CU), without Armenia and Kyrgyzstan.

Although many authors call attention to the weakness of economic element of Russian hegemony due to the EAEU member's insufficient economic diversification, technological retardation, low internal trade turnover, and limited access to external financing (Libman, 2007; Kubicek, 2009; Zagorski, 2015; Satpayev, 2015; Sivickiy, 2015; Podadera Rivera and Garashchuk, 2016b; Kirkham, 2016) Kirkham argues that its "weaknesses", such as homogeneity, when combined with the monopolistic nature of capitalism, could be transformed into the hegemonic project's driving force: the EAEU member states led by Russia can merge their efforts to proceed with 'reindustrialisation', to create transnational sectorial holdings and develop joint technological and professional bases.

However, it is obvious that the growth of mutual trade, mutual investments, and civilized labor migration are the crucial factors for Eurasian integration to be successful. In this regard one of the primary objectives in the long term (until 2025) must be to increase the common market. But it seems that the fundamental move to a truly 'common' market has been postponed until 2020. Although no issues related to a single central bank or single currency have been officially raised the EAEU, member states have started consultation relating to the creation of a financial regulator through a supranational financial institution which would exist for enforcing common standards in the Union's financial markets. It is also planned to establish a single power market in 2019. A single market for oil and gas is expected to emerge by 2025.

It is worth mentioning that the EAEU started operating in a disadvantaged economic and political situation for its member states. Thus the geopolitical crises between Russia and Western nations together with the oil-price collapse could not help influencing negatively the economic element of Eurasian integration. Sanctions applied by the West against Russia due to situation in Ukraine and oil-price shock led to currency devaluation and economic stagnation in Russia.

Nevertheless, in such a situation the EAEU member states did not participate in the policy of contra sanctions applied by Russia against the West that, on the one hand, can be seen as absence of solidarity and common economic policy within the EAEU, but on the other hand, it demonstrates that Russia, being a hegemon, did not want less powerful members of the union to be involved in its "Sanctions War" by force.

The fact that Russia never issued official recommendations to adopt the sanctions (nor was the issue escalated to the level of the EAEU) can become a certain "bridge" toward improving and developing future relations between the EU and the EAEU. Moreover, it can be said that the sanctions even had some kind of positive impact on growth of mutual trade within the EAEU. Thus, for instance, the agricultural imports from Belorussia, Armenia and Kyrgyzstan to Russia have

increased significantly. According to the Eurasian Economic Commission, despite the stagnation of the Russian economy and low oil-prices, between EAEU member states as a percentage of their total foreign trade has increased from 12.3% in 2014 to 13.5% in 2015. Moreover Alpysbayeva *et al.* (2015) argue that the Russian currency devaluation in 2014 caused a “mirroring” of the structure of mutual trade between Russia and Kazakhstan, and temporarily reinforced Kazakhstan’s status as a raw-materials supplier in the EAEU.

According to Vinokurov (2017) the establishment and evolution of the common Eurasian Union market for goods and services helps absorb shocks affecting mutual investments, thereby mitigating the negative impact of economic contraction over the past two years. However, the author argues that it is not a panacea and in this regard it is crucial for member states of the EAEU to secure full-scale coordination of macroeconomic policies, primarily monetary policy.

Nevertheless, even though the EAEU will pursue coordinated macroeconomic policies, the EAEU is too small to become a self-sufficient market or to grow into a regional power comparable with the EU, taking into consideration that the majority of the EAEU’s trade turnover occurs in commerce with the rest of the world.

In this regard Vinokurov (2017) argues that any attempts to erect a “Eurasian fortress” are suicidal. In our view, for such a young regional organization as the EAEU, in this situation the solution should be to select true strategic partners on the international stage and to establish strong long-term partnerships with them.

At the moment, the EAEU is an example of regional integration in spite of the fact that its members are situated on two parts of the continent. Still, it is worth noting that the Union is an open organization and allows the possibility that, apart from the former Soviet republics, other countries can join. In this case, the integration in the former Soviet area can acquire a sub-regional character. The contract concerning the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) allows for the possibility of widening the circle of its member states. Presently, there are two possible variants of collaboration of individual states with the EEU: either a full EEU-membership or the establishment of a free trade area). According to Vinokurov and Libman (2012), long-term sustainable development of the EAEU is only possible if it relies on close cooperation with both the European Union and China. Vasileva (2017) argues that economic cooperation between the EU and the EAEU is still possible and can be achieved by lowering trade barriers, harmonizing standards and creating a common free trade zone. She thinks that the EU-EEU dialogue could be a first small step towards solving some more complicated political crises in Europe and contribute to establishing a common and indivisible Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security community stretching from Vancouver to Vladivostok.

Bond (2017) points out that European Commission officials do not want to give the EAEU legitimacy by dealing with it formally (as Russia would like), so limit themselves to informal contacts. But within those limitations, there is still some progress, for instance in harmonising EU and EAEU standards. The author also highlights that both the EU and China recognize that they cannot work together effectively along the Silk Road without taking some account of Russia and its historical links in the region. The EAEU and China have signed a Trade and Economic Cooperation Agreement hand in hand with the involvement of each in China's new strategic concept — the Silk Road Economic Belt. In this regard, Karaganov *et al.* (2015) opine that cooperation between the EAEU and China most certainly provides a powerful impetus to regional development and on-going interaction with respect to transport, energy, and finance in Central Asia, Siberia, and the Far East. Taking into account that the Western financial market is now limited for Russia because of the sanctions, BRICS becomes the largest source of investment. Vinokurov (2017) highlights that as any rapid progress in relations with the EU is not expected until the current profound crisis is defused, the solution could be to build up a network of free trade areas with large trade partners.

It is significant that there has already been some progress in that direction, and the EAEU is actively working on the creation a network of free trade areas (FTAs). Thus the first Agreement was signed with Vietnam in 2015. The negotiations with Iran were started in 2015 and the Interim Agreement was signed in 2018. A Trade and Economic Cooperation Agreement with China was also formalized in 2018. Agreements with Israel<sup>52</sup>, Egypt, Thailand, Serbia, Singapore, India, Mongolia are under negotiation. Hungary, Cambodia, Laos, Peru, South Korea, Tunis, Japan, Chile, among others, have expressed interest in collaborating with the EAEU. According to Minister of Foreign Affairs Lavrov, about 50 countries are interested in collaboration with the EAEU.<sup>53</sup> The project of FTA with New Zealand unfortunately was abandoned due to the sanctions against Russia.

### 3.3. Strategic Partnership EU-EAEU?

Nowadays the selection of the partners can be limited by the sanctions that the West has imposed against Russia (and to some degree vice versa). However, it can be said that despite the fact that Russia is no longer EU's strategic partner the EU continues to be the largest trade partner for Russia. The EU is also the largest trade partner for Kazakhstan and plays a leading role in the modernization of member states economies of the Eurasian integration project. Thus, deep

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<sup>52</sup> The first round of negotiations between the EAEU and Israel took place in April of 2018.

<http://www.eurasiancommission.org/ru/nae/news/Pages/27-04-2018-2.aspx>

<sup>53</sup> Grishina M., 2017. "Sergey Lavrov: Poryadka 50 stran jotyat sotrudnichat s EAEU"

<https://souzveche.ru/articles/politics/35309/>

integration with the EU is extremely important for the EAEU. In this regard, the EU should be regarded as a key strategic partner (Vinokurov, 2014; Podadera Rivera and Garashchuk 2017).

Strategic partnership can arise not only between countries but also between unions and political blocks (Kim, 2012). Taking into account EU's intention to develop the strategic relationships with certain international and regional organizations, such as the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the Council of Europe (CoE), the Southern Common Market (MERCASUR), the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the African Union (AU) aimed to reinforce the global government it can be proposed the possibility of strategic partnership with the EAEU.

From this point of view it is important to compare the EAEU with the EU (see Table 29).

**Table. 29 Comparative Analysis of EAEU with EU**

EU	EAEU
<b>Premise of creation</b>	
Prevention of conflicts between neighbouring countries, peace and stability in the region, rehabilitation and developments of national economics by means of cooperation and elimination of tariff and non-tariff barriers	According to its leaders the union was created with the aim of turning into the link between Europe and Asia-Pacific region.  According to many international experts' opinion the union was created as geopolitical response to the EU enlargement towards the East, and China's expansionistic tendencies towards the counties of the Central Asia
<b>Rang of objectives</b>	
Wide rang of objectives: economic, political, social, etc.	Limited by economic objectives
<b>Global agenda</b>	
Existence of global agenda	Absence of global agenda just regional objectives
<b>Members' Antecedent status</b>	



Independent states with different identity.	Consists of countries that used to form part of the same country. Union population used to be citizens of the USSR and therefore they have not lost their soviet identity
<b>Political regime</b>	
Democratic	Authoritarian
<b>Members' economic level y economic structure</b>	
Different level and different structure	Different level and similar structure
<b>Conditions of incorporation and leaving</b>	
Stipulate political economic and juridical criteria for incorporation. The Provision of leaving the EU did not exist till the Lisbon Treaty came into force in 2009.	There is not certain criterion for incorporation. But from the beginning there is Provision about leaving the organization
<b>Economic Policy</b>	
Harmonization of economic policy and common monetary union.	There is neither harmonization of economic policy nor monetary union.
<b>Institutions</b>	
Legislative power belongs simultaneously to the European Council, European Parliament and European Commission. European Commission is the main executive power.	The institutions resemble those of the European Union but it can be mentioned the absence of the Eurasian Parliament. Moreover the Supreme Council has the wider circle of powers and functions, which shows the predominance of vertical powers in the Union and weak delegation of the authority. The Eurasian Commission is under the domination both Supreme Eurasian Economic Council and Eurasian Intergovernmental Council
<b>Union's Values</b>	
There are common values	Common values are not presented but there are common principles
<b>Political culture</b>	



Mature political culture, political cooperation of social groups and citizen movements, formalized channels created to protect common interests	Vertical communications and lack of differentiation of interests prevail
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Source: Own elaboration on the basis of EU's and EEU's official juridical documents

Observing Table 29 it can be stressed a significant difference between unions regarding its objectives, agenda, apolitical regimen, conditions for incorporation and leaving of organization, antecedent status, economic policy, political culture and institutions. In comparison with the EU's institutions it can be highlighted the absence of Eurasian Parliament, limited functions of Eurasian Commission and strongly marked domination of Eurasian Economic Council and Eurasian Intergovernmental Council under other institutions. Moreover it can be concluded that unlike the EU the EAEU does not have harmonization of economic policy. Thus, sanctions between the RF and the EU were not applied to other countries of the EAEU, which contradicts the principle of common economic policy and free movement of goods inside of the Union. What is more, the sanctions create for member countries the conditions of developing the illegal re-exportation of European goods to the Russia's territory. Nevertheless, as it was above mentioned, this phenomenon can become a certain type of 'bridge' in improving the relationship between two Unions.

However the EAEU is a comparatively young organization and therefore it can use the experience and avoid mistakes made by more mature organizations. Although, its immaturity characterizes it as an unstable system, despite signed agreements and presence of supranational institutions. Integration processes are not finished yet and this does not exclude the possibility of reversible processes.

To support the scenario of strategic partnership between two Unions we analyze the data on trade in the EAEU both generally (see Table 30) and in regard to trade relations with the EU before the crisis in Ukraine started in 2014 (see Table 31).



**Table 30. Main Data on Trade Turnover of the Customs Union in 2013 (Billion \$)**

Member	Trade Turnover	Export	Import	Main commercial partners	Main export item	Main import item
Republic of Armenia	5.9	1.5	4.4	RF China Germany Iran Ukraine USA Bulgaria	Cast iron Copper, Nonferrous industry, Diamonds, Minerals, Food products Energy	Gas Petrol Petroleum Tobacco products Food products Diamonds
Republic of Belarus	80.2	37.2	43	RF Ukraine Germany Netherlands China Poland Italy	Re-export of mineral products, Machinery manufacturing, Food and agricultural products, Chemical industry	Petrol, Petroleum products, gas and other minerals, Machinery manufacturing, instrument engineering and transport facility, Products of chemical industry
Republic of Kazakhstan	131.4	82.5	48.9	RF China Italy Netherlands France Switzerland Ukraine	Petrol, Petroleum products, gas and other minerals, Nonferrous industry, Ferrous industry, Grain Crops	Machinery manufacturing, instrument engineering and transport facility, Raw petroleum, Chemical industry, Food products, Final goods
Kyrgyz Republic	8	2	6	RF China Kazakhstan Switzerland Turkey Uzbekistan Germany	Fruits and other agricultural products, minerals (gold, mercury, tin, coal), labour force	All industrial products

Russian Federation	867.6	523.3	344.3	China, Netherlands Germany Italy Ukraine Belarus Japan	Petrol, Petroleum products, gas and other minerals, Metallurgy, Chemical industry	Machinery manufacturing, Chemical industry, Food and agricultural products, Textile and shoes
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Source: Based on official data of members' national statistics: <http://www.armstat.am/>; <http://www.belstat.gov.by/>; <http://www.stat.kz/>; <http://www.gks.ru/>; <http://www.stat.kg/>

**Table 31 Main Data on Trade Turnover between Members of the Customs Union and Countries of EU in 2013 (Billion \$ in Percentage Terms)**

Member of the Eurasian Union	Turnover	Exp	Imp	% of turnover with the EU in total turnover	Main partners from the EU	Place of the EU in trade turnover
Republic of Armenia	1.7	0.5	1.6	28.2	Germany Bulgaria Belgium Italy Netherlands France Spain	First commercial partner
Republic of Belarus	21	10.5	10.5	26.2	Germany Netherlands Poland Italy Lithuania United Kingdom Latvia	Second commercial partner
Republic of Kazakhstan	53.3	43.8	9.5	40.6	Italy Netherlands France Austria Germany United Kingdom	First commercial partner

					Spain	
Kyrgyz Republic	0.7	0.2	0.5	8.8	Germany Netherlands Belgium Poland France Italy Lithuania Spain	Forth commercial partner
Russian Federation	417.5	283.2	134.3	48.1	Netherlands Germany Italy Poland United Kingdom France Finland	First commercial partner

Source: Based on official data of members' national statistics: <http://www.armstat.am/>; <http://www.belstat.gov.by/>; <http://www.stat.kz/>; <http://www.gks.ru/>; <http://www.stat.kg/>

Looking at the data of Table 30 it can be observed that among all members of the EAEU, Belarus, Armenia and Kyrgyzstan have a negative balance of trade. The negative balance of international trade may show the country's dependence on imports. It is also worth noting that the main line of revenue for Russia, Kazakhstan, Armenia and Kyrgyzstan is sale of raw materials and for Belarus it is resale of natural resources it receives from Russia at reduced rates. So we can conclude that the four countries are considered as exporters of raw materials and their economies depend primarily on the price of oil, gas and other natural resources. One of the main items of imports for the all members of the Union is the machinery industry that demonstrates the weakness of this domestic industry and the dependence on the foreign supplies.

Observing the main commercial associates for countries, it is necessary to emphasize that the Russian Federation is the main commercial partner for the members of the Union, while for this one in 2013, the main commercial partner was China, and neither Belarus nor Kazakhstan and Armenia can be named as the most important commercial partners of the RF. Such a position can indicate the supremacy of Russia in the Union and the dependence on it by other members (above all it is the case of Belarus and Armenia, bearing in mind its dependence on Russian supplies of raw materials).

In terms of Table 31, it can be said that the EU plays an important role in the economies of the members of the EAEU: if we consider the EU as a participant, before the crisis in Ukraine it was the main trading partner for Russia, Kazakhstan, Armenia, the second one for Belarus and the fourth for Kyrgyzstan. It is the case that the trade with the EU represents a significant part in the common exchange of members of the EAEU.

But not only the EU represents interest as commercial partner for the members of the EAEU. As Table 4 shows, between the countries of the EU, it is possible to name the Netherlands, Germany and Italy as the main trading partners of the EAEU members. That is to say they are countries - founders of the EU and their opinion has strong weight on the European common foreign - policy decisions. Hence it can be concluded that these countries are interested in economic integration with the EAEU and despite the political crisis between Russia and the West its political weight could positively influence the development of relations between the EU and the EAEU.

It is worth mentioning that, although relations with Kazakhstan, Belarus, Armenia and Kyrgyzstan are not as interdependent as the Euro-Russian relations (the RF provided the EU with 33% of its oil needs and 34% of its natural gas consumption before the crisis), each of these countries represents interest for the EU and has potential for future development of trade with them. This way, Kazakhstan is the ninth country for territory and holder of rich deposits of oil, natural gas, gold and other raw material. Today Kazakhstan is the third energy resources exporter to European countries, among countries not members of the OPEC, after Russia and Norway. By the way, Austria imports from Kazakhstan 25 % of its needs for energy resources, Romania 30 % and for Germany it is the supplier number four. And that is precisely the reason why in the Table 4 we can observe that the exports from Kazakhstan to the EU far exceed the imports.

The Republic of Belarus, in its turn, despite the fact that it does not have its own deposits of energy resources, it has access to Russian raw materials at low price, re-export them to the European Union and may be alternative supplier to some European countries. Also it is a country that is fully situated in Europe and borders with some of the member countries of the European Union. In this way, the border with Poland is 399 km, with Lithuania 462 km, with Latvia 143km; as a whole the length of the border with the European Union is 1004 km. As they are neighbors, ecological problems, for example, or security problems turn out to be difficult, or even impossible to solve without cooperation. The development of trade in this region is equally important for both the Republic of Belarus and its neighbors. That is why it is no wonder at all that Poland, Lithuania and Latvia are some of the main commercial associates of Belarus, among European countries (see Table 31). Belarus also borders with the Russia and Ukraine and hence it can be said that it has geostrategic location connecting the EU and its Eastern European neighbors.

Speaking about the Republic of Armenia, although it does not have common borders with the European Union (neither with the RF), in case of incorporation of Turkey to the EU, this small country with its rich deposits of non-ferrous metals will turn into a neighbor of interest for European countries. Moreover, it is worth mentioning that in 2017 Armenia became the first EAEU member-state which signed Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement (CEPA) with the EU. As for Kyrgyz Republic, it should not be forgotten that the EU is one of the main donors to this EAEU member-state.

Summarizing the contents of this section, it can be concluded that the EAEU and the EU have common interests. And the strategic partnership between two unions could be based, first of all, on common economic interests. However negative experience of strategic partnership between Russia and the EU demonstrated that such pragmatic partnership based just on common commercial benefits is not enough for establishing real long-term strategic partnership. Thus, several factors that in practice hinder the scenario of establishment of the strategic partnership between two Unions should be mentioned.

First of all, we find a difference in the values promoted by the EU. The EU considers the member countries of the EAEU as non-democratic states, even as a threat to the development of democratic principles in the Eurasian continent. Secondly, there are historical stereotypes that have not disappeared yet in some countries of the European Union, which, after the fall of the USSR, perceived the idea of integration in the post-Soviet area as a threat and revival of the Soviet empire. Moreover, such stereotypes increased after Russia interfered in the Ukrainian conflict, which led to the incorporation of the Crimean peninsula into the Russian territory. Third, the member countries of the Eurasian Economic Union represent a different political system from ‘multilevel governance’ in the EU, which means both vertical and horizontal decentralization. The centralized model based on foreign policy vertical power of the member countries of the EAEU supposes existence of powerful center that takes decisions. As a result, on the one hand, the countries of the EAEU are capable of taking decisions and negotiating much faster compared to the EU; - but on the other hand it is a weak point of the EAEU because any change in leadership in these countries can lead to disorder in the political system and put an end to the idea of integration in the Post-Soviet Space.

The security field and collaboration at the international level is the most problematic field in the Euro-Russian relations, which, in its turn, can be transmitted to the level of the EAEU in the future.

The next factor is the level of development of the parties: according to the Global Index of Competitiveness 2013-2014, the RF occupies the place 64, Kazakhstan 50, Armenia 79, Kyrgyzstan 122 and the Republic of Belarus is not presented in the ranking, while most of the countries of the

EU are way ahead and some of them are in the Top-10. The strategic partnership supposes equality of partners, but seeing different level of development of the economies it is difficult to speak about equality of relations. However, in the future this factor could be the reason for rapprochement between two Unions and integration of their economies with the aim of modernization of the EEU members' economic system.

Erokhin (2015) argues that today BRICS (Brazil Russia India China South Africa) seems to be the only alternative to the alliance of USA and the EU. Taking into account that the Western financial market is now limited for Russia because of sanctions, BRICS becomes the largest source of investment. The size of the EAEU is too small to become any real alternative to Russia's relations to China, to BRICS countries, or to grow into the regional power, comparable with the EU. From our point of view one of the option for the EAEU could be to renew its relationship with EU taking into account the common commercial interests, necessity in technologies and modernization of economy and its infrastructure, geographic proximity and common historical-cultural roots. Moreover, with advanced integration and building a real strategic partnership between the EAEU and the UE the ex-Soviet republics will not have to choose between two powerful agents in Eurasia, which can prevent emergence of conflicts in the Post-Soviet Space.

In order to provide empirical evidence of our research the methodology and data are described under the next heading.

#### **4. Empirical Framework: Integration Blocks' Gravity Effects and Potential Trade Estimation**

In this heading we provide empirical evidence for analysis of the EAEU and its relationship with other regional organizations and groups of countries. Implementing the Gravity Model and estimating potential trade, we discovered not only which factors influence foreign trade cooperation with various integration blocks but also analysed those groups of countries aimed at deciding which partners the Eurasian Economic Union should develop strategic partnerships with.

##### **4.1. Data and Gravity Model Implementation**

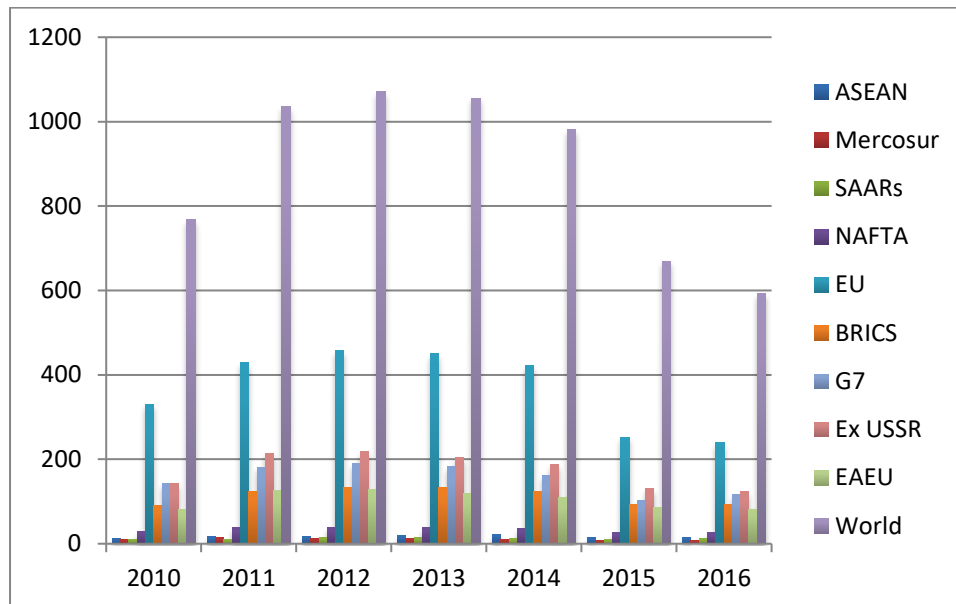
Our data represents economic variables of 76 countries through the seven-year-duration from 2010 (the year when The Common Customs Tariff went into force) to 2016 (total panel observations 532) divided by 10 main groups:

- Group I: Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)
- Group II: Southern Common Market<sup>54</sup> (Mercosur)
- Group III: South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARs)
- Group IV: North Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)
- Group V: European Union (EU)
- Group VI: Emerging power countries: BRICS
- Group VII: The most developed countries: Group of Seven (G7)
- Group VIII: Ex-Soviet Republics (Ex USSR)
- Group IX: Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU)

Our research also included countries which do not belong to any of these groups mentioned above, but they are either important commercial partners for the EAEU or countries which express (or have expressed in the past) a strong interest in building a network of free trade areas with the EAEU (Group X).

Trade values between the EAEU and main groups of countries (groups I -IX) from 2010 to 2016 are presented in Figure 15.

**Figure 15. EAEU's Trade (Million \$)<sup>55</sup>**



Source: Calculated on the basis of Trade Map data

For our model we used the standard variables for Gravity Models such as partners' GDPs per capita (in order to measure economic size) and distance between EAEU's capitals and partner's capital.

<sup>54</sup> Spanish: Mercado Común del Sur; Portuguese: Mercado Comum do Sul

<sup>55</sup> From 2010 to 2015 the Customs Union (CU), without Armenia and Kyrgyzstan.

We also added variables related to the geopolitical situation such as oil-prices and current sanctions between Russia and the West which could affect the EAEU's economy; variables related to common values with a partner taking into consideration a negative experience of strategic partnership between Russia and the EU which failed due to differences in values. Moreover, there were added dummy variables related to the partner's affiliation with integration blocks or specific groups of countries. A similar methodology was applied by Chernov's (2017) article where he estimated integration blocks' gravity effects on Russian foreign trade. The variables are described in more detail in Table 32.

**Table 32. Variables of Chapter 3**

<b>Abbreviations</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Data Base</b>
Trade	Dependent Variable, logarithm. Trade turnover (export and import) between the EAEU and partner	Trade Map
DIST	Independent Variable, logarithm. Distance between member states capitals of the EAEU (the median) and partner's capital in km	World Distance Calculator <sup>56</sup>
GDP_U	Independent Variable, logarithm. EAEU's GDP, constant to 2010.	World Bank
GDP_P	Independent Variable, logarithm. Partner's GDP, constant to 2010.	World Bank
POP_U	Independent Variable, logarithm. EAEU's population	World Bank
POP_P	Independent Variable, logarithm. Partner's population	World Bank
PETRPRICE	Independent Variable. The Brent crude oil price per barrel.	Statista <sup>57</sup>
FREEDOMEDIF	Independent Variable. Freedom in the World Index of partner divided by Freedom in the World Index of the EAEU (member states average)	Freedom House <sup>58</sup> Reports
SANC	Independent Dummy Variable. Sanctions between Russia and the West. If there are sanctions 1, if there are not sanction 0.	Official Information
EU	Independent Dummy Variable. Affiliation to the EU. If partner is member state of the EU 1, if not - 0.	Official Information
ASEAN	Independent Dummy Variable. Affiliation to the ASEAN. If partner is member state of the ASEAN 1, if not - 0.	Official Information
MERCOSUR	Independent Dummy Variable. Affiliation to the MERCOSUR. If partner is member state of the	Official Information

<sup>56</sup> [https://distancecalculator.globefeed.com/World\\_Distance\\_Calculator.asp](https://distancecalculator.globefeed.com/World_Distance_Calculator.asp)

<sup>57</sup> <https://es.statista.com/>

<sup>58</sup> Non-governmental organization that measures the degree of civil liberties and political rights



	MERCOSUR 1, if not - 0.	
USSR	Independent Dummy Variable. If partner was one of the Soviet Republics 1, if not - 0.	Official Information
NAFTA	Independent Dummy Variable. Affiliation to the NAFTA. If partner is member state of the NAFTA 1, if not - 0.	Official Information
G7	Independent Dummy Variable. Affiliation to the G7. If partner is member state of the NAFTA 1, if not - 0.	Official Information
SAARS	Independent Dummy Variable. Affiliation to the SAARS. If partner is member state of the SAARS 1, if not - 0.	Official Information
BRICS	Independent Dummy Variable. Affiliation to the BRICS. If partner is member state of the BRICS 1, if not - 0.	Official Information
EAEU	Independent Dummy Variable. Affiliation to the EAEU. If partner is member state of the EAEU 1, if not - 0.	Official Information

Source: Own elaboration

The initial model is as follows:

$$\begin{aligned}
\text{LnTrade}_{ijt} = & \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 \ln(\text{GDP\_Pit}) / (\text{POP\_Pit}) + \alpha_2 \ln(\text{GDP\_Ujt}) / \\
& (\text{POP\_Ujt}) + \alpha_3 \ln(\text{DIST}_{ij}) + \alpha_4 \text{FREEDOMEDIF}_{ijt} + \alpha_5 \text{SANC}_{ijt} + \alpha_6 \text{PETRPRICE}_t + \alpha_7 \text{EU}_{jt} + \\
& \alpha_8 \text{ASEAN}_{jt} + \alpha_9 \text{MERCOSUR}_{jt} + \alpha_{10} \text{USSR}_{jt} + \alpha_{11} \text{NAFTA}_{jt} + \alpha_{12} \text{G7}_{jt} + \alpha_{13} \text{SAARS}_{jt} \\
& + \alpha_{14} \text{BRICS}_{jt} + \alpha_{15} \text{EAEU}_{jt}
\end{aligned} \tag{1}$$

Based on the literature framework, the following hypotheses are advanced:

- **Hypothesis 1:** There is a positive effect of increasing both partner's and EAEU's GDPs per capita on bilateral trade.
- **Hypothesis 2:** There is a negative effect of geographical distance on bilateral trade.
- **Hypothesis 3:** There is a negative effect of sanctions on bilateral trade.
- **Hypothesis 4:** There is a positive effect of petrol price increase on bilateral trade
- **Hypothesis 5:** There is a negative effect of differences in values on bilateral trade.
- **Hypothesis 6:** The EAEU trades more with the EU than with the rest of the world
- **Hypothesis 7:** The EAEU trades more with its member-states than with the rest of the world

Regarding the variables related to the partner's affiliation with integration blocks and groups of countries, the present research that has been carried out by using the Gravity Model aims at finding out which blocks or groups of country the EAEU trades with more and consequently should develop strategic partnerships with.

The results obtained by the Gravity Model are presented under the next heading.

#### 4.2. Results obtained by Gravity Model

The Fixed Effect Model (FEM) and Random Effect Model (REM) are regular specifications for analysing the heterogeneity between observed units while working with panel data (see, for example, Baltagi, 2008 and Wooldridge, 2010). Both models are the extension of simpler model, well known as "Pooled" Model (see, for instance, Carter *et al*, 2012). It is not easy to decide which model should be applied. Even though the "Pooled" Model is ruled out, which is supposed does not contemplate any heterogeneity between units, the election between fixed or random effects is not so obvious (see, for example, Johnton and Dinardo, 2001 and Gujarati *et al*, 2010). ). In any case it is necessary to consider the data and estimators properties, as well as we should also base on specification test results (Thanh Binh *et al.*, 2015).

Furthermore, another question in panel data is the consideration or no of the dynamic in the specification. In this article it is planned the static panel on the basis of which it is supposed to estimate the long-term relations between implicated variables as far as the autocorrelation in the model is admissible as long as the stationarity of the residues is ensured in order to dismiss the phenomenon of the spurious regression (Greene, 2003). The specification of the static panel that has been considered (see, for instance, Baltagi, 2008 and Wooldridge, 2010) can be written as follows:

$$y_{it} = \alpha + X'_{it}\beta_X + Z'_i\beta_Z + u_{it} \quad (2)$$

where  $u_{it} = \delta_i + \gamma_t + \varepsilon_{it}$ ,  $y_{it}$  refers to *it-th* of the endogenous variable,  $X'_{it}$  refers to the observation *it-th* in the  $k_x$ , explanatory variables are considered exogenous,  $Z'_i$  refers to the observation *i-th* in the  $k_z$ , variables which take the same value in time,  $\delta_i$  takes the specific unobservable effects in the cross section units and  $\gamma_t$  takes the specific unobservable effects in the temporary units. The variable  $\varepsilon_{it}$  represents the term of idiosyncratic shocks, which should fulfil basic assumptions being usual in a regression model. Finally,  $\beta_X$  and  $\beta_Z$  are parametric vectors to estimate.

In our application,  $X'_{it}$  is defined by the following variables:  $\text{Log}(\text{GDP\_P}_{it}/ \text{POP\_P}_{it})$ ,  $\text{Log}(\text{GDP\_U}_{it}/ \text{POP\_U}_{it})$ ,  $\text{Log}(\text{DIST}_{it})$ ,  $\text{FREEDOMEDIF}_{it}$ ,  $\text{PETRPRICE}_{it}$ ,  $\text{EAEU}_{it}$  y  $\text{SANCT}_{it}$ .

Regarding the dichotomous variables  $Z'_i$ , they are defined by EU<sub>i</sub>, G7<sub>i</sub>, USSR<sub>i</sub> y BRICS<sub>i</sub>.

In table 3 we can observe the summary of the test applied in order to verify if  $\delta_i = 0$ ,  $\gamma_t = 0$  y  $\delta_i = \gamma_t = 0$ . In particular, three contrasts are applied: Breusch and Pagan (1980), Honda (1985) y King and Wu (1997), based on Lagrangian Multiplier. In the mentioned Table the Chi-square values and the *P-value* in parenthesis are shown.

The contrasts indicate that the null hypothesis that “there is not unobservable heterogeneity between units”, known as the “Pooled” Model (see, for example, Carter *et al.*, 2011) has been rejected. In particular, the heterogeneity between cross-sectional units (countries) has been detected while excluding its presence in case of temporary units.

**Table 33: Lagrangian multiplier test for random effects model**

Null Hypothesis: there is no significant difference across, time and both units

Test	Cross-section ( $\delta_i = 0$ )	Time ( $\gamma_t = 0$ )	Both ( $\delta_i = \gamma_t = 0$ )
Breusch-Pagan	1315.318*** (0.0000)	3.002 (0.0831)	1318.320*** (0.0000)
Honda	36.267*** (0.0000)	-1.732 (0.9584)	24.419*** (0.0000)
King-Wu	36.267*** (0.0000)	-1.732 (0.9584)	8.203*** (0.0000)

Note: \*\*\* is statistically significant al 1% level

By focusing on the cross-section units (countries), the consideration of a FEM with a view to control the heterogeneity is rejected for its own model specification. It should be taken into consideration that the specification incorporates dichotomous variables, which have a fixed value in temporary units (EU, G7, USSR y BRICS). The problem of the FEM is the fact that the parameters related to the dichotomous variables are already controlled and taken within the fixed effects, so, it is impossible its identification (see Gujarati Damonder and Porter Dawn, 209, p. 601).

In the Table 34 is shown the Hausman (1978) contrast, which supposes a REM under the null hypothesis comparing it with the estimation of a FEM (see also Wooldridge, 2010, p. 291 and Baltagi 2005, p. 72). Based on the results of the contrast a REM seems to be admissible. However, the contrast shows the problem in calculation of the variance and covariance matrix for what the result does not seem conclusive.

**Table 34: Hausman test for random effects model**

Null Hypothesis: cross section random effects

Model	Chi-square	P-value
Random Effects model	0.000000	1.0000

Note: Estimated coefficient covariance matrix is of reduced rank

Assuming that the heterogeneity detected in the units in the countries is not correlated with the explanatory variables we have considered the using of a REM, which moreover allows us to quantify the effects of relevant dichotomies variables in the analysis, such as EU or SANCT. Furthermore, in order to ensure the robustness of the standard error estimators of the coefficients the estimation of Variance and Covariance White's Matrix for cross-section units (corrected by the degrees of freedom) has been applied. The results are shown in the Table 35.

**Table 35: Estimation Results (Random Effects Model)**Dependent variable:  $\log(\text{Trade}_{ij})$ 

Independent variable	Coefficient	t-statistic	P-value
$\log(\text{GDP\_P}_{it} / \text{POP\_P}_{it})$	0.655	5.66	0.0000
$\log(\text{GDP\_U}_{it} / \text{POP\_U}_{it})$	2.108	5.33	0.0000
$\log(\text{DIST}_{it})$	-0.470	-6.60	0.0000
$\text{FREEDOMEDIF}_{it}$	-0.100	-4.73	0.0000
$\text{PETRPRICE}_{it}$	0.006	7.49	0.0000
$\text{SANCT}_{it}$	-0.121	-2.81	0.0050
$\text{EU}_i$	0.285	2.28	0.0230
$\text{G7}_i$	1.617	8.17	0.0000
$\text{USSR}_i$	0.877	3.60	0.0003
$\text{EAEU}_i$	0.282	2.04	0.0410
$\text{BRICS}_i$	2.064	7.49	0.0000

Note: Cluster-Robust Standar Errors: White cross-section standard errors &amp; covariance (d.f. corrected)

The specification of the model does not reveal major problems with multicollinearity (see Tables E1 and E2 in the Appendix E). In regard to the efficiency, the REM has problems with correlation between cross section units (see Table E3 in the Appendix E), which hamper the efficiency of random effects estimator. Another indication of inefficiency is the heterogeneity in  $u_{it}$  for cross section and temporary units (see Appendix E, Tables E4 and E5). In this case, the homoscedasticity in temporary units and the heteroscedasticity in cross section units are recognized. In order to counteract this inefficiency the *Cluster-Robust Standar Errors* for countries in random effects estimator have been applied, which have allowed that the majority of the coefficients are significantly different from zero till 1%. Thus, the unit root contrasts in the panel data about residues

of the REM have been applied (see Appendix E, Table E6). In none of the cases the unit root has been recognized (being either common or specific for every country), thereby excluding that the results of Table 35 are spurious regression.

Observing Table 35 we can say that the both partner's and EAEU's increasing of GDPs per capita are significant, in particular, the EAEU's GDP per capita with the highest coefficient. Thus, we can confirm the first hypothesis.

Regarding the second hypothesis it can be observed that the distance is significant in EAEU's trade and its member states trade more with closer countries. As for the third hypothesis, despite the EAEU member-states did not support Russia in sanctions-war with the "West", the sanctions had negative impact on bilateral trade. Regarding the fourth hypothesis, there is positive effect of oil-price increase due to the biggest economies of the Union, of Russia and Kazakhstan, which are very sensitive to oil-price changes.

As for the difference in values there is a negative effect on bilateral trade. Thus, the EAEU trades more with partners with similar values and, consequently, the common values will be significant in the choosing of its strategic partners (the fifth hypothesis is confirmed).

Regarding the variables related to the partner's affiliation with integration blocks, the EAEU trade more just with the EU (the sixth hypothesis confirmed) while affiliation to the other regional integration organizations, such as ASEAN, SAARS, Mercosur and NAFTA were insignificant and, consequently, those variables were omitted from the model. As for the affiliation to the groups of countries, the EAEU trades more with BRICS, G7 and, surprisingly also with countries sharing a common Soviet past, in spite of the fact than many authors argued that common Soviet ties would disappear with time. Finally, confirming the seventh hypothesis it is worth mentioning that the EAEU trades more with its members-states despite the many authors' criticisms regarding its economic background of the Union.

In conclusion, the EAEU should develop the strategic partnership based on its common economic interest with the EU, BRICS, G7 and with countries sharing a common Soviet past. However, the common values with the above mentioned regional organisations and groups of countries should not be forgotten in the selection of strategic partners.

### **4.3. Potential Trade Estimation**

Although with time, the focus of the partnerships can expand to include horizontal, multilateral, and foreign policy issues, the economics and mutual economic benefits continue to be the basis for strategic partnerships. In this regard, it is important to measure the partners' trade potential.

Jakab et al. (2001) recommend a method of speed of convergence (SC) as follows:

$$SC = \frac{\text{Average growth rate of potential trade}}{\text{Average growth rate of actual trade}} \times 100 - 100 \quad (3)$$

The method of speed of convergence acknowledges this convergence if the growth rate of potential trade is smaller than that of actual trade, and as a result the speed of convergence will be negative. In the opposite case, we have the matter of divergence. This method provides more accuracy than the point estimates method.

However, Thanh Binh et al (2014) argue that the negative speed of convergence cannot reflect the convergence of potential and actual trade, and that is why the difference between potential trade value and actual trade value should also be considered. In particular:

$$\Delta T = \text{potential trade value} - \text{actual trade value} \quad (4)$$

Thus, according to Thang Binh et al, if SC and  $\Delta T$  are unlike signs, there will be the convergence between potential trade value and actual trade value and in case of SC and  $\Delta T$  having like signs, the result will be a divergence. In other words, countries with the result of the convergence will have high potential for developing bilateral trade with the EAEU.

For countries with a convergence condition, the most likely potential partners are countries, which have the larger magnitude of SC and smaller magnitude of  $\Delta T$ . Result of dividing  $\Delta T/SC$  provides a value reflecting the time of convergence. Countries that have a smaller period of convergence will be potential partners of the EAEU in developing bilateral trade. To estimate  $\Delta T$  and SC in bilateral trade between the EAEU and partner countries, the results obtained from regression of our Gravity Model will be used.

In our case it was found that the EAEU had the convergence in trade with 33 countries out of 76 countries in the scope of the study. This result demonstrates that the EAEU still has untapped potential for trade with many countries: namely, with 13 member states of the EU, 6 states with a common Soviet past, 4 members states of ASEAN, 3 countries of G7, 3 member states of SAARS, 2 states of NAFTA, 1 member state of Mercosur, 1 country of BRICS.

As for Vietnam, with which the FTA Agreement was signed we can also observe the situation of convergence, as well as with Israel, with which the FTA Agreement is under negotiations. Within the EAEU there is convergence with Armenia and Kirgizstan. Meanwhile with the rest of member-states we can observe the situation of overtrade.

The results of countries starting with the smallest time of convergence in convergence

condition are shown in Table 36 (the full list of countries with convergence is presented in Appendix F, Table F1.).

**Table 36. Top 10: EAEU’s potential trade partners**

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Time of Convergence</b>	<b>Group</b>
1	Sri Lanka	194.53	III
2	Portugal	356.50	V
3	Cambodia	429.45	I
4	Uzbekistan	769.64	VIII
5	Croatia	949.53	V
6	Romania	980.24	V
7	Kyrgyz Republic	1158.85	IX
8	Israel	1677.75	X
9	Armenia	2097.73	IX
10	New Zealand	2140.57	X

Source: Own Calculations

As for countries with a divergence condition, it should be found out whether they are overtrade or low potential by reviewing  $\Delta T$ : if  $\Delta T < 0$ , the result will be overtrade and if  $\Delta T > 0$ , the result will be restrictive potential. Totally there 38 countries with overtrade situation and 5 countries low potential. The full list of countries with divergence according to the situation is presented in Appendix F, Table F2.

To summarize, the EU will remain being the major partner. Although according to the Gravity Model the EAEU trades more with BRICS than with the rest of the world only South Africa has situation of convergence. Despite the results of the Gravity Model, trade with the ASEAN is not significant at this moment, in future this partner also can be attractive, taking into consideration that its four member states have situation of convergence with the EAEU. Many ex-Soviet Republics have potential to develop bilateral trade with the EAEU. In his regard, their membership in the EAEU also can be beneficial for all parties.

## 5. Conclusions

It is obvious that nowadays the EAEU is too small to become a self-sufficient market. Thus, its future development and success not will only depend on its coordinated macroeconomic politics and efficiency of institutions but to a greater extent, on developing its relationship with other

countries and regional blocks. In this regard, the key objective for the EAEU will be to choose correctly its strategic partners and built with them long-term confidential relationships.

Despite the trend towards high institutionalisation with signs of supranationality, the EAEU's bodies are flexible and respectful towards the member-states' sovereignty, accompanied by decision-making equality, and limited by economic issues. Moreover, the EEC is actively engaged not only with EAEU member states but also with the non-member countries in order to attract new partners for collaboration and possible participation in Eurasian integration projects.

For our research the REM was chosen. In order to contract the homoscedasticity in temporary units and the heteroscedasticity in cross section the *Cluster-Robust Standar Errors* have been applied.

The Gravity Model has shown: first, the increase both of EAEU's and its trade partner GDPs per capita have positive effect on bilateral trade (in particular, the EAEU's GDP per capita with the highest coefficient); second, the EAEU trades more with closer partners which have common values; third, the sanctions had negative impact on bilateral trade; forth there is positive effect of increase in oil prices on bilateral trade. Regarding the variables related to the partner's affiliation with integration blocks and different groups of countries, the EAEU trades more with the EU, BRICS, G7, countries with a common Soviet past, and with its member-states within the EAEU. Thus, it can be concluded that strategic partnership with such regional blocks and groups of countries based on common commercial interests would be beneficial for the EAEU, but the geographical proximity and shared values should also be taken into account in selecting its strategic partners.

According to the results of the partners' potential trade estimation, the EAEU had a convergence in trade with 33 countries. The EU will remain as the major trade partner with 13 member states of convergence in trade. Moreover, the fact that the issue of the sanction war between Russia and the West has never been escalated to the level of the EAEU, and can therefore become some kind of "bridge" in improving and developing of future relations between the EU and the EAEU. It is worth mentioning that the EAEU have convergence in trade with many nascent post-Soviet countries and also with countries which have expressed interest in building a network of free trade areas. In this regard, the FTAs Agreements and even the accession of some of those partners to the EAEU can be interesting projects for all parties concerned.

Finally, within the EAEU, there is convergence in trade with Armenia and Kyrgyzstan. Thus, this result demonstrates a capacity for increasing the insider trading with these two recently incorporated member-states.



## 6. Appendixes

### 6.1. Appendix D. Integration on the Post-Soviet Space

**Table D. Evolution of Integration on the Post-Soviet Space**

Integration Project	Year of foundation	Participants	Retired participants	Objectives	Critical
The CIS (Community of Independent States)	1991	12 former Soviet Republics Ukraine is participant and founder country but not a member  Turkmenistan associate member  Mongolia observer	Georgia	Collaboration in all fields (economic, political, humanitarian, etc.)  Full development of all the members in the framework of the common economic area, cooperation between states and integration  Assurance of human rights and freedoms  Collaboration in the assurance of international peace and achieve general and complete disarmament  Mutual legal assistance  Peaceful resolution of conflicts and disagreements between the states-participants	According to V. Putin, the CIS was created for the 'civilized divorce' of the post-Soviet countries.  Most of the objectives set remained on paper  The organization could not prevent and solve conflicts in the post-Soviet area  The dominance of Russia in the organization bothered other members  The absence of supranational structures did not allow to deepen economic integration between the countries
The CSTO (Collective Security Treaty Organization)	1992	Russia Republic of Belarus Kazakhstan Kyrgyzstan Tajikistan	Uzbekistan Georgia Azerbaijan	Defense of the territories of the member-states through the mutual efforts of the armies of any political threat of external war, global terrorism, drug trafficking, and disaster	Some experts assume that the structure is the political military alliance created as a counterweight to NATO. However, members declare that they consider the body not as an military alliance but as a regional organization that deals with a wide variety of problems in the field of security.  As the organization has never participated in any military operation on behalf of the union in the war, sometimes considered to have no prospects
The GUAM (Organization for democracy and	1997	Ukraine Georgia Azerbaijan	Uzbekistan	Establishment of democratic values, states of law and respect for Human Rights	The Russian Federation considered this organization rather as an alliance against Russia or 'organization of orange

economic development)		Moldova Uzbekistan		Assurance of sustainable development  The security and stability at both international and regional levels  Deepening of the European integration  Development and collaboration in the fields of mutual interest	nations' backed by the US (Yazikova, 2005). Other, less radical experts saw the organization as the counterweight to Russian supremacy.  During its history, the organization had only five summits which demonstrates the irregularity of meetings. Many times, the organization has been characterized as ineffective and useless. In 2009, the president of Moldova stated that the GUAM as a regional organization is a non-starter and has no prospects
The State of the Union (the Union between the Russian Federation and Republic of Belarus)	1996	Russia Belarus		The creation of the economic, political, customs, humanitarian, monetary common space	Despite the efforts of both parties, the commitment to the creation of a monetary union was not achieved. During its history, the Union experienced both cooling and rapprochement in relationships. Although according to Bogdanos (2011), the rapprochement between the partners in 2011 was related to the difficult economic situation in the Republic of Belarus
OCAC The Organization of Central Asian Cooperation	2002	Kazakhstan Kyrgyzstan Uzbekistan Tajikistan Russia		Collaboration in all fields  Realization of common policy in the field of customs control Creation of common economic space  Mutual Support in matters of external threat	In 2005 the members decided to join the EAEC and the organization ceased to exist.
EAEC The Eurasian Economy Community	2000	Russia Belarus Kazakhstan Kyrgyzstan Uzbekistan Tajikistan	Uzbekistan	Creation of the Economic Union (deep integration) Collaboration in the UN	According to V. Putin, this is the most successful project in the post-Soviet area which achieved all its objectives.  The Project has been the basis of

		<p>Observers: Armenia Moldova Ukraine</p>			<p>Eurasian Economic Union</p> <p>The different level of economic development of member countries and Russia's domain</p>
<p>SCO (Shanghai Pact) The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation</p>	1996	<p>Russia China Kazakhstan Kyrgyzstan Uzbekistan Tajikistan</p> <p>Observers: Afghanistan India Iran Mongolia Pakistan</p>		<p>Strengthening of friendship, confidence and good neighbourly relations between states</p> <p>Development of multilateral cooperation with the goal of supporting and ensuring the peace, security and stability in the region</p> <p>Fight against terrorism, separatism, drug traffic, arms trade, transnational crime, illegal emigration</p> <p>Collaboration in all fields of mutual interest</p> <p>Coordination of approaches for integration into the world economic system</p> <p>Assistance to ensure the freedoms and Human Rights</p> <p>Developing and maintaining relations with other international organizations</p> <p>Collaboration and prevention of international and regional conflicts and dispute resolution</p> <p>Mutual search for the solution to problems of XXI</p>	<p>The organisation is considered more like a club of interests than an organisation with political and economic influence in the region, due to the dominance of bilateral relations between participants and lack of results of established objectives</p>

Source: Elaboration on the basis of official data

## 6.2. Appendix E. Statistical Results

**Table E1. Correlations in the dataset**

	LOG(TRADE)	LOG(GDP_P/POP_P)	LOG(GDP_U/POP_U)	LOG(DIST)	FREEDOMEDIF	PETRPRICE	SANCT	EAEU
LOG(TRADE)	1.00	0.39	0.12	-0.42	0.19	0.15	0.12	0.25
LOG(GDP_P/POP_P)	0.39	1.00	0.01	-0.09	0.80	-0.02	0.37	-0.06
LOG(GDP_U/POP_U)	0.12	0.01	1.00	-0.03	0.02	0.60	0.02	-0.02
LOG(DIST)	-0.42	-0.09	-0.03	1.00	-0.11	-0.08	-0.15	-0.17
FREEDOMEDIF	0.19	0.80	0.02	-0.11	1.00	0.03	0.37	-0.26
PETRPRICE	0.15	-0.02	0.60	-0.08	0.03	1.00	-0.42	-0.05
SANCT	0.12	0.37	0.02	-0.15	0.37	-0.42	1.00	-0.11
EAEU	0.25	-0.06	-0.02	-0.17	-0.26	-0.05	-0.11	1.00

**Table E2. Variance-inflation factor (VIF) of independent variables**

Variable	VIF
Log(GDP_P <sub>it</sub> )	3.20
Log(POP_P <sub>it</sub> )	1.92
Log(DIST <sub>it</sub> )	2.21
FREEDOMEDIF <sub>it</sub>	4.05
PETRPRICE <sub>it</sub>	2.53
SANCT <sub>it</sub>	2.79
EAEU <sub>it</sub>	2.01
EU <sub>i</sub>	1.17
G7 <sub>i</sub>	1.93
USSR <sub>i</sub>	1.41
BRICS <sub>i</sub>	1.08

Note: Panel Least Squares

**Table E3. Breusch-Pagan's test and Pesaran's test for cross-sectional dependence**

Null Hypothesis: No cross-sectional dependence (correlation)

Model	Test	Statistic	P-value
REM	Breusch-Pagan LM	5088.486	0.0000
	Pesaran scaled LM	29.64947	0.0000

Note: REM = Random Effects Model

**Table E4. Heteroskedasticity Likelihood ratio test for heteroscedasticity**

Null Hypothesis: Residuals are homoscedastic (cross-section test)

Model	Statistic	P-value
Pooled (Least Square)	534.9193	0.0000

**Table E5. Heteroskedasticity Likelihood ratio test for heteroscedasticity**

Null Hypothesis: Residuals are homoscedastic (period test)

Model	Statistic	P-value
Pooled (Least Square)	0.355017	1.0000

**Table E6. Panel unit root test (summary)**

Null Hypothesis: Unit root (assumes common unit root process)

Model	Test	Statistic	P-value	Cross-sections	Obs.
REM	Levin, Lin & Chu t*	-3.44980	0.0003	76	433

Null Hypothesis: Unit root (assumes individual unit root process)

Model	Test	Statistic	P-value	Cross-sections	Obs.
REM	ADF - Fisher	206.474	0.0022	76	433
REM	PP - Fisher	230.535	0.0000	76	433

Note: Probabilities for Fisher tests are computed using an asymptotic Chi-square distribution.  
All other tests assume asymptotic normality.

### 3.3. Appendix F. Results of Potential Trade Estimation

**Table F1. Countries with Convergence**

Rank	Country	Time of Convergence	Group
1	Sri Lanka	194,53	III
2	Portugal	356,50	V
3	Cambodia	429,45	I
4	Uzbekistan	769,64	VIII
5	Croatia	949,53	V
6	Romania	980,24	V
7	Kyrgyz Republic	1158,85	IX
8	Israel	1677,75	X
9	Armenia	2097,73	IX
10	New Zealand	2140,57	X
11	Chile	2144,19	X
12	Ireland	2182,99	V
13	Czech Republic	2315,33	V
14	South Africa	2441,71	VI
15	Estonia	2941,40	V
16	Malaysia	3009,52	I
17	Mexico	3199,53	IV
18	Bangladesh	3244,81	III
19	Afghanistan	3797,82	III
20	Paraguay	4266,64	II
21	Singapore	5896,29	I
22	Georgia	7095,80	VIII
23	United States	7521,36	IV, VII
24	Belgium	8841,81	V
25	Latvia	9546,48	V
26	Malta	11081,16	V
27	Vietnam	11605,96	X

28	Egypt, Arab Rep.	14857,50	X
29	Denmark	15384,63	V
30	Sweden	33227,46	V
31	United Kingdom	81835,65	V, VII
32	Switzerland	132908,12	X
33	Italy	548671,08	V, VII

Source: Own Calculation

**Table F2. Countries with Divergence**

N	Country	Situation OT/LP
1	Argentina	OT
2	Australia	OT
3	Austria	OT
4	Azerbaijan	OT
5	Bulgaria	OT
6	Brazil	OT
7	Canada	OT
8	China	OT
9	Cyprus	OT
10	Germany	OT
11	Spain	OT
12	Finland	LP
13	France	OT
14	Greece	OT
15	Hungary	OT
16	Indonesia	OT
17	India	LP
18	Iran, Islamic Rep.	OT
19	Japan	OT
20	Lithuania	OT
21	Moldova	OT
22	Myanmar	OT
23	Mongolia	OT
24	Netherlands	OT
25	Pakistan	OT
26	Peru	OT
27	Philippines	OT
28	Poland	OT
29	Serbia	OT
30	Slovak Republic	OT

31	Slovenia	LP
32	Thailand	OT
33	Tajikistan	LP
34	Turkmenistan	OT
35	Tunisia	OT
36	Turkey	OT
37	Ukraine	OT
38	Uruguay	OT
39	Norway	OT
40	Iceland	LP
41	Belarus	OT
42	Kazakhstan	OT
43	Russian Federation	OT
OT	OVETRADE	
LP	LOW POTENCIAL	

Source: Own Calculation

## CONCLUSIONS



## 1. Final Conclusions

The present doctoral thesis intends to contribute to the specialized literature for researchers and professionals related to the strategic partnership and European Union Foreign Policy in political economics, foreign affairs and geo-economics.

From observing recent events on the international scene, it should be mentioned that in the current situation wherein the new USA administration seems to be drawing back from globalization and liberal values, the EU can no longer totally count on its main traditional partner in building efficient multilateralism. In such a scenario on the international scene, the strategic partnerships with other core players have no choice but to become more up-to-date than ever. In this regard, the right strategic partner choice can offer a viable alternative to the heretofore traditional ‘transatlantic relationship’.

Although the international organizations are rather passive in resolving conflicts, there is no country, which is able to combat global challenges without help, no matter how strong it is. In this regard, cooperation is required. A true strategic partnership based on mutual interests and respect can be a solution. By building real strategic partnerships the parties can avoid and resolve conflicts and insure the betterment of global and national interests and the common welfare. If global actors on the international scene decide to choose cooperation instead of confrontation and rivalry, i.e. to become strategic partners instead of being rivals, many problems can be solved. Nevertheless, the choice of strategic partners should be based on real economic and social indicators in order to avoid the often unpredictable and counterproductive behaviour of politicians. From this point of view, first, the role of international and national institutes are extremely important and, second, the use of objective statistical and econometric methods for measurement is required.

In this regard, our research offers an innovative methodology for the election of the EU’s strategic partners based on a geo-economic approach, which includes political, economic and geographic indicators. This approach aims to make the EU strategic partner choice more science-based and, consequently, its position will become more easily understood and appreciated in the international arena.

This thesis, composed of three independent chapters, represents a kind of trilogy where each of its chapters has its own object of research, specific objectives and hypothesis, particular methodology and conclusions, but they are all connected by the same goal of knitting countries together in order to use their unified forces for fighting against terrorism, organized crime, violence, natural disasters, ecological problems among other global, regional and other national challenges.

In the first chapter the phenomenon of strategic partnership in the New Multipolar World Order and the EU's concept of strategic partnership were researched with a view to offer an original methodology for choosing strategic partners for the EU, based on a geo-economic approach and by using econometrics technics.

In the second chapter, a case study of the ill-fated strategic partnership between the EU and Russia was analysed, first in order to understand the impact which the failure of strategic partnership between them in 2014 had on their bilateral trade potential, together with other factors; second, to prevent a future recurrence of the errors committed not only with Russia but also with the EU's other strategic partners; and finally, to suggest possible strategies for resolving the deep current political crisis and finding a way out of the sanctions war.

In the third chapter the new regional project on the post-Soviet Space – the Eurasian Economic Union- was researched with a view to propose a strategic partnership with the EU, taking into consideration such factors as economic interdependence and geographical proximity.

However, while observing the recent events in the political world, we may say that so far the international system is beginning, albeit reluctantly, to show itself resigned to the idea of returning to the era of the Cold War. The separation and the confrontation between the "Western World" and Russia are becoming more marked. At the same time the collaboration among the emerging countries is increasing. This research has provided an alternative model of collaboration between two parts of the same continent that currently wish to survive the West vs Russia crisis in relations.

Thus, this work calls for joining two parts of the continent with a view to promote economical, technological, and socio-cultural development by the means of exchange and integration among countries whose citizens belong to the Eurasian Economic Union and the European Union. With this view, it was empirically proved that the financial and business circles, tourists, students, scientists both from the Eurasian Economic Union and the European Union need to unite in cooperation inasmuch as they represent two opposite ends of the same continent.

Above all, it should not be forgotten that the Eurasian Union and the European Union are neighbors and no matter what they might prefer, they simply cannot ignore each other. Pending regional conflicts, issues involving internal and external securities, international terrorism, drug trafficking, international crime, environmental problems are the problem areas that require collaboration between partners and cannot be solved separately.

Moreover, a true strategic partnership would prevent the emergence of conflicts on the post-Soviet area of Eastern Europe. With advanced integration between the Eurasian Union and the

European Union, recent nascent countries existing on post-Soviet space would not have to choose between two powerful agents on the Eurasian continent.

And finally it is worth mentioning that if the rates of economic and military growth of countries as China and India remain the same or rise to even higher levels, we may assume that before long the most powerful agents on the international stage will be found, not on the Atlantic, but rather on the Pacific Ocean. Today the US and China are the two most powerful poles of the international system. And if we estimate the potential of the European Union and the Eurasian Economic Union separately, we may conclude that they cannot act in their own best interests one by one. In such a situation the option for the European Union and the Eurasian Union could be a strategic partnership that would allow them some leverage against the US and China.

According to the objectives of the present doctoral thesis, the following specifics indicate the range of the conclusions corresponding to each of its chapters:

### Chapter 1

- First of all, by analyzing specialized literature we arrived at our own definition of strategic partnership with a view to supplying it with indicators that would enable us to submit the concept to a full evaluation. Thus, *Strategic Partnership is understood to mean a long-term bilateral cooperation for mutual benefits and equality of rights and mutual respect between states, international organizations, political blocks and unions. All these have a relevant economic and geopolitical weight at regional and/or international levels, based on the common economical and/or geopolitical interests and preferably (even though not compulsory) on the common values and historical-cultural roots, which aim at achieving common strategic multidimensional objectives.* By providing this definition our idea was to highlight the following main cornerstones when speaking about strategic partnership:
  - The cooperation between partners should be long-term and beneficial for both parties
  - Equality of rights and respect between parties are essential
  - Strategic partnership can take place not only between countries but also between international organizations, political blocks and unions
  - Strategic partners should have a balance of economic and geopolitical weight at regional and/or international levels
  - Strategic partnership should be based on common economical and/or geopolitical interests

- Even though common values and historical-cultural roots are not compulsory it can produce a great impact on the strategic partnership. The absent of common values can obstruct and even destroy relationships whereas when partners are united by common values historically and culturally it can reinforce the strategic partnership between them
- Strategic partners should have common strategic multidimensional objectives

It is also worth mentioning that although there is a correlation between regional integration and strategic partnership, the main difference between the terms is that for Strategic Partnership the existence of a supranational component is not essential. In this regard, Strategic Partnership arranges strong collaboration on a wide range of questions, avoiding the derogation of any other party's sovereignty, and consequently leaving more space for political movement and protection of national interests. Moreover, the strategic partnership not only is an instrument to acquire all possible benefits from the bilateral relations, but also a measuring stick for occupying higher positions on the international stage.

- Second of all, on the basis of research-resultant literature the strategic partnership was measured with a view to identifying and selecting strategic partners for the EU. With this purpose in mind, all indicators were divided on the following categories: economic, commercial, political, social, common values, geographical-cultural, juridical, institutional and discriminatory. Consequently, for every group the Categorical Principal Components Analysis (CATPCA) was applied, and we obtained the following 14 dimensions: partner's economical weight, partner's economic freedom, common commercial interests, partner's sustainable governance, partner's political weight, partner's social development, collaboration in science and education, common values, partner's geographical closeness, common historical-cultural roots, common legal basis, common institutional basis, economic adversarial relationship and obstruction regarding a free circulation of citizens. Then the Principal Component Analysis was applied in order to decrease the number of variables till optimum while avoiding the repetition of information. Thus we obtained three main principal components:

The first component explained the amount of total variance and shows where the highest weights obtained such dimensions as the partner's political influence, partner's economic weight, partner's social development and common commercial interests. The second component explains where the highest weights obtained such dimensions as partner's political freedom, partner's economic freedom and common values. The third component

explains where the geographical closeness, legal and institutional basis obtained the highest weights.

The EU's official strategic partners have high positions and are situated very close to each other only in the first component that is why it was titled the *Strategic Component*. The second component embraces the countries with whom the EU shares common values and concurs in point of view regarding global issues. We called this component the *Partner in Spirit Component*.

It should be mentioned that the EU has developed what may be referred to as predominately a legal and institutional basis with countries which might be regarded either literally or figuratively as its 'neighbors', in particular with those nations which could then be viewed as potential EU's members. Therefore, the component was called the *Good Neighbour Component*.

Finally on the basis of these three principal components, the Binary Logistic Model was applied. For our model only the first principal component proved to be a significant addition. Thus, we can prove that despite the EU leaders' rhetoric about common values, the political and economic weights of the partner together with common commercial interests were the main indicators for being chosen as one of the EU's strategic partners.

According to the model, the USA, China, Japan, Canada and Russia represent a particular group with a probability of more than 95 per cent, which we have called the most important EU's Strategic Partners with whom the EU should develop its preferential strategic partnerships. South Africa should not be declared as EU's strategic partner while Switzerland and Australia should be included in the EU's special list. Mexico, together with Hong Kong, Argentina, Singapore and Saudi Arabia, is situated in the group of 'EU's Potential Strategic Partners'. So, our new list of '*Special Ten*' comprises the following: USA, China, Japan, Canada, Russia, Brazil, India, Switzerland, South Korea and Australia. Even though Switzerland (like Norway) has already a very peculiar relation with the EU being member of the EU single market and of the Schengen area, which goes beyond a strategic partnership we argue that its high status and importance has not been explicitly stated at the international level. Therefore this country should be either included in the list of EU's strategic partners or any other higher official status should be awarded.

- Third, the same methodology was applied for six regional organizations including the EAEU. Thus, according to the results of the Binary Logistic Model, all of six investigated regional groups are more attractive as strategic partners for the EU than any of its already

established members taken separately. Mercosur, the EAEU and the ASEAN have the highest probability of becoming the EU's most important strategic partners. The SAARC also have considerable strategic towards becoming EU's strategic partners, while SICA and CARICOM are not interesting for the EU in this regard. Mercosur has the highest probability of becoming the EU's strategic partner. However, it is ASEAN that has the highest synergetic effect as a regional organization, taking into consideration that none of its members is an official EU strategic partner. As for the EAEU, despite the high probability of becoming EU's strategic partner, it is not fertile as a regional organization. Thus, Russia without the EAEU is one of the most important EU's strategic partners and together with the EAEU the probability of entering into a strategic partnership with the EU increases only by 0.9% (the lowest synergetic effect comparing with all researched groups).

- Finally, in spite of the fact that only the first component was significant for the Binary Logistic Model, the other two components are not irrelevant for our research. With the purpose of including other two components and also in order to propose the alternative methodology for comparing the results obtained by the Binary Logistic Model, the methodology mentioned above was completed by the additions of the following technics: synthetic index and cluster analysis.

In order to construct the Strategic Partner's Suitability Index (SPSI) for the EU, we have given weight to every component on the basis of total explained variance. According to the SPSI the US, Canada and Switzerland obtained the highest score in the ranking. As for regional organizations, Mercosur has the highest position in the ranking compared with the rest of investigated regional organizations. It can be concluded that according to the SPSI, Mercosur is more suitable as EU's strategic partner than any of its members taken separately. Regarding the ASEAN, it can be said that its position in the ranking mostly coheres with its member Singapore. As for the EAEU, the SAARC and the SICA, they seem to be less suitable as EU's strategic partners than any of their members taken separately (Russia is more suitable than the EAEU, India is more suitable than the SAARC, Costa Rica is more suitable than the SICA). Probably many regional groups, as well as some of the official strategic partners of the EU (China, India, Russia), were penalized for clashing with the EU's norms and values.

As for cluster analysis, the optimum number of clusters are seven and from these seven clusters only four of them are interesting for our research. The cluster analysis has demonstrated that Mexico and South Africa are not of sufficient strategic interest to qualify

as the EU's official strategic partners, which coincides with the results obtained by the Binary Logistic Model. Regarding the investigated regional organizations, it was empirically demonstrated that the ASEAN, the EAEU, the Mercosur and the SAARC are attractive as strategic regional partners for the EU, while SICA and CARICOM do not represent the strategic interest. Australia, Chile, Iceland, Norway and Switzerland, despite not having such a high strategic component as other strategic partners, nevertheless have the potential to become EU strategic partners based on common values.

The cluster analysis shows that there are two different groups of strategic partners: the first one, which concurs with EU norms and values, and the second one, which from the beginning has had a problematic nature regarding common values. In this regard, the analysis has confirmed that the EU's strategic partners are too heterogeneous for designing a collective response to multilateralism, and the EU should apply an individualistic approach toward every of its partners.

## Chapter 2

- First of all, it should be recalled that the initial reference to strategic partnership appeared in the official documents of the EU in 1998, when the EU confirmed the necessity of considering the RF as a strategic partner. Therefore, it was involved in relations with Moscow when the EU used this term for the first time (and the last time during the 1990's). The term didn't even figure in transatlantic relationships, which were the most important for the EU. However, the EU included Russia in its list of its 'Special Ten' only in 2009.
- Second of all, not only did the EU developed relationship with Russia under the concept of the strategic partnership but it was also supposed to include Russia to European Neighbourhood Policy. Although Russia rejected to be part of this project, not wanting to be treated as the less powerful neighbours of the EU, Russia continues participating in many activities promoted under the programme of European Neighbourhood Policy.
- Third, during almost thirty years of EU-Russian relationship Russia has undergone the radical transformation from a State weekend by foreign debt, political and economic instability after the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the war in Chechnya till a country that performs its own independent policy based on Putin's doctrine to make Russia powerful



again. However, over the history of their cooperation the EU and Russia have progressed considerably. Among the most remarkable achievements we can highlight the following: elaboration of a wide legal and institutional base, establishment of “Road Maps” in four common spaces; elaboration of the “Partnership for Modernization” program; simplification of visa regime for Russian and European citizens; expansion of the relations, not only in the commercial field, but also in other spheres, such as ecology, science, culture, education, etc. However, their relationship can be characterized as unstable due to several political and economic crises that the partners have experienced during their recent history together.

- Fourth, from the very beginning both the EU and Russia have highlighted their pragmatic interests and priorities. Thus, while for Russia the priority of collaboration was the creation of a common European Collective Security in Europe, the EU focused on the promotion of Democracy and the development of democratic institutions, imposing the principals of Rule of Law and EU’s values on Russia.

All in all, despite the official status of strategic partners, common interests and strategic objectives, collaboration in different fields, established mechanisms and a broad institutional base, due to the existence of disagreements, especially in the field of security, discriminatory actions and non-fulfillment of obligations, the Euro-Russian relations for a long period could only be defined as a “partnership of necessity” rather than as a “strategic partnership” declared by the parties. Many authors even argue that strategic partnership between Russia and the EU has never existed.

Both Russia and the EU considered Ukraine as part of its own geopolitical project. Thus, the EU looked to associate Ukraine, along with five other former Soviet republics through the Eastern Partnership program while Russia tried to attract Ukraine to its regional project – the Eurasian Economic Union. Moreover, the Ukraine crisis was preceded by confrontation between the USA and Russia. For the USA and the EU there was absolutely no question of letting Russia enjoy any special postimperial privileges such as a zone of influence, particularly in the former Soviet Union. The accumulation of the problems between the partners led first to isolation between the Russia and the EU and then to open confrontation for leadership on the post-Soviet Space.

Not only did the conflict in Ukraine put an end to the strategic partnership between Russia and the EU in 2014 while suspending negotiations about a visa-free regime and a new Agreement with the EU, but the parties imposed sanctions against each other.



Moreover, Russia was kicked out of G8 and negotiations about its possible incorporation into the OECD were suspended.

- Fifth, the sanctions damaged both Russian and the EU's economy. However, it is difficult to estimate the damage of the sanctions to Russia's economy due to the fact that the timing of their application coincided with the collapse of oil prices which had already seriously damaged a Russian economy almost exclusively dependent on raw materials. Many experts concur that the low oil prices effected Russian economy much more than the sanctions. Moreover, the imposing of sanctions failed to fulfill its main objective – the restoration of the territorial integrity of Ukraine.

Nevertheless, it is worth mentioning that both parties managed to adapt to the sanctions war. Thus, the EU diversified its markets for agricultural production while Russia promoted and increased domestic production and diversified its suppliers by buying embargoed products from the EAEU, BRICS and non-European neighbours.

- Sixth, with a purpose toward analysing how different factors, such as the growth of Russian and the EU's GDPs per capita, geographical distance between parties, devaluation of Russian currency, rise in oil prices, and whether or not strategic partnership could have influenced bilateral trade between Russia and the EU, the Gravity Model was applied. In order to collect both long-term and short-term relationship data based on significant variables, the Dynamic Panel Data was utilized. In order to avoid the multicollinearity between variables, three implementations were administered. By applying the Gravity Model, the negative effect of distance and sanctions on bilateral trade was confirmed. On the other hand, the model also validated the positive effect of devaluation of Russian currency and the growth of Russian and EU's GDPs per capita, and the rise in oil prices on a standard of bilateral trading. Moreover, even though many authors cast some doubt regarding the actual existence of a strategic partnership between Russia and the EU, according to the Model there was a positive effect regarding strategic partnership on bilateral trading.

During the final step, the Error Correction Model was formulated by incorporating three vectors of cointegration. This model improves the explanatory capacity of trade due to the fact that not only does it take into consideration the long-term dynamic (vectors of cointegration) but also the short-term dynamic with a view to minimizing the variability size of term of disturbance. As the result of the model, the second vector which links trade with

the devaluation of Russian currency and strategic partnership was not significant. However, it does not mean the absence of a relationship between variables. In fact, this relationship does exist in the long term provided we don't incorporate the other two vectors. This means that we shouldn't use all three vectors at the same time because there is multicollinearity among them, and so if we put the three of them together, the second one becomes insignificant, but this does not mean that there is not a relationship going on here, because if we apply the second variable without the other two, then it does become meaningful.

- Finally, we would like to mention that the present crisis in relations between Moscow and Brussels does not mean that Russia and the EU are not of strategic relevance to each other anymore; on the contrary, the partnership between parties continues to exist but it is in a frozen state. In this regard, it is important not to lose completely those economic and cultural ties which had been established over many years, taking into consideration that sooner or later the parties should reach an agreement and put an end to the destructive sanctions war.

Thus, in conclusion, we argue that among all the scenarios, the most reasonable and efficient for all the parties would be to establish a real and renewed strategic partnership between the European Union and the Russian Federation. Among the reasons for this scenario the following may be highlighted:

- Interdependence of Euro-Russian economies requires stability and trust in the relationship. Moreover, the positive effect of strategic partnership on the bilateral trade between the EU and Russia was empirically demonstrated.
- Russia and the EU have common historical and cultural roots, including economic and cultural ties which have been built and developed over many years. Not surprisingly therefore, financial and business communities, tourists, students, scientists both from Russia and the EU need each other in the cooperation between two parts of the same continent.
- The EU and the RF are neighbors and, whether they want to or not, they have to count on each other. The security in Europe can't be efficient and complete without Russia.
- A real strategic partnership between Russia and the EU would be able to put an end to the rivalry pertaining to the post-Soviet land space.

### Chapter 3

- In this chapter the new regional organization on the Post-Soviet Space – the Eurasian Economic Union- was analysed with a view to propose strategic partnership with the EU. As in the previous chapter, here we call once more for the unification of the two parts of the continent, proposing that with advanced integration and the building of a real strategic partnership between the EAEU and the EU, the ex-Soviet republics will not have to choose between two powerful agents in Eurasia.
- Even though the EAEU was created on the basis of EU's model, it retains its particular characteristics that distinguish the EAEU from other integration entities. It is necessary to take into account the specific location of the EAEU, which involves both European and Asian traditions, putting the emphasis on state sovereignty. Moreover, the strategic location augurs for the special mission of integration: to become a link between Europe and the Asia-Pacific region.

It is worth mentioning the fact that the union consists of countries that used to form part of the same Union, and that this distinguishes it from other models of integration. So, speaking of the process of integration in the EEU, the recovery of the old links that had existed between members is essential. Moreover, EAEU member-states are characterized by having authoritarian regimes.

Finally, the different goals of its members, its weak economic base and the overbearing omnipresence of Russia has demonstrated that the EAEU is rather more a geopolitical project than economic. It can be concluded that without strong economic content a deeper integration is quite questionable. The political crisis between Russia and the EU and the low world oil prices also complicate further integration.

- With regard to EAEU's institutions – even though they resemble those of the EU – the absence of Eurasian Parliament, and limited functions of the Eurasian Commission and strongly marked domination of Eurasian Economic Council and Eurasian Intergovernmental Council under other institutions, make EEU's interinstitutional relations completely different. Moreover the absence of harmonization of EEU's economic policy contradicts the principals of deep economic integration.

On the other hand, it is worth mentioning that despite the trend towards high institutionalisation with signs of supranationality, the EAEU's bodies are flexible and

respectful towards the member-states' sovereignty, accompanied by decision-making equality, and limited by economic issues. Moreover, the Eurasian Economic Commission is actively engaged not only with EAEU member states but also with the non-member countries in order to attract new partners for collaboration and possible participation in Eurasian integration projects.

- As for comparative analysis of the EAEU and the EU, the significant difference regarding its objectives, agenda, apolitical regimen, conditions for incorporation and leaving of organization, antecedent status, economic policy, political culture and institutions, was clearly identified and delineated.
- Regarding the empirical part of this chapter for our model we used the standard variables for Gravity Models such as partners' GDPs per capita (in order to measure economic stature) and distance between the EAEU and the EU. We also added variables related to the geopolitical situation such as oil-prices and current sanctions between Russia and the West which could affect the EAEU's economy; variables related to common values with a partner taking into consideration a negative experience of strategic partnership between Russia and the EU which failed due to differences in values. Moreover, there were added dummy variables related to the partner's affiliation with integration blocks or specific groups of countries.

The Gravity Model has shown: first, the increase of both EAEU's and its trade partner GDPs per capita have had a positive effect on bilateral trade (in particular, the EAEU's GDP per capita with the highest coefficient); second, the EAEU trades more with closer partners which have common values; third, the sanctions have had a negative impact on bilateral trade; fourth there is a positive effect of increase in oil prices on bilateral trade. Regarding the variables related to the partner's affiliation with integration blocks and different groups of countries, the EAEU trades more with the EU, BRICS, G7, countries with a common Soviet past, and with its member-states within the EAEU while affiliation to the other regional integration organizations, such as ASEAN, SAARS, Mercosur and NAFTA were insignificant.

- According to the results of the partners' potential trade estimation, the EAEU had a convergence in trade with 33 countries out of 76 countries in the scope of the study. This

result demonstrates that the EAEU still has untapped potential for trade with many countries: namely, with 13 member states of the EU, 6 states with a common Soviet past, 4 members states of ASEAN, 3 countries of G7, 3 member states of SAARS, 2 states of NAFTA, 1 member state of Mercosur, 1 country of BRICS.

It is worth mentioning that the EAEU have convergence in trade with many nascent post-Soviet countries and also with countries, which have expressed interest in building a network of free trade areas. In this regard, the FTAs Agreements and even the accession of some of those partners to the EAEU can be interesting projects for all parties concerned. Within the EAEU, there is convergence in trade with Armenia and Kyrgyzstan.

- Although such factors as different values, political regimes and systems, disagreements on the international stage, and the different level of some partners' development in key areas can be disconcerting and discourage the establishment of strategic partnership between the EU and the EAEU it has been empirically demonstrated the EU will remain as the major trade partner with 13 member states of convergence in trade. Thus, regarding the possibility of establishment of strategic partnership between the EU and EAEU, the common commercial interests, necessity in technologies and modernization of economy and EAEU's infrastructure, geographic proximity and common historical-cultural roots were defined as factors that could unite the EAEU and EU in the future. Moreover, the fact that the issue of the sanction war between Russia and the West has never been escalated to the level of the EAEU, it can therefore potentially become some kind of "bridge" in improving and developing future relations between the EU and the EAEU.

Indeed, such a strategic partnership based on economic interests is possible in the event that the parties in conflict resolve their differences at the international level and in the security field, and the EU sacrifices its conception of common values in favor of economic benefits of cooperation. However, this pragmatic approach towards the strategic partnership is highly unlikely and can be very dangerous as has been demonstrated by the negative EU-Russian experience.

Nowadays, after the era of the Transatlantic and Investment Partnership with US, when the EU seemingly can no longer confidently count on its main traditional partner, maybe it is time for the EU to start negotiating with China and the EAEU instead. It is obvious that at present the EAEU is too small to become a self-sufficient market. Thus, its future development and success not will only depend on its coordinated macroeconomic politics and efficiency of institutions but to a greater extent on developing its relationship

with other countries and regional blocks. Therefore the EAEU is currently searching for trade partners actively promoting the Free Trade Agreements (FTAs). Thus, such FTAs have already been signed with Vietnam and Iran. The FTA with Israel is under negotiation. In this regard, the EU and the EAEU may join their efforts for protecting FTAs, globalization and multilateral bodies in order to lend counterweight to the USA's new administration's policy of protectionism.

The main obstacle for EU-EAEU rapprochement is undoubtedly the situation in Ukraine and sanctions between the EU and Russia. However, we argue that step-by-step economic cooperation between the EU and the EAEU first can mitigate the political confrontation and second may become the platform for deeper collaboration when the crisis in Ukraine is resolved.

## **2. Limitations and Future Lines of Research**

It should be noted that proposed models, despite being useful for understanding the reality and making decisions, at the same time are limited by certain issues arising from complex realities. Even more, all research contributions designed to address concerns about the topic we are dealing with lead inevitably to new questions and ideas. In short, it is our current limitations that create promises for new lines of research.

Thus, in this heading, the limitations and ideas for future lines of research are presented with aims to stimulate other researchers', authors' and experts' interest about the strategic partnership, to promote future development of this topic and to improve the research provided by this doctoral thesis.

### **2.1. Limitations**

With regard to the first chapter it is worth stressing that in this scope of research we have offered a first attempt at providing empirical evidence by elaborating the model of Strategic Partners Election for the EU, given that until now there had been neither specific criteria nor any models for the election of the EU's strategic partners. Thus, despite broad databases there was not enough information for some of the countries. Therefore, according to the Pareto Rule of 80-20, countries that revealed less than the required 80 per cent of information were excluded from our research. However, 143 countries were included, representing the majority of the population. In this regard,

despite this limitation our sample is representative and that is why the results obtained during this research should be considered as reliable.

Secondly, while elaborating the Strategic Partner's Suitability Index (SPSI) for the EU, the original idea was to give weight to every component on the basis of the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP), described by Thomas L Saaty in 1990. This technique is one of the multi-criteria decision making methods attributed to relative priorities assigned to each criterion in achieving the stated objective.

The survey consisted of a few questions where the professionals in International Relations and European Union's Foreign Policy from different National, International and European institutions had to estimate the factors from 1 to 10 (where 1 is the less important and 10 is the most important), which the European Union should take into account while selecting its strategic partners. With the purpose of going ahead with this survey, more than 100 e-mails were sent to the respondents. However, lacking formal affiliation with these high-level institutions, it turned out to be impossible to achieve full collaboration. From about 100 e-mail we received only three completed questionnaires. As the result we had no choice but to abandon this idea. Thus, we chose the quantitative method and weight for every component of our synthetic index was given on the basis of a clear-cut total variance. This technique has been already used by many authors in different economic fields.

Regarding the second chapter, although we did not have any problem with obtaining information and initially it was supposed to include all 28 EU member states, finally Cyprus and Netherlands were omitted from the model due to the relations between variables with those countries have led to distorted results. Thus, the final version consider 26 EU member states.

Moreover, the initial idea was to include all three vectors in order to reflect all variables in the final model, denominated as the Error Correction Model. However, the second vector which links trade with the devaluation of Russian currency and strategic partnership was not significant. In this regard, it is crucial to understand that despite this result the relation between variables does exist in the long term but it is not essential in the Error Correction Model when we incorporate the other two vectors. Summarizing, it should highlighted that it is a frequent situation when due to the elevated number of variables it is impossible to include all of them in the model once and for all.

As for the third chapter, as in the previous one, initially it was supposed to include more countries to the model (80 countries); however, subsequently the sample was reduced to 76 items due to some of those countries distorting the results. Nevertheless, our sample represents more than 90% of population (EAEU's trade partners) making our results reliable.



Another shortcoming is the fact that the EAEU is a young organization, which puts limitations on practical research methods. For our model the starting point was 2010 when the Common Customs Tariff between Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan went into force. Thus, we could observe only seven years, which is not a long period for economic and political processes to unfold in a completely discernible way. The disintegration or a strengthening of the integration process are both possible outcomes. In this regard, in order to evaluate properly this new integration project on the post-Soviet space and to arrive at the proper conclusions, it is crucial to wait patiently for more time to pass while continuing to observe all of its foreign and domestic economic activity.

Finally, we cannot ignore the main challenge of this research: the strategic partnership is primarily a political dynamic and regardless of how favourable the economic and other indicators can be, the practical application of strategic partnership depends on political leaders' willingness to do so and competence in taking the right steps.

## **2.2. Future Lines of Research**

Finally, in this heading the following future lines of Research proceeding from this doctoral thesis are mentioned:

- A) Synthetic Indices, Models and Specialized Platforms for Measuring Strategic Partnership
- B) Gravity Model Applications for Researching Strategic Partnership
- C) Elaboration of "Road Maps" for EAEU-EU Rapprochement

### *A) Synthetic Indices, Models and Specialized Platforms for Measuring Strategic Partnership*

The innovative methodology for the election of strategic partners based on a geo-economic approach aimed to make EU's eventual choices more science-based, which, proceeding from the first chapter can be used as some kind of guide or starting point for elaboration of synthetic indices and models for strategic partners' election for countries, institutions and organizations by adapting index or models according to the special criteria required in every particular case. As one of the future lines of research it should also be considered the writing of recommendations of how to become more strategic for the EU written for countries such as, for example, Mexico and South Africa, which can be elaborated on the basis of the results obtained by the binary logistic model and the Strategic Partner's Suitability Index. Moreover, in relation to the above-mentioned limitations, there is a plan



to improve the Strategic Partner's Suitability Index (SPSI) for the EU by implementation of the survey with expert assessment that could not be carried out in this thesis, but which would serve to give weight to every component on the basis of Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP).<sup>59</sup> Consequently, the obtained results should be compared with the thin synthetic index obtained in this thesis. In such a manner, the SPSI can be improved and modified. Thus, the index should be calculated every year and the ranking of EU's strategic partners should be published on the official web pages or specialized platforms.

Such a platform has already been created by FRIDE and the Egmont Institute. European Strategic Partnerships Observatory (ESPO) is a policy-oriented, web-based and networked platform launched in 2012 with a purpose to provide information, analysis and debate on the EU's relations with a selected range of key global and regional partners. Through targeted work packages, ESPO aims to engage a wide network of experts and practitioners in Europe and beyond. One of the future lines of future development could be to collaborate with this platform. Another thread for the long term could be an option to create a platform aimed at helping countries, organizations and companies select their strategic partners basing on the provided models.

#### *B) Gravity Model Applications for Researching Strategic Partnership*

It is not surprising that Gravity Models have been used as a workhorse for analysing the determinants of bilateral trade flows due to their relative simplicity and straightforwardness. However, we have found only one example of research where, besides traditional for Gravity Models variables such as partners' GDPs per capita and distance between partners, the dummy variable of strategic partnership was added. This research belongs to Thanh Binh D. T et al. (2014) where the authors analysed trade activities of Vietnam by applying a Gravity Model. Nevertheless, in their work the variable of strategic partnership was insignificant.

Basing on the methodology of the above mentioned article, in the second chapter we analysed EU-Russian activities. In our case there was a positive effect of strategic partnership on the parties' bilateral trade.

However, for future lines of the research the Gravity Models can be applied for researching EU's activities with its other strategic partners. The EU's concept of strategic partnership has been criticized for being unclear, politicized and irrelevant from a scientific point of view. In this regard, this line of future investigation can help to figure out if there is positive relationship between

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<sup>59</sup> For future collaborations and proposals here it is the link with questionnaire of this survey <https://goo.gl/forms/BQF3ofLm2vFTnr5v1>.

bilateral trade and concept of strategic partnership. In case of positive results the scientific foundation and credibility of the EU's concept of strategic partnership will be empirically proved.

### *C) Elaboration of "Road Maps" for EAEU-EU Rapprochement*

Although there have not been any official talks between the EU and the EAEU or any engagement above the level of technical standard harmonization, EAEU member-states continue to express interest in cooperating with the EU. Thus Kazakhstan signed Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with the EU in December 2015. Armenia signed the specially designed Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement with the EU in November 2017. Moldova is a member of the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) that recently became an observer to the EAEU.

Moreover, according to Russia's 2016 foreign policy strategy, the creation of a common economic space between the EU and the EAEU is one of the strategic priorities in relations with the EU while for the EU the cooperation between two unions is conditional on the implementation of the Minsk II agreement. However, sooner or later the crisis in relationship should be resolved. In this regard, it's important to prepare beforehand a platform for economic and political rapprochement with detailed plan included. If the parties manage to make arrangements, one of the options in the long term could be an attempt to elaborate a Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA).

A closer cooperation with EU can provide to EAEU extra investment, credits and assistance with a view to modernize the economies and bring EAEU member states closer to the EU. On the other hand, due to the economic asymmetries, deep integration will not bring equal gains for every country and that is why the inflow of competitive goods from Europe to the EAEU market will likely lead to the shutdown of some industries and to the re-structuring of the labor market. That is why it is essential to elaborate "Road Maps" for EAEU-EU rapprochement where all conditions for cooperation might be discussed, different scenarios proposed according to possible types of agreements and gains and losses for all parties concerned calculated. In this regard, different methodologies for researching integration agreements can be used, for example, the "Sussex Framework" developed at University of Sussex which allows researchers to analyze regional integration agreements on the basis of interpretation extracted data and calculating several indicators.

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