This study set out to assess perspectives of expansion of RMB (Renminbi) and identify the pace of internationalization of the yuan. This is done by presenting the payment currencies evolution. Besides, in this paper I report on different views on the growth for RMB payments, that allowed to observe an objectivity method.

Korpechkin, A.
Scientific tutor Vasilevskaya, L.
BSEU (Minsk)

THE ROLE OF OPEC IN SETTING OIL PRICES

With each passing year, oil seems to play an even greater role in the global economy. However, its impact on a country's economy may be different due to the shifts in prices.

Oil is a commodity traded on a global market. While the value of a country's currency or the interest rate can affect economic conditions on the national level only, fluctuations in the oil price have a global effect. The two primary factors that impact the price of oil are: supply and demand and market sentiment.

The concept of supply and demand is actually not that straightforward in this case. The price of oil as we know it is basically set in the oil futures market.

Another key factor is market sentiment. It is based on the beliefs and intentions that traders of futures market possess.

However, those are not the only determinants of oil prices. The single largest entity impacting the world's oil supplies is the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), a consortium of 12 countries.

OPEC, which supplies 43 percent of crude demand, is formally committed, as described in its founding statue, to maintaining a stable market. OPEC keeps demand and supply in balance, and prices within a band that it deems reasonable. In order to accomplish this it will not only increase, but also will decrease production as needed. Each member country has a production quota which is based roughly on the member states' proven reserves, as well as on many other factors such as need for revenue. However, these quotas are mostly for public consumption, and members may or may not abide by them since the only result that matters is a tranquil market.

OPEC always maintains what is termed 'spare capacity', which is the ability to add additional supply to markets on short notice in case of unforeseen developments.

It is important to note that day to day or week to week prices on commodity exchanges are influenced by all market participants. This includes businesses such as airlines or oil refineries that need to protect themselves from changes in prices as well as speculators who place bets on future price direction.

However, longer term prices are set by the supply and demand balance controlled by OPEC: too much supply on the market means prices will drop slowly but steadily, and too little supply means prices will rise. In either case there can be significant fluctuations within or outside the price band since there is no official cooperation between consumers (oil importers) and producers to balance the market. Indeed, price fluctuations can be viewed as an integral part of the price setting mechanism in that they help to mask the real reason for price increases.

Kosiak, M., Moroz, D.
Scientific tutor Dmitrieva, O.
BSEU (Minsk)

TECHNICAL BARRIERSTO TRADE: PROTECTION OR CONSTRAINT OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE?

Methods of non-tariff regulation are the main obstacles to the free movement of goods across the border at the present stage of international trade development, because methods of tariff regulation of trade are much easier to eliminate. The most interesting category of non-tariff barriers for economists all over the world is technical barriers to trade. These are the widely divergent measures that countries use to regulate markets, protect their consumers, or preserve their natural resources, but they also can be used to discriminate against imports in order to protect domestic industries.

The legal basis of technical barriers is a technical regulation. It is a document which lays down product characteristics or their related processes and production methods, including the applicable administrative provisions, with which compliance is mandatory. It may also include or deal exclusively with terminology, symbols, packaging, marking or labeling requirements as they apply to a product, process or production method.

Legitimate purposes of establishing technical barriers are to provide high-quality export products, production requirements, to protect the lives and safety of people, animals and plants, as well as protection of the environment and national security requirements. However, there are many cases when technical restrictions are used for protectionist purposes. Governments of many countries use technical regulations in order to prevent the penetration of highly competitive imported products in the domestic market.

In this regard, over the past twenty years a lot of work to create a variety of international legal acts in the field of technical regulation has been done. The most important treaty in this sphere is the Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade administered by the World Trade Organization. It encourages countries to use