

подходом воздействия факторов чисто экономического характера, а также факторов неэкономического характера является формирование международной конкурентоспособности экономики каждого из государств. Отчеты Международного института управленческого развития и Международного экономического форума, которые издаются в Женеве, иллюстрируют высокий уровень вовлечения Германии в международное разделение труда, а также международные потоки факторов производства. В рейтинге одного из перечисленных выше институтов, оценивающих конкурентоспособность национальной экономики в 2003 г., сообщается, что среди 102 подвергаемых анализу государств Германия занимала 13-е место, а Российская Федерация — 65-е место.

Экспертным советом для определения общеэкономического развития Германии изложено мнение, что в отношении конкурентоспособности в последние годы предприятия немецкой экономики явно улучшили свою позицию на международных рынках, в том числе и в России. Совет предполагает, что во время интернационализации Германия будет ориентироваться на свои сильные стороны — область высоких технологий. Сталь и производные из нее материалы принадлежат к сфере высоких технологий.

В ближайшее время можно ожидать экономической экспансии Германии в сторону экономики Российской Федерации. Мы имеем дело с прогнозами относительно будущей экономической жизни на европейском континенте. Одной из возможностей является так называемая траектория Лондон — Париж — Москва. В данном плане имеется пространство для развития экономического сотрудничества между Германией и Российской Федерацией.

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ENTERING GLOBAL VALUE CHAINS: OPPORTUNITIES VS. RISKS

ВКЛЮЧЕНИЕ В ГЛОБАЛЬНЫЕ ЦЕПОЧКИ ПОСТАВОК: ВОЗМОЖНОСТИ И РИСКИ

В статье рассматривается участие в глобальных цепочках поставок как высокоэффективный способ интернационализации деятельности компаний. Однако несмотря на все свои преимущества, накопленный международный опыт свидетельствует о необходимости более взвешенного подхода к реализации данной стратегии включения в международную систему производственных отношений.

Throughout the last few decades the strategy of entering global value chains (GVCs) has been considered as a progressive and efficient way for a

company and a country to internationalize its activity through joining the ubiquitous rush for its piece of an international trade and production pie. The strategy, in fact, has a lot to offer, especially for developing and transition economies.

It enables companies to benefit from economies of scale and scope (either on their own or through their suppliers). It provides national companies with a shortcut access to networks, global markets, capital, knowledge and technology. For the least developed countries integration in GVCs can be seen as a first step to economic development. Joining an existing chain requires less effort than building a complete new value chain. Developing and transition economies can enter GVCs by opening their markets to trade and FDI, improving their business environment, and strengthening domestic capabilities to engage in international trade.

It stimulates governments to run more efficient policies aimed to strengthen the benefits that countries obtain from participating in GVCs. The focus gets shifted to the upgrading process by strengthening the business environment, supporting investment in knowledge assets such as R&D and design, and fostering the development of important economic competencies, notably skills and management.

It strengthens local factors of production that are unlikely to cross borders, through investment in people, education, skills, infrastructure, encouragement of industry-university links. It induces the establishment of national contractual institutions since they become a crucial element of the system supporting the cross-border contacts within GVCs.

Participation in international production networks, however, is a two-side coin. It runs many *risks* and induces high *costs* on its parties.

One of the risks mentioned is the risk of generating adverse terms-of-trade effects on countries, particularly those at the lower ends of production chains. Developing countries, especially those at an early stage of industrialization, may become locked into deep downstream or low-value-added activities due to stiff competition from other suppliers to keep labor costs low. Thus, African GVC participation is still mostly limited to downstream incorporation of raw materials in the exports of developed countries.

It also creates few domestic linkages and technology spillovers. Mexico serves as a bright example here. Despite being located higher upstream within a chain of automotive production, Mexico faces a problem of low domestic value added generated in export-oriented maquiladoras highly dependent on imported parts.

Another risk for countries, entering GVCs is the tight control over intellectual property and expensive branding strategies of the lead firm which blocks them from moving up the value chain. The risk should not be underestimated. Even China, a dominant exporter of electronics goods, according to some recent estimates, accounts for just 3 % of total profits in the sector.

The list of risks associated with the participation in GVCs grows intensively as companies and countries accumulate more and more experience in

managing the new strategy. Various international reports reflect the situation by taking ever more cautious positions towards promoting GVC participation to the new-comers.

Thus, despite all the ado about GVCs, developing and transition economies need to carefully weigh both the costs and benefits when considering a strategy of joining international production networks. The strategy is not impeccable and it still awaits for some alternatives to be challenged by. Regional value chains — to suggest one.

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ECONOMIC RELATIONS BETWEEN BELARUS AND THE CONTINENT OF AFRICA: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

ЭКОНОМИЧЕСКОЕ ВЗАИМОДЕЙСТВИЕ БЕЛАРУСИ И СТРАН АФРИКИ: ВЫЗОВЫ И ВОЗМОЖНОСТИ

Экономическое взаимодействие Беларуси с африканским континентом на современном этапе характеризуется высоким нереализованным потенциалом. Богатые ресурсами страны Африки, стремящиеся к поиску новых партнеров, заинтересованных не только в закупках сырья, но и в ответных поставках промышленной продукции, недостающей на континенте, открывают новые возможности для Беларуси, заинтересованной в расширении своего присутствия на мировом рынке вопреки вызовам современного этапа глобализации.

Trade and economic relations among nation states in recent times have become increasingly important in the development of modern societies and economies. Nation states have faced the need to intensify trade with each other due to the benefits that trade brings along. This has led to the creation of many trade agreements and economic arrangements between and among nation states at different levels.

International trade is an engine for economic growth and development. Empirical literature supports this fact with strong evidence. Increased participation in international trade can propel economic growth, which happens to be a key condition for a wider range of development outcomes.

Trade between Belarus and the continent of Africa is not an exception irrespective of the fact that there is not much trade currently going on between Belarus and countries within the African continent. This situation creates a perfect situation for Belarus to trade more with the African continent and also vice versa in view of the fact that both Belarus and the African continent stand to benefit significantly from such a relationship.