

Judging from the analysis of proven oil and gas reserves, Central Asia is an important segment of the world energy system. The main consumers of Central Asian oil and gas are Europe and China. The development of trade relations and the saturation of the European market due to the fact that the main source of oil for Europe is the reserves of the North Sea, and oil consumption is growing. Therefore European multinational companies, such as Shell (Great Britain, the Netherlands), Total (France), British Petroleum (Great Britain), Eni (Italy), are present in the Central Asian region. Many of these oil companies entered the market at a time when the economies of the post-Soviet states were in difficult conditions. In addition to the previously mentioned companies, Chevron, Exxon Mobil (USA), Gazprom and national companies of Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan also function in this region [1].

The presented oil producing companies serve not only economic interests, but also contribute to the security of their national economies. They ensure the saturation of the domestic oil and gas market from Central Asia, foster the infrastructure for oil production and invest in research and development of alternative energy sources [2].

It can be concluded that the development of transnational oil companies allows to develop new fields for the extraction of natural resources. This, in turn, contributes to the improvement of advanced technologies, as well as the interaction of countries to achieve a common goal. TNCs of oil market are the key to future oil supply.

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PREFERENCES FOR REDISTRIBUTION

Growing wealth inequality has become a key concern for economists, and tackling it requires a deep understanding of how redistribution affects the inequality. To find the answer to this question, we should study the taxation and transfers, the role of the political regime, public attitudes, the impact of the pandemic and define redistribution.

Redistribution of income is the transfer of income and wealth from some individuals to others through a social mechanism such as taxation, welfare, public services, monetary policies. Redistribution is a complex issue, which can take various forms and rely on different mechanisms. We place the focus on two forms of

redistribution. The first is direct income redistribution from the rich to the poor. The second is indirect redistribution through the provision of public goods. Taxation and income transfers to the poorest segment of society are the most direct way to keep inequality in check and reduce poverty in the short term. These instruments are particularly appropriate when the benefits of growth fail to reach the poor. But most of the time they are too small to really make a difference. On average, taxes on personal income and cash benefits to the poor are almost 10 times as low as a proportion of GDP.

The success of taxation and income transfers to the poorest segment of society have demonstrated that it is possible to transfer cash efficiently to the poor in developing economies. Taxation and income transfers are the most direct way to support programs that help fight inequality. Cash transfer programs give money to households on the condition that they comply with certain pre-defined requirements, such as up-to-date vaccinations, regular school attendance or improvement children's nutrition, etc. The spread of such initiatives shows the progress made in the last 15 years. But their current impact on poverty and inequality is limited. Their main weakness is their size, which amounts to 0.5 percent of GDP at most in middle-income countries. In poorer countries, they are still at the pilot stage. Expanding those programs requires more resources. A higher income tax in the upper part of the income scale could help raise the necessary funds. Such programs should continue to improve in the future, thanks to advances in information technology. In this respect, the generalized use of bank accounts, credit and debit cards by higher-income people in most countries should make it easier to monitor personal incomes and reduce tax evasion. Political economy issues aside, this should lead developing economies' governments to place more emphasis on direct taxation than they presently do.

Developing economies tend to rely relatively more than advanced economies on the indirect taxation. Indirect taxes are said to be regressive because they tax consumption rather than income, and wealthier people save a higher proportion of their income. But indirect taxation in developing economies may even increase poverty depending on the structure of tax rates and the consumption basket of households. In any case, lowering taxes on goods that weigh more in the budget of the poor achieves relatively little redistribution because wealthier people also consume these goods.

At the moment, a huge number of surveys demonstrate the attitude of the population towards the redistribution of income. A closer examination of the data and estimates of the factors shaping individuals preferences are consistent with motives involving strong self-interests of the respondents. The trend shows that the higher the expected income position of household, the less supportive the respondents are of income redistribution. Those who experienced severe hardships with the recent crisis tend to support redistribution more than those who had little problems or not at all. Furthermore, the role of preferences towards uncertainty is confirmed: the higher the willingness to take risks, the less likely the individual is to support or favor redistribution. Respondents with tertiary education are less inclined to support redistribution compared to those with secondary education.

The pandemic has had a huge impact on income redistribution. The pandemic has affected incomes, which in turn has affected redistribution. But if a person has an income above the average, in any force majeure situation, he will be in more favorable conditions.

Therefore, these households are least interested in redistributing their funds to the poorer ones. It is also stressed that welfare regimes can play a role in shaping the level of public support for redistribution.

Thus, countries are not homogeneous with respect to preferences for redistribution, with sizeable variations in country averages and in public preferences. Public attitudes confirm a dominant role of self-interest, with some indications of social sentiments as well. The studies also confirm the role of income inequality in shaping public attitudes. In particular, higher inequality is confirmed to increase the demand for direct income redistribution. The important part is the influence of democracy and governance institutions on demand for redistribution. Better democratic and governance institutions stimulate redistribution of public money towards education, healthcare, environment and public infrastructure, while weaker democratic and governance institutions increases demand for allocation of public money to assistance to the poor, housing and pensions.

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