

SUMMARY

Subject of the thesis: The post-Soviet space as a zone of collision of foreign policy interests of the Russian Federation and the European Union.

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Relevance of the research issue: In the modern world the post-Soviet space is a zone of political interests' collision of the world powers. This territory is of interest to the West as a reliable supplier of primary energy resources, an important transit zone as well as a market for European goods. Nowadays activities of the EU and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in the post-Soviet space are aimed at weakening Russian influence and promoting Western values.

The key foreign policy objectives for most countries are concentrated in the geographical region where they are located. That's why good relations with neighboring countries are the priority. The Post-Soviet space has been remaining the zone of the vital interests for the Russian Federation. We are united by a common history, culture, traditions and customs. The Russian vital interests in the field of economy, defense, security and protection of the Russian-speaking population are concentrated right in the post-Soviet space. These factors compose the basis of the country's national security.

Moscow must react in time to the processes occurring within this region, because it is a zone of its vital interests. For example, drawing the former Soviet countries into the sphere of West interests is contrary to the goals and objectives of the Russian Federation development and threatens its national security.

One of the largest EU expansions took place in 2004-2007. It made EU geographically closer to Russia. Thus the post-Soviet space has acquired great importance for the European Union. Nowadays countries of the post-Soviet space are faced with the choice of a certain model of cooperation with Russia or the EU. We cannot deny the fact that the European model is of great interest to them. The EU conducts many interaction programs, one of which is the policy of the "Eastern Partnership", which helps strengthen ties in the field of economy, education, culture and energy between the EU and the six post-Soviet countries.

To sum it up careful monitoring of the Western interests in the post-Soviet space is a necessary component of developing the Russian political line towards former USSR countries. Analyzing the EU foreign policy it is possible to identify strengths and weaknesses in the economic, political, cultural and humanitarian interaction of the European Union and the post-Soviet space.

An analysis of the relations of the countries in the post-Soviet area with the West allows preventing possible challenges and threats for the Russian Federation, which first of all determines the relevance of this study.

The purpose is to identify the key directions and contradictions between the foreign policy interests of the Russian Federation and the European Union in the post-Soviet space.

Research objectives:

- analyze the foundations of the modern countries foreign policy;
- consider modern geopolitical characteristics of the post-Soviet space;
- identify the Russian Federation interests in the post-Soviet space;
- determine the EU's foreign policy strategy in the post-Soviet space;
- investigate the reasons for the collision of the interests of the Russian Federation and the EU in the post-Soviet space.

Scientific novelty lies in determining of the mechanisms of the EU's influence on the political institutions of the post-Soviet countries as well as the necessary conditions for strengthening the position of the Russian Federation in the CIS region.

The structure of the paper is resulted from the subject, purpose and objectives of the study. The work consists of the introduction, two chapters, five paragraphs, the conclusion and the 127-reference bibliography, (forty one of which are in English), and the two Appendixes. The total volume is 86 pages.

Summary: This work examines the policy of the Russian Federation and the European Union towards the post-Soviet space. Based on the research, the author found that since the Eastern Partnership program does not guarantee the further membership of the member countries in the EU, this is a negative factor for a number of countries that declare their intention of fully integration into the European Union. However, the EU is promoting Western values in the field of culture and education, providing financial assistance for political reforms, investing heavily in the economies of the post-Soviet countries, liberalizing the visa regime and developing contacts between people. These factors encourage some countries of the former Soviet Union to prefer the European vector of development rather than the Eurasian model of cooperation presented by the Russian Federation.

The National Security Concept of the Russian Federation says that foreign policy interests are based on equal relations with all states and integration associations, but first of all the preference is given to the Commonwealth of Independent States. The key objectives in this region for the Russian Federation are to strengthen influence, including through the Eurasian Economic Union. Russia's participation in this integration association ensures the growth of Russian exports to the participating countries, reduces economic costs, raises the level of goods competitiveness on the external market. The strengthening of the economic well-being of the participants of the EEMA has a positive impact on the international political situation in the region. Thanks to the functioning of this integration association, the level of unemployment, crime, poverty decreases, new markets are emerging, contacts between people increase, the region becomes attractive for foreign investment. Thus the author comes to the conclusion that Russia's dominance in the region has a favorable effect both for Russia, as the country is separated by the buffer zone from the centers that pose a threat to it, and

for states in the post-Soviet space. However, in order to successfully compete with the EU's Eastern Partnership policy, Russia needs to monitor the situation in the countries cooperating with the EU in order to prevent the development of anti-Russian sentiments and to offer their own attractive cooperation projects.