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**The Role of EU Member States in EU-Russian Relations:  
Studies in English**

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The internal heterogeneity of the European Union and the complexity of developing a common EU policy in principle, and in Russia in particular, could not but draw the attention of specialists in European integration and the relations between Russia and the EU abroad. It was a much more popular topic outside of Russia (compared to Russian-language research). Three factors have stimulated research in this area: the enlargement of the European Union and the increase of its internal diversity, the EU institutional reforms designed to enhance its effectiveness and ability to formulate a unified policy, as well as the growing rigidity of Russian policy, the demands of the international environment that the EU develop a clear and special policy in respect to Moscow.

Abroad, of course, there were studies demonstrating the specifics of Russian perception, the complexity of understanding the functioning of the European Union, which Russia experienced. At the same time, they usually focused not so much on the problems of understanding the EU or the difficulties that the third party is experiencing because of the long development of the EU policy and its inconsistency, but rather how Moscow intends to play on the contradictions of the member countries with regard to Moscow and divide and rule its policies. This mirrored one of the trends in the domestic study of the role of member countries in the EU's policy towards Russia.

However, the main attention in non-Russian literature was focused not so much on Russia but on how internal diversity manifests itself within the European Union, what can be done to minimize the inconsistency of the EU, in order not to make the EU hostage to the most critical members of Russia.

In this regard, a large number of studies of EU the institutions is remarkable. In particular, the difficulties of reaching consensus within the framework of the CFSP, the role of the presidency (before the Lisbon Treaty) in seeking a consensus within the EU were explored. Researchers also investigated changes introduced by the Lisbon Treaty as well as how discrepancies in the policy towards Moscow affect the voting in the European Parliament, the choice of the norms supported in the world arena, the formation of positions and actions against Russia. In this context, the European Neighborhood Policy has always attracted special attention.

European researchers also implemented a curious project on the role of member countries in the EU, how they affect the preferences of the European Union, what they bring there, and how EU institutions influence national authorities and bilateral relations. This project is also notable for the fact that in its course, various EU member states were analyzed, distributed among geographic blocs (taking into account the historical specifics of their relations with Russia).

In a similar perspective, Russia's relations with the EU and its member countries were often analysed as a two-tier game in which various issues are addressed and resolved at different levels. Two strategies have been singled out: pragmatic cooperation at the national level with the shifting of problematic issues (for example, democratic reforms) to the supranational level; and burdening EU-Russian relations with conflict aspects of Moscow's relations with some national capitals. The first strategy, as a rule, is typical for the old member countries while the second one is characteristic of new member states.

The studies stated that despite the years of the functioning of the European Union, as well as the experience of new member countries in the EU, their policies on Russia do not converge, as member states remain divided on principled issues of the dialogue with Russia. Obviously, the crisis in Russia-EU relations, which began as a result of the events in Ukraine in 2014, contributed to the EU's adopting a more consolidated approach.

In studies of the national preferences of member countries, two groups of countries are distinguished. The first one is made of new members of the EU, especially the Baltic countries and Poland. The most critical of Russia (because of historical events), they hinder the constructive line of the EU towards Moscow, deepen cooperation (blocking some decisions or postponing others). Secondly, many studies focus on Germany as the leader of the integration processes today, until recently positive towards deepening ties with Russia. This approach was

justified, on the one hand, by the traditional belief of the Germans in the economic interdependence, and, on the other, by the hopes for political changes in Russia (for example, connected with Dmitry Medvedev's presidency). The transformation of Germany's position at the present stage, obviously, will serve as a change in the study here. Although Germany as the leader of integration processes will continue to attract the attention of researchers.

Finally, special attention was paid to the relations between Russia and certain EU countries in the energy sector. Here, the studies revealed the unevenness of the dependence of member states on Russia, the differences in the acceptability of this dependence and how this determined their position on Russia's external energy policy (especially in the gas field).

The classification of EU member states in terms of their friendliness and disposition towards Russia has also become a textbook case. In some cases, they were built on the basis of the historical experience of the interaction of member states with Moscow, as well as their economic, and especially energy, ties, in others the interpretation of the concept of modernization was the departing point for identifying difference in how Russia was viewed by various member states.