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## **The Role of EU Member States in EU-Russian Relations: Russian-language publications**

The specifics of the European Union - its nature, the combination of the attributes of an international organisation and of a supranational political system - naturally raised questions about how third countries could build relations with this actor. The situation was complicated by the growing internal diversity of the EU, the pluralism of the views of institutions and, in particular, of the member countries, on the dialogue with Moscow. The cacophony was based, first of all, on the historical experience of these countries, but also on the geographical proximity, the nature of economic relations, the importance of Russia in domestic political debates (including for building a new national identity). All this attracted the attention of both Russian and foreign researchers, raised the question of the integrity and character of the EU position towards Russia, the parameters of building relations with the Union.

Three areas of research can be identified in the Russian-language literature.

The first is to study the specifics of the member countries and how they determine the EU's position in relation to Russia. Most often the constructive role of the old member countries and the destructive one of new member states was emphasised. At the same time, the academic literature explored possibilities of extending constructive relations to the whole of the European Union, as well as ways to influence the European Union through "allies".

Nevertheless, there have been frequent calls from Russian researchers to build relationships with those who are really ready for this, even if priority is given to friendly national rather than supranational authorities. At the same time, often Russian-language literature ignored the nature

of the division of competencies between national and supranational authorities in the EU as well as the principle of solidarity.

The calls to build relations with structures and players ready for this naturally increased after the introduction of EU restrictive measures against Russia in 2014 and acquired the character of a political recommendation. This was a response to the EU's negative consolidation on Russia in connection with the events in Ukraine in 2014.

Secondly, Russian-language scholarship tried to classify member states in terms of the degree of friendliness / hostility towards Russia. The main such attempt was made when considering political and economic aspects of partnerships for modernization. The idea was to identify the specifics of the views of member countries and its impact on how the concept of modernization was interpreted, as well as identifying factors that contribute to consensus in the EU and which were hampered. These attempts to rank member countries, however, have not gained much popularity in Russian-language research. Rather, experts preferred to concentrate on individual countries, highlighting the EU's context at the same time.

Finally, the third area of Russian-language research on the role of member countries in determining the EU foreign policy line (and also on their unity) is the analysis of changes in the constituent documents of the European Union. Russian experts curiously monitored the transfer of competences from member countries to supranational institutions and bodies, as competencies at the EU level were expanded during the adoption of the Amsterdam, Nice and, finally, the Lisbon Treaty. In particular, it was investigated what it meant to build a single EU line towards Russia in economic, foreign policy and other areas. At the same time, the inability of the EU to quickly agree on changes, the difficulties of ratification have often been interpreted as an internal political crisis that the EU is trying to solve, externalizing its problems and becoming more aggressive in relations with Russia.

In general, Russian studies are characterized by a gradual recognition of the European Union, an understanding of the nature of its functioning (decision-making), which, along with strengthening the internal structure of the bloc itself, contributed to reducing speculative recommendations on the division of member countries, on the national priority over national. Studies of factors that could contribute to the development of a single positive position of the EU on relations with Russia, however, have not yet appeared.