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International Landscape of the Market of Russian Economic Journals



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Abstract. The paper considers a new stage in the formation of the Russian market of economic journals, the stage at which an increasing number of them are accepted for coverage in international databases such as Scopus and Web of Science. In order to make an adequate assessment of the qualitative changes that have occurred in the market, we propose to introduce significant adjustments to the methodology for compiling the academic Rating of leading Russian economic journals. The adjustments affect both the subsystem of scientometric indicators where it takes into account the potential of high citations, and the subsystem of expert evaluation where it takes into account the publication's inclusion in the databases Scopus and Web of Science (WoS). We provide the results of the 4th wave of the Rating of leading Russian economic journals presented in the form of the Diamond List and the List of the second tier of journals. We analyze the shifts in the positions of the journals in comparison with previous years; we show that Russia already has 15 economic publications with international certification, among which five

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publications have double certification (both Scopus and WoS). The figures show that a new qualitative round of competition has begun among the journals that have received international recognition. We prove that a journal's success or failure in its efforts to be included in international databases depends on whether its management is willing to follow the new rules and standards. This is largely the reason why many domestic journals have lost their positions. The following are considered as typical strategies a journal should use to achieve success: to implement a sequence of efforts to be accepted for coverage in international databases; to "hunt" for best authors; to provide a flexible peer review system; to publish a full-scale English version of the journal. We substantiate a new publishing paradigm, according to which Russian economists in the coming years will reconsider their views in favor of placing their papers in first-rate domestic publications rather than publishing them in second-rate foreign journals.

Key words: rating; economic journals; international databases.

Introduction: a new milestone in the development of the market of economic journals¹

The global task of internationalization of Russian science is implemented in many areas, among which the inclusion of domestic scientific publications into international databases is of great importance. Acceptance for coverage in the *Scopus* and *Web of Science* (WoS) databases for Russian economic journals means a kind of *international certification* and a quality mark. In addition, the fact that researchers prefer publications included in international databases automatically increases the attractiveness of such publications, which in turn improves the quality of the portfolio of their papers. Today, this movement is gaining momentum and dramatically changes the landscape of domestic economic journals. Some of them have already successfully completed the international certification procedure and become "full-fledged" participants of the international academic market and leaders of the national market; others have not overcome this barrier, thus turning into outsiders and moving to the periphery.

The processes concerning the integration of Russian journals into the world market interfere

with the competitive processes that are going on in the domestic market of economic periodicals². Acceptance into foreign databases has become prime goal within the general direction of competitive strategies of Russian economic journals, while other aspects of their activities started to play a supporting part. In this regard, it is necessary to monitor the changes and assess the current state of the market and its immediate future. The aim of our paper is to consider the landscape of domestic economic publications taking into account their international status. To this end, we use the data of the Rating of leading Russian economic journals (LREJ Rating), the methodology of which has undergone significant changes in the course of 2016, as the international factor has been taken into account. In addition, the paper will attempt to analyze the strategies of success

¹ We would like to express our sincere gratitude to the anonymous reviewers for their useful comments on the paper.

² It should be noted that in our paper we consider the concept of "market" in a narrow context: as a set of actors engaged in the production and consumption of the product (journal). Producers are represented by publishers (owners) and editors (employees or volunteers). A journal is created with involvement of authors (for a fee or for the opportunity to access the audience of readers). The product (content of the journal) is characterized by quality and is consumed by the scientific community (consumers) under certain conditions, which is expressed in the popularity, prestige and citation of the publication. All these processes are provided by the interaction between the market participants, this interaction can be compared with transactions such as purchase and sale, even in the absence of monetary payments.

that allowed journals to increase their quality and complete the international certification.

New stage of journal ranking

The idea of comparing academic journals included in international databases has been implemented in Western countries for a long time. Thus, we can note the work of C. McDonough in 1975 on comparison and aggregation of journal ratings [1]. A little later, in 1978, S. Kagann and K. Leeson conducted a survey among the members of the American Economic Association about their attitude toward various economic journals [2]. The results were compared with existing ratings; the work helped identify and analyze some differences in quantitative and qualitative assessments. Among the latest studies, we highlight the work of C-L. Chang, E. Maasoumi and M. McAleer, who build an aggregated rating of 299 Economics journals from Web of Science [3]. This work was continued and developed in the study of K. Wohlrabe, who designed a meta-rating of 315 economic journals [4]; the rating combines quantitative and qualitative assessments of journals and takes into account their citation metrics in various bibliometric databases such as *Web of Knowledge*, *Google Scholar* and RePEc. One of the last works of the synthetic type was the study of V. Claar and R. Gonzalez, who conducted a comparative analysis of available ratings of journals in order to obtain an aggregated ranked database of 284 economic titles [5]. They selected three journal ratings based on quantitative assessments (citation method) as initial rating products [6, 7, 8], and two ratings based on expert surveys [9, 10].

Russia has come along a similar way, but in a much shorter period of time. Thus, in 2015, the Financial University under the Government of the Russian Federation launched work on the annual compilation of a series of academic

ratings, among which the LREJ Rating was of great importance, displaying the 50 best economic journals [11]. The 13 leaders of this list form the so-called Diamond List, which contains Russia's most prestigious and high-quality publications.

This initiative had not only its predecessors, but also numerous followers. Thus, in 2012, A.A. Muraviev's rating appeared, based on the ranking of journals in the Russian Science Citation Index (RSCI) according to scientometric indicators [12, 13]. Simultaneously with the LREJ Rating, there emerged others such as I.A. Sterligov's rating based on expert surveys in 2015 [14, 15] and O.V. Tretyakova's rating [16] of journals of RAS economic institutions on the basis of RSCI bibliometric data. In 2016, the rating of the best Russian economic journals according to the international database RePEc based on bibliometric data was presented [17]. At the same time, a rating of journals was presented, based on the widely used network approach [18]. In 2017, there appeared A. Ya. Rubinshtein's rating [19] based on expert survey data. Simultaneously, a study of the dynamics of the LREJ Rating [20] was presented, which considered the shifts over three years in the Diamond List and typical errors in the market strategy of economic journals.

The presence of several alternative ratings of economic journals gave rise to an independent research direction. So, in 2015 there appeared a work by Muraviev, in which a simple heuristic procedure for comparing the ratings of Muraviev, Sterligov and the LREJ Rating [21] was proposed; it showed that all the three ratings overlap significantly and on their basis it is possible to form a list of about ten high-impact journals in economics and related disciplines. Another research area related to the aggregation of existing ratings has been developed by

A. Subochev, who conducted a quantitative analysis of Muraviev's, Sterligov's and the LREJ ratings and built a synthetic rating [22], which represents the set of the three original rating systems better than any of them taking separately. In 2018, the Consensus Rating of Russian Economic Journals was published, which was a synthetic aggregate of four private rating products – LREJ, Muraviev's rating, Sterligov's rating, and Rubinshtein's rating [23].

All of these approaches sought to identify leaders in the Russian market of economic journals as accurately as possible. We must say that this problem was solved in general, but it became clear in 2018 that the activities of academic journals began to be dominated by the international component that involves their international certification. It means that all the journal's expert assessments and bibliometric data that are not very satisfactory are “outshined” by the fact of its acceptance into Scopus or Web of Science; and, on the contrary, no positive expert and bibliometric assessments compensate for the lack of international recognition. This fact requires that the methodology for journals ranking and monitoring the periodicals market should be reconsidered, taking into account the international factor.

Algorithm for building the LREJ Rating: a new version

The analytical product of the LREJ Rating has been compiled according to a uniform methodology for three years; only the expert evaluation procedure changed slightly, which did not violate the general logic of the original algorithm. However, in 2018, when the next rating of economic journals for 2016 was being compiled, LREJ ranking methodology was significantly revised. This was due to three circumstances.

First, the bibliometric indicators of the rating and the expert evaluation procedure were criticized in the literature [24]. Second, Russia has already gained a critical mass of journals included in Scopus and WoS. Third, in December 2017, speaking at the “Stratification of the community of economists and the rankings of journals” session in the framework of the annual conference of the New Economic Association (NEA), Olga Tretyakova – a leading researcher at RAS Vologda Research Center – proposed to build journal ratings that would consider highly cited papers on breakthrough topics on the pages of academic journals.

The maximum openness to outside signals has been a basic operational principle for LREJ Rating developers. In this regard, its fourth wave was formed in collaboration with researchers from RAS Vologda Research Center Olga Tretyakova and Anna Artamonova, who provided the information support of the rating in terms of the indicator of the potential of high citations. In parallel, the algorithm of expert evaluation of journals was modified taking into account their coverage in international databases.

Consequently, the algorithm for constructing the LREJ Rating for 2016 involves the following stages.

At the **first stage** the journals are ranked according to four parameters of the RSCI taken from the scientific electronic library eLIBRARY and one parameter calculated on the basis of the data of this bibliographic database:

x_{1i} – total number of citations of the i -th journal without self-citation (i.e. the *citation coefficient* characterizing the final impact of the publication);

x_{2i} – 5-year impact factor of the i -th journal without self-citation (i.e. the *impact factor* reflecting the relative activity of citation of materials of the publication);

x_{3i} – 5-year Herfindahl-Hirschman index of the i -th journal for the citing journals (i.e. *group citation coefficient* taking into account possible collusion between journals in relation to cross-references);

x_{4i} – half-life time of articles of the i -th journal cited in the current year (i.e. the index of the “half-life” of the article or the *durability coefficient*, taking into account the time depth of citation and reflecting the degree of durability and fundamental nature of materials of the publication);

x_{5i} – potential of high citations (i.e. the sum of citations of articles with more than 11 citations for the current year), which characterizes the ability of the journal to publish *breakthrough research* findings.

To identify highly cited publications, we used main principles of the methodology of the *Essential Science Indicators* international base. In the course of the analysis we used data from the RSCI for the year 2016. The sample included 606 journals, the number of articles was 52,220. All publications were arranged in descending order of their citations, after which we determined the upper section of 1% of their total number and set a threshold number of citations that a publication must receive in order to be included in the “top”. The threshold value was 11 citations. Such publications are defined as highly cited for this reference group.

Having applied the algorithm, we identified 522 highly cited papers published in Russian economic journals in 2016. As a result of further “manual” processing carried out for each journal, we formed a list of papers with the number of citations that satisfy the threshold value, i.e. 11 citations and more. After that, we further “refined” the citations of each paper in order to exclude self-citation and “cluster” citation (multiple citation of an article by different authors in a single collection or

journal). Having “cleared” the papers from self-citation and “cluster” citation, we defined the final number of highly cited publications for each journal, articles from which were initially included in the 1% of the most cited ones.

The *high citation potential* indicator is the sum of all “cleared” citations for selected highly cited papers in the i -th journal.

The rating on RSCI parameters is based on the indicators y_{hi} that represent normalized values x_{hi} (h – number of RSCI parameter). Indicators $x_{1i}, x_{2i}, x_{4i}, x_{5i}$ are normalized as a percentage relative to the maximum value:

$$y_{hi} = (x_{hi} / \max_i \{x_{hi}\})100\%, \quad (1)$$

where y_{hi} – normalized value of x_{hi} , x_{hi} – RSCI parameters.

“Reverse” normalization is carried out for the indicator x_{3i} :

$$y_{3i} = (1 - x_{3i} / \max_i \{x_{3i}\})100\%, \quad (2)$$

The final rating score (x_{Ri}) of RSCI indicators is determined by weighing the particular normalized values (y_{hi}):

$$x_{Ri} = 0,2y_{1i} + 0,2y_{2i} + 0,2y_{3i} + 0,2y_{4i} + 0,2y_{5i}, \quad (3)$$

followed by normalization – y_{Ri} .

The equation (3) used equal weighting factors for all aggregated RSCI indicators.

At the **second stage**, a sample of journals that claim to be the best is formed. The rating score (3) obtained at the previous stage for the 100 best economic journals in Russia serves as the basis not only for further calculations, but also for the formation of an “advanced” sample of journals, which are to undergo a more thorough analysis.

At the **third stage**, expert evaluation of journals is carried out. In 2016, experts estimate the journals on one parameter:

x_{6i} – scientific level of the i -th journal (compliance with modern requirements, degree

of instrumental elaboration, culture of working with empirical material, etc.) (i.e. the *index of scientific level*).

Expert assessments are given on a 15-point scale [0; 15] according to the rule: the more, the better.

In 2016, the work of experts to assess the scientific level of journals was carried out in two steps. The *first step* was to select the journals that are included in the international scientometric databases Scopus and WoS and which were awarded points on the following principle:

$$x_{6i} = \begin{cases} 15, & \text{if a journal is included both} \\ & \text{in } Scopus \text{ and in } Web \text{ of } Science \\ 10, & \text{if a journal is included either} \\ & \text{in } Scopus \text{ or in } Web \text{ of } Science \end{cases} . \quad (4)$$

The procedure (4) greatly simplifies expert evaluation, first, by leveling it for journals with international certification, and second, setting the upper limit for all other publications for which the procedure implemented in the construction of the 2015 rating remained unchanged. The selected group of three experts assessed each journal in two stages: at the first stage, each expert gave their assessment, at the second – they carried out open discussions and coordinated the assessments. At the second stage, an agreed consolidated decision was formed as a result of an exchange of views and arguments, and the assessment received the final approval of all experts. This procedure helps smooth out individual errors, draw the attention of experts to the facts they missed, adjust the initial scores and provide more balanced final assessments. When forming the 2016 rating, three rounds of expert evaluation were conducted, i.e. there were three groups, each consisting of three people; the obtained estimates were averaged.

Under the expert assessment of the scientific level index (x_6), the requirements that were

subject to examination were also specified. For example, the scientific level of a journal was evaluated depending on the presence of the problem statement in its articles, substantiated literature review, original methodological development, new original numerical data, and practically significant conclusions. Besides, the level of instrumental elaboration of the material was taken into account. Thus, experts had to deal with a limited range of evaluated qualities of scientific journals. An important point of the described evaluation procedure is the consensus among experts on the fact that the scientific level of journals was evaluated depending on the level of instrumental developments. In this case, experts proceeded from the fact that modern economic science is an instrumental science, and therefore the scientific degree of a journal should be matched with the depth of instrumental studies presented in it; descriptive articles with primitive quantitative empirics received lower scores on the scientific level. This condition in its explicit form was absent during the first three rating waves.

The key point of the expert evaluation was the restriction on the rating of journals that were not included in international databases. It was assumed that this score could not be higher than 10 points received by publications included in at least one international database.

The obtained expert assessments were normalized to obtain the y_{Ei} score.

At the **fourth stage**, the RSCI rating y_{Ri} and the expert rating y_{Ei} were aggregated:

$$x_i = 0,5y_{Ri} + 0,5y_{Ei}, \quad (5)$$

with subsequent normalization and obtaining the final score y_i .

This improved ranking algorithm brings journals with international certification to the forefront, and other publications are rated on an equal basis.

Table 1. Diamond List of Russian economic journals, 2016

No.	Journal	Final score	RSCI parameters					Expert index of the academic level
			Citation coefficient	Longevity coefficient	Competitiveness coefficient	Impact-factor coefficient	High citation potential coefficient	
1.	<i>Voprosy ekonomiki</i>	100.0	100.00	47.8	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.0
2.	<i>Forsait</i>	74.1	9.7	43.4	97.4	65.6	0.00	100.0
3.	<i>Ekonomika regiona</i>	71.8	25.7	27.4	98.2	32.2	11.9	100.0
4.	<i>Ekonomicheskaya politika</i>	68.1	9.5	31.9	97.6	23.4	0.0	100.0
5.	<i>Zhurnal Novoi ekonomicheskoi assotsiatsii</i>	67.2	7.4	30.1	99.1	18.2	0.0	100.0
6.	<i>Problemy prognozirovaniya</i>	58.4	27.7	49.6	96.4	44.9	5.9	66.7
7.	<i>Mirovaya ekonomika i mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya</i>	57.8	33.2	56.6	97.6	21.6	10.3	66.7
8.	<i>Terra Economicus</i>	55.4	32.2	56.6	94.5	12.4	2.5	66.7
9.	<i>Ekonomicheskii zhurnal Vyssei shkoly ekonomiki</i>	54.1	6.9	50.4	97.3	31.0	0.0	66.7
10.	<i>Ekonomicheskie i sotsial'nye peremeny: fakty, tendentsii, prognoz</i>	52.8	14.4	31.0	97.6	25.7	5.8	66.7
11.	<i>Vestnik Sankt-Peterburgskogo universiteta. Ekonomika</i>	52.7	7.0	52.2	97.1	16.9	0.0	66.7
12.	<i>Prikladnaya ekonometrika</i>	52.3	4.6	53.1	95.7	16.8	0.0	66.7
13.	<i>Journal of Institutional Studies</i>	50.5	4.6	31.9	97.0	19.9	0.0	66.7

Table 2. Second tier of leading Russian economic journals, 2016

No.	Journal	Final score	RSCI parameters					Expert index of the academic level
			Citation coefficient	Longevity coefficient	Competitiveness coefficient	Impact-factor coefficient	High citation potential coefficient	
14.	<i>Biznes-informatika</i>	50.3	2.9	39.8	97.3	11.4	0.0	66.7
15.	<i>Vestnik mezhdunarodnykh organizatsii: obrazovanie, nauka, novaya ekonomika</i>	49.0	3.2	30.1	94.7	12.6	0.0	66.7
16.	<i>Ekonomika i matematicheskie metody</i>	47.1	10.4	94.7	95.8	11.7	0.0	46.7
17.	<i>Rossiiskii zhurnal menedzhmenta</i>	46.7	10.5	70.8	97.8	30.5	0.0	46.7
18.	<i>Vestnik Sankt-Peterburgskogo universiteta. Seriya 8. Menedzhment</i>	42.7	6.7	76.1	96.4	23.8	0.0	40.0
19.	<i>Problemy upravleniya</i>	39.7	10.6	54.0	94.6	17.3	0.0	40.0
20.	<i>Prostranstvennaya ekonomika</i>	39.4	9.0	38.1	94.0	29.8	2.4	40.0
21.	<i>Ekonomicheskaya nauka sovremennoi Rossii</i>	38.4	9.9	71.7	96.0	16.9	0.0	33.3
22.	<i>Prikladnaya ekonometrika</i>	38.3	4.1	37.2	85.6	7.1	0.0	46.7
23.	<i>Den'gi i kredit</i>	37.6	24.8	31.0	96.8	25.2	10.1	33.3
24.	<i>Korporativnye finansy</i>	37.6	4.1	47.8	91.7	13.9	0.0	40.0
25.	<i>Zhurnal ekonomicheskoi teorii</i>	37.1	8.1	37.2	95.3	12.4	0.0	40.0

International landscape of leading economic publications: empirical evidence

The final array of the rating is presented only by the first 50 journals and is available in full at the “Non-Ergodic Economics” website³. *Table 1* contains the Diamond List of Russian economic journals; *Table 2* contains the journals of the second tier.

The calculations show the following. Russia currently has 15 economic publications with international certification, five of which are double certified (both Scopus and WoS). At the same time, two of them — *Biznes-informatika* and *Vestnik mezhdunarodnykh organizatsii: obrazovanie, nauka, novaya ekonomika* — were not included in the Diamond List, having lost to their competitors in international databases. Thus, it can be stated that among the journals that have received international recognition, there already is a tough competition, and some of the journals even become outsiders within the group.

It should be mentioned that all the journals on the Diamond List are well known and almost all have been on it before. In fact, all these publications have confirmed their status, which is not a surprise.

More interesting is the second tier of journals ranking 14th–25th in the LREJ Rating. This list urges the managers of these journals to think about what they do. In fact, all of them could have entered international databases, but for various reasons they did not do so and thus found themselves behind the line that separates the leaders from all others.

For example, we find it extremely sad that such journals as *Ekonomika i matematicheskie metody* and *Rossiiskii zhurnal menedzhmenta* were excluded from the Diamond List and now belong in the second tier. In previous years, these journals occupied the second and third

positions in the Diamond List; in addition, in the 1990s, the former journal attracted the attention of the American academic community and its best papers were regularly translated and published in the *Matekon* journal. Thus, the title had all the chances to be included in Scopus and WoS. However, this did not happen, in spite of all the prerequisites like scientific level, international authority and established traditions that the journal had:

We can name some more journals that are losing their positions. It is *Prostranstvennaya ekonomika*, a leading journal in its field, it ranked 10th and 12th on the Diamond List in the previous years; some other journals like *Korporativnye finansy*, *Problemy upravleniya*, *Vestnik Sankt-Peterburgskogo universiteta. Seriya 8. Menedzhment*, and *Ekonomicheskaya nauka sovremennoi Rossii* find themselves in a similar situation. It is safe to say that all of these publications have sufficient potential for entry into Scopus and WoS, but they have not yet done so, which deprives them of the opportunity to compete for the most advanced places in the Russian market of academic journals.

Conversely, *Ekonomika regiona*, which in previous years ranked 16th and 17th in the LREJ Rating and has never been on the Diamond List, can serve as a model of targeted promotion in international databases. Not only was the journal accepted into Scopus and WoS, but it also managed to enter the second quartile, which is undoubtedly a great achievement that simply can not be ignored when constructing a rating.

The current international landscape of Russian economic journals allows us to draw the following conclusions.

First, the initial phase of domestic publications’ integration into international databases has been successfully completed.

³ Available at: <http://nonerg-econ.ru/cat/18/9/>

Further, we can expect the expansion of this process. It is unlikely that it will have a landslide character, but we can hope that from four to five publications will be annually accepted into Scopus and WoS over the next five years. These are primarily second-tier journals (see Tab. 2); however, besides them there are less noticeable publications in Russia that are making considerable efforts to enter international databases. This means that in three to four years there may be about three dozen economic journals with international certification in Russia. This circumstance will give rise to a qualitatively new round of competitive processes in the market of economic journals.

Second, many publications included in Scopus and WoS will continue their rally in these databases on their way toward higher quartiles. For example, such journals as *Problemy prognozirovaniya* and *Zhurnal Novoi ekonomicheskoi assotsiatsii* have all chances to enter the second quartile in the foreseeable future. In 2017, CiteScoreTracker (CST) – an important indicator taken into account in the rating in SCOPUS – was 0.53 for the first journal and 0.56 for the second one, respectively. In many ways, the achievement of this result depends on the desire and efforts of the journal management. It is possible that other journals that have an English version and can count on a wider international readership (for example, *Ekonomicheskie i sotsial'nye peremeny: fakty, tendentsii, prognoz*) will improve their positions. For example, we note that *Zhurnal Novoi ekonomicheskoi assotsiatsii* has an endowment, which is designed to accumulate funds for the publication of the English version of the journal. If this initiative of the journal is implemented in the coming years, its entry into the high quartiles will be only a matter of time. If there are at least 5–6 Russian journals in the high quartiles, it is likely to change radically the

geography of preferences of Russian economists in favor of publishing their papers in domestic journals.

Journals' typical success strategies

The above landscape of Russian economic publications, taking into account their international status, raises the issue of success strategies. For example, why in conditions when international requirements to journals are widely known to the Russian scientific community, Scopus and WoS accept only a few representatives from Russia? Is it possible to distinguish some typical principles and approaches that allow Russian journals to pass international certification?

In our opinion, with a certain degree of conditionality, we can distinguish four principles that, if not guaranteeing the success of the journal, at least significantly contribute to it.

1. *The sequence of efforts to join an international database.* The experience of different journals shows that it is impossible to pass international certification without serious efforts. As a rule, the management of journals sets a corresponding goal and pursues it methodically for several years.

For example, the sociological journal *Monitoring obshchestvennogo mneniya* [Public Opinion Monitoring] published by VTSIOM set the task of passing international certification, formed an editorial board that included foreign scientists with high scientific authority and with a clear interest in Russian science. These people were entrusted with the mission of distributing the journal abroad, attracting the attention of the general public in the respective countries, as well as attracting foreign authors to contribute their papers to the journal. In parallel, the journal's staff worked with the competent authorities of international databases to meet the necessary requirements;

this work was entrusted to a specific person who was responsible for its success or failure. Of course, the journal management sought informal channels of communication with Western databases, which would speed up the process of international recognition.

A similar strategy was implemented by the journal *Ekonomicheskaya politika*. It created a special position within its editorial staff, allocated appropriate funding, and entrusted this person with the exclusive functions of communicating with international databases and achieving the goal of entering them. The experience has shown that such “personnel localization” of the task of international integration made it possible to achieve success when, after many years of fruitless efforts, a positive result was obtained literally within a year.

Against this background, we can once again recall the example of the journal *Ekonomika i matematicheskie metody*, whose management reacted passively to the new initiative and did not support it with human and financial resources; consequently, the publication is losing authoritative authors who prefer to work with journals that have an international status and, as a result, the journal is losing its leading positions.

2. *Hunting for best authors.* The entry of a journal into international databases presupposes its rather high average level; however, in the long term it is important for the publication to have “breakthrough” papers, which gain great popularity and produce high citation. Such materials make a journal recognizable, interesting and enjoying a wide readership. The promotion of publications in Scopus and WoS depends largely on the presence of such papers. Practice shows that the entire community of economists can be divided into two unequal groups: those who supply standard materials,

and those who are able to write highly cited and really interesting articles. In this regard, many journals are already carrying out a kind of hunt for “interesting” authors.

We should point out that today such “hunting for authors” is carried out spontaneously, i.e. in the market there are numerous and various strategies of this kind. For example, *Voprosy ekonomiki* published papers by Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev, federal ministers, advisers to the President of the Russian Federation, etc. These articles obviously lack scientific novelty, and they do not meet the academic requirements; however, such articles serve as policy documents and discussion papers that provide an unprecedented citation. For instance, Medvedev’s article “Socio-economic development of Russia: finding new dynamics” was cited 231 times in 2016, which is an absolute record; two articles by S.Yu. Glazyev had 18 citations each. This policy of the journal has made *Voprosy ekonomiki* the absolute market leader in the potential of high citations (see Tab. 1).

The journal *Ekonomika regiona* provides an acceptable potential of high citations (see Tab. 1) at the expense of the widest possible openness to authors from all over the country. Thus, the publication carries out an experiment on “probing” authors and their materials in order to understand their citation potential and interest toward them on the part of the scientific community. The staff of the journal *Ekonomicheskie i sotsial’nye peremeny: fakty, tendentsii, prognoz* monitors interesting articles in other journals, contacts their authors and invites them to publish in the journal, thereby ensuring the presence of well-known scientists and their articles with the potential of high citations. In addition, the journal’s founder and publisher conducts international projects; for instance, it cooperates with researchers from

the Chinese Academy of Sciences, which allows it to form a pool of joint articles with Chinese colleagues. *Terra Economicus* uses a limited practice of invited papers, when a certain author is offered a guaranteed publication on a given highly relevant topic, which can attract the attention of the readership. *Ekonomicheskaya politika* creates special sections for papers on relevant topics submitted by participants of relevant conferences; these materials are informative and are not subject to peer review. Many other journals also carry out personal work with selected authors that are able to liven up their content.

At the other pole of publications are *Forsait*, *Zhurnal Novoi ekonomicheskoi assotsiatsii* and *Ekonomicheskii zhurnal Vysshei shkoly ekonomiki*, which give priority to academic standards, and therefore do not contribute to the increase in the parameter of high citations. It is possible that in the future this may complicate their promotion in international databases and preservation of a high reputation in the Russian market.

3. *Flexible peer review system.* International requirements have led to the formation of a total system of peer review in the leading journals of the country. However, purely mechanical application of this procedure often leads to the loss of “valuable” authors, whose articles, as a rule, are of high interest [20]. In this regard, some publications abandon primitive general peer review schemes and practice individualized “work with authors”. Such modifications are caused by the fact that even small editions are still quickly bureaucratized and begin to work according to the established patterns, sometimes with automatic mailing of articles to reviewers, etc. To avoid the loss of specific interesting authors, journals implement personification and acceleration of all procedures. For example, in case of *Problemy prognozirovaniya*, its deputy editor-

in-chief carries out direct communication with some authors, thereby controlling potentially highly cited and interesting materials, promptly bringing them to the editorial board for discussion and preventing them from being handled inappropriately in the review process. Some journals use the mechanism of “internal peer reviewers”, engaging in direct dialogue with them to decide on the publication of priority articles.

We would like to emphasize that the flexible review system is a continuation of the “hunt for authors” strategy. In practice, these two strategies are effectively combined, which allows journals to form a pool of prestigious authors and their articles.

4. *Publication of a full English version of the journal.* Currently, many Russian economic journals that do not have an English version are included in the Scopus and WoS databases. Obviously, even if it is possible for a journal to enter the database, progress within the database is practically impossible for it. In this regard, the general direction for all journals is to translate their content into English with the highest quality. For example, *Ekonomika regiona* was able to enter the second quartile within Scopus largely due to the fact that a significant part of its papers are published in English.

At the same time, we should note that hybrid versions of journals, when some articles are published in Russian and some in English, are not an ideal strategy. It is much more efficient to issue two full-scale versions of the journal – in Russian and in English. For example, *Problemy prognozirovaniya*, which was originally published in two languages, has long been included in Scopus and occupies a steady position in the third quartile. And the very important fact is that the journal’s management does not pursue the independent goal of promoting the journal in the international database. The journal is a publication of RAS

Institute of Economic Forecasting and is designed to fulfill its main mission – to publish the Institute’s research findings [20, 25].

Another example is the journal *Ekonomicheskie i sotsial’nye peremeny: fakty, tendentsii, prognoz*, which was accepted into WoS exclusively because of its English version. Moreover, the journal serves as a textbook example showing that even a small regional institution like Vologda Research Center (VoIRC) of the Russian Academy of Sciences, which publishes the journal, is able to find the finances for the publication of a full-fledged English version. If we take into account the fact that VoIRC RAS was previously a branch of the Central Economics and Mathematics Institute (CEMI) of RAS, which publishes the journals *Ekonomika i matematicheskie metody* and *Ekonomicheskaya nauka sovremennoi Rossii*, it becomes clear that the success/failure of journals in their promotion on the international scientific market is the result of the desire/unwillingness of their management to move in this direction [26, 27].

The success of economic journals with a full-scale English version suggest that the number of such publications will increase in the future, as well as the number of publications that have received international recognition. It is possible that the expansion of this movement will be promoted by federal initiatives. Thus, in 2017, under the patronage of the Ministry of Education and Science of Russia, a competition was held for state support for development and promotion of journals with the organizational participation of the Association of Science Editors and Publishers (ANRI) [20]. The winners of the competition among economic journals were *Forsait* and *Ekonomika regiona*⁴, which were on the Diamond List in 2016 (see Tab. 1).

⁴ Available at: <http://konkurs-jurnalov.neicon.ru/>

Currently, the journals *Den’gi i kredit*, *Forsait*, *Vestnik mezhdunarodnykh organizatsii: obrazovanie, nauka, novaya ekonomika* have full-scale English versions; *Zhurnal Novoi ekonomicheskoi assotsiatsii* is going to launch its English version in 2019. There are more radical versions of this policy, as, for example, in the case of *Russian Journal of Economics*, which is published only in English. Thus, qualitative changes in this direction have already taken place.

A new publishing paradigm

About five years ago, the country began to actively pursue the line of integration of Russia into the world science. At the same time, the regulator believed that this process should be achieved through the publication by Russian scientists of their research in foreign scientific journals. The fundamental error of this assumption consisted in its narrowness and limitation. In fact, the indicated reference point was correct, but it is not the only one, and it involves the publication of domestic scientific journals in two languages, which would make them transparent to the world scientific community. In the natural sciences, the second way of integrating Russian science into global science has traditionally existed, while there were practically no social titles published in parallel in English and included in the Scopus and WoS databases. Instead of moving along both lines of development, the emphasis was placed only on the first – penetration into “foreign” journals that have already gained international prestige.

Currently, there is an additional factor, which extremely severely limits this method of internationalization of the Russian economic science, if not negates it altogether. This factor is the international sanctions, whose indirect effect is the reluctance of Western publications to cooperate with Russian scientists. Thus, experience shows that Hungarian and Polish

economic titles, which published articles by Russian economists a year and a half or two years ago, today reject their papers due to political reasons. This state of affairs requires a revision of the old publication paradigm focused on “external” scientific publications.

We can add that the international landscape of the Russian economic publications market, discussed above, draws a peculiar line in the confrontation that has arisen. In fact, we are talking about the revision of the publication doctrine of Russian researchers. The fact is that among the domestic economic journals there are already a dozen and a half that are included in Scopus and WoS. If their number increases, and there is no doubt about it, then Russian economists will have a choice: they can either submit their papers to second-rate Hungarian, Polish, Turkish and South African journals or to publish them in first-class domestic titles. In addition, if in the future the process of helping leading Russian journals to publish in English is launched, the choice of our economists will actually be predetermined.

In turn, if the interest of Russian economists, including their best representatives, develops in favor of domestic journals, it will mean further strengthening of the content and quality of our publications, which will allow them to become even more interesting for the world scientific community and strengthen their international positions.

It is obvious that the work on the integration of Russia into world science is not reduced to the “reorientation” of domestic economists from the “second tier” foreign journals to Russian publications. Serious work is needed in a number of other areas, such as bringing scientific publications in line with international standards, attracting reputable foreign authors, forming a base of highly qualified domestic and foreign reviewers, strengthening support

(including financial) from the state and scientific foundations, etc. Much has already been done in these areas [28], but there is still a long way to go. And we think it is necessary to start with consolidating the efforts of economic researchers and economic journals, the two main actors of the academic market. If these two market actors decide to work together, this may be the most useful strategy for both of them. Since we should not ignore the fact that the articles of Russian economists cause a wide resonance only among their compatriots; it will be too quixotic to count on the explosive interest on the part of foreign colleagues.

Conclusion

The trend of promotion of Russian economic journals on the international market of academic publications, which began in recent years, implies revising many strategies and priorities. First of all, we are talking about the fact that the leading Russian economists should not completely abandon domestic publications in favor of prestigious foreign journals, but, on the contrary, they should publish their papers most actively in domestic titles without compromising the prestige and popularity of their articles. At the same time, the leading journals need to do everything to ensure the publication of their content in two languages – Russian and English, as well as to work very carefully with interesting authors to strengthen their own positions through their articles. There exist all the prerequisites for such a turn of events.

It is possible that the emergence of 30–35 international-level publications on the market will lead to a loss of demand for ratings of Russian journals, because the new leading journals will be almost automatically promoted in international databases and will enter the next higher quartile. In our opinion, by this time the mission of Russian rankers will be

completed, and the projects of building all-Russian ratings will be closed. In this sense, we can say that Russian ratings of domestic journals are a kind of intermediate (auxiliary) institutions, while international ratings act as the final institutions. Replacing one with the other will mean the onset of a more mature phase of the life cycle of the market of Russian economic journals. In our view, this moment can come in 2020.

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