

## Regions' Export Activity as an Object of State Support



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**Abstract.** The article reveals the forms of changing the system of state support for export activities at the meso-economic level. The forms are general (subject composition of participants in foreign trade relations, procedure for their state regulation and development) and specific (methods for providing support to exporting enterprises, ways to assess the implementation of these methods). We systematize measures of government support for export according to functional purposes, arrange them into a multi-level scheme, and identify bottlenecks in its implementation. We develop our own approach to assessing the institutional and organizational support of regions' foreign trade activities. We put forward a method for calculating the assessment of regulatory legal support for this activity, based on the establishment of criteria reflecting the effectiveness of forms of development of regions' export activities. We carry out a comparative assessment of each form of support, which makes it possible to identify key areas of formation of regulatory legal support for foreign economic activity that have a significant impact on export activities

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in Russia's regions. The application of the proposed method for managing the system of government support for export will help to address the most critical issues in the field of international cooperation and foreign trade relations. The system will help to create conditions for the development of export-oriented industries and enterprises, ensure greater availability of financial resources for organizations at all levels and an increase in export volumes through the formation of new mechanisms to support them. The implementation of the proposed measures will stimulate the production of goods in general, which will contribute to an increase in the added value of the regional economy, an increase in the tax base, foreign trade turnover and the number of jobs, and create the most favorable conditions for the development of export activities in Russia's constituent entities.

**Key words:** foreign economic activity, legal and regulatory support, regional export center, government support for export, regional economy, institutional and organizational aspects.

### Introduction

Foreign trade activity is an important component of a country's involvement in international economic relations. It has a significant impact on its socio-economic development. At the same time, special attention should be paid to the transformation of measures for supporting export activity under radically changed geopolitical conditions at all levels of socio-economic system as an integral part of the import substitution policy.

Research on the development stages of international economic relations has revealed that in the period before the special military operation, a powerful multilevel system of development support for export activity was formed, including Russia's entry into the World Trade Organization, development of large industrial parks in regions, creation of new integrated forms of international economic relations, etc.

Disruption of long-term foreign economic relations and significant sanction pressure triggered the restructuring of economic relations in the country, including export activity. Significant changes in foreign trade market conditions, constantly increasing importance to create and export potential required implementation of a

support system at macro- and mesoeconomic levels. In this regard, study and systematization of the measures, their institutional and organizational provision are extremely relevant. Appropriate assessment of institutional and functional infrastructure of state support for export activity, its condition and development of financial and organizational support measures will allow optimizing these important processes.

Research identifies institutional and organizational as a set of means for export development, including regulatory support for promoting foreign trade relations, export support institutions, procedure for functioning and assessing the effectiveness of their activities.

The rapidity of ongoing changes has not allowed domestic economists to conduct research on important theoretical and practical issues related to support methods for export activity and the appropriate assessment of their effectiveness at the regional level. First, it is necessary to define the subjects of export relations, which include executive authorities and specialized subordinate institutions, exporting enterprises, credit, leasing, consulting and insurance organizations that form a part of the export support system.

In the applied aspect, a number of interrelated circumstances negatively affecting foreign trade relations at the regional level should be emphasized. These include:

- lack of regional normative acts regulating the system of state support of export activities;
- lack of sufficient authority to conclude legally significant contracts for international interaction (while the selection of potential partners is carried out taking into account the corridor of opportunities formed at the level of the federal center);
- poor development of regional institutional infrastructure for state support of export activity, strong dependence on the federal center;
- lack of a transparent system of state financing for regions to support export development, taking into account reasonable indicators of its effectiveness;
- lack of economic mechanisms to ensure a sustainable financial base for export development based on available domestic resources (combination of several financial sources, subsidization of different categories for exporters);
- urgent need for building relations with territorial divisions of new foreign partners, forming new logistics chains, searching for alternative sales markets, strengthening work in the domestic market, including reorientation to state procurement, changing the structure of regional foreign trade turnover.

Despite the fact that Russia's federal constituent entities lack sufficient authority and resources to conclude legally significant contracts for international cooperation and to implement their own export support measures, we observe attempts to establish bilateral relations with new market entrants, including foreign trade markets.

The preceding considerations demonstrate necessity for analysis of the system of state support for export activities in order to improve its efficiency at the regional level. This is the aim of research.

#### **Literature review**

Economic studies, devoted to international cooperation at the level of Russian regions, are conducted less frequently in comparison with scientific research at the macroeconomic level. Role of entities in foreign economic activity is limited by lack of resources and power. In this regard, foreign economic activity is not a primary focus in regulatory acts, reflecting socio-economic strategies of regional development. More attention is paid to creation of new markets, prospects of parallel import and impact of sanctions on foreign economic activity (Azieva, 2023, Babanov et al., 2023, Gasilovskii et al., 2022, Gorodnova, Domnikov, 2022, Kulagovskaya et al., 2022, Kulikova et al., 2023).

The article by A.E. Gasilovskii is particularly focused on difficulties, associated with unstable economic and political situation in the Russian Federation within the specified timeframe. This resulted in significant shifts in the structure of foreign trade turnover. The author presents a conclusion regarding the principal export and import directions, the largest trade partners of the Russian Federation in international arena, and also formulates current trends in the development of foreign economic sector, based on which possible prospects and problems of development of foreign economic activity in the Russian Federation are considered.

At the same time, works of some scientists reflect influence of state support on export. For instance, O. Cadotte et al. evaluated impact of FAMEX export promotion program in Tunisia on

the performance of beneficiary firms. The authors suggest that beneficiaries initially exhibit accelerated export growth and greater diversification between target markets and products. However, three years after later growth rates and export levels of beneficiaries do not differ significantly from non-beneficiary companies (Cadot et al., 2015). Works of other foreign authors also study in detail the issues of state support for export activities, primarily in free market economies (Kovner et al., 2020; Leonidou et al., 2007; Malca et al., 2019). At the same time, a number of scientists have focused on developing a model of direct and indirect impact of state support for export on performance of enterprises (Shamsuddoha, Yunus, 2006). The work of Mark J. Melitz is devoted to analysis of intra-industry effects of international trade, which demonstrates how cumulative productivity growth of an industry resulting from reallocation of funds contributes to welfare, thereby emphasizing benefits of international trade (Melitz, 2019). The behavior of firms at international trade shows is thoroughly examined in works of Rolf Seringhaus (Seringhaus, Rosson, 2001). In his research, Revindo concluded that small and medium-sized enterprises in developing countries have fewer opportunities to participate in export markets than their larger counterparts, despite various export assistance provisions by their governments (Revindo et al., 2019).

T. Wilkinson's work reflects international resource-based view of small and medium-sized enterprises by examining the effectiveness of export promotion services. In particular, the impact of government support for exports in the United States on the entry of small and medium-sized enterprises into international markets is investigated. The work proposes and proves a

hypothesis about trade shows and distributor networking programs having a positive impact on satisfaction of small and medium-sized enterprises with their export performance (Wilkinson, Brouthers, 2006).

T.R. Urumov examines institutions of state support for export of small and medium-sized businesses in the United States and India. The research reveals that in the United States the primary means of support is export loans and guarantees, whereas India focuses on promotion of products on global markets (Urumov, 2017).

The findings of E. Catanzaro's research suggest that financial support is beneficial for enterprise performance in terms of foreign markets number but not in terms of economic indicators (Catanzaro et al., 2018).

The effectiveness of Russian state support system for export and its organizational and institutional provision has not been assessed by domestic economists. In scientific literature there is a greater focus on financial aspects of support system for foreign trade activity. A.Yu. Knobel' and A. Loshchenkova present econometric assessment of export support expenses impact on volume of regional export. They identify priority regions in terms of funding for export support. The authors conclude that regional export support, implemented in the Russian Federation within programs for small and medium-sized enterprises support, has an encouraging effect on volume of regional exports only in the short term. It is important to note the authors' opinion on efficiency of export support centers. They consider the work of export promotion centers in regions as ineffective, primarily due to low competence of their employees in export support matters (Knobel', Loshchenkova, 2018; Kuznetsov, Knobel', 2017).

In other works, devoted to analysis of export support measures in Russia, researchers primarily focus on effectiveness of financial support measures. For instance, the article by E.S. Sokolova and her co-authors examines issues related to development of system of state support for Russian export activity. The effectiveness of support measures was found to be reliant on Russian private business. The authors state that Russia has recently witnessed a positive growth in export support expenses. However, the amount of resources allocated for these purposes is significantly lower than in other developing countries. Additionally, there is a territorial limitation of support for exporting companies. The majority of allocated funds are directed toward exporting companies located in the Central Federal District (Sokolova et al., 2019).

#### **Research methodology**

This article presents our own approach to assessing and improving system of state support for export activity. This approach consists of three main stages and defines the objectives of research:

Analyzing institutional and infrastructural system of export support and its functionality: identifying, structuring and systematizing institutional and functional structure of support for Russian exporters at the macro- and meso-economic levels. At this stage key directions of export support in Russia are studied; subjects of state export support and their legal status are determined; functional structure of support for Russian exporters is systematized; means for implementing state policy to support export at meso-economic level are identified; measures of state export support are systematized by functional purpose and structured in a multilevel layout; bottlenecks in implemen-

tation of state support measures for export are identified.

Analyzing existing methods for effectiveness assessment of export support infrastructure at the regional level – studying the system and process of effectiveness in assessing export state support implementation, analyzing existing methodology for determining the result of regional export centers as key infrastructural links of the system of state support for foreign trade at the level of constituent entities of the Russian Federation. At this stage work directions of export potential development within the national project “International Cooperation and Export” are studied; export support measures within the Regional Export Standard 2.0 (RES) are systematized, methods for assessing their implementation are studied; bottlenecks in methods for assessing state support implementation for export are identified; the regulatory and legal framework for determining the total work results of regional export centers is considered, bottlenecks in their work are identified.

Assessing normative legal support of foreign economic activity to develop the most promising development directions. This assessment was conducted in points (with the use of weight coefficients), based on the expert evaluation.

#### **Results**

Research into the regulatory legal framework for export development revealed that the primary institutional mean at the federal level is the national project “International Cooperation and Export”, developed by the Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Russian Federation according to Presidential Decree 204 “On national and strategic goals for the development of the Russian Federation for the period up to 2024”, dated May 7, 2018. It consists of five federal projects: “Industrial Export”, “Export of

Table 1. Structure of the national project “International Cooperation and Export”

№	Federal project	The amount of funding, billion rubles	Expected results
1	Industrial Export	420	Industrial export reaches 205 billion USD
2	Export of Agricultural Products	350	Export of agricultural products reaches 45 billion USD
3	Systemic Measures for Development of International Cooperation and Export	158	Number of exporting companies covered by export support measures reaches 12,000; Volume exports supported by Russian Export Center reached 25 billion USD
4	Logistics of International Trade	22	Construction and modernization of 24 checkpoints
5	Export of Services	6	Export of services reaches 100 billion USD

Source: own compilation, based on “International Cooperation and Export” project.

Agricultural Products”, “Logistics of International Trade”, “Export of Services”, “Systemic Measures for Development of International Cooperation and Export” (*Tab. 1*).

Table 1 illustrates that the federal project “Export of services” exhibits the highest budget efficiency, with an estimated export volume of 17 dollars for each invested ruble. In contrast, the “Export of agricultural products” project is the least efficient, with an expected effect of 13 cents for each invested ruble. This is due to the low profitability of agricultural products.

Infrastructural means for promoting export development are defined by regulatory acts, first of all, by Federal Law 164-FZ “On the principles of state regulation of foreign trade activities”, dated December 8, 2003, and a number of subordinate acts of the Government of the Russian Federation. These legal acts detail and specify each method of support with reference to export support institutions, including four institutions at the macroeconomic level.

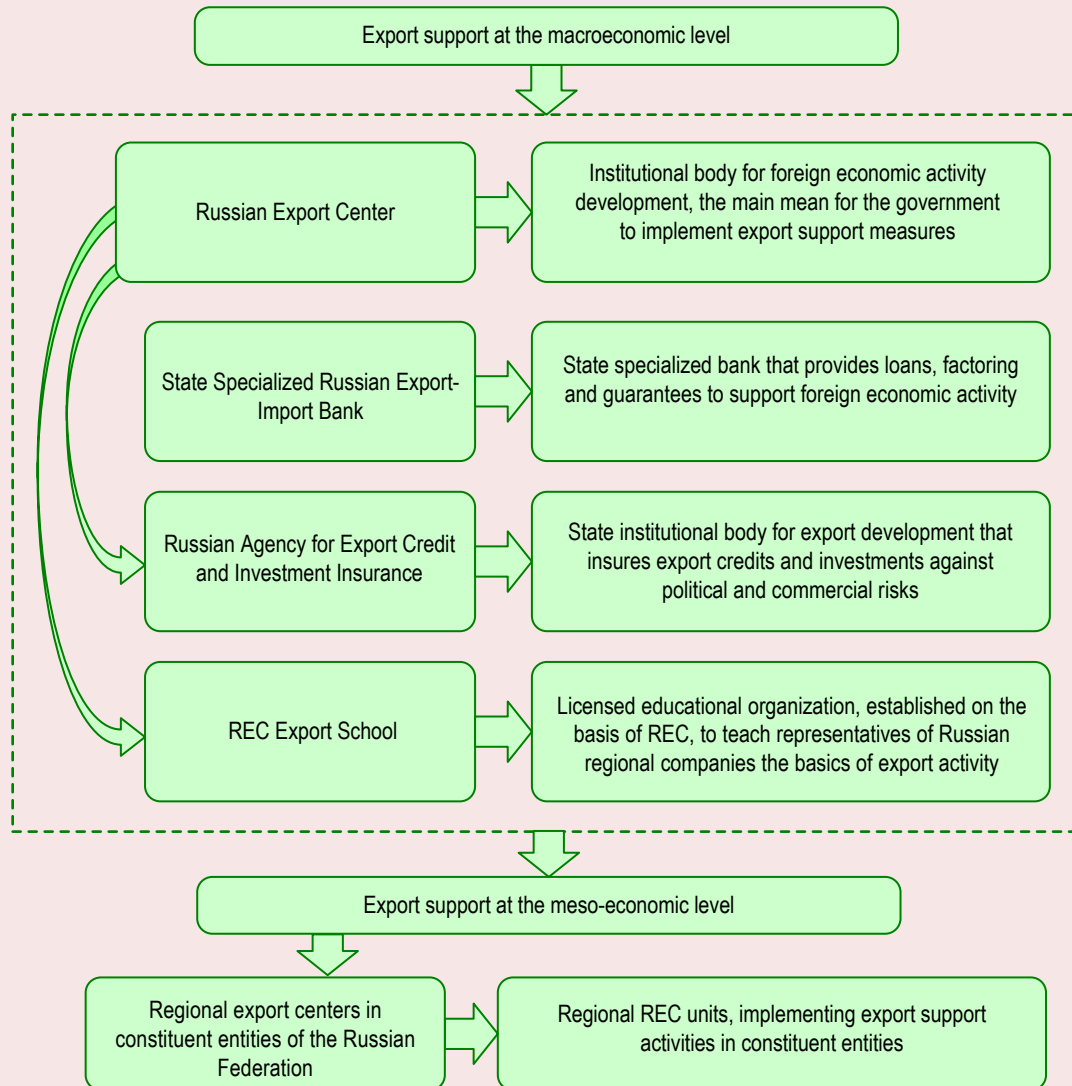
It is important to note that, despite the fact that Law 164-FZ has been existing for 20 years, its regulatory base has undergone significant revisions since March 2022 with development of its infrastructural component. In particular, functions and powers of export support institutions (Export Insurance Agency of Russia, state specialized

Russian Export-Import Bank) were specified. In December 2022, the concept of non-resource non-energy export was adopted to provide state support. The Russian Government subsequently determines the list of product codes falling under non-resource non-energy export. Sanctions policy of unfriendly countries and the necessity of the Russian Government to response have triggered implementation of regulatory and legal framework to promote export activity.

Analysis of existing system of state policy in the field of export activity support and means for its implementation at meso-economic level allowed us to structure this system by functional purpose and by levels of export support (*Fig. 1*). In accordance with Article 46.1 of Law 164-FZ, functions of providing financial, insurance, guarantee and other support types for export and import are fulfilled by the following export support institutions:

- Russian Export Center JSC;
- Russian Agency for Export Credit and Investment Insurance JSC;
- State Specialized Russian Export-Import Bank (JSC);
- subsidiaries of these institutions in accordance with the Federal Law, acts of the Government of the Russian Federation, decisions of the authorized management bodies of these organizations.

Figure 1. Multilevel layout of export activity supporters



Source: own compilation, based on Law 164-FZ.

Figure 1 shows that Russian Export Center JSC plays the key role in institutional infrastructure of exporters support. This state institution provides support for non-resource exporters, consolidates a group of companies that offer Russian exporters a wide range of financial and non-financial support measures. This is confirmed by regulatory legal framework.

At the same time, meso-economic level of export support is represented by a single organi-

zation – Regional Export Center, which is managed by the federal center, limiting exporters opportunities for financing or securing transactions, since it does not provide an alternative for implementing export programs, for example, through regional banks. According to the annual report of the Central Bank of Russia, the key area of activity is the expansion of correspondent network of Russian banks within the framework of foreign trade relations. In 2024, the majority of Russian banks

(88%) intend to develop products related to foreign exchange operations, foreign economic activities, and cross-border transfers. Therefore, financing foreign trade activity may become one of the main directions for regional banks and alternative financial sources will be created for enterprises at the meso-economic level.

Another bottleneck of the existing system is poorly developed municipal infrastructure in regions, which makes it difficult to implement export projects of enterprises in cities, etc., especially those located far from regional centers. To illustrate, in the Kostroma Region there is a single Regional Export Center that is not physically located within the region (JSC Galich mobile cranes plant, Galich, Kostroma Region; LLC Kronstar (the largest producer of wood panels in Russia), Sharya, Kostroma Region; JSC Gazprom trubinvest, Volgorechensk, Kostroma Region, etc.)

Similar situation was observed in other regions of the Central Federal District, where the largest revenue was gained by organizations located outside the regional center (Vladimir Region: LLC Mondelēz Rus, Pokrov; Ferrero Russia, Vorsha; LLC Trade House Ascona, Kovrov; Ivanovo Region: LLC Verkhnevolzhsky Service Metal Center (a large manufacturer of building metal structures), Novo-Talitsy; LLC Soyuz Avtodor, Gulikha; LLC EGGER Wood Products Shuya; Yaroslavl Region: LLC Medved, Danilov; UEC NPO Saturn PJSC, Rybinsk).

Lack of regional export center offices outside regional centers is further compounded by the relatively modest number of REC personnel. In particular, in the Central Federal District, with exception of Moscow and the Moscow Region, export development is the responsibility of three to six people (for example, in the Kostroma Region

and in the Tambov Region there are three people, in the Ivanovo, the Kursk and the Bryansk Regions there are four people). This makes it difficult to take a proactive approach to promote regional export-oriented enterprises to foreign markets. The consequence of these REC problems lies in the creation of a predominantly formal approach for state economic policy in the field of foreign trade activity, based on the declarative nature in most cases.

State export support at the meso-economic level, especially in the new geopolitical situation, plays the key role in development of international economic relations and makes it possible to even out the result of sanctions pressure. In this context, analysis of export support directions and existing methodologies for assessing its results at the regional level, as well as use of these results to encourage entities of the Russian Federation to implement export support programs are becoming increasingly relevant.

For example, the national project “International Cooperation and Export” contains a large number of support types at the federal level and the only formal indicator for the regions is the introduction of a regional export standard. This is a set of 15 measures that will allow regions to implement an export strategy at the level of best practices. These measures are systematized in three blocks:

- creating a platform for export development in constituent entities of the Russian Federation;
- providing access to necessary measures to support export activity in constituent entities of the Russian Federation;
- creating mechanisms to promote region in foreign markets, promoting export activity in constituent entities of the Russian Federation.

Implementing these strategies allows regions to ensure development of export activity and



replication of best practices of foreign economic strategies at the meso-economic level. Regional export centers serve as the primary means through which authorities of Russia's constituent entities implement support measures within the regional export standard.

Study of the regional export standard as the primary element of institutional and organizational support for development of export activity allowed us to organize and various support measures and compare them with the methods of assessing their implementation (*Tab. 2*).

Table 2. Export support measures and methods for assessing their implementation

Support direction	Support measures	Methods for assessing implementation of regional export centers
<b>1. Creating a platform for export development in constituent entities of the Russian Federation</b>		
1.1 Fixing export development, including export of services, in the strategic planning documents of the region	Development of a Strategy to ensure favorable conditions for exports of goods, works and services development in the region until 2030 as a separate document or as part of the Strategy for the socio-economic development of constituent entity of Russia	Development and adoption of this document
1.2. Identifying executive authority of the constituent entity of the Russian Federation responsible for development of non-resource exports and exports of services	Identification or establishment of an executive authority to coordinate export support measures in region and to develop of non-resource exports and export of services	Establishment of an advisory body with responsibilities, fixed in the relevant legal and regulatory acts
1.3. Development and training of a regional management team	Creation of a management team, defining the role of each team member in export development in the region	Considered implemented in the first year, if the management team is formed and trained; in the second and third year – if at the end of the calendar year a report on implementation of measures for the professional development of the management team is provided, in the fourth year – if the qualification of the management team is confirmed
1.4 Development and implementation of regional export development program for constituent entities of the Russian Federation	Development and approval of regional export development program as a comprehensive plan for regional export development for the period up to 2024 with a forecast up to 2030, containing key objectives, indicators and measures, including export component	In the first year it is considered implemented if regional program is developed and approved and necessary funding is provided; in the second year and further – if target indicators are achieved and program activities are implemented by at least 80%
1.5 Introduction of an export council under the top official authority of a constituent entity of the Russian Federation	Council is an expert advisory coordination body that operates on a permanent basis. It comprises representatives of executive government bodies, REC, development institutions, business support infrastructure facilities, regional export support center, public organizations and business associations. It includes existing exporters who are planning to carry out export activities from various industries	In the first year it is considered implemented if the Export Council is established and at least two meetings are held; in the second year and further, if an Export Council is established and at least four meetings are held
1.6 Establishment and development of the Export Support Center	Establishment and regular operation of an export support center, taking into account recommendations, developed by REC, and e requirements, approved by the Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation	It is considered implemented if an export support center has been established in region meets requirements of the Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation and approved key performance indicators are fulfilled by 100%

End of Table 2

Support direction	Support measures	Methods for assessing implementation of regional export centers
1.7 Ensuring region's presence in foreign markets	Providing assistance in finding partners, enabling negotiations with foreign counterparties, promoting regional brand, assisting businesses in opening their own representative offices abroad and establishing joint ventures in another country	In the first year it is considered implemented if a plan is formed to ensure region's international presence in any of the formats, in the second year and further – if presence in priority export development countries is ensured
1.8 Creation and development of personnel training system in the sphere of foreign economic activity on the basis of regional higher educational institutions	Introductions of an action plan for the system of personnel training development in the sphere of foreign economic activity, including measures to assess and forecast the need for specialists in foreign economic activity and to calculate planned indicators for personnel training for the period up to 2030, based on needs of existing exporters, as well as forecasts of socio-economic development of region	In the first year it is considered implemented if a region has developed an action plan and a system for sending students to target programs in other regions, in the second year and further – if not less than the planned number of people are trained per year and not less than 30% of the number of trained people pass training at regional coordinator and/or at export support infrastructure and at regional exporting enterprises
1.9 Development and analysis of current and potential exporters base in region, export auditing	Carrying out systematic work to build a database of exporters, as well as potential exporters, and determine their willingness to export, identify support needs and growth barriers	Considered implemented if a database of exporters is formed, needs and barriers are analyzed, results of analysis are submitted to the relevant federal executive body
<b>2. Providing access to necessary measures to support export activity in constituent entities of the Russian Federation</b>		
2.1 Organization of teaching the basics of export activity for export-oriented businesses	Conducting informational and education events on export activity, including information on existing state support measures, creating an educational platform	Considered implemented if education and/or information consulting is conducted in region
2.2. Creation of a set of measures to expand business relations with potential foreign counterparties	Development and approval by Export Council of an international action plan with international business missions, ensuring participation of business delegations in visits of regional administration abroad, attracting foreign customers	Considered implemented if an action plan is approved at a meeting Export Council and its implementation level in region in the reporting year reached 80%
2.3 Development of export activity through e-commerce channels	Annual events to promote information on advantages of e-commerce, selecting promising companies to enter international e-trade platforms	Determined by the system of online monitoring of Regional Export Standard implementation (100%)
2.4 Implementation of improving programs and other comprehensive export development means	Development of a plan and an individual roadmap for entering foreign markets, a business plan for increasing export revenue, support and provision of support measures	Determined by the system of online monitoring of Regional Export Standard implementation (100% annually)
<b>3. Creating mechanisms to promote region in foreign markets, promoting export activity in constituent entities of the Russian Federation</b>		
3.1. Creation and development of mechanisms to promote export activity among working population	Conducting a large-scale campaign to promote export activity among working population, holding "Exporter of the Year" contest with advance payment or compensation costs for winners to participate in improving programs	Considered implemented if activities to promote exports among working population are carried out on an annual basis, a special section on the Internet is created and "Exporter of the Year" contest is held
3.2 Creation and development of mechanisms to promote products of regional companies abroad	Ensuring the presence of regional goods and services in trade missions of the Russian Federation abroad, broadcasting information about regional goods on foreign channels, assisting regional companies in integrating into production chains of large international companies	Considered implemented if activities to promote regional goods and services in foreign markets are carried out on annual basis
Source: own compilation, based on Regional Export Standard 2.0.		

In addition to the mentioned unified measures to support foreign economic activity, Regional Export Standard provides other measures to ensure conditions for export activity development in a constituent entity of the Russian Federation. These measures include development and implementation of proactive means to ensure favorable conditions for export activity development.

However, methods for assessing implementation of Regional Export Standard, presented in Table 2, in terms of methods for recording implementation of RES measures indicate that implementation is assessed solely on a formal basis (availability of documents, body, holding an event, etc.) without taking into account effectiveness of measures and significance of each specific measure to develop non-resource export at the meso-economic level. The comprehensive approach provides an opportunity for rational and effective use of financial and organizational resources, while ensuring the achievement of a high level of budgetary impact. In this context, it is necessary to develop a set of methods for managing a system of state support for export activity at the meso-economic level.

The implementation of Regional Export Standard 2.0 is a target indicator of the national project "International Cooperation and Export." This project is decomposed for all entities and included in regional projects that are part of the federal project. Consequently, there is a scientific interest in the system and the process of assessing its implementation in the regions of Russia.

As a part of export standard all Russian regions are developing their own regulatory legal framework of different content, which regulates the implementation of foreign economic activity. Its availability and efficiency are analyzed below on the example of 18 regions of the Central Federal District.

Regulatory legal acts and other regional documents have the same structure as Regional Export Standard. They comprise three main areas:

- providing the basis for export development in constituent entities of the Russian Federation;
- implementing necessary measures to support export activity in constituent entities of the Russian Federation;
- promoting regional brands in foreign markets, promoting export activity in constituent entities of the Russian Federation.

Assessment of normative legal support of foreign economic activity to identify the most promising directions for development of the normative-legal base of export activity was conducted in points. It is based on weighting coefficients. This assessment was carried out with the method of expert evaluations. Research involved leading specialists of region's executive authorities, engaged in the development of foreign economic policy, as well as executives of existing export-oriented enterprises and representatives of the scientific community (candidates and doctors of sciences (Economics)).

Eight experts were tasked to rate the influence degree that ten institutional support means for export development exert on region's foreign trade potential. The experts were tasked to assign ratings and to distribute the means from the largest to the smallest.

General expert assessment, based on the weighting coefficient, indicates that the most significant forms of normative legal support for export activities are:

- a resolution/decreed, a plan to provide assistance in finding partners, enabling negotiations with foreign counterparties, promoting regional brands, assisting business entities in opening their

own representative offices abroad, establishing joint ventures in another country (0.186).

- development and approval of a regional export development program as a comprehensive export development plan for a constituent entity of the Russian Federation for the period until 2024 with a forecast until 2030, including key goals, indicators and activities of a constituent entity of the Russian Federation that include an export component (0.175);

- Export Council develops and approves a plan of international events for a constituent entity of the Russian Federation, including international business missions (0.167);

- legal instruments, regulating creation and development of mechanisms to promote export activity among economically active population and young people of a constituent entity of the Russian Federation (0.119);

- availability of a regulatory legal document, providing for systematic work on forming a base of exporters of goods and services (0.114);

- development of a Strategy to ensure favorable conditions for the development of goods, works and services export in a region until 2030 in the form of a separate document or as part of the Strategy of socio-economic development of a constituent entity of the Russian Federation (0.1).

At the same time, the least significant forms of normative legal support for export activity are:

- availability of a document, regulating activities of a Russian regional executive authority responsible for export development (0.069);

- creation of an Action Plan for professional development of a management team (0.036);

- approval of the Regulations on the Export Council under the top official of a constituent entity of the Russian Federation (0.022);

- availability of an Action Plan for the development of a personnel training system in the sphere of foreign economic activity (0.011).

Research calculated the coefficient of concordance  $W = 0.909$ . This indicates a high degree of consistency between the opinions of the experts. In accordance with the proposed method, ranking of the region's institutional support will be based on a weighting sum of ranks of export development methods, as tested on the example of the regions of the Central Federal District.

Results of rating assessment indicated that the level of institutional support for export activities is most advanced in the Kursk Region (0.641), Bryansk Region (0.628) and Belgorod Region (0.530). This is confirmed by real achievements.

The Strategy of Socio-Economic Development of the Kursk Region for the period up to 2030 identifies export development as a priority area of the region's development. It includes the majority of means to assist current and potential exporters within the main directions: organization and communication, education, informing and consulting. The Kursk Region is implementing regional projects in accordance with the national project "International Cooperation and Export." The following regional projects have been implemented in the Kursk Region: "Development of Exports of Products of the Kursk Region Agro-industrial Complex," "Export of Services," "Systemic Measures for the Development of International Cooperation and Exports," "Development of Medical Services Exports in the Kursk Region," which is a component of the national project "Healthcare". In 2023 representatives of small and medium-sized businesses signed 67 export contracts for a total of 8 million dollars with the assistance of the Export Support Center.

The Bryansk Region has approved and is implementing the Export Strategy of the Bryansk Region up to 2030 and the Regional Export Development Program of the Bryansk Region up to 2024. These strategies provide institutional means to expand geography and structure of non-resource and non-energy exports of the Bryansk Region, to increase the number of exporting companies and volume of export products. Additionally, an action plan for development of a personnel training system in the sphere of foreign economic activity in the Bryansk Region has been created. With the assistance of the Export Support Center, 34 international contracts were successfully signed. Over 37 million rubles were allocated to provide support for export enterprises.

The Belgorod Region has approved the Program for Development of the Belgorod Region's Export Potential for the period 2021–2024. This program provides a set of regulatory measures, including creation of an Export Council, register of exporters and development of roadmaps for introducing regional products to foreign markets. In 2023 the Belgorod Region Export Support Center provided assistance for 482 small and medium-sized businesses. A total of 43 export contracts were concluded, with nine of them being signed by companies, which were not previously engaged in export activity. The total value of export supported in 2023 was more than 15.7 million dollars.

At the same time, the existing approach for evaluating efficiency of export support centers is predominantly formal, manifesting in direct correlation between the final rating of an export support center and the planned indicators of its activity, namely the ratio of planned to actual indicators, regardless of the real effectiveness of state support measures implemented through this institutional entity.

The results of the 2022 study indicate that the Moscow Region continues to lead the top 10 regions in export support center efficiency, with no changes compared to the previous year. The Omsk Region has improved its ranking by one position compared to 2021, while the Smolensk Region has risen by 10 positions. The Kaluga Region has also seen an increase, advancing by three positions. The Republic of Bashkortostan lost 3 positions, the Krasnodar Territory gained 20 positions. The Sverdlovsk Region (-2 positions), the Samara Region (no change), the Ivanovo Region (+5 positions), and the Ryazan Region (+6 positions) complete the top ten most efficient regions.

Analysis of the results of regional export support centers work for the first quarter of 2023 revealed that over 6,700 small and medium-sized businesses received centers services; 765 companies concluded export contracts with a total value of 211 million dollars for supply of products to 66 countries.

This trend indicates that, despite the current political situation, businesses are actively adapting to new landscape of international markets. Export support centers play a significant role in this process.

Institutional and functional analysis revealed unsystematic character of state policy implementation in the field of foreign trade support, large number of bottlenecks in its implementation at the meso-economic level and lack of its orientation to the real result, namely the growth of foreign trade turnover within each constituent entity of the Russian Federation.

Correlation analysis of quantitative attributes with determining strength of relations between these indicators is chosen as a method of identifying relationship between effectiveness of regional export centers and implementation of the regional export standard.

The sample correlation coefficient was used as an indicator, which is calculated according to the formula:

$$r = (\overline{x \times y} - \bar{x} \times \bar{y}) / S_x \times S_y,$$

where:

$x$  – REC efficiency rate;

$y$  – RES implementation rate;

$S_x, S_y$  – average standard deviations  $x, y$ .

The set in question is defined by leading positions of ten regions, indicated with performance of regional export centers and by availability of comparable information on these regions, indicated with implementation of regional export standard ( $n = 10$ ; *Tab. 3*). To assess the strength of the correlation relationship commonly accepted criteria are typically employed, according to which absolute values of  $r_{xy} < 0.3$  indicate a weak relationship, values of  $r_{xy}$  from 0.3 to 0.7 indicate a relationship of medium strength, and values of  $r_{xy} > 0.7$  indicate a strong relationship.

The Pearson coefficient of -0.265, obtained on the basis of the data in Table 3, indicates a weak

inverse relationship between effectiveness of regional export centers and implementation of the regional export standard in regions. The efficiency of regional export centers activity, assessed on the basis of planned indicators, does not sufficiently reflect the real efficiency of state support for exports, which requires reformatting the set of methods for managing of state support system for export activities at the meso-economic level. A promising direction is development of a method for distributing subsidies for development of state support system for export activity between regions, based on an assessment of condition and potential for development of foreign trade relations within them, taking into account effectiveness of export support provided, volume of regional exports, volume of supported exports and other criteria.

**Conclusion**

The research on institutional support for the development of export activity in the country and regions produced several general statements:

- transformation necessity of institutional and organizational measures of state support for export activity is a relevant topic;

Table 3. Assessment of relationship between implementation of regional export standard and effectiveness of regional export centers

Region	REC efficiency rate	RES implementation rate
Moscow Region	1	62
Omsk Region	2	1
Smolensk Region	3	43
Kaluga Region	4	8
Republic of Bashkortostan	5	4
Krasnodar Territory	6	9
Sverdlovsk Region	7	3
Samara Region	8	49
Ivanovo Region	9	25
Ryazan Region	10	5

Source: own compilation, based on REC data.

– formal approach to assess the Regional Export Standard, biased method of calculating effectiveness of export support centers, un-systematic character of means of state export development policy in conditions of severe financial and resources limitations, need to reorganize a set of methods for managing the system of state support for export activity at the meso-economic level in terms of applying a targeted approach and taking into account the budget were noted;

– general management forms (entities engaged in foreign trade relations, their state regulation and development) and specific management forms (support for exporting enterprises, ways to assess the implementation of these methods at the meso-economic level) of state support system for export activity, based on analysis of existing mechanisms of international relations development are revealed; system of state support measures for export activity is structured according to their functional purpose in a multilevel layout, bottlenecks in its implementation are determined;

– method to manage system of state support for export activity in regions has been developed.

Within its framework, a comprehensive assessment of institutional and organizational support for development of regional export activity has been proposed. It ranks ten different forms of support for foreign economic activity;

– weak inverse correlation between efficiency of regional export centers and implementation of regional export standards in regions has been revealed. This indicates lack of connection between institutional and organizational means of export development at the meso-economic level;

– necessity and relevance of developing a method for distributing subsidies for development of state support system for export activity among regions are stated. The development is based on assessment of condition and potential for development of foreign trade relations within them, taking into account effectiveness of provided export support, export volume of regional enterprises, volume of supported exports and other criteria.

Research results can be used by authorities of constituent entities of the Russian Federation to develop export activity and improve forms of its support by the state.

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