



**Eurasian Development Bank**

INVESTING IN DEVELOPMENT & INTEGRATION

**EDB CENTRE FOR INTEGRATION STUDIES**

# **REGIONAL INTEGRATION DATABASE (RID): Methodology, Composition, and Indicators**

Database is available at

[http://www.eabr.org/e/research/centreCIS/projectsandreportsCIS/index.php?id\\_4=41398&linked\\_block\\_id=0](http://www.eabr.org/e/research/centreCIS/projectsandreportsCIS/index.php?id_4=41398&linked_block_id=0)

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## 1. Introduction: Regional Economic Integration Database

The Regional Integration Database (RID) is an applied research project implemented by Eurasian Development Bank's (EDB) Centre for Integration Studies. The Centre is a think-tank incorporated into the EDB and entrusted with applied research on the matter of regional integration. It is located in St. Petersburg, Russia. The scope of its reports and analytical notes ranges from macroeconomic modelling and monetary affairs to trade, investment, international organizations, and sociology and politics of integration.<sup>1</sup>

The starting point of the RID was actually the establishment and rapid advancement of the Eurasian Economic Union. In order for the EEU to advance properly and function efficiently, both positive and negative global experience in regional integration should be taken into account. To this end the Centre for Integration Studies created this database. We made it public both in English and Russian and intend to update and enrich the RID constantly.

The unique feature of this database is that it lists not only "classic" multilateral agreements on free trade between countries, all customs and economic unions of the world, and "the unions of unions" (agreements between customs unions), but also comprises data on river basin organisations (focusing on the creation and development of shared infrastructure) and regional fora. It also includes new 'mega-deals' such as the US-EU Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, and the Trans-Pacific Partnership, among others. Overall, the Regional Integration Database contains data on 92 regional integration organizations and agreements.

These organisations and agreements are analysed with more than 130 indicators, including trade flows, investment, budget, currency and finance, institutional development, and political aspects. The variables contained in the database may be of interest to economists, political analysts, sociologists, and international relations specialists. These include macroeconomic variables and indicators of mutual trade, foreign trade parameters, the institutional structure of the groupings, the indicators of economic and political asymmetry and political regimes in member states, their influence on the world politics, the existence of military conflicts between them, and publicly available information about their secretariats and budgets. These are a small portion of indicators.

The RID is expected to become the best database in its class since it provides the comprehensive and most up-to-date information on regional economic integration. Our next tasks would be to (1) constantly improve the quality of data, (2) extend the scope of the database and (3) implement a software solution that would enable researchers to work with the database in a more efficient manner. Currently it is fully available in Excel format.

The EDB Centre for Integration Studies encourages researchers to use the RID to solve theoretical and empirical tasks. We will be glad to obtain any proposals and feedback regarding the database usage.

The database and related materials are accessible at EDB [website](#).

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<sup>1</sup> Read more about the Centre's projects and publications at [www.eabr.org/r/research/analytics/centre/](http://www.eabr.org/r/research/analytics/centre/)

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1. "Universe" of regional integration agreements

The first and largely non-trivial question, which must be answered in the study of regional integration agreements and organizations (RIAs) is to determine the list of agreements interesting for analysis<sup>2</sup>. In such a case, researchers face three problems.

First, it is often difficult to give a clear definition of the RIA – moreover, questions arise both in terms of a “regional” nature of agreements and in terms of their focus on economic integration. Definition of a region is largely endogenous to functioning of the RIA and, hence, it is very difficult to give a strict criterion dividing RIAs and interregional associations. Specific economic issues are also addressed in a broad range of agreements.

Second, it is extremely difficult to “track” a large number of organizations permanently created by various countries. Moreover that a large number of them will “go into hibernation” within some time and will practically cease to operate (herewith, formal dismissal of the organization does not occur).

Third, often not one association but the “family” of associations, somehow interconnected, is concerned. A good example is the EU, practically throughout its all history representing, from a formal point of view, a set of several organizations and CIS, in which all members still have an opportunity to withdraw from specific agreements signed earlier.

The named restrictions are in the focus of several research projects aimed at building databases of RIAs. Herewith, a direction selected for building these databases, in economic science and in international political economy, is somehow different, which is connected with differences in interests of disciplines in the regional integration study.

**Economic science: WTO base.** More simply, economic science is mainly focused not on RIAs in a broad sense but, specifically, on free trade zones and customs unions (with respect to which the majority of international trade theories were formulated). In this respect, the use of the database of regional WTO trade agreements appears to be attractive (WTO 2014). The database includes the list of all agreements, about the creation of which the WTO was informed. The WTO classifies all agreements included in the database as “customs unions”, “free trade zones”, “partial scope agreements” – all three types refer to mutual trade – and “agreements on economic integration” liberalizing trade in services.

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<sup>2</sup> We use the term “organization” as a trade-off alternative covering interests of both economists and representatives of international political economy – if economists are normally interested in agreements between countries (irrespective of an organizational structure), representatives of IPE are rather interested in formal organizations.

The advantage of the WTO database is, first, broad coverage (it includes even comparatively insignificant RIAs), second, clear typology of RIAs by categories meeting the standard economic theory (and, hence, well suitable for testing hypotheses). Herewith, the database includes both proper regional agreements and agreements covering countries located in various regions. However, the WTO database is characterized by a number of drawbacks. First, its accuracy depends on the accuracy of information provided by countries-parties to agreements. Though the database takes into account whether the agreement is in force or suspended (or in the process of adoption), this information is not always complete. Second, the database by definition does not cover agreements of countries not being WTO members (what, however, as of today may be considered a minor problem). Third, although a clear definition of the RIA is an advantage in many situations, in others it may turn out to be a drawback. Integration projects are often connected not with organizations formally focused on liberalization of trade and services but with, for example, creation of common infrastructure, common project financing or with “soft” standards’ and rules’ approval forms. All these organizations are absent in the WTO database<sup>3</sup>. One should also have in mind that for the WTO database “regional” are essentially all agreements restricted by the composition of members (“not global”), which raises many questions in terms of existing literature on regionalism.

Apart from the WTO database having global coverage, a number of regional databases should also be highlighted. For example, APTIAD database (UNESCAP, 2014) covers trade agreements signed by countries of the Asia-Pacific Region. INTRADE (IADB, 2014) database contains agreements in the Western Hemisphere. Both databases are basically close to the WTO database (focused namely on trade agreements); however, they contain a whole number of additional variables and, besides, include a set of regionalization indicators within the framework of RIAs (for example, trade statistics).

**International political economy: Correlates of War database.** For international political economy, regional integration is interesting, above all, as a product of activities of interstate organizations having a specific decision-making procedure, generally, at least rudimentary bureaucracy. Thus, the database of interstate organizations (IGO) included in the broad collection of Correlates of War (CoW) databases originally published in the work (Wallace and Singer, 1970) and further updated in the work (Pevehouse et al., 2004) may be regarded as a starting point of the majority of studies. CoW contains a broad range of various indicators and databases covering different aspects of international relations. The database is characterized by the broadest coverage of various agreements (both regional and

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<sup>3</sup> The list of regional and intergovernmental organizations – observers of the UN General Assembly may constitute an alternative to the WTO database. It includes practically all major international organizations. However, this list is not focused directly on economic issues (it includes many military-political alliances); does not include more technical agreements (though their role in the contribution to regional integration may be significant) and again is defined not by strict scientific criteria but by political will and readiness of specific organizations to participate in UN activities. Thus, this list may hardly be considered sufficient although it is sometimes used in literature.

global) and contains data from the beginning of the XIX century. Unlike the WTO database, CoW represents a *scientific project* based on clear methodology and does not depend on political will and accuracy of countries providing information. The database includes: 1) all agreements, on the basis of which a formal organization is created; 2) comprising at least three countries (multilateral agreements); 3) having permanent secretariat or another similar body. Herewith, however, CoW database cannot be regarded as fully impeccable for the purposes of our study. First, it contains a great number of non-economic organizations. Second, it is not always accurate in the description of “families” of organizations. If sometimes individual members of these “families” appear in the list as individual organizations, then the whole “family” in other situations is regarded as a single organization. Third, unlike the WTO database containing a lot of bilateral agreements, CoW database explicitly includes only multilateral agreements. Finally, CoW database coverage is ended with 2000 year.

The said became a reason for appearing numerous CoW database modifications both supplementing it with newer agreements and using stricter criteria for selecting agreements included in the database. The work (Vogly et al., 2008) proposes the database of *formal intergovernmental organizations* (FIGO) defined authors as organizations having a sufficient organizational structure and autonomy for ensuring a permanent formal and multilateral decision-making mechanism of member-states as well as the ability to implement member-states’ will. FIGO are defined on the basis of 11 criteria which may be combined in several groups: membership (only multilateral organizations consisting mainly of states are included (non-governmental members may not have a right to veto decisions of the organization)); presence of clear decision-making routines and mechanisms (including regular multilateral meetings of participants); sufficient administrative potential of secretariat (including in terms of personnel); and sufficient fiscal capacity. The definition of FIGO, thus, does not comprise both softer agreements which do not assume creation of a sufficient supranational establishment and “zombie” organizations which exist only “on paper” - whereas for the analysis of reasons for success or failure of RIAs inclusion of “zombie” in the database would be expedient. One should also have in mind that, like CoW, FIGO database is not aimed at analyzing only regional organizations and comprises, inter alia, organizations with broader coverage and organizations not related to economic ones.

The database (Goertz and Powers, 2011) represents an attempt to overcome the last two limitations focused only on regional economic agreements. The database includes, first, only regional agreements. The “regional” nature, in the meantime, is defined based on “geographic continuity” - all countries must have common borders with each other. Second, only economic agreements are taken into consideration; agreements having no relation to economics are not included in the database. Third, only agreements binding for member-states are taken into consideration i.e. various “soft forms” of integration are again not taken into consideration. Fourth, only agreements addressing a broad range of questions are taken into consideration –

specialized agreements are absent in the database. For our purposes, namely the focus on binding agreements and refusal to take into consideration specialized organizations, many of which are of major interest for regional integration development, is a drawback of this database.

Apart from the above-described approaches, to this or that extent connected with CoW, a number of researchers use Yearbook of International Organizations (Union of International Associations 2014) database as well. In this case, not purely scientific but, above all, commercial project published by the Union of International Associations, the centre for registration and documentation of international organizations established in 1907 is concerned. Yearbook contains a detailed description of 66 thousand international organizations and is permanently updated. In this case, a maximally broad definition of international organizations is concerned – they comprise non-governmental structures, various forums, and other forms of “soft” interaction. Limited application of Yearbook in specific studies is connected, as one may judge, with the fact that this database (unlike the majority of another ones which are considered in this overview) are in closed access and are distributed only by subscription.

A somewhat “intermediate” approach between economics and international political economy is implemented in RIKS – Regional Integration Knowledge System (UNU-CRIS, 2014) database. This database is generated by the Institute of comparative regional integration studies of the UN University and, by the own estimate of database compilers, cannot be regarded at present as a complete and exhaustive list of regional agreements. The database includes organizations: 1) apparently pursuing the regional integration goal (which must be reflected, for example, in their constituent documents; 2) consisting of at least three participants 3) including only countries of one region (according to the UN classification). Herewith, it is taken into consideration in the database whether the integration group informed the WTO of its functioning.

## **2.2. Database Contents**

RIA databases differ not only in coverage but in contents – if some of them include a broad list of indicators and parameters, and then the other ones are limited by a small number of variables. In general, three approaches to database generation may be highlighted. The first one (two most widely-spread databases – WTO and CoW are largely based namely on it) is limited to only minimum information recording in the database – composition of members of the organization and the period of its functioning (in individual cases a reference is made to main documents of the organization). In case of CoW, although, the database of interstate organizations, as already noted, is just one of numerous databases (including, for example, the database on interstate conflicts, on mutual trade, on military-political alliances and so on). Besides, all databases are built so that it is quite easy to “import” indicators from

one database to another one. However, for the purposes of this project, more detailed databases, which contain the set of RIA functioning indicators, are of no less interest.

One may speak about two types of indicators which are normally included in the database. The first one takes into consideration scope of regionalization i.e. economic interrelations “from below” generated within the framework of RIAs. A more complete set of such indicators is contained in UNU-CRIS database. In the simplest form, mutual trade scope in RIAs is concerned. For us, however, the second and less standard group of indicators - qualitative variables taking into account the level of development of formal regionalism within the framework of the RIA i.e., ultimately, describing peculiarities of regional organization functioning are more interesting. Here, again, two types of variables may be highlighted. The first one describes the level of economic and political cooperation within the framework of RIAs; the second one is focused on the characteristic of decision-making mechanisms in RIAs and regional bureaucracy functioning. Information in both cases may be based both on purely formal indicators (contents of agreements and regulations) and on expert estimates or indirect characteristics (for example, regularity of summits conducted by RIA member-states).

**Scope of cooperation:** At present there are several major research projects evaluating scope of interstate cooperation. The overwhelming majority of them are aimed at analyzing individual integration projects (for example, EU); however, some are also focused on a comparative perspective. In this case, above all, Integration Achievement Score (Feng and Genna, 2003, 2004) project as well as a number of another similar projects covering a lesser number of organizations (Hufbauer and Schott, 1994; Dorucci et al., 2004) are highlighted. All listed projects are based on the analysis of RIA documents and on expert estimates and are designed for evaluating regional project achievement in individual areas (for example, trade, investments or migration) on the pre-set scale. However, collection of information and evaluation of RIA functioning is becoming so labor-intensive that it inevitably leads to significant reduction of database coverage to scope impeding econometric study. The list of covered integration agreements in most cases is formed ad-hoc, without an attempt to cover all RIAs meeting a specific definition.

The project (Haftel, 2007) is an exception. In this case, evaluation of cooperation scope in regional organizations based on an extensive database comprising all RIAs meeting pre-set criteria is concerned. Specifically, RIAs consisting of at least three members are included; asymmetrical organizations are excluded – what can be regarded as a well-known project restriction since similar “plutocratic” (Hancock, 2009) structures today arouse a considerable research interest – and “framework organizations” of APEC type. The following is evaluated for each organization: 1) declared cooperation level in specific fields (again on the basis of a pre-set scale and detailed analysis of RIA documents); 2) real steps taken to implement this cooperation level; 3) declared cooperation level at the highest level

(for example, regularity of summits, RIA established by regulatory documents); 4) real cooperation level at the highest level (for example, real number of summits).

Finally, two other works also examining quite an extensive “universe” of RIA but relying on more specific characteristics of economic cooperation of member-states should be highlighted. RIA efficiency in studies (Gray and Slapin, 2012; Gray, 2014) is evaluated by means of interrogating high level experts – though expert evaluations are used in another works (for example, in Integration Achievement Score), their application in (Gray and Slapin, 2012) is more systematic and RIA coverage – much broader (40 integration agreements are included). Finally, Gray (2012) attempts to highlight a special group of regional organizations which she names “zombie” - formally functioning structures at the same time having no effect on economic policy and just being a cover for bureaucratic activity; it is, however, specified in the work (Soederbaum, 2004), that many “zombie” in fact represent regional structures although declaring goals which are formally similar in that they are pursued by other organizations but in practice implementing another “hidden” agenda. Our database, as will be shown further, may partly be used for discovering “zombie” but also as a basis for a more detailed classification of regional associations.

**RIA functioning peculiarities.** In this case, primary focus is not on RIA operation results but on work organization. In this respect, RIAs also vary much – from supranational EU bureaucracy to practically symbolic secretariats of other associations. It should be noted that a correlation between development of RIA decision-making mechanisms and their bureaucracy and scope of economic cooperation as part of RIA is incomplete. For example, NAFTA is almost deprived of its own bureaucracy; cooperation is mainly implemented by officers of core ministries of USA, Mexico and Canada. However, scope of economic cooperation in NAFTA is significant.

Several different sets of criteria are used in various works for describing RIA functioning peculiarities. The work (Boehmer et al., 2004) concerns the degree of RIA institutionalization being evaluated by a three-step scale: minimum (presence of regular meetings at the highest level and secretariat), structural (presence of specialized supranational bodies) and interventional (mechanisms of coercion to adherence to RIA regulations). The article (Haftel and Thornton, 2006) concerns RIA independence, for the evaluation of which six binary variables are used: 1) decision-making by the majority of member-states; 2) decision-making as part of the council of ministers; 3) presence of secretariat of organization; 4) right of secretariat to initiate decisions of organization; 5) presence of dispute resolution mechanism with compulsory decisions; 6) presence of permanent tribunal. The already mentioned database (Goertz and Powers, 2011) contains six criteria, based on which an international organization is evaluated: 1) presence of the council of ministers; 2) presence of secretariat; 3) presence of parliament or parliamentary assembly; 4) presence of dispute resolution mechanism; 5) presence of subsidiaries; 6)

international legal personality. Organizations in the work (Blake and Lockwood Payton, 2014) are evaluated in terms of a decision-making mechanism – consensus principle, weighted voting or simple majority (the database was published in 2014 in accordance with science journal requirements where the relevant article appeared).

One of the latest works in this area – article (Hooghe and Marks, 2014) – combines many previously used studies. International organizations examined in the work are evaluated in terms of two criteria – delegation and pooling. “Delegation” characterizes the scope of authority transferred to supranational bureaucracy – secretariat. Above all, it concerns the possibility of secretariat to initiate decisions of relatively different aspects of organization’s functioning (budget, exclusion of member-states, economic policy, amendment of regulations etc.). “Combination of authority” describes a refusal of organization’s member-states from a right of veto with respect to a number of key decisions (for example, admittance of new members of amendment of organization’s regulations, sanctions for a failure to observe assumed obligations) – in this case decisions are made based on a pre-defined mechanism as part of the organization. The database of this article opened for researchers at the end of 2014 comprises 72 organizations – among which, however, a lot of international and not regional structures.

Finally, another project in this area that should be noted – detailed study of International Democracy Watch (Finizio et al., 2014). In this case, not a “bureaucratic” component of regional organizations is in focus but openness with respect to population of member-states, ability of the latter to monitor work of supranational bureaucrats. The study represents a detailed description of the larger number of organizations (including quite exotic ones) in terms of the set of pre-defined criteria of accountability to electorate. However, International Democracy Watch at present does not propose any quantitative assessments of regional organizations; besides, not only economic RIAs are examined but also organizations in the area of culture and purely political associations. Finally, the “supranational democracy” concept itself is disputed (Dahl, 1999).

### ***2.3. Regional Integration Database***

#### ***“Universe”***

Thus, Regional Integration Database is characterized by important features that differentiate it from existing databases. First, the main advantage of the project, in our opinion, is RIA “universe”. The Regional Integration Database is based on two data sources: WTO database and FIGO database (other databases potentially interesting for us – for example, (Goertz and Powers, 2011) – are unavailable for researchers). Such an approach enables to answer a number of interesting questions. For example, to compare foreign trade effects of “soft” associations (forums or projects aimed at developing general infrastructure) and “standard” free

trade agreements recorded as part of the WTO database. This discussion is extremely important for literature dedicated to “new” regionalism. Specifically, the database is generated as follows:

- The WTO database takes into account all regional agreements, except for bilateral free trade agreements between two countries and between the country and the free trade agreement. Thus, the database includes, inter alia, agreements between customs unions and individual countries or groups of countries. Such an approach is interesting as it will enable to examine not only “classical” “regionalism” but “interregionalism” - cooperation between already existing RIAs.
- The following types of associations are included from FIGO database: 1) cooperation organizations as part of river and lake basins (these structures are often focused on the creation of overall infrastructure what is important for our analysis); 2) regional forums (as was already said above, we are interested, inter alia, in “soft” integration structures.
- Besides, the database includes several more associations: Latin-American ALBA (this structure seeks to become an alternative to traditional regional agreements based on “Bolivarian” ideology of Venezuela) recently established by countries of the Pacific coast of Latin America and focused on free trade Pacific Alliance and a number of multilateral bargaining forums having changes to convert to influential large-scale RIAs: first and foremost, mega-deal projects Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), Trans-Pacific Strategic Economic Partnership Agreement (TPSEP) and Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP).

The list obtained in such a manner comprises several types of associations. First, the classical multilateral free trade agreements between countries, customs and economic unions – that is RIAs interesting for both political scientists (by virtues of a clearly executed institutional structure) and economists (by virtues of easily identified focus on economic integration under a conventional approach of B. Balassa). Second, these are “non-conventional” structures – forums and organizations of river basins; in this case it concerns associations with a clear institutional structure but not necessarily fit in the logic of integration steps of B. Balassa. Third, these are projects of integration associations – in particular mega-RIAs. Since it concerns projects (sometimes being the subject of fierce dispute), it is not always possible to define their future institutional structure – as well as to be confident that projects in fact will be embodied in practice. Fourth, finally, this is the group of bilateral free trade agreements, one of parties of which is a specific country and the other one – European Union. This group of associations is somehow different from the above-described – it concerns a specific form of regionalism arising due to activity of the EU. In this case, from an institutional point of view it concerns structures which are in principle different from conventional “interstate” associations.

As a rule, it concerns regionalism formats in which a predominant role when defining rules of the game belongs to one of the parties, the institutes of which are responsible for implementation of agreements. Such “asymmetrical” structures, as it was noted, until recently have not been studied in practice in existing literature, whereas their significance for global economy may turn out to be major (Hancock, 2009).

From an applied point of view, indicators collected by us are somehow different for each of four groups. It is not expedient to review bilateral agreements “country – EU” from the point of view of an institutional structure as we do for the first and second types of agreements since EU bodies play the role of “general institutes” for the agreement. Besides, examination of the internal asymmetry of agreements is of no interest for this group – by definition, we are speaking about organizations where the EU dominates. The third group is also of no interest in terms of institutes since the latter have not been created yet. But for the first and second groups we are collecting a large number of institutional indicators.

All in the entire database comprises **94** RIAs (including 66 associations of the first – third groups and 28 bilateral agreements in which the EU is one of parties). Thus, it is far less than CoW, Yearbook of International Organizations and WTO databases (characterized, however, by excessively broad coverage of RIAs for most study purposes) but at the same time it is more than practically all remaining databases used in literature.

### ***Variables***

The peculiarity of Regional Integration Database (differing it from absolutely all RIA databases, except for UNU-CRIS database, which, as was already noted, is incomplete) is a combination of all three types of RIA characteristics in the database – scope of regionalization, scope of economic cooperation and peculiarities of association’s functioning. As of today, the database includes the following variables (their more detailed list is presented in a corresponding section of the report):

- Year of establishment, initial and modern composition (need for these characteristics is unlikely to cause doubt). This indicator group also includes GDP (aggregate and per capita) as of the year of establishment in initial composition and population as of the year of establishment in initial composition. These indicators describe the scope of RIAs at the moment of establishment and may be used for analyzing RIA development dynamics through time.
- Set of macroeconomic variables, characteristics of mutual trade and production factor movement (investments and migration). In this case, statistical characteristics describing economic development and degree of integration in RIA (as a minimum, these characteristics may be used as a basis for calculating the specified integration indicators) are concerned. The section dedicated to production factor movement also

includes individual institutional indicators – availability of a common transport and common visa regime in RIA countries. All the remaining indicators, however, are focused namely on the intersection of state economics (irrespective of an institutional basis, on which it occurs) and their common characteristic.

- Set of political characteristics describing peculiarities of the political regime of RIA countries and a power index (CINC – CoW index integrating a number of key characteristics for describing the impact of countries in the world politics). These indicators must be included for recording the institutional environment of RIA member-states. This group also comprises one of asymmetry indicators – share of a leading country in the aggregate CINC of RIA member states (this characteristics may be used for identifying the presence of a hegemon-country in RIA).

- Characteristics of a foreign trade regime: set of variables characterizing the level of import duties of RIA member-states, availability of exemptions (planned and actual) from the free trade regime and other similar characteristics. A special indicator group is used for describing a foreign trade regime in customs unions, where, by definition, there arise additional economic integration tasks – peculiarities of a common customs tariff, mutual control on the internal boundary and others. This set of variables is important for examining standard topics of regional economic integration in economic literature. In this case, we are already examining institutional indicators – peculiarities of the economic policy of states affecting the operation of economics (taken into consideration in a previous set of indicators).

- RIA coverage of individual fields of activities and RIA depth. This set of indicators is, perhaps, one of the most complicated for collection and analysis, as it is far more difficult to standardize. Besides, it was necessary for the detailed evaluation of RIA operation to conduct expert interrogation as in (Feng and Genna, 2004) and (Gray and Slapin, 2012). It goes beyond this project and would result, most likely, in the reduction of RIA coverage in the database. Thus, we are limited to the collection of generalized characteristics related to the degree of detail of agreements on the establishment of RIAs and areas of regulation. We also include a number of variables in the set of indicators describing the degree of agreement implementation although we are here limited to formal characteristics – presence of a transitional period, ratification of agreements and so on. The examination, for example, of bureaucratic agreement application practices would demand a far more detailed RIA analysis, which would inevitably result in the reduction of database scope. However, the indicators obtained, too, in our opinion, appear to be extremely important for understanding RIA functioning peculiarities.

- Institutional characteristics of RIA: in this case, we use an extremely broad range of indicators, practically identical to modern literature standards. Specifically, we use

two types of indicators – characteristics of RIA bodies and characteristics of dispute resolution mechanisms in RIAs.

- Structure and possible asymmetry of the composition of RIA members: since problems of the asymmetry of economics and power potential of countries plays an important role in the study of regional integration, several characteristics of the diversity of member-states are included in the database. We also collect a number of indicators at a country level, which may be used for analyzing RIAs. In particular, this group of indicators includes specific weight of member-states in population and GDP of RIAs and relative price levels in RIA countries (price convergence may be regarded as one of actual integration signs).

- Activity and representation in information space and in the world policy: RIA name Internet search frequency. We use Google statistics. For non-western RIAs these indicators may be incomplete, for example, due to the presence of alternative RIA abbreviations in national languages and coverage of corresponding Google web-sites. However, our indicator may be used as the “first approximation” of public attention to a corresponding RIA). Besides, the year of RIA information update in Yearbook of International Organizations or on RIA web-site is taken into consideration as well (thus, we may exclude projects not carrying out any real activities and existing only due to unwillingness of founding-countries to go for formal dissolution of agreements (already mentioned “zombie” organizations).

- Relationships between RIA countries. In this case, we use two types of indicators: degree of accord of RIA country positions during voting in the UN (this indicator is traditionally used in literature as a measure of states’ closeness in the world arena) and availability of military conflicts between RIA countries. It is apparent that purely political changes of interstate relationships cannot help but affect economic integration (as well as, in its turn, be connected with peculiarities of economic cooperation).

- Historical and geographic characteristics. Above all, we take into consideration availability of states in RIA, which until recently formed part of a single state – in this case integration may also be characterized by a number of peculiarities (Libman and Vinokurov, 2010) – and availability of states in RIA which are territorially “isolated” from the remaining RIA states. Many databases in principle do not acknowledge territorially isolated associations as regional agreements considering territorial integrity an integral criterion of the “region”. We use a broader approach, connected, in particular, with the inclusion of “territorially isolated” free trade agreements in the analysis. For individual countries as part of RIA we also collect information about duration of their sovereign existence.

- Finally, an additional variable describes whether RIA membership is “exclusive” or whether membership in a number of associations at the same time is permitted.

The composition of Regional Integration Database variables is interesting for economics and international political economy (political science and theory of international relations in general. Besides, it includes indicators describing both RIA functioning peculiarities and results of activities of regional associations. Such an approach enables to use the database for a broad range of topics and issues – broader than the majority of existing databases.

### **3. Database Compositions: Groups of RIAs, Indicators, Data Sources**

#### **3.1. Database generation**

The current database included:

- 17 customs unions, one of which (European Union) is an economic union too;
- 11 multilateral free trade areas (FTAs) (here CIS and CIS FTA are considered separately, due to which the line “CIS FTA” is highlighted in another colour);
- 31 forums or RIA project;
- 7 river or lake basins;
- 28 EU FTAs - country (countries).

Data on these five RIA groups are placed in Excel file sheets. Information, by the whole number of quantitative indicators, is presented not only on RIAs in general but on member-states as well. Tables are built as two-level ones: in a folded form they display information on RIAs in general, in expanded form – also information on member-states (on a part of indicators). Availability of information on countries is indicated in a special line of the “heading”. For convenient work with the database, tables of data on RIAs in general without country data are placed in individual sheets. This, for example, allows for sorting out what may be required for arranging RIAs in a specific order. Bilateral free trade agreements involving the EU are placed in this database version in an individual sheet in alphabetic order. They contain, mainly, quantitative macroeconomic indicators, including trade data. All other RIAs are placed in another, main sheet with a complete list of indicators (see below). RIAs are placed without meeting alphabetic arrangement<sup>4</sup>. Only RIA groups are arranged: first – customs unions and economic unions, below – multilateral FTAs, further forums, draft FTA and basins. Caveat: FTA between the EU and Canada (CETA) was left in the group of projects, although by the end of work with the database it had been already signed.

- Filling in cells: by qualitative indicators value 1 means “yes” or “available”. 0 - “no”, 0.5 – “both yes and no” (encountered very seldom);

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<sup>4</sup> Remark for users: groups of lines not always can be sorted out without information distortion (Excel feature).

- NA (non available) – information is not available;
- nappl. (non applicable) – indicator is not applicable to this RIA;
- TBA (to be added) – information will be added later.

Empty cells in RIA lines may mean that information by corresponding indicators is presented only on RIA countries but not on RIAs in general.

“Countries” (in the third line) means that for a number of RIAs data is also presented by member-states which may be viewed by expanding a group (pressing “+” on the left from RIA line or by expanding the entire table by pressing “2” button in the left top corner of the table.

Self-expanding remarks are added to many cells.

Data sources are given by indicators in general in the bottom line of the table: indicating a source with respect to each cell is technically difficult and would increase file “weight” by many times.

### 3.2. *Indicator groups and sources*

Indicators are presented by 142 columns and are divided into 14 heterogeneous groups highlighted in colour and indicator group name in the first line of the “heading”.

No.	Indicator groups	Indicators	Unit of measurements	Availability of country data	Sources
1	Membership and basic indicators	Name (Engl.)			
2		Membership and abbreviation		countries	RIA web-sites and search engines, Yearbook of International Organizations
3		Year of establishment			
4		Initial number of countries		countries (without withdrawn ones)	
5		Number of countries as of 2012			RIA web-sites
6		Population as of the year of establishment (initial membership)	mln people	countries	World Bank Data

7		GDP as of the year of establishment (initial membership)	\$ bln (in current prices)	countries	
8		GDP per capita as of the year of establishment (initial membership)	\$ (in current prices)	countries	
9	Macroeconomic indicators	Population as of 2012	mln people	countries	World Bank Data
10		GDP as of 2012	\$ bln	countries	
11		GDP (PPP) as of 2012	\$ bln	countries	
12		GDP per capita as of 2012	\$	countries	
13		GDP per capita (PPP) as of 2012	\$	countries	
14		Agriculture (% of GDP)	% of added value	countries	
15		Industry (% of GDP)	% of added value	countries	
16		Manufacturing industry (% of GDP)	% of added value	countries	
17		Services (% of GDP)	% of added value	countries	
18	Trade	Export of goods and services	% of GDP	countries	World Bank Data
19		Import of goods and services	% of GDP	countries	
20		Export of goods and services	\$ bln	countries	
21		Import of goods and services	\$ bln	countries	

22		Export of goods	\$ bln	countries	UN Comtrade, www.trademap.org
23		Import of goods	\$ bln	countries	UN Comtrade, www.trademap.org
24		Trade turnover	\$ bln	countries	
25		Export of goods	% of GDP	countries	
26		Import of goods	% of GDP	countries	
27		Mutual export	\$ bln		
28		Mutual export	% of turnover		Calculation
29		Mutual export	% of total export		Calculation
30		Mutual export	% of GDP		Calculation
31		Mutual import	\$ bln		Calculation
32		Mutual import	% of turnover		Calculation
33		Mutual import	% of total import		Calculation
34		Mutual import	% of GDP		Calculation
35		Mutual export + mutual import	bln \$		Calculation
36		Mutual export + mutual import	%		Calculation
37		Trade turnover with the rest of the world	bln \$		Calculation
38		Turnover with the rest of the world	%		Calculation
39		Concentration index			Calculation

40		Share of intra-industry trade	%		Calculation
41		Trade intensity index			Calculation
42	Factor Movements	Number of emigrants to other countries of RIA as of 2010			Calculation based on Bilateral Migrants' Stocks 2010
43		Share of emigrants to other countries of RIA as of 2010 (% of total amount of emigrants)	%		
44		Number of immigrants from countries of RIA as of 2010			
45		Share of immigrants from countries of RIA as of 2010 (% of total amount of immigrants)	%		
46		Mutual money transfers (financial inflows)	\$ mln		Bilateral Remittance Calculations for 2012
47		Mutual money transfers (financial inflows)	% of transfer inflows		Calculation
48		Mutual money transfers (financial outflows)	\$ mln		Bilateral Remittance Calculations for 2012
49		Mutual money transfers (financial outflows)	% of transfer outflows		Calculation
50		Visa-free regime within the RIA			Google
51		Uniform passport (Surprint)			Google
52	Mutual direct investments, accumulated	\$ mln		Calculations based on UNCTAD Bilateral FDI Statistics 2014	
53	Mutual direct investments, %	%		Calculation	
54	Trade policy	FTA: approach towards scheduling trade commitments	positive list or negative list		RIA documents

55		Average import duties on mutual trade as of 2013 (de facto)	%		www.trademap.org (calculations and Calculations on the basis of data on tariffs in bilateral trade by 2 HS marks, without the average level)
56		Planned exemptions from free trade regime at the end of a transitional period	% or group of goods		RIA documents
57		Actual share of exemptions from free mutual trade regime as of 2013	%		www.trademap.org and diff. sources
58		Rules of origin: (own (1) or borrowed rules (0))			RIA documents
59		Average weighted import duties by countries	%	Countries	World bank Data
60		Average (non-weighted) import duties by countries	%	Countries	WTO Average MFN Tariff Map
61	Trade policy - CU	Current common external tariff (CET)			WTO Average MFN Tariff Map , RIA documents
62		Simple average of CET	%		
63		CET - under consideration or approval			
64		% of exemptions from the common external tariff as of 2012	%		
65		Valid unified customs code			RIA documents, search engines
66		Formula of customs revenue distribution between countries			
67		Customs control on the common border	Available (=1) /not available		

			e (=0)		
68	RIS coverage	Specification of a Foundational Agreement	(pages)		RIA documents
69		Level of formalization (type of agreement / organization)			
70		Declared goal			
71		FTA-Goods			
72		FTA - Services			
73		Integration in the sphere of government procurement			
74		Agreement on Intellectual Property Rights Protection			
75		Availability of single currency			
76		Availability of single currency (with cash turnover)			
77	Stage	Negotiations on the conclusion of an agreement are being held, negotiations' start year			RIA web-sites, search engines
78		Agreement presumes a transitional period			
79		Signed but not ratified and not in force			
80		In force, transitional period is running			
81		In force, transitional period is finished or not presumed			
82		Success of trans. period goal achievement			
83	Structure and asymmetry	Participation of a country with population less than in Luxembourg			

84		Population distribution by country	%	countries	Calculations based on World Bank Data
85		GDP distribution by country	%	countries	
86		GDP (PPP) distribution by country	%	countries	
87		RIA export structure by countries	%	countries	
88		RIA import structure by countries	%	countries	
89		"Hegemonic country" (based on GDP and population)			
90		GDP of a "Hegemonic country" (% of RIA total GDP)	%		
91		Population of a "Hegemonic country" (% of RIA total population)	%		
92		Relative price level (GDP / GDP(PPP))		countries	
93		Share of the country with the highest Power Distance Index in the total Power Distance Index			Calculation based on COW
94	RIS bodies	Council of heads of states and heads of governments			RIA documents, Based on budgets: Andrii O. Boiar. Revenue-Generating Schemes for International Unions. Journal of Economic
95		Frequency of summits (how many times per year)			
96		Council of foreign affairs ministers			
97		Council of ministers			
98		Council (or commission) of trade ministers			
99		Commission (as an executive body with the right of legislative initiative)			
100		Commission with supranational powers			

101		Presence of another supranational body (other than a Commission)			Integration. Vol.29 No.3, September 2014, 407~429
102		Central bank			
103		Parliamentary assembly			
104		Secretariat			
105		Right of secretariat to initiate decisions			
106		Right of secretariat to amend decisions			
107		Right of secretariat to impose veto on decisions			
108		Presence of automat. sanctions or sanctions initiated by secretariat for obligations' violations			
109		Decision-making mechanisms (consensus, voting )			
110		Principles of authority formation - supranational=1 or intergovernmental=0			
111		Possibility to adopt direct-action acts (yes=1, no=0)			
112		Subsidiarity among basic principles (yes/no)			
113		Number of inter/supranational bodies (secretariat, unless otherwise specified)	People		
114		Budget size	\$ mln		
115		Budget procedures	%		
116		Revenue redistribution mechanisms			

116	Dispute settlement	Dispute resolution model (based on WTO-2013, Steff Working paper ERSD-2013-7 classification):	(Political =P, quasi-legal=Q, L, legal=IO)		WTO Staff Working paper ERSD-2013-7	
117		Availability of a formal dispute resolution mechanism			RIA, judicial documents	
118		Dispute resolution body/system				
120		Court (permanent dispute settlement body)				
121		Ad hoc tribunal as an interim dispute settlement body				
122		Judicial practice (number of reviewed cases as of 2012)				
123		Obligatory nature of resolutions of the formal dispute resolution mechanism for member-states				
124		Right of citizens and organizations (not governments) to directly appeal against decisions				
125	Geography and policy	Duration of country independence	Years	countries	World Factbook	
126		Membership of countries gained independence after the Second World War			World Factbook	
127		RIA includes a country (countries) which was (were) a part of a single state in the recent past (20-30 years)	(yes=1, no=0, occupation = 0.5)			exp. est. resp. exec.
128		Presence of military conflicts between members of the agreement as of 2012				exp. est. resp. exec.

129		Presence of military conflicts between members of the agreement in recent past			exp. est. resp. exec.
130		Acceptability of multiple membership (in this or other RIA)			exp. est. resp. exec.
131		Geographic continuum (presence of islands not taken into account)			exp. est. resp. exec.
132	Form of government and democracy	Composite Index of National Capability (CINC)		countries	Correlates of war database
133		Share of a country with a maximum CINC in total RIA CINC			Calculation
134		Rank of Democracy Index compiled by the Economist Intelligence Unit		countries	Economist Intelligence Unit
135		Democracy Index compiled by the Economist Intelligence Unit		countries	Economist Intelligence Unit
136		Democracy Index compiled by Global Democracy Ranking		countries	<a href="http://democracyranking.org">http://democracyranking.org</a>
137	UN	RIA international status in the UN	observer status, permanent representation=2, observ., no permanent representation=1, no observer status =0		
138		Percentage of voting coincidence of all RIA members in the UN General Assembly - 1			<a href="http://thedata.harvard.edu/dvn/dv/Voeten/faces/study/StudyPage.xhtml?globalId=hdl:1902.1/12379">http://thedata.harvard.edu/dvn/dv/Voeten/faces/study/StudyPage.xhtml?globalId=hdl:1902.1/12379</a>
139		Percentage of voting coincidence of all RIA members in the UN General Assembly - 2			<a href="http://thedata.harvard.edu/dvn/dv/Voeten/faces/study/StudyPage.xhtml?globalId=hdl:1902.1/12379">http://thedata.harvard.edu/dvn/dv/Voeten/faces/study/StudyPage.xhtml?globalId=hdl:1902.1/12379</a>

140	Level of publicity	Average amount of a search query in Google (the RIA name in English, per month, as of 2013)			Google AdWords
141		Average amount of a search query in Google (the RIA abbreviation in English, per month, as of 2013)			Google AdWords
142		Information update year in Yearbook of International Organizations or on RIA web-sites			Yearbook of International Organizations, RIA web-sites
143		RIA web-site			Google

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