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## PARADIPLMACY OF THE SVERDLOVSK REGION: DEVELOPMENT AND MODALITIES OF IMPLEMENTING AT THE PRESENT STAGE <sup>1</sup>

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**Abstract.** *Introduction.* The article examines the key paradiplomacy areas of the Sverdlovsk region. The analysis focuses on the aspects distinguishing the region from other subjects of the present-day Russian Federation, which allowed it to become one of the leaders in developing international activities during the post-Soviet period. *Methods and materials.* The methodological basis of this work is constituted by the approaches devised by I. Duchacek. Paradiplomacy is defined as international contacts of regions with different actors in international relations regarding economic, political, cultural and environmental issues. These contacts move in the same direction as activities undertaken by central authorities. Approaches by I. Duchacek, R. Kaiser, A. Kuznetsov, Yu. Akimov were applied to study the motives and factors for active paradiplomacy development of the Sverdlovsk region. To examine the modalities of implementing paradiplomacy in the Sverdlovsk region, scientific and analytical materials were used along with statistic data and indicators provided by the Ministry of International and Foreign Economic Relations of the Sverdlovsk Region and by the Russian Export Center JSC. *Analysis.* It was found that the Sverdlovsk region became the first to base its paradiplomacy on the regional identity. On the one hand, the regional identity development was marked by a conflict between the region and the central authorities; on the other hand, the local ruling groups deliberately fostered the policy of regional uniqueness. Mainstreaming the regional identity served the practical interests of elites both in internal political legitimation and in establishing their international economic, political and cultural personality. In the 2000s, the paradiplomacy model of the Sverdlovsk region transformed from conflict to cooperation based on partnering and seeking a compromise with the federal government. *Results.* The strategy of paradiplomacy development chosen by the region is evaluated as a success. The emphasis put by the regional authorities on implementing large-scale international projects and developing foreign trade relations allows the Sverdlovsk region not only to keep the indicators of foreign economic activities stable, but also to retain elements of its regional identity.

**Key words:** paradiplomacy, region, Sverdlovsk region, foreign economic activities, regional identity.

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## ПАРАДИПЛОМАТИЯ СВЕРДЛОВСКОЙ ОБЛАСТИ НА СОВРЕМЕННОМ ЭТАПЕ: ОСОБЕННОСТИ И ФОРМЫ РЕАЛИЗАЦИИ <sup>1</sup>

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**Аннотация.** *Введение.* В статье исследуются основные направления парадипломатии Свердловской области. Выявляются особенности региона по сравнению с другими субъектами современной России, которые позволили Свердловской области в постсоветский период войти в число лидеров по развитию международной

деятельности. *Методы и материалы.* Методологической основой работы стали подходы И. Духачека. Парадипломатия определяется как международные контакты регионов с разными акторами международных отношений по экономическим, политическим, культурным, экологическим вопросам, которые развиваются параллельно деятельности центральных властей. В ходе исследования мотивов и факторов активного развития парадипломатии Свердловской области применялись подходы И. Духачека, Р. Кайзера, А. Кузнецова, Ю. Акимова. Для изучения форм реализации парадипломатии в Свердловской области использовались научно-аналитические материалы, а также статистические данные и показатели Министерства внешнеэкономических связей Свердловской области, АО «Российский Экспортный центр». *Анализ.* Установлено, что Свердловская область стала первым регионом, где парадипломатия основывалась на региональной идентификации. Особенности развития региональной идентичности стали, с одной стороны, конфликт региона и центра, с другой стороны, сознательное развитие правящими группами политики региональной уникальности. Актуализация региональной идентичности отвечала практическим интересам элитных групп как во внутривластной легитимации, так и в обретении международной экономической, политической и культурной субъектности. В 2000-е гг. произошла трансформация модели парадипломатии Свердловской области от конфликтной к кооперационной, основанной на сотрудничестве и компромиссе с Федеральным центром. *Результаты.* Сделан вывод об успешности выбранной регионом стратегии развития парадипломатии. Акцент региональных властей на проведении масштабных международных проектов и развитии внешнеторговых связей позволяет Свердловской области не только сохранять стабильные показатели внешнеэкономической деятельности, но элементы региональной идентичности.

**Ключевые слова:** парадипломатия, регион, Свердловская область, внешнеэкономическая деятельность, региональная идентичность.

**Цитирование.** Наронская А. Г. Парадипломатия Свердловской области на современном этапе: особенности и формы реализации // Вестник Волгоградского государственного университета. Серия 4, История. Регионоведение. Международные отношения. – 2023. – Т. 28, № 2. – С. 240–250. – (На англ. яз.). – DOI: <https://doi.org/10.15688/jvolsu4.2023.2.20>

**Introduction.** A topical trend in contemporary international relations is an increasing number of actors and a strengthened role of regions. First of all, this trend affects federal states whose subjects are actively developing paradiplomacy and their international self-reliance. Vivid examples are the Canadian provinces of Quebec and Ontario, the Belgian Flanders and Wallonia, the Spanish Catalonia and the Basque Country. In Russia, paradiplomacy first emerged in the 1990s. The key factor in enhancing international ties of Russian regions was globalization. However, that process was influenced to no lesser degree by the collapse of the USSR, a difficult period of building a new federal state, decentralization and centrifugal tendencies in the 1990s Russia. The Sverdlovsk region represents a special example of establishing and developing paradiplomacy. Having been a restricted area within the USSR, in a short time the Sverdlovsk region took its place among the leading constituent entities in terms of paradiplomatic activity. In connection with the forgoing, the purpose of this article is to identify the reasons for paradiplomacy development and its features in the Sverdlovsk region as well as to assess areas and the results of the region's international activities at present.

**Methodology.** The theoretical and methodological foundations of paradiplomacy were elaborated by the modern political science relatively recently – first in the 1980s, primarily in the works by American and Canadian researchers (I. Duchacek, F. Aldecoa, M. Keating, A. Lecours, L. Moreno, H.J. Michelmann, P. Soldatos, S. Wolff et al.) [3; 6; 13; 16; 25]. In domestic political science, the study of diplomacy conducted by constituent entities and territories does not attract much academic interest despite this topic being relevant, which is reflected in the studies by A. Kuznetsov, I. Busygina, Yu. Akimov, T. Zonova et al. [2; 5; 12; 27]. To define paradiplomacy, we use the approach of I. Duchacek for whom paradiplomacy means contacts of subnational governments with various international relations actors in trade, industry, culture and other areas. These contacts of regions are parallel with the activities undertaken by central authorities [6, p. 15].

As for main forms of paradiplomacy, here we also proceed mostly from Duchacek's theory. Among the key forms of international activities performed by the regions, we highlight the establishment of permanent missions in the capitals and economic centers of foreign states, as well

as the establishment of diplomatic missions of foreign countries in the regions themselves; international visits of heads of regions, as well as their presence in foreign delegations of the central authorities or the head of state; holding international trade, industrial and investment exhibitions that demonstrate to potential investors the economic opportunities of the host regions, along with holding large-scale international sports, cultural and educational events that allow regions to showcase themselves on the international arena; finally, it is participation of regional authorities in international conferences and other economic, political and cultural events.

What motivates a regional actor to get involved in international activities? In addition to obvious worldwide trends such as globalization and regionalization, there are specific political, economic and cultural motives determine the international activities undertaken by this or that actor.

Among the key factors driving international activities of the regions is the presence of an ethnolinguistic community or nation being a minority if compared with the largest nation in the state but prevailing in the territory of a given region [1, p. 26]. The Canadian researcher S. Paquin distinguishes *identity paradiplomacy* defining it as “the sub-state foreign policy, one of the acknowledged aims of which is to strengthen a minority nation within a federal state or a decentralized structure” [17, p. 73]. In any case, paradiplomacy development stresses the aspiration of ethnic groups to express their identity. The next factor pushing a constituent entity towards paradiplomatic activities is the relations between the center and the regions. Firstly, a region needs a legal basis for its international activity so here the policy of the center is of paramount importance. Secondly, intensified decentralization, a lack of channels and mechanisms for representing the interests of the entity before the center and, finally, the asymmetry of the regions in a federal state can have a significant impact on paradiplomacy development. At the same time, today asymmetry is characteristic of most federal states and is not viewed as a problem of modern federalism since it acts as a mechanism for leveling the economic and social standing of regions. That being said, regional inequality often sparks nationalism and separatism, draws

increased attention to regional identity and inevitably leads to a clash of regional interests. In this case, paradiplomacy primarily brings about economic competition between regions, their rivalry for potential investors and foreign partners. As a result, a key competitive advantage is having potential partners abroad who are interested in building diplomatic relations with that specific region.

Regarding paradiplomacy types, according to the level of international relations a region can develop transborder paradiplomacy (international contacts with neighboring regions), regional paradiplomacy (international ties with regions of other countries) and, finally, global paradiplomacy (contacts with international, non-governmental organizations, non-state actors, interest groups, etc.) [11, p. 18].

**Analysis.** The establishment and development of paradiplomacy in modern Russia came about in the early 1990s. It was in that period that many regions commenced chaotic development of their international activities riding on the wave of decentralization and sovereignization caused by the collapse of the USSR and creation of the Russian Federation, as well as in a total absence of centralized control. The subjects that succeeded most were: 1) federal cities (Moscow and St. Petersburg) as the administrative and cultural centers of the country; 2) national republics (most notably Tatarstan but also Bashkortostan) where identity paradiplomacy was developing under the leadership of national elites; 3) border regions whose international activity was determined by a favorable geographic location and broad opportunities for development of transborder paradiplomacy (the Arkhangelsk, Leningrad and Primorsky regions, the Republic of Karelia, etc.); 4) those entities of Russia that were most abundant in natural resources and thus were of significant economic interest primarily for transnational oil and gas companies (the Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Area, the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Area, the Tyumen region).

With regard to the Sverdlovsk region, it does not belong to any of the above-mentioned groups and constitutes a special case of developing paradiplomacy in Russia. The Sverdlovsk region began active development of its international ties in the early 1990s. During the Soviet era, this region used to be closed for the aliens, but after

the visit paid by the President of the Soviet Union M.S. Gorbachev on 25–27 April 1990, the USSR Council of Ministers adopted the Resolution No. 1233-164 of December 8, 1990, on lifting the restrictions. That was the moment when the region first appeared on the international arena and started gradually building relationships with foreign partners. In just 10 years of paradiplomacy development, by the beginning of the 2000s, the Sverdlovsk region had got third in Russia by the number of consular missions, being surpassed only by Moscow and St. Petersburg. The first diplomatic consulate that opened in the region was the U.S. Consulate General in 1994; the next, in 1995, was the British diplomatic mission.

Looking at the reasons for such rapid development of paradiplomacy, it is possible to indicate both the advantageous geographic position of the region and the fact that it is a key metallurgical region of Russia. It is worthy to note the role of the first President of Russia B.N. Yeltsin in reinforcing the political and economic positions of the region in the 1990s, despite the tension with its first governor, E. Rossel. For instance, the Sverdlovsk region was among the first in Russia to enter into the *Agreement on the Delimitation of Jurisdiction and Powers between the Public Authorities of the Russian Federation* in January 1996. That document granted the region ample opportunities for pursuing international and foreign economic relations, as well as investment activities [23, p. 4]. In our opinion, the crucial role in development of the region's paradiplomacy was played by the aspiration of regional ruling groups to establish their self-reliance and legitimize their status through a conflict with the federal center, as well as their desire to overcome the legal and economic asymmetry of Russian regions. Those two interrelated motives were reflected in the intensification of the region's separatism in the early 1990s and in the project for establishing the 'Ural Republic'. The Sverdlovsk region became the first federal subject where identity paradiplomacy was based not on the national or ethnic but on the regional identity. Regional identity is the subject's perception of its belonging to a specific regional and geographic community, based on the opposition of its group to others [7, p. 83].

Confrontation between the ruling groups in the region headed by their political leader

E.E. Rossel and the central authorities contributed to the development of the Ural identity. Another regional identity driver was the fact that the cultural, economic and geographical features of the Sverdlovsk region were harnessed by the regional elite for its practical purposes. We are talking about the conscious designing of regional uniqueness (which is expressed, first of all, in establishing the region's image and in a symbolic policy of the regional elite), as well as about promoting and positioning that uniqueness not only throughout the domestic political space, but also in international activities [15, p. 64]. The case for the special place of the region both in Russia and in the world was supported by the unique geographical position of the Ural territory on the border between Europe and Asia, as well as by a strong network of transport communications that could make the region a link between the West and the East. It was stressed that Ural was not only a leading industrial region of Russia but also a historic, cultural and educational center of the country. As a result, Ural became the regional identifier and the marker of the Sverdlovsk region. The symbolic policy of the regional authorities aimed at promoting the uniqueness, independence and self-reliance of the Sverdlovsk region was actively supported by the new economic elite of the region. That is not surprising considering the managers of the region's leading enterprises, such as Uralektromed, Uralmash, Ural Optical and Mechanical Plant, Nizhny Tagil Iron and Steel Works, etc. were interested in creating and developing favorable conditions for foreign economic and international activities. Thus, the evolution of regional identity directed the region's paradiplomacy to gain the Sverdlovsk region's international, economic, political, cultural personality.

The conflict nature of the relations between the center and the Sverdlovsk region found reflection in the forms of paradiplomacy. As early as in 1991, the Executive Committee of the Sverdlovsk Regional Council of People's Deputies approved the decision to establish the Office for International and Foreign Economic Relations (in 1994, the Office was reorganized into the Department of International and Foreign Economic Relations; in 1998, the Department was transformed into the Ministry of International and Foreign Economic Relations of the Sverdlovsk

Region). On June 4, 1992, the regional administration signed its first international agreement: the counterparty was the Trade Ministry of the Republic of Bulgaria, the scope covered trade and economic relations as well as cooperation in research and technology [21]. All this had happened before the Constitution of the Russian Federation was adopted, which formalized the status of the Sverdlovsk region and the legal options for international activities of the regions. The conclusion of agreements and the negotiation process took place both in the region and during frequent visits abroad made by the head of the region E.E. Rossel and administration officials. The events were held at the highest level including heads of state (for example, of the CIS countries). Those official trips were widely covered by local media, which rather demonstratively emphasized how independent the regional authorities were from the federal center in their actions. Such progress of regional paradiplomacy was facilitated by the lack of clear regulations for international activities of regional entities, centrifugal tendencies and the ‘parade of sovereignties’ in the 1990s.

In the course of federal reforms in the 2000s paradiplomacy underwent significant transformations. First of all, the 1993 Constitution was supplemented with new legal foundations for paradiplomatic activities. It is worth noting that according to Article 71 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation, foreign policy and international relations, international treaties and foreign economic relations belong to the jurisdiction of the Russian Federation. As for the subjects of the Russian Federation, Article 72 refers the following matters to the joint jurisdiction of the center and regions: coordination of international and foreign economic relations of the subjects and fulfillment of international treaties of the Russian Federation [24]. Regarding new legal provisions, it is necessary to accentuate Federal Law No. 4-FZ of January 4, 1999, “On Coordination of International and Foreign Economic Relations of the Constituent Entities of the Russian Federation” [10]; Decree of the Government of the Russian Federation No. 91 of February 1, 2000 “On the Adoption by the Government of the Russian Federation of Decisions Concerning Consent for the Effectuation by Subjects of the Russian Federation of International and Foreign Economic Relations with Agencies

of State Power of Foreign States” [19]; Decree of the President of the Russian Federation No. 1478 of November 8, 2011, “On the Coordinating Role of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation in the Implementation of a Uniform Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation” [26]. Those regulatory documents were aimed at harmonizing the regional and federal legislation, as well as shaping a unified foreign policy concept of the Russian Federation. In particular, they eliminated the possibility of regions entering into agreements with the central authorities of foreign states. The conclusion of treaties became possible only at the level of subjects of foreign federal states and subnational entities of unitary states. Thus, in the 2000s, the capacity of the regions to develop international relations independently and uncontrollably was reduced to zero. As a result, paradiplomacy of the Sverdlovsk region gradually moved from a confrontational model of interaction with federal authorities to active cooperation and ‘quiet diplomacy’ based on a compromise and a uniform foreign policy.

Today, the region has a wide network of foreign missions: these are 16 missions of foreign states enjoying diplomatic status (on April 1, 2021 the U.S. Consulate General ceased to provide visas and American Citizen services but it continues to implement cultural, educational and exchange programs), 12 honorary consuls of foreign states without diplomatic status and 6 missions promoting national business and culture. The presence and a constantly increasing number of diplomatic missions in the region are not only a formal sign of paradiplomacy development, but also an indicator that the region is becoming a center of international activity. Establishment of diplomatic and trade missions of foreign states intensifies cultural and educational contacts but, above all, it stimulates international trade, economic and investment cooperation. For those reasons, diplomatic contacts are being developed with the main trading partners of the region, which are the USA, the UK, Germany, China, Turkey, Belarus and Italy. The region has 32 current agreements on international cooperation with 24 states. Table 1 shows how successful Governors of the Sverdlovsk region were in concluding international treaties. This range of agreements from all-round cooperation to a specific interaction in trade,

economics, science, technology and the humanitarian area. Treaties were concluded both with the central authorities and individual entities and regions of foreign states. Talking about the geographic distribution of the parties to the agreements, these are the countries of the “near abroad” (the post-Soviet states) as well as the countries of the “far abroad”, that is outside the former Soviet Union.

It is obvious that the process of concluding international treaties was most active during the term of E. Rossel. At the same time, the current governor of the region, E. Kuyvashev, manages not only to preserve and maintain this form of paradiplomacy, but also to explore new areas of cooperation (in particular, with India, Iran, South Africa). Over the past ten years, the region has developed such modes of paradiplomacy as the implementation of large-scale international projects in the field of politics, sports and culture. In 2009, Ekaterinburg hosted the first summit of the BRIC countries. For that top level meeting, the capital of the Urals was visited by the Presidents of Russia and Brazil, the Prime Minister of India and the Chairman of the People’s Republic of China [18]. In 2018, group matches of the FIFA World Cup were played in Ekaterinburg. In July 2021, the 6<sup>th</sup> International Music Festival *Crazy Days in Yekaterinburg* took place here. The festival is held annually and supported by the French Institute at the French Embassy in Russia and the Alliance Française Ekaterinburg. In 2023, Ekaterinburg will host the Universiade.

However, the region counts most on holding international trade, industrial and investment exhibitions, the key one being the main industrial exhibition of Russia, Innoprom. The first edition of this annual exhibition was held in 2010 and since that time it has evolved into an international symbol of the Sverdlovsk region. The event was initiated by the Governor of the region A.S. Misharin who was guided by the example of Hannover Messe, the German international platform for industry and innovations. The first Innoprom exhibition in 2010 was attended by representatives of 30 countries. During the event, 20 foreign economic agreements were signed totaling to over 43 billion rubles. In subsequent years, the event expanded in scale and the number of participants increased significantly because of

large corporations and concerns from the USA, Germany, Japan, France, Italy, among which are Siemens, Mazak, Fanuc, Siempelkamp, Dassault Systèmes, Phoenix Contact, Autodesk, etc. [8]. In addition to the input of international participants of the event, there are presentations held by the most economically developed Russian regions, such as Moscow, Tatarstan, Perm Territory, Tyumen region, Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Area, etc. Among permanent participants are domestic companies such as Rostec State Corporation, Rosatom State Corporation and UMMC Holding LLC. Sanctions imposed in 2014, did not have a significant impact on the exhibition or the participation of the largest corporations from the USA, Europe and Japan. At the same time, representation of China increased. In 2015, the exhibition welcomed a massive delegation of representatives from 130 Chinese companies such as First Automotive Works (FAW) and Lifan Industry (automotive construction), ZTE Corporation and Huawei (telecommunications), Harbin Xi Robot Co (industrial robotics), Bei Dou (satellite navigation) [8]. Starting from 2015, a partner country is selected for each Innoprom trade fair. After China, Russia and the Sverdlovsk region partnered with India, Japan, South Korea, Turkey and Italy. In 2019, the President of the Russian Federation V.V. Putin paid a visit to the exhibition for the first time. The results of the Innoprom trade fair are of great importance for the economic development of the region. They directly affect its trade and foreign economic activities, while also allowing the region to compete with other entities for markets, new technologies and foreign investments.

Analyzing the dynamics of the region’s foreign trade activity, in the 1990s the average foreign trade turnover of the Sverdlovsk region was \$4 billion, where the export figure averaged at \$2.5 billion and imports at \$1.5 billion. The key trading partners of the region in the 1990s were the Netherlands, USA, Kazakhstan, Germany, the UK, Italy, Iran, China, Ukraine, Uzbekistan. According to the former Minister of Foreign Economic Relations of the region A. Sobolev, over the period from 2000 to 2015, the foreign trade turnover of the Sverdlovsk region grew significantly from \$3 billion to \$9 billion. Both exports and imports peaked in 2008, when the region’s trade turnover amounted to more than

\$14 billion. After 2008, the region's foreign trade volumes declined reaching a minimum in 2016, when the turnover amounted to \$6 billion [4]. Looking at the main trading partners of the region at that time, the USA, Germany and Italy continued to hold the leading positions in the 2000s. Meanwhile, the role of the EAEU, BRIC(S) and SCO countries in the region's foreign trade relations was growing. Since 2017, the situation on the foreign economic scene has been changing positively. Compared to 2016, foreign trade indicators have risen significantly. Analysis of foreign trade relations of the region in the period from 2017 to 2020 confirms the stable progress of imports and exports of the Sverdlovsk region (see Table 2). The key indicator of the region's foreign economic activities is the volume of exports. According to the Russian Export Center JSC, in 2020, the Sverdlovsk region ranked 8<sup>th</sup> in terms of export volume among the regions of Russia (in 2020, the region's share in Russian exports was 2.3%) [20]. It is worth noting that export volumes decreased in all regions of the Russian Federation being in the top ten by their foreign economic activity, with the exception of the Rostov and Sverdlovsk regions. Dynamics of foreign trade with major partner countries are shown in Table 3.

As can be seen, at the present stage the main partners of the Sverdlovsk region are the USA, China, Kazakhstan and Germany. They accounted for approximately 44.7% of the trade turnover of the Sverdlovsk region in 2017, 44% in 2018, 47% in 2019 and 50.7% in 2020. Moreover, in recent years, there has been an unprecedented increase in mutual turnover with China, which accounted for 16.1% of trade volume in 2017, while by 2020 this figure had grown to 23.28%. At the same time, the share of the United States in the region's foreign trade has been gradually decreasing: from 12% in 2017 to 7.9% in 2020. Traditionally, the primary exports of the Sverdlovsk region are metals and metalware products (their share in the total volume is more than 50%), as well as engineering products and products of the chemical industry [9]. That being said, according to the Russian Export Center JSC, in 2020 the Sverdlovsk region ranked fourth in terms of non-resource exports among all subjects of the Russian Federation (after Moscow, St. Petersburg and the Rostov region). Last year the region performed

large-scale supplies of the military-industrial complex products (to Algeria and Egypt), aircraft components (to China, the USA, Uzbekistan and France), telecommunications equipment (to Kazakhstan, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan), railway equipment (to Kazakhstan, the USA and Ukraine). Because of the pandemic supplies of medical (respiratory) equipment increased 2.9 times (to Serbia, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Indonesia) [9].

Finally, although paradiplomacy of the Sverdlovsk region is fully in line with the unified foreign economic, cultural and educational policy of modern Russia, identification markers of the region remain and are traced quite clearly in the field of international relations. In particular, the *Strategy for Development of International and Foreign Economic Relations of the Sverdlovsk Region for the Period to 2035*, approved by the Government of the region in 2019, mentions the need to cooperate with the subjects of the Ural Federal District to develop and promote the regional brand *Made in Ural*, which will contribute to an increase in export volumes [22]. It is for this purpose that the Government of the Sverdlovsk region launched the *Made in Ural* portal for foreign economic activities of export-oriented enterprises, as well as for information support of foreign economic activities and for strengthening international ties of the region [14]. Thus, the regional authorities try to preserve the elements of regional identity in the course of paradiplomacy development in the Sverdlovsk region.

**Results.** In the early 1990s, the Sverdlovsk region got actively involved in paradiplomacy development. On the one hand, international relations of the region were established quite traditionally via creating the Ministry dealing with foreign economic activities, as well as via signing international agreements with foreign states. On the other hand, active development of paradiplomacy in the 1990s was based on the conflict between the federal center and the power groups of the region, whose main motivation was the desire to overcome the economic asymmetry of the Russian regions. That resulted in separatism and the rise of identity paradiplomacy building on the Ural identity. Mainstreaming the regional identity served the practical interests of elites both in internal political legitimation and in establishing

their international economic, political and cultural personality. Starting from the early 2000s, the region's paradiplomacy evolved from a conflict model towards a compromise and close cooperation with the federal center. The changes affected the legal framework, as well as the modalities of the region's international relations. The regional authorities put emphasis on holding large-scale international political, sports and cultural events along with development of foreign trade ties of the region. Despite sanctions imposed on the Russian Federation and the COVID-19 pandemic, the Sverdlovsk region managed to maintain stable indicators of foreign economic activities, which at the present stage are the crucial component of the region's paradiplomacy. Over the last years the Sverdlovsk region became

one of the leading in Russia in terms of the volume of non-resource exports, which indicates the success of the region's foreign economic policy aimed at finding new markets and developing new technologies.

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APPLICATIONS

Table 1. The results of Governors of the Sverdlovsk region in concluding international treaties

Governor	Term	Number of concluded agreements	List of states
E.E. Rossel	August 25, 1995 – November 23, 2009	22	Armenia, Belarus, Bulgaria, China, Finland, Georgia, Hungary, Italy, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Slovakia, Tajikistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Vietnam
A.S. Misharin	November 23, 2009 – May 14, 2012	1	Abkhazia
E.V. Kuyvashev	May 29, 2012 – present	9	Azerbaijan, China, Czech Republic, Kyrgyzstan, India, Iran, Moldova, Poland, South Africa

Table 2. Key Foreign Trade Indicators, million of USD in 2017–2020

	2017	2018	2019	2020
Turnover	10,640	13,144	12,002	12,282
Exports	6,925	8,570	7,352	7,636
Imports	3,715	4,574	4,650	4,645
Balance	3,210	3,996	2,701	2,991

Table 3. Key Trading Partners of the Sverdlovsk Region in 2017–2020 with Trade Turnover Exceeding 1 Million USD

Rank place	2017	2018	2019	2020
1	United States	China	China	China
2	China	United States	United States	Germany
3	Kazakhstan	Kazakhstan	Kazakhstan	Kazakhstan
4	Germany	Germany	Germany	United States
5	Greece	France	Algeria	Turkey
6	Czech Republic	Vietnam	France	Algeria
7	France	Iraq	Belarus	Egypt
8	Iraq	India	The Netherlands	Uzbekistan
9	Italy	Belarus	Czech Republic	Belarus
10	Belarus	Austria	Serbia	The Netherlands

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