

MACROECONOMIC STABILITY OF THE BRICS AND THE POTENTIAL FOR IMPROVING FOREIGN TRADE COOPERATION WITH SERBIA

Sanja FILIPOVIĆ¹, Jelena IGNJATOVIĆ², Ivona LAĐEVAC³

ABSTRACT

The aim of this research is to evaluate the macroeconomic stability of the BRICS and to determine the potential of Serbia's foreign trade cooperation with its members. The macroeconomic analysis is based on comparative statistical data for 2000-2022, showing that the BRICS countries, compared to the G7, have higher economic growth rates. However, the standard of living is almost six times lower. On average, inflation and unemployment in the BRICS are higher than in the G7. The BRICS have a twice lower average public debt to GDP, while the external debt ratio to GDP is six times lower than in the G7. Except for China, the BRICS countries' exports are dominated by resources and products of low-tech processing and export of medium- and high-tech products and capital-intensive products is low. With the exception of China and Russia (with whom Serbia has concluded a Free Trade Agreement), foreign trade with the other BRICS member countries is insignificant, and Serbia has a trade deficit with them. Determining the possibilities for improving trade exchange requires a more detailed analysis of the complementarity of economies and the liberalization of trade regimes. However, geographical distance is the main obstacle.

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received:
13 April 2024
Revised:
23 May 2024
Accepted:
30 May 2024

KEYWORDS

BRICS; Serbia;
G7; EU;
macroeconomic
stability; foreign
trade exchange.

Cite this article as: Filipović, Sanja, Jelena Ignjatović, and Ivona Lađevac. 2024. "Macroeconomic Stability of the BRICS and the Potential for Improving Foreign Trade Cooperation with Serbia". *The Review of International Affairs* LXXV (1191): 217–240. https://doi.org/10.18485/iipe_ria.2024.75.1191.2

¹ Principal Research Fellow and Full Professor, Institute of Social Sciences and Singidunum University, Belgrade, Serbia. E-mail: sfilipovic@singidunum.ac.rs, <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8166-8042>

² Lecturer, Academy of Applied Studies Šabac, Šabac, Serbia. E-mail: j.ignjatovic@akademija.sabac.edu.rs, <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9946-6916>

³ Senior Research Fellow, Institute of International Politics and Economics, Belgrade, Serbia. E-mail: ivona@diplomacy.bg.ac.rs, <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4052-4426>

Introduction

The global world economy is defined by a new reality, which in the last decade implies not only the struggle for economic supremacy between the United States and the People's Republic of China as the leading world economies (Nikolić and Zvezdanović-Lobanova 2022; Filipović and Ignjatović 2021), but also an increasing bloc division among the most developed world economies within the Group of Seven (G7)⁴ and the BRICS member countries.⁵

Generally, both groups are informal organisations created to solve grave global challenges. The G7 was set up in 1975 when the heads of the Russian annexation of Crimea in 2014, Russia's membership state, and the governments of the six leading industrial countries met to discuss the enormous economic problems the world was facing in the 1970s. Canada joined the G7 in 1976 and Russia in 1998; however, after that, it was suspended. On the other hand, the BRICS is an informal group of states that share a commitment to restructure the global political, economic, and financial architecture in a fair, balanced, and representative way. Although the growing importance of these countries in the global economy was pointed out in 2001 when the acronym BRIC was coined (O'Neill 2001), the First BRIC Summit was organised in June 2009 in Yekaterinburg, Russia. The First Summit was primarily devoted to the effects of the global economic crisis and development strategies. In addition, the necessity of a reform of international financial institutions and the United Nations was also indicated (BRICS 2024). With the accession of South Africa to the block in 2011 came the alignment of common goals and the improvement of cooperation within the member countries (EFSAS 2023; Mancheri and Shantanu 2011; Acharya, Kumwenda-Mtambo and Janowski 2023).

The motive for creating the BRIC bloc is based on criticism of the existing international financial order (Xun 2014) and, above all, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank and the reaffirmation of the role of the United Nations (Lađevac 2021). The BRICS countries strongly criticise the work, policy, and attitude of the World Bank and the IMF towards developing countries (Muhumed and Gaas 2016), while they demand consistent application of the principles of the rule of international law from the United Nations. The BRICS advocates the introduction of a new world currency instead of the dominance of the dollar, which accounts for almost 90% of global foreign exchange transactions (Savage 2023) and thus not only enables numerous

⁴ Members of the G7 are: the United States, Canada, Japan, Germany, France, Italy, the United Kingdom, and, additionally, the European Union (EU) as a "non-enumerated member".

⁵ Members of the BRICS are: Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa. All BRICS countries are part of the Group of 20 (G20) major economies.

advantages of the United States in international trade and financial transactions (Bertaut, von Beschwitz and Curcuru 2023) but also encourages the concern of BRICS policymakers over the macroeconomic impacts of dollar dominance on emerging markets.

Advocating for de-dollarisation (Papa 2023; Greene 2023) and the creation of more favourable models of financing infrastructure and development projects for developing countries, the BRICS countries set up the New Development Bank (NDB), which began operating in 2016 (NDB 2023). The founding capital of the NDB was USD 100 billion, of which China invested USD 41 billion, Brazil, Russia, and India USD 18 billion and South Africa USD 5 billion (Zakić 2019; Cattaneo, Biziwick and Fryer 2015; Biziwick, Cattaneo and Fryer 2015). Each of the BRICS members has an equal number of NDB shares (2024). The board of directors consists of the governors (ministries of finance) of the BRICS member countries, and the bank's headquarters is in Shanghai. The NDB has so far approved the financing of 98 projects that contribute to sustainable development (Clean Energy and Energy Efficiency, Transport Infrastructure, Water and Sanitation, Environmental Protection, Social Infrastructure, and Digital Infrastructure) in all member countries in the amount of about USD 32.8 billion (NDB 2023; 2024). The NDB conducts all bilateral transactions between member countries of the bloc and approves financing in their national currencies (Savage and Goh, 2023). As financing in local currency facilitates trade between bloc members at lower costs through the promotion of trade in local currency, the NDB provides financing and loans to development projects, both in the bloc and in developing countries (NDB 2017a). By financing infrastructure and sustainable development projects in BRICS and developing countries (Devonshire-Ellis and Ramezani Bonesh 2023; NDB 2017a), the NDB is a counterpart to the World Bank (Simić 2015, 210; Mazenda and Ncwadi 2016). The bloc is on the verge of developing its own gold-backed global reserve currency (Devonshire-Ellis and Ramezani Bonesh 2023), and an international payment system is being developed (Maheshwari 2023) aiming to reduce reliance on SWIFT (Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication) that is strongly influenced by the US banks.

The NDB supports China in the Cross-Border Interbank Payment System (CIPS) based on cross-border transactions denominated in yuan (CIPS 2024). In 2016, in an effort to internalise the yuan, China issued yuan-denominated bonds through the NDB (Goh 2018) and created a yuan credit line to support infrastructure and development projects in the bloc. The NDB signed agreements with financial institutions in China (China Development Bank, Industrial and Commercial Bank of China, and Bank of China) to promote the yuan in cross-border transactions, currency exchange, project financing, and investments (Kenton 2023; NDB 2017b). The share of the Chinese renminbi in

the total trade within the BRICS bloc is about 47%, with a tendency for further growth (Gnidchenko 2023). An important instrument in strengthening the financial policy of the NDB is the Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA) between the BRICS central banks (European Parliament 2014) that provides support to the BRICS members in conditions of sudden currency crises, balance of payments, and liquidity problems. Additionally, within the BRICS financial cooperation, there is a Financial Forum, which consists of national development financial institutions (SABTT 2024).

The COVID crisis further triggered developing countries to show their dissatisfaction with the global order, and since then, over 20 countries have applied to join the BRICS (MEMO 2023), most of which are members of China's Belt and Road Initiative (Lađevac 2018). Mexico, Pakistan, Syria, Turkey, and Uruguay have expressed interest in joining but have not submitted a formal request (Devonshire-Ellis 2022). In August 2023, a decision was made to expand the bloc starting January 1, 2024 (Sharma 2023), which includes Argentina (Argentina withdrew the request after the presidential elections), Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and the United Arab Emirates (Ntengento 2023).

Taking into account trends in the global economy but also the strengthening of economic cooperation with China on the one hand, as well as the long-term process of accession of the Republic of Serbia to the EU and the policy of conditionality on the other hand, the idea that Serbia should reconsider the possibilities of joining the BRICS bloc became promoted in the public. Although Serbia has officially opted for the EU integration process, it can enter into trade agreements with other countries or organisations before joining the EU if they do not conflict with the Association and Stabilisation Agreement. Nevertheless, that idea requires complex analyses, where the analysis of official statistical data should be the first step. Considering the macroeconomic stability of the BRICS bloc and the upward trend in foreign trade relations among Serbia and the BRICS member countries (i.e., China and Russia), the aim of this paper is to determine the possibilities for improving Serbia's foreign trade cooperation with the BRICS bloc.

Comparison of Macroeconomic Stability Indicators of the BRICS and G7

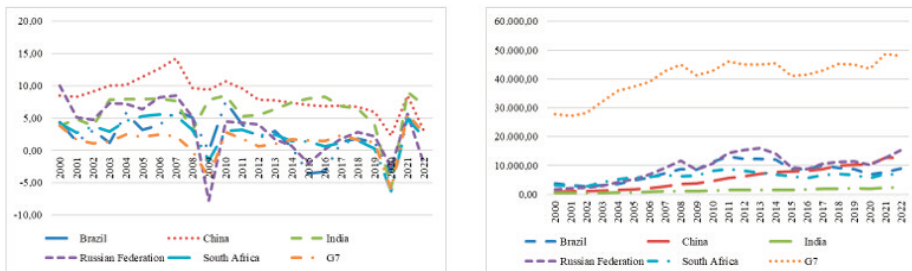
In order to assess the macroeconomic stability of the member countries of the BRICS bloc, this chapter will provide a comparative analysis of selected indicators among the G7 group and the BRICS member countries. Macroeconomic stability will be analysed based on three main indicators: the real gross domestic product rate (GDP), the inflation rate at the end of the year, and the unemployment rate. In addition, the change in the standard of living

measured as GDP per capita, as well as public debt and external debt expressed as a percent of GDP, will be analysed. In order to get an impression of the dynamics of changes, the period from 2000 to 2022 will be covered in a comparative data analysis.

In the period 2000-2022, the average GDP growth rate in the BRICS bloc was 4.4%, thanks to the high growth rates of China (8.4%) and India (6.0%), while the G7 recorded 1.3% of the real growth rate. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, BRICS had a recession of -3.1% in 2020 (South Africa had the biggest recession at -6.3%, followed by India at -5.8%, Brazil at -3.2%, and Russia at -2.6%), while the recession in the G7 was -6.1% (Figure 1). The BRICS countries had an average economic growth of 6.6% in 2021 (Brazil 4.9%, Russia 5.6%, India 9.5%, China 8.4%, and South Africa 4.9%), which is also the highest level of economic growth since the creation of the bloc, while the G7 recorded 5.6%. It is predicted that the BRICS economic growth will be 3% in 2024 (Brazil 1.4%, Russia 1.2%, India 6.4%, China 4.6%, and South Africa 1.5%), while the G7 is predicted to grow by only 1% (World Bank 2023).

In the observed period 2000-2022, all the countries of the BRICS bloc recorded an increase in the standard of living that amounted to USD 6082 per capita on average (Russia had the highest standard of living on average of USD 9349, and India had the lowest standard of living of only USD 1313), while the G7 recorded USD 40745 per capita, almost six times more (World Bank 2024). During the COVID-19 pandemic, all countries except China (USD 10408) experienced a decline in living standards (Figure 2). Despite the sanctions, it should be noted that in 2022, Russia recorded an increase in the standard of living to as much as USD 15345 (World Bank 2024).

Figure 1 and 2: Real growth rate of GDP (in %) and GDP per capita (in current USD,) in BRICS countries and G7



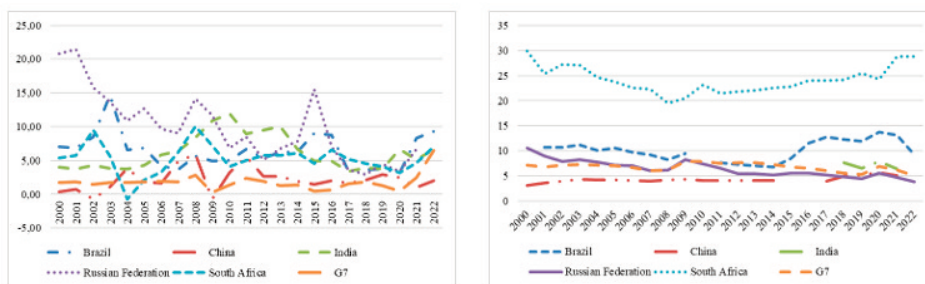
Source: World Bank 2024.

In the period 2000-2022, Russia had the most pronounced problem of an annual inflation rate (as much as 20.8% in 2000), while the BRICS bloc's average

was 5.9% compared to 1.7% of inflation in the G7 (Figure 3). At the time of the escalation of the COVID-19 pandemic (2020), the average inflation for the bloc countries was 3.7%, while the G7 recorded an average inflation of only 0.4%. At the time of the energy crisis in 2022, average inflation was almost equal in the G7 (6.5%) and the BRICS (6.2%) (World Bank 2024).

Unemployment did not change significantly in the observed period; the average rate was 11.1% (South Africa 24.2%, Brazil 10.8%, Russia 6.4%, India 5.7%, and China 4.2%), while the G7 recorded an average unemployment rate of 6.7%. If the Republic of South Africa is excluded, the level of unemployment for the entire observed period is identical in the BRICS (6.8%) as in the G7 (6.8%). Among the BRICS countries, the problem of unemployment is the most pronounced in South Africa (Ngubane, Mndebele and Kaseeram 2023), where the rate of unemployment is not below 20% (Figure 4). The COVID crisis led not only to a recession and a drop in living standards but also to an increase in unemployment to the level of 11.2% (2020), while the G7 recorded 6.9%. With the onset of the energy crisis (2022), unemployment in the bloc reached an average of 13.9%, while the G7 recorded 6.1% (World Bank 2024).

Figure 3 and 4: Annual inflation rate (in %) and Unemployment rate (in %) in BRICS countries and G7



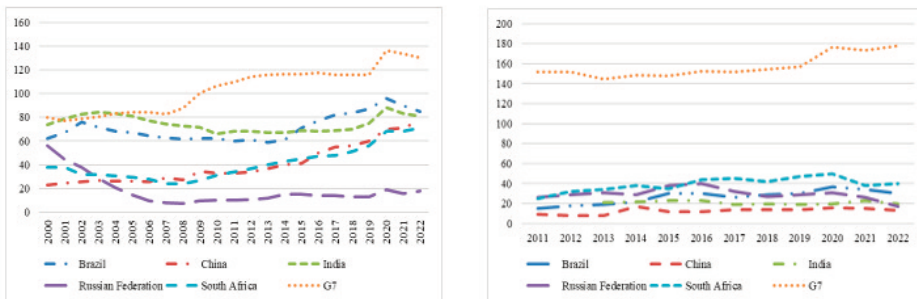
Source: World Bank 2024.

In the period 2000-2022, the average public debt as a percentage of GDP for the BRICS countries was 49%. The highest rate was recorded in India (74.7%) and Brazil (71.2%), while the lowest public debt was recorded in Russia (18.1% of GDP). On the other hand, the public debt as a percentage of GDP in G7 was 103.5%, with a significant increase after 2008 (IMF 2023a). After the COVID-19 pandemic, all countries recorded an increase in general government gross debt (Figure 5), which increased the government budget deficit. According to the latest data for 2022, the average government deficit in the BRICS countries was -5.5% of GDP (BRICS Plus -2.9%), while in the G7 group was -4.5% of GDP. The

highest deficit in 2022 was recorded in India (-9.6%) and in the United Kingdom (-6.2%) (Country economy 2023). The IMF projections for 2024 are that the countries of the BRICS bloc will increase the level of public debt to 71.5% of GDP (Brazil 90.3%, China 87.4%, India 82.3%, South Africa 75.8%, and Russia 21.8%), but this is still a lower level compared to the G7 with public debt of 128.6% (Japan is recorder with public debt of 251.9% of GDP) (IMF 2023a).

The G7 is more indebted than the BRICS bloc, which is in accordance with the research findings showing that an increase in foreign debt was present in European countries after the global economic crisis (Filipović, Raspopović and Tošković 2015). For the considering period, the average level of external debt in the G7 was 157.2% of GDP, while the BRICS had an external debt of only 25.9% of GDP (South Africa 39.1%, Russia 29.5%, Brazil 26.6%, and India 21%), while China had the lowest debt ratio (12.96%). The reason for high indebtedness in the countries of the G7 group is reflected in the high level of foreign debt of the United Kingdom (319.3% of GDP), France (220.7%), and Germany (155%). With the outbreak of the pandemic and the energy crisis, there was an increase in external debt in all countries (Figure 6) (Ceicdata 2023; Focus economics 2023; Global data 2024; IMF 2023c).

Figure 5 and 6: Public Debt (in %) and External debt (in %) in BRICS countries and G7



Source: IMF 2023a; Ceic data 2023.

In January 2024, five more countries joined the BRICS bloc (BRICS Plus), some of which have problems with inflation (Iran, Ethiopia), unemployment (South Africa) and high levels of indebtedness (Egypt). In addition, Ethiopia, the second most populated country in Africa, which was once Africa's fastest-growing economy, is now recovering from a civil war and has a problem with human rights violations. Even though Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Iran are not only members of the BRICS but also of the OPEC organisation (largest oil exporter), these countries have strained international relations. Despite their

traditional cooperation with the US, Saudi Arabia and the UAE have begun strengthening cooperation with China, the US's biggest competitor. On the other hand, through the mediation of China, Saudi Arabia and Iran, as traditional dissidents, began the restoration of diplomatic relations. Although the strongest economic power, China faces the problem of an ageing population (Filipović and Ignjatović 2023), uneven development, and a slowdown in economic activity. In addition, China and India traditionally have a border conflict but also an aspiration for leadership in the global south.

BRICS Power of Resources

Although there are huge differences between the BRICS countries in socio-political organisation and culture, they are also characterised by certain similarities. First, those are countries with a large population, where India (1.428 billion) and China (1.425 billion inhabitants) are the most populated countries in the world, while Brazil is in seventh place, Russia in tenth place, and South Africa in twenty-fourth place (Worldometer 2024). On the other hand, the seven most developed industrial countries of the G7 have a population of 776.2 million (IMF 2023b). Second, the BRICS bloc's countries are large in area, where Russia ranks first in world landmass (11%), China third (6.3%), Brazil fifth (5.6%), India seventh (2.0%), and South Africa in twenty-fifth place (0.8%) (World Bank 2024). Third, all these countries are rich in natural resources (arable land and forestry, fossil fuels, lithium, nickel, copper, manganese, graphite, and other critical minerals) and base their economic growth on their exports (Huang 2024; Wilson 2015). Brazil is one of the largest producers and exporters of agricultural goods in the world; Russia has energy resources (oil and gas), metals, and minerals; India has a strong development in the information technology sector; China dominates the sectors of production, trade, and investment; and South Africa has the largest gold deposits in the world. Fourth, according to the GNI per capita (Atlas method) for 2022, according to the criteria of the World Bank, China, Russia, and Brazil are classified in the upper-middle income group (USD 4,256-13,205), while only India belongs to the lower-middle income group (USD 1,086-4,255) (Hamadeh et al. 2022).

Even though the BRICS make up more than 40% of the world's population (Statista 2024b), while the G7 countries make up about 10% of the world's population (BMZ 2024), the BRICS countries have only 15% of the voting rights in the IMF (Tran 2023) and therefore want changes in the management of this financial institution (Tett 2010).

Considering GDP in PPP, the G7 accounts for about 29.9% of global GDP and the BRICS for 36.9%. In 1995, the share of the G7 in the world GDP was 44.7%, compared to 16.9% for the BRICS (IMF 2023b). Today, the five BRICS countries

together account for nearly 31.5% of global GDP (Business Standard 2023), compared to the G7, which accounts for around 45% (BMZ 2024). The BRICS Plus generates almost 37% of world GDP (Lordache 2023), and the share of the BRICS economies in global GDP is predicted to rise to 50% by 2030 (Devonshire-Ellis 2022). According to the State Bank of India (SBI) report (2023), China has a share of 70% in the value of GDP in the bloc, India 11%, Russia 8%, Brazil 7%, and South Africa 2%. The five new BRICS members will together have a share of around 9% in GDP, namely Saudi Arabia (4%), the UAE, and Iran (2% each), while Ethiopia's GDP will have a negligible effect. Considering the share in global exports (trade in goods) over 2000-2022, the BRICS Plus increased the group's share from 20.1% to 24.6%. China had the largest share in global exports (14.4%), followed by the United Arab Emirates (2.4%) and Russia (2.1%) (Statista 2024a).

By expanding, the BRICS group is also strengthened in terms of resources. According to Federal Newswire reports (2023), the BRICS Plus would have 72% of rare earth resources (and three of the five countries with the largest reserves), i.e., 75% of the world's manganese, 50% of the world's graphite, 28% of the world's nickel, and 10% of the world's copper (excluding Iranian reserves). The expansion of the BRICS could have important implications for investment in energy and trade since it brings together countries rich in energy and other resources but also countries with rapidly growing consumption of them. Thus, Saudi Arabia began significant investments in lithium, nickel, and copper mines in Brazil to enable the production of 500,000 electric vehicles per year by 2030 (Baskaran and Cahill 2023). Iran possesses significant amounts of several critical minerals. It is second in the world in zinc and copper reserves. Given that, due to economic sanctions, Iran has not been able to initiate investments to increase production, there are indications that the bloc will invest in Iranian production in exchange for copper, zinc, and lithium.

Although the world is striving to reduce the use of fossil fuels, the global oil market is still of crucial importance to the members of the BRICS bloc. With the bloc expansion to the BRICS Plus, the share in world oil production increased from 20.4% to 43% of world oil production (SBI 2023), while the rest of the world has a share of 56.9% (Table 1). The inclusion of Saudi Arabia, the largest oil exporter in the world (12.9% of total exports), may contribute to de-dollarization because China, the largest oil importer, advocates payment in the Chinese yuan (Baskaran and Cahill, 2023). Oil production records approximately the same production level in the countries of the bloc and the G7 group. The largest oil producers in the BRICS Plus are Russia (11118.3 thousand barrels per day) and Saudi Arabia (11732) (Energy Institute 2023), which means that Saudi Arabia and Russia are in the top three world oil producers, next to the United States (13866.2) as a leader.

Table 1: Oil production in BRICS Plus, 2022

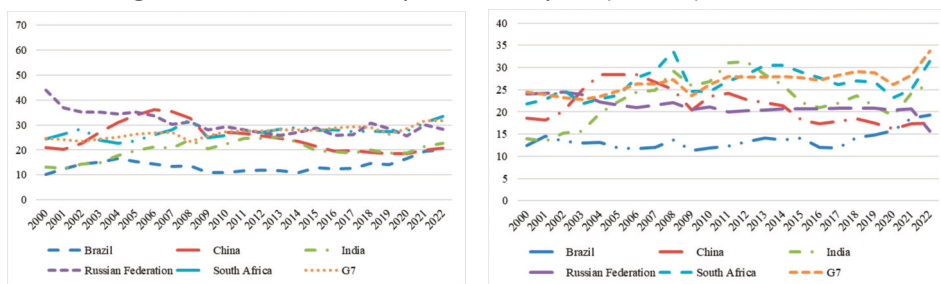
	Original BRICS member	Thousand Barrels per Day	World share (%)
Saudi Arabia	No	12.136	12,9
Russian Federation	Yes	11.202	11,9
China	Yes	4.111	4,4
United Arab Emirates	No	4.020	4,3
Iran, Islamic Rep.	No	3.822	4,1
Brazil	Yes	3.107	3,3
India	Yes	737	0,8
Egypt, Arab Rep.	No	613	0,7
Ethiopia	No	0	0
South Africa	Yes	0	0

Source: Energy Institute 2023.

Among the BRICS countries, the main exporter of industrial products is China, the main exporters of textile goods are China and India, and Brazil, India, and South Africa dominate in the export of agricultural products. In the chemical industry, Russia dominates as the largest exporter of fertilizers compared to China and South Africa (Ahad Bhat, Jamal and Beg 2022). In the area of steel products, all five countries are in competition, while in the area of transport equipment, China has no competition (Wang, Zhao and Chu 2018).

The exports of the BRICS countries are dominated by resources and products of low-tech processing, while the exports of medium- and high-tech products and capital-intensive products are low. The average export of the bloc countries in the period 2008-2022 amounted to 22.9% of GDP, while imports amounted to 21.4% of GDP (World Bank 2024) (Figures 7 and 8). Imports are dominated by mineral products, chemical products, and electromechanical products.

Figure 7 and 8: BRICS export and import (% GDP), 2000-2022



Source: World Bank 2024.

Considering the value of foreign trade among the BRICS countries, China takes the lead. China is the most important foreign trade partner for all bloc countries in imports and exports (the only exception is India, where China is not in the top three export markets). According to ITC (2024), in terms of export value, China ranks first in the world, followed by India and Russia. China's exports are dominated by industrial products, while the exports of other member countries are dominated by mineral fuels, agricultural goods, and other raw materials (Table 2).

Table 2: The largest foreign trade partners BRICS, 2022⁶

	Import			Export		
	Main trade partner	The largest share (%), partner	Top 3 products and share in a world export (%)	Main trade partner	The largest share (%), partner	Top 3 products and share in a world export (%)
Brasil	China US Argentina	22% 19% 4.8%	mineral fuels and oils, bituminous substances (1.2%), nuclear reactors, boilers, machines and devices (1.3%), electrical equipment, sound recorders and players, televisions (0.8%)	China US Argentina	26.8% 11.3% 4.6%	mineral fuels and oils, bituminous materials (1.6%), oilseeds and grains, seeds and fruits (32%), ores, slag and ash (10%).
Russia	China Germany Tukey	38.2% 7.8% 4.7%	nuclear reactors, boilers, machines and devices (1.3%), electrical equipment, sound recorders and players, televisions (0.6%), vehicles (except for railways and trams) (0.9%).	China Germany Tukey	19.7% 10.1% 7%	mineral fuels and oils, bituminous substances (9.8%), Consumer goods (3.4%), natural or refined pearls, precious and semi-precious stones, precious and coated metals (2.8%).
India	China UAE US	14% 7.4% 7.1%	fuels and oils, bituminous materials, minerals (6.5% share in world exports), pearls, precious or semi-precious stones, precious metals, (8.4%), electrical machines and equipment, sound recorders and players, television (1.9%).	US UAE Netherlands	17.7% 6.9% 4.1%	mineral fuels and oils, bituminous substances (2.8% share of world exports), pearls, precious and semi-precious stones, precious metals (4.3%), nuclear reactors, boilers, machinery and mechanical devices (1, 1%).
China	Chinese Taipei R. Korea Japan	8.8% 7.4% 6.8%	electrical machines and equipment, sound recorders and players, televisions (16.4% share of world exports), mineral fuels and oils, bituminous substances (12.6%), ores, slag and ash (60.2%).	US Hong Kong Japan	16.2% 8.3% 4.8%	electrical machinery and equipment, sound recorders and players, television (26.8% of world exports), nuclear reactors, boilers, machines and mechanical devices (22.1%), vehicles (except railways or trams) (9.6%).
South Africa	China India Germany	20.1% 7.5% 7.4%	mineral fuels and oils, bituminous substances (0.6% share in world exports), nuclear reactors, boilers, machines and mechanical devices (0.5%), electrical machines and equipment, sound recorders and players, television (0.3%).	China US Germany	9.7% 8.9% 8.1%	pearls, precious or semi-precious stones, precious metals (2.9% of world exports), mineral fuels and oils, bituminous substances (0.5%), nuts, slag and ash (5%).

Source: Authors on the base ITC 2024.

⁶ Export concentration means the degree to which a country's exports are concentrated on a small number of products, ie a small number of trading partners.

In 2022, Brazil, Russia, and South Africa mostly exported to China (oilseeds, fruits, cereals, industrial or medical equipment, ores, slag and ash, mineral fuels and oils, bituminous substances and minerals, wood and its products, coal, pearls, precious and semi-precious stones, precious metals, pharmaceutical products, iron, steel and copper). India and China mostly exported to the United States (electrical machines and equipment, sound recorders and players, televisions, nuclear reactors, boilers, machines and devices, toys, games and sports, iron, steel and copper).

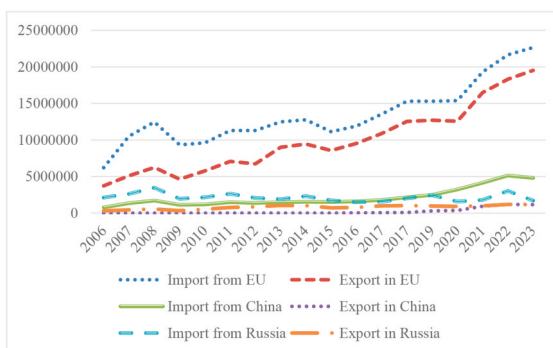
Brazil, Russia, India, and South Africa mostly imported from China (mineral fuels and oils, bituminous substances, minerals, nuclear reactors, boilers, machines and devices, plastics and organic chemicals). China imported the most from Chinese Taipei (electrical machines and equipment, sound recorders and players, television, nuclear reactors, boilers, machines and mechanics, and plastics) (ITC 2024).

Serbia's Foreign Trade Exchange of Goods

The Most Important Foreign Trading Partners of Serbia

By the value of foreign trade exchange in 2023, the EU is the most important foreign trade partner of Serbia, with a share of 59.8% in the total foreign trade, followed by the CEFTA countries (9.2%), China (8.4%), and Russia (4.1%) (ITC 2024). In the period 2006-2023, Serbia had the highest increase in foreign trade of goods with the EU, while the increase in foreign trade with China has been noticeable since 2019 (Figure 9). Electricity, crude oil, petroleum gas, packaged medicines, and cars have the largest share of Serbia's imports. In exports, the following goods are dominant: insulated wire, copper ore, electricity, rubber tyres, and electric motors (OEC 2024).

Figure 9: Serbian foreign trade of goods – the EU-27, China and Russia, EUR thousand



Source: ITC 2024.

Foreign trade exchange between Serbia and the EU has evolved significantly since the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) entered into force in 2013. However, two previous agreements from 2000 and 2009 contributed greatly to the growth of mutual foreign trade. According to ITC data for 2023, Serbia exports 63.4% of goods to the EU and imports 57.1% of goods from the EU. The Serbian coverage of imports by exports is 84% (in 2009, it was 48%). The share of the deficit with the EU in relation to the total trade deficit decreased from 58.8% (2013) to 35.1% (2023). In the trade exchange with the EU, Serbia records a surplus in agricultural product trade. The most important EU export and import markets (2023) for Serbia were Germany (15.2% of total exports and 13.1% of total imports), Italy (6.2% export and 7.3% import), and Hungary (5.5% export and 4.2% import). Among the EU countries, Serbia has the largest trade deficit with Germany, Hungary, and Poland and the largest surplus with Romania, Bulgaria, and Slovakia (ITC 2024).

The Government of Serbia signed the Free Trade Agreement with China in October 2023, which should become operational in 2024. The Free Trade Agreement refers to 10,412 products from Serbia and 8,930 products from China, whose trade will be gradually liberalized. After fifteen years, full liberalisation (exemption from paying customs duties and other fees) will apply to products from about 90% of tariff codes. Serbian government officials have highlighted that this agreement will increase the export of the following domestic products: apples, plums, peaches, soy oil, wine, pharmaceuticals, and industrial products. According to ITC data for 2023, Serbia exports 3.8% of total exports to China and imports 12.1% of goods from China. Although there has been an increase in exchange since 2019, the trade deficit in absolute terms shows significant growth, whereby the share of the deficit with China in the total Serbian deficit increased from 11.5% (2006) to 41.1% (2023).

Serbia's foreign trade exchange with the CEFTA countries is the result of an agreement signed by Serbia in December 2006. The agreement resulted in opening the market for investors, increasing trade for all signatory countries (under the same conditions), and improving access to the EU market. According to ITC data for 2023, Serbia exports 18.3% of total goods to the CEFTA and imports 4.5% of goods from the CEFTA. Within the CEFTA group, Serbia is the largest exporter and importer and achieved a surplus of 9.2% in 2023. The most significant volume of foreign trade among the signatories of the CEFTA agreement is with Bosnia and Herzegovina, followed by North Macedonia and Montenegro. After Germany and Italy, Bosnia and Herzegovina was Serbia's largest export market in 2023, while Montenegro was in fourth place.

Russia is Serbia's fourth most important foreign trade partner in terms of foreign trade exchange value. The Free Trade Agreement with Russia was signed in 2000, and the new Free Trade Agreement between Serbia and the Eurasian

Economic Union (EAEU) came into force in July 2021. The agreement enables free trade, i.e., the export of goods from Serbia to the EAEU market without customs duties. The agreement should increase trade between Serbia and Kazakhstan, Belarus, Armenia and Kyrgyzstan, especially in agricultural products, but also improve trade in agricultural products with Russia. According to ITC data for 2023, Serbia exports 3.9% of total goods to Russia and imports 4.3% of goods from Russia. In the period 2006-2023, the share of Serbian exports to Russia amounted to 5.4% on average, while the imports share was up to 10%. Despite the signed Free Trade Agreement, there has been a weak dynamic of mutual exchange in recent years related to the Western sanctions against Russia (Nikolić 2021). There was no significant change in the trade deficit in absolute terms, while the share of the deficit with Russia in relation to the total Serbian deficit reduced from 27.2% in 2006 to 6% in 2023 (ITC 2024).

Foreign Trade between Serbia and the BRICS Countries

Among the members of the BRICS bloc, China and Russia belong to the group of the most important foreign trade partners, while the volume of foreign trade exchange with the other countries of the bloc is modest. Considering Serbian total exports in 2023, within the BRICS bloc, the most important partner was Russia (7th position), followed by China (9th place). Brazil was in 32nd place, India was 53rd, and South Africa was in 63rd place. Taking into consideration Serbian imports in 2023, China was in 2nd place, Russia in 5th place, India in 31st place, South Africa in 40th place, and Brazil only in 47th place.

The largest import from the BRICS countries (2023) was from China (12.1%) and Russia (4.3%), while other countries did not exceed 0.8% (India) and 0.2% of total imports (South Africa and Brazil). Serbian exports were highest in Russia (3.9%) and China (3.8%), while exports to Brazil, India and South Africa did not exceed 0.3% (Table 3). The highest share among the BRICS countries in total Serbian deficit is with China (41.1%), followed by Russia (6.0%), India (3.7%), Brazil (0.1%), and South Africa (1.1%) (ITC 2024).

Considering the value of Serbian foreign trade in 2023, Serbia mostly imports mineral fuels (Russia), electrical machinery and equipment (China), coffee, tea, spices (Brazil), aluminium and organic chemicals (India), ores (South Africa), and exports ores (China and Brazil), nuclear reactors, boilers, machinery (Russia) and electrical machinery (India, South Africa).

Table 3: Serbian foreign trade of goods with BRICS countries in 2023

		Import			Export		
		Value 2023 (US Dollar thousand)	The largest value, product	Top 3 products and share in a world export (%)	Value 2023 (US Dollar thousand)	The largest value, product	Top 3 products and share in a world export (%)
Serbia	Brazil	105,445	42,349 8,058 7,582	Coffee, tea, maté and spices; Plastics and articles thereof; Miscellaneous edible preparations.	99,967	74,446 8,395 8,344	Ores, slag and ash Nuclear reactors, boilers, machines and mechanical devices Plastics and articles thereof
	Russia	1,724,089	1,200,994 215,092 44,022	Mineral fuels, mineral oils Fertilisers Inorganic chemicals; organic or inorganic compounds of precious metals,	1,195,699	231,222 130,276 88,234	Nuclear reactors, boilers, machinery, mechanical appliances Articles of apparel and clothing accessories, knitted or crocheted Edible fruit and nuts; peel of citrus fruit or melons
	India	353,827	36,919 34,428 32,685	Aluminium and articles thereof Organic chemicals Electrical machinery and equipment	28,68	8,568 5,744 5,620	Electrical machinery and equipment Edible fruit and nuts; peel of citrus fruit or melons Nuclear reactors, boilers, machinery and mechanical appliances
	China	4,801,081	1,040,721 964,217 886,827	Electrical machinery and equipment; Commodities not elsewhere specified; Nuclear reactors, boilers, machinery and mechanical appliances	1,159,902	762,734 302,186 36,312	Ores, slag and ash; Copper and articles thereof; Wood and articles of wood; wood charcoal
	South Africa	116,716	89,417 8,760 8,672	Ores, slag and ash Edible fruit and nuts; peel of citrus fruit or melons; Mineral fuels, mineral oils and products of their distillation	20,940	7,844 2,418 2,248	Electrical machinery and equipment and parts thereof; Paper and paperboard; articles of paper pulp; Nuclear reactors, boilers, machinery and mechanical appliances.

Source: ITC 2024.

Serbia has signed a trade agreement with Russia since 2000, while the trade agreement with China will become operational in 2024. Although the Republic of Serbia opted for European integration, Serbia has the right to conclude trade agreements with third countries until its full membership in the EU. Statistical data show that the volume of foreign trade exchange with the remaining three members of the BRICS bloc is modest, i.e., far below the realized value of trade exchange with Russia and China. Determining the possibilities for improving

trade exchange with these countries would require a more detailed analysis of the complementarity of economies and the liberalization of trade regimes. However, limitations should be taken into account, among which geographical distance is the main obstacle.

Although the general public increasingly hears the idea that Serbia should join the BRICS bloc, if one considers the effects on the improvement of foreign trade exchange and, above all, the possibility of increasing Serbia's exports to these countries, it should be borne in mind that the BRICS is an informal organisation. China is the dominant trading partner (independent of bloc membership) of all members (except India), and a trade agreement with China will become operational within the year. Likewise, although Serbia has concluded a foreign trade agreement with Russia since 2000, modest results have been achieved in increasing exports.

Conclusion

The growing interest of developing countries to join the BRICS bloc stems from their desire to change the global economic order. Although Serbia opted for European integration, the long-term process of accession to the EU and the gradual strengthening of economic relations with China raise the question of whether there are grounds for Serbia's accession to the BRICS bloc. Without the desire to enter a wider domain of discussion, this research was exclusively based on relevant statistical databases to determine whether the member countries of the BRICS bloc have macroeconomic stability and whether there are grounds for improving Serbia's foreign trade exchange with the BRICS members.

Considering the period 2000–2022, the research results showed that the BRICS bloc is characterised by certain elements of macroeconomic stability. The BRICS countries have common characteristics (large countries by area and population, rich in resources) that have enabled them to have a high level of resilience even in crisis periods. During 2000–2022, marked by several crises (the global economic crisis, the COVID crisis, and the energy crisis), the BRICS countries had higher average economic growth rates than the G7 – 4.4% compared to 1.3%. And yet, the average standard of living in the BRICS is almost six times lower than in the G7 – USD 6,082 compared to USD 40,745. Although the level of average inflation in the observed period in the BRICS bloc was higher (5.9%) than in the G7 (1.7%), during 2022, the level of inflation was almost identical. During the entire observed period, the countries of the BRICS bloc recorded an almost twice higher level of unemployment (11.1%) compared to the G7 (6.7%) – the reason for this is the high level of unemployment in the Republic of South Africa (24.2%). The BRICS had twice the average public debt as a percentage of GDP (49%) compared to the G7 (103.5%), while foreign debt

as a percentage of GDP was six times higher in the G7 (157.2%) than in the BRICS (25.9%).

As all BRICS countries are rich in natural resources, their economic growth is mainly based on the export of resources (the only exception is China). The exports of the BRICS countries are dominated by resources and products of low-tech processing, while the exports of medium- and high-tech products and capital-intensive products are low. China is the most important foreign trade partner for all BRICS countries, both as an import partner and as an export market (the only exception is India, where China is not in the top three export markets). China's exports are dominated by industrial products, while the exports of other member countries are dominated by mineral fuels, agricultural goods, and other raw materials.

According to the value of Serbia's foreign trade exchange, the EU is the most important foreign trade partner, followed by the CEFTA signatory countries, China and Russia. The foreign trade exchange between Serbia and the EU increased after the signing of the SAA in 2013. Serbia has a surplus in the foreign trade exchange of agricultural products with the EU, and there is a noticeable trend towards decreasing the total deficit. The most important foreign trade partners in the EU are Germany, Italy, and Hungary. Serbia's foreign trade exchange with the CEFTA countries is the result of an agreement from 2006, the primary goal of which is to improve the economic ties of the former Yugoslav republics through the liberalisation of trade, which abolishes customs tariffs, increases trade for all signatory countries (under the same conditions), and improves access to the EU market. With the CEFTA countries, Serbia has a surplus in foreign trade. Although the foreign trade exchange with China has been on an increasing trend since 2019, a significant increase in the absolute amount of the deficit has been noticed, which has led to an increase in the share of the deficit with China in relation to the total trade deficit from 11.5% (2006) to 41.1% (2023). In addition, the effects of the Free Trade Agreement, which is expected to become operational in 2024, are uncertain. Despite the signed Free Trade Agreement with Russia in 2000, in recent years, there has been a weak dynamic of mutual exchange, which is primarily related to the Western sanctions against Russia, which led to Russia's economic slowdown and a reduction in domestic demand. Besides, the share of the trade deficit with Russia within the total trade deficit of Serbia decreased from 27.2% in 2006 to 6% in 2023.

Apart from China and Russia, with which Serbia has signed foreign trade agreements, foreign trade exchange with other BRICS member countries is not significant, given that Brazil, India and South Africa are not among the ten most important foreign trade partners. Moreover, according to data for 2023, exports to Brazil, India and South Africa did not exceed 0.3% of the total value of exports,

while imports from India accounted for 0.8% of total imports and 0.2% from South Africa and Brazil. Serbia mostly imports coffee, tea, spices (Brazil), aluminium (India), ores (South Africa), exports ores (Brazil), and electrical machinery (India, South Africa). In addition to the non-complementary structure of goods, the reason for the low volume of foreign trade exchange stems from the fact that these are geographically distant countries.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: This paper is part of the project “Contributing to Modern Partnerships: Assessments of Sino-EU-Serbian Relations” (COMPASS), funded by the Science Fund of the Republic of Serbia (2023-2025), Grant No. 7294.

References

- Acharya, Bhargav, Olivia Kumwenda-Mtambo, and Tomasz Janowski. 2023. “What is BRICS, which countries want to join and why?”, *Reuters*, August 22, 2023. <https://www.reuters.com/world/what-is-brics-who-are-its-members-2023-08-21/>
- Ahad Bhat, Mudaser, Jamal Aamir, and Mirza Nazrana Beg. 2022. “Trade Integration and Export Aspiration: Evidence from India’s Trade in Goods with BRICS Countries”. *Organizations and Markets in Emerging Economies* 13 (2): 490-514.
- Baskaran, Gracelin, and Ben Cahill. 2023. “Six New BRICS: Implications for Energy Trade”, *CSIS*, August 25. <https://www.csis.org/analysis/six-new-brics-implications-energy-trade>
- Bertaut, Carol, Bastian von Beschwitz, and Stephanie Curcuru. 2023. “The International Role of the U.S. Dollar” Post-COVID Edition”, *FEDS Notes*, June 23. <https://www.federalreserve.gov/econres/notes/feds-notes/the-international-role-of-the-us-dollar-post-covid-edition-20230623.html>
- Biziwick, Mayamiko, Nicolette Cattaneo, and David Fryer. 2015. “The rationale for and potential role of the BRICS Contingent Reserve Arrangement”. *South African Journal of International Affairs* 22 (3): 307-324. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10220461.2015.1069208>
- [BMZ] Federal Ministry for Economics Cooperation and Development. 2024. “What is the G7 and how does it operate?”. Accessed March 24, 2024. <https://www.bmz.de/en/news/g7-presidency/what-is-the-g7-104148>
- BRICS. 2024. “Previous BRICS summits”. BRICS. Accessed February 15, 2024. http://en.brics2015.ru/russia_and_brics/20150301/19545.html

- Business Standard. 2023. "BRICS surpass G7 GDP, India, China major economies with fast growth", *Business Standard*, December 10, 2023. https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/brics-surpass-g7-gdp-india-china-major-economies-with-fast-growth-123042000484_1.html
- Cattaneo, Nikolette, Mayamiko Bizwick, and David Fryer. 2015. "The BRICS Contingent Reserve Arrangement and its Position in the Emerging Global Financial Architecture". *SAIIA Policy Insights* 10: 1-7. <https://saiia.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Policy-Insights-10.pdf>
- Ceic data. 2023. "Brazil External Debt: % of GDP". Ceic data. Accessed December 15, 2023. <https://www.ceicdata.com/en/indicator/brazil/external-debt-of-nominal-gdp>
- [CIPS] Cross-Border Interbank Payment System. 2024. "Participants". Accessed March 20, 2024. https://www.cips.com.cn/en/participants/participants_announcement/index.html
- Country economy. 2023. "Government budget deficit". Accessed October 30, 2023. <https://countryeconomy.com/deficit>
- Devonshire-Ellis, Chris. 2022. "The New Candidate Countries for BRICS Expansion", *ESSF*, November 9, 2022. <https://www.europe-solidaire.org/spip.php?article65466>
- Devonshire-Ellis, Chris, and Farzad Ramezani Bonesh. 2023. "Intra-BRICS Trade and Analysis 2023", *Silk Road Briefing*, September 4, 2023. <https://infobrics.org/post/39263/>
- [EFSAS] European Foundation for South Asian Studies. 2023. "The BRICS: Origins, Evolution & 2023 Expansion". *EFSAS Study Paper* 9, October 2023. <https://www.efsas.org/publications/study-papers/the-brics-origins-evolution-and-expansion/>
- Energy Institute. 2023. "Statistical Review of World Energy", *Energy Institute*, November 10, 2023. <https://www.energyinst.org/statistical-review/resources-and-data-downloads>
- European Parliament. 2014. "The BRICS Bank and Reserve Arrangement: towards a new global financial framework?". European Parliament. [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document/EPRS_ATA\(2014\)542178](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document/EPRS_ATA(2014)542178)
- Federal Newswire reports. 2023. "Brics expansion could threaten global energy security", *Federal Newswire*, January 5, 2023. <https://thefederalnews.wire.com/stories/649333359-brics-expansion-could-threaten-global-energy-security>

- Filipović, Sanja and Jelena Ignjatović. 2021. "International relations through the prism of the new technological division of power". *Međunarodni problemi* 73 (4): 637-666. <https://doi.org/10.2298/MEDJP2104637F>.
- Filipović, Sanja and Jelena Ignjatović. 2023. "The effects of Chinese population policy on the labour market". *Stanovništvo* 61(1): 69–89. <https://doi.org/10.2298/STNV220609003F>
- Filipović, Sanja, Neda Raspopović, and Jelena Tošković. 2015. "The impact of transitional reforms on the level of external debt in countries in transition". *Industrija* 43 (1): 175-191.
- Focus Economics. 2023. "Egypt External Debt", *Focus Economics*, December 20, 2023. <https://www.focus-economics.com/country-indicator/egypt/external-debt/#:~:text=External%20Debt%20in%20Egypt,informati%20%20visit%20our%20dedicated%20page>.
- Global data. 2024. "Canada's External Debt to GDP Ratio (2010–2020, %)". March 30, 2024. <https://www.globaldata.com/data-insights/macroeconomic/canadas-external-debt-to-gdp-ratio/>
- Gnidchenko, Andrey. 2023. "Bargaining power, product differentiation, and currency patterns in intra-BRICS trade". *BRICS Journal of Economics* 4 (3): 285-299.
- Goh, Brenda. 2018. "BRICS development bank to issue \$780 million in yuan-denominated bonds", *Reuters*, May 28, 2018. <https://www.reuters.com/article/china-brics-bank/update-1-brics-development-bank-to-issue-780-million-in-yuan-denominated-bonds-idUSL3N1SZ3SQ/>
- Greene, Robert. 2023. "The Difficult Realities of the BRICS' Dedollarization Efforts-and the Renminbi's Role", *Carnegie endowment for international peace*, December 5, 2023. <https://carnegieendowment.org/2023/12/05/difficult-realities-of-brics-dedollarization-efforts-and-renminbi-s-role-pub-91173>
- Hamadeh, Nada, Catherine Van Rompaey, Eric Metreau, and Shwetha Grace Eapen. 2022. "New World Bank country classifications by income level: 2022-2023", *World Bank Blogs*, July 1, 2022. <https://blogs.worldbank.org/opendata/new-world-bank-country-classifications-income-level-2022-2023>
- Huang, Juanjuan. 2024. "Resources, innovation, globalization, and green growth: The BRICS financial development strategy". *Geoscience Frontiers* 15 (2). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gsf.2023.101741>
- [IMF] International Monetary Fund. 2023a. "General government gross debt". *International Monetary Fund*. https://www.imf.org/external/datamapper/GGXWDG_NGDP@WEO/CHN?zoom=CHN&highlight=CHN

- [IMF] International Monetary Fund. 2023b. "World Economics Outlook. Major advanced economies (G7)". *International Monetary Fund*. <https://www.imf.org/external/datamapper/profile/MAE>
- [IMF] International Monetary Fund. 2023c. "Total external debt, in % of GDP". *International Monetary Fund*. https://data.imf.org/?sk=9e48a6ef-c22a-4287-aeff-522685606cb8&hide_uv=1
- ITC. 2024. "Trade Map", *ITC*, Accessed January 30, 2024. https://www.trademap.org/Country_SelProductCountry.aspx?nvpm=1%7c076%7c%7c%7c%7cTOTAL%7c%7c%7c2%7c1%7c1%7c2%7c1%7c1%7c2%7c1%7c1%7c1%7c1
- Kenton, Will. 2023. "Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Defined, What's in It, Pros/Cons, MOU vs. MOA", *Investopedia*, February 19, 2023. <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/m/mou.asp>
- Lađevac, Ivona. 2018. "Tekuća situacija i mogućnost koordinacije politike Jedan pojas, jedan put između Kine i EU - perspektiva Srbije". In: *Budućnost saradnje Kine i Srbije*, edited by Ivona Lađevac, 45-59. Beograd: Institut za međunarodnu politiku i privredu.
- Lađevac, Ivona. 2021. *Kina i Rusija – quo vadis?*. Beograd: Institut za međunarodnu politiku i privredu.
- Lordache, Ruxandra. 2023. "Emerging economies group BRICS invites 6 new members, including Saudi Arabia and Iran", *NBC News*, August 24, 2023. <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/brics-invites-6-countries-saudi-arabia-iran-join-group-rcna101561>
- Maheshwari, Dhairya. 2023. "BRICS' Share in Global GDP Forecast to Rise to 30pc in 2024: SBI", *Sputnik India*, September 4, 2023. <https://sputniknews.in/20230904/brics-share-in-global-gdp-forecast-to-rise-to-30pc-in-2024-sbi-4018332.html>
- Mancheri, A. Nabeel and S Shantanu. 2011. "IBSA vs BRICS: China and India courting Africa", *East Asia Forum*, September 2, 2011. <https://www.eastasiaforum.org/2011/09/02/ibsa-vs-brics-china-and-india-courting-africa/>
- Mazenda, Adrino and Ronney Ncwadi. 2016. "The rise of BRICS development finance institutions: A comprehensive look into the New Development Bank and the Contingency Reserve Arrangement". *African East-Asean Affairs* 3: 96-123.
- [MEMO] Middle East Monitor. 2023. "South Africa: 8 Arab countries request to join BRICS", *Middle East Monitor*, August 15, 2023. <https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20230815-south-africa-8-arab-countries-request-to-join-brics/>

- Muhumed, Mohamed Muhumed and Sayid Aden Gaas. 2016. "The World Bank and IMF in Developing Countries: Helping or Hindering?". *International Journal of African and Asian Studies* 28: 39-49.
- [NDB] New Development Bank. 2017a. "NDB's General Strategy: 2017 – 2021", *New Development Bank*. <https://www.ndb.int/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/NDB-Strategy-Final.pdf>
- [NDB] New Development Bank. 2017b. "New Development Bank and Industrial and Commercial Bank of China Sign Memorandum on Strategic Cooperation", *New Development Bank*, September 6, 2017. <https://www.ndb.int/news/new-development-bank-industrial-commercial-bank-china-sign-memorandum-strategic-cooperation/>
- [NDB] New Development Bank. 2023. "Investor Presentation", *New Development Bank*, February, 2023. https://www.ndb.int/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Investor-Presentation-February-2023_FINAL.pdf
- [NDB] New Development Bank. 2024. "NDB Focus Areas", *New Development Bank*, Accessed March 15, 2024 <https://www.ndb.int/about-ndb/focus-areas/>
- Ngubane, Mbongeni Zwelakhe, Siyabonga Mndebele, and Irshaad Kaseeram. 2023. "Economic growth, unemployment and poverty: Linear and non-linear evidence from South Africa". *Heliyon* 9 (10). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2023.e20267>
- Nikolić, Goran. 2021. "Spoljnotrgovinska robna razmena Srbije i Rusije 2000-2021: Dinamička i strukturna analiza". *Finansije* 1-6: 7-25.
- Nikolić, Goran i Jelena Zvezdanović-Lobanova. 2022. „Formiranje nove globalne geopolitičke i geoekonomske ravnoteže“. *Nacionalni interes* 41 (1): 65-81.
- Ntengento, Wandiswa. 2023. "BRICS GDP to grow by 36% following expansion", *Africa News*, August 25, 2023. <https://www.africanews.com/2023/08/25/brics-gdp-to-grow-by-36-following-expansion/>
- O'Neill, Jim. 2001. "Building Better Global Economic BRICs", *Global Economics Paper No: 66*, Goldman Sachs Global Research Centre London, November 30, 2001. <https://www.almendron.com/tribuna/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/build-better-brics.pdf>
- [OEC] Observatory of Economic Complexity. 2024. "Serbia". Accessed March 6, 2024. <https://oec.world/en/profile/country/srb>
- Papa, Mihaela. 2023. "How long will the dollar last as the world's default currency? The BRICS nations are gathering in South Africa this August with it on the agenda", *Fortune*, June 25, 2023. <https://fortune.com/europe/2023/06/25/dollar-reserve-currency-brics-brazil-russia-india-china-south-africa/>

- [SABTT] South African BRICS Think Tank. 2024. "BRICS Forums". Accessed March 26, 2024. <https://sabtt.org.za/brics-forums/>
- Savage, Rachel, and Brenda Goh. 2023. "BRICS bank looks to local currencies as Russia sanctions bite", *Reuters*, August 10, 2023. <https://www.reuters.com/business/finance/brics-bank-looks-local-currencies-russia-sanctions-bite-2023-08-10/>
- Savage, Rachel. 2023. "What is a BRICS currency and is the U.S. dollar in trouble?", *Reuters*, August 24, 2023. <https://www.reuters.com/markets/currencies/what-is-brics-currency-could-one-be-adopted-2023-08-23/>
- [SBI] State Bank of India. 2023. "How BRICS+6 Triumphs Good Global Economics". August 29, 2023. <https://bank.sbi/documents/13958/36530824/290823-How+BRICS%2B6+Triumphs+Good+Global+Economics.pdf/e5331827-3252-ad66-45d7-049a4a50d03e?t=1693302141266>
- Sharma, Shweta. 2023. "Brics countries agree historic expansion as six new countries invited to join", *Independent*, August 24, 2023. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/africa/brics-2023-summit-new-members-saudi-uae-iran-b2398553.html>
- Simić, Jasminka. 2015. "Ekonomski pojas novog puta svile: Kineski prodor na zapad ili odgovor na azijske izazove". *Međunarodni problem* 67 (2-3): 196-216. <https://doi.org/10.2298/MEDJP1503196S>
- Statista. 2024a. "Export of goods by the BRICS countries from 2000 to 2022". Accessed February 10, 2024. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/254301/exports-of-the-bric-countries/>
- Statista. 2024b. "Total population of the BRICS countries from 2000 to 2028". Accessed February 6, 2024. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/254205/total-population-of-the-bric-countries/>
- Tett, Gillian. 2010. "The Story of Brics", *The Financial Times Magazine*, January 10, 2010. <https://www.ft.com/content/112ca932-00ab-11df-ae8d-00144feabdc0>
- Tran, Hung. 2023. "China and India are at odds over BRICS expansion", *Atlantic Council*, August 8, 2023. <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/china-and-india-are-at-odds-over-brics-expansion/>
- Wang, Pei-Zhi, Yu-Xin Zhao, and Ling-Xi Chu. 2018. "Analysis of Competition and Complementarity in the BRICS Export Products". Paper presented at the 4th Annual International Conference on Management, Economics and Social Development (ICMESD), Atlantis press, Xi'an, Shaanxi, China, May 18-May 20.
- Wilson, Jeffrey D. 2015. "Resource powers? Minerals, energy and the rise of the BRICS". *Third world Quaterly* 36 (2): 223-239. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2015.1013318>

- World Bank. 2023. "Global economics prospects". *World Bank Group*, June 2023. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/6e892b75-2594-4901-a036-46d0dec1e753/content>
- World Bank. 2024. "Data indicators". Accessed March 16, 2024. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG?end=2022&start=1971>
- Worldometer. 2024. "World Population". Accessed March 17, 2024. <https://www.worldometers.info/world-population/>
- Xun, Pang. 2014. "The New Development Bank: Not Merely a Bank", *Carnegie endowment for international peace*, August 14, 2014. <https://carnegieendowment.org/2014/08/14/new-development-bank-not-merely-bank-pub-56752>
- Zakić, Katarina. 2019. "Politika ekonomskih integracija Kine u Evroaziji". In: *Integracioni procesi u Evroaziji*, edited by Dušan Proroković and Ana Jović-Lazić, 13-44. Beograd: Institut za međunarodnu politiku i privredu.

MAKROEKONOMSKA STABILNOST BLOKA BRICS I POTENCIJALI ZA UNAPREĐENJE SPOLJNOTRGOVINSKE RAZMENE SA SRBIJOM

Abstrakt: Cilj ovog istraživanja je da se proceni makroekonomska stabilnost BRIKS-a i da se utvrdi potencijal za unapređenje spoljnotrgovinske saradnje Srbije sa njenim članicama. Makroekonomska analiza podataka zasnovana je na uporednim statističkim podacima za period 2000-2022. koji pokazuju da zemlje BRIKS-a, u poređenju sa G7, imaju više stope ekonomskog rasta, ali je životni standard skoro šest puta niži. U proseku, inflacija i nezaposlenost u BRIKS-u je viša nego u G7. BRIKS imaju duplo manji prosečan javni dug prema BDP-u, dok je odnos spoljnog duga prema BDP-u čak šest puta niži nego u G7. Izuzev Kine, u izvozu zemalja BRIKS-a dominiraju resursi i proizvodi niske tehnološke prerade, dok je izvoz proizvoda srednje i visoke tehnologije i kapitalno intenzivnih proizvoda nizak. Osim Kine i Rusije (sa kojima Srbija ima sporazume o slobodnoj trgovini), spoljnotrgovinska razmena sa ostalim zemljama članicama BRIKS-a nije značajna, ali Srbija sa njima ima trgovinski deficit. Utvrđivanje mogućnosti za unapređenje trgovinske razmene zahteva detaljniju analizu komplementarnosti privreda i liberalizacije trgovinskih režima, međutim, treba imati u vidu i geografsku udaljenost kao prepreku.

Ključne reči: BRICS; Srbija; G7; EU; makroekonomska stabilnost; spoljnotrgovinska razmena.