

ANALYSIS OF VISEGRAD GROUP COUNTRIES' FOREIGN TRADE COMMODITY AND TERRITORIAL STRUCTURE*

M. Svatoš, L. Smutka

Czech University of Life Sciences, Faculty of Economics and Management, Department of Economics, Prague, Czech Republic

This study has analysed foreign trade development of the following countries: the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and the Slovak Republic (Visegrad group countries – V4 countries). The main aim of this paper is to characterise the total foreign trade development of these countries in order to determine the intensity of their trade relations. The EU integration processes significantly changed the commodity and territorial structure of trade for the individual countries. During the analysed time period the inter-annual growth rate of the external trade nominal value for the analysed countries was almost twice as high as the world and EU 27 average. The growth of the value of external trade flows is connected with a constantly growing level of openness of the individual economies. The countries studied are producing the significant part of their production for export purposes, and the growth of their export activities is accompanied by the growth of imports (the long term export value growth is higher in comparison with import value growth).

Visegrad group countries; export; import; balance; competitiveness; growth rate; value; trend; analysis

INTRODUCTION

The Visegrad group consists of four Central European countries. All these countries are members of the European Union. The members of the Visegrad group (V4) are very important trade partners for each other. They have been developing mutual trade for many years. The analysis of their international trade in general, and agricultural trade in particular, during the last 18 years (1990–2007) on the basis of a number of mutual bilateral agreements and on the basis of their membership of the Central European Free Trade Area (in 1993–2004), documents that all countries had already developed mutual trade in the past (before their EU accession). Nowadays they develop mutual trade within the framework of all the Visegrad group of countries within the membership of the European Union. Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and the Czech Republic have a huge potential to develop mutual trade not only in the fields of agricultural and food production, but they also have a potential to develop mutual trade in all other sectors of their national economies. All the Visegrad countries are linked through very strong flows of mutual trade. During the last decade (1996–2006) the trade volume and value were constantly increasing. The Visegrad countries also improve mutual trade relationships with other countries. Their main trade partners are the European Union countries and some other European countries outside the European Union.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The paper deals with an analysis of the external trade development trends within the framework of all Visegrad

group of countries. It also analyses mutual trade development during the last 10 years (1996–2006). The main aim of this study is to analyse changes in individuals and in the mutual V4 countries' territorial (trade partners) and commodity trade structures that had occurred during the analysed period. The analysis of the trade among the studied countries is based on the following indicators analysis: export, import, turnover, balance of trade, terms of trade, GDP, a territorial structure (individual countries' export and import destinations), a commodity structure, shares of exports and imports in total value of GDP, values of export, import and final trade balance per inhabitant in the selected countries and levels of offset of imports by exports. Individual countries' trade indicators are compared to each other and also they are compared with general development trends in world.

The authors used the World Trade Organisation's foreign trade database and the United Nations' foreign trade database (UN COMTRADE) as the main information sources for this paper. For the purpose of all analyses, the authors decided to use the SITC rev. 3 nomenclature, which divides all merchandise products into 10 basic groups of products. For some analyses (especially for the purpose of the RCA and RCA1 analyses) this division was simplified and all traded merchandise products were divided into the following three basic groups of products: Agricultural and foodstuff products, Fuels and raw materials and Manufactured goods.

A very important part of the paper is the analysis of the individual countries' competitiveness in traded goods. The paper analyses the whole commodity structure of mutual trade and identifies those commodities which are "the cornerstones" of mutual trade. Individual commodities are

* This paper is carried out within the framework of the grant No. 6046070906, funded by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic.

analysed – especially through the revealed comparative advantage indices.

The following indices were chosen for the analysis of the competitiveness of the economy sectors for the individual analysed countries:

- RCA – at the national economy level,
- RCA1 – at the world trade and mutual V4 countries trade levels.

For the calculation of these indices we used the WTO's and IMF's databases and we also applied the WTO methodology for sorting the total production into several groups according to SITC nomenclature (Agricultural and food-stuff products – SITC 0, 1 and 4, Fuels and raw materials – SITC 2 and 3, Manufactured goods – SITC 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9). The mathematical description of the above mentioned indices as follows:

The Revealed comparative advantage index

$$RCA = (X_{ij}/M_{ij})/(X_{it}/M_{it})$$

where: X represents exports

M represents imports

i represents analysed country

j represents the analysed economy sector

t represents the sum of all economy sectors.

The RCA index monitors the relationship between exports and imports of sectors of individual national economies, and compares it with the situation in the whole national economy. If the value of the index is higher than one, it means better possibilities for selling commodities from the analysed sectors through external trade. If the value of index is less than one, it is more effective to focus on production in some other sector(s) of the national economy.

The Revealed comparative advantage index

$$RCA_1 = (X_{ij}/X_{nj})/(X_{it}/X_{nt})$$

where: X represents exports

i represents analysed country

j represents the analysed economy sector

n represents some set of countries or world

t represents the sum of all economy sectors.

RCA₁ measures a country's exports of a commodity (or industry) relative to its total exports and to the corresponding exports of a set of countries, e.g. the world. A comparative advantage is "revealed", if RCA > 1. If RCA is less than "one", the country is said to have a comparative disadvantage in the commodity/industry. It is argued that the RCA index is biased due to the omission of imports especially when country-size is important.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Visegrad countries – foreign trade development

The current world trade represents a value of about 12 trillion USD. During 1996–2006 the nominal value of world merchandise trade increased by more than 120% (in current prices), and an average inter-annual growth rate of

world trade reached the value of about 8.7%. The current share of the analysed V4 countries in the world exports is about 2.7%, and in the world imports the value of their share is about 2.84%. While in 2007 the value of these countries' imports reached 340 billion USD, the value of exports reached only 320 billion USD. The final result of these trade flows is a negative balance of trade (see details – Table 19). Only one country of the Visegrad group was able to reach a positive balance of trade – the Czech Republic which had a surplus of trade balance of about 2 billion USD. The balance of trade of all the other countries was negative (Hungary –3 billion USD, Poland –16 billion USD and the Slovak Republic –4 billion USD). The foreign trade development trend of all V4 countries can be characterised in the following manner. While during the analysed period (1996–2006) the nominal value of world trade increased by more than 100% (123%), the nominal value of the analysed countries trade increased by 382% in exports, and by 277% in imports. The foreign trade development trend of the analysed countries over the last 10 years can be considered as positive, especially from the two following reasons. During analysed time period analysed countries changed their economy structure and especially their merchandise exports changed (volume and added value of traded goods increased significantly).

The average inter-annual growth rate (1996–2006) of V4 countries' merchandise exports was higher (foreign direct investments have been constantly influencing individual countries' economies and individual V4 countries except for Poland are heavy dependant on export activities) than the inter-annual growth rate of imports. While in the period of 1996–2006 the average value of inter-annual growth rate of exports reached almost 17.5%, the same indicator of merchandise imports reached only the value of 14.5%. There are some slight differences among the individual countries but, in general, it is possible to say that in the V4 countries (which are also EU members) the development trend is very similar. In the case of all analyzed countries the main driver of foreign trade growth was the growth of their trade activities in area of manufactured products. The growth of individual countries' economy is based especially on manufactured products export, which is accompanied by constantly increasing imports of those components which are necessary for realization of domestic production. (Especially in the case of Hungary, Slovakia and the Czech Republic their production capacities were created not only for supplying of their domestic markets, but also for exports. The reason of this situation is the fact that their especially manufactured goods production is higher than the capacity of their markets and therefore the significant share of their production is exported abroad.)

Table 1 contains information about the foreign trade development trends of the Czech Republic, the Slovak Republic, Hungary and Poland. It is obvious that foreign trade value is continuously growing in all monitored countries. There are several main reasons of this development trend. Firstly, the American dollar, which is used for the expression of trade flows, was constantly dropping in

Table 1. Foreign trade basic indicators of the development trend of selected countries in 1996–2006 (billion USD)

Country/Trade flow		1996	1998	2000	2002	2004	2005	2006
Czech Republic	export	21.9	28.31	29.07	38.51	65.76	78.21	95.13
Hungary	export	12.63	23.01	28.08	34.33	55.46	62.28	74.06
Poland	export	24.39	28.21	31.6	40.26	73.78	89.38	109.58
Slovak Republic	export	7.5	10.71	11.88	14.48	27.89	32.01	41.72
Czech Republic	import	27.73	30.52	32.23	40.74	66.71	76.53	93.44
Hungary	import	16.05	25.7	32.09	37.61	60.27	65.9	76.97
Poland	import	37.01	47	48.83	55.09	88.16	101.54	125.65
Slovak Republic	import	9.41	13.09	12.78	16.63	29.45	34.44	44.37

Source: Comtrade (UN)

value in comparison with the other currencies over the considered time period. Another reason for this development trend is the permanent process of decreasing tariff barriers which is a significant factor in all the analysed countries for which the main foreign trade partners are members of the European Union. In 2004 the V4 countries became EU members and all trade barriers among these countries as well as other EU members were removed and the trade between them and non-EU members has been influenced by the rules of the EU common trade policy (they had to accept EU rules which have been influencing trade between EU members and other non-EU countries). During the last ten years the nominal values of the exports and imports of all the analysed countries increased several times (see Table 1). Except for Poland, they are all very dependent on foreign trade activities. Shares of foreign trade in total GDP are higher than 65%. The Polish share of foreign trade turnover in their GDP is only 32% (it is especially because of Poland has much bigger internal market in comparison with others). The analysis shows that foreign trade is a very important economic activity for all analysed countries. All countries are opened to international trade activities and it is also obvious that no analysed country has a significantly higher value of exports in comparison to the value of imports and *vice versa*. A very important feature of all the analysed countries is the fact that their average trade growth rate is higher in comparison to the world average (about 8% per year). The growth of foreign trade activities (especially exports) is an important stimulus for the growth of every country's domestic product. If we compare the development trends of GDP and foreign trade turnover we can see that both indicators are characterised by a very high level of inter-

annual growth rate. The growth of foreign trade volume and value has a significant influence on the GDP growth and the growth of individual incomes of individual inhabitants in every country. A high level of offset of imports by exports for all V4 countries is typical (Poland 87%, Hungary 96%, Slovakia 94% and the Czech Republic 101%). In the Czech and Slovak Republics, Hungary and Poland it can be seen that the level of offset of imports by exports has been constantly increasing since the beginning of the monitored time period. While in 1996 (in the above mentioned countries) the level of offset was between 65% and 80%, in 2006 the level of offset reached within the range of between 87% and 102% (this is possible to explain through the fact that during the last decade many new production capacities in analysed countries were opened and main shares of those capacities' production are not for their domestic markets, but they supposed to be exported).

A very interesting part of the foreign trade analysis for the monitored countries is the analysis of the foreign trade results per inhabitant of every selected country. Tables 2 and 3 include data connected with the foreign trade development trends for every country analysed, expressed per inhabitant. The data show that there are significant differences especially between the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary on one side and Poland on the other side. All are above the world average in export and import values per capita. The main trader among the analysed group of countries with the highest value of export and import per capita is the Czech Republic. In 2006 the value of Czech foreign trade turnover per capita reached about 18500 USD. The other countries values of turnover per capita were the following: Slovakia – 16 000 USD, Hungary – 15 000 USD and Poland – c. 6000 USD – if we take into consideration

Table 2. Development of individual countries' – Export/cap value

(in USD)	1996	2000	2002	2006
Czech Republic	2143	2845	3769	9310
Hungary	1256	2792	3414	7365
Poland	640	829	1056	2875
Slovak Republic	1393	2206	2689	7747
V4 – total	1042	1578	2001	5026
World	740	1013	1032	1875

Source: WTO, Comtrade

Table 3. Development of individual countries' – Import/cap value

(in USD)	1996	2000	2002	2006
Czech Republic	2714	3154	3987	9145
Hungary	1596	3191	3740	7654
Poland	971	1281	1445	3297
Slovak Republic	1747	2373	3088	8240
V4 – total	1414	1975	2353	5338
World	752	1059	1064	1961

Source: WTO, Comtrade

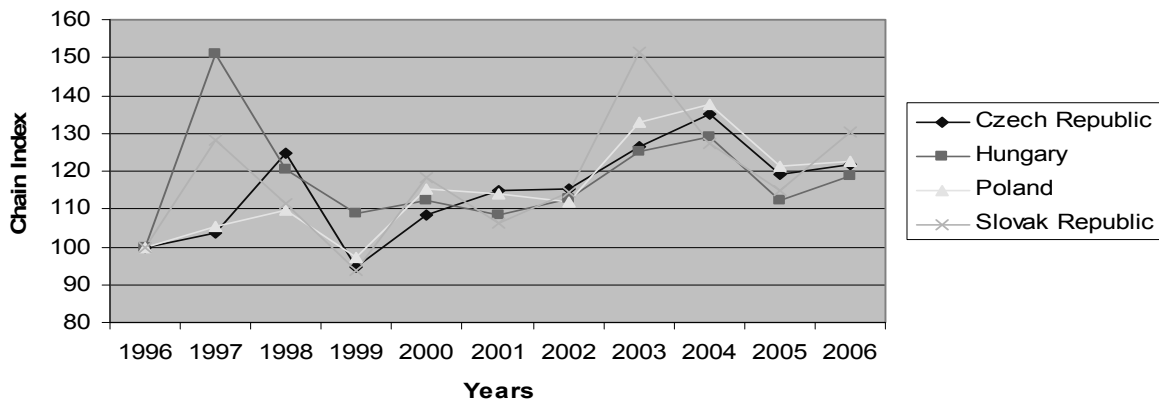


Fig. 1. Development of individual V4 countries' per capita export value – Chain Index (1996–2006)
Source: WTO, Comtrade, own processing

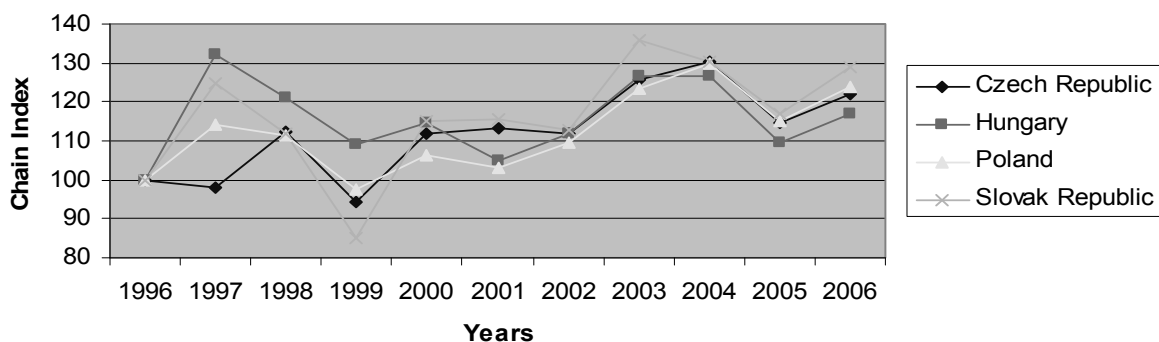


Fig. 2. Development of individual V4 countries' per capita import value – Chain Index (1996–2006)
Source: WTO, Comtrade, own processing

the individual countries' GDP/cap values, it must be emphasized that foreign trade activities have an important role in individual countries' national economy development. Above mentioned tables are accompanied by Figs 1 and 2. Both graphs are illustrating the development trends of the Visegrad countries' foreign trade activities expressed per one habitant. It is possible to see that all countries have very similar foreign trade value development trends; there are only differences in the intensity of individual countries' inter-annual growth rates. Average inter-annual growth rates among individual countries are slightly different. During the period of 1996–2006 the differences in the growth rates among individual countries were as follows: (country – inter-annual growth rate of export/inter-annual growth rate of import): the Czech Republic – 16% / 13%, Hungary – 20% / 17%, Poland – 17% / 13%, the Slovak Republic – 20% / 18%, World average – 10% / 10%, V4 average – 17% / 15%.

When we compare these data, we can see that development trends expressed per capita are very similar in all analysed countries. The growth rates of export values are higher in comparison with the growth rates of import values in all the analysed countries. The average growth rate values of the V4 countries' foreign trade activities are higher in comparison with the world average inter-annual growth rate of merchandise trade. There is also a relationship between foreign trade development and the national GDP growth (GDP and foreign trade are closely related

and individual countries' economies are heavily dependent on foreign trade activities – this fact makes them extremely vulnerable if there is any problem in area of export activities.). When we compare national GDP/cap, export/cap and import/cap development trends in 2000–2006, we can see that in all the analysed countries the inter-annual growth rates of export and import were higher in comparison with the growth rate of GDP. During the analysed period we can see the following inter-annual growth rates development trends in individual countries. In the Czech Republic the average value of inter-annual growth rates of export and import activities were 22% and 19.6%, respectively, and in the same period the average growth rate of GDP was about 17%. A similar situation we can see in Hungary (average inter-annual growth rate of GDP/ Export / Import: 15.7% / 17.8% / 16%, Poland: 12.1% / 23.4% / 17.4% and the Slovak Republic: 18.4% / 24.1% / 23.4%). The data show clearly that export and import values per capita are growing faster than the growth rate of individual countries' GDP/cap. It is also necessary to emphasize that in all the analysed countries the average inter-annual growth rate of export is higher in comparison with growth rates of import activities. During the analysed period, the Czech and Slovak Republics, together with Hungary, exported merchandise goods in the highest per capita values. The cumulative Czech export per capita during 1996–2006 reached almost 48 thousand USD, in the Slovak Republic it was more than 37 thousand USD and

in Hungary the cumulative value of export per capita reached almost 41 thousand USD. Poland reached a much lower value of exports per capita, in comparison with the above mentioned countries – about 14 thousand USD. In respect of import activities, the results are very similar to the results of export per capita. The leading importers are again the Czech Republic (about 50 thousand USD), the Slovak Republic (about 41 thousand USD) and Hungary (more than 44 thousand USD). The cumulative value of imports per capita for Poland is far behind the above mentioned three countries (about 19 thousand USD).

To be able to explain the above mentioned development trends, it is necessary to analyze individual countries' economy development during the last decade. During this time period all mentioned countries were influenced by significant flows of foreign direct investments. Individual governments changed their strategies in relation to Foreign Direct Investments. Foreign investors bought, built or rebuilt many capacities for merchandise production purposes and also for providing of commercial services. These capacities were bought, modernized and some of them were newly established not only for the individual countries' markets, but mainly they were created for to supply the whole region. (A very nice example is possible to see in case of Czech car industry. In 2008 production capacities in the Czech Republic produced more than 800 000 cars; this production is much higher in comparison with Czech internal market's absorption capacity – therefore the majority of production is created for export purposes.) Individual countries' production capacities significantly increased their output. The growth of merchandise goods production and exports was accompanied by the growth of imports – companies located in analysed regions had to import the increasing quantity of raw materials and components which were necessary to ensure

local industrial production growth. Positive for the individual analysed countries is the fact that the growth of import value was lower in comparison with the growth of export value (added value of exports was constantly increasing in analysed time period – see Table 18 – Selected countries' terms of trade development). The final result of mentioned development was growth of individual countries' GDP and also the growing dependence of individual analysed countries on foreign trade operations.

The total foreign trade commodity structure of individual V4 countries

In 2006 the value of world trade (merchandise exports) exceeded 12 trillion USD. Manufactured products have the largest share in total world trade, their share is quite stable and during the whole period of 1996–2006 the value of the share of manufactured products in total world merchandise trade was about 80% (the main share in this value – about 50% – is accounted for by machines and transport equipment). The share of agricultural and food-stuff products in total world merchandise trade is (in the long term) about 7% (Even though the value of traded products is constantly increasing, the share of these products in total world trade value is constantly decreasing.) and the share of fuels and raw materials trade in total world trade is about 12%. The Czech Republic, the Slovak Republic, Hungary and Poland have been actively participating in all these world trade commodity groups. In some commodity groups they are in the position of exporters and in some others they are in the importers position. Tables 4 and 5 include information about the commodity structure development of all the above mentioned countries in the period 1996–2006.

Table 4. Shares of main groups of products in total trade activities for selected countries, 2006 (in %)

		Czech Republic	Hungary	Poland	Slovak Republic
Export	agrarian products	3.40	5.40	9.20	4.00
	fuels and raw materials	5.20	3.90	6.70	7.70
	manufactured goods	91.40	90.70	84.10	88.30
Import	agrarian products	5.00	3.90	5.80	5.00
	fuels and raw materials	11.70	8.80	13.40	16.70
	manufactured goods	83.30	87.30	80.90	78.30

Source: Comtrade (UN)

Table 5. Shares of main groups of products in total trade activities for selected countries, 1996 (in %)

		Czech Republic	Hungary	Poland	Slovak Republic
Export	agrarian products	5.20	19.20	10.70	5.10
	fuels and raw materials	9.40	7.90	10.30	10.40
	manufactured goods	85.40	72.90	79.00	84.50
Import	agrarian products	6.90	5.20	9.80	8.10
	fuels and raw materials	12.40	17.30	13.90	19.00
	manufactured goods	80.70	77.60	76.40	72.90

Source: Comtrade (UN)

Territorial structure (export and import partners) of the V4 countries' total foreign trade activities

The European Union's share in the total analysed countries' foreign trade activities is about 80–90% in exports and 60–70% in imports. The European Union is the crucial trade partner for all V4 countries. The share of other countries and territories is only minor. A slightly different situation exists in the case of the share of non-EU countries in the V4 countries imports. In the case of territorial structure of imports, the supremacy of EU countries is not as high as in exports. The reason for this situation is the fact that all the V4 countries are not self-sufficient in their raw material consumption and they must import huge quantities of energy, fuels and raw materials, for example, natural gas, crude oil and others. This is one of the reasons why non-EU countries have higher shares in the V4 countries' imports in comparison to exports (there are also some other reasons, for example: cheap labour forces, cheaper land and so on). Another reason why, for example, the United States or Japan have strong import positions on the analysed countries' markets, is the fact that these countries represent the world economy and technological leaders, they invest a lot of money in the V4 countries and, in particular, are exporting technologically advanced products with a high level of added value to the V4 countries. Among the most important trade partners of the V4 countries located outside of the EU, are the United States, Russia, Ukraine, China, South Korea and Japan.

Mutual foreign trade development among the V4 countries

At the beginning it is necessary to emphasise that mutual trade relations among the V4 countries represents only 14.6% of these countries' total foreign trade value. The total growth rate of the mutual trade value (the average inter-annual growth rate is about 17.7%) corresponds with a growth rate of the total V4 countries' trade (the average inter-annual growth rate is 17.4%). Similar growth rates of mutual and total trade are typical for all the analysed countries, except for the Slovak Republic where the total trade growth rate (export and import flows) is much higher in comparison to the mutual trade of other V4 countries.

Table 6. The development of individual countries total exports and exports within Visegrad group

Exports – in bill. USD		1996	1998	2000	2002	2004	2006
Czech Republic	world	21.9	28.3	29.1	38.5	65.8	95.1
	V4	4.7	4.9	4.4	5.8	10.7	15.9
Hungary	world	12.6	23	28.1	34.3	55.5	74.1
	V4	0.8	1.2	1.4	1.9	4	8.4
Poland	world	24.4	28.2	31.6	40.3	73.8	109.6
	V4	1.4	1.8	2.2	3.1	6.4	11.7
Slovak Republic	world	7.5	10.7	11.9	14.5	27.9	41.7
	V4	3.1	3.3	3.3	3.8	6.7	10.7

Source: Comtrade (UN)

Tables 6 and 7 tell us about every analysed country's trade flows within the scope of the V4 community and enable us to compare these trade flows with every country's total foreign trade flows. We can see that the values of total exports and imports within the framework of the V4 countries are not equal. This fact is explained in the methodological part of this paper. A very important feature of all analysed countries mutual trade is the ability of these countries to continuously increase the value of mutual trade. The growth of mutual trade has a similar rate as that of every analysed country's total trade. The result of this development is the constant position of the V4 countries in every analysed country's territorial trade structure and therefore there is still interest in developing and improving mutual trade relations. Tables 8 and 9 give us information about the share of the other V4 countries in total foreign trade activities of every analysed country. We can see that mutual trade between the V4 countries is important especially for the Slovak Republic and the Czech Republic which realised 25.7% and 17.1% respectively of their exports within the V4 community, and 21% and 13.4% respectively of their imports. While the share of the V4 countries in the total territorial structure is decreasing in the case of some countries (the Czech Republic, the Slovak Republic), in other countries the share of mutual trade is growing (Hungary) or is stable (Poland). Tables 10 and 11 give us information about the level of individual countries' foreign trade activities within the V4 community. It can be seen that the Czech Republic is the most active exporter among the V4 countries, its share in total exports within the analysed group of countries is about 34% (the shares of other countries are about 18–25%). With about 32% the Czech Republic is the country with the highest share of total imports within the V4 community. The shares of other countries are more or less the same – about 20–25%.

Table 12 enables us to see the mutual trade flows among the individual analysed countries. The most active exporter among the V4 countries is the Czech Republic. In 2006, Czech total exports with the other V4 countries reached about 16 billion USD, the total value of imports from the other V4 countries was about 14.3 billion USD. The following countries have the main shares of total

Table 7. The development of individual countries total imports and imports within Visegrad group

Imports – in bill. USD		1996	1998	2000	2002	2004	2006
Czech Republic	world	27.72	30.52	32.24	40.73	66.71	93.43
	V4	3.73	3.48	3.6	4.58	8.19	12.35
Hungary	world	16.04	25.71	32.08	37.61	60.25	76.98
	V4	1.15	1.35	1.87	2.5	4.84	7.85
Poland	world	37.09	47	48.83	55.09	88.15	125.7
	V4	1.97	2.58	2.99	3.46	6.3	9.3
Slovak Republic	world	9.41	13.07	12.77	16.63	29.46	44.38
	V4	2.93	3.05	2.54	3.51	6.15	9.32

Source: Comtrade (UN)

Table 8. The share of V4 countries in every analysed country total exports (in %)

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Czech Republic	22.6	21.5	18.0	15.9	15.5	15.7	15.5	15.6	17.0	16.7	17.1
Hungary	8.3	6.7	6.2	5.2	5.4	5.8	6.3	7.3	8.3	9.1	11.4
Poland	9.9	11.0	10.3	9.6	9.4	10.3	10.4	10.8	11.4	9.3	10.7
Slovak Republic	43.8	38.0	32.5	29.3	29.4	29.0	27.1	23.5	24.1	26.1	25.7

Source: Comtrade (UN)

Table 9. The share of V4 countries in each analysed country total imports (in %)

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Czech Republic	14.1	13.6	12.1	11.8	11.9	11.6	12.0	12.1	13.1	12.6	13.4
Hungary	8.9	7.0	6.1	6.4	6.6	7.1	7.9	8.4	9.2	8.9	10.2
Poland	6.5	6.7	6.4	6.5	7.1	7.4	7.2	7.7	8.3	7.2	7.4
Slovak Republic	33.0	28.4	25.2	23.1	21.4	22.2	22.2	22.3	20.9	20.4	21.0

Source: Comtrade (UN)

Table 10. The share of each analysed country in mutual V4 exports (in %)

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Czech Republic	47.08	43.77	43.90	41.25	38.64	39.28	39.86	38.25	38.58	37.26	34.04
Hungary	8.42	9.79	10.77	11.61	12.06	12.26	12.97	13.89	14.28	15.27	18.01
Poland	13.91	14.66	15.83	19.23	19.63	21.06	21.15	22.19	22.99	23.70	25.00
Slovak Republic	30.59	31.78	29.50	27.91	29.67	27.40	26.02	25.68	24.15	23.77	22.96

Source: Comtrade (UN)

Table 11. The share of each analysed country in mutual V4 imports (in %)

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Czech Republic	38.12	34.47	33.27	32.60	32.71	31.88	32.60	31.43	32.13	32.54	31.81
Hungary	11.79	12.18	12.93	16.04	17.03	16.85	17.81	18.25	19.01	18.87	20.21
Poland	20.11	23.36	24.67	26.85	27.17	26.47	24.62	24.42	24.74	24.84	23.96
Slovak Republic	29.97	29.99	29.13	24.51	23.09	24.80	24.97	25.91	24.12	23.75	24.02

Source: Comtrade (UN)

Table 12. Mutual trade flows among V4 countries (including re-exports, F.O.B.)

(million USD)	Export				
	Czech Republic	Hungary	Poland	Slovakia	world
Czech Republic	x	2855.50	5390.60	8024.00	95 141.00
Hungary	2517.40	x	3015.50	2886.50	74 055.50
Poland	6066.90	3330.70	x	2292.90	109 584.1
Slovak Republic	5710.80	2444.60	2580.00	x	41 719.20

Source: Comtrade (UN)

Czech exports activities: the Slovak Republic 49%, Poland 33.3% and Hungary 17.7%. The shares of individual countries in Czech imports within the V4 community are the following: Poland 41.7%, the Slovak Republic 40% and Hungary 18.3%. The second biggest player in mutual analysed countries foreign trade activities is Poland. In 2006, Polish exports within the analysed group of countries reached 11.7 billion USD, the value of imports reached almost 11 billion USD. The shares of individual countries in Polish territorial foreign trade structure are the

following (share of export / share of import): the Czech Republic 52% / 47%, Hungary 28.5% / 29% and the Slovak Republic 19.6% / 23.9%. The Slovak Republic is the third biggest participant in the V4 mutual trade. In 2006, the value of exports reached almost 10.7 billion USD and value of imports reached 13.2 billion USD. The shares of other countries in total Slovak exports and imports within the V4 group of countries are as follows (share of export/ share of import): the Czech Republic 53.2% / 57%, Hungary 22.8% / 21.8% and Poland 24% / 21.2%. Hungary's

Table 13. Exports of each selected country realized within the framework of V4 countries

(million USD)	Czech Republic			Hungary			Poland			Slovak Republic		
	A	F	M	A	F	M	A	F	M	A	F	M
Czech Republic	0	0	0	154	225	2438	348	434	4528	877	888	6023
Hungary	170	30	2317	0	0	0	164	42	2809	183	222	2482
Poland	671	1100	4296	454	95	2782	0	0	0	258	488	1547
Slovak Republic	540	1007	4164	287	435	1722	191	440	1949	0	0	0

Source: Comtrade (UN), A – agricultural and foodstuff products, F – fuels and raw materials, M – manufactured goods

foreign trade turnover within the monitored group of countries is about 17 billion USD. In 2006 the value of exports was about 8.4 billion USD and the value of imports reached 8.6 billion USD. Individual trade partners' shares in total Hungarian export and import activities are as follows (share of export/share of import): the Czech Republic 30% / 30.7%, Poland 35.8% / 42.3% and the Slovak Republic 34.3% / 27%.

The commodity structure of V4 countries mutual foreign trade activities

Table 13 gives us information about the V4 countries mutual foreign trade commodity structure. The commodity structure of all the analysed countries' foreign trade is similar. The dominant role in the V4 countries mutual trade is that of manufactured products. In 2006, the share of manufactured products in the total mutual V4 countries trade was about 80% (37 billion USD). The shares of agricultural and foodstuff products and fuels and raw materials were only 9.2% (about 4.3 billion USD) and 11.6% (about 5.4 billion USD) respectively. The total value of traded goods represented about 47 billion USD. The main exporters of manufactured products among the V4 countries are the Czech Republic (35% of total mutual value of exports) and Poland (23% of total mutual value of exports). Shares of the Slovak Republic and Hungary are similar, each with about 20–21%. Fuels and raw materials represent the weak point of all the economies of the analysed countries. All are dependent on imports of raw materials especially fuels. This notwithstanding, they also export some raw materials, and also they have a position as a re-exporter. The following countries have the main shares in mutual exports within the V4 countries: the Slovak Republic (35%) and Poland (31%). The shares of the other countries are as follows: the Czech Republic (28.6%) and Hungary (5.4%). Agricultural and foodstuff products have the lowest share in the total value of mutual trade activities (about 9%). The main shares in total exports among the V4 countries have Poland (32%) and the Czech Republic (32%). The shares of other countries are as follows: the Slovak Republic (23.7%) and Hungary (12%).

The analysis of V4 countries' foreign trade competitiveness

The following part of the paper is analysing the mutual V4 countries foreign trade competitiveness, and the level of each country's comparative advantage. The analysis is made through the RCA and RCA1 indices, which

are briefly described in the methodological part of this paper. The paper analyses the competitiveness of every country's foreign trade at two stages. The first stage represents the analysis of competitiveness of each economy sector at the national level and the second stage of the analysis represents the analysis of competitiveness at the world level and within the framework of the analysed group of countries. Table 14 gives us the results of the analysis of every monitored country economy sector's comparative advantage at the national level. In the Czech Republic the only group of products which has a comparative advantage in comparison with other groups of products at the national level is that of manufactured products (to explain this development is very easy – the Czech Republic has very long industrial tradition and many new industrial capacities were established during the last two decades, but on the other hand in case of total agricultural and foodstuff production and total fuels and raw materials production the Czech Republic is not self-sufficient and it is more or less dependent on imports from areas which have surplus of raw materials and fuels sources. Czech foreign trade activities are pushed especially through the export of manufactured products. The growth of export is also accompanied by the growth imports, because companies located in the Czech Republic have been importing increasing quantity of material and components for the purpose of their production activities development.). The same can be said about the Slovak Republic. Within the framework of the Slovak foreign trade commodity structure of exports at the national level, only manufactured products have a comparative advantage. The other countries (Hungary and Poland) are able (at the national level) to reach a comparative advantage in the case of agricultural and foodstuff products (both countries have a strong agrarian sector with very long tradition and also they have much better production condition for agricultural production in comparison with Slovakia and the Czech Republic) and also in the case of manufactured products. In trade activities in the area of fuels and raw materials, all V4 countries have a comparative disadvantage in comparison with the other two main groups of products. Table 15 gives us information about every analysed country's foreign trade comparative advantage at world level.

It can be seen that if we divide all the traded products into three main groups of products (according to SITC nomenclature – agricultural and foodstuff products, fuels and raw materials, manufactured items), and if we make the analysis of comparative advantage through RCA1 index, we can find that the results which we gained from the

Table 14. RCA index (2006) – The basic analysis of individual countries' competitiveness at the national level

RCA		1996	2003	2004	2005	2006
Czech Republic	agricultural and foodstuff products	0.76	0.71	0.68	0.73	0.68
	raw material and fuels	0.75	0.55	0.57	0.57	0.45
	manufactures	1.06	1.07	1.07	1.06	1.10
Hungary	agricultural and foodstuff products	3.71	2.07	1.61	1.44	1.41
	raw material and fuels	0.46	0.46	0.42	0.38	0.44
	manufactures	0.94	1.01	1.03	1.06	1.04
Poland	agricultural and foodstuff products	1.10	1.48	1.48	1.55	1.59
	raw material and fuels	0.93	0.75	0.77	0.84	0.83
	manufactures	1.03	1.03	1.02	1.05	1.04
Slovak Republic	agricultural and foodstuff products	0.63	0.65	0.71	0.73	0.80
	raw material and fuels	0.55	0.50	0.57	0.57	0.46
	manufactures	1.16	1.12	1.11	1.12	1.13

Source: Comtrade (UN)

Table 15. RCA1 index (2006) – The basic analysis of individual countries competitiveness at world level

RCA1		1996	2003	2004	2005	2006
Czech Republic	agricultural and foodstuff products	0.59	0.48	0.51	0.61	0.56
	raw material and fuels	0.84	0.49	0.45	0.37	0.35
	manufactures	1.07	1.12	1.12	1.15	1.16
Hungary	agricultural and foodstuff products	2.18	0.96	0.94	0.93	0.89
	raw material and fuels	0.71	0.29	0.31	0.30	0.26
	manufactures	0.91	1.10	1.11	1.13	1.15
Poland	agricultural and foodstuff products	1.22	1.12	1.27	1.49	1.52
	raw material and fuels	0.92	0.59	0.66	0.50	0.45
	manufactures	0.99	1.05	1.03	1.05	1.07
Slovak Republic	agricultural and foodstuff products	0.58	0.43	0.54	0.66	0.66
	raw material and fuels	0.93	0.66	0.76	0.68	0.51
	manufactures	1.06	1.10	1.07	1.09	1.12

Source: Comtrade (UN)

comparative advantage analysis at the national level are different in comparison to the results from the analysis which is made at the world level. It is possible to see that all analysed countries have a comparative advantage in the case of manufactured goods exports at world level (this group of products represents the flagship of individual countries' merchandise trade and also production capacities, which are supposed to produce manufactures, are the main targets of foreign direct investments). During the last years individual countries changed their priorities and nowadays they are supporting especially production of manufactures with high level of value added. In the case of agricultural and foodstuff products exports, only Poland has a comparative advantage at the world level. Other countries' agricultural and foodstuff exports do not have this advantage especially because of the constantly decreasing role of agrarian sector in individual countries' national economy. In the case of fuels and raw materials, no analysed country is able to reach a comparative advantage at the world level. (In general they do not have enough own sources /except for few minerals/ and they are completely dependent on imports.)

Table 16. RCA1 index (2006) – The basic analysis of selected countries competitiveness in relation to their foreign trade activities realized only within the frame of the V4 community

RCA1 (only V4 countries)	Agricultural and foodstuff production	Fuels and raw materials	Manufactures
Czech Republic	0.92	0.81	1.12
Hungary	0.60	0.27	1.14
Poland	0.99	0.95	0.80
Slovak Republic	1.01	1.47	1.01

Source: Comtrade (UN)

The last part of this chapter is devoted to an analysis of mutual trade comparative advantage between the individual V4 countries. Table 16 shows every analysed country's comparative advantages or disadvantages in individual main groups of products, which are traded within the V4 countries. It is possible to see that within the frame of mutual exports among the V4 countries there are some differences in values of RCA1 index in comparison to individual countries exports at world level. It is possible to

see that in manufactured items, only one country is not able to reach a comparative advantage (Poland). This could be explained by the fact, that Poland is country with big internal market and also by the fact that Polish share in mutual V4 countries trade is much lower in comparison with other countries. Polish market has about 35 million consumers and significant share of production is directly consumed in this country and it is not exported abroad. Poland also was not so successful like the other analysed countries in area of foreign direct investments inflows and there are not so many companies which production is mainly for export purposes.

In the case of agricultural and foodstuff products exports only Poland and the Slovak Republic are able to reach a comparative advantage (these two countries realize significant shares of their agrarian exports within territory of V4 countries and for example for the Slovak Republic V4 countries (especially the Czech Republic) are decisive trade partners); and in fuels and raw materials only the Slovak Republic is able to reach a comparative advantage within the framework of V4 countries mutual trade.

Visegrad countries – foreign trade development trends comparison

The last part of the paper deals with problems devoted to the comparison of individual Visegrad development trends of countries foreign trade. Figs 3, 4, 5 and 6 illustrate the development trends of individual Visegrad countries export and import activities and enable us to compare individual countries among themselves. To be able to compare their total and mutual foreign trade development we decided to make an analysis based on the comparison of individual countries inter-annual growth rates development (the comparison of chain indices development). The first two graphs (Figs 3 and 4) enable us to compare individual countries total export and import development trends. Even though there are huge differences among individual countries in realized foreign trade values (see details – Tables 6 and 7) and volumes, we can see that individual countries' development trends of export and import inter-annual growth are very similar – development trends are almost the same (these results can be confirmed by the analysis of individual regression functions which were created for the purpose of individual countries' export and import evaluation).

In the total export (Fig. 3) we can see that individual V4 countries' development trends are almost the same. Average values of individual countries inter-annual growth rate have been oscillating between 17% and 20% (Czech Republic 17.3%, Hungary 17.9%, Poland 17.6% and Slovak Republic 19.6%). Another important common feature of all analysed countries that has to be emphasized is the fact that despite the huge differences in realized trade value, the absolute value of all analysed countries' export activities increased during the period 1996–2006 by about 550–650%. Development trends of import values of indi-

vidual countries are also very similar as it is in the case of export values development. Fig. 4 illustrates through the chain indices analyses the development trends of individual countries total import values development. We can see that the development trends of import activities of individual countries are very similar. The average inter-annual growth rates of individual countries' import oscillated between 14% and 18% (Czech Republic 14.6%, Hungary 16.4%, Poland 14.7% and Slovak Republic 17.5%), although all countries, except for the Czech Republic, had a negative trade balance. We can see that the situation of trade balance of individual countries was improving. In general, the growth rates of exports are higher in comparison with the growth rates of imports and it must be highlighted that during the analysed period the absolute growth of individual countries' import activities did not exceed the growth of exports. In 1996–2006 the nominal value of individual countries import increased by about 420–540%.

The second part of this chapter is devoted to analyses of the mutual trade development of only individual Visegrad countries. The development trends of trade activities of individual countries realized within the framework of the Visegrad group are similar, but they are not so homogeneous as is in the case of the total trade development of individual countries. Figs 5 and 6 illustrate the inter-annual growth rate of export and import activities of individual countries realized only within the Visegrad group. Although there are some differences in the case of the mutual trade development of individual countries, we can see that the general development trend in the case of all analysed countries is similar.

All countries permanently increase the value of mutual trade. The value of trade activities among the Visegrad group countries were increasing. During the period 1996–2006 the average inter-annual growth rate of mutual trade reached the value of about 17–18%. The nominal value of mutual trade increased during the analysed period by more than 350%. The main drivers of this development are Poland and Hungary – their inter-annual growth rates of export/import activities realized within the Visegrad group were 24.4% / 17.32% and 27.1% / 21.7% respectively. The growth rates of the Czech (14% / 13.7%) and Slovak (14.4% / 13.5%) Republics' trade realized within the Visegrad group do not have such an intensive development trend as is the case of Poland and Hungary, but it is necessary to emphasize that the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic are the main pillars of the mutual Visegrad trade activities. The share of these two countries in the total trade among mentioned countries is about 57%, while the share of Hungary (18%) and Poland (23%) is about 43%. The explanation of this development trend has to be sought at the beginning of 1990's when the Visegrad group was established. Because of the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic were members of former Czechoslovakia, when they decided to split this country, they were still dependent on each other and therefore the majority of the Visegrad trade activities was realized between these two countries. Especially the Czech Republic is the most active exporter

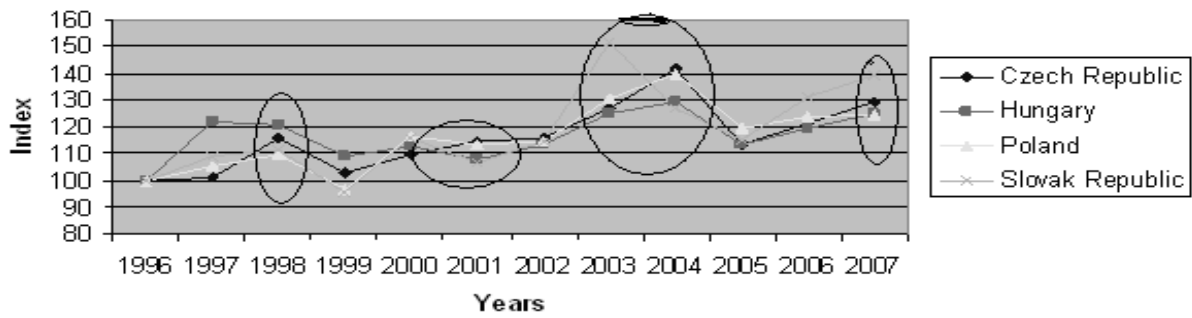


Fig. 3. Visegrad countries' foreign trade (export) development in 1996–2007 (Chain Index Development)
Source: WTO, Comtrade, own processing

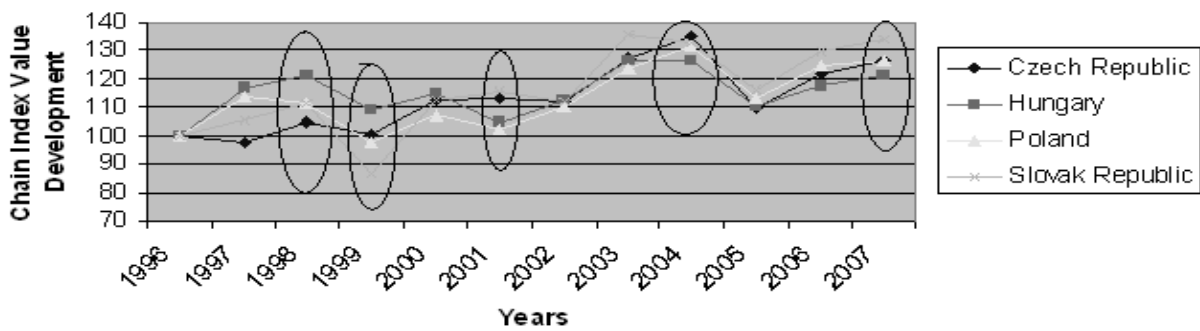


Fig. 4. Visegrad group countries – Development of import values – Chain Index (1996–2007)
Source: WTO, Comtrade, own processing

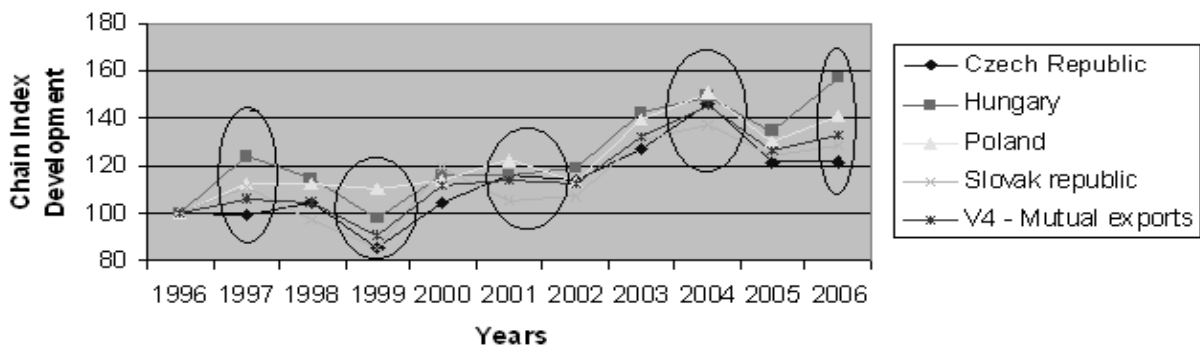


Fig. 5. Visegrad group – mutual export activities – Chain Index Development (1996–2006)
Source: WTO, Comtrade, own processing

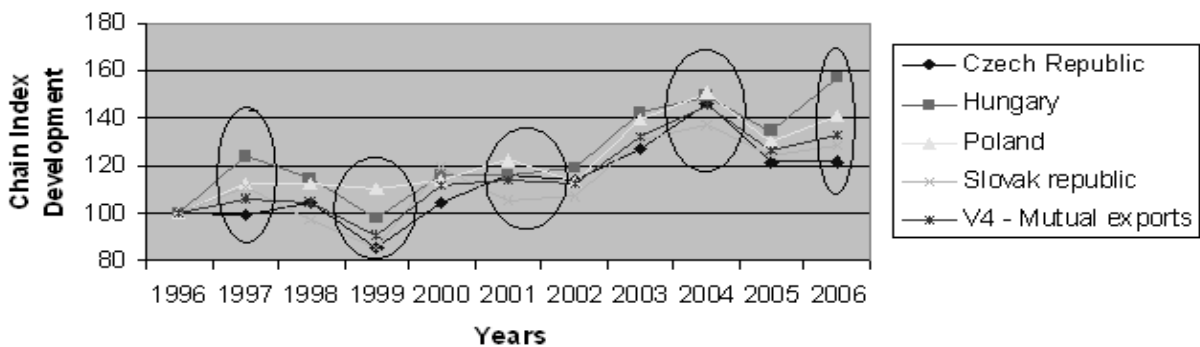


Fig. 6. Visegrad group – mutual import activities – Chain Index Development (1996–2006)
Source: WTO, Comtrade, own processing

within the whole group of countries and its share in the total trade turnover is more than 30%. When we compare the changes in the mutual trade value development we have to highlight that individual V4 countries increased the absolute nominal value of their export/import activities realized within the Visegrad group significantly. During the monitored period nominal values of Czech exports/imports increased by 240% / 230%, Polish exports/imports increased by more than 700% / 370%, Hungarian exports/imports increased by 900% / 580% and Slovak exports increased by 250% / 300%. At this point it has to be mentioned that while in past the Czech and Slovak Republics had the main shares in total Visegrad trade activities, their shares are now declining, while the Hungarian and Polish shares in mutual trade are constantly increasing.

CONCLUSIONS

V4 countries foreign trade development

The mutual trade of the Czech and Slovak Republics, Hungary and Poland has been growing continuously since 1996 to the present. During 1996–2006 the value of mutual trade increased by more than 300% (the average inter-annual growth rate was about 17.7%). While in 1996 the value of mutual foreign trade reached about 10 billion USD, in 2006 it was more than 46 billion USD. Detailed information about the mutual trade value development of the V4 countries can be seen in Table 17. The growth rate of mutual trade has a similar development trend in comparison with individual countries' foreign trade activities at the world level. A very important feature which is characteristic for the mutual analysed countries foreign trade is the fact that trade among them is still developing and does not have a tendency to stagnate. The Polish, Czech, Slovak and Hungarian EU accession influenced the mutual trade development among all the analysed V4 countries. When we compare the results of mutual trade development three years (2001–2003) before the EU accession of the V4 countries and three years (2004–2006) after their EU accession, we can see that the average inter-annual rate of the mutual V4 countries trade increased its value from 20% to 35%. The average inter-annual growth of the foreign trade turnover value increased from 2.63 billion USD/year in 2001–2003 to 9.2 billion USD/year in 2004–2006. It appears that the EU accession of the four analysed countries did not have any negative effect on all the analysed countries mutual trade. At present, the Czech Republic represents the main trader within the V4 countries. Its share in the mutual V4 countries foreign trade turnover is about 33%. The shares of other countries in total mutual trade turnover are: Poland 24%, the Slovak Republic 23% and Hungary 19%.

In general the main factors, which have been influencing the foreign trade results of the four analysed countries, are the size of the economy (Individual countries have different size of internal market and different purchasing power of their individual consumers.), the level of eco-

nomical growth (All mentioned countries are fast growing economies, but they have different structure of economy growth. While Poland economy growth is realized especially through its internal market development, in case of other countries it is just foreign trade which is the main driver of their economy growth.), mutual trade barriers (In past the value of mutual trade among individual countries was limited by many restrictions, in nowadays there are no restrictions, because all analysed countries became the EU members and they accepted the rules of Common trade policy), political and economical orientation of individual countries (During the last more than ten years individual countries' political and economical orientation significantly changed, they became the EU members and they have been developing their trade relations especially within the EU internal market.), the level of foreign direct investments (Foreign direct investments represent very important factor of individual countries' economy growth. Countries like the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic were very successful in area of foreign direct investments inflows. They were able to attract many foreign investors, who made from these countries significant exporters.), the level of domestic consumption and production (Individual countries have been constantly increasing their domestic production and consumption as well.), exchange rate development (The exchange rate is the very important factor which has been influencing individual countries' foreign trade performance. All analyzed countries except for the Slovak Republic do not replace their national currencies by EURO and therefore their trade is constantly influenced by individual countries' currency value development.) and many other factors. The positive trends, which are possible to see in the case of all the analysed countries foreign trade development, are specialisation and the constantly growing share of processed products with a high level of value added in the total exports of the analysed countries. On the basis of external trade and GDP development trends comparison at world level and within the framework of the V4 group of countries we can make several important conclusions, which follow.

– During the analysed period of 1996–2006, the group of V4 countries as representative of the Central and Eastern European countries, is characterised by a significantly higher level of inter-annual growth rate of external trade in comparison with the rest of the world. During the analysed time period the inter-annual growth rate of the external trade nominal value for the analysed countries was almost twice (export 17.5%/year, import 14.5%/year) as high as the world and EU 27 average (8.7% respectively 8.1%).

– The growth of the value of external trade flows is connected with a constantly growing level of openness of the individual economies (they are more and more open to external trade activities). According to the share of export value in GDP value, the V4 countries (except for Poland) are in the group of the most liberal and trade-opened world economies. The level of openness of the economy of the countries mentioned (65–75%) is more than twice as high as the world average (i.e. about 30%). Even the

Table 17. Development of mutual trade values among the V4 countries

(in billion USD)	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Trade flows	10.02	10.67	11.12	10.07	11.27	12.84	14.45	19.17	27.83	35.12	46.76

Source: Comtrade (UN)

Table 18. Selected countries' terms of trade development

Terms of trade	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	Mean value
Czech Republic	1.06	1.11	1.00	0.97	1.02	1.03	1.01	1.04	1.04	1.00	1.03
Hungary	1.14	0.99	1.00	0.98	1.03	1.01	0.99	1.02	1.03	1.02	1.02
Poland	0.92	0.99	0.99	1.08	1.11	1.02	1.08	1.06	1.05	0.99	1.03
Slovak Republic	1.03	1.00	1.10	1.03	0.92	1.02	1.11	0.98	0.98	1.01	1.02

Source: Comtrade (UN)

Table 19. V4 countries' foreign trade commodity structure development in billion USD

V4 countries' foreign trade structure in billion USD		1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
V4 – exports	agricultural and foodstuff products	6.56	7.32	7.15	5.85	5.92	6.62	7.1	9.31	12.7	16.31	19.05
V4 – exports	raw material and fuels	6.33	6.11	5.79	5.68	6.65	7.17	7.66	9.56	14.25	16.57	18.39
V4 – exports	manufactures	53.53	63.72	77.3	77.75	88.06	98.77	112.8	148.3	195.9	229	283.1
V4 – imports	agricultural and foodstuff products	7.11	6.97	7.23	6.25	6.1	6.6	7.28	8.56	11.99	14.74	17.14
V4 – imports	raw material and fuels	13.13	13.68	11.72	11.45	15.95	16.13	17.17	20.47	27.71	35.31	41.88
V4 – imports	manufactures	69.96	81.74	97.36	96.13	103.9	112.4	125.6	160.5	204.9	228.4	281.4
V4 – balance	agricultural and foodstuff products	-0.55	0.35	-0.08	-0.4	-0.18	0.02	-0.18	0.75	0.71	1.57	1.91
V4 – balance	raw material and fuels	-6.8	-7.57	-5.93	-5.77	-9.3	-8.96	-9.51	-10.91	-13.46	-18.74	-23.49
V4 – balance	manufactures	-16.43	-18.02	-20.06	-18.38	-15.82	-13.65	-12.8	-12.17	-8.95	0.64	1.64

Source: Comtrade (UN)

level of openness of the Polish economy is above the world average.

– Another effect connected with the high level of external trade and GDP growth in the countries analysed is the growth of their export value share in the total world GDP. This fact represents the improvement of the V4 countries economic position at world level – meaning that they have a better position in the global competitive environment.

– The level of participation and dynamic contribution to the development of the global economic dimension of the Central and Eastern European countries (in comparison to other territories) can be documented by the share of these countries and territories in the world inter-annual GDP growth in relation to their share in the total GDP volume.

– Current V4 countries mutual and total foreign trade development trends are influenced by many factors. In nowadays it is just the financial crisis which has been influencing individual countries' trade and economy development. This crisis is going to show us how the individual analysed countries are vulnerable. Their economy growth is closely related with foreign direct investments inflows and also with foreign trade operations. All countries, except for Poland, are heavily dependent on foreign trade development and growth. Their economy growth is related with limited number of trade partners – mainly from the EU. Individual countries' export activities are also re-

lated with only limited number of products – it makes the whole system of foreign trade operations extremely fragile and vulnerable. In general it is very difficult to make some recommendations how to improve the current situation. The logical way how to improve the whole system is to increase the number of foreign trade partners and to increase (to improve the level of diversification) the number of items which are exported. Diversification process can make the whole system more stable and it can protect individual economies against world market fluctuations. But there is one significant problem – Individual governments have just only limited possibilities how to improve current situation. The main problem is the fact that the majority of production capacities in analysed countries are controlled by foreigners and transnational companies. These subjects – they have their own interests and their own visions, therefore it is very difficult to improve for example territorial and commodity structure of individual countries' foreign trade activities. Another problem is the fact that all countries accepted the rules and obligations connected with the EU's policies. If we take in consideration all above mentioned aspects, it must be emphasized that individual governments can improve current situation only through negotiation processes within the EU and also they can created those conditions, which would be able to support domestic companies and to attract those kinds of foreign direct investments which can make the whole system more strong and stable.

REFERENCES

- SVATOŠ, M.: Selected trends forming European agriculture. *Agric. Econ. – Czech*, 54, 2008: 93–101.
- JENÍČEK, V.: World commodity trade in the globalization processes. *Agric. Econ. – Czech*, 53, 2007: 101–110.
- KUNEŠOVÁ, H. – CIHELKOVÁ, E. et al.: *Světová ekonomika (World economy)*. C. H. Beck, 2006.
- VARADZIN, F. et al.: *Ekonomický rozvoj a růst (Economical development and growth)*. Praha, Professional Publ. 2004.
- SVATOŠ, M. – SMUTKA, L.: The analysis of external trade development among the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Poland and Ukraine. In: *Agricultural market and trade: evidence and perspectives of V4 region and its neighbour – Ukraine*. Warsaw, 2008: 119–151.
- WB, WDI online database, 2008, available at: ddp-ext.worldbank.org, accessed February 2009.
- International Trade Statistics 2007. WTO, 2008.
- UN, Comtrade database, 2008, available at: comtrade.un.org/db, accessed February 2009.
- Atlas économique mondial 2007, Le nouvel Observateur, Paris 2007, Fortune, Vol. 156, No. 2, July 23, 2007.
- International Financial Statistics, IMF, Vol. LXI, No. 4, April 2008.

Received for publication on February 12, 2009

Accepted for publication on April 23, 2009

SVATOŠ, M. – SMUTKA, L. (Česká zemědělská univerzita, Provozně ekonomická fakulta, katedra ekonomiky, Praha, Česká republika):

Analýza komoditní a teritoriální struktury obchodu zemí Visegrádu.

Scientia Agric. Bohem., 40, 2009: 164–177.

Příspěvek se zabývá analýzou vývoje zahraničního obchodu zemí tzv. Visegrádské čtyřky. Hlavním cílem tohoto článku je charakterizovat vývoj zahraničního obchodu zmíněných zemí a zejména pak analyzovat a zhodnotit ty faktory, které ovlivňují vývoj vzájemného obchodu analyzovaných zemí. Tento článek je součástí rozsáhlého výzkumného záměru č. 6046070906 MŠMT. Z výsledků analýzy vyplynuly následující závěry. Skupina zemí V4 ve sledovaném období (1996–2006) prokázala významně vyšší roční tempo růstu zahraničního obchodu – téměř dvojnásobné – ve srovnání s průměrem světovým a EU. Souběžně s tím došlo k zásadnímu zvýšení míry otevřenosti ekonomiky. Podle ukazatele podílu exportu na HDP se řadí země V4 (kromě Polska) do skupiny nejotevřenějších ekonomik světa. Období příprav na vstup do EU a samotný vstup do EU znamenaly výrazné změny v komoditní a teritoriální struktuře zahraničního obchodu analyzovaných zemí. Zahraniční kapitál převzal kontrolu nad výrobními kapacitami a významná část zejména průmyslové produkce je produkována pro export. Růst exportu je spojen s nárůstem importů produktů a surovin, které jsou bezprostředně nutné pro zajištění produkce. Pozitivním rysem je fakt, že tempo růstu hodnoty exportu analyzovaných zemí převyšuje tempo růstu hodnoty importů.

země Visegrádské skupiny; export; import; bilance; konkurenceschopnost; míra růstu; hodnota; trend; analýza

Contact Address:

Prof. Ing. Miroslav Svatoš, CSc., Česká zemědělská univerzita v Praze, Provozně ekonomická fakulta, katedra ekonomiky, Kamýčká 129, 165 21 Praha 6-Suchbát, Česká republika, tel.: +420 224 384 344, e-mail: svatos@pef.czu.cz
