THE EU, APEC AND ASEAN; A COMPARISON IN THE FRAMEWORK OF ECONOMIC INTEGRATION

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Abstract: Fast developing technology, increased production and the search for market has paved the way for globalization after the industrial revolution. Transnational borders has almost disappeared today's World which faced with two great wars and a lot more threat during the 20th century. Economic integrations gained speed after the two Great World Wars. Countries started to come together because of advancing technology, transportation facilities, security concerns and increased competition during this period. Thus, political, military and cultural integration movements established and also economic integration movements gained speed. Economic, political, military integrations like EU, APEC, ASEAN, NAFTA, WTO and NATO have showed impact in every region of the World. There are a lot of regional and global integration movements in the World. Globalization leads to act the World as if it had a single center increasingly. This case is important in terms of economic integration of the national economies. The main objective of economic integration is an effort to eliminate all barriers to trade. In this work, the structure of the economic integration process and its effect on the World economy will be examined. APEC, ASEAN and EU can be considered as one of the best samples of the economic integration in the World. General structures, macroeconomic performances and their effects on integration process of these three economic integrations will be discussed. As a result, APEC stands out with its developing large trade volume, ASEAN is noted with its great speed of economic development and, European Union differs with its large gross domestic product per capita. APEC, EU and ASEAN organizations show that both developed and developing countries can not remain outside of integration. Each of the three integration movement has been making great contributions to the World to integrate. World is almost becoming a single country thanks to the economic integration.

Keywords: Economic integration, APEC, ASEAN, EU, Foreign Trade

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1. Introduction

Countries are making economic cooperation with other countries to increase their foreign trade, to compete with others for about last six decades. This kind of cooperation generally called economic integrations. Increasing security concerns and past experiences made countries to cooperate especially after Second World War. Integration such as European Union has emerged in these kinds of conditions.

Nowadays, there are a lot of regional and global integration movements in the World. Among of them possibly the most successful is the European Union. EU

economic integration movement is increasingly turning into a political union in recent days. As a result of political and economic unification in the World, some regional and global integration was established such as EU, NATO, ASEAN and APEC since the mid- 20th century.

Foreign trade has become an important position for those countries which don't want to lag behind in the globalized World. Countries need integration to export their products in foreign markets and to import some needed goods to their countries. The countries or groups of countries which established economic unity among themselves are trying to remove all trade barriers, to liberalize the foreign trade. (Hepaktan ve Çınar, 2011:68).

The aim of this study is to examine the overall structure of the concept of economic integration which is quite common nowadays. Therefore first, it is focused on the concept of integration, and then the three economic integrations, EU, ASIA and APEC as having a great place in the World economy are analyzed. These three integrations' foreign trade data and the share in the World economy are compared. Thus, the success of the economic integration process and its impact on the World economy will become more apparent.

2. The Concept of Economic Integration

Fast developing technology, increased production and the search for market has paved the way for globalization after the industrial revolution. Transnational borders has almost disappeared today's World which faced with two great wars and a lot more threat during the 20th century. New trade routes, competitive strategies and security concerns have caused the World to move toward integration. The globalization process is a quite broad concept. The concept of integration in general is expressed a different structure as gradually coming together and transformation as result of rapidly developing technologies, social, political, economic and even cultural developments (Şeren Güler, 2011:48). As a result of the globalization process the European Union which is the most successful example of the integration is founded.

Globalization leads to act the World as if it had a single center increasingly. This case is important in terms of economic integration of the national economies. The main objective of economic integration is an effort to eliminate all barriers to trade. Factor mobility is provided in advanced stages of integration. Ultimately, national economic policies are harmonized with integration by empowering integration (Aydoğuş, 2005:2). Regional economic integration results in eliminating the constraints of the national economy in trade. The free trade comes forward within the union by increasing prosperity and the level of income of the member states. The rules of intra-regional free trade and a common external trade are the most important rules of the economic integration process (Yanar, 2011:3).

Regional economic integration is being implemented in different ways. The order of the integration process is as follows: free trade area, customs union, common market, economic and monetary union and, full economic integration (Ertürk, 1991). In political union stage which is the most advanced step of the process of integration, countries start to move together in economic, military and political aspects. On the basis of the political integration process, it is expected the union to have regional and global power status without being any restriction and to act as nation states.

Relations with neighboring countries come to the fore because economic integration is based on cooperation and distributions. Geographical advantage thanks to regional integration improves the integration of power. The possibility success of the integration further increases in regions such as involvement of powerful countries, marketing is easy, the raw material can be obtained easily and far from political and terrorist threat (İsayev, 2013:194).

3. The European Union

The EU is a unique economic and political partnership between 28 European countries that together cover much of the continent. The EU was created in the aftermath of the Second World War. The first steps were to foster economic cooperation: the idea being that countries that trade with one another become economically interdependent and so more likely to avoid conflict. The result was the European Economic Community (EEC), created in 1958, and initially increasing economic cooperation between six countries: Belgium, Germany, France, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands. Since then, a huge single market has been created and continues to develop towards its full potential. (http://europa.eu/abouteu/basic-information/about/index en.htm)

What began as a purely economic union has evolved into an organization spanning policy areas, from development aid to environment. A name change from the EEC to the European Union (EU) in 1993 reflected this. The EU is based on the rule of law: everything that it does is founded on treaties, voluntarily and democratically agreed by all member countries. These binding agreements set out the EU's goals in its many areas of activity.

One of the EU's main goals is to promote human rights both internally and around the World. Human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights: these are the core values of the EU. Since the Lisbon Treaty's entry in force in 2009, the EU's Charter of Fundamental Rights brings all these rights together in a single document. The EU's institutions are legally bound to uphold them, as are EU governments whenever they apply EU law (http://europa.eu/about-eu/basic-information/about/index_en.htm).

The capital city of The EU is Brussels in Belgium. There are several organs in The EU. These are as follows, European Parliament, European Council, European Commission, Court of Justice, The European Court of Auditors, The Economic and Social Committee, The Committee of Regions, The European Investment Bank, The European Central Bank, The Community Agencies (İBB- AB İlişkileri Müdürlüğü, https://ab.ibb.gov.tr/avrupa-birligi/abnin-temel-organlari/). The EU founded by six countries reached 28 members with the participation of Croatia at the end.

The European Union can be considered as an economic community that represents best the economic integration process. More than 500 million inhabitants and to address the close to 50% of the World economy shows the strength of the Union. Some countries from the EU such as Germany, France and England are located at the top of the countries with the World's ten largest economies.

Of the 500 largest companies Worldwide, nearly 200 companies are the EU member states (Şeren Güler, 2011:52). The European Union is the best performing integration movement in the World in terms of economic indicators. The countries that one of the members of EU such as Germany, Britain, France as the World's

largest gross domestic product and foreign trade volume are further increasing the power of the unity. The European Economic Community was founded in 1958 and, it has rapidly expanded with new members, and then has set an example for other countries in terms of economic success. In other parts of the World integration movement has gained speed in the face of economic success of the European Union. The success rates in integration are higher in developed countries. But in 1960 a few unsuccessful integrations experienced in World. As the 1990s, developing countries have established successful integrations. ASEAN, APEC, MERCOSUR are some successful regional economic activities (Çeştepe, Mıstaçoğlu, 2010:93-94).

Table 1: EU Macro-Economic Indicators

Years	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2000	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Population (Million)	487, 9	489, 2	490, 5	492, 3	494, 3	496, 3	498, 2	500, 0	501, 9	503, 3	504. 5	505, 5	505, 1	506, 5	508, 3
Land Area (sq. km)	4241 912	4241 382	4240 192	4240 352	4240 442	4240 152	4239 492	4239 440	4238 886	4239 793	4241 134	4240 993	4238 103	4238 061	4238 061
GNI Growth(%)	3,9	2,07	1,2	1,5	2,8	2,1	3,3	2,7	0,07 8	4,17 5	2,38	1,7	-0,6	0,05	1,2
Trade(%of GDP	68,	67	65	64	66	69	74	74	76	67	74	79	81	80	81
Inflation (consumer price %)	3,1	3,15	2,30	2,09	2,25	2,48	2,60	2,63	4,20 5	0,95	1,66	3,30	2,71	1,38	0,22
GDP at market prices trillion\$)	8,8	8,9	9,7	11,8	13,7	14,3	15,2	17,6	19,0	17,0	16,9	18,3	17,2	17,9	18,5
GNI per capita, Atlas method (current US\$)	19.5	18.9	18.6	21.04	25.4	29.2	31.3	33.4	35.9	35.4	35.4	35.6	35.2	35.6	35.7

Source: Table has been created by us with World Bank data.

Table 1 shows the European Union's macro-economic performance from 2000-2014 years. When it is examined the table, population of the EU was around 487 million in 2000, reached 508 million in 2014. National income per capita in 2000 was around 19.000 dollars increased to 35.000 dollars in 2014. Still it located in the very low rate of inflation. The consumer price inflation rate remained 0.22% for 2014. Looking at the foreign trade ratio of the GDP the European Union's it is about 81%. This rate was increased to 68 % in 2000 to 81 % in 2014. As can be seen from the table, the persistence of the some countries with the highest per capita income in the World are in the EU leads to an increase in the average macro economic indicator's value of unity.

4. ASEAN

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations is a political and economic organization of ten Southeast Asian countries. It was formed on 8 August 1967 by Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand. Since then, membership has expanded to include Brunei, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar (Burma), and Vietnam. Its aims include accelerating economic growth, social progress, and sociocultural evolution among its members, alongside protection of regional stability as well as providing a mechanism for member countries to resolve differences peacefully (en.wikipedia.org).

The secretariat of the Organization is located in Jagart, Indonesia. ASEAN has become quite successful integration movement with nearly 40 years of its history. Although it faced with many challenges in the year it was founded ASEAN has

managed to become an important actor in the World economy and the community in accordance with the principle of, "ASEAN Way". MAHPILONDO and ASA organizations could not succeed because of various problems before ASEAN founded. ASEAN have managed to keep members together with a strong sense of discipline, plans and projects. They also survive up to date by achieving to minimize the problems (Emin Demirbaş ve Aydın, 2014:79). As set out in the ASEAN Declaration, the aims and purposes of ASEAN are (http://www.asean.org/asean/about-asean/overview/):

To accelerate the economic growth, social progress and cultural development in the region through joint endeavors in the spirit of equality and partnership in order to strengthen the foundation for a prosperous and peaceful community of Southeast Asian Nations;

- To promote regional peace and stability through abiding respect for justice and the rule of law in the relationship among countries of the region and adherence to the principles of the United Nations Charter;
- To promote active collaboration and mutual assistance on matters of common interest in the economic, social, cultural, technical, scientific and administrative fields:
- To provide assistance to each other in the form of training and research facilities in the educational, professional, technical and administrative spheres;
- To collaborate more effectively for the greater utilization of their agriculture and industries, the expansion of their trade, including the study of the problems of international commodity trade, the improvement of their transportation and communications facilities and the raising of the living standards of their peoples;
- To promote Southeast Asian studies; and
- To maintain close and beneficial cooperation with existing international and regional organizations with similar aims and purposes, and explore all avenues for even closer cooperation among themselves.

ASEAN which can not take an active role until 1975 began to take an active role by signing South East Asia Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation and re targeting regional security and the economic and social development goals in 1976. ASEAN is based on the basis of economic cooperation. Its main purposes are to set up large-scale industry and regional agricultural systems, to remove barriers and tariffs on trade, to open up international markets and to ensure cooperation in many economic areas (Erdem Hapaktan ve Çınar, 2011:70). Asian Free Trade Area Agreement (AFTA) which signed between ASEAN countries in 1992 was an important step in field of integration. The purposes of signing AFTA Agreement were reducing customs, quotas and tariffs gradually, encouraging foreign investment and boosting intra-regional trade. ASEAN has adopted guite different and successful model in economic cooperation. The basis of this economic cooperation model is to supply raw material resources they have into region and to make remain the monopoly power they have in the region. They increased trade in other products by preferential trade agreement. Thus, they could both preserve themselves from international competition and increase foreign trade (Emin Demirbaş ve Aydın, 2014:91).

ASEAN is an integration that gives great importance to economic relations out of region. China, South Korea, Japan, India, New Zealand, Australia, called ASEAN + 6 those are partners in close economic cooperation between ASEAN countries. In particular, the presence of close economic ties with China, makes ASEAN great contribution in terms of trade and capital flows (https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/region_e/con_sep07_e/kawai_wignaraja_e.pdf). ASEAN's 10 members have approximately of 626 million populations and approximately 2.4 trillion dollars gross domestic product. This feature has made ASEAN one of the largest economies in the World. It is the 3rd largest economy in the Asian region and the 7th largest in the World. ASEAN is the fastest growing economy in Asian region after China (https://www.usasean.org/system/files/downloads/asean_matters_for_america.pdf.

Table 2: ASEAN Macroeconomic Indicators

	2011	2012	2013	2014
Total land area km2	4.435.674	4.435.617	4.435.618	4.435.618
Total population thousand	598.926	606.856	614.741	622.250
Gross domestic product at current prices US\$ million	2.210.915	2.343.196	2.409.216	2.573.589
GDP growth percent	4,9	6,0	5,3	4,7
Gross domestic product per capita at current prices US\$	3.691	3.861	3.919	4.136
International merchandise trade US\$ million	2.388.444	2.476.427	2.511.517	2.528.917
Export US\$ million	1.242.199	1.254.581	1.271.128	1.292.634
Import US\$ million	1.146.245	1.221.847	1.240.388	1.236.284
Foreign direct investments inflow	95.838	115.453	117.687	136.181
Visitor arrivals	81.229,0	89.225	101.055	105.083

Source: ASEAN http://www.asean.org/?static_post=macroeconomic-indicators Table 2 shows the macro-economic performance of ASEAN. It has a population of 622 millions in 2014. The region's GDP growth rate was 4.9% in 2011 was around 4.7% in 2014. GDP per capita is located in the level of developing countries. This rate was \$ 4,136 in 2014. When considered the Integration's total foreign trade performance it's around 2.5 trillion dollars. ASEAN increases the power of integration by not giving foreign trade deficit.

ASEAN is working on four basic disciplines to develop and strengthen its economy in international market. These are; production based single market, highly competitive based economic region, equitable economic growth based region, an integration that integrated into the global economy. The basis of ASEAN's success is these 4 rules that have great importance in raising the region. The production based single market system is made by the free movement of goods, services, capital, investment, and skilled labor (ASEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY BLUEPRINT 2008: http://www.asean.org/wp-content/uploads/archive/5187-10.pdf).

5. APEC

The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) is a regional economic forum established in 1989 to leverage the growing interdependence of the Asia-Pacific. APEC's 21 members aim to create greater prosperity for the people of the region by promoting balanced, inclusive, sustainable, innovative and secure growth and

by accelerating regional economic integration (http://www.apec.org/). APEC ensures that goods, services, investment and people move easily across borders. Members facilitate this trade through faster customs procedures at borders; more favorable business climates behind the border; and aligning regulations and standards across the region. For example, APEC leads to synchronize regulatory systems which are key step to integrating the Asia-Pacific economy. A product can be more easily exported with just one set of common standards across all economies. APEC's 21 member economies are Australia; Brunei Darussalam; Canada; Chile; People's Republic of China; Hong Kong, China; Indonesia; Japan; Republic of Korea; Malaysia; Mexico; New Zealand; Papua New Guinea; Peru; The Philippines; The Russian Federation; Singapore; Chinese Taipei; Thailand; United States of America; Viet Nam. (http://www.apec.org/).

APEC has grown to become a dynamic engine of economic growth and one of the most important regional forums in the Asia-Pacific. Its 21 member economies are home to around 2.8 billion people and represent approximately 57 per cent of World GDP and 49 per cent of World trade in 2014(http://www.apec.org/).

APEC is hosting countries with large economies such as, The US, China, and Japan .Before describing any further what APEC is, it would be useful to make clear what it is not.

APEC is not:

- a formal trade agreement like the North American Free Trade Association (NAFTA);
- a European-style "common market,"
- a rules-based organization like the World Trade Organization (WTO);
- a policy think tank group like the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (http://www.ncapec.org/docs/what is apec.pdf).

APEC's way of working is based on no rules way of working, volunteering, open and transparent information, consultation and exchange of ideas. APEC had an understanding of consistently and increasing economic growth and improving the welfare when it was established. In 1994, this approach transforms into Bokor Goal understanding meant free and open trade and investment policies in Asia-Pacific region. Asia-Pacific Cooperation Organization integration structure is sat on three main pillars. These pillars are, trade and investment liberalization, ease of trade, economic and technical cooperation (APEC Primer, http://apec2015.ph/aboutapec/primer)

Table 3: APEC Macroeconomic Indicators

Years	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Total Populations(in thousands)	2751655	2770277	2789395	2808668	2828112
GDP, Current USD (in millions)	36006901	39885586	42079945	43066839	43841331
GDP per capita, Current USD	13085,55	14397,69	15085,69	15333,55	15567,89
GDP Growth Rate (annual %)	4,586615	2,853565	3,260596	3,040897	2,417068
Labor Force Participation Rate, Total					
(% of total population ages 15+)	67,85118	67,9205	68,01757	68,09973	68,13394
Exports of Merchandise Goods and					
Commercial Services (in current					
USD millions)	8722801	10150931	10489995	10762352	10997494
Imports of Merchandise Goods and					
Commercial Services (in current					
USD millions)	8806477	10436179	10890167	11127426	11310845

Source: Table created by us with data of Stats APEC, http://statistics.apec.org/index.php/key indicator/kid result flash/66

The Table 3 which is created APEC statistics by us shows APEC's macroeconomic performance in 2010-2014. Asia-Pacific Cooperation Organization approximately has 2.8 billion populations in 2014. This rate corresponds to more than 40% of the World population. Gross domestic product was 36 trillion dollars in 2010 rose to \$ 43 trillion in 2014. APEC's GDP is equivalent to 58% of the World economy. National income per capita of the Community is located in the developed country status. The GDP per capita was around \$ 13,000 in 2014 has increased up to 15,000 dollars in 2010. When the foreign trade value is mentioned it is approximately reached \$11 trillion exports and \$ 11.3 trillion import in 2014. Total foreign trade figures have already caught 22 trillion dollars in 2014. Labor force participation rate is about 68% of the total workforce in 2014.

APEC countries have award that the business cycle of the APEC countries played a key role in the region's success and in achieving the goals for a long time. Therefore it was decided to establish an organization that regulates the life business in the APEC region. As a result, the APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC) was established. ABAC members are directly elected by the member countries of APEC. ABAC makes a large contribution to APEC to penetrate better integration, to make more successful and regular business activity (http://www.ncapec.org/docs/what_is_apec.pdf).

6. Comparison

All three integration movements of the forehead covered in this article have different bureaucratic structures, different levels of integration and operation rules. Nevertheless, all of them are integration. These integration movements make the World more integrated by creating new trade opportunities and facilitating international trade. Table 4 summarizes the general macroeconomic indicators for all integration analyzed in the study. APEC stands out with its developing large trade volume, ASEAN is noted with its great speed of economic development and, European Union differs with its large gross domestic product per capita.

Table 4: Comparative Macroeconomic Indicators 2014

	APEC	EU	ASEAN
Total Populations (in milions)	2.820	508,3	622,2
GDP, Current USD (in billions)	43.841	18.500	2.573
GDP per capita, Current USD	15.567	35.700	4.136
GDP Growth Rate (annual %)	2,41	1,3	4,7
Labor Force Participation Rate, Total (% of total population ages 15+)	68	47	42
Exports of Merchandise Goods and Commercial Services (in current USD trillions)	11,9	1,73 (2013 data)	1,3
Imports of Merchandise Goods and Commercial Services (in current USD millions)	11,3	1,68 (2013 data)	1,2

Source: Created by us with above table's data.

7. Conclusion

Economic integration provides a positive contribution to the economy of the country including the integration. Two Great Wars of the 20th century have made the countries closer to each other. Regional, economic, political and military integration

movement were begun to establish by Second World War. Increased security concerns, the corrections concern the deteriorating economies, competitiveness and trade targets triggered the integration and globalization. World countries award that the closed economic system couldn't bring success to them after the Second World War. International capital and trade are indispensable two targets for development for these countries no longer. Therefore, alliances and integrations have become imperative to withstand competition in the developing World.

Today, three economic integrations with big impact in the World have made great contribution to the economic integration process. The European Union founded in early 1950, has proven its integration success as its economic system, market understanding and management approach. With its 28 members acting as a single market economy The EU has become quite successful both within the region, in foreign trade and in the international arena. The average income per capita in the EU is around 35 thousand dollars in 2014. This figure is well above the World average. For many countries, the desire to join and-or the target of increasing trade with EU shows the success of the EU's economic integration.

The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation known as APEC is hosting the largest economies of the World. Major economies such as US, Japan, China and Russia raise the power of the integration of APEC. APEC contains more than 40% of the World population with its 21 members and of 2.8 billion populations. It is understood that the globalization and integration are indispensable musts because the number of international organizations. APEC economies address more than 50% of the World both in foreign trade and economy.

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations, known as ASEAN has contributed to the process of integration in the World with its 10 members. ASEAN provides a major contribution to success of integration with rapidly evolving disciplined management approach. In particular, ASEAN with ASEAN+6 understanding has close trade relations with countries such as large economies like China, South Korea, and Japan. Although the ASEAN's economy smaller than The EU and APEC, it is growing rapidly in free trade and economic growth.

As a result, globalization has spread to almost all regions of the World. There is available various regional economic cooperation in Africa, Asia, Europe, and in Americas. Economic integration has become gradually mandatory especially in developing countries which desire to catch their growth and development objectives. APEC, EU and ASEAN organizations show both developed and developing countries can not remain outside of integration. Each of the three integration movement has been making great contributions to the World to integrate. World is almost becoming a single country thanks to the integration.

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