

Russia's Digital Economy Policy and Korea-Russia Cooperation



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Currently, the trend of digitalization is accelerating around the world. The Russian government, like other major countries, considers the digital economy policy as a key national task. In this context the Russian government is preparing concrete implementation programs. For example, 'the National Technology Initiative' (NTI) was adopted in April 2016 and 'Technet Roadmap 2035' set up in February 2017.

Russia's digital transformation in the 4th term of Putin's power is a key issue. This can have a great impact on fundamental improvement of the Russian economic structure and strengthening of industrial competitiveness at the global level. However, Russia's digital economy policy faces significant challenges. In other words, Russia is facing certain restrictions on technological exchanges with Western advanced countries due to the West's continued economic sanctions against Russia after the Ukraine crisis in 2014.

Meanwhile, the development of quaternary industries is one of the major pillars on which Korea has established its new economic development

policy. The government has actively pursued international cooperation in these fields. Against this backdrop, cooperation in the digital economy between Korea and Russia is both feasible and likely to contribute to sustainable relations.

The main goals of digital cooperation between Korea and Russia are as follows. Both Korea and Russia seek to develop digital infrastructure, conduct joint research, establish startups and jointly enter third markets. Detailed joint policies and programs must be prepared on both sides to complete this digital transformation and produce successful bilateral cooperation in the digital sector. Technology cooperation in the sector of innovative industries could be possible in the areas of artificial intelligence (AI), blockchain technology, 5G infrastructure, big data, cyber security, etc. Cooperation will also be necessary in the new markets created by quaternary industrial technologies.

Here we need to look at examples of international cooperation between Russia and other countries. Italy and Russia have experience in the most successful industrial cooperation during the Cold War. At that time, Italy was able to carry out industrial cooperation with Russia most successfully in Europe as the comprehensive strategy at the national level and the will of companies to develop the market were combined. Recently, China and Russia are also strengthening cooperation in the innovative industry sector. In commemoration of the 70th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Russia and China, the two countries have declared 2020 and 2021 the “year of science, technology and innovation.” This is also the result of competition for technological supremacy between the US and China. The lessons learned from China and Italy’s cooperation with Russia indicate that national policy and mechanisms for bilateral cooperation are necessary.

Therefore, we should pay attention to strengthening digital cooperation, using the 30th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Korea and Russia as a starting point for future cooperation. To this end, joint initiatives such as a comprehensive cooperation agreement at the level of the two governments should be created, and based on this agreement, the two countries should create and implement detailed agreements and implementation plans for each field. As leaders on both sides have agreed on cooperation in quaternary industries, it is now time to design more specific cooperation projects and establish relevant institutions. **KIEP**