

# Evolutionary dynamics of Belarus' economic ties

In 2024, the Belarusian economy maintains steady positive dynamics. According to the results of the first quarter, the growth of gross domestic product exceeded four percent. Belarus significantly increased the output of trucks and cars, buses, TV sets, nitrogen fertilizers, cement, confectionery, paints, varnishes. The production of vegetables, milk and other agricultural products has increased by more than one and a half times. And the country's enterprises continue to invest in modernization, including with the help of free economic zones, import substitution, technology parks, and innovative development program. The national economy is also supported by increased sales in foreign markets. In two months of this year, Belarus' exports exceeded six billion dollars. In the future, the Belarusian side is betting on the markets of China, Central Asia, Africa and Latin America. Especially since several new Belarusian embassies have been opened in non-traditional markets recently. How do these ties work today? What interesting experience in this context has been accumulated in a number of Belarusian regions and departments? These and other questions of this topic are discussed in this study.



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Innovative perspectives

Boris Zalessky



# Evolutionary dynamics of Belarus' economic ties

*towards the creation of new partnerships. Innovative perspectives*

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## Future transportation trends

In June 2023, Minsk hosted the fourth exhibition "Electric Transport Day", which was attended by more than 30 organizations - industrial enterprises, scientific organizations and companies-importers of electric vehicles. This exhibition forum presented passenger and cargo electric transport, the latest models of Belarusian electric buses, components of the element base for electric vehicles. "Among the novelties were the MAZ electric bus, the first Volat electric bus of the Minsk Wheel Tractor Plant, a multifunctional city electric truck of the National Academy of Sciences, a new model of the AMKODOR electric loader"<sup>1</sup>.

It should be noted that this exhibition overlaps very organically with the global trends and development tendencies of the Belarusian market. After all, according to the International Energy Agency, more than ten million electric cars will be sold in the world in 2022, which is 55 percent more than in 2021. "This was facilitated by the global trend towards decarbonization, the refusal of major car companies to produce cars with internal combustion engines. <...> As a result, the total number of electric vehicles in the world exceeded 26 million units"<sup>2</sup>. In 2023, the positive dynamics continued. At the same time, the share of new electric vehicles in the market reached 18 percent (in 2020 there were only 4 percent).

As for the Republic of Belarus, our country also has all the conditions for the development of the electric car market. And in 2023,

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<sup>1</sup> More than 30 organizations will take part in the exhibition "Day of electric transport" in Minsk on June 9 [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/bolee-30-organizatsij-primut-uchastie-v-vystavke-den-elektrotransporta-v-minske-9-ijunja-569850-2023/>

<sup>2</sup> Electricity consumption by charging stations for electric vehicles in Belarus has increased by more than a third [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/elektropotreblenie-zarjadnymi-stantsijami-dlja-elektrotransporta-v-belarusi-vyroslo-bolee-chem-na-tret-569857-2023/>



this trend is already much more strongly felt on Belarusian roads. "First of all, it is most noticeable for commercial vehicles. A lot of electric cars are appearing in cabs, carsharing and commercial transportation. <...> One of the trends is the growth of deliveries from the leading country of electric vehicle technologies - China"<sup>3</sup>. Recall that the first Chinese electric cars Geely Geometry C were brought to BELJI three years ago to get experience of use in Belarus and to show buyers the new cars. "As for the domestic electric car, the work is now being done jointly with the Academy of Sciences. We [BELJI CJSC] gave the NAS a sample of one of the most popular Coolray models to work out the possibility of creating an electric car on the basis of another car"<sup>4</sup>.

By the way, the capacity of the passenger car market in Belarus is estimated at 50 thousand cars per year. Electric cars could occupy a fourth part of this volume, if their price was below ten thousand dollars. So far, the Geometry C model costs more than 90 thousand Belarusian rubles. So, it seems that the key directions in electric transportation for the company "BELJI" will be to provide the market with more budget models and to develop the service. In particular, a new Geely model - Geometry E - is a car of a more budget segment. On the topic of domestic electric car in June 2023, the Ministry of Industry of Belarus also spoke out, emphasizing that it will be ready to present and show its own development very soon, so that "the model of domestic electric car will be ready this year"<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> By the end of the year about 200 filling stations of Belorusneft will be modified for charging Chinese electric cars [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/do-kontsa-goda-okolo-200-eks-belorusnefti-modifitsirujut-dlja-zarjadki-kitajskih-elektromobilej-569935-2023/>

<sup>4</sup> Svidersky: Belarus has all the conditions for the development of the electric car market [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/sviderskij-v-belarusi-est-vse-uslovija-dlja-razvitiya-rynka-elektromobilej-569868-2023/>

<sup>5</sup> Ministry of Industry: soon we will present a prototype of domestic electric car [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/minprom-skoro-predstavim-opytinyj-obrazets-otechestvennogo-elektromobilja-571013-2023/>

Continuing the topic of electric cars of Chinese manufacturers in Belarus, we note another interesting fact: by the end of 2023, it was planned to modify about 200 charging stations of PA Belorusneft for these cars, or almost 30% of all charging station capacities in the country. Speaking in general, electricity consumption by charging stations for electric vehicles in Belarus in 2022 increased by more than a third. A network of charging stations has already been "formed, there are about 700 of them in total. By this indicator, Belarus is a leader in the CIS"<sup>6</sup>.

By the way, in May 2023, the charging infrastructure of our country was recognized as a leader at the international environmental competition "Green Eurasia" among the countries of the Eurasian Economic Union, where it was noted that the Belarusian superfast charging complex implemented "all modern trends in electric vehicle technology. This is a system of electric energy storage, a pantograph for electric buses, and there is also a possibility for an electric car to charge in 10 minutes for 300 kilometers"<sup>7</sup>. By 2025 these super-fast complexes will appear in Belarusian regional cities and on the highway M1 - Brest - Russian border, and by the end of 2030 they will be installed 86 throughout Belarus. In the meantime, in 2024 "15 modern superfast charging complexes will be built"<sup>8</sup>.

Another interesting issue in the context of this topic concerns the creation of components for electric vehicles. After all, Belarus is already

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<sup>6</sup> Electricity consumption by charging stations for electric vehicles in Belarus has increased by more than a third [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/elektropotreblenie-zarjadnymi-stantsijami-dlja-ekstrotransporta-v-belarusi-vyroslo-bolee-chem-na-tret-569857-2023/>

<sup>7</sup> 85 superfast charging complexes for electric cars will be installed in Belarus by the end of 2030 [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/v-belarusi-dokontsa-2030-goda-ustanovjat-85-superbystryh-zarjadnyh-kompleksov-dlja-ekstrokarov-569933-2023/>

<sup>8</sup> There will be more than 700 electric charging stations in Belarus by the end of the year, 105 more will be added in 2024 [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/v-belarusi-k-kontsu-goda-budet-bolee-700-ektrozarjadnyh-stantsij-v-2024-m-dobavitsja-esche-105-571025-2023/>

ready to localize these components. These are power motors, which Mogilevliftmash produces in sufficient quantities as needed. These are also control electronics, which are produced by Izmeritel plant in Vitebsk. As for the batteries, "the Academy of Sciences has three enterprises that compose battery systems. <...> Now we see a more promising direction - sodium ion batteries"<sup>9</sup>. In Belarus, prototypes have already been made in laboratory conditions. And in China they expected to produce an electric car with sodium-ion batteries before the end of 2023. All these facts show that the implementation of the comprehensive program for the development of electric transport last year has already contributed to the creation of a new sector of machine building in Belarus - electric vehicle construction, as well as the formation of a system of scientific support for the whole range of economic, environmental and social issues in this innovative area.

In March 2024, the Belarusian government updated the comprehensive program for the development of electric transport. In particular, the document includes the chapter "Creation of electric passenger car production". Recall that in January 2023, at a meeting on the implementation of the comprehensive program for the development of electric transport until 2025, the government set the task - to determine the real terms for the creation of a domestic electric passenger car. At that time it was noted that "a lot of research and development work has been carried out, a significant number of powertrain elements, electrical equipment, traction devices have been created"<sup>10</sup>. And the March (2024) resolution of the Council of Ministers already says that in

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<sup>9</sup> Chizhik: in Belarus they create components for electric transport and are ready for their localization [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/chizhik-v-belarusi-sozdajut-komponenty-dlja-elektrotransporta-i-gotovy-k-ih-lokalizatsii-569937-2023/>

<sup>10</sup> Golovchenko: it is necessary to determine the real terms of creation of domestic electric passenger car [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/golovchenko-neobhodimo-opredelit-realnye-sroki-sozdaniya-otechestvennogo-legkovogo-elektromobilja-546358-2023/>

2017-2022 the United Institute of Mechanical Engineering of the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) of Belarus has formed a scientific and engineering school, mastered the methods of designing electric power plants of vehicles and their basic components, taking into account the technological capabilities of domestic enterprises, as well as developed design documentation, manufactured and tested components of these plants. And now for serial production of Belarusian electric vehicles "it is expedient to evaluate two potential directions of automobile industry development - electric vehicle and serial hybrid. The most promising of them is the organization of production on the basis of serially produced passenger cars"<sup>11</sup>. And in the second half of 2023, an experimental sample of a passenger electric car BELGEE eX50 with a component base of an electric propulsion system was produced. And at the end of January this year, the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus "began work on certification testing of the experimental sample of the Belarusian electric car and finalization of design documentation for the conditions of serial production. Also, a roadmap to organize the production of a pilot batch of BELGEE eX50 electric passenger cars this year has been approved"<sup>12</sup>. It is planned that in August-September the production of five electric cars should be completed. Further - trial operation and testing to approach the mass production of these cars by the end of this year. Also in the plans - "production of all the component base for domestic electric cars at the enterprises of the Ministry of Industry. Specific factories have been

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<sup>11</sup> The government updated the comprehensive program for the development of electric transport [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/pravitelstvo-obnovilo-kompleksnuju-programmu-razvitija-elektrotransporta-621197-2024/>

<sup>12</sup> Gorbunov, A. "Power reserve of 400 km, spare parts are cheaper". How Belarusian electric car will be more profitable than foreign ones / A. Gorbunov // [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/zapas-hoda-400-km-zapchasti-deshevle-chem-belorusskij-elektromobil-budet-vygodnee-inostrannyh-624192-2024>

identified and are preparing to produce the necessary components."<sup>13</sup> . So there is reason to believe that in 2025 the Belarusian electric passenger car may be put into mass production.

As for Belarusian electric **buses**, at the end of March 2024, two pilot projects to provide electric transportation involving two domestic manufacturers of electric passenger transport have already been implemented in two regions of Belarus - Mogilev and Minsk regions. Firstly, 15 modern electric buses produced by BKM Holding (formerly Belkommunmash) have started operating in Shklov district. They will operate on three urban and 19 suburban routes. "Electric buses are designed for 31 passenger seats, another 36 people will be able to ride in them standing. There is space for a wheelchair and a baby stroller. Also in the cabin you can find connectors for charging gadgets, a "warm" button for demanding a stop, installed both inside and outside"<sup>14</sup> . In addition, eight charging stations were arranged in Shklov to serve the new public transport. Secondly, 14 new electric passenger buses produced at the Minsk Automobile Plant were put into service in Zhodino. This pilot project involves the complete replacement of diesel buses on city routes. "The electric buses have 285 kWh batteries located on the roof, which provides the maximum number of seats. The autonomous driving range is 250 kilometers and the total passenger capacity is 66 people."<sup>15</sup> . In addition, the vehicles are equipped with air conditioning and microclimate system of the driver's cabin. In the cabin

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<sup>13</sup> Belarus is preparing for serial production of domestic electric cars [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/v-belarusi-gotovjatsja-k-serijnomu-proizvodstvu-otechestvennyh-legkovyh-elektromobilej-624868-2024>

<sup>14</sup> Convenience and environmental friendliness. New electric buses will go on routes in Shklov district [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/udobstvo-i-ekologichnost-novye-elektrobussy-vyjdu-na-marshruty-v-shklovskom-rajone-623982-2024>

<sup>15</sup> Parkhomchik: Zhodzina is provided with the necessary infrastructure for the operation of urban electric transport [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/parhomchik-zhodino-obespechen-neobhodimoi-infrastrukturou-dlja-raboty-gorodskogo-elektrotransporta-624337-2024/>

there are video cameras, information system with a scoreboard and USB-ports for charging various types of devices. And in general, it seems that the pilot project to provide electric transport will continue throughout the country - "Vitebsk region is next in line, most likely the industrial city of Novopolotsk"<sup>16</sup>.

Now let's take a look at the development of electric trucks at a number of Belarusian enterprises. Back in early 2022, BKM Holding (formerly Belkommunmash) presented its first electric truck Vitovt Truck Electro Prime, which started delivering goods to one of Minsk retail chains in February last year. The novelty is able to "carry a load of up to 7.8 tons at a speed of 90 km/h without recharging. Power reserve up to 200 km. <...> Full charging in this mode is 90 minutes"<sup>17</sup>. For several months, the electric truck, delivering goods from the logistics center to hypermarkets, "rolled" more than 12 thousand kilometers. And in general, the tests were successful. But the creators of the novelty must still solve several related issues. For example, "the electric truck must be redesigned, as some of the components were from European countries, but now they are unavailable for the Belarusian company. They need to be replaced"<sup>18</sup>. The second issue is that while the electric truck is more expensive than a conventional one, so it's very expensive to take such equipment. Now the creators of the novelty are in the process of its finalization. But in the current year the results obtained can be very interesting.

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<sup>16</sup> Parkhomchik: the pilot project to provide cities with electric transport will continue [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/parhomchik-pilotnyj-proekt-po-obespecheniju-gorodov-elektrotransportom-budet-prodolzhatsja-623973-2024/>

<sup>17</sup> The first Belarusian electric truck of "BKM Holding" undergoes experimental operation [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/pervyj-belorusskij-elektricheskij-gruzovik-bkm-holdinga-prohodit-opytnuju-ekspluatatsiju-555820-2023/>

<sup>18</sup> "The market is not ready yet, but there is interest". Is there a future for Belarusian electric trucks? [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/rynok-poka-ne-gotov-no-interes-imeetsja-est-li-buduschee-u-belorusskih-elektrogruzovikov-599641-2023/>

The Minsk Automobile Plant is also engaged in this topic, where there is a separate division that develops electric transmission and adaptive control systems, telematics and mechatronics. This version of the electric truck "is designed for transportation of goods up to 4.5 tons for a distance of up to 200 km without recharging (urban and suburban routes). At the same time, an almost one hundred percent level of localization of development and production has been achieved, which ensures import-independence of the component base and intellectual component used in it"<sup>19</sup> . The development of this promising novelty shows that it has a future and even plans to increase capacity for such production.

Another important element of the Comprehensive Program for the Development of Electric Transport for 2021-2025 is the provision of electric charging stations (ECS). For reference, we note that "Belarus has a deployed network of charging stations for electric vehicles, the total number of which exceeds 1 thousand"<sup>20</sup> . Among them, as of January 1, 2024, the network of charging stations of RUE "Production Association "Belarusneft" consisted of 690 stations. Of them 432 are located in Minsk region and the capital, 55 in Brest region, 48 in Vitebsk region, 62 in Gomel region, 62 in Grodno region and 35 in Mogilev region. And "Belarusneft" plans to develop this network. In addition, "new super-fast charging complexes are being actively designed, which combine the most modern that is available in the charging infrastructure. By 2030, the number of such complexes in the country will reach 86 units, and the

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<sup>19</sup> MAZ told how the work on the domestic electric truck is progressing [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/na-maze-rasskazali-kak-prodvigaetsja-rabota-nad-otechestvennym-elektrozovikom-602395-2023/>

<sup>20</sup> Karankevich: Belarus has a deployed network of charging stations, their number exceeds one thousand [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/karankevich-v-belarusi-sformirovana-razvernutaja-set-zarjadnyh-stantsij-ih-chislo-prevyshaet-tysjachu-624347-2024>

charging speed of an electric car will be comparable to the speed of filling the car with gasoline at a traditional gas station"<sup>21</sup> .

Another participant of this market is JSC "Vityaz", which mastered the production of stations in 2018. And "today, the company's assets include more than 20 models of electric charging stations of various modifications. The production of Echarging stations is developing in four directions: so-called ground-mounted and wall-mounted stations, fast and super-fast charging complexes"<sup>22</sup> . The annual output of such equipment in 2023 amounted to about 300 units, which is almost one and a half times more than in 2022. But the priority for Vityaz JSC remains the production of superfast charging complexes for charging both electric cars and electric buses, as well as electric trucks.

And a new participant of this market in Belarus in October 2023 became a network of electric charging stations SKAT, which is being created by the enterprise "Belsellectrosetstroy". "The new charging stations are equipped with connectors for Chinese GB/T electric cars. They will provide both fast charging of electric cars - in 15-40 minutes, and slow charging - within 6-8 hours, depending on the capacity and equipment of the stations"<sup>23</sup> . Last year 15 such stations were produced, and in the future about 100 will be produced annually.

Finally, Belarus plans to start testing a domestic battery for electric transportation by the end of 2024. "In August, the National Academy of Sciences should report on the first Belarusian battery, which

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<sup>21</sup> In Belarus by 2030 the network of superfast charging complexes for electric cars will reach 86 units [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/v-belarusi-k-2030-godu-set-superbystryh-zarjadnyh-kompleksov-dlja-elektrokarov-dostignet-86-edinits-579668-2023/>

<sup>22</sup> "Vityaz" by the end of the year plans to increase the output of electric charging stations 1.5 times [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/vitjaz-poitogam-goda-planiruet-v-15-raza-uvlechit-vypusk-elektrozarjadnyh-stantsij-594575-2023/>

<sup>23</sup> A new network of electric charging stations will appear in Belarus [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/v-belarusi-pojavitsja-novaja-set-elektrozarjadnyh-stantsij-593411-2023/>



by the end of the year <...> should start testing"<sup>24</sup> . And this will be a very important factor in the development of the Comprehensive Program for the Development of Electric Transport for 2021-2025.

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<sup>24</sup> Tests of the Belarusian battery for electric transport are planned to start by the end of the year [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/ispytanija-belorusskoj-batarei-dlja-elektrotransporta-planirujut-nachat-do-kontsa-goda-624870-2024/>

## Free economic zones: to facilitate the realization of new projects

Free economic zones (FEZs) in Belarus are an effective tool for increasing Belarusian exports, attracting foreign investment and increasing profits. At the same time, the successful operation of FEZs attracts not only tax preferences and benefits, but also "reduction of the time of document processing, simplification of administrative procedures for investors, simplification of the procedure for allocation of land plots within FEZs and demolition of unused buildings"<sup>25</sup>. In 2023, FEZs have confidently confirmed the status of key centers of attraction of investments, which provide not only unique conditions for the functioning of resident enterprises, but also effective development of regions, and form a fifth of the main national indicators - investment, exports and production.

Suffice it to say that as of January 1, 2024, 425 organizations were registered as FEZ residents, which "have already invested a total of about \$12.5 billion in the implementation of announced projects"<sup>26</sup>. At the same time, 30 new companies came to the FEZ last year, which planned to implement projects in logistics, food industry, furniture production, electrical equipment, metalworking and which will create more than 1300 jobs. In addition, in 2023, the procedure for registration of business entities as FEZ residents was simplified. Administrations of these formations were authorized to develop detailed plans for the development of territories. "Also, 7 large engineering and transport

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<sup>25</sup> Golovchenko: for investors in FEZ creates an oasis of the most demanded business environment [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/golovchenko-dlja-investorov-v-sez-sozdaetsja-oazis-naibolee-vostrebovannoj-biznes-sredy-588296-2023/>

<sup>26</sup> Chebotar: since the beginning of the year FEZ attracted 26 residents with a total investment volume of \$157 million [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/chebotar-s-nachala-goda-sez-privlekali-26-rezidentov-s-obshchim-objemom-investitsij-157-mln-606717-2023/>

infrastructure facilities were built for a total amount of more than Br130 million"<sup>27</sup> .

For reference, we note that in 2022, 13 new infrastructure facilities were commissioned in the FEZ. The availability of ready infrastructure allowed FEZ residents to complete the construction of modern enterprises in 2023 and subsequently set up the production of new export-oriented products. In particular, a woodworking plant was put into operation in Svisloch district, and also allowed "in Grodno - to open the production of glass containers using innovative energy-efficient and resource-saving technologies, in Minsk district - to build a plant of unique X-ray equipment, in Minsk - to complete the construction of an aircraft repair plant, in Gomel - to establish the production of medical products"<sup>28</sup> .

One of the most powerful zones in Belarus is FEZ "Minsk", whose share in industrial production of all Belarusian FEZs reaches almost 20 percent. In 2023, among the main tasks to be implemented in this zone were: "1) attraction of new investors; 2) intensification of foreign economic activity; 3) use of new innovative technologies; 4) stimulation of business activity; 5) efficient use of resources; 6) expansion of import-substituting production capacities"<sup>29</sup> . As of mid-December 2023, 105 enterprises with Belarusian and foreign investments were already operating here. For a quarter of a century the residents of the zone have built "43 modern factories, 16 factories are under construction (taking into account stages and queues), 10 - at the design stage"<sup>30</sup> . Last year

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<sup>27</sup> In 2023, 30 new companies received the status of FEZ resident [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/v-2023-godu-status-rezidenta-sez-poluchili-30-novyh-kompanij-616460-2024/>

<sup>28</sup> In 2022, 25 projects were successfully completed in free economic zones [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/v-2022-godu-v-svobodnyh-ekonomicheskikh-zonah-uspeshno-zaversheno-25-proektov-556389-2023>

<sup>29</sup> Zalesky, B. Export growth strategy. Opportunities and challenges of open economy in modern conditions / B. Zalesky. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2023. - C. 51.

<sup>30</sup> Enterprises of FEZ "Minsk" [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://fezminsk.by/residenty/predpriyatiya-sez-minsk/>

new residents with interesting investment projects in various industries came to the FEZ.

For example, in February 2023, the company Carvalio LLC was registered in FEZ "Minsk", which undertook to implement an investment project to create the production of furniture and its elements, wooden, metal building structures and joinery. "Modern furniture production will ensure the complex and rational use of wood and production of demanded products on the territory of FEZ "Minsk". The project realization provides for the construction of the facility on a land plot of 1.5 hectares in the area of Fanipol (Minsk region)<sup>31</sup>. More than 50 jobs will be created at the new enterprise, and the share of export supplies will be at least 80 percent.

In March 2023, another - 100th resident - Modul-Online LLC was registered in the FEZ, which planned to "implement an investment project for the production of furniture parts based on laminated chipboard. Investment costs will be spent on the purchase of new production equipment and modernization of own production facilities on the territory of the free economic zone"<sup>32</sup>. About one hundred jobs will be created at the enterprise. Apparently, the production will be a synthesis of high-tech production process, a large potential of skilled workers, technologists, designers and management specialists. At the same time, more than 60 percent of production is planned to be exported to the countries of the Eurasian Economic Union, as well as far abroad.

In the second half of 2023, five more new residents appeared in the FEZ in five months. In July - two companies. The first is Gualapak BiWay LLC, founded by a leading multinational group for the

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<sup>31</sup> The new resident of FEZ "Minsk" will produce furniture and building structures [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/novyj-rezident-sez-minsk-budet-proizvodit-mebel-i-stroitelnye-konstruktsii-550914-2023>

<sup>32</sup> A new resident of FEZ "Minsk" will produce furniture parts based on laminated chipboard [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novyj-rezident-sez-minsk-budet-proizvodit-mebelnye-detali-na-osnove-laminirovannogo-dsp-558219-2023/>

production of flexible packaging for food and non-food products headquartered in Italy, which operates on four continents through 11 production facilities and sells its products worldwide. The implementation of the investment project of the new FEZ resident "will contribute to the achievement of the task set by the program of socio-economic development of the Republic of Belarus to ensure environmentally safe living conditions for the population, improve environmental protection and efficient use of natural resources"<sup>33</sup>. It is planned that at least two thirds of the production volume will be exported. The second resident is Albus Group LLC with an investment project on creation of production of chemical additives for various industries. The main idea of the project is to create a new production complex on the territory of the FEZ to produce emulsion additive and other chemical products. "The first import-substituting product, which is planned to be put into production, is AKB glue, used for the processing of paper products"<sup>34</sup>. The fact is that so far there are no producers of this glue in Belarus, for this reason the existing demand of the Belarusian market is fully covered by imported supplies. So, hopefully, the new resident will be able to significantly strengthen its position in the market, expand the assortment range, reduce the cost of production and increase sales.

The next new FEZ resident - in October 2023 - is the company with Turkish capital "Diligent Company", which plans an investment project on "organization of production of ABS plastic and polypropylene products (travel suitcases). The project envisages creation of 60 new

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<sup>33</sup> A new resident of FEZ "Minsk" will be engaged in the production of flexible packaging [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novyj-rezident-sez-minsk-zajmetsja-proizvodstvom-gibkoj-upakovki-577745-2023/>

<sup>34</sup> A new resident of FEZ "Minsk" will create the production of chemical additives for industries [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novyj-rezident-sez-minsk-sozdast-proizvodstvo-himicheskikh-dobavok-dlja-otraslej-promyshlennosti-577985-2023/>

jobs"<sup>35</sup> . And in early December, the company "Holz Inc" came to the FEZ, one of the founders of which was the group of companies TMC, engaged in the construction of warehouses, hangars and production buildings, as well as the development of pre-project documentation. The new resident will implement a project for the production of furniture and blanks, "will be engaged in the construction of a production and warehouse complex of 10 thousand square meters with all necessary facilities and its equipping with technological equipment"<sup>36</sup> . This will be a high-tech and highly profitable production facility with significant export potential.

In mid-December the 105th resident of FEZ "Minsk" became the company "Manrosti" LLC, which plans to implement an investment project to organize high-tech production of coffee products with its own research base. This will provide "the needs of domestic and foreign enterprises in quality products, increase the growth of export potential, create high-tech jobs"<sup>37</sup> . An important fact: the company has already allocated a third of the jobs for workers with disabilities who are directly involved in the production of products. In the last days of 2023 the resident became KUP "Department of Road and Bridge Construction and Improvement of Minsk City Executive Committee" with an investment project for the construction of a hot-dip galvanizing plant. It is expected that this enterprise will become one of the largest in Belarus in this field and will provide services in hot-dip galvanizing of metal structures of

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<sup>35</sup> The company with Turkish capital "Diligent Company" became a new resident of FEZ "Minsk" [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/novym-rezidentom-sez-minsk-stala-kompanija-s-turetskim-kapitalom-diligent-kompani-594996-2023/>

<sup>36</sup> A new resident of FEZ "Minsk" will be engaged in furniture production [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/novyj-rezident-sez-minsk-zajmetsja-proizvodstvom-mebeli-602938-2023/>

<sup>37</sup> A new resident of FEZ "Minsk" realizes an investment project for the production of coffee products [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novyj-rezident-sez-minsk-realizuet-investproekt-po-proizvodstvu-kofejnyh-produktov-605440-2023/>

various shapes and sizes to both Belarusian and foreign companies. Sixty new jobs will be created here. "The production capacity of the plant is to process products with a total weight of 24 thousand tons per year. The start of production activities under the project is scheduled for 2026"<sup>38</sup> . As a result, imports of galvanizing services will be reduced annually in the country by more than six million dollars.

An important event in the development of this FEZ in December 2023 was the opening of a significant energy infrastructure facility for the region - Cherkasy substation. The fact is that today on this territory "in the area of Fanipol 12 residents work with a total amount of attracted investments in fixed assets \$183.9 million, created 1725 new jobs. FEZ enterprises on this territory have produced products worth \$1.93 billion"<sup>39</sup> . In 2022, a gas pipeline was put into operation here, and last year an on-site gas pipeline string with a length of over two kilometers was built. The launch of this infrastructural facility increases the attractiveness of this territory, provides gas supply to new, modern, high-tech-based enterprises of FEZ residents, and will also make it possible to attract a significant amount of investment and create more than 500 new jobs.

In January 2024, three more companies with interesting projects appeared in the FEZ. First, BAZtyub LLC, which manufactures cold-deformed pipe products in Zhodzina, is a unique enterprise. There are no more such enterprises in Belarus. The new resident "will build a plant for the production of metal pipes and machining of metal products with a

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<sup>38</sup> A new resident of FEZ "Minsk" will take up an investment project for the construction of a hot-dip galvanizing plant [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novyj-rezident-sez-minsk-zajmetsja-investproektom-po-stroitelstvu-zavoda-gorjachego-tsinkovanija-607216-2023/>

<sup>39</sup> Gas pipeline put into operation in FEZ "Minsk" in the area of Fanipol [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/gazoprovod-vveli-v-ekspluatatsiju-v-sez-minsk-v-rajone-fanipolja-607767-2023/>

capacity of 4 thousand tons per year"<sup>40</sup> . This project, where at least 100 jobs will be created, will increase production and meet the steady demand for these products, as the manufacture of pipes from sheet metal is widely used in various fields - from construction to transportation and industry. Secondly, MetalBelMash LLC, which will organize the production of hot-rolled coil sheet, which will allow to produce high-quality import-substituting products for Belarusian economic entities. After all, hot-rolled metal products occupy a large niche among all rolled products and are used in various fields of construction, machine building, as well as in the automotive industry, shipbuilding, bridge construction, and fencing.

Thirdly, Dansibel LLC, which is implementing an investment project to organize the production of sanitary and hygienic products for seven years. The production areas will be modernized, the necessary equipment will be installed - several lines, which are characterized by high productivity and allow to manufacture a wide range of products. These "production capacities will allow to produce more than 1.5 million packages of products per year. The declared volume of investments in fixed assets under the project will amount to about 1 million euros"<sup>41</sup> . It is to be assumed that the new resident will be able to quickly develop new markets in order to increase the range of high quality products.

Finally, already in February this year, another resident - Ampera Group LLC - was registered in FEZ Minsk, which will start producing charging stations for electric cars as early as 2024 and will become a new player in this market segment. "The technological novelty of the

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<sup>40</sup> New residents of FEZ "Minsk" will engage in the production of import-substituting products [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/novye-rezidenty-sez-minsk-zajmutsja-proizvodstvom-importozameschajuschej-produktsii-609600-2024/>

<sup>41</sup> A new resident of FEZ "Minsk" will be engaged in the production of sanitary-hygienic means [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novyj-rezident-sez-minsk-zajmetsja-proizvodstvom-sredstv-sanitarno-gigienicheskogo-naznachenija-611393-2024/>



investment project lies in the possibility of producing charging stations with a capacity of up to 750 kW, weldless design, liquid cooling of charging cables. The company's production capacity allows to produce up to 1200 charging stations per year<sup>42</sup>. More than 15 jobs will be created.

In general, in 2023, FEZ "Minsk" enterprises attracted investments in fixed assets of about 250 million Belarusian rubles, which is 1.2 times more than in 2022. "Despite a number of restrictive measures, foreign business is interested in investing in the development of enterprises. The inflow of foreign direct investment amounted to about 207 million dollars, which is 7 percent more compared to 2022"<sup>43</sup>.

In 2024, the FEZ "Minsk" plans to involve even more organizations and use all available territories. After all, this FEZ "was designed to give businesses a boost to development in key industries"<sup>44</sup>. And a number of countries are already interested in investment cooperation with this FEZ. For example, in August 2023, the Turkish Association of Independent Industrialists and Entrepreneurs MUSIAD, which includes more than 60 thousand Turkish companies, said that it was "interested in launching production in Belarus in the chemical industry, as well as ready to consider other areas of business"<sup>45</sup> in partnership with FEZ "Minsk". In September 2023, the capital's FEZ expanded its interaction with partners from Tajikistan, when three

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<sup>42</sup> A new resident of FEZ "Minsk" will be engaged in the production of charging stations for electric cars [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/novyy-rezident-sez-minsk-zajmetsja-proizvodstvom-zarjadnyh-stantsij-dlja-elektromobilej-618320-2024/>

<sup>43</sup> Foreign business is interested in investing in the development of enterprises [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://fezminsk.by/news/inostranny-biznes-zainteresovan-investirovat-v-razvitie-predpriyatij/>

<sup>44</sup> Kartun: more organizations should be involved in FEZ "Minsk" [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/kartun-v-sez-minsk-neobhodimo-voilekat-bolshe-organizatsij-562537-2023/>

<sup>45</sup> Turkish investors intend to launch production in the chemical industry in Belarus [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/turetskie-investory-namereny-zapustit-v-belarusi-proizvodstvo-v-sfere-himicheskoy-promyshlennosti-583837-2023/>

agreements on cooperation with FEZs - Sughd, Kulyab, and Dangara - were signed at once on the margins of the Belarusian-Tajik business forum. "The documents are aimed at developing bilateral relations, as well as cooperation in the field of research and implementation of international practices of investment project realization"<sup>46</sup> . And in October 2023, during the Iran-Belarus Business Forum, FEZ Minsk signed a memorandum of cooperation with Iran's FEZ Maku, in which the parties emphasized "the expansion of bilateral trade and investment cooperation, including participation in joint projects, business events, trade and investment missions"<sup>47</sup> . Finally, in December 2023, delegations from China and India visited the capital's FEZ and considered prospects for expanding contacts and implementing investment projects.

So, in 2024, FEZ Minsk and its residents will show many more new projects and creative ideas to create innovative production and increase the export potential of the capital region and the entire republic. The main measures that will increase the efficiency of companies in the development of exports are modernization and technical re-equipment of existing production facilities, introduction of modern technologies, reduction of production costs, including through the full application of benefits at the enterprises of the free economic zone, increasing the production of high-tech, innovative and export-oriented products, development and mastering of new profitable types of products, as well as preserving the positions of enterprises of the free economic zone.

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<sup>46</sup> FEZ "Minsk" will expand cooperation with Tajikistan [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/sez-minsk-rasshirit-sotrudnichestvo-s-tadzhikistanom-590824-2023/>

<sup>47</sup> FEZ "Minsk" and Iranian FEZ "Maku" signed a memorandum of cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/sez-minsk-i-iranskaja-sez-maku-podpisali-memorandum-o-sotrudnichestve-594179-2023/>

## Efficient Driver industrial production

Import substitution is one of the key priorities for the development of the Republic of Belarus in the near future. Back in December 2021, the Belarusian government defined strategic directions of work and developed specific tasks in this direction. These include the use of opportunities of such integration entities as the Eurasian Economic Union, "increasing localization in conjunction with support measures, implementation of sectoral import substitution programs, development of cooperation both within the country and with friendly countries, use of local raw materials, active involvement of scientific developments in the real sector of the economy"<sup>48</sup>. In 2022, import substitution has become the most important task of every import-related enterprise to work ahead of the curve. In this regard, strenuous tasks have been communicated to all regions of Belarus. The measures that stimulate Belarusian enterprises to substitute imports are "increasing localization, development of technological chains, processing of local raw materials, involvement of small and medium-sized businesses"<sup>49</sup>. Interesting experience in this context has already been accumulated in a number of Belarusian regions and departments.

The topic of import substitution is very relevant in **Minsk region**. Manufacturers of Minsk region "only in this [2022] year plan to master the production of import-substituting products in 154 nomenclature items. This is over \$1.5 billion. At the same time, it is planned to export

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<sup>48</sup> Golovchenko: import substitution is one of the engines of the economy, designed to resist the sanctions pressure [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/golovchenko-importozameshenie-odin-iz-dvigatelej-ekonomiki-prizvannyj-protivostojat-sanktsionnomu-542135-2022/>

<sup>49</sup> Zaleskii, B. Result-oriented. Realization of opportunities of international economic relations / B. Zaleskii. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2022. - C. 6.

import-substituting products worth \$1 billion"<sup>50</sup> . For example, "Slutsk Cheese Factory" has implemented a project for the production of quick-soluble milk powder. This is a product from which whole milk can be obtained at home using drinking water. Taking into account the situation with food shortages in some countries, instant milk may be in demand in Asia and Africa as well. In Kopyl district, the Dzerzhinsky agro-industrial complex has implemented a large-scale turkey meat production project. The enterprise will produce more than 6 thousand tons of turkey meat per year. The production of blue mold cheese has already been mastered in Minsk region. In a few years, the production of white mold cheese will be mastered.

Special attention is paid to the issues of import substitution in OJSC Belakotekhnika, which is located in the village of Svisloch, Pukhovichi district. The company produces more than 100 items of veterinary drugs and more than 60 fodders and feed additives based on unique recipes. At the same time, Belakotekhnika is constantly expanding its assortment. Its own development department registers six to eight new product names every year. "In 2022, a new production site specializing exclusively in veterinary preparations was put into operation. It comprises four production areas: a physico-chemical laboratory, a development department laboratory, raw material warehouses and finished product warehouses."<sup>51</sup> . With the commissioning of the new production site, the production and sales volumes have increased by 30 percent. The company's products are

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<sup>50</sup> Kurlenko: this year Minsk region plans to export import-substituting products for \$1 billion [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/kurlenko-v-etom-godu-minskaja-oblast-planiruet-eksportirovat-importozameschajushuju-produktsiju-na-1-514181-2022>

<sup>51</sup> Voropai, A. How "Belekotekhnika" provides import substitution of veterinary drugs and feed / A. Voropai // [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/amp/regions/view/reportazh-kak-belekotekhnika-obespechivaet-importozameschenie-veterinarnyh-preparatov-i-kormov-514311-2022>

cheaper than their European counterparts, while their quality is not inferior.

**Brest region's** enterprises are also actively involved in import substitution. In particular, the Zhabinka fodder factory will soon launch a new line for the production of fodder for fish and animals, which used to be purchased abroad. Kobrin butter and cheese factory together with the Republican Scientific and Practical Center of Oncology and Medical Radiology is completing the production of food for cancer patients. The Pinsk district is working on the issue of extraction and processing of basalt - raw material for the glass industry, which was mainly imported. OJSC "Berezastroymaterialy" is thinking about the development of clay deposit in Stolin district in order to replace the part of raw materials purchased abroad. An important detail: "In January-May [2022], 267 new commercial organizations and 1,334 individual entrepreneurs were registered in the region. Private structures have also reoriented themselves to produce import-substituting products and are retooling their production facilities. And the work to ensure import substitution continues"<sup>52</sup> .

In 2022, the Southwest region produced nearly \$900 million worth of such products, while introducing new types of goods. For example, the production of batteries and components was increased. In Kobryn district, capacities for the production of mushroom compost were put into operation. The Brest Radio-Technical Plant mastered the production of temperature indicators for the needs of "Brestgazoapparat". The enterprises that produce equipment for the processing industry also joined this work. Thus, KOMPO mastered the production of a line for

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<sup>52</sup> Vakulchik: Brest region enterprises actively involved in the work on import substitution [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/vakulchik-predpriyatija-brestskoj-oblasti-aktivno-vkljuchilis-v-rabotu-po-importozamescheniju-514809-2022>

sausage making, while AgroPischeProm produced meat processing equipment.

In 2023 Brest region aims to produce more than 900 million dollars worth of import-substituting products, of which more than 530 million dollars worth of goods will be exported. At the moment, work is underway on 146 items, including 14 new ones. "In particular, the region's enterprises have taken up the manufacture of radiosurgical instruments, construction parts made of plastics, planters and seedling planters, and zip lock packaging. A farm in Ivanovo district grows bulbs of Dutch varieties of tulips. One of the enterprises in the region has mastered the production of low-protein bakery and confectionery products"<sup>53</sup>. In addition, Pinsk "Kuzlitmash" is working on the creation of a new line of mechanical presses for precision stamping. Zubr Energy has started production of batteries using AGM technology. "Silicon Materials will produce monocrystalline silicon ingots. Production of hydraulic valves and expansion of the hydraulic cylinder model range will be organized at SALEO-Kobrin, and Kobrin Tool Plant SITOMO will create production of chrome-plated hydraulic cylinder rods.

In **Mogilev region** there is an interesting experience in import substitution in BelEmsa LLC, which is located on the territory of Mogilev district and is an enterprise-resident of a free economic zone with Turkish-Belarusian private capital. Since the beginning of 2022, the share of import substitution at BelEmsa has increased to 80 percent. "More than 150 items of products are produced here, including diapers for children and adults, wet toilet paper, wet wipes and wipes with antibacterial effect. The production of medical masks reaches a record high of more than 100 million pieces per month, while the production of

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<sup>53</sup> Brest region enterprises plan to produce import-substituting products for more than \$900 million [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/predpriyatija-brestskoj-oblasti-planirujut-proizvesti-importozameschajushej-produksii-bolee-chem-na-561252-2023>

baby diapers exceeds 20 million pieces per month. These volumes are enough to fully cover the needs of the domestic market and the territory of the near abroad<sup>54</sup>. Soon a new line will be launched at the company, which will increase the production of diapers for adults three times - up to 18 million pieces per month, while the capacity of the existing line is more than six million. In the near future, along with economy and middle class diapers for children, premium products produced by BelEms, the quality of which is not inferior to Japanese and European analogues, will appear on the shelves. Thus, the company will fully cover the entire price range.

In general, in 2022 Mogilev region produced import-substituting products worth more than \$820 million, and "more than 60% of manufactured products worth more than \$500 million were exported. The share of small and medium-sized businesses accounts for more than half of the import-substituting products of the region"<sup>55</sup>. For reference, it should be noted that last year 113 economic entities produced import-substituting products in Mogilev region in 191 commodity items. Among them is the branch "Yelizovo" of OJSC "Grodno Glass Plant", where the modernization of the glass container shop has been completed. Now the project on installation of a line for sorting and processing of glass waste is being worked out there. PTUP "Krasny esudovik-Slavgorod" organized an innovative production of confectionery products, which has already created more than 80 new jobs. OJSC Babushkina Krynka, the managing company of the holding company Dairy Company Babushkina Krynka, is implementing a project to create new lactose-free dairy products using an innovative membrane technology method. The project

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<sup>54</sup> The share of import substitution at "BelEmsa" increased from the beginning of the year to 80% [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/dolja-importozameschenija-na-belemsa-vozrosla-s-nachala-goda-do-80-514471-2022/>

<sup>55</sup> This year the enterprises of Mogilev region intend to produce import-substituting products for \$870 million [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/predpriyatija-mogilevskoj-oblasti-v-etom-godu-amereny-proizvesti-importozameschajuscej-produktsii-na-560572-2023/>

is included in the state program of innovative development of the Republic of Belarus for 2021-2025. UCHNPPP "Technolit" implements the project on organization of production of components for meat processing plants, flax factories, petrochemical enterprises, within the framework of which more than 300 units of spare parts for flax factories and meat processing plants have already been produced. One more thing: the enterprises of Mogilev region plan to produce import-substituting products worth 870 million dollars in 2023.

As for the enterprises of **Gomel region**, which are actively working to replace imported products, the region produced import-substituting products worth more than \$860 million in 2022. At the same time, more than 70 percent of such products were exported. Among the most effective import-substituting projects is the Medplast enterprise, where an innovative production of vacuum tubes for venous blood collection was launched in December 2021. Now 55 types of tubes of different size, volume and filling are produced here. These products are fully compliant with the level of world standards. "Over 14.4 million tubes were produced last year [2022], and plans for 2023 include 20 million tubes. In the long term, this production will make it possible to fully meet the needs of the country's medical institutions with the possibility to refuse imported analogs"<sup>56</sup>. The total demand in Belarus is 20-25 million tubes per year. Another example of work on import substitution in Gomel region is the enterprise "SvetlogorskKhimvolokno", where last year "import-substituting production of nitrile and latex gloves for medical and food spheres was launched. The design capacity of the production - 200 million pieces of gloves per year - completely covers the demand of the republic,

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<sup>56</sup> From tubes to hydroblocks: in Gomel region activated import substitution [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/ot-probirok-do-gidroblokov-v-gomelskoj-oblasti-aktivirovali-importozameschenie-558557-2023/>



including for surgical purposes"<sup>57</sup>. At the same time, more than 180 new jobs have been created. Another interesting fact is the "Saleo-Gomel" enterprise, which provided a significant increase in the supply of new import-substituting hydraulic blocks and hydraulic equipment for the head conveyors of machine-building holdings "MTZ" and "Gomselmash".

Systematic work in this regard is also shown by **Vitebsk region**, where "the volume of import substitution for the half-year [2023] is more than \$500 million, by the end of the year this amount is expected to double"<sup>58</sup>. The region has organized the production and supply of high-pressure hoses, filter hoses and wipes, fasteners to machine-building enterprises, and fusion sealing tape. There are also 147 production projects and 124 infrastructure projects planned in the region. The Orsha flax mill was modernizing and expanding its production. The Polotsk district mastered the technology of metal structures manufacturing with multisystem integration of processes based on the Industry 4.0 concept. In Vitebsk, a factory of truck cranes with a lifting capacity of up to 100 tons was under construction, and in Ushachsky district, a workshop for processing raw materials and producing protein and vitamin supplements was built. Construction of 6 MW wind turbines is being completed in Senno district, and a project to produce cross-laminated panels is being implemented in Tolochinsky district. Besides, the Verkhnedvinsk butter and cheese factory plans to produce mozzarella, the creation of a multi-profile fruit and vegetable processing plant is underway in Sharkovshchina, and the construction of a delayed coking unit for oil

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<sup>57</sup> Krupko: enterprises of Gomel region are actively working on the replacement of imported products [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/krupko-predpriyatija-gomelskoj-oblasti-aktivno-rabotajut-nad-zamescheniem-importnoj-produktsii-557802-2023/>

<sup>58</sup> Subbotin: the volume of import substitution in Vitebsk region for the half-year amounted to more than \$500 million [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/subbotin-objem-importozameshenija-v-vitebskoj-oblasti-za-polugodie-sostavil-bolee-500-mln-589817-2023/>

residues at Naftan OJSC has been completed. And, finally, we should mention several more import-substituting projects in Vitebshchina: a vaccine plant with reconstruction of the existing production in the village of Dolzha - BelVitunifarm OJSC; a plant of innovative veterinary drugs - Belkarolin LLC; production of universal cable for laying in land, water and air - in Energokomplekt LLC; production of metal-cutting and auxiliary tools with the introduction of innovative technological processes - in Orsha Tool Plant OJSC. So, in 2024 Vitebsk region, apparently, should significantly update the indicators on the volume of products that will replace imported supplies.

Speaking about the sectoral tasks in terms of import substitution, the enterprises of **Belgospisheprom Concern**, which ensure the substitution of similar products with their own production, look good against the background of the reduction in imports of consumer goods. In particular, within the framework of the state program of innovative development of Belarus for 2021-2025, the implementation of the project "Organization of innovative production of confectionery products with the installation of a line at the enterprise "Krasny pizhvedivik - Slavgorod" has been completed. "The company specializes in the production of various types of chewy marmalade, sunflower, rapeseed, flower and whipped cream honey, as well as innovative types of healthy candies. Such a wide range of products will provide Belarusians with tasty and healthy confectionery products"<sup>59</sup>. About 100 new jobs have been created at the enterprise. In general, "for the first nine months of 2023, the concern produced an import-substituting range of products worth \$425 million. All these products are now on the shelves of

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<sup>59</sup> Enterprises of "Belgospisheprom" supply products to 36 countries of the world [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/predpriyatija-belgospisheproma-postavljajut-produktsiju-v-36-stran-mira-513896-2022/>

Belarusian stores"<sup>60</sup>. The main part in the production of these products fell on the enterprises of confectionery and canning industry, in particular, those engaged in the production of canned fruit and vegetable products, including those for infants and school meals.

One more fact concerning this topic. For 2023, organizations of the **Ministry of Industry** system will produce import-substituting products worth almost six billion dollars, and in 2024 this volume should increase by another 200 million dollars. "The increase will occur in such groups as trucks, buses, vans, trailers for trucks, grain and forage harvesting equipment, diesel engines, rolled metal products, and televisions"<sup>61</sup>. In addition, the positive dynamics of import-substituting products output will be largely ensured through the development and organization of production of innovative products. In this regard, the experience of the Belarusian Automobile Plant, which at its holding site in Orsha is creating a high-tech production facility for the production of heavy-duty dump trucks and mastering new types of products, is interesting. "The introduced rolling technology will make it possible to produce high-quality blanks of solid rolled and profile rings from steels of various grades with an outer diameter of up to 3 m and a weight of up to 3 tons with high quality and minimal allowance for subsequent processing. They will be used to produce bearings, crown gears of planetary gears, flanges and other types of products. Currently, such blanks are not produced in Belarus"<sup>62</sup>. These high-tech products are

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<sup>60</sup> Head of Belgospishcheprom: the concern has produced \$425 million worth of import-substituting products for nine months [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/glava-belgospishcheproma-za-devjat-mesjatsev-kontsern-proizvel-importozameschajuschej-produktsii-na-425-599446-2023/>

<sup>61</sup> Enterprises of the Ministry of Industry in 2024 plan to increase the output of import-substituting products [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/predprijatija-minprom-a-v-2024-godu-planirujut-uveliclit-objem-vypuska-importozameschajuschej-produktsii-606535-2023/>

<sup>62</sup> Investments of BELAZ in the creation of a modern ring rolling complex will amount to almost Br200 mln [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/investitsii-belaza-v-sozdanie-sovremennogo-kompleksa-koltseraskatki-sostavjat-pochti-br200-mln-605545-2023/>

used in machine building, aircraft and engine building, nuclear power engineering, shipbuilding. For this reason, the implementation of this investment project with high export potential will not only lead to the creation of our own high-tech production of rolling rings, but will also ensure their full import substitution both for the needs of the Belarusian Automobile Plant and other enterprises of our country.

In the **energy sector**, Belenergoremnaladka has accumulated extensive experience in the production of import-substituting products. This is the largest organization in Belarus specializing in repair, installation, adjustment, diagnostics and maintenance of power equipment - from small CHPPs to the Belarusian NPP, as well as production of spare parts and assemblies, including those based on unique technologies. In 2022, this enterprise produced "import-substituting products worth \$2 million, or 53% more than in 2021, in the current year - already worth \$3.5 million with the annual plan of \$2.8 million"<sup>63</sup>. In addition, Belenergoremnaladka put into operation a mobile workstation based on a high-precision 3D scanner with computer equipment and licensed software. The company's own design and engineering bureau and an accredited metal and welding control laboratory allow it to provide services for the development of a full set of design documentation to produce a product according to the sample. And in 2024 the enterprise will perform maintenance and repair of equipment of both power units, including controlled access zones, at the Belarusian NPP. In the future, a branch office will be opened here so that the work can be performed with the least involvement of third-party organizations.

Recall that at the end of December 2022 at the meeting of the Presidium of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus it was

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<sup>63</sup> Belenergoremnaladka OJSC produced import-substituting products for \$3.5 million [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/oa0-belenergoremnaladka-vypustilo-importozameschajuschej-produktsii-na-35-mln-606481-2023/>

noted that in 2023 import substitution will become an even more effective driver of Belarusian industrial production, where special attention will be paid to increasing localization. For reference, we note that two years ago the amount of these products in Belarus amounted to about \$27 billion, and already "in the current [2023] year the volume of import-substituting products will amount to about \$29 billion"<sup>64</sup>. This indicates that a large number of enterprises in the whole country - in sectors and regions - are already involved in the implementation of import-substitution programs in all areas, from trucks and buses to TV sets, furniture and the simplest consumer goods. And in 2024, import substitution, cooperation between enterprises and increasing the level of localization of production will be effective ways to increase industrial production and strengthen cooperation ties between the business sector and large state holdings.

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<sup>64</sup> Golovchenko: we expect that this year the output of import-substituting products will amount to \$29 billion [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/golovchenko-ozhidaem-cto-v-etom-godu-objem-vypuska-importozameschajuschej-produktsii-sostavit-29-mlrd-605441-2023/>

## **Technoparks as a tool innovative perspectives**

One of the important mechanisms for implementing the strategy of innovative development in Belarus is the system of industrial parks on unused and inefficiently used production areas of state-owned enterprises. "The main areas of activity of residents of Belarusian technoparks today are such as instrumentation and mechanical engineering, electronics, information technology and software development, medicine, pharmaceuticals and production of medical equipment..."<sup>65</sup>. The State Program of Innovative Development of the Republic of Belarus for 2021-2025 for the accelerated development of infrastructure in the spheres of scientific, scientific-technical and innovative activity among the priority tasks provides support for small innovative entrepreneurship on the basis of science and technology parks or technoparks. <sup>66</sup>The mechanisms for solving this task are: creation and organization of technoparks' activity in large district centers; formation and development of technological infrastructure in technoparks to provide relevant services to residents - prototyping and industrial design centers, centers for collective use of equipment, engineering centers, laboratory complexes, co-working centers; "organization of implementation in technoparks of educational programs of additional education of adults on the issues of innovation activity"; "organization of implementation in technoparks of educational programs of additional education of adults on the issues of innovation activity".

It should be noted that in 2023 in Belarus there were "more than 20 subjects of innovation infrastructure - these are 16 technoparks, 6 technology transfer centers, the Belarusian Innovation Fund and the

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<sup>65</sup> Zalessky, B. Looking ahead. Features of multi-vector partnership in modern conditions / B. Zalessky. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2021. - C. 117.

<sup>66</sup> State Program of Innovative Development of the Republic of Belarus for 2021-2025 / edited by S.V. Shlychkov. - Minsk: GU "BellISA", 2022. - C. 13.

National Center for Intellectual Property"<sup>67</sup>, where there are more than 250 residents of technoparks and more than 5,300 people working. "The volume of output (goods and services) by residents of technoparks has almost doubled compared to 2022 and amounted to about Br830 million. Technopark residents shipped products (goods and services) worth over Br350 million for export, which is 43% of the total volume of output, compared to 2022, this indicator increased by 2.5 times"<sup>68</sup>.

Among the actively developing Belarusian innovation structures is the **Minsk City Technopark LLC**, established in November 2011 and uniting today 54 resident enterprises, which are located on three sites of the Belarusian capital. The largest number - 43 - is located on Soltys Street. There is one resident at the site on Central Street. Another ten residents are located on Partizanski Avenue - on the territory of the motorcycle factory, where a complex reconstruction is underway. Besides, "the new site on Partizansky Prospekt has a special management procedure: within 5 years from the moment of registration as a technopark resident, companies are exempt from profit tax and during the same period they can import equipment duty-free"<sup>69</sup>. In general, the technopark helps residents to look for foreign partners, financial, technological and human resources. And the profit tax is only 10 percent. So for this reason, even today the most relevant and diverse areas of activity are being developed here - "creation of components for aerospace systems, electric transport and electrically driven vehicles, production of hardware and software and complexes for electronic queue

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<sup>67</sup> Innovation and science. SCST has set technoparks tasks for 2024 [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/innovatsii-i-nauka-gknt-postavili-tehnoparkam-zadachi-na-2024-god-617472-2024/>

<sup>68</sup> Residents of the Belarusian technoparks in 2023 increased the volume of production almost twice [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/rezidenty-belorusskih-tehnoparkov-v-2023-godu-uvlichili-objemy-vypuska-produksii-pochti-vdvoe-619889-2024/>

<sup>69</sup> New technologies for different industries. Golovchenko visited Minsk City Technopark [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/novye-tehnologii-dlja-raznyh-otraslej-golovchenko-poseschaet-minskij-gorodskoj-tehnopark-598916-2023/>

management, feed additives, medical products for ophthalmology, otorhinolaryngology, exoprosthesis, commercial and warehouse equipment"<sup>70</sup>. An important detail: about 60 percent of the technopark residents' products are exported to the countries of the Eurasian Economic Union, Central Asia and Europe. The technopark plans to further expand and develop, as well as to increase the number of residents.

Speaking about other innovative structures of the Belarusian capital, which are actively developing their activities and showing high results, we can name the scientific and technological park "**UP Unitechprom BSU**", established in 1999 and dealing with medicines and pharmaceutical substances, chemical-analytical and special technologies, measuring equipment, medical devices, ingredients of the food industry. In 2023, the first series of "Temodex" for local chemotherapy of malignant brain tumors was produced here, for which the patents of the United States, India and the European Union have been obtained. Also in the past year, "new unique medicines were launched. For example, the drug "Prospidelong" has no analogues in the world and is intended for patients with gastric cancer, "Antispikes" is used for healing of various wounds after surgical interventions, "Foscelantan" - to enhance tissue regeneration in the treatment of trophic ulcers and abscesses of various kinds"<sup>71</sup>. For this purpose in March 2023 in "Unitechprom" of the Belarusian State University opened a modernized workshop for the production of unique drugs, which is equipped with modern equipment and fully complies with international standards. Indeed, "this project implements all stages of the innovation cycle, starting from the stage of

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<sup>70</sup> Golovchenko: it is necessary to increase the effect of funds invested in scientific development [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/golovchenko-nuzhno-velichivat-effekt-ot-vlozhennyh-v-nauchnye-razrabotki-sredstv-598984-2023/>

<sup>71</sup> Shlychkov: dozens of innovative products are developed annually in Belarus [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/shlychkov-v-belarusi-ezhedogno-razrabatyvajutsja-desjatki-vidov-innovatsionnoj-produksii-568140-2023/>



fundamental research, through applied development and implementation of commercialization. The project of the fifth technological mode, so it belongs to the high-tech sphere"<sup>72</sup> . It remains to add that the modernization of this site was carried out within the framework of the project "Organization of production of original bioresorbable polyfunctional medicines", which is part of the state program of innovative development and is scheduled until 2025.

And in 2024, the science and technology park "UP Unitechprom BSU" plans to launch production of hemostatic napkins for hospitals and personal use, which are intended to be used as an additional means during surgical interventions to stop capillary, venous and small arterial bleeding, as well as for household bleeding. The fact is that these wipes "are made of sterile absorbable white or yellowish-white cloth made by controlled oxidation of cellulose. In contact with blood, the napkin absorbs and swells it, gradually transforming into a gel-like substance, and reliably plugs capillaries, activating a multi-stage process of blood coagulation, which stops bleeding"<sup>73</sup> . The development is a Belarusian analog of expensive imported hemostatic napkins, which are widely used around the world. It is planned that in 2024 their production will be launched, and the products will be available in health care institutions of our country, as well as in pharmacies. In addition, exports to the Eurasian Economic Union market, where there is currently a shortage of hemostatic materials, will be established in the future.

Another interesting example of Belarusian innovative entrepreneurship is the **Brest Science and Technology Park**,

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<sup>72</sup> Unique antibacterial and antitumor drugs will begin to produce "Unitechprom BSU". [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/unikalnye-antibakterialnye-i-protivoopuholevyje-preparaty-nachnet-proizvodit-unitechprom-bgu-558361-2023/>

<sup>73</sup> Belarus plans to launch the production of hemostatic napkins for hospitals and personal use [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/v-belarusi-planirujut-zapustit-proizvodstvo-gemostaticheskikh-salfetok-dlja-bolnits-i-lichnogo-610519-2024/>

established in June 2012, where 55 residents were registered by the end of 2022, and today there are already more than 70 residents. They are engaged in the spheres of IT, design, mechanical engineering, waste processing, education, and medicine. In mid-December 2022, the park welcomed four new entrants. One of them specializes in the production of sports boats from composites, the second - in the design and production of orthopedic products. The third resident is engaged in the production of pneumatic units, the fourth - the development of neurocorrection program in speech therapy. At the beginning of 2023, the park increased the area by seven thousand square meters. "For its needs, the technopark received the former workshop of the Brest Electromechanical Plant. Its reconstruction began in November 2020. Thanks to the implementation of the project, the usable area of the building will double - up to 22.5 thousand square meters. The whole point is that the ceiling height in the former production premises reaches 7.2 meters. Each of the four floors will be divided in two and the distance from floor to ceiling will be reduced to 3.6 meters. The first phase of the reconstruction is nearing its completion"<sup>74</sup> . And in 2023, the first phase of reconstruction has already been completed here. And the term of the whole reconstruction is 2025-2026. Since the beginning of 2023, five floors have been completed: two technical, one and a half production and one and a half office floors. A small amount of work has been defined for the second stage: a parking lot will be arranged. During the third stage the builders will erect five more floors in the building. They will be commissioned gradually over three years. The new areas of the technopark will house production and service facilities, offices, co-working space, conference halls, and common areas. The technopark has already created a shared-use center, which is formed on the basis of

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<sup>74</sup> Brest Technopark will increase its area by the beginning of 2023 [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/tech/view/brestskij-tehnopark-k-nachalu-2023-goda-uvlichit-svoi-ploschadi-540149-2022>

Industry 4.0 technology. It has been equipped with advanced equipment for the production of a full cycle of metal and polymer products for small-scale and pilot production. In particular, it includes "laser cutting machine, hydraulic sheet bending machine, robot manipulator, additive unit for printing single sand molds for the production of shaped castings, hydraulic profile bending machine, injection molding machine, tool sharpening machine. The equipment has been assembled and commissioning works have been performed"<sup>75</sup>. Conditions for residents and their partners have also been created for the organization of joint work and provision of services. In addition, Brest Technopark is a participant of the program "One Region - One Project", within the framework of which it acts in three areas. The first is the production of complex 3D molds for mechanical engineering. The second is the production of robotic complexes for processing industry enterprises and enterprises with serial production. "The third direction is the production of pumps from composite materials for use in housing and utilities, food production, petrochemicals"<sup>76</sup>.

It should be noted that several more technoparks are being created in Brest region. In 2023, the construction of a branch of the park in **Baranavichy** started. In particular, "a plot of 13.7 hectares has been reserved next to the factory of automatic lines. On this territory it is planned to build an industrial park, whose production facilities will be transferred for use to residents. The project envisages the construction of three workshops of the industrial hotel type. The area of one workshop is 6.9 thousand square meters."<sup>77</sup>. A logistics center, a small administrative

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<sup>75</sup> Khokhlov, A. Brest Technopark: an important platform for union projects / A. Khokhlov // [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://nocrkomcr.pd/science/235728/>

<sup>76</sup> Reconstruction of Brest Technopark is planned to be completed in 2025-2026 [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/rekonstruktsiju-brestskogo-tehnoparka-planirujut-zavershit-v-2025-2026-godah-575770-2023/>

<sup>77</sup> Industrial park will be built in Baranovichy [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/industrialnyj-park-postrojat-v-baranovichah-540068-2022/>

building with laboratories and offices will also be built here. Now the preparatory works for the construction of the production building and engineering networks are already underway. "Currently, on the premises of the first production building, five subjects are interested in organizing the production of universal tractor semi-trailers, industrial film greenhouses, polymer composites, recycling of secondary material resources"<sup>78</sup>. Other economic entities are also interested in this innovative platform. The first building of the technopark is planned to be put into operation in 2025.

As for **Pinsk**, the decision to create a similar site there was made at the end of 2022, as the industrial park should become a point of growth in the development of the city. The experience of the Brest Science and Technology Park will be used in its creation. The local authorities are already searching for residents. In particular, the interest is shown by enterprises manufacturing roofing materials and fertilizers. In early March 2024, at the meeting on the implementation of the program of accelerated socio-economic development of Pinsk at the level of the Government of Belarus, a specific task was set: the work on the creation of the industrial park should be accelerated. After all, "the issue of effective functioning of the industrial park depends not only on the walls, general construction and other works, but also on the equipment and those who will be residents"<sup>79</sup>, to create a comfortable environment for business and produce in-demand products with an innovative component. The realization of this project was started on the basis of LLC "Technopark "Polesie". It is about providing ready industrial areas for organizations interested in producing innovative

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<sup>78</sup> Five companies are interested in working on the territory of the industrial park under construction in Baranovichi [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/pjat-kompanij-zainteresovany-v-rabote-na-territorii-strojaschegosja-v-baranovichah-industrialnogo-parka-614591-2024/>

<sup>79</sup> It is necessary to create a comfortable environment for business. Igor Petrishenko on the construction of an industrial park in Pinsk [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.government.by/ru/content/10798>

products. The proposed specialization of the industrial park is machine building, metalworking, logistics services, chemical industry. Three land plots with a total area of 50 hectares have been selected for construction in the industrial and warehouse zone on Kozubovsky Street. Two of them are included in the free economic zone (FEZ) "Brest". It should be noted that "the industrial park will consist of four production buildings of about 6 thousand square meters each and engineering infrastructure. The starting point of the park will be a plot of 11.5 hectares, which is located within the boundaries of FEZ "Brest". OJSC "Kuzlitmash", CJSC "Pinskdrv", CJSC "Amkodor-Pinsk", OJSC "PINEMA", Pinsk plant of small mechanization means"<sup>80</sup> are located in the neighborhood. The industrial potential of these enterprises can be used to attract residents of the park and create production cooperation chains with them. This project is implemented in several stages: the start of construction of the first stage - in September 2023; completion and launch of the first production facilities - in early 2025.

Another interesting example is **Zhabinka**. This satellite town of Brest aims to increase investment attractiveness and create comfortable conditions for business. Special attention in Zhabinka will be paid to producers of innovative products. "First of all, we are talking about science and technology parks and their residents, technology transfer centers. There is a need to modernize existing production facilities and create new, high-tech ones"<sup>81</sup>. So far, one resident of Brest Technopark has been registered in Zhabinka. It is a private enterprise that deals with digital technologies and robotics in agriculture. Having become a resident of the Brest Science and Technology Park, the company has

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<sup>80</sup> Industrial park will start building in Pinsk in the fall [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/industrialnyj-park-nachnut-stroit-osenju-v-pinske-545904-2023/>

<sup>81</sup> Technopark residents will be given preferences in the satellite city of Brest [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/rezidentam-tehnoparkov-predostavjat-preferentsii-v-gorode-sputnike-bresta-544234-2023/>

retained its business in Zhabinka district, got an opportunity to acquire a complex of capital buildings for the production of innovative and high-tech products and even signed a contract for the production of a line for the production of fuel pellets for a peat briquette plant. All this shows that Zhabinka as a satellite town has a high potential for attracting investments and is open for fruitful cooperation. The measures taken will allow to ensure progressive development of small and medium business, increase its share in the economy of the region and contribute to the creation of new enterprises and jobs. For reference, we note: more than 500 individual entrepreneurs, about 150 micro and small enterprises, as well as 13 medium-sized businesses are registered in Zhabinka district. In the region in 2022, 8 new commercial organizations were created, 5 of them - in the satellite town. Small and medium-sized businesses provide more than 35 percent of the total revenues to the consolidated budget of Zhabinka district. So, the innovation prospects in this region are not bad either.

And another interesting point in the context of this topic can be seen in the **Gomel region**, where the **technopark "Coral"** is functioning. As of the end of 2023, there were already about 20 residents operating here. In 2024-2025 it is planned to expand this innovation site. "It is planned to build production facilities so that residents can more effectively develop exactly innovative production, production of innovative products"<sup>82</sup>. That such creative participants of the technopark will determine the future, this is no longer in question. For example, like the company "IdeiRobotics", which developed an automated pharmacy in Gomel. This resident of the Coral Technopark specializes in software for robotization of production and technological processes and creation

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<sup>82</sup> For innovative production: in Gomel Regional Executive Committee announced the expansion of the technopark "Coral" [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/dlja-innovatsionnogo-proizvodstva-v-gomelskom-oblispolkome-anonsirovali-rasshirenie-tehnoparka-korall-611043-2024/>

of artificial intelligence systems for production. "Gomel programmers and engineers have become pioneers in this segment not only in Belarus, but also abroad. Among the unconditional bonuses of the automated pharmacy are round-the-clock availability of medicines, online consultation with a pharmacist, reduction of the selling price of medicines"<sup>83</sup>. And such developments, it should be assumed, will be introduced on a mass scale in the real sector of the economy and social sphere in the near future.

To summarize. Technoparks in Belarus, including Minsk City Technopark, Science and Technology Park "Unitehprom", Brest Science and Technology Park, Technopark "Coral", are very effective tools for the development of small and medium-sized enterprises, which play a significant role in the development of the country's regions. And in the future in our republic they plan to create new technoparks and their branches in order to "develop technological infrastructure to provide services to residents, to attract extra-budgetary sources of financing for subjects of innovation infrastructure and to ensure their work"<sup>84</sup>. All this suggests that technoparks are becoming a promising platform for the development of the innovation economy in Belarus.

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<sup>83</sup> Gomel Technopark residents have developed an automated pharmacy [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/rezidenty-gomelskogo-tehnoparka-razrabotali-avtomatizirovannuju-apteku-584974-2023/>

<sup>84</sup> Shlychkov, S. How innovations are supported in Belarus / S. Shlychkov // [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/interview/view/kak-v-belarusi-podderzhivajut-innovatsii-8554/>

## **To ensure high momentum growth in the volume and number of transactions**

In 2023, the Belarusian Universal Commodity Exchange (BUTB) interacted very efficiently with foreign companies, both from the countries of the "far arc" and the near abroad. In particular, 660 exporters and importers from **Asian** countries operated on the Belarusian exchange platform last year. **China** was the leader in the number of traders and volumes of transactions on this continent. Suffice it to say that during this period 46 new Chinese residents came to BUTB, and the amount of exchange transactions increased 2.7 times and amounted to more than 80 million dollars. In 2024, a new wave of activity of participants from Asian countries, including **South Korea, Singapore, Mongolia, Turkey, Pakistan** and the **United Arab Emirates**, is expected on BUTB.

For example, at the end of 2023, the first deal was concluded on the BUTB to sell sawn timber products to the **Republic of Korea**, when an importing company from this Asian country purchased a trial batch of 400 cubic meters of edged hardwood sawn timber from one of the Belarusian forestry enterprises. And the geography of exchange exports of these products of the domestic woodworking industry expanded to 17 countries. In this regard, the entry of the Republic of Korea to the BUTB trades opens new opportunities for Belarusian producers. "At that, we are talking not only about lumber, but also about dairy products, which are in high demand in this country. In particular, imports of milk powder and butter amount to hundreds of millions of dollars"<sup>85</sup>. So the pilot deal on lumber purchase may become a starting point for regular transactions of

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<sup>85</sup> Lumber supplies to the Republic of Korea started via BUTB [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/cherez-butb-nachalis-postavki-pilomaterialov-v-respubliku-koreja-602882-2023/>



Korean businessmen at BUTB on a wide range of commodity nomenclature.

**Singapore** is another participant of interaction with the Belarusian exchange platform. At the beginning of 2023, nine companies from this Southeast Asian country were accredited on the BUTB. Previously, Singaporean companies participated in the exchange trading only as buyers. Mostly, companies from Singapore bought Belarusian skim milk powder; recently, there has also been an increased demand for wood products. In particular, "in 2022, exchange-traded exports of sawn timber to Singapore amounted to \$9.3 million, which is an order of magnitude higher than in 2021"<sup>86</sup>. In 2023, the development of the Singaporean direction began to pay special attention. At the end of January, the goods of Singaporean manufacturers were presented for the first time at the BUTB auction. It was about the sale of high-tech industrial equipment on the BUTB import substitution platform. Laser equipment manufacturers from Singapore, interested in working in the domestic market, were attracted under the bid placed by one of the Belarusian industrial flagships. For this purpose, two new Singaporean companies were accredited at the stock exchange. And then the first sales bids were put up. Even then it was expected that placement of bids for the sale of import-substituting goods produced in Singapore in the BUTB trading system would contribute to the formation of a favorable competitive environment and reduce the costs of Belarusian enterprises purchasing at the exchange trading. In the future, this made it possible to develop exchange trade with this state, which is a member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, even more actively.

And already at the end of 2023, Singapore was included in the list of eight countries that began to apply the mechanism of exchange-

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<sup>86</sup> Goods of Singaporean manufacturers will be presented for the first time at the BUTB auction [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/tovary-singapurskih-proizvoditelej-budut-vpervye-predstavleny-na-torgah-butb-547522-2023/>

targeted transactions, which became available on BUTB from June 22, 2023. "The main feature of such transactions is that they can be concluded directly with foreign buyers, but the selling price of goods must not be lower than the current exchange quotation for that commodity, formed on the basis of the results of exchange trading. In addition, since address transactions are registered on the exchange, their participants are entitled to use all risk insurance instruments available on the BUTB"<sup>87</sup>. It remains to add that Singapore, along with China, Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan and Russia, became one of the five largest buyers of Belarusian lumber products in 2023 on BUTB, increasing the purchase of these products almost two and a half times and was able to reach the mark of 120 thousand cubic meters. In February 2024, the first Singaporean brokerage company - Vooking Pro Pte. Ltd., which had been working on the BUTB as a trade visitor for more than two years. In the status of a professional participant, the new broker "plans to attract buyers of timber products from the Asian region to the exchange platform, contributing to the further expansion of the geography of exchange exports"<sup>88</sup>. After all, accreditation of the broker in Singapore is the next stage in the development of exchange trade with this country to help increase the pool of buyers from Asian countries, including the People's Republic of China and the Republic of Korea, where exchange deliveries of Belarusian sawn timber have already been organized. In addition, the broker usually takes care of transportation and logistics issues, which undoubtedly contributes to increasing the attractiveness of the exchange mechanism for foreign companies. This is especially true for the countries of the "far arc".

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<sup>87</sup> Targeted deals on BUTB are made by companies from eight countries [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/adresnye-sdelki-na-butb-zakljuchajut-kompanii-iz-vosmi-stran-599332-2023/>

<sup>88</sup> BUTB accredits the first broker in Singapore [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-akkreditovala-pervogo-brokera-v-singapore-613819-2024>

Speaking about **Mongolia**, the first broker from this country - United Meres Machinery Company - was accredited to BUTB in September 2023 and planned to start its activities with high-demand commodities - ferrous metals and coal, as well as petrochemical and agro-industrial products. And in January 2024, with the help of the first Mongolian broker, the first transaction for the supply of white granulated sugar - 312 tons - was processed. "Given the high demand for sugar in Mongolia, it can be assumed that this product area can become one of the promising markets in Asia. Moreover, after the successful fulfillment of the first contract, Mongolian partners are already expecting an increase in exports from Belarus"<sup>89</sup> .

BUTB also demonstrated high positive dynamics of trade turnover with **Turkey** in 2023. In particular, "the amount of transactions concluded by Turkish bidders in January-August was 31% higher than in the whole of 2022. The key drivers of growth were active purchases of Belarusian sawn timber, including with the use of a targeted mechanism, as well as exports of ferrous and non-ferrous scrap to Turkey"<sup>90</sup> . Last year, 18 new Turkish residents came to BUTB. And as of mid-September 2023, 50 companies from this country, including one stockbroker, were already represented at the auction. And in the same September, a major Turkish producer of synthetic and natural yarns, threads and fibers sold its products - 40 tons of viscose yarn - for the first time to a Belarusian textile industry enterprise on BUTB's industrial and consumer goods floor. This fact made it possible to expand the geography of foreign suppliers of textile raw materials using this trading platform to work on the Belarusian market to four countries. The first three are Moldova, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

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<sup>89</sup> Zalessky, B. On the course of cooperation. Specifics of Belarus' interaction with Asian countries / Boris Zalessky. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2024. - C. 38.

<sup>90</sup> Supplies of textile raw materials from Turkey began to be realized through the platform BUTB [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/postavki-tekstilnogo-syrja-iz-turtsii-nachali-realizovyvatsja-cherez-ploschadku-butb-588124-2023/>

The priority areas of cooperation between BUTB and **Pakistan** in 2024 are: from the Pakistani side - imports of lumber, milk powder, sugar, vegetable oils; from the Belarusian side - purchase of rice, cereals, yarn and non-ferrous metals. In addition, it is logistics, which "will optimize transportation costs and make the products sold by Belarusian exchange traders more attractive in price for Pakistani buyers"<sup>91</sup>. BUTB is also planning to expand the geography of producers of import-substituting products, presented on the exchange platform, at the expense of Pakistani companies interested in setting up trade or manufacturing business in Belarus. In particular, the Pakistani holding Afil Industries "is studying the possibility of implementing an investment project in Belarus for the production of food products, and also intends to establish regular wholesale deliveries of Pakistani products in demand in the Belarusian market"<sup>92</sup>. First of all, we are talking about specific goods - various types of rice, soccer balls, gloves, belts, as well as such a specific product as Himalayan salt.

Finally, this year BUTB plans to intensify cooperation with the **United Arab Emirates** (UAE), an international trade hub with a powerful transportation, logistics and financial infrastructure. For reference, we note that "as of April 1, 2023, 14 companies from the UAE were accredited at BUTB. The main volume of transactions in 2022-2023 fell on woodworking and petrochemical products"<sup>93</sup>. The Emirati side believes that BUTB's interaction with companies from the UAE will

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<sup>91</sup> BUTB aims to increase the number of accredited companies from Pakistan [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-namerena-uvlechit-kolichestvo-akkreditovannyh-kompanij-iz-pakistana-578951-2023/>

<sup>92</sup> BUTB expects to attract suppliers from Pakistan to the import substitution platform [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-rasschityvaet-privlech-na-ploschadku-importozameschenija-postavschikov-iz-pakistana-571569-2023/>

<sup>93</sup> UAE Embassy will assist BUTB in the development of exchange trade with the countries of the Middle East [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/posolstvo-oe-okazhet-sodejstvие-butb-v-razvitii-birzhevoj-torgovli-so-stranami-blizhnego-vostoka-559908-2023/>

open up great opportunities for promoting Belarusian goods to North Africa and Asia, as this is a very promising export destination for bidders from Belarus. In the near future, the parties intend to take new concrete steps to attract representatives of Emirati businesses to the Belarusian stock exchange to establish long-term trade relations.

Now let us dwell on the development of cooperation between the Belarusian stock exchange and **African** countries. First of all, we should note that in general, our republic plans to increase exports to this continent by at least 2.5 times in 2024. At the same time, it is necessary to "emphasize products that are less dependent on the situation on world markets. <...> And focus on promotion, actively using effective merchandising tools, quality service, as well as e-commerce opportunities"<sup>94</sup>. So for BUTB have already formulated clear objectives of using the exchange mechanism to intensify mutual trade and increase trade turnover this year with African partners, including those from **Egypt, Nigeria, Ethiopia**.

In particular, back in August 2021, BUTB signed a memorandum of understanding with the Egyptian Commodity Exchange (EMX), which was established by the Ministry of Supply and Internal Trade of **Egypt in 2020**. In November last year, the parties considered the issues of improving e-commerce technologies, exchange of analytical data, organization of trade in new commodity positions and ensuring favorable conditions for effective trade partnership between economic entities of Belarus and Egypt. "The main efforts are planned to focus on measures that will contribute to the growth of bilateral trade volumes and the expansion of the application of the exchange mechanism in export-import activities. In this regard, BUTB and EMX intend to work out the possibility of mutual participation of Belarusian and Egyptian companies

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<sup>94</sup> Belarus plans to increase exports to Africa at least 2.5 times in 2024 [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-planiruet-v-2024-godu-narastit-eksport-v-strany-afriki-ne-menee-chem-v-25-raza-602900-2023/>

in exchange trading on both platforms"<sup>95</sup> . All this will not only give impetus to the development of exchange trade between the two countries, but will also increase the efficiency of the implementation of joint projects in other areas. In particular, the entry of Egyptian companies to the BUTB platform for industrial and consumer goods will promote industrial cooperation between the two countries, as well as the solution of import substitution issues.

As for **Nigeria**, in February 2024, Minsk hosted a business forum "Belarus-Nigeria: Direct Dialogue," which discussed promising areas of cooperation between BUTB and the business community of this country interested in buying Belarusian products, including rapeseed oil and milk powder. For reference: products of the oil and dairy industries are among the most demanded commodity items by foreign participants of the Belarusian exchange platform, "and the Nigerian market, given its capacity and purchasing power, is of significant interest to Belarusian exporters"<sup>96</sup> . Thus, the accreditation of Nigerian companies on the BUTB, apparently, will allow Belarusian producers to expand the geography of exports and establish regular supplies to this promising market without additional costs in the near future.

Speaking about BUTB's partnership with **Ethiopia**, it should be recalled that back in 2023 the parties outlined promising commodity positions that could be traded on the stock exchange in 2024 as part of export-import transactions between Belarusian and Ethiopian companies. "If we talk about imports from Ethiopia, it is, of course, first of all, agricultural products - coffee, soybeans and cereals. <...> In terms of exports of Belarusian goods to Ethiopia, it would be advisable to

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<sup>95</sup> Commodity exchanges of Belarus and Egypt agreed to develop cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/tovarnye-birzhi-belarusi-i-egipta-dogovorilis-razvivat-sotrudnichestvo-599879-2023/>

<sup>96</sup> BUTB plans to establish supplies of Belarusian agricultural products to Nigeria [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-planiruet-naladit-postavki-belorusskoj-selhozproduksii-v-nigeriju-615084-2024/>

emphasize dairy products - milk powder and whey"<sup>97</sup>. It only remains to add that Ethiopian residents have not yet participated in exchange trading on the BUTB, but African partners are interested in this topic. And this year it will definitely manifest itself.

In 2023, among the foreign BUTB participants from the **Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)** countries, which significantly increased interest in Belarusian exchange trading and showed high growth dynamics in the volume and number of transactions, it is necessary to mention the enterprises of **Uzbekistan**. If in 2022 only six Uzbek companies regularly participated in exchange trading sessions, in 2023 there were already 29 of them. And the amount of transactions at the end of last year increased 17 times - "from just over \$1 million in 2022 to almost \$18 million in 2023"<sup>98</sup>. At the same time, the commodity nomenclature of mutual trade has expanded. In particular, now, in addition to sawn timber, residents of Uzbekistan also began to buy Belarusian sugar at the exchange. This happened in May 2023, when the first such transaction was registered on the BUTB. "The seller was one of the domestic sugar mills, and the buyer was a brokerage company accredited at BUTB and the Uzbek Republican Commodity and Raw Materials Exchange (URTSB). The volume of the pilot purchase amounted to 134 tons"<sup>99</sup>. This fact is interesting for another reason. This is the first practical result of the joint project of BUTB and UZRTSB on mutual accreditation of brokers. The fact is that back in April 2023, within the framework of the agreement on strategic partnership between

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<sup>97</sup> BUTB presented exchange trading opportunities to the Ethiopian business community [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-predstavila-vozmozhnosti-birzhevoj-torgovli-delovym-krugam-efiopii-575836-2023/>

<sup>98</sup> Exchange trade turnover of Belarus and Uzbekistan in 2023 increased 17 times Korea [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/birzhevoj-tovarooborot-belarusi-i-uzbekistana-v-2023-godu-vyros-v-17-raz-611161-2024/>

<sup>99</sup> BUTB registered the first deal on sugar sales to Uzbekistan [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-zaregistrovala-pervuju-sdelku-po-realizatsii-sahara-v-uzbekistan-566927-2023/>

the two exchanges, seven brokerage organizations from each side received mutual admission to the exchange trading platforms of Belarus and Uzbekistan after appropriate certification. On the Belarusian side, the following organizations became exchange brokers: "OJSC Belresursy - the managing company of Belresursy Holding, CHTUP Belresursbrok, RUE Beltamozhservice, CJSC BirZhex, IP Sokol Lubov Leontievna, LLC StatusBrok, as well as LLC Center of Brokerage Services"<sup>100</sup>, which together with Uzbek partners will allow to expand the range of trading participants much faster.

As for the plans for the development of exchange trade between Belarus and Uzbekistan in 2024, woodworking, agriculture, metallurgy and light industry are among the main areas identified, which will be able to bring the partnership between the two countries to a qualitatively new level. For this purpose, the exchange mechanism for the supply of Uzbek-made goods to Belarus will be more actively used. In this regard, the possibilities of the BUTB platform for industrial and consumer goods will be utilized. Recall that in 2023, Uzbek producers first used the Belarusian import substitution platform to sell cotton yarn. In August last year, "two trial transactions totaling 140 tons were made. In both cases, the buyer was one of the leading domestic textile enterprises"<sup>101</sup>. Thus, the exchange platform provided the Belarusian company with direct access to the direct producers of raw materials it needed and ensured full support of the purchase procedure. The total amount of transactions amounted to more than one million dollars. As part of the development of exchange imports in 2024, it is planned not only to increase the volume of sales in this commodity item, but also to bring to the auction

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<sup>100</sup> Seven brokers of BUTB accredited at the Uzbek Republican Commodity Exchange [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/sem-brokerov-butb-akkreditovalis-na-uzbekskoj-respublikanskoj-tovarno-syrjevoj-birzhe-561922-2023/>

<sup>101</sup> Uzbek yarn manufacturers concluded the first deals on the BUTB platform [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/uzbekskie-proizvoditeli-prjazhi-zakljuchili-pervye-sdelki-na-ploschadke-butb-585558-2023/>



other types of import-substituting products manufactured in this country. We would like to add that "as of February 1, 2024, 101 companies from Uzbekistan <...> are accredited on BUTB. In January, the amount of transactions of Uzbek participants amounted to \$5.2 million. In January 2023, this indicator was equal to \$60 thousand"<sup>102</sup> .

In 2024, the Belarusian exchange platform plans to noticeably intensify joint events on trade topics for representatives of business in **Kyrgyzstan**. The fact is that at the end of 2023, "the amount of transactions of exchange traders from Kyrgyzstan increased almost one and a half times, mainly due to a significant increase in purchases of Belarusian sugar and sawn timber"<sup>103</sup> . At the same time, Kyrgyz companies almost did not use the exchange's export opportunities, although this Central Asian country has a well-developed agricultural sector and can expand the geography of agricultural exports, including in Belarus. In January of this year, BUTB agreed to cooperate with the National Investment Agency under the President of the Kyrgyz Republic. The parties specifically identified priority commodity positions for the development of mutual exchange trade. For this purpose, Belarus will attract suppliers of raw materials and cotton yarn from Kyrgyzstan. After all, these products are in demand among Belarusian traders, and the growth of their sales will have a positive impact on the dynamics of the Belarusian-Kyrgyz exchange trade turnover. As for Belarusian supplies, "the main attention will be paid to the products of the sugar industry and timber industry. In 2023, these groups of goods accounted for almost the entire volume of Belarusian exports to Kyrgyzstan through the BUTB. In addition, the National

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<sup>102</sup> Metallurgy, agriculture and light industry. BUTB outlined directions of cooperation with Uzbek business [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/metallurgija-selskoe-hozjajstvo-i-legprom-butb-oboznachila-napravlenija-sotrudnichestva-s-uzbeksxim-614003-2024>

<sup>103</sup> BUTB and Kyrgyz embassies agreed on cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-i-posolstvo-kyrgyzstana-dogovorilis-o-sotrudnicestve-609545-2024/>

Investment Agency expressed its readiness to help accredit the first broker from Kyrgyzstan to BUTB<sup>104</sup>, which will help expand the pool of Kyrgyz clients of the exchange, the number of which reached 25 by the beginning of this year.

As for BUTB's cooperation with **Azerbaijan, we would like to** remind you that in 2023, this South Caucasus country was among the top-3 sellers of Belarusian goods, and in terms of timber purchases, it ranked second, second only to China. In addition, the transactions were regular and their amount was gradually growing. "As a result, compared to January-September of last [2022] year, supplies of wood products to Azerbaijan increased in natural terms by 4.3 times to 218 thousand cubic meters"<sup>105</sup>. Azerbaijani companies thus accounted for about a quarter of the total volume of sawn timber products exported through BUTB. At the international exhibition BakuBuild, held in October 2023 in the Azerbaijani capital, the Belarusian exchange platform attracted potential buyers from Azerbaijan interested in importing products for the construction industry. And there is every reason to believe that in 2024 there will be new interesting opportunities to continue interaction with the business of this post-Soviet country.

Speaking about BUTB's partnership with **Moldova**, it should be noted that in 2023, the first exchange transactions for the sale of white granulated sugar and material for the textile sector were made. In the first case, the pilot purchase amounted to 210 tons, which was purchased by a company that is the largest importer of sugar to Moldova. And there is a probability that "the pilot transaction will become a starting point for

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<sup>104</sup> BUTB and the National Investment Agency of Kyrgyzstan agreed on cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-i-natsionalnoe-agentstvo-po-investitsijam-kyrgyzstana-dogovorilis-o-sotrudnichestve-612497-2024/>

<sup>105</sup> Export opportunities of BUTB presented at the international construction exhibition in Azerbaijan [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/eksportnye-vozmozhnosti-butb-predstavleny-na-mezhdunarodnoj-stroitelnoj-vystavke-v-azerbajdzhane-594979-2023/>

regular supplies of Belarusian sugar to this country, since the same algorithm was used earlier to build up work with Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, which are the main buyers of Belarusian sugar at the stock exchange trades"<sup>106</sup>. Moreover, the Moldovan market is promising for the export of sugar mills from Belarus, as this country annually consumes more than 80 thousand tons of this product, and the exchange platform provides direct access to the enterprises-producers together with low risks and transparent market pricing. In the second case, the transaction between the economic entities of Belarus and Moldova was registered on the platform of industrial and consumer goods BUTB, within which the import substitution service operates. "The subject of the purchase made by one of the domestic enterprises of the textile industry was a membrane for fabric lamination worth Br845 thousand"<sup>107</sup>. This suggests that the circle of countries, residents of which use this exchange platform to sell goods in the Belarusian market, has been supplemented by Moldova. We should assume that this deal with Moldovan partners will be the beginning of a new interesting experience in Belarusian-Moldovan e-commerce.

In the same year 2023, the first transaction for the purchase of products from a company resident in **Tajikistan** was registered on the BUTB import substitution platform, when "in the course of exchange trading, a domestic light industry enterprise purchased 40 tons of carded yarn - one of the most demanded raw materials in the knitwear industry - from a Tajik trading organization"<sup>108</sup>. In this case, the stock exchange

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<sup>106</sup> Belarusian sugar for the first time sold to Moldova through the stock exchange [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/beloruskij-sahar-vpervye-prodan-v-moldovu-cherez-birzhu-573850-2023/>

<sup>107</sup> The company from Moldova for the first time concluded a deal on the platform of industrial and consumer goods BUTB [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/kompanija-iz-moldovy-vpervye-zakljuchila-sdelku-na-ploschadke-promyshlennyh-i-potrebitelskih-tovarov-578041-2023/>

<sup>108</sup> Procurement of import-substituting products in Tajikistan for the first time through BUTB [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/zakupku->

also helped the Belarusian company to meet the need for foreign raw materials. It is curious that the last time companies from this Central Asian country used the exchange mechanism to work in the Belarusian market 16 years ago - in 2008. Let's hope that new deals with Tajikistan's businessmen on the BUTB are not "just around the corner".

There is one more interesting fact of cooperation of the Belarusian exchange platform with partners from the CIS. In November last year, BUTB agreed to develop cooperation in 2024 with one of the leading electronic trading platforms of **Kazakhstan** - ETS-Tender - in the field of corporate procurement. It is planned that "interaction between the parties will be of a purely practical nature and will contribute to the activation of participation of manufacturers and suppliers from Kazakhstan in the procurement procedures of Belarusian enterprises, as well as to increase the share of Belarusian products in the procurement of Kazakh companies in the public and private sector"<sup>109</sup>. The partners from Kazakhstan were very interested in BUTB's experience in organizing exchange trading in industrial and consumer goods. In particular, we are talking about a separate digital platform that allows for round-the-clock procurement of a wide range of products in demand in various sectors of the economy: from light industry and agriculture to energy and machine building. In addition, in 2022 the import substitution service was introduced on BUTB, thanks to which Belarusian enterprises were able to promptly purchase analogs of imported goods and increase sales of their own products. So with the assistance of ETS-Tender in 2024 it is planned to attract many more manufacturers from Kazakhstan to BUTB trades.

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[importozameschajuschej-produksii-v-tadzhikistane-vpervye-proveli-cherez-butb-560416-2023/](https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-i-kazahstanskaja-ploschadka-ets-tender-imereny-sotrudnicat-v-sfere-elektronnyh-zakupok-602493-2023/)

<sup>109</sup> BUTB and Kazakhstan platform ETS-Tender intend to cooperate in the field of electronic procurement [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-i-kazahstanskaja-ploschadka-ets-tender-imereny-sotrudnicat-v-sfere-elektronnyh-zakupok-602493-2023/>

## **Belarus - Uzbekistan: Growth points - industry, agriculture, health care, regions**

In December 2023, Samarkand hosted the 10th meeting of the joint Belarusian-Uzbek intergovernmental commission (IGC) on bilateral cooperation, during which the parties discussed the state and prospects of trade and economic interaction, paying special attention to the spheres of industry, agriculture, and healthcare in order to fill the economic component of the partnership between Belarus and Uzbekistan with new practical content and ensure timely implementation of investment projects and trade contracts. It should be noted that the bilateral trade between Minsk and Tashkent today shows good dynamics. "In the first 10 months of this [2023] year, mutual trade turnover has increased by more than 20% and has already exceeded \$500 million"<sup>110</sup>. Nevertheless, it was noted at the IGC meeting that the parties still have significant untapped potential to multiply trade volumes by expanding mutual supplies of products in demand in the markets of the two countries.

Let's take the development of **industrial cooperation**. Since 2019, the number of enterprises from Belarus has quadrupled in Uzbekistan. And today, "there are 186 enterprises with Belarusian capital operating in the country, but there are all prerequisites for increasing this figure"<sup>111</sup>. Suffice it to say that in the first seven months of 2023, 33 enterprises from Belarus were established in the Central Asian republic. And in our country a total of 84 organizations with Uzbek capital have been

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<sup>110</sup> Aripov: Uzbek-Belarusian cooperation has reached a new level [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/aripov-uzbeksko-belorusskoe-sotrudnichestvo-vyshlo-na-novyj-uroven-603582-2023/>

<sup>111</sup> Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Uzbekistan: we are interested in increasing the number of joint ventures [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/predsedatel-tpp-uzbekistana-my-zainteresovany-v-uvlichenii-kolichestva-sovmestnyh-predpriyatij-603524-2023/>

established. In addition, Uzbekistan has already "opened representation of companies in the field of international transportation, software development, production of medicines and veterinary drugs. In 2022, a joint venture for the production of dairy products was opened in Tashkent"<sup>112</sup>.

In this regard, the participants of the 10th IGC meeting proposed to further strengthen the substantive part of the draft joint roadmap for the development of bilateral cooperation for 2024-2025 in order to move to mutual investment and establishment of joint production facilities. And in this regard, the Belarusian side is already implementing projects on the assembly of special machinery, production of agricultural machinery for soil and cotton cultivation. In 2023, "the first Belarusian-Uzbek enterprise for the production of dry milk mixtures was launched, which will sell products made on the basis of Belarusian raw materials both to producers and processors in Uzbekistan and supply them to neighboring countries. In the city of Karshi there is a joint venture with the Belarusian manufacturer Marko for the production of footwear"<sup>113</sup>. There are also significant prospects for organizing production on Uzbek soil of Belarus tractors, diesel-generator and compressor units, medicines, woodworking and furniture production.

In general, Belarus has a lot to offer its Uzbek partners: machine-building products, food products, services, and the latest scientific and technical developments. Suffice it to say that exports of enterprises of the Belarusian Ministry of Industry to this Central Asian country almost doubled in the first three quarters of 2023, "trade turnover increased by

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<sup>112</sup> Cherviakov: among our partner countries Uzbekistan is in the top ten in terms of trade turnover [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/chervjakov-sredi-nashih-stran-partnerov-uzbekistan-vhodit-v-desjatu-po-objemu-tovarooborota-586551-2023/>

<sup>113</sup> Golovchenko: Uzbekistan for us is one of the main trade partners in the region of Central Asia and the CIS [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/golovchenko-uzbekistan-dlja-nas-javljaetsja-odnim-iz-osnovnyh-torgovyh-partnerov-v-regione-tsentralnoj-603540-2023/>

more than 90% <...> over this period. Exports to Uzbekistan were based on the supply of tractors, refrigerators and freezers, automotive equipment, metal products, engines, hardware products, electrical transformers, as well as mowers, starters, potato diggers, oil pumps..."<sup>114</sup>. In particular, JSC "Managing Company of Bobruiskagromash Holding" is planning to increase the volume of supplies of agricultural machinery to Uzbekistan in the near future, as "in Central Asian republics the most demanded models of agricultural machinery are tractor trailers for cotton transportation, tillage equipment, machines for organic fertilizers application and forage harvesting equipment"<sup>115</sup>. In addition to tractors, cooperation between the two countries in the field of industry will expand significantly, as "cooperation on cargo and passenger equipment, household appliances, elevator equipment is being discussed and developed quite extensively"<sup>116</sup>. Another example: the enterprises of the concern "Bellesbumprom", which are very familiar to the Uzbek market. In the first nine months of 2023, "exports of woodworking products, including furniture and pulp, increased by almost 24% compared to January-September last year <...>. Now the concern is working on the creation of a subject of the commodity distribution network in Uzbekistan, which will open new opportunities for supplies to this country"<sup>117</sup>.

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<sup>114</sup> Ministry of Industry: export of our products to Uzbekistan in January-September doubled [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/minprom-eksport-nashej-produktsii-v-uzbekistan-za-janvar-sentjabr-vyros-vdvoe-603475-2023/>

<sup>115</sup> "Bobruiskagromash" plans to increase the supply of agricultural machinery to Uzbekistan [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/bobrujskagromash-planiruet-narastit-postavki-selhoztehniki-v-uzbekistan-582084-2023/>

<sup>116</sup> Tractors, elevators, cargo equipment. How Belarus and Uzbekistan will cooperate in industry [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/traktory-lifty-gruzovaja-tehnika-kak-belarus-i-uzbekistan-budut-sotrudnicat-v-promyshlennosti-596490-2023/>

<sup>117</sup> Export of enterprises "Bellesbumprom" to Uzbekistan for 9 months increased by almost a quarter [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/eksport-predpriyatij-bellesbumproma-v-uzbekistan-za-9-mesjatsev-vyros-pochti-na-chetvert-603583-2023/>

All these facts show that Belarus and Uzbekistan are successfully promoting the formation of a well-developed structure of cooperative ties in order to fully utilize the available production, scientific, technical, and innovation potential to fulfill the urgent and ambitious task of increasing trade turnover to one billion dollars. For more systematic work in general, the Belarusian side proposed to develop a program of bilateral economic cooperation within the framework of the 10th IGC meeting, while in certain sectors of the economy - to expand the formats of interaction to find new areas of partnership and pay attention to the functioning of sectoral working groups. For reference, we would like to remind that "meetings of the working group in the field of agriculture, as well as the mixed commission in the field of transport are held on a regular basis. It is advisable to organize the work of groups in the field of industry, medicine and pharmaceuticals, construction, light industry, woodworking, forestry and water management, which will be working bodies of the intergovernmental commission"<sup>118</sup>. In addition, other new formats of interaction are being successfully implemented.

Among them is the **Women's Business Forum**, which was held for the first time in Minsk in September 2023 and brought together participants from the two countries in various areas: light and heavy industry, science and education, and machine building. Let us say at once that by the end of the plenary session, the participants of this meeting signed "14 memorandums and agreements on cooperation, including an agreement on the establishment of a joint leather and footwear production. 15 contracts worth Br93.5 million, or 350 billion Uzbek soums"<sup>119</sup>. In particular, light industry enterprises of Belarus and

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<sup>118</sup> Leonid Zayats on the results of the meeting in Samarkand: The decisions taken will contribute to the strengthening of bilateral ties [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/10747>

<sup>119</sup> During the First Belarusian-Uzbek Women's Business Forum contracts for Br93.5 million were concluded [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL:



Uzbekistan have signed contracts worth more than two and a half million dollars. Thus, an agreement on the intention to create a joint venture for dressing sheepskin-fur, karakulevo-fur, fur-fur raw materials was signed between Furskins Company and "Marko". "Agreements on cooperation between "Uztekstilprom" association and design center of "Kamvol" OJSC have been reached. A memorandum of intentions was signed for the purchase of worsted fabrics for school assortment of Charog`on Tekstil LLC. A contract for the supply of denim clothing was also signed between Kalinka CJSC and Chichiq Mega Bizness LLC" .<sup>120</sup>

It should be noted that Bellegprom Concern's enterprises have been successfully cooperating with Uzbek partners since 2018. Holding "Marko" is working within the framework of a joint venture to re-stitch shoes. About 250 thousand pairs have already been produced, but this is not the limit. The task is to increase the output to millions of pairs of shoes. "And since sheepskin is in demand in Belarus for making linings and insoles for winter shoes, but we [in Belarus] do not have this type of raw material, it is very important to enter into industrial cooperation in order to motivate both sides in terms of quality, technical component and business"<sup>121</sup> . Another example: "Milavitsa has been working on lingerie alterations with a company in Tashkent since January 2023. And in Smorgon, together with the Uzbek side, a business project is being implemented to create a vertically integrated complex for the production of cotton yarn and cotton yarn products. "This is the first enterprise that

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<https://www.belta.by/economics/view/vo-vremja-pervogo-belorussko-uzbekskogo-zhenskogo-biznes-foruma-zakljucheno-kontraktov-na-br935-mln-586641-2023/>

<sup>120</sup> The enterprises of light industry of Belarus and Uzbekistan signed contracts for more than \$2.5 million [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/predprijatija-legproma-belarusi-i-uzbekistana-podpisali-kontrakty-bolee-chem-na-25-mln-586396-2023/>

<sup>121</sup> Lugina told about the prospects of cooperation between enterprises "Bellegprom" and companies from Uzbekistan [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/lugina-rasskazala-o-perspektivah-sotrudnichestva-predpriyatij-bellegproma-i-kompanij-iz-uzbekistana-586553-2023/>

will make a finished product in Belarus from raw materials obtained in Uzbekistan"<sup>122</sup> .

Within the framework of the section "Expanding Industrial Cooperation between Belarus and Uzbekistan" of the Women's Business Forum, the Belarusian side presented opportunities for expanding industrial cooperation. In particular, "metropolitan enterprises [in Minsk] are interested in finding new partners to sell their products in the market of the region [Uzbekistan]"<sup>123</sup> . And they are already effectively cooperating with their Uzbek colleagues. For example, Minsk Automobile Plant acts on the market of this Central Asian country as an independent exporter on the basis of the existing joint production. In particular, in September 2023, "Minsk Automobile Plant and FE LLC "MAZ-TASHKENT" signed a contract for the supply of MAZ machinery worth \$1 million"<sup>124</sup> and agreed to expand cooperation ties. As for Minsk Tractor Plant, it will supply about 500 BELARUS machines to Uzbek TEXAGRO-KLASTER LLC. "The amount of the deal exceeds \$8 million"<sup>125</sup> .

As for pharmaceuticals, it was noted at the Women's Business Forum that the Belarusian side is building an enterprise on Uzbek soil to produce probiotics, which are not produced in this country at all. In fact, "import of medicines in Uzbekistan accounts for about \$1.5bn. Belarus is ready to supply its pharmaceutical products, as well as to propose to the

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<sup>122</sup> Belarus and Uzbekistan realize joint projects in the field of pharmaceuticals and light industry [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-uzbekistan-realizujut-sovmestnye-proekty-v-oblasti-farmatsevtiki-i-legproma-592648-2023/>

<sup>123</sup> Lazarevich: capital enterprises effectively interact with Uzbekistan [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/lazarevich-stolichnye-predpriyatija-effektivno-vzaimodejstvujut-s-uzbekistanom-586603-2023/>

<sup>124</sup> MAZ signed a contract on delivery of machinery to Uzbekistan for \$1 mln [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/maz-zakljuchil-dogovor-na-postavku-tehniki-v-uzbekistan-na-1-mln-586570-2023/>

<sup>125</sup> MTZ will supply about 500 tractors to Uzbekistan for more than \$8 mln [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/mtz-postavit-okolo-500-aktorov-v-uzbekistan-na-bolee-chem-8-mln-586567-2023/>

health authorities of our countries to work out the possibility of creating production facilities in Uzbekistan for bulk medicines, antibiotics, anti-tumor drugs..."<sup>126</sup> . So, let us hope that this forum has indeed established useful contacts and made it possible to create additional conditions for attracting investment resources to the promising projects that were worked out at this Belarusian-Uzbek meeting.

And in November 2023, a three-day **medical forum** "Days of Health Care and Medical Education "Uzbekistan - Belarus" was held in Minsk, which touched upon almost all spheres of medical activity: high technologies, problems of primary care, personnel training, the work of the pharmaceutical industry, and the production of medical equipment. During these days, almost 120 agreements were signed, as well as a "road map, in which, according to all the principles of the target planning program, tasks, deadlines, resources and responsible executor will be defined"<sup>127</sup> . The day before, Belarusian cardiac surgeons, oncologists, and pediatric surgeons as part of medical teams traveled to Uzbekistan, where they "performed more than 100 operations and provided more than 250 consultations in various regions of the country"<sup>128</sup> . And the Minsk Scientific and Practical Center (MSPC) of Surgery, Transplantology and Hematology has already hosted about 30 specialists from various hospitals in Uzbekistan, and also proposed an initiative to organize a Minsk center in Tashkent. And we also note that "46 patients from Uzbekistan have received high-tech medical care in MNPC of

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<sup>126</sup> Cherviakov: Belarus and Uzbekistan have created an impressive reserve for further development of cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/chervjakov-belarus-i-uzbekistan-sozdali-vnushitelnyj-zadel-na-dalnejshee-razvitie-sotrudnichestva-586639-2023>

<sup>127</sup> Ministers of Health of Belarus and Uzbekistan signed agreements on cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/ministry-zdravoohranenija-belarusi-i-uzbekistana-podpisali-dogovory-o-sotrudnicestve-602477-2023/>

<sup>128</sup> Minister of Health of Uzbekistan: Belarusian specialists performed more than 100 operations in Uzbekistan [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/ministr-zdravoohranenija-uzbekistana-beloruskie-spetsialisty-proveli-v-uzbekistane-bolee-60-operatsij-602505-2023/>

surgery, transplantology and hematology. Including 3 liver transplants and 10 kidney transplants. The potential for further joint work in this area is quite large"<sup>129</sup> .

A separate topic of the medical forum is the training of medical personnel. Today, Belarus and Uzbekistan see prospects for intensifying bilateral cooperation in such key areas as cardiology, oncology, transplantation, pediatric surgery, maternal and child health care, as well as in the pharmaceutical industry and supplies of medical devices. From January 2024, by agreement of the parties, joint educational programs of network training will be organized in eight specialties of higher education and all areas of sub-specialties of clinical residency, and it is planned to introduce a system of training 150 sub-specialists under the internship program. And one more thing: for the first time since January this year training of nurses in six directions of the joint educational program according to international standards will begin. The fact is that Uzbekistan's healthcare sector pays special attention to the training of nurses. And they are well aware of the Belarusian experience in this subject. After all, 74 medical colleges are already functioning in Belarus and about 100 thousand nurses are trained in seven directions. In particular, the Vitebsk State Medical University (VSMU) and the college, which plan to accept students, interns and doctors from this Central Asian country, will help the Uzbek partners in this matter. "So far, VSMU has no more than a dozen students from Uzbekistan, who come to Vitebsk on their own and enroll in specialties that are attractive to them"<sup>130</sup> . But the first steps have already been made on cooperation of

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<sup>129</sup> Petrishenko: the most important task is to do everything to improve the well-being of the peoples of Belarus and Uzbekistan [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/petrishenko-vazhnejshaja-zadacha-sdelat-vse-dlja-povyshenija-blagopoluchija-narodov-belarusi-i-602449-2023/>

<sup>130</sup> Pushnyakova, A. In what Uzbek universities and colleges see cooperation with VSMU / A. Pushnyakova // [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/v-chem-uzbekskie-vuzy-i-kolledzhi-vidjat-sotrudnichestvo-s-vgmu-602248-2023/>

VSMU, for example, with Samarkand State Medical University and Bukhara State Medical Institute. And within the framework of the Medical Forum, four more agreements between VSMU and Uzbek universities were signed.

A new form of interaction between Belarus and Uzbekistan in the field of education was the **Forum of Rectors of Higher Education Institutions**, which met for the first time in October 2023 in Minsk - at the Belarusian State University of Informatics and Radioelectronics. This structure brought together "more than 30 heads of Belarusian and Uzbek universities, who actively engaged in a dialog, discussing topical issues of development of higher education systems of the two countries"<sup>131</sup> and signed a roadmap for cooperation, where, taking into account the trends in the educational market of Uzbekistan, a number of Belarusian universities will work out the issue of opening branches or joint faculties. Among the leaders in this context is the Belarusian National Technical University (BNTU), which currently implements 75 joint educational programs with partner universities from Uzbekistan. One of the brightest examples of cooperation is the interaction between BNTU and Tashkent State Technical Transport University. "We are talking about the first joint educational program "2+2". From 2019 to 2023, similar programs have also been prepared and created with Islam Karimov Tashkent State Technical University, Karshi Engineering and Economic Institute, Tashkent Architecture and Construction University, Samarkand State Architecture and Construction University"<sup>132</sup>. The idea of the program is that Uzbek students spend the first two years of their

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<sup>131</sup> The roadmap for cooperation signed by the heads of the Councils of Rectors of Belarus and Uzbekistan [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/dorozhnyu-kartu-sotrudnichestva-podpisali-rukovoditeli-sovetov-rektorov-belarusi-i-uzbekistana-595530-2023/>

<sup>132</sup> BNTU awarded diplomas to the first graduates of joint educational programs of Belarus and Uzbekistan [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/v-bntu-vruchili-diplomy-pervym-vypusknikam-sovmestnyh-obrazovatelnyh-programm-belarusi-i-uzbekistana-574797-2023/>

studies at home and the next two at BNTU, so that graduates receive two diplomas at once - in Uzbekistan and in Belarus. And so in June 2023, the first graduation of diploma holders of the "2+2" program took place.

And another interesting format of cooperation between Belarus and Uzbekistan was mentioned within the framework of the 10th IGC meeting - it is the **Forum of Regions**, which should be given importance and "is planned to be held in Belarus"<sup>133</sup>. Recall that the First Forum of Regions of the two countries was already held in Minsk in 2019. As of April 2023, "the parties have already signed 15 interregional agreements. <...> The practice of developing roadmaps for the implementation of interregional agreements has proved effective"<sup>134</sup>. For this reason, it is necessary to continue to find partners for long-term cooperation in the regions.

**Fergana Oblast** and the **Bellesbumprom Concern** provide an interesting example in this regard. The fact is that Belarusian-Uzbek cooperation in the furniture, woodworking, and pulp and paper industries is now actively developing. "The result of work with Uzbek colleagues was the opening of the furniture house "Belarus" in Fergana. Now the products of three domestic factories are presented here - OFO "FanDOC", Yelsk furniture factory (a branch of OJSC "Mozyr DOK") and RUE "Newsprint Plant" (a branch of house building)"<sup>135</sup>. The parties plan to expand the assortment, as well as increase the number of Belarusian brands represented in the house of furniture. Another interesting idea is to create a showroom in the under-construction

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<sup>133</sup> Aripov: Uzbek-Belarusian cooperation has reached a new level [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/aripov-uzbekska-beloruskoe-sotrudnichestvo-vyshlo-na-novyj-uroven-603582-2023/>

<sup>134</sup> Zalessky, B. With a focus on results. Perspectives of an integrated approach to new partnership opportunities / Boris Zalessky. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2023. - C. 16.

<sup>135</sup> New showrooms and furniture supplies. "Bellesbumprom" on the development of cooperation with Uzbekistan [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novye-shourumy-i-postavki-mebeli-bellesbumprom-o-razviti-i-sotrudnichestva-s-uzbekistanom-561977-2023/>

residential complex "Eco City" in Fergana, where products from Belarus, which are in demand in construction and arrangement of residential premises, will be presented: thermo-insulating panels, wallpapers, interior doors, furniture. And in the sanatorium-resort zone in Buvaydinsky district of Fergana region, supplies of wooden houses, saunas, and gazebos produced by the house-building branch of the Newsprint Plant RUE have been agreed upon.

**Hrodna Region**, which has agreements with three Uzbek regions, is among the active participants in interregional cooperation between Belarus and Uzbekistan. And now this Central Asian country ranks third in Hrodna's trade turnover with foreign countries. At the same time, a significant growth of mutual trade was registered in 2022 - 1.7 times. In 2023, the trade turnover increased by another 11 percent. "Grodno region supplies Uzbekistan with foodstuffs, woodworking products, petrochemicals, buys foodstuffs, yarn, fabrics, textiles in Uzbekistan, which is very much in demand by local light industry enterprises"<sup>136</sup>. Cooperation is also developing in the educational sphere: in 2023, 160 Uzbek students received higher education at Hrodna universities. And the parties have already outlined prospects for further development, including in the field of investment on the basis of the Grodnoinvest free economic zone.

Finally, let us consider another important tool for increasing Belarusian-Uzbek trade and economic interaction - **sectoral exhibitions**. In 2024, Belarus intends to participate in many international exhibition events in Uzbekistan, where major industry forums in agriculture, food, machinery and technologies for agribusiness, industrial technologies, food and light industry, and scientific and technical achievements will be held. In particular, in March this year the Belarusian exposition will be

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<sup>136</sup> Trade turnover of Grodno region with Uzbekistan in 2023 increased by 11% [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/tovarooborot-grodnenskoj-oblasti-s-uzbekistanom-v-2023-godu-uvlichilsja-na-11-594414-2023/>

organized in Tashkent at the 23rd international exhibition UzFood, in April - at the industrial forum Innoprom. Central Asia", in October - at the 8th textile exhibition UzTextileExpo Autumn, and in November - at the 18th food forum UzProdExpo/UzAgroExpo. Traditionally, Belarusian participants in these business events always attract great interest of visitors not only from Uzbekistan, but also from other Central Asian countries.

For example, in April 2023, at the forum "Innoprom. Central Asia", where about 300 companies took part, Belarus was represented by "leading enterprises from various industrial sectors and scientific and educational institutions, each of which presents its unique products and technologies at the exhibition, demonstrating the potential and opportunities for cooperation and promotion of manufactured products, scientific and technical developments and services"<sup>137</sup>. Thus, BELAZ OJSC, the managing company of BELAZ-HOLDING, presented its promising development directions at the exhibition. In particular, the BELAZ-7558H dump truck with a payload capacity of 90 tons. Minsk Tractor Plant, among other things, demonstrated a specialized tractor BELARUS-80X, designed to meet the peculiarities of agricultural crops cultivation. And OJSC BMZ - the managing company of BMK Holding showed hot-rolled metal products for automotive and other industries. The stand of the Ministry of Education of Belarus presented more than 50 scientific and technical developments of six universities and organizations of the department, including new technologies and software complexes intended for use in industrial and scientific developments, as well as technologies, equipment and materials for the

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<sup>137</sup> Belarus presents an exposition at the exhibition "Innoprom. Central Asia" in Tashkent [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-predstavljaet-ekspozitsiju-na-vystavke-innoprom-tsentralnaja-azija-v-tashkente-563204-2023/>



chemical and oil refining industry, machine building, foundry production.

Also in April 2023, the International Exhibition "Healthcare / TIHE 2023" was held in Tashkent, where more than 250 companies from 13 countries participated and where a wide range of materials and technologies for laboratory and functional diagnostics, therapy and surgery, rehabilitation equipment, means of automation of medicine, equipment of medical institutions were presented. The visitors were also familiarized with the presented therapeutic and health-improving preparations, orthopedic means meeting all modern demands of the industry. Our country was represented at this exhibition forum by the Belarusian Prosthetic and Orthopedic Rehabilitation Center, which showed "technical rehabilitation equipment of its own production: products for children (with cerebral palsy, with dysplasia) and women after mastectomy (bodices, swimsuits), active wheelchair, orthopedic insoles, table for mechanotherapy and other, in total - more than 20 items"<sup>138</sup>.

Belarus is also a traditional participant of the UzTextileExpo Autumn international exhibition, which was held for the 7th time in October 2023 in the Uzbek capital and where 183 companies from eight countries, including China, India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan participated. "The Belarusian exposition this time was represented by major petrochemical exporters, including companies such as Naftan, Mogilevkhimvolokno and Svetlogorskkhimvolokno. The companies brought with them a rich assortment of products in demand

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<sup>138</sup> Belarusian technical means of rehabilitation will be presented at the exhibition in Tashkent [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/beloruskie-tehnicheskie-sredstva-reabilitatsii-predstavjat-na-vystavke-v-tashkente-560954-2023>

among Uzbek and regional consumers"<sup>139</sup>. "Naftan" introduced visitors to acrylic fibers of its own production - a durable material widely used in the textile industry. "Mogilevkhimvolokno" presented polyester fiber for fabrics, insulation, syntepon, nonwoven fabrics. Polyethylene terephthalate, a high-strength plastic used in the production of containers, was also among the presented products of the enterprise. "Svetlogorskikhimvolokno" demonstrated nonwoven materials of high strength, polyester textile yarns, knitted fabrics in various designs - dyed, with lacquer effect, bleached, tufted, embossed and many others.

Finally, in November 2023, the Belarusian exposition Belarus - the Taste of Nature was presented at the leading agricultural and food exhibitions UzProdExpo/UzAgroExpo, where "more than 120 companies from Uzbekistan, Austria, Armenia, Belarus, Bulgaria, Iran, Italy, Kazakhstan, Cyprus, China, Kyrgyzstan, Netherlands, South Korea, Russia, USA, Turkmenistan, Turkey and Czech Republic..."<sup>140</sup>. In particular, the Belarusian enterprise - Postavy Dairy Plant - presented its well-known products, including Cheddar Red, Parmesan Grand and Maasdam cheeses, which have already become a kind of classic. These products arouse the greatest interest among potential partners from Uzbekistan. Another Belarusian participant, Bretta, took part in the exhibition for the first time and expected successful contacts and fruitful results. The company showed a range of dry dairy products produced by the Luninets Dairy Plant, where among the products stood out milk powder under the brand name "Molochnaya Kapelka", which is made from skimmed pasteurized milk. This product can be used for preparation of non-caloric yogurts, ice cream, shakes, infant formulae.

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<sup>139</sup> Belarusian exposition is presented at the textile exhibition in Tashkent [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/beloruskaja-ekspozitsija-predstavlena-na-tekstilnoj-vystavke-v-tashkente-594563-2023/>

<sup>140</sup> Belarus presents its food products at the exhibitions in Tashkent [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-predstavljaet-svoju-prodovolstvennuju-produktsiju-na-vystavkah-v-tashkente-601144-2023/>

As for Slutsk Cheese Factory, it demonstrated in Tashkent an expanded line of its lactose-free products, including a novelty - lactose-free sweet cream butter "#Mozhno" and milk "#Mozhno A2". In addition, the assortment included glazed cheese, cottage cheese, milk with extended shelf life, sweet cream butter, chocolate butter, processed cheese. Finally, the Gomel meat processing plant brought to the Uzbek market products meeting halal standards, which included "Beef" sausage, raw smoked beef product "Santorini Prestige", poultry chips, raw smoked chicken product "Fileichka", as well as cooked-smoked beef products, including "Filey Firm". In addition, the meat processing plant presented its latest innovations, including such products as "Exquisite" tenderloin and "Gourmet" beef. Also new for the Uzbek market was the low-calorie sausage "Black Pearl" made from beef and poultry meat. Of course, the exposition of Belarus - the Taste of Nature aroused high interest on the part of visitors, including representatives of Uzbek business, government agencies and mass media.

Returning to the 10th meeting of the joint Belarusian-Uzbek intergovernmental commission on bilateral cooperation, we note that Uzbekistan is Belarus's key partner in Central Asia. The two former Soviet republics celebrated the 30th anniversary of diplomatic relations in 2023. And today, based on numerous facts, we can assert that the interaction between Minsk and Tashkent is experiencing a period of a peculiar flourishing, which is reaching a qualitatively new level and seeking to search for and expand new joint forms of cooperation to realize the objectives of strategic cooperation.

## **Belarus - Uzbekistan: forum of hopes and perspectives**

In February 2024, the II Forum of Regions of Belarus and Uzbekistan was held in Tashkent, attended by more than 150 representatives of Belarusian regions and the business community. And within two days, they and their Uzbek partners discussed a wide range of issues of bilateral interregional interaction - from investment and industrial cooperation to strengthening cultural and humanitarian ties. As a result, the parties "came to a package of bilateral documents (45 documents), which includes interdepartmental, interregional agreements, a number of contracts, the total value of which is about \$150 million"<sup>141</sup>. In particular, they concluded: an intergovernmental agreement on the application of electronic systems of certification of origin of goods; an agreement between the Ministry of Antimonopoly Regulation and Trade of Belarus and the Committee for the Development of Competition and Consumer Protection of Uzbekistan on cooperation in the development of competition, consumer protection and regulation of the advertising market; a protocol on cooperation in the field of intellectual property. The parties also "signed an agreement on scientific and production cooperation, a roadmap for the development of cooperation in the agro-industrial complex for 2024-2026, a plan of joint measures to develop cooperation in the integration of information systems in the field of plant quarantine"<sup>142</sup>. Cooperation programs have been adopted in the spheres of culture and art, sports and tourism, and education. Minsk and Tashkent signed an agreement to establish twinning ties and develop multifaceted cooperation. In addition, in order to organize systematic

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<sup>141</sup> The Belarusian delegation in Tashkent reached agreements for \$150 million [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/beloruskaja-delegatsija-v-tashkente-dostigla-dogovorennostej-na-150-mln-614453-2024>

<sup>142</sup> Belarus and Uzbekistan signed a road map of cooperation for 2024-2025 [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-uzbekistan-podpisali-dorozhnyu-kartu-sotrudnichestva-na-2024-2025-gody-614308-2024>

mutual supplies, a joint foreign trade company will be created in Minsk and Tashkent; export support mechanisms and electronic system of goods certification will be introduced; favorable conditions for cargo transportation will be created and multimodal corridors in the direction of South Asian markets will be used. The parties also "intend to implement projects in agro-industrial complex, electrical and textile sphere, health care and pharmaceuticals, urban development, public utilities. Roadmaps will be adopted and working groups will be established for each direction"<sup>143</sup> .

It should be noted that the parties have signed 70 documents over the 30 years of Belarusian-Uzbek interaction, and the scope of the February agreements confirms the strategic nature of the relations between the two former post-Soviet republics. Moreover, this package of bilateral documents is crowned by the Roadmap for cooperation for 2024-2025, which provides for the implementation of export and investment projects worth one billion dollars. For reference, let us specify: in 2018-2022, the trade turnover between Belarus and Uzbekistan increased 3.2 times. In 2023, the volume of mutual trade grew by another 12 percent and exceeded 565 million dollars. The road map for 2024-2025 deals with such areas of interaction as "industrial cooperation, agriculture, processing industry, humanitarian issues, education issues, cooperation in sports and tourism, training of personnel for the forestry industry, urban development, housing and utilities - a wide range of issues. They are sealed by 99 documents totaling \$1.054 billion"<sup>144</sup> .

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<sup>143</sup> Mirziyoyev: Belarus and Uzbekistan will create a joint foreign trade company [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/mirzиеv-belarus-i-uzbekistan-sozdadut-sovmestnuju-vneshnetorgovuju-kompaniju-614250-2024/>

<sup>144</sup> Belarus and Uzbekistan will realize projects for more than \$1 billion in 2024-2025 [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-uzbekistan-v-2024-2025-godah-realizujut-proekty-bolee-chem-na-1-mlrd-613960-2024/>

In their joint statement in February 2024, the leaders of Belarus and Uzbekistan emphasized that the priority direction of Belarusian-Uzbek relations would be further expansion of mutually beneficial trade and economic interaction and building up the volume of mutual trade and expanding its nomenclature, including in the **industrial sector**. Recall that exports of enterprises of the Ministry of Industry of Belarus to this Central Asian country increased by almost 45 percent in 2023. At the same time, "industrial cooperation is not limited to mutual deliveries of products. Industrial cooperation has traditionally been one of the priority areas of interaction"<sup>145</sup>.

For example, PA Energokomplekt together with YES LLC are working on localization of cable and wire products production in Uzbekistan. Since 2018, Minsk Automobile Plant has been cooperating with Krantas Group LLC on the production of special-purpose machinery in Uzbekistan. During the period of cooperation, more than 200 units of special vehicles - tank trucks, in particular, gasoline and water tankers, garbage trucks, crane equipment - have been jointly produced and sold to Uzbek consumers. In its turn, the Uzbek company within the framework of cooperation supplies crane booms to Belarus to the Mogilevtransmash plant for subsequent production of hoisting cranes. And work is underway to conclude new contracts for 2024. At the end of 2023, a new cooperation project to organize in Uzbekistan the assembly production of diesel-generator sets and compressor stations was launched. The project involves Minsk Motor Plant and Uzbek company PLANETA SERVIS LLC.

In 2024, it is envisaged to start practical implementation of the project with this partner in the field of tractor construction. The fact is

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<sup>145</sup> Export of enterprises of the Ministry of Industry to Uzbekistan in 2023 increased by almost 45% [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/eksport-predpriyatij-minproma-v-uzbekistan-v-2023-godu-vozsros-pochti-na-45-614029-2024/>

that "a pilot project will be launched this year - Belarus and Uzbekistan will create an assembly production of cotton tractor. At the first stage, 500 tractor kits will be supplied. Uzbekistan is going in the direction of developing its production base"<sup>146</sup> . License agreements have already been signed with Minsk Tractor Plant (MTZ) to organize assembly production of Belarus machinery. Work is underway to address localization issues. "The relevance of the project is confirmed by the unabated demand for Belarusian tractors on the part of Uzbek agrarians. In 2023 alone, MTZ increased exports of tractors to Uzbekistan by 1.6 times compared to 2022"<sup>147</sup> . To be more precise, more than four thousand tractors were supplied from Belarus last year. This is a record for recent years.

The parties have great potential for the development of mutually beneficial cooperation in the creation of joint production of dump trucks. After all, "Uzbekistan is a leader among the CIS countries in copper production and gold mining. It is the mining industry that has priority and it is the locomotive of Uzbekistan's economy"<sup>148</sup> . For this reason, the Uzbek side is ready not only to organize the large-scale assembly of Belarusian dump trucks, but is also ready to manufacture the necessary parts and components to transport ore to processing plants where rare-earth metals will be produced. It should also be noted for reference that following the II Forum of Regions of Belarus and Uzbekistan, more than ten enterprises of the Belarusian Ministry of Industry signed contracts worth about 45 million dollars.

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<sup>146</sup> Belarus and Uzbekistan create assembly production of cotton tractors [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-uzbekistan-sozdajut-sborочноe-proizvodstvo-hlopkovodcheskih-tractorov-613951-2024/>

<sup>147</sup> Ministers of Industry of Belarus and Uzbekistan familiarized themselves with the production sites of partner companies [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/ministry-promyshlennosti-belarusi-i-uzbekistana-oznakomilis-s-proizvodstvennymi-ploschadkami-kompanij-614578-2024/>

<sup>148</sup> Belarus and Uzbekistan will work out the creation of joint production of dump trucks [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-uzbekistan-prorabotajut-sozdanie-sovmestnogo-proizvodstva-samosvalov-614810-2024/>

In recent years, cooperation between the countries **in the forestry, woodworking and pulp and paper industries has been** developing very dynamically. Statistics show that "in the last three years there has been an annual increase in supplies to Uzbekistan - on average twofold, which indicates a constantly growing demand <...>. In 2023, the growth rate of exports of woodworking and pulp and paper products amounted to over 150%. In Uzbekistan, the enterprises of the industry supply almost the entire range of products manufactured in Belarus"<sup>149</sup> . And the organizations of the Ministry of Forestry were able to increase exports to Uzbekistan in 2023 even five times. And this year "we plan to increase shipments two times more"<sup>150</sup> , including at the expense of house sets produced by forestry enterprises. And that is not all. At present, Belarusian woodworking products are very actively traded on the Uzbek market through the Belarusian Universal Commodity Exchange (BUTB). There are, of course, contracts for other commodity items, but so far sawn timber from Belarus is in the lead. In general, "for a month and a half of the current [2024] year, the exchange [BUTB] has already sold and purchased \$7 million worth of products with the participation of Uzbek business. More than 100 Uzbek companies are registered at the exchange"<sup>151</sup> .

At the II Forum of Regions, several woodworking and pulp and paper enterprises also signed contracts to supply Uzbekistan with their products. Thus, OJSC "Svetlogorsk Pulp and Paper Mill" signed

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<sup>149</sup> Enterprises of woodworking and pulp-and-paper industry concluded contracts on delivery of products to Uzbekistan for \$17 million [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/predpriyatija-bellesbumproma-zakljuchili-kontrakty-po-postavke-produktsii-v-uzbekistan-na-17-mln-614132-2024/>

<sup>150</sup> Organizations of the Ministry of Forestry at the end of 2023 increased exports to Uzbekistan five times [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/organizatsii-minleshoza-po-itogam-2023-goda-narastili-eksport-v-uzbekistan-v-pjat-raz-614577-2024/>

<sup>151</sup> BUTB proposes to build direct sales of Uzbek enterprises for buyers in Belarus [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-predlagaet-vystraivat-prjamyje-prodazhi-uzbekskih-predpriyatij-dlja-pokupatelej-v-belarusi-616373-2024/>



agreements with two Uzbek companies for the supply of bleached softwood pulp. Newsprint Plant RUE signed a contract for supply of offset and sack paper. The total amount of the contracts is 17 million dollars. The newsprint plant has also signed an agreement of intent to sell sawn timber to Uzbekistan. And woodworking enterprise "Fandok" will be engaged in furniture production in Uzbekistan. It is planned to open a joint company for furniture production in Tashkent region. A road map has already been prepared for this purpose. Uzbek partners undertake to build a building according to the requirements of FanDOC, buy equipment according to the requirements of the Belarusian company, and FanDOC enters with its raw material base. "Thus, Belarus will not just sell raw materials to Uzbekistan, but produce and sell a product with high added value on the local market. The parties will own the enterprise 50/50"<sup>152</sup>. In addition, a roadmap for further expansion of cooperation between Belarus and Uzbekistan in the woodworking industry was signed on the margins of the forum.

As for the interaction between the two countries in **agriculture**, joint production facilities will be set up in Uzbekistan in the near future. Belarus will build a poultry farm in Tashkent and a dairy plant in Samarkand. For this purpose, "a project has been worked out to build a poultry farm to raise broilers of about 70-75 thousand tons per year. The realization of this project has already begun: a feed mill has been purchased, land has been obtained. We even have a brand already - "Jozha" ("Chicken")"<sup>153</sup>. In Samarkand, Savushkin Product will act as a partner, where not only Belarusian but also local raw materials will be processed, and then the finished products will be marketed in third

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<sup>152</sup> "FanDOC" will engage in furniture production in Uzbekistan [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/fandok-zajmetsja-proizvodstvomebeli-v-uzbekistane-614380-2024/>

<sup>153</sup> Belarus will build a poultry farm in Tashkent and a dairy plant in Samarkand [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-postroit-v-tashkente-ptitsefabriku-a-v-samarkande-molochnyj-kombinat-614367-2024/>

countries, for example, Afghanistan. Another direction in this regard is the export of veterinary drugs. In February 2024, a contract was signed under which "supplies will grow almost 2.5 times. This shows the demand for our [Belarusian] veterinary drugs in the Uzbek market"<sup>154</sup> . In addition, Uzbekistan plans to test Belarusian potatoes and has already ordered the first batch - 20 tons. The fact is that Uzbek potatoes are grown in the fields of this Central Asian country with yields several times lower than in Belarus. "Further cooperation in this area will depend on the result. But in general, the need for potatoes in Uzbekistan is not covered by about half"<sup>155</sup> .

Another important trend in Belarus-Uzbekistan relations: in 2024, the two post-Soviet countries will noticeably strengthen cooperation in the **textile and garment industries**. Within the framework of industrial cooperation, it is planned to make mutual deliveries of cotton yarn, cloth, and fabrics for Belarusian enterprises, as well as chemical fibers, linen raw materials, and blended ready-made fabrics for Uzbek enterprises. Projects will be worked out to sew ready-made garments on the territory of Uzbekistan according to the orders of Belarusian brands, as Belarus lacks its own seamstresses. For this reason, a number of enterprises from Belarus - "Svitanak, Slavyanka, Kalinka, and Orsha flax combine - already have experience in placing their orders with Uzbek enterprises"<sup>156</sup> . Strategically, the Belarusian side decided as follows: labor-intensive products - suit and dress, coat groups, some complex elements - will be produced in Belarus; other assortment items - in

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<sup>154</sup> Belarus will increase supplies of veterinary drugs to Uzbekistan by 2.5 times [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-v-25-raza-narastit-postavki-vetpreparatov-v-uzbekistan-616324-2024>

<sup>155</sup> Uzbekistan wants to test Belarusian potatoes, the yield of its own potatoes is several times lower [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/uzbekistan-hochet-ispytat-belorusskij-kartofel-urozhajnost-svoego-v-neskolko-raz-nizhe-614368-2024/>

<sup>156</sup> Belarus will more actively involve Uzbek enterprises in the production of clothing [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-budet-aktivnee-privlekat-k-proizvodstvu-odezhdy-uzbekskie-predpriyatija-613968-2024/>

Uzbekistan - under Belarusian trademarks, with fabrics and fabrics from our republic. In addition, "the key aspect of cooperation will be in the field of education and advanced training. Uzbek specialists, including seamstresses, technologists and designers, will be sent to Belarusian enterprises for internships, and Belarusian technologists will be engaged for managerial work at Uzbek enterprises"<sup>157</sup>. By the way, it should be noted that the number of students from Uzbekistan studying in Belarus has increased significantly over the past five years. If five years ago, 14 citizens of Uzbekistan were educated in Belarus, now there are about 1,200. "And in total, about 4 thousand students are studying under joint educational programs. There is a great interest to train specialists in Belarus in those specialties that will be in demand in the real sector of the economy"<sup>158</sup>.

In 2024, Belarus and Uzbekistan intend to develop cooperation in the **field of healthcare at an** accelerated pace and have outlined more than ten areas of cooperation in this regard. For example, in the field of child health care, the Mother and Child Republican Scientific and Practical Medical Center of the Ministry of Health of Belarus will organize advanced training for doctors of the Republican Specialized Scientific and Practical Medical Center for Mother and Child Health of Uzbekistan on neonatology, as well as the development of joint educational programs of master's degree and clinical residency, and cooperation on neonatal resuscitation. Internships and professional development of Uzbek medical, teaching and scientific personnel in cardiac surgery, cardioanesthesiology, functional diagnostics of patients with congenital heart defects, online consultations on problem patients,

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<sup>157</sup> Belarus and Uzbekistan will strengthen cooperation in the textile and clothing industries [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-uzbekistan-ukrepjat-sotrudnichestvo-v-tekstilnoj-i-shvejnoj-otrasljah-614106-2024/>

<sup>158</sup> Ambassador of Uzbekistan: there is a great interest in training students in Belarus [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/amp/society/view/posol-uzbekistana-est-bolshaja-zainteresovannost-v-obuchenii-studentov-v-belarusi-616364-2024>

exchange of specialists in the field of radiology, targeting, molecular genetic therapy will also be organized. A separate block of partnerships includes training in Belarus of medical physicists and oncology engineers, specialists for the transplantology service of Uzbekistan, interaction in orthopedics and arthroscopy through exchange of experience, training and joint operations. Speaking about cooperation between the sanitary and epidemiological services of Belarus and Uzbekistan, the parties agreed "to carry out joint work and research in the field of prevention and treatment of infectious and non-infectious diseases, including immunization and pandemic control programs"<sup>159</sup> .

The Belarusian side is also considering the possibility of entering the Uzbek market with high-quality low-cost **pharmaceuticals** that are necessary for the needs of healthcare in this country. All the more so because at present, the enterprises of Belfarmprom Holding have 136 registration certificates for medicines in Uzbekistan. In 2023, the supply of medicines to this country increased by 120 percent. In February 2024, commercial contracts worth more than five million dollars were signed, which will significantly increase these supplies. A memorandum of understanding was also adopted between Belfarmprom Holding and the Agency for the Development of the Pharmaceutical Industry under the Ministry of Health of Uzbekistan, on the basis of which the first contracts have already been signed and practical work has begun to expand not only direct supplies, but also the development of new types of medicines. The Belarusian side offered a list of 12 items that can be mastered jointly at the enterprises of Uzbekistan. And "now Belpharm, which is located in Tashkent, and Nesvizh Medical Preparations Plant are working on the possibility to start manufacturing infusion solutions

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<sup>159</sup> Staff training and joint operations. What cooperation between the Ministries of Health of Belarus and Uzbekistan looks like [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/podgotovka-kadrov-i-sovmestnye-operatsii-kakim-viditsja-sotrudnichestvo-minzdravov-belarusi-i-614005-2024/>

for the needs of the Ministry of Health of Uzbekistan. The Belarusian plant acts as a technical partner, which implies readiness to transfer technologies and train specialists"<sup>160</sup> . All this suggests that Belarus considers Uzbekistan as one of the most promising platforms for joint work to bring joint products to the markets of third countries. And one more fact: the Belarusian side has submitted documents for registration of about 20 new medicines in this Central Asian country and 27 for re-registration. At the same time, the possibility of entering the Uzbek market with a line of oncological drugs from Belarus, which are two to three times cheaper than imported analogs, is being considered.

Speaking about the results of the II Forum of the Regions of Belarus and Uzbekistan in terms of Belarusian regions, we can note interesting results from Hrodna, Brest, Vitebsk, and Minsk. For example, the **Grodno Oblast Executive Committee** signed memorandums of cooperation with Surkhandarya Oblast and the Republic of Karakalpakstan, and agreements on trade and economic, scientific and technical, environmental, social and humanitarian, and cultural cooperation were concluded with Samarkand and Andijan Oblasts. At the same time, the emphasis in partnership ties with Uzbek colleagues is on cooperation, the creation of joint productions and mutual investments. "There is interest on the part of Uzbek business to invest in the economy of Grodno region <...>. There is an interest on the part of our [Grodno] producers to engage not only in supplying finished products, but also to organize joint ventures and produce products there"<sup>161</sup> . In the same days of February, Grodno State University (GrSU) "signed cooperation agreements with Urgench Innovation University and Tashkent State

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<sup>160</sup> Belarus plans to organize supplies of medicines for oncology treatment to Uzbekistan [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/amp/society/view/belarus-planiruet-organizovat-postavki-v-uzbekistan-lekarstv-dlja-lechenija-onkologii-616347-2024>

<sup>161</sup> Karanik: in cooperation with Uzbekistan the emphasis is placed on the creation of joint productions and mutual investments [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/karanik-v-sotrudnichestve-s-uzbekistanom-upor-delaetsja-na-sozdanie-sovmestnyh-proizvodstv-i-vzaimnye-614485-2024/>

Technical University"<sup>162</sup> , as well as with Nizami State Pedagogical University in Tashkent. In addition, GrSU representatives at the Tashkent Institute of Chemical Technology outlined plans for further development of a joint educational program for undergraduates, and at the Tashkent State Transport University discussed prospects for developing mutually beneficial ties.

As for **Brest region**, which by the end of 2023 increased the growth of trade turnover and export volumes in the Uzbek market, it identified at the forum clear priorities for cooperation with Uzbek partners - textile production, road construction, production of bricks, ceramic stones and blocks, as well as cooperation in agriculture and in the organization of mutual supplies of food products - peanuts, raisins, apricots, prunes, spices. After all, the enterprises of Brest region "not only supply their products to Uzbekistan and import Uzbek goods, but also are investors. Thus, Kobrin "Polesie", specializing in the production of children's toys, invested in the construction of a similar plant in Tashkent"<sup>163</sup> . For this reason, Brest Regional Executive Committee at the forum signed action plans for 2024-2025 to implement interregional agreements on trade and economic, scientific, technical and cultural cooperation with Syrdarya and Bukhara regions, which were concluded at the First Forum of Regions of Belarus and Uzbekistan. In addition, the following agreements were signed at the Second Forum: a cooperation agreement between the Brest Regional Clinical Hospital and the Bukhara Regional Multidisciplinary Medical Center and a protocol of intent between the cities of Brest and Bukhara.

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<sup>162</sup> Three agreements with universities of Uzbekistan will complete the portfolio of international cooperation of GrSU [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/tri-dogovora-s-vuzami-uzbekistana-dopolnjat-portfel-mezhdunarodnogo-sotrudnichestva-grgu-614135-2024/>

<sup>163</sup> Brest region will conclude new cooperation agreements at the Forum of Regions of Belarus and Uzbekistan [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novye-dogovory-o-sotrudnichestve-zakljuchit-brestskaia-oblast-na-forume-regionov-belarusi-i-uzbekistana-613850-2024/>

On the margins of the II Forum of Regions, **Vitebsk region** signed road maps for 2024-2025 with Namangan and Kashkadarya regions. In the second, representatives of Vitebsk and Kashkadarya regions also agreed "to cooperate in the spheres of oncology, pediatric surgery, transplantology and endocrinology..."<sup>164</sup> , and also discussed issues related to cooperation in economy, tourism, information technologies and sports. Finally, as mentioned above, at the second forum **Minsk** and Tashkent signed an agreement on the establishment of twinning ties and an action plan to implement the agreement between the Minsk City Executive Committee and the Tashkent Hokimiyat on trade, economic, scientific, technical and cultural cooperation for 2024-2025. The parties determined the main task in this matter - "to realize all plans in the shortest possible time"<sup>165</sup> .

Summing up, it should be noted that today the interaction between the two former post-Soviet republics "is experiencing a period of a peculiar flourishing, which is reaching a qualitatively new level and striving to search for and expand new joint forms for the realization of strategic cooperation tasks"<sup>166</sup> . In this context, the II Forum of Regions of Belarus and Uzbekistan showed the parties' confident course for further effective partnership, and the priority direction of Belarusian-Uzbek relations remains the expansion and deepening of mutually beneficial trade and economic cooperation: from industrial cooperation and agriculture to scientific and technological, cultural, humanitarian and regional interaction.

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<sup>164</sup> Vitebsk and Kashkadarya regions plan cooperation in the spheres of oncology and pediatric surgery [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/vitebskaja-i-kashkadarjinskaja-oblasti-planirujut-sotrudnichestvo-v-sferah-onkologii-i-detskoj-hirurgii-613865-2024/>

<sup>165</sup> Delegation from Minsk participates in the II Forum of Regions of Belarus and Uzbekistan [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/delegatsija-iz-minska-uchastvuet-v-ii-forume-regionov-belarusi-i-uzbekistana-613836-2024/>

<sup>166</sup> Zalesky, B. Address of partnership - Uzbekistan. Chronicle of cooperative interaction / Boris Zalesky. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2024. - C. 61.

## **Belarus - Tajikistan: focus on intensifying partnerships**

Belarus and Tajikistan plan to intensify trade and economic cooperation to increase trade turnover and reach the level of at least \$100 million of bilateral trade in 2024. Minsk and Dushanbe see positive dynamics and untapped potential to emphasize not only "simple supply of products, but also the expansion of cooperation ties, the creation of long-term joint projects, assembly plants in the field of agricultural machinery and attachments, elevators, dairy products, electrical transformers and other promising areas"<sup>167</sup>.

Recall that in 2022, the Belarusian-Tajik trade turnover amounted to more than \$78 million. In the first 11 months of 2023, this indicator amounted to about \$75 million. There are 9 registered enterprises with Tajik capital in Belarus, including 2 joint ventures and 7 foreign ones. In Tajikistan, there are more than 20 entities of the commodity distribution network of Belarusian enterprises and one joint venture. In addition, interesting joint cooperation projects have emerged over the past five years. First, since 2017, an assembly plant for Belarusian agricultural machinery has been operating in the Tajik city of Hissar. In 2024, it is planned to organize the assembly of combine harvesters there as well. Second, in 2022, an assembly plant for elevators of OJSC Mogilevliftmash was opened in the Tajik city of Khujand. Third, a joint venture based on Belarusian technologies - LLC JV "Production of Dairy Products "Vatan" - was established in Dushanbe, the capital of the country, which has been producing products under the trademark "ALMIR" since June 2023. Fourth, in November 2023, V.I. Kozlov Minsk Electrotechnical Plant and JSC Transformer from Bokhtar signed

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<sup>167</sup> Cooperative ties and joint projects. Ambassador of Belarus on cooperation with Tajikistan [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/kooperatsionnye-svjazi-i-sovmestnye-proekty-posol-belarusi-o-sotrudnichestve-s-tadzhikistanom-607001-2023/>



a Memorandum on the organization of assembly production of Belarusian transformers in Tajikistan. Fifth, commercial agreements were signed to supply cotton, yarn and cotton fabrics from this Central Asian country up to 2025 for the needs of light industry enterprises of Belarus for a total amount of over \$40 million. Sixth, BELAZ OJSC worked out the issue of setting up an enterprise for the production of quarry machinery in Tajikistan in the near future.

In September 2023, the 16th meeting of the Belarusian-Tajik Intergovernmental Commission (IGC) on Trade and Economic Cooperation was held in Dushanbe to review trends of interaction in industrial cooperation, light industry, supplies of woodworking products, food products, and pharmaceutical products. The parties also discussed cooperation in agriculture, food and personnel training for the agro-industrial complex, transportation, education and science, health care and social protection, culture and sports, tourism and interregional cooperation. On the same day, a meeting of the Belarusian-Tajik Business Council was also held, attended by heads and representatives of 24 Belarusian enterprises and organizations, as well as small and medium-sized businesses. As a result of this event, its participants signed "13 bilateral documents - cooperation agreements and contracts for the supply of products totaling more than \$16 million"<sup>168</sup>.

In particular, within the framework of the 16th IGC meeting, Gomselmash OJSC signed a memorandum of bilateral cooperation with Agrotekhservis CJSC. This document provides for the delivery of five GS5A combine harvesters to the Tajik market in 2024. The fact is that "Gomselmash" has been closely cooperating with "Agrotekhservis" for many years already to provide Tajikistan's agrarians with grain and

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<sup>168</sup> Enterprises of Belarus and Tajikistan signed contracts for \$16 million during the business council [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/predprijatija-belarusi-i-tadzhikistana-vo-vremja-delovogo-soveta-podpisali-kontrakty-na-16-mln-590816-2023/>

forage harvesters, as well as timely service maintenance"<sup>169</sup>. We would like to add that now in this Central Asian country the most popular are economical and simple combines and self-propelled mowers GOMSELMASH. It is also planned to supply machine kits and other machinery to Tajik partners. In addition, "Belarus will supply seeds, livestock, canned meat, dairy and fish products to Tajikistan"<sup>170</sup>.

In 2023, the Belarusian-Tajik cooperation in the woodworking and pulp and paper industries also shone with new colors, with supplies from Belarus growing 1.7 times in seven months. And if we talk about the figures of the last five years, the exports of the enterprises of Bellesbumprom Concern grew 2.2 times. "Now practically the whole range of products of the timber industry complex of the republic is sold in Tajikistan: lumber, wood boards, paper, cardboard and products made of them, wallpaper, furniture, plywood"<sup>171</sup>. The Belarusian concern already has clear prospects for further cooperation with Tajik partners.

Investment cooperation between the two countries also featured prominently in the decisions of the 16th IGC meeting. Earlier, in February 2023, at the first meeting of the working group on these issues between the Ministry of Economy of Belarus and the State Committee for Investment and State Property Management of Tajikistan, the parties outlined the key objective in this topic - "to give impetus to investment cooperation, to identify points of contact up to the list of specific projects to attract business"<sup>172</sup>. And now the most promising areas and the

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<sup>169</sup> "Gomselmash" will supply a batch of combine harvesters to Tajikistan in 2024 [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/gomselmash-postavit-partiju-zernouborochnyh-kombajnov-v-tadzhikistan-v-2024-godu-591373-2023/>

<sup>170</sup> Belarus and Tajikistan agreed on cooperation in agriculture [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-tadzhikistan-dogovorilis-o-sotrudnichestve-v-selskom-hozjajstve-592218-2023/>

<sup>171</sup> Enterprises of "Bellesbumprom" for the last 5 years increased exports to Tajikistan by 2.2 times [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/predpriyatija-bellesbumproma-za-poslednie-5-let-narastili-eksport-v-tadzhikistan-v-22-raza-590869-2023/>

<sup>172</sup> Cherviakov: it is necessary to identify priority areas of investment cooperation between Belarus and Tajikistan [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL:

formation of a list of investment projects, including import-substituting ones, are already being discussed. These are mining, machine building, IT-sector, agriculture, pharmaceuticals and tourism. The plan is to study the possibility of creating a Belarusian-Tajik investment fund. In addition, among the new investment projects Tajikistan wants to create in Minsk "a multifunctional trade complex to serve as a coordination center for representatives of both countries"<sup>173</sup>.

One of the priorities of Belarusian-Tajik cooperation is also education, which will reach a new level in 2024. After all, today various educational projects are already being implemented between educational institutions of the two countries, "within the framework of which joint faculties have been created and unified educational programs have been adopted. The issue of opening branches of Belarusian universities in Tajikistan is being worked out"<sup>174</sup>. For reference, it should be noted that there are four joint Belarusian-Tajik faculties in higher educational institutions in Dushanbe, whose graduates receive state diplomas of the Republic of Belarus. More than 500 Tajik students study at Belarusian universities.

In October 2023, the Ministry of Education of Belarus and the Ministry of Education and Science of Tajikistan signed a joint action plan for 2023-2026 in Minsk. At the same time, the Belarusian capital hosted the second forum of rectors of the two countries, where representatives of more than 50 higher education institutions of Belarus and Tajikistan participated and where more than 10 bilateral agreements at the university level were signed. In particular, within the framework of

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<https://www.belta.by/economics/view/chervjakov-nuzhno-opredelit-prioritetnye-napravlenija-investsotrudnichestva-belarusi-i-tadzhikistana-552755-2023/>

<sup>173</sup> Tajikistan wants to create its trading house in Minsk [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/tadzhikistan-hochet-sozdat-v-minske-svoj-torgovyj-dom-609906-2024>

<sup>174</sup> Safarzoda, B. Water for life, melting glaciers, Nowruz and Kupalye / B. Safarzoda // [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/interview/view/voda-dlja-zhizni-tajanie-lednikov-navruz-i-kupalje-posol-o-tadzhikistane-i-druzhbe-s-belarusju-8874/>

this interaction, "the Belarusian State Pedagogical University carries out close cooperation with the Pedagogical University of Tajikistan precisely on the exchange of teaching staff and best practices in training future teachers"<sup>175</sup> . And Baranovich State University and Tajik State University of Law, Business and Politics signed a cooperation agreement, which "defines the key directions of joint educational and research activities, as well as in the sphere of realization of joint youth initiatives"<sup>176</sup> . And now the universities are preparing a roadmap for international cooperation to facilitate the implementation of educational modules, participation in scientific and educational tracking, and academic exchange.

Last. In October 2022, Belarus and Tajikistan signed a roadmap of bilateral cooperation for 2022-2026, which contains 39 items. To date, 6 have already been implemented, and 33 are under implementation, including 21 that are being implemented on a permanent basis. Today, the parties continue to look for new opportunities to intensify cooperation in order to fully implement this strategic document and make a new contribution to the development of Belarusian-Tajik relations.

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<sup>175</sup> The Ministries of Education of Belarus and Tajikistan signed a plan of joint action for 2023-2026 [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/ministerstva-obrazovanija-belarusi-i-tadzhikistana-podpisali-plan-sovmestnyh-dejstvij-2023-2026-gody-592165-2023/>

<sup>176</sup> BarSU develops a roadmap for cooperation with a new partner university from Tajikistan [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/bargu-razrabatyvaet-dorozhnuju-kartu-sotrudnichestva-s-novym-vuzom-partnerom-iz-tadzhikistana-592689-2023/>

## **Belarus - China: promote domestic exporters and assist foreign importers**

Back in early March 2023, the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the Republic of Belarus adopted the Joint Statement on Further Developing the Relationship of All-Weather and Comprehensive Strategic Partnership in a New Era, in which the parties agreed to promote bilateral trade and economic cooperation and steadily increase the volume of bilateral trade. One of the tools to increase and diversify Belarusian-Chinese trade today is the use of the exchange mechanism, which has been actively developing since 2019.

At the end of 2022, the amount of transactions made by Chinese companies at the trading sessions of the Belarusian Universal Commodity Exchange (BUTB) increased by almost 15% and amounted to about \$53 million. At the beginning of 2023, the number of trading session participants from China also increased significantly - from 67 to 113, two of which had the status of stockbrokers. "Last year, lumber, rapeseed oil, milk powder, vet-blue leather and synthetic fibers were supplied to China through the exchange platform. In turn, Belarusian companies purchased Chinese-made ferrous metal products and soybean meal on BUTB"<sup>177</sup> .

The positive dynamics of the Belarusian-Chinese exchange trade volumes was achieved due to active work to attract PRC residents to the exchange trading, as well as due to the creation of favorable conditions for representatives of Chinese business. In particular, the accreditation procedure at the exchange was simplified, the possibility to settle transactions in Chinese yuan was provided, and consulting support in the Chinese language was organized. In addition, special export trade

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<sup>177</sup> The amount of transactions of Chinese companies on BUTB increased by 14% [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/summa-sdelok-kitajskih-kompanij-na-butb-vozroslo-na-14-551264-2023/>

sessions focused on the Chinese market were regularly held during 2022, which allowed Chinese importers to buy Belarusian lumber products with delivery to convenient locations in the Middle Kingdom. In 2023, BUTB expects to further increase supplies of a number of domestic products to this country. In particular, lumber, vegetable oils, and meat and dairy products.

For example, in March 2023, the Chinese company **SUMEC International Trading**, which provides about three percent of the total volume of imports of timber and sawn timber to that country, expressed its interest in cooperating with the BUTB. The parties considered "two forms of interaction: the company's participation in exchange trading as a visitor with the conclusion of transactions on its own behalf and at its own expense or obtaining the status of an exchange broker, allowing to attract new buyers from China to the Belarusian trading platform"<sup>178</sup>. Now the geography of purchases by SUMEC International Trading is quite diversified. Timber products are imported from Brazil, Canada, Congo, Russia, Finland and other countries, including Belarus, where the company has recently opened a subsidiary. At the same time, the Chinese side is ready to purchase Belarusian sawn timber through BUTB on a regular basis, provided that the price offers of domestic woodworkers are competitive and the rhythm of supply is guaranteed. Recall that in March 2023, at a special session at BUTB, focused on the Chinese market, Belarusian bidders placed bids for the sale of sawn timber in the volume of more than 100 thousand cubic meters.

In April 2023, the Chinese corporation **Xiamen Xiangyu Group Corporation (XMXYG)**, which is included in the list of the 500 largest companies in the world according to Fortune magazine, confirmed its

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<sup>178</sup> BUTB agreed to cooperate with one of the largest Chinese importers of forest products [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-dogovorilas-o-sotrudnichestve-s-odnim-iz-krupnejshih-kitajskih-importerov-lesoproduktsii-553935-2023/>

readiness to increase the volume of purchases of wood products on the BUTB trading floor, as well as to develop cooperation in other promising commodity areas, and since March 2022 its subsidiary - **Xiamen Xiangyu Superchain Supply Chain Development Co.** - regularly participates in lumber trading on the Belarusian exchange platform. "During this time, XMXYG has purchased nearly 10,000 cubic meters of sawn timber products worth about \$2 million through BUTB"<sup>179</sup>. Thanks to the exchange, the company has already purchased four trains of sawn timber and is determined to continue cooperation in the same way, progressively increasing the volume of purchases. XMXYG is also interested in expanding the list of goods that the corporation buys on BUTB, and not only in the timber industry segment. We are talking about the possibility of bidding for agricultural products and, first of all, rapeseed oil, which is in stable demand in China and was already supplied to the PRC market through BUTB in 2022. At that time it was sold for more than 42 million dollars, including within the framework of import transactions made by Chinese participants. Therefore, given the significant production capacity of Belarusian oil extraction plants, this area may become a new growth point for the Chinese corporation in Belarus.

Another partner of BUTB, which is interested in cooperation with the Belarusian exchange platform, was the Chinese company **Beijing Huibaocheng Technology** in May 2023. This importer buys dairy products and vegetable oils, which are widely used in China's food industry. The company plans to "buy about 10,000 tons of rapeseed oil on the exchange on a monthly basis with the possibility of increasing

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<sup>179</sup> Chinese corporation is ready to increase purchases of Belarusian sawn timber through BUTB [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/kitajskaja-korporatsija-gotova-naraschivat-zakupki-belorusskih-pilomaterialov-cherez-butb-560768-2023>

supplies in the future"<sup>180</sup> . The Chinese importer is interested in Belarusian dried milk, so it will actively participate in the bidding.

In June 2023, another major Chinese importing company announced its intention to increase purchases of lumber products on the BUTB - it is **Taomu (Suzhou) Information Technology**. The fact is that according to the results of five months of 2023, the company has already purchased about 53 thousand cubic meters of these products through the exchange, which is almost twice as much as last year's figure for the same period. But this is far from the limit. And by the end of 2023, "it is planned to purchase at least another 20 thousand cubic meters. Thus, Belarus may become one of the three main markets from where Taomu (Suzhou) Information Technology imports woodworking products"<sup>181</sup> . Interestingly, in 2022, Russia, Canada and Sweden were the strategic partners of this company for the supply of sawn timber, while Belarus ranked only fourth.

We would like to remind you once again that at the beginning of 2023 the number of participants of BUTB trading sessions from China already amounted to 113. And as of November 27 of the same year, 152 of them had already been accredited on the Belarusian exchange floor. "At the end of 10 months [of 2023], China became the largest export destination for Belarusian exchange trading participants. <...> As a result, compared to January-October last year, the volume of export transactions increased two and a half times"<sup>182</sup> and amounted to almost \$60 million.

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<sup>180</sup> BUTB expects to increase supplies to China of sawn timber, vegetable oils, meat and dairy products [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-rasschityvaet-narasitit-postavki-v-kitaj-pilomaterialov-rastitelnyh-masel-mjasa-i-molochki-567273-2023/>

<sup>181</sup> A large Chinese importer intends to increase purchases of lumber products at BUTB [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/krupnyj-kitajskij-importer-nameren-naraschivat-zakupki-piloprodukcii-na-butb-571701-2023/>

<sup>182</sup> Osmolovsky: BUTB will provide comprehensive support to Belarusian exporters [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/osmolovskij-butb-okazhet-kompleksnuju-podderzhku-belorusskim-eksporteram-599485-2023/>



One of the primary tasks that BUTB will address with Chinese partners in 2024 is to expand the range of goods from Belarus and China involved in mutual exchange trade. It should be noted that "Belarusian lumber, rapeseed oil, meat products, and milk powder are exported to China through the exchange. At the same time, the exchange mechanism is becoming more and more in demand among Chinese businesses, ensuring a high positive dynamics in terms of the amount of transactions"<sup>183</sup>. In order to further develop these processes in Belarus and China, it is planned to focus on small and medium-sized enterprises, primarily producers of import-substituting goods. In addition, it is planned to ensure further diversification of the product mix by means of BUTB's targeted work with sectoral business associations and chambers of commerce and industry in various regions of China, which "will make it possible to establish interaction both with manufacturers of products in demand in Belarus and with potential consumers of Belarusian goods"<sup>184</sup>.

In particular, in July 2023, BUTB and the **Xinjiang Asia-European International Trade Center (AEEX)**, the operator of the **Asia Europa Exchange** electronic trading platform, agreed to increase exports to China. It will focus "on the regions through which the New Silk Road passes. First of all, these are Shanghai, Taicang and Xinjiang"<sup>185</sup>, where there are AEEX offices, which are already

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<sup>183</sup> BUTB and the Chinese Embassy identified priorities of cooperation in trade and economic sphere [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-i-posolstvo-kitaja-opredelili-prioritety-vzaimodejstvija-v-torgovo-ekonomicheskoy-sfere-594539-2023/>

<sup>184</sup> Prospects for the development of exchange trade between Belarus and China discussed at the business forum in Shanghai [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/perspektivy-razvitiya-birzhevoj-torgovli-belarusi-i-kitaja-obsudili-na-biznes-forume-v-shanhae-597700-2023/>

<sup>185</sup> Xinjiang Asia-Europe Trade Center to help boost exports to China through BUTB [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/sintzjanskij-aziatsko-evropejskij-torgovij-tsentri-pomozhet-narastit-eksport-v-kitaj-cherez-butb-576501-2023/>

establishing interaction with representatives of Chinese businesses interested in working through BUTB.

In August 2023, the **China National Forestry Industry Corporation** announced its intention to expand cooperation with BUTB. It plans not only to increase purchases of Belarusian sawn timber, but also to sell Chinese-made goods through the Belarusian import substitution platform. The two sides also reached an agreement to explore the possibility of importing Belarusian rapeseed oil and milk powder to China as the most liquid commodity items. "In this context, the issue of accreditation of the corporation as an exchange broker is also being considered, which will allow it to attract economic entities from other sectors of the economy to the BUTB"<sup>186</sup>.

Another fact: in September 2023, the **Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region** expressed its interest in developing cooperation with the BUTB, which "has four main features: vast territory, huge reserves of natural resources, highly developed agriculture and a powerful energy industry"<sup>187</sup>. The Chinese side is confident that exchange trading can play a key role in creating favorable conditions for companies from this region of China to do business in Belarus. In this regard, the BUTB, with its wide import and export opportunities, can facilitate the activities of companies from Inner Mongolia in the Belarusian market.

Finally, in November 2023, in the framework of the 13th China International Wood Trade Conference, which was held in Nanning, the administrative center of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, a memorandum of cooperation on electronic exchange trade was signed by

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<sup>186</sup> China Forest Industry Corporation intends to expand cooperation with BUTB [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/kitajskaja-lesopromyshlennaja-korporatsija-namerena-rasshirit-sotrudnichestvo-s-butb-581070-2023/>

<sup>187</sup> Belarus and China discussed the prospects of development of exchange trade [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-kitaj-obsudili-perspektivy-razvitiya-birzhevoj-torgovli-590151-2023/>

BUTB and the **China Timber and Forest Products Trade Association (CTWPDA)** to assist Chinese companies in entering the Belarusian market. Recall that over 467 thousand cubic meters of Belarusian lumber products were "sold on the Chinese market in the first 11 months of 2023. This is almost five times more than in January-November last year. At the same time, working with domestic suppliers, Chinese importers actively use the mechanism of exchange address transactions, the volume of which has already reached 237 thousand cubic meters in just a few months"<sup>188</sup>. In this regard, the establishment of partnership relations between BUTB and CTWPDA will not only help to find new buyers for sawn timber produced in Belarus, but will also provide an additional impetus to the development of Belarusian-Chinese cooperation in the exchange sphere.

A total of 162 Chinese residents have already been accredited on BUTB in January 2024, 51 more than in January 2023. "At the same time, the amount of transactions made by Chinese bidders increased 2.7 times - from \$30.4 million in 2022 to \$80.6 million in 2023"<sup>189</sup>. This happened mainly due to exports of Belarusian products. These were mainly supplies of sawn timber, rapeseed oil, dried milk and petrochemical products. When it comes to imports from China, "Belarusian traders mainly purchased ferrous and non-ferrous metal products through BUTB"<sup>190</sup>. For this reason, BUTB's plans for 2024 include not only a further increase in export sales, but also the expansion

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<sup>188</sup> BUTB and China Forest Trade Association signed a memorandum of cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-i-kitajskaja-assotsiatsija-torgovli-lesom-podpisali-memorandum-o-sotrudnichestve-602012-2023/>

<sup>189</sup> The new broker BUTB will be engaged in deliveries of import-substituting goods from China [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novyj-broker-butb-zajmetsja-postavkami-importozameschajuschih-tovarov-iz-kitaja-611688-2024/>

<sup>190</sup> BUTB and the Chinese Shenyang administration agreed to cooperate in exchange trading [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-i-administratsija-kitajskogo-shenjjana-dogovorilis-o-sotrudnichestve-v-sfere-birzhevoj-torgovli-606169-2023/>

of the range of goods produced in China. Moreover, in 2023, about a quarter of transactions on BUTB's industrial and consumer goods platform were for products of Chinese origin.

Developing the topic of import substitution, we note that in January 2024, **Shanghai Duxia Industry and Trade Co., Ltd** became the first stock broker from China, which will specialize in the supply of import-substituting products on the BUTB and attract manufacturers of goods in demand in Belarus - industrial and consumer goods - to the exchange platform. It should be noted that this company from Shanghai has traditionally produced printing machines and equipment for the production and processing of plastic packaging, which are sold not only in the Celestial Empire, but also exported abroad, mainly to the Commonwealth of Independent States and Europe. As a broker, the Chinese partner of BUTB intends to attract producers of import-substituting goods, which are in high demand in the Belarusian market, to the exchange trading. These are, first of all, electrical equipment, household appliances, video and sound recording equipment, measuring devices, industrial tools, as well as components and spare parts for machines and mechanisms. As a result, the procurement opportunities of Belarusian bidders will be significantly expanded, and the appearance of Chinese manufacturing plants on the Belarusian electronic platform will provide more favorable conditions for concluding transactions. One more fact in this regard: the new broker was accredited on the BUTB with the assistance of the Exchange's representative office in Shanghai, which was opened in 2023 to expand the pool of Chinese users of the exchange platform, promote Belarusian goods in the Chinese market and organize supplies of import-substituting products in demand in the Belarusian market. And 19 new Chinese residents have already been accredited at the BUTB with the participation of the representative office.

By the way, in the new year 2024, BUTB has already established partnership with the Chinese holding **Osell Group**, which unites a number of electronic trading platforms for manufacturers from China and facilitates their entry into foreign markets. The fact is that "the Osell Grop digital ecosystem is used by thousands of companies from various industries and agriculture, and the purpose of cooperation with BUTB is to involve representatives of Chinese business in cross-border trade on the Belarusian exchange platform"<sup>191</sup> . And already in January this year, BUTB and Osell Grop organized a round table for the business community of this region in the city of Wuxi, in the province of Jiangsu, given the high level of economic development and significant export potential of this province. It is expected that the results of this event will be available in the near future.

Returning to the topic of Belarusian exports to China via BUTB, it should be noted that this trend will continue to dominate in 2024. Especially in terms of successful deliveries of Belarusian woodworking products to the Celestial Empire market. This is evidenced by the figures, which show that "in 2023, Chinese companies purchased 501 thousand cubic meters of lumber products on the exchange, which is 4 times more than in 2022. Over 53% of the total sales volume was provided by exchange address transactions. At the same time, about 30 buyers from China regularly participated in the trades"<sup>192</sup> . This year, BUTB will further expand the range of buyers of these supplies in China.

For example, on the eve of 2024, as part of its efforts to diversify markets and increase exports of the Belarusian timber industry, BUTB agreed on accreditation with **BNBM Group Forest Products, which is**

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<sup>191</sup> BUTB started to cooperate with a major Chinese trading platform [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-nachala-sotrudnicat-s-krupnoj-kitajskoj-torgovoj-platfornoj-612305-2024/>

<sup>192</sup> . BUTB expands the range of lumber buyers from China [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-rasshirjaet-krug-pokupatelej-pilomaterialov-iz-kitaja-607633-2023/>

a subsidiary of one of the largest construction holdings in this country - **China National Building Materials Group, which is** among the leading importers of roundwood and sawn timber. In the near future, after the first trial purchase, BNBM Group Forest Products plans to gradually increase the volumes based on the demand dynamics in China and deliver to warehouses in Changxing (Zhejiang Province) and Chengdu (Sichuan Province), and then ship to end consumers.

**Taomu (Suzhou) Information Technology**, already mentioned above, which became the largest foreign buyer of sawn timber on the BUTB in 2023, plans to scale its business in Belarus. Last year, the firm bought more than 140,000 cubic meters of sawn timber on the exchange, almost four times more than in 2022. The company will continue to increase its purchases in 2024. "At the same time, we are talking not only about increasing imports of lumber products through BUTB, but also about purchases of other Belarusian goods popular in China"<sup>193</sup>. These are milk powder, rapeseed oil, sugar. In order to further deepen cooperation in the field of exchange trade, the parties also agreed to work on the integration of the BUTB platform and the Taomu (Suzhou) Information Technology electronic marketplace, where banking and logistics services are already connected, which will allow Belarusian exporters accredited at BUTB to better and more effectively promote their products in the Chinese market, interacting with their end consumers.

All these facts indicate that in 2024 the application of the exchange mechanism will reach a qualitatively new level of building up and diversifying the Belarusian-Chinese trade and will give a powerful

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<sup>193</sup> The largest foreign buyer of sawn timber at BUTB is ready to scale up business in Belarus [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/krupnejshij-inostrannyj-pokupatel-pilomaterialov-na-butb-gotov-masshtabirovat-biznes-v-belarusi-610932-2024/>

impetus to the relations of all-weather and all-round partnership of the two countries in the new era.

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## **Belarus - Vietnam: dynamics defines new reserves**

In December 2023, the Republic of Belarus presented its products at the largest international multi-sectoral exhibition in Southeast Asia - Vietnam Expo - in Ho Chi Minh City. Within the framework of five country expositions, which were organized at this forum together with India, China, the Republic of Korea, and Vietnam, "the Belarusian collective stand brought together 36 Belarusian enterprises and organizations from the fields of mechanical engineering, petrochemicals, electrical engineering, agriculture, food and beverage production, scientific and technical research and development, as well as educational and marketing services"<sup>194</sup>. Note that this exhibition is held in Vietnam twice a year: in April in Hanoi and in December in Ho Chi Minh City. In total, more than 1,200 companies from 20 countries have registered as exhibitors in 2023. The 21st Vietnam Expo in Ho Chi Minh City showcased a wide range of products and services, making it a comprehensive and multi-faceted exhibition. The main sections of the exhibition include food processing; agriculture; machinery; electronics; metallurgy; petrochemicals; construction; science and technology; medicine and pharmaceuticals.

At the Belarusian stand, in particular, petrochemical enterprises, including JSC Belshina, demonstrated their capabilities, products and potential. The visitors and participants were presented samples of tires for cars, trucks and agricultural machinery, polyamide-6 and materials based on it, cord fabrics, acrylic fiber, high-pressure polyethylene, motor oils, nitrogen-phosphorus-potassium fertilizers. At the stand of Beltopgaz association, with the participation of peat plants Vitebskorf of

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<sup>194</sup>Belarus presented its products at the largest exhibition in Southeast Asia [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-predstavila-svoju-produktsiju-na-krupnejshej-vystavke-v-jugo-vostochnoj-azii-603968-2023/>



Vitebskoblgaz enterprise, Torfopredpriyatie Glinka OJSC and Turshovka OJSC, samples of professional peat substrates produced in Belarus were widely presented. After the negotiations, representatives of Beltopgaz signed a memorandum of cooperation with the Vietnam Coconut Association in the production of biofertilizers. The Vietnamese partner "will coordinate research on bio-organic fertilizers based on Belarusian peat for coconut palms in order to increase the yield and quality of coconuts throughout Vietnam, as well as support the development of the market for the consumption of such bio-fertilizers"<sup>195</sup>. In addition, the Vietnam Coconut Producers Association will coordinate with Beltopgaz GPO in organizing seminars on the introduction of Belarusian peat-based bio-organic fertilizers for coconuts in Vietnam to find a market of consumers. The Belarusian side will select the optimal formulation of peat substrate for coconut cultivation. The parties also reached an agreement on pilot deliveries of Belarusian peat-based substrates to Vietnam for growing 500 trees with scientific research to control the growth rate and quality of fruits, and on a counter-delivery of coconut planting material to Belarus to select the optimal formulation of the substrate.

The Ministry of Education of the Republic of Belarus presented about 30 innovative developments at this forum, including novelties of the Belarusian National Technical University, the Belarusian State University of Informatics and Radioelectronics and the Belarusian State University (BSU). In particular, BSU showed more than 20 exhibits in Ho Chi Minh City, for which it was awarded diplomas of the VIETNAM EXPO. Among them are food additives, pharmaceuticals, and technological equipment. For example, "an innovative series of

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<sup>195</sup> "Beltopgaz" will cooperate with the Vietnam Coconut Association in the production of fertilizers [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/beltopgaz-budet-sotrudnichat-s-vjetnamskoj-kokosovoj-assotsiatsiej-v-proizvodstve-udobrenij-605045-2023>

biopreparations "Tsiropig", "Biferon - MRS" and "Circol" was presented. They are intended for treatment and prevention of diseases of farm animals<sup>196</sup>. Also among the exhibits are heat-resistant heat-insulating composite materials based on phosphate and silicate binders, light-absorbing composite materials, technologies of applying gradient anticorrosive heat-resistant coating, metal corrosion inhibitors, food complexes for normalization of the nervous system. As a result, at the exhibition "15 documents, three framework agreements on partnership relations and 12 contracts totaling \$26 million were signed"<sup>197</sup>.

In addition to the national exposition of Belarus at the VIETNAM EXPO international exhibition in Ho Chi Minh City, the Saigon Convention and Exhibition Center hosted a Belarusian-Vietnamese business forum, which "was attended by more than 30 Belarusian enterprises and organizations, including machine-building giants of Belarus, major Belarusian educational institutions and scientific centers, as well as food and dairy producers"<sup>198</sup> and where the participants discussed the prospects of cooperation with Vietnamese partners. The fact is that today Belarus is striving to reach a new level of cooperation with Vietnam, which would be characterized by strong production and technological ties. In particular, we are talking about the establishment of "joint ventures to produce high-tech and competitive products to meet

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<sup>196</sup> Diplomas of the International Exhibition "Vietnam Expo" are awarded to BSU and "UNITEKHROM BSU" [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://bsu.by/news/diplomov-mezhdunarodnoy-vystavki-vietnam-expo-udostoeny-bgu-i-unitekhprom-bgu-d/>

<sup>197</sup> Anufrieva, O. Belarusian companies at the exhibition "Vietnam Expo - 2023" signed contracts for 26 million dollars / O. Anufrieva // [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.sb.by/articles/beloruskie-kompanii-na-vystavke-vietnam-ekspo-2023-zaklyuchili-kontrakty-na-26-millionov-dollarov.html>

<sup>198</sup> Belarus and Vietnam at the joint business forum discussed the development of industrial ties [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-vjetnam-na-sovmestnom-biznes-forume-obsudili-razvitie-proizvodstvennyh-svjazej-603969-2023/>

domestic demand and with subsequent access to the markets of third countries"<sup>199</sup> .

Interesting facts should be mentioned in this context. Since 2019, the production of special vehicles based on the machines of the Minsk Automobile Plant has been operating in the province of Heunggyen. "The machinery is assembled on the basis of machine kits of Belarusian production, and previously delivered vehicles are modernized. The enterprise can produce about 500 Vietnamese-made all-wheel drive vehicles per year"<sup>200</sup> . And this assembly plant "MAZ Asia" opens good prospects to work in the markets of other countries of the region - Indonesia, Malaysia, Cambodia, Laos. In the same Vietnamese province, a project to build a dairy products plant using Belarusian technologies and Belarusian milk powder, which will produce yogurt, ice cream, butter, and cheese, is already under consideration. In addition, the Belarusian side proposed to the Vietnamese partners to cooperate in the field of ecology, as the number of cars and motorcycles is growing rapidly in this Southeast Asian country and there is a great need to recycle used tires. In order to turn these tires into new products, it is possible to supply from Belarus high-tech and efficient complexes for the use of solid domestic waste with obtaining from them secondary resources for the production of new products. As a result, "Vietnam can make confident steps towards building a so-called circular economy based on the maximum use of all types of secondary resources"<sup>201</sup> .

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<sup>199</sup> Foreign Ministry: Belarus seeks to reach a new level of cooperation with Vietnam [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/mid-belarus-stremitsja-vyjti-na-novyj-uroven-kooperatsii-s-vjetnamom-603996-2023/>

<sup>200</sup> Bet on the development of industrial cooperation. What Golovchenko talked about with the Prime Minister of Vietnam [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/stavka-na-razvitie-promkooperatsii-o-chem-golovchenko-govoril-s-premjerom-vjetnama-604054-2023/>

<sup>201</sup> Golovchenko: Belarus contributes to strengthening food security in Vietnam [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/golovchenko-belarus-vnosit-vklad-v-ukreplenie-prodovolstvennoj-bezopasnosti-vjetnama-604073-2023/>

All these facts show that the Belarusian-Vietnamese trade and economic cooperation today is characterized by sustainable positive trends. Suffice it to say that "at the end of last year [2022], trade turnover between the two countries amounted to \$180 million. In January-September this year, it has already exceeded \$200 million, with both Belarusian and Vietnamese exports growing"<sup>202</sup>. And there is every reason to believe that this dynamics will only increase. But for this to happen, of course, in 2024 the parties will have to not only develop the existing opportunities, but also find new reserves for bilateral economic interaction.

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<sup>202</sup> MAZs, dairy products and environmental issues. What Roman Golovchenko negotiates in Vietnam [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/10746>

## **Belarus - Mongolia: to make the relationship strategic nature**

Mongolia is a state located in East Asia, with which Belarus develops effective cooperation in a wide range of areas. The countries are actively developing trade and economic cooperation, building partnership ties between Belarusian and Mongolian regions, strengthening interparliamentary contacts, and continuing the implementation of joint projects in education. It should be noted that since the establishment of Belarusian-Mongolian diplomatic relations in January 1992, Belarusian exports have traditionally formed the basis of bilateral trade. In this context, promising areas of cooperation include "mining (supplies of quarry and special machinery), transportation (transit, supplies of passenger vehicles, railway cars, and equipment), road maintenance (supplies of special machinery, equipment, and technologies), agriculture (supplies of machinery, equipment, and technologies, cooperation in crop production, livestock breeding, and veterinary medicine), and emergency prevention (supplies of fire-fighting equipment).<sup>203</sup> .

At the end of 2018, with the total volume of trade turnover of \$19.5 million, the value of exports from Belarus exceeded \$19 million with a positive balance for the Belarusian side - \$18.8 million. The bulk of goods supplies from Belarus to Mongolia were milk, condensed and dried cream, trucks, plastic containers, road and construction machinery, butter, medicines, bread and flour confectionery, synthetic combed fibers, footwear, sugar, engines and power units. In the same year of 2018, the turnover of services between the two countries also increased almost 1.8 times, exceeding the figure of six million dollars. The facts

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<sup>203</sup> Mongolia [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://export.by/mongolia>

show that bilateral ties between Belarus and Mongolia have noticeably intensified in recent years after:

1) establishment of the Joint Belarusian-Mongolian Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation in 2013;

2) opening of the Belarusian embassy in Ulaanbaatar in June 2014;

3) the emergence in 2015 of the Joint Belarusian-Mongolian Commission on Cooperation in Science and Technology and the bilateral interdepartmental Working Group on Cooperation in Agriculture.

In June 2018, on the margins of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization summit in the Chinese city of Qingdao, the leaders of the two countries stated during a bilateral meeting that "Belarus and Mongolia are located between large states or blocs, so it is important to be able to take advantage of this position and find advantages in terms of economy"<sup>204</sup>. At that time, the Belarusian side voiced its readiness to create highly productive enterprises and machinery production on Mongolian soil, while the Mongolian side expressed its interest, first of all, in the creation of dairy production using Belarusian technologies. In general, in recent years, Belarus and Mongolia have "expanded their legal framework and strengthened trade and economic cooperation. Cooperation in the agricultural and scientific-technical spheres has been launched. Bilateral ties in education and sports have been restored"<sup>205</sup>. And in the future, the Mongolian side is not only interested in more active cooperation with Belarus in agriculture, mechanical engineering, food industry, science, education, but also sees great opportunities in the wide mutual use of each other's transit potential. According to the parties, "Belarus can become an outlet to Europe for Mongolia and its

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<sup>204</sup> Negotiations with the President of Mongolia Haltmagiin Battulga [Electronic resource]. - 2018. - URL: [http://president.gov.by/ru/news\\_ru/view/vstrecha-s-prezidentom-mongolii-xaltmagijn-battulgoj-18894/](http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/vstrecha-s-prezidentom-mongolii-xaltmagijn-battulgoj-18894/)

<sup>205</sup> Transcript of the approach to the press of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belarus V. Makei following the talks with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Mongolia (June 4, 2018, Minsk) [Electronic resource]. - 2018. - URL: [http://mfa.gov.by/press/news\\_mfa/d211839fb93936d7.html](http://mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/d211839fb93936d7.html)

goods, and Mongolia can become a conduit to Asia for Belarusian products"<sup>206</sup> .

In April 2019, an **intergovernmental general agreement on the provision of an export credit** was adopted to ensure the supply of Belarusian machinery to Mongolia. According to this document, "in the coming years, the parties will work out the issues of supplying firefighting, agricultural, municipal, road-building and road-cleaning equipment, passenger elevators, and railway cars"<sup>207</sup> . It was also discussed that a dairy cluster will be created in Mongolia with the use of Belarusian technologies, including a milk processing plant and dairy farms, and "opportunities for cooperation in the construction and mining industries, education, as well as expansion of the bilateral legal framework"<sup>208</sup> . And in June 2019, the **fifth meeting of the joint Belarusian-Mongolian commission on trade and economic cooperation** was held in Ulaanbaatar, where the issues of practical implementation of the intergovernmental general agreement on granting export credit were considered, and the **Roadmap for the development of cooperation between the Republic of Belarus and Mongolia for 2019-2021** was signed.

And already within the framework of this loan for 2021 several major projects were implemented. "More than 70 units of fire-fighting equipment on MAZ chassis were delivered for the needs of the State Emergency Situations Agency of Mongolia. <...> The supply of road cleaning and repair equipment on MAZ chassis for the needs of the

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<sup>206</sup> Tsogtbaatar, D. Belarus can become for Mongolia and its goods an exit to Europe / D. Tsogtbaatar // [Electronic resource]. - 2018. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/opinions/view/belarus-mozhet-stat-dlja-mongolii-i-ee-tovarov-vyehodom-v-evropu-6281/>

<sup>207</sup> Belarus will provide an export credit to Mongolia for the purchase of its equipment [Electronic resource]. - 2019. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-predostavit-eksportnyj-kredit-mongolii-na-pokupku-svoej-tehniki-345020-2019/>

<sup>208</sup> The regular meeting of the Belarusian-Mongolian Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation was held in Ulan Bator [Electronic resource]. - 2019. - URL: <http://mongolia.mfa.gov.by/ru/embassy/news/ddb45d27a11bdef0.html>

Ministry of Roads and Transportation Development of Mongolia became highly demanded. 42 units were delivered for all aims of Mongolia<sup>209</sup>. The Belarusian side also transferred the technology for road pavement repair and assisted in setting up in this country the production of the necessary components to ensure the operation of road repair machines. As for other results of 2021, "trade turnover of food products and agricultural raw materials with Mongolia amounted to \$14.1 million (up 2.5 times compared to 2020). The main export items were milk and milk products - 85.9%"<sup>210</sup>. In the same year, the Mongolian side decided to purchase about nine thousand heads of highly productive pedigree cattle of Belarusian selection from Belarus.

Interesting prospects have also opened up in the **Belarusian-Mongolian cooperation in the field of education**, the basic element of which is the intergovernmental agreement on cooperation in this area, signed in 2013, which provides for the possibility of annual exchange of students to study at the universities of the parties. Fulfilling the provisions of this document and within the framework of the implementation of the Memorandum on interaction and cooperation between Dalanzadgad commune of Umnugovi aimag and the city of Zhodino, signed in 2016, "in the 2017/2018 academic year, six citizens of Mongolia were enrolled to study at the Branch of BNTU "Zhodino State College"<sup>211</sup>. And in 2021, more than 30 Mongolian students have already studied in Belarus. The most popular specialties for them were: medical science, IT software, information systems and technologies,

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<sup>209</sup> Interview of Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Belarus to Mongolia D. Gorelik to the information portal "GOGO" (January 5, 2022). Gorelik to the information portal "GOGO" (January 5, 2022) [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://mfa.gov.by/press/smi/bf44fc21553530dd.html>

<sup>210</sup> Belarus and Mongolia intend to increase cooperation in agriculture [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-mongolija-namereny-naraschivat-sotrudnichestvo-v-selskom-hozjajstve-498561-2022/>

<sup>211</sup> Humanitarian cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2019. - URL: [http://mongolia.mfa.gov.by/ru/bilateral\\_relations/cultural/e6d8f5ae8191d258.html](http://mongolia.mfa.gov.by/ru/bilateral_relations/cultural/e6d8f5ae8191d258.html)



mining machinery and equipment, agronomy, veterinary science, law, and transport logistics.

**The sixth meeting of the joint Belarusian-Mongolian commission, which** discussed topical issues of expanding mutually beneficial partnership, was held already in February 2022 in the format of a videoconference, where it was noted that "among the main exported goods from Belarus to Mongolia are food products and quarry machinery"<sup>212</sup>. The parties then agreed to intensify projects to be implemented under the General Agreement on Export Credit (2019), including the replacement or reconstruction of elevators in residential buildings in Ulaanbaatar and the supply of agricultural machinery and equipment. And then there was also "an agreement on cooperation with Belarus within the framework of the national Billion Tree Movement"<sup>213</sup>, initiated by Mongolian President U. Khurelsukh in 2021. In the same year 2022, **interregional cooperation** also began to develop more actively.

**Brest Region** is among the Belarusian regions that are seriously interested in developing trade and economic interaction with Mongolian partners. Suffice it to say that the foreign trade turnover with Mongolia in 2021 increased more than 2.5 times and amounted to more than 1.2 million dollars. The positive dynamics continues in the following years, which is based on the supplies of furniture, industrial equipment, food products from Brestchina. And the parties have a good reason for the expansion of partnership ties. After all, Mongolia is a country with a developed mining industry, agriculture, where the number of cattle is

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<sup>212</sup> Belarus and Mongolia held a meeting of the commission on trade and economic cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-mongolija-proveli-zasedanie-komissii-potorgovo-ekonomicheskomu-sotrudnichestvu-487044-2022/>

<sup>213</sup> Battsetsag, G. Mongolia and Belarus held an online meeting of the commission on trade and economic cooperation / G. Battsetsag // [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://montsame.mn/ru/read/291038>

more than 70 million. And "more than half of the world's cashmere is of Mongolian origin"<sup>214</sup> .

**Mogilev Region** is also highly interested in cooperation with this East Asian country. After all, in 2020 the trade turnover of the Belarusian region with Mongolia amounted to only \$179 thousand, in 2021 - more than \$1.5 million, and "at the end of 9 months of the current [2022] year this figure will be about \$2.7 million"<sup>215</sup> . In October 2022, negotiations with a delegation from **Bulgan aimag** took place in Mogilev. The main industry of the Mongolian region is agriculture, including cattle breeding and farming. Among the issues discussed during the meeting was Mogilev's experience in training highly professional specialists in these areas, as well as the development of cultural, educational, sports and tourist cooperation. And the parties have already agreed to work in these areas.

Finally, in January 2024, Minsk hosted the **seventh meeting of the joint Belarusian-Mongolian intergovernmental commission** (IGC) on trade and economic cooperation to discuss the status and prospects of interaction in industry, agriculture, transportation and logistics, finance, as well as education, culture, and science. The parties agreed that "today's mutual trade turnover does not reflect the potential of the two countries, in past periods the volume of trade turnover was much higher. <...> But we must do everything to make the relationship between the two countries acquire a strategic character"<sup>216</sup> .

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<sup>214</sup> Brest region and Mongolia are interested in the development of cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/brestskaja-oblast-i-mongolija-zainteresovany-v-razvitii-sotrudnichestva-497468-2022/>

<sup>215</sup> Isachenko on cooperation with Mongolia: success depends on the desire to work together [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/isachenko-o-sotrudnichestve-s-mongoliej-uspeh-zavisit-ot-zhelanija-sovmestno-rabotat-532389-2022/>

<sup>216</sup> Multi-brand center of Belarusian machinery is planned to open in Mongolia [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/multibrendovyyj-tsentr-belorusskoj-tehniki-planirujut-otkryt-v-mongolii-611362-2024/>

Among the priority areas of cooperation between Belarus and Mongolia are agriculture-related topics. These include supplies of equipment for dairy and livestock farms, potato and other crop seeds, Belarusian-made veterinary drugs, as well as training and retraining of Mongolian specialists in Belarusian agrarian universities. Within the framework of the IGC, at the third meeting of the Belarusian-Mongolian working group on agriculture, an agreement on cooperation in the field of pedigree cattle breeding was signed between the **Belarusian State Association Belplemzhivobedinenie** and the **State Agricultural Corporation of Mongolia**, which "provides for the supply of pedigree cattle of Belarusian selection to Mongolia"<sup>217</sup> .

In addition, the parties discussed the construction and operation of a multi-brand center in this East Asian country, where all Belarusian machinery - tractors, combines, trucks, and dump trucks - will be presented. And **Gomselmash** has already signed a contract with the State Agricultural Corporation of Mongolia to supply 10 self-propelled mowers. It should be noted that "this [Mongolian] market consumes up to 300 units of self-propelled grain harvesting machinery annually"<sup>218</sup> . Gomel mowers were supplied to the Mongolian market until 2015. And today these deliveries are already being resumed. For reference: "Gomselmash" took part in the **48th international exhibition Ulaanbaatar Partnership-2023 in Ulaanbaatar in the fall of 2023**, where it showed a wide range of products, which can be further developed to meet the requirements of the Mongolian specifics and the wishes of customers based on the purpose of its application. Within the framework of this business forum the specialists of Gomel enterprise

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<sup>217</sup> Belarus plans to expand the range of food supplies to Mongolia [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-planiruet-rasshirit-assortiment-postavok-prodovolstvija-v-mongoliju-611355-2024/>

<sup>218</sup> "Gomselmash" resumes deliveries to Mongolia [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/gomselmash-vozobnovljaet-postavki-v-mongoliju-611342-2024/>

held negotiations with the representatives of the **Ministry of Agriculture of Mongolia and KOGS "Agricultural Corporation"**, where "the main topic was the promotion of Belarusian combine harvesters on the Mongolian market"<sup>219</sup> . And already in 2024 the supplies of machinery from Gomel, which is in demand, will begin. **Minsk Tractor Works** is also interested in increasing the volume of supplies of BELARUS machines to this country. Especially since "the growth rate of MTZ exports to Mongolia in 2023 amounted to 163.3% compared to 2022" .<sup>220</sup>

Returning to the 48th International Exhibition in Ulaanbaatar, it should be recalled that Ulaanbaatar Partnership-2023 is the largest multi-sectoral exhibition event in Mongolia, which annually brings together hundreds of companies from such sectors as agriculture, engineering, oil refining, construction and light industry. In 2023, the collective exposition Made in Belarus was also presented at this forum, where "six companies participated, covering such sectors as food industry, mechanical engineering, dual-use machinery and consumer goods"<sup>221</sup> . Among them was **Vitebsk Carpets OJSC**, which showed novelty samples of polypropylene carpets and classic carpet collections. A wide range of products, including sterilized milk, cheese, skimmed milk powder, whey, sweet butter, glazed cheese, milkshakes and lactose-free products, was presented by **Minsk Dairy Plant No. 1**. Optical-electronic devices and surveillance systems, including night vision devices, laser rangefinders and rangefinder modules, as well as thermal imaging

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<sup>219</sup> "Gomselmash" establishes business ties with Mongolia [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/gomselmash-nalazhivaet-delovye-svjazi-s-mongoliej-591381-2023/>

<sup>220</sup> MTZ is interested in expanding the supply of tractors to Mongolia [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/mtz-zainteresovan-v-rasshirenii-postavok-tractorov-v-mongoliju-612157-2024/>

<sup>221</sup> Made in Belarus exposition was presented at the exhibition in Mongolia [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/ekspozitsiju-made-in-belarus-predstavili-na-vystavke-v-mongolii-590845-2023/>

surveillance devices, were demonstrated by the **Scientific and Technical Center "LEMT" of BelOMO**. Another exhibitor - **JSC "Zenit"** - showed at its stand a wide range of products and promising developments, including LED headlights and lights for harsh operating conditions, electrical products for elevators, street and industrial LED lighting, disinfection systems for rooms and elevator cabs. The company is interested in establishing business relations with Mongolian enterprises in mining, utilities and construction.

Finally, in Ulaanbaatar, visitors to the exhibition were able to familiarize themselves with the capabilities of the **Belarusian Universal Commodity Exchange (BUTB)**, which established contacts with representatives of Mongolian businesses to attract them to the trades as sellers or buyers. And among the promising commodity items that were considered by BUTB during the exhibition, the focus was on exports of Belarusian agricultural products and petrochemicals to Mongolia. In the future, "BUTB expects to utilize the potential of the industrial and consumer goods platform, where deals are already being concluded to sell Mongolian products."<sup>222</sup> In September 2023, the first Mongolian stockbroker - **United Meres Machinery** - was accredited at BUTB. The **company** has been working in the Belarusian market for quite a long time, has good experience in supplying raw materials for the metallurgical industry and is engaged in the sale of quarry and special equipment of the Belarusian Automobile Plant to mining companies in Mongolia. As a BUTB broker, the company intends to diversify its commodity portfolio and use all groups of goods represented on the Belarusian exchange platform. After all, "Mongolia is a promising market for Belarusian enterprises, both in terms of purchasing raw

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<sup>222</sup> Opportunities of the Belarusian exchange platform are presented at the international exhibition in Mongolia [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/vozmozhnosti-belorusskoj-birzhevoj-ploschadki-predstavleny-na-mezhdunarodnoj-vystavke-v-mongolii-590839-2023/>

materials and supplies and selling finished products. Using the exchange platform as a link between Belarusian and Mongolian business entities will not only simplify the search for business partners, but will eliminate the main risks associated with payment and delivery of goods"<sup>223</sup> . The new broker plans to start with high-demand goods - ferrous metals and coal. In addition, the possibility of supplying petrochemical and agro-industrial products to Mongolia is being worked out. And in January 2024, with the help of the first Mongolian broker on BUTB, the first transaction for the supply of white granulated sugar to this East Asian country was registered. "The volume of the pilot purchase amounted to 312 tons"<sup>224</sup> . Given the high demand for sugar in Mongolia, it can be assumed that this product area may become one of the promising markets in Asia. Especially since after the successful fulfillment of the first contract, Mongolian partners are already expecting an increase in the volume of exchange exports from Belarus.

As for the 7th meeting of the IGC, the parties also discussed topical **issues of scientific and technical cooperation** and noted the significant potential for strengthening cooperation between Belarus and Mongolia in science and education. In particular, within the framework of the IGC, at the fourth meeting of the Joint Belarusian-Mongolian Commission for Cooperation in Science and Technology, the parties agreed to announce in the near future a **contest of scientific and technical projects for 2024-2025**. "Points of mutual interest are agriculture, agricultural and forestry machinery and equipment, intensive animal husbandry, reforestation and breeding, crop production, as well

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<sup>223</sup> BUTB accredited the first broker in Mongolia [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-akkreditovala-pervogo-brokera-v-mongolii-586995-2023/>

<sup>224</sup> Belarusian sugar for the first time sold to Mongolia through BUTB [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/beloruskij-sahar-vpervye-prodan-v-mongoliju-cherez-butb-611445-2024/>

as history and archeology"<sup>225</sup> . And in the same January 2024 it was agreed to sign an updated agreement between the **National Academy of Sciences (NAS) of Belarus** and the **Academy of Sciences of Mongolia** with the addition of its **roadmap of cooperation for 2024-2025**, as well as "to work out the issue of signing an agreement on cooperation between the NAS of Belarus and the Ministry of Education and Science of Mongolia"<sup>226</sup> . In addition, the parties will consider the possibility of organizing a **forum of young scientists** in the first half of 2024 and work out the issue of training of Mongolian specialists in master's, postgraduate and doctoral studies of the **State Educational Institution "University of NAS of Belarus**.

Another interesting topic was in the focus of Belarusian-Mongolian interaction at the 7th meeting of the IGC - **ecology**. The fact is that the Mongolian government does not have a separate forestry ministry. For this reason, environmental issues are distributed among several agencies. We have already mentioned that in 2021, Mongolian President U. Khurelsukh announced an ambitious initiative to plant at least one billion trees by 2030. In this context, improving the technology of forestry is becoming a priority issue in Mongolia. In particular, the East Asian country was interested in the Belarusian experience in forestry and drew attention to several promising areas for expanding partnerships, including wooden house building. And the Belarusian side offered "Mongolia to consider high-quality ecological housing from

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<sup>225</sup> Belarusian-Mongolian competition of scientific and technical projects will be announced in the near future [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belorusko-mongolskij-konkurs-nauchno-tehnicheskij-proektov-objavjat-v-blizhajshee-vremja-611318-2024/>

<sup>226</sup> Belarus and Mongolia are considering the possibility of holding a forum of young scientists this year [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-mongolija-rassmatrivajut-vozmozhnost-provedenija-foruma-molodyh-uchenyh-v-etom-godu-612262-2024>

Belarusian forestry enterprises"<sup>227</sup> . In addition, the Mongolian partners initiated joint scientific research on reforestation under climate change and desertification, cultivation of planting material, and training of specialists with the possibility of opening a sectoral training center.

Summarizing the results of the 7th meeting of the intergovernmental commission on trade and economic cooperation, we note that today the traditionally friendly relations and cooperation between Belarus and Mongolia are actively developing in trade, economy, agriculture, light industry and other areas. As for further bilateral interaction, it will only be saturated with new innovative ideas and projects to make these partnerships truly strategic. After all, Belarus and Mongolia still have a lot of untapped opportunities for cooperation. And the task of the governments of both states is not to miss these opportunities and create conditions for their realization.

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<sup>227</sup> Mongolia is interested in studying the Belarusian experience of forestry [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/mongolija-zainteresovana-v-izuchenii-belorusskogo-opyta-vedenija-lesnogo-hozjajstva-611197-2024/>



## **Belarus - Mongolia: a new phase of cooperation begins**

In March 2024, Belarusian Foreign Minister S. Aleinik paid an official visit to Mongolia. Aleinik's official visit to Mongolia in March 2024, during which an agreement was reached to raise the relations between Minsk and Ulaanbaatar to a higher level in order to intensify the whole range of contacts between the parties at the level of industries, economic entities, and business circles. In fact, we are talking about "a new stage in the relations between Belarus and Mongolia"<sup>228</sup>. In this regard, the two countries will develop and soon sign a roadmap for cooperation until 2026, which will include the supply of Belarusian agricultural machinery and equipment, municipal and road repair machines, emergency response equipment, elevator equipment, quarry equipment, and a full cycle of high-class and highly efficient agricultural production complexes specially adapted to the needs and requirements of Mongolian customers. The fact is that "Mongolia is actively developing, so there is a growing interest of Mongolian consumers in goods, including high-efficiency machinery and foodstuffs"<sup>229</sup>. In this context, the parties have already discussed the possibility of opening specialized trading platforms both in Minsk and Ulaanbaatar.

But the most urgent issue for this East Asian country is the development of the agro-industrial sector, as they intend to modernize a lot of things in agriculture, especially in the livestock industry, so that it goes from extensive nomadic to intensive state, as well as to create joint production of agricultural machinery for the subsequent equipping of Mongolian farms. During the visit it was noted that the sectoral

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<sup>228</sup> Aleinik: a new stage begins in the relations between Belarus and Mongolia [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/politics/view/aleinik-v-otnoshenijah-belarusi-i-mongolii-nachinaetsja-novyj-etap-621446-2024/>

<sup>229</sup> Belarus and Mongolia will develop a road map of cooperation until 2026 [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/amp/politics/view/belarus-i-mongolija-razrabotajut-dorozhnyju-kartu-sotrudnichestva-do-2026-goda-621451-2024>

ministries of the parties "have prepared a road map for the development of cooperation in agriculture, there are prescribed projects and steps for their implementation. These include the construction of new and modernization of existing full-cycle dairy farms, supplies of cattle of Belarusian selection, veterinary drugs, seeds, specialized equipment, training and professional development of Mongolian specialists and, of course, supplies of agricultural machinery"<sup>230</sup>.

There are already several production facilities in Mongolia that cooperate with Belarus. For example, the APU plant for the production of dairy, carbonated, and alcoholic beverages, which uses milk powder from Belarus to produce dairy products and Belarusian malt for beer production. In March this year, Minsk Tractor Works signed a road map with the Ministry of Agriculture and Light Industry of Mongolia to organize supplies of tractors with a capacity of 80-350 horsepower and plows. The road map reflects the plan of supplies for 2024-2025 with the prospect of cooperation until 2027. In March, the Belarusian side held talks with the Mongolian state-owned Agricultural Corporation to supply pedigree cattle, milking equipment, and build dairy production facilities for the needs of Mongolian farmers.

In addition, as part of this topic, following the results of the meetings in March this year in Ulan Bator, the Belarusian Universal Commodity Exchange (BUTB) plans to diversify its commodity structure and increase the volume of exchange deliveries of Belarusian agro-industrial products to the Mongolian market. For reference, we note that "in September 2023, the first Mongolian stockbroker - United Meres Machinery, which has been working in the Belarusian market for quite a

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<sup>230</sup> What are Belarus and Mongolia ready to offer each other? Details of Aleinik's talks in the government [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/chtobelarus-i-mongolija-gotovy-predlozhit-drug-dругu-podrobnosti-peregovorov-alejnika-v-pravitelstve-621640-2024/>

long time..."<sup>231</sup> . And the first transaction involving a resident from Mongolia was concluded in January 2024. So far, the Mongolian market is supplied only with the products of Belarusian sugar mills. Almost one and a half thousand tons of this product have already been sold for a total of more than \$770 thousand. The work in this direction will be continued in the near future. Besides, "Mongolia is interested in importing Belarusian milk powder and butter. An agreement on cooperation on these commodity items has already been reached with four potential buyers - large food industry enterprises"<sup>232</sup> .

A separate topic is the interaction between Belarus and Mongolia in the sphere of emergency response. It is known that "thanks to the work of Belarusian equipment, more than 13 thousand people have already been rescued and property damage worth over \$20 million has been prevented"<sup>233</sup> . And now the parties are discussing several areas of prospective cooperation in this area. First, the Mongolian partners are interested in purchasing special fire-fighting equipment of Pozhsnab LLC based on MAZ chassis, as well as other equipment and special clothing. The parties are preparing to sign a new contract. We are talking about the delivery of more than 100 units of Belarusian fire-fighting equipment. Second, there is great interest in continuing training programs for Mongolian specialists on the basis of specialized institutions of Belarus.

Among other promising areas of Belarusian-Mongolian interaction in Ulaanbaatar were discussed: cooperation in the mining industry;

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<sup>231</sup> Zalessky, B. Ideology of pragmatism. Features of partnership in the Belarusian economy: internal and external segments / Boris Zalessky. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2024. - C. 146.

<sup>232</sup> BUTB plans to increase exports of agricultural products to Mongolia [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-planiruet-uvlichit-eksport-belorusskoj-selhozproduktsii-v-mongoliju-622030-2024/>

<sup>233</sup> How Belarusian machinery helps to save people in Mongolia and where our milk powder is used. New details about Aleinik's visit [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/kak-belorusskaja-tehnika-pomogaet-spat-ljudej-v-mongolii-i-gde-ispolzujut-nashe-suhoe-moloko-novye-621781-2024/>

modernization of elevator infrastructure in residential buildings. In addition, "emphasis was placed on the supply of municipal and passenger vehicles for the needs of Ulaanbaatar. The Mongolian side was also offered opportunities for the Belarusian side to supply rolling stock for the subway"<sup>234</sup> . In the humanitarian field, Minsk and Ulaanbaatar outlined projects "in the light of the large-scale state programs that are currently being implemented in Mongolia. Including the Billion Tree Program, which requires special training of forestry workers"<sup>235</sup> . In short, the parties agreed, expanding the legal framework of the relations between Belarus and Mongolia, to accelerate the work towards the signing of about ten bilateral documents - in agriculture, education, inter-university cooperation, emergency response, between law enforcement agencies and scientific institutions of the two countries.

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<sup>234</sup> Belarus plans to supply municipal and passenger vehicles to Mongolia [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-planiruet-postavljat-v-mongoliju-kommunalnuju-i-passazhirskuju-tehniku-621673-2024/>

<sup>235</sup> Transcript of the approach to the press of Minister S. Aleinik within the framework of the official visit to Mongolia (March 15, 2024, Ulan Bator) [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: [https://mfa.gov.by/press/news\\_mfa/b1f3b3594a37a807.html](https://mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/b1f3b3594a37a807.html)

## Belarus - Latin America: important integration platform

The Republic of Belarus today maintains diplomatic relations with all 33 States of Latin America and the Caribbean. This region of the globe is of interest to our country as an important platform for integration into global trade and economic ties. And this contributes to the rapprochement of the Belarusian side with a number of Latin American states. For example, "with some countries of the region the relations have already reached the level of strategic partnership, while with others the expansion of interaction in political, trade and economic, educational, scientific, technical and other spheres is becoming more and more progressive"<sup>236</sup>. Recall that Belarus has embassies in Argentina, Brazil, Venezuela, Colombia and Cuba. The year 2023 saw many interesting and significant events in the relations of our republic with a number of countries of the region.

Let us start with the **Republic of Nicaragua**. In October 2023, Minsk hosted the third meeting of the Belarusian-Nicaraguan Joint Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation, which discussed the current state of interaction between Minsk and Managua and outlined further steps to expand bilateral partnerships. In particular, opportunities and prospects "in the field of housing and industrial construction, building up bilateral trade, cooperation in the spheres of investment, food, light industry, pharmaceuticals, culture, strengthening business contacts between the two countries, establishing ties between the capital authorities of Belarus and Nicaragua" were considered<sup>237</sup>.

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<sup>236</sup> Belarus and the countries of Latin America [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: [https://www.mfa.gov.by/bilateral/america/latin\\_america/](https://www.mfa.gov.by/bilateral/america/latin_america/)

<sup>237</sup> About the meeting of the Belarusian-Nicaraguan joint commission on trade and economic cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: [https://www.mfa.gov.by/press/news\\_mfa/b2665dfb1e8ad9b4.html](https://www.mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/b2665dfb1e8ad9b4.html)

The first two meetings of the commission were held in September 2014 in Minsk and in September 2015 in Managua. During this period, Belarusian exports were based on agricultural machinery and components, "horticultural and forestry equipment, parts for internal combustion engines, and bearings. In the commodity structure of imports, the largest specific weight was occupied by supplies of bananas, coffee and strong alcoholic beverages"<sup>238</sup>. And in May 2023, the parties stated that they aimed to seriously intensify trade, economic and humanitarian ties in order to constantly fill them with new projects and cooperation programs. At the same time, a number of important bilateral documents were signed in Minsk: A general agreement between the governments of Belarus and Nicaragua on the provision of export credits; a basic agreement on the supply of Belarusian machinery to the Nicaraguan market; and "an agreement on cooperation in education, which will provide a legal basis for interaction between the parties and the establishment of working contacts between educational institutions of the two countries"<sup>239</sup>. In June 2023, the parties discussed the possibilities of cooperation in agriculture and agreed to work out the prospects of organizing cooperation in such areas as "exchange of genetic material of agricultural crops, livestock breeding, internships for scientists and specialists, training of Nicaraguan specialists at the master's and postgraduate schools of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus"<sup>240</sup>.

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<sup>238</sup> Trade and economic relations between the Republic of Belarus and the Republic of Nicaragua [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: [https://cuba.mfa.gov.by/ru/bilateral\\_relations/N/trade/](https://cuba.mfa.gov.by/ru/bilateral_relations/N/trade/)

<sup>239</sup> Zalesky, B.L. When partners have respect, trust and friendship / B.L. Zalesky // Materiały XX Międzynarodowej naukowo-praktycznej konferencji, "Aktualne problemy nowoczesnych nauk - 2023". Volume 1. Przemysł: Nauka i studia. - C. 41.

<sup>240</sup> Belarus and Nicaragua discussed areas of cooperation in agriculture [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-nikaragua-obsudili-napravlenija-sotrudnichestva-v-selskom-hozjajstve-573073-2023/>

In July 2023, a Belarusian delegation headed by Foreign Minister S. Aleinik visited Nicaragua to discuss at the highest and highest levels "investment projects, contracts for the supply of Belarusian machinery, prospects for Belarus' participation in major infrastructure projects in Nicaragua, cooperation in agriculture, logistics and opportunities for using port infrastructure, credit and finance, and options for joint work in the markets of Latin America."<sup>241</sup> . Following the visit, Belarus and Nicaragua adopted another package of bilateral agreements and contracts. In particular, they signed intergovernmental agreements on mutual visa abolition and on the resumption of the work of the joint Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation, as well as approved the Roadmap of Cooperation in Agriculture. In addition, MTZ signed a framework contract to supply products of the Belarusian plant to Nicaragua for a two-year period. <...> MAZ and the mayor's office of Managua also signed a contract for the supply of Belarusian machinery. An agreement was reached to supply 236 units of AMKODOR machinery for the construction industry and municipal services in Nicaragua"<sup>242</sup> . In the field of culture, the Bolshoi Theater of Belarus, the Ruben Dario National Theater, and the Nicaraguan cultural foundation Incanto signed a memorandum of cooperation.

During the 3rd meeting of the joint commission, the Belarusian side emphasized that it considers Nicaragua an important political, trade and economic partner in the Latin American region and a reliable ally in the international arena. As for the supply of Belarusian machinery to the Nicaraguan market, further steps have already been outlined. The products of Minsk Automobile Plant, Amkodor, Minsk Tractor Plant and

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<sup>241</sup> The Belarusian delegation held extended negotiations with the economic bloc of the Nicaraguan government [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/beloruskaja-delegatsija-provela-rasshirennye-peregovory-s-ekonomicheskim-blokom-pravitelstva-nikaragua-577785-2023/>

<sup>242</sup> . About the visit of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belarus S. Aleinik to Nicaragua. Aleinik's visit to Nicaragua [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: [https://mfa.gov.by/press/news\\_mfa/a423b01505b9ac36.html](https://mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/a423b01505b9ac36.html)

other giants of the national industry will be in demand in the Latin American country "when implementing ambitious infrastructure projects planned by the current government. There are serious developments in the agricultural sector, in particular, the application of Belarusian agricultural technologies in Nicaragua"<sup>243</sup> .

Note that Nicaraguan land is very fertile. But only less than half of it is cultivated. "That is, 50% of the fertile land is not cultivated because there is not enough machinery and not enough people. The government of the country <...> is moving in the right direction. They have built 4,000 kilometers of roads"<sup>244</sup> . In this regard, the Nicaraguan side expressed interest in organizing the supply of a large batch of machinery of the Ministry of Industry of Belarus for various purposes - road-building, agricultural, passenger - "for municipal needs, as well as for the implementation of large infrastructure, transport and logistics projects"<sup>245</sup> . As a result of the negotiations, the parties agreed to form a list of necessary types of equipment for the preparation of commercial offers and delivery terms. On the whole, the successful implementation of the agreements will bring the relations between Belarus and Nicaragua to a new, higher level of development.

Another strategic and very important partner of Belarus in Latin America is the **Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela**. It should be recalled that the two countries established diplomatic relations back in February 1997. Six years ago, in October 2017, Minsk hosted official talks

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<sup>243</sup> Transcript of the approach to the press of Deputy Minister E. Shestakov following the meeting of the Belarusian-Nicaraguan Joint Commission (October 4, 2023, Minsk) [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: [https://www.mfa.gov.by/press/news\\_mfa/ab8c63a09ebb1fec.html](https://www.mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/ab8c63a09ebb1fec.html)

<sup>244</sup> Dried milk to Cuba and machinery to Nicaragua. The Ambassador told about the directions of Belarusian exports [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/suhoe-moloko-na-kubu-i-tehnika-v-nikaragua-posol-rasskazal-o-napravlenijah-belorusskogo-eksporta-579482-2023/>

<sup>245</sup> Rogozhnik discussed with the delegation of Nicaragua the issues of intensification of supplies of Belarusian equipment [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/rogozhnik-s-delegatsiej-nikaragua-obsudil-voprosy-intensifikatsii-postavok-belorusskoj-tehniki-591732-2023/>



between the presidents of Belarus and Venezuela, during which the parties declared their desire to increase cooperation in all areas in the coming years, despite the fact that this country has been going through a rather difficult period recently. As for the interaction with the Belarusian side, "due to the difficult situation in the world, the pace of implementation of joint projects has slowed down"<sup>246</sup>.

It should be noted that the parties established long-term trade, economic and cooperation ties back in 2007. Since then, Belarus has built four plants in Venezuela - for the production of ceramic blocks, tractors, municipal and road-building machinery. And in this country there were "JV MAZVEN to assemble MAZ trucks, JV VeneMinsk Tractores to assemble Belarus tractors, a plant to assemble heavy road-building machinery Makinaryas Barinas"<sup>247</sup>. Since the same year of 2007 in Venezuela operated a joint venture for oil and gas production "Petrolera Belo-Venezolana", which focused on seven oil and six gas fields, four of which are located in the west of the country - on Lake Maracaibo, the rest - in the Venezuelan east. During the work of this JV, the financial effect for the Belarusian side amounted to about 70 million dollars. "Over 8.4 million tons of oil and 6.4 billion cubic meters of gas were produced between 2008 and 2016"<sup>248</sup>.

As for construction, in addition to the opening of the largest brick factory in Latin America, Belarusian CJSC Belzarubezhstroy has been involved since 2007 in the construction of housing on Venezuelan soil,

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<sup>246</sup> Negotiations with Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro [Electronic resource]. - 2017. - URL: [http://president.gov.by/ru/news\\_ru/view/peregovory-c-prezidentom-bolivarianskoj-respubliki-venesuella-nikolasom-maduro-17221/](http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/peregovory-c-prezidentom-bolivarianskoj-respubliki-venesuella-nikolasom-maduro-17221/)

<sup>247</sup> Matveev, V. Belarus and Venezuela agree to intensify the work of assembly plants by supplying raw materials / V. Matveev // [Electronic resource]. - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-venesuella-dogovari-vajutsja-ob-aktivizatsii-raboty-sborocnyh-proizvodstv-za-schet-postavok-269845-2017/>

<sup>248</sup> Matveev, V. Additional investments are needed for the development of JV "Petrolera BeloVenesolana" - General Director of "Belorusneft" / V. Matveev // [Electronic resource]. - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/dlja-razvitiya-sp-petrolera-belovenesolana-nuzhny-dopolnitelnye-investitsii-gendirektor-belorusnefti-269858-2017/>

where they realized three contracts for the construction of 19968 apartments. Finally, in the field of agriculture, while building the first agro-industrial town in Venezuela, Belarusian specialists "erected 176 dwelling houses and a warehouse of mineral fertilizers, laid more than 20 km of roads and cleared 2.5 thousand hectares of shrubbery. More than 400 units of specialized machinery from Belarus were supplied and 1.2 thousand hectares of territory were sown"<sup>249</sup>. It was believed that all this would amount to only one fifth of what Belarusian representatives still had to do in Venezuela's agriculture.

As we can see, the two countries really did not need to start from scratch, renewing the agreements already reached in the field of industry and construction, as well as in agriculture and hydrocarbon extraction. Especially since Venezuela then adopted a national program of Bolivarian development of the post-oil economy, which included 15 directions, ranging from food production to the most modern equipment, "including projects in industry and agriculture. Belarus can assist in their realization"<sup>250</sup>. That is why at the meeting of the two presidents in Minsk it was decided to significantly intensify the activities of the joint intergovernmental commission and to hold its 7th meeting in the very near future in order to outline a concrete action plan for the implementation of both prospective and currently implemented joint projects.

In the sphere of production cooperation, the discussion was about bringing the existing joint ventures to their full capacity so that at least half of their output could be sold in the domestic market of Venezuela and the other half could be exported. As for the oil and gas industry,

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<sup>249</sup> Venezuela asks to build five more agro-towns on the Belarusian model [Electronic resource]. - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/venesuela-prosit-postroit-esche-pjat-agorodkov-po-belorusskoj-modeli-269901-2017/>

<sup>250</sup> Belarus plans to build new plants in Venezuela and increase production volumes of the existing ones [Electronic resource]. - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-planiruet-postroit-v-venesuele-novye-zavody-i-uvelicit-objemy-proizvodstva-dejstvujuschih-270308-2017/>

"Belarus is interested in increasing oil production in Venezuela up to 2-3 million tons per year"<sup>251</sup>. For this purpose, it would be necessary to significantly intensify cooperation between JV Petrolera Belo-Venezolana and the Belarusian industry research and design institute BelNIPIneft, whose strategic task in this Latin American country was "to increase the efficiency of oil and gas deposits development through the introduction of new production technologies and rational selection of geological and technical measures"<sup>252</sup>. In agriculture, while Venezuela imports \$10 billion worth of food annually, it was planned to build dairy complexes, poultry farms, a slaughterhouse, a meat processing plant, and milk processing plants with the help of Belarusian specialists. Finally, in the field of construction, "agreements were reached on the allotment of new neighborhoods for the construction of housing in Venezuela by Belarusian specialists"<sup>253</sup>. All these facts showed that Minsk and Caracas both then and now intend to focus on the most important issues in the development of partnership in order to fully realize the existing potential of cooperation.

Now let us return to the present day. In November 2023, Minsk hosted the 8th meeting of the Belarus-Venezuela Joint Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation, at which the parties discussed the most important aspects of the development of promising areas of cooperation, found compromise solutions to existing problematic issues and outlined concrete steps for further implementation of projects in industry, construction, agriculture, food, transportation, petrochemicals,

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<sup>251</sup> Belarus is interested in increasing oil production in Venezuela to 2-3 million tons per year [Electronic resource]. - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-zainterosovana-v-uvelichenii-dobychi-nefti-v-venesuele-do-2-3-mlnt-v-god-270309-2017/>

<sup>252</sup> Venezuela plans to expand cooperation with Belarus in the oil sector [Electronic resource]. - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/venesuela-planiruet-rasshirit-sotrudnichestvo-s-belarusju-v-neftjanof-sfere-269908-2017/>

<sup>253</sup> Matveev, V. Chernyi: there are agreements on the allocation of new neighborhoods for housing construction in Venezuela / V. Matveev // [Electronic resource]. - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/chernyj-est-dogovorenosti-po-otvodu-novyh-mikrorajonov-dlja-stroitelstva-zhilija-v-venesuele-269871-2017/>

healthcare, pharmaceuticals, science and technology, education and tourism. It should be specified that in November 2017, at the 7th meeting of the joint commission, the parties adopted a roadmap for bilateral cooperation in the medium and long term, which, unfortunately, was not implemented due to global events. Nevertheless, as of mid-October 2023, 32 interstate, intergovernmental and interagency agreements had been signed between Belarus and Venezuela. And at the 8th meeting of the joint commission the parties outlined the task of the current moment "to return by joint efforts to the main highway of strategic interaction between our brotherly states, despite all the obstacles and difficulties, and to realize the huge potential that exists in the relations between the Republic of Belarus and Venezuela"<sup>254</sup> . And for this reason, 13 more documents were signed in Minsk to implement projects in various areas.

In particular, the parties adopted an important document on the creation of a high-level group for strategic planning of the joint commission to monitor the implementation of "new structural mechanisms in bilateral relations that will increase trade turnover between our countries, organize efficient logistics and production chains"<sup>255</sup> . In addition, an agreement was signed in the scientific sphere, which provides for the exchange of experience between the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus and the Venezuelan Institute of Geography in the field of geography, hermetics, geodata, as well as documents in the field of tourism and health care, and in the industrial sphere.

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<sup>254</sup> Parkhomchik: Belarus and Venezuela are political and economic partners, as well as close friends and allies [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/parhomchik-belarus-i-venesuela-politicheskie-i-ekonomicheskie-partnery-a-takzhe-blizkie-druzjja-i-602138-2023/>

<sup>255</sup> Vice-President of Venezuela: our countries are bound by ties of friendship, we need to continue to stick together [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/vitse-prezident-venesuely-nashi-strany-svjazyvajut-uzy-druzhy-nam-i-dalshe-nuzhno-derzhatsja-drug-602296-2023/>

All these facts suggest that the 8th meeting of the joint commission may become a new starting point for the preparation of an updated draft roadmap for the short, medium, and long term. Moreover, the parties have already identified eight most pressing issues that should be resolved as soon as possible: 1) resumption of assembly operations of Belarusian machinery in Venezuela; 2) intensification of projects in construction; 3) discussion of options for cooperation in forestry and woodworking; 4) consideration of opportunities for joint projects in the mining industry; 5) cooperation between the parties in agriculture and food supplies; 6) cooperation between the two countries in the construction industry; 5) cooperation in the supply of foodstuffs; and 6) cooperation in the construction industry.

Of course, one of the most important topics on this list is the resumption of the work of tractor and truck assembly plants in Venezuela. It should be noted that over the past years, the Venezuelan side has purchased more than 1,300 machine kits from Belarus, "which were assembled in Venezuela and are used in the national economy. More than 3 thousand Belarusian tractors work in the fields of our country [in Venezuela], and trucks drive on the roads"<sup>256</sup>. The urgent task of these plants is to reach the design capacity of 10 thousand tractors and 5 thousand trucks, and to sell them in the markets of neighboring countries of Latin America. On the basis of these enterprises a multi-brand center will be created to support the equipment that will be produced there. And "specialists of MTZ and MAZ will work in this center. They will perform tasks related to education, training, support, service. On the basis of this center will also be formed warehouses of

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<sup>256</sup> Vice-President of Venezuela: the participation of Belarus in the life of our country is of great importance and weight [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/vitse-prezident-venesuely-uchastie-belarusi-v-zhizni-nashej-strany-imeet-bolshoe-znachenie-i-ves-602178-2023/>

spare parts for production and repair of produced machinery"<sup>257</sup> . In addition, a very important issue is in the mining industry, as Belarus is interested in supplying quarry equipment to Venezuela, especially since this equipment has already been supplied to this country. For this reason, the parties agreed to "additionally create a narrow working group that would work out a plan of interaction in this direction" .<sup>258</sup>

As for the agro-industrial complex, the first meeting of the Belarusian-Venezuelan working group on agriculture and food was held within the framework of the joint commission in Minsk, where the prospects for cooperation in crop production, livestock breeding, veterinary medicine, and agrarian education were discussed. For reference, we note that "in the first 9 months of this year, Belarus' trade turnover with Venezuela increased by 27.9% compared to the same period last year [2022]. The main export item is dried milk whey, and the main suppliers are Slutsk Cheese Factory OJSC and Molochny Mir OJSC. The main import item is ethyl alcohol"<sup>259</sup> . As a result, the parties agreed to exchange experience in the field of agrarian education, exchange visits of technical specialists for internship, advanced training and retraining in the field of agriculture, animal husbandry and fish farming.

Speaking about the intention to expand cooperation in the field of education and science, the Venezuelan side outlined the main directions in this interaction as well. "These include artificial intelligence, bio- and

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<sup>257</sup> It is planned to create a multi-brand center on the basis of Belarusian-Venezuelan enterprises [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/na-baze-belorussko-venesuelskih-predpriyatij-planiruetsja-sozdat-multibrendovyj-tsentr-602259-2023/>

<sup>258</sup> Belarus is interested in supplying quarry equipment to Venezuela [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-zainteresovana-v-postavkah-karjernoj-tehniki-v-venesuelu-602262-2023/>

<sup>259</sup> Belarus is interested in supplying a wide range of food products to Venezuela [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-zainteresovana-v-postavkah-shirokogo-assortimenta-prodovolstvennoj-produktsii-v-venesuelu-602273-2023/>

information technologies, as well as the field of social sciences"<sup>260</sup> . On the Belarusian side, the Belarusian State University is already actively involved in these partnerships, having signed a cooperation agreement with the Simon Rodriguez National Experimental University back in 2007.

During the plenary session of the joint Belarus-Venezuela Commission in November 2023, the parties stressed that the organization of efficient transport communication is also of paramount importance for the two countries. In this regard, there was a proposal for "the possibility of direct air communication between our countries and joint steps to organize the transportation of goods by sea"<sup>261</sup> . In general, the two countries see great opportunities for cooperation in other areas - construction, forestry, woodworking, healthcare, pharmaceuticals, tourism. This gives Belarus and Venezuela a reason to plan cooperation not only for the next three to five years, but also for the long term.

**The Federative Republic of Brazil** is the main partner of the Republic of Belarus in foreign trade with Latin American countries and is among the top ten partners of the Belarusian state in the world. Again, let us make a small excursion to the past, when the first meeting of the Belarus-Brazil Joint Commission on Economic Cooperation took place in November 2017. This fact very eloquently illustrated the state of relations between the two countries, the essence of which was that "despite its geographical remoteness, Brazil has been and remains for Belarus the most important trade and economic partner in Latin

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<sup>260</sup> Belarus and Venezuela intend to expand cooperation in education and science [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-venesuela-namereny-rasshirit-sotrudnichestvo-v-oblasti-obrazovanija-i-nauki-594268-2023/>

<sup>261</sup> Belarus proposes to establish direct air transportation with Venezuela [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-predlagaet-naladit-prjamoe-aviasoobschenie-s-venesueloj-602159-2023/>

America"<sup>262</sup> , therefore, the Belarusian side was very interested in a significant intensification of contacts with Brazilian partners in the economic, political, scientific, technical, and cultural spheres. After all, Belarus, on the one hand, is a major importer of Brazilian sugar, iron, tobacco, leather and fruit, and, on the other hand, exports a lot of fertilizers, textiles and machinery to this Latin American country. Suffice it to say that in 2016, the Belarusian-Brazilian trade turnover exceeded half a billion dollars. But, according to the parties, "the economic potential of our countries indicates that we can multiply mutually beneficial cooperation in trade, scientific and technical, educational and other areas"<sup>263</sup> . That is why in July 2017, the foreign ministries of the two countries signed a memorandum on the establishment of the Joint Belarusian-Brazilian Commission for Economic Cooperation, which was to become one of the most important instruments for the implementation of mutually beneficial economic projects aimed at intensifying and further expanding trade and economic interaction, more fully realizing the potential available in the bilateral relations, which would allow to increase and diversify the mutual trade turnover of the two countries.

There were three main areas that looked most promising for Belarusian-Brazilian interaction at that time: first, increasing mutual trade turnover in goods and services; second, applying more complex forms of cooperation between Belarusian and Brazilian economic entities; and third, transition to the establishment of joint ventures in sectors of mutual interest - machine-building and agriculture, oil and gas, and the high-tech sector. In this respect, the first meeting of the

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<sup>262</sup> Congratulations to the President of the Federative Republic of Brazil Michel Temer [Electronic resource]. - 2017. - URL: [http://president.gov.by/ru/news\\_ru/view/pozdravlenie-prezidentu-federativnoj-respubliki-brazilija-mishelu-temeru-17019/](http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/pozdravlenie-prezidentu-federativnoj-respubliki-brazilija-mishelu-temeru-17019/)

<sup>263</sup> Interview of the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus E. Shestakov to the publication "Brasilia in Foco" (July 8, 2017, Brazil) [Electronic resource]. - 2017. - URL: <http://mfa.gov.by/press/smi/c98f377693514952.html>



Belarusian-Brazilian Joint Commission on Economic Cooperation can be considered quite effective.

First, the parties agreed to locate assembly production of Belarusian tractors at one of the sites in the Anapolis agro-industrial district of Goiás. To this end, Minsk Tractor Plant, the Ministry of Industry of Belarus, and the Secretariat for Economic Development of the State of Goiás signed a memorandum of intent. Secondly, "a number of commercial contracts worth more than 40 million USD were concluded"<sup>264</sup>. In particular, only Orsha Flax Mill and Baranovichi Cotton Association will supply Brazil with fabrics worth almost one and a half million dollars. In addition, Belarusian exporters were expected to interact with Brazilian partners in such interesting and mutually beneficial areas as "supplying the Brazilian market with blended fabrics with viscose; resumption of cooperation with Belarusian manufacturers in the production and supply of men's shirts; expanding the range of linen fabrics supplied to Brazil. It is also planned to supply the Brazilian market with blackout fabrics, bed linen and towels"<sup>265</sup>. In particular, a trial batch of its goods to the Brazilian company Viner Brasil Tecnologia Ltd was to be supplied by OJSC "Mogilevkhimvolokno". Brazil was supposed to supply Belarus with tannery semi-finished product "vet-blue" to ensure the capacity utilization of Belarusian tanneries.

As for other promising areas of cooperation, they looked very promising: first, the desire of Embraer, one of the world's largest Brazilian aircraft-building companies, to open its service center in Belarus; second, the signed agreement on technical cooperation between PA Belorusneft and Viner Brasil Tecnologia Ltd; third, the adopted contract for the supply of potash fertilizers between Belarusian Potash

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<sup>264</sup> Anatoly Kalinin made a working visit to the Federal Republic of Brazil [Electronic resource]. - 2017. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/7680>

<sup>265</sup> Orsha Flax Factory and BPHO will supply fabrics to Brazil for \$1.4 million [Electronic resource]. - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/orshanskij-lnokombinat-i-bpho-postavjat-v-braziliju-tkanej-na-14-mln-279290-2017/>

Company and Camporico; fourthly, a "trilateral memorandum of intentions between MTZ, Bobruiskagromash and Geoterra to work out the issue of entering the Brazilian market with Belarusian tractor machinery, attachments and trailed equipment"<sup>266</sup> ; fifthly, an agreed memorandum of cooperation between the Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Belarus-Brazil Chamber of Commerce and Industry. All these concrete steps to strengthen Belarusian-Brazilian cooperation were expected to yield positive results in the near future.

Now let's look at the present day. Note that "in 2021, bilateral trade amounted to \$782.9 million. The volume of bilateral trade amounted to \$782.9 million (growth rate of 108.9%). Exports amounted to \$585.1 million. USD 585.1 MILLION (108.3% GROWTH RATE)"<sup>267</sup> . At that time, Belarusian supplies were based on petrochemicals and products of the Belarusian Metallurgical Plant. In 2022, due to a number of limiting factors, the figures of the Belarusian-Brazilian trade turnover slightly decreased. But since January 1, 2023, Brazil has undergone significant changes: a new president of the country has taken office and a new government is already functioning. These changes have to some extent affected the relations between Belarus and Brazil, which were established more than 30 years ago - in February 1992. It can be said that today the two states, which are separated by 14 thousand kilometers, "have all grounds for the progressive development of bilateral cooperation in both political and economic spheres"<sup>268</sup> . The dynamics of 2022-2023 demonstrates the recovery of foreign trade volumes. In

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<sup>266</sup> Contracts worth over \$40 million concluded during the visit of the Belarusian delegation to Brazil [Electronic resource]. - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/kontrakty-na-summu-bolee-40-mln-zakljuчены-vo-vremja-vizita-belorusskoj-delegatsii-v-braziliju-278631-2017/>

<sup>267</sup> Trade and economic relations [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://brazil.mfa.gov.by/ru/exportby/tev/>

<sup>268</sup> Lukashovich: the volume of trade of Belarus with Brazil is hundreds of times higher than with some neighboring countries [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/lukashovich-objem-torgovli-belarusi-s-braziliej-v-sotni-raz-vyshe-chem-s-nekotorymi-sosednimi-stranami-555506-2023/>

particular, "trade turnover for the first nine months of the current [2023] year amounted to almost \$700 million. This is twice as much as last year's figures"<sup>269</sup> . Judging by the available facts, two areas of cooperation stand out in the interaction between the two countries today - agriculture and education.

With regard to the first area, we recall that "Brazil has about 5 million agricultural enterprises, of which 70% are small businesses. They need equipment, tractors <...>. For example, BELARUS-152 and BELARUS-622 models, which are just suitable for such farms"<sup>270</sup> . The Brazilian side believes that the machines of Minsk Tractor Plant (MTZ) are of high quality, easy to operate, and help to increase productivity. This can be judged, for example, by the results of the International Agricultural Exhibition-Fair AgriShow, which was held in May 2023 in the Brazilian city of Ribeirão Preto. This business forum is "the largest agricultural event in South America, which is attended by all representatives of agribusiness of the continent without exception. By its characteristics, the exhibition is more like a district or even regional center: the number of participants and visitors exceeds 200 thousand people, and exhibition areas and pavilions occupy 520 thousand square meters"<sup>271</sup> .

In 2023, AgriShow had a record number of participants - from more than 90 countries. And at this agro-industrial summit, Belarus presented MTZ tractors for the first time: not only small and maneuverable models for individual farmers, but also large

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<sup>269</sup> Trade turnover between Belarus and Brazil amounted to almost \$700 million for nine months [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/tovarooborot-belarusi-i-brazilii-za-devjat-mesjatsev-sostavil-pochti-700-mln-600698-2023/>

<sup>270</sup> Ambassador: Brazil has a high interest in Belarusian machinery [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/posol-brazilii-v-nashej-strane-est-vysokij-interes-k-belorusskoj-tehnike-582274-2023/>

<sup>271</sup> Belarus presented its tractors at the largest agricultural exhibition in South America [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-predstavila-svoi-traktory-na-krupnejshej-agrovystavke-v-juzhnoj-amerike-564485-2023/>

multifunctional machines for large farms. Specialists of Minsk Tractor Plant, Smorgon Aggregate Plant, Bobruisk Plant of Tractor Parts and Aggregates, Borisov Metalist Plant worked at the exhibition. At the same time, "the niche for Belarusian agricultural machinery was defined: low-powered basic tractors with a capacity of up to 20-25 horsepower, which can become an indispensable assistant for family farming, which is the basis of agriculture in Brazil"<sup>272</sup> .

Back in March 2023, Belarus and Brazil agreed to build two factories for the production of MTZ tractors in this country. Consent has already been received from the governors of two Brazilian states - Ceará and Goiás, "project activities are underway. <...> specialists have already started discussing these nuances, there are positive signals"<sup>273</sup> . And in July of this year, a roadmap for the project on the creation of joint Belarusian-Brazilian assembly plants, including small tractor machinery oriented at family farms, has already been signed. And this interesting initiative in the field of industrial cooperation may have an impressive result.

Speaking about the development of cooperation between Belarus and Brazil in the field of education, we would like to recall that the Agreement on Cooperation in this area was signed in August 2015. However, even earlier, Belarusian universities started developing ties with Brazilian partners. For example, Belarusian State University (BSU) adopted relevant documents on cooperation with the universities of Brasilia (2012) and Uberlandia (2014). In 2015, the Belarusian State Agricultural Academy signed a Cooperation Agreement with the same University of Uberlandia. In 2020, the Memorandum of Cooperation was

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<sup>272</sup> Belarus plans to help Brazil create its new tractor [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-planiruet-pomoch-brazilii-sozdat-svoj-narodnyj-traktor-564487-2023/>

<sup>273</sup> Belarus and Brazil agreed on the construction of two plants for the assembly of MTZ tractors [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-brazilija-dogovorilis-o-stroitelstve-dvuh-zavodov-po-sborke-tractorov-mtz-555498-2023/>

adopted by P.M. Masherov Vitebsk State University and the Federal University of the State of Paraná.

In 2023, the Federal University of Minas Gerais (UFMG), which was founded in 1927 and today ranks 10th in the rating of the best universities in Latin America, joined the partnership with Belarusian universities. More than 40 thousand students study there and more than three thousand teachers work there. The structure of the university includes 20 academic departments and 25 libraries. In September of this year BSU and FUMJ signed a memorandum that envisages educational and scientific interaction, development of academic mobility, as well as "the parties plan to cooperate in the preparation of joint educational programs, publications, implementation of research projects, to hold conferences, seminars, workshops, <...> exchange students and teachers, educational and scientific materials"<sup>274</sup>.

In September 2023, the partners of the Brazilian university also included the Belarusian State Economic University (BSEU) and the Belarusian State University of Informatics and Radioelectronics (BSUIR), which adopted the relevant memoranda with AHIF, which became the first step towards fruitful Belarusian-Brazilian cooperation in this area. In particular, BSEU and AHIF have already identified specific areas of partnership. First, "the focus is on teaching Portuguese for Belarusian students and Russian for Brazilian students"<sup>275</sup>. Secondly, it is the creation of joint programs in English in the specialty "World Economy". In addition, the Center for Latin American Studies has already been "established and is successfully functioning at the Faculty

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<sup>274</sup> Memorandum of Understanding signed between BSU and the Federal University of Minas Gerais in Brazil [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/memorandum-o-vzaimoponimanii-podpisan-mezhdu-bgu-i-federalnym-universitetom-minas-zherajs-v-brazilii-588360-2023/>

<sup>275</sup> Memorandum of Understanding signed between BSEU and Brazilian Federal University of Minas Gerais [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/memorandum-o-vzaimoponimanii-podpisan-mezhdu-bgeu-i-brazilskim-federalnym-universitetom-minas-zherajs-588101-2023/>

of International Business Communications of BSEU, where joint projects are conducted by scientists from both universities. A center for the study of the Portuguese language will also be developed"<sup>276</sup> . All these joint projects, which are interesting for both sides and are already being implemented in the near future, will certainly serve to bring the two peoples - Belarusian and Brazilian - closer together. A rapprochement that will only deepen.

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<sup>276</sup> Rector of the Brazilian university: cooperation in education will serve to bring our countries closer together [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/rektor-brazil'skogo-universiteta-sotrudnichestvo-v-obrazovanii-posluzhit-sblizheniju-nashih-stran-588136-2023/>

## Belarus - Cuba: Rectors' Forum is result-oriented

In September 2023, Minsk hosted the first Forum of Belarusian and Cuban Rectors of Higher Education Institutions, during which they discussed ways to deepen bilateral cooperation in education, expand partnerships between the educational community of Belarus and Cuba, inter-university contacts in the interests of training faculty, student exchanges, as well as in the implementation of specific scientific projects and joint research. "The Cuban side is particularly interested in the potential of Belarusian universities in the field of high technologies, cybersecurity and personal data protection, as well as development in the field of artificial intelligence"<sup>277</sup>. The participants of the event emphasized that today one should focus on a concrete result, which should yield economic returns. The first Forum of Belarusian and Cuban Rectors resulted in the signing of bilateral cooperation agreements between the universities of the two countries.

**The Belarusian State University** (BSU) is among the active participants of this forum. It should be reminded that back in April 2023, BSU intensified cooperation with Cuban partners in the field of education, science and innovation. In particular, a cooperation program was signed with the leading and oldest higher education institution of the country - the **University of Havana**, regulating joint work "in the field of biology, geography, chemistry, mathematics, tourism, study of Spanish and Russian languages"<sup>278</sup>, as well as a memorandum on the development of a joint master's degree program. In the nearest plans -

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<sup>277</sup> Deputy Minister of Education of Cuba expressed interest in the realization of scientific projects with Belarus [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/zamministra-obrazovanija-kuby-zajavil-o-zainteresovanosti-v-realizatsii-nauchnyh-proektov-s-belarusiju-589322-2023/>

<sup>278</sup> Mathematics, Spanish and tourism. BSU activates cooperation with universities of Cuba [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/matematika-ispanskij-jazyk-i-turizm-bgu-aktiviziruet-sotrudnichestvo-s-vuzami-kuby-562131-2023/>

academic mobility, organization of internships, guest lectures, scientific research, as well as joint training of specialists. And with the **Pedagogical University of Enrique Jose Varona** BSU intends to develop cooperation in the field of pedagogy with the introduction of innovative methods in the educational process. In the signed agreement on cooperation the parties fixed the exchange of students, master students, invitation of teachers and researchers for joint work on research and educational projects, as well as the exchange of information, educational materials, joint scientific and educational events. In addition, "the universities plan to develop joint educational programs in the field of humanities with the issuance of two diplomas"<sup>279</sup> .

In September 2023, BSU got several more partners: the **University of Guantanamo**, the **José Antonio Echeverría Technological University of Havana**, and the **University of Camagüey**. It should be noted that "BSU, taking into account the signed agreements, is developing educational and scientific contacts with eight Cuban institutions"<sup>280</sup> , with which it is promising to cooperate in the spheres of pharmaceuticals and biotechnology, to develop joint educational projects. For example, after the April negotiations BSU and the **Raúl Roa García Higher Institute of International Relations** drew up a detailed program of cooperation and have already worked out the project of the virtual platform "Russian for Cubans / Spanish for Belarusians".

The Belarusian **National Technical University (BNTU)** signed cooperation agreements with its partners from Cuba - the **University of Guantanamo and the Antonio Niez Jimenez Mao University - as part**

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<sup>279</sup> BSU and Pedagogical University of Cuba will develop cooperation in the field of pedagogy [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/bgu-i-pedunivrsitet-kuby-budut-razvivat-sotrudnichestvo-v-oblasti-pedagogiki-562339-2023/>

<sup>280</sup> Exchange of students and joint research. Cooperation agreements signed by BSU and universities of Cuba [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/obmen-studentami-i-sovmestnye-issledovanija-soglashenija-o-sotrudnicestve-podpisali-bgu-i-uzvy-kuby-589103-2023/>



of the first Forum of **Belarusian** and Cuban rectors of higher education institutions. These documents "provide for the exchange of experience in educational and methodical work of higher educational institutions, exchange of textbooks and teaching materials (training programs, teaching aids), joint research in various areas of science and technology, as well as the exchange of scientific and technical information, experience of scientific work, the search for various forms of scientific cooperation"<sup>281</sup>. It should be noted that the signing of the agreement was the result of a meeting of heads of universities, which was held in the Science and Technology Park BNTU "Polytechnik". The event was also attended by representatives of Baranovichi State University, Belarusian State Agrarian Technical University, Brest State Technical University, Belarusian State University of Food and Chemical Technologies, Belarusian-Russian University, Gomel State Technical University named after P. O. Sukhoi and Polotsk State University named after Euphrosyne Polotsky. The Cuban side expressed interest in cooperation in such areas as geology, ecology, mining and electromechanics. Colleagues from other Belarusian universities also signed a number of cooperation agreements with Cuban universities.

In September 2023, **Gomel State Medical University** (GomHMU) and the **University of Medical Sciences of Havana** signed a Memorandum of Cooperation in the field of higher medical education and science. It should be reminded that this is not the first experience of cooperation with the Cuban side for Gomel university. After all, "as a result of Belarusian-Cuban cooperation and with the active participation of GomHMU specialists in the field of vaccinology, in 2022 the vaccine "Soberana Plus" was approved and authorized by the Ministry of Health

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<sup>281</sup> BNTU signed a cooperation agreement with two Cuban universities [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/bntu-podpisal-soglashenie-o-sotrudnichestve-s-dvumja-kubinskimi-universitetami-589060-2023/>

of Belarus for booster vaccination in our country"<sup>282</sup> . Today, clinical trials of the Cuban vaccine are already underway on the basis of the research laboratory of the State Medical University of Belarus. So the partner universities will do a lot more on this research topic.

Speaking about the results of the first Forum of Belarusian and Cuban Rectors, we would like to emphasize that back in "November 2022, an intergovernmental agreement on mutual recognition of educational documents..."<sup>283</sup> was added to the legal framework of Belarusian-Cuban relations. Today, the participants of this forum are already starting the practical implementation of this document so that the universities of Belarus and Cuba could achieve concrete results and receive economic returns in many areas of cooperation.

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<sup>282</sup> Gomel State Medical University concluded a cooperation agreement with the University of Medical Sciences of Havana [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/gomelskij-gmu-zakljuchil-dogovor-o-sotrudnichestve-s-universitetom-meditsinskih-nauk-gavany-589137-2023/>

<sup>283</sup> Zalessky, B. With a focus on results. Perspectives of an integrated approach to new partnership opportunities / Boris Zalessky. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2023. - C. 9.

## **Belarus - Equatorial Guinea: the roadmap is comprehensive**

In December 2023, the Republic of Belarus and the Republic of Equatorial Guinea in the capital of this African state - Malabo - signed the Roadmap for the development of cooperation for 2024-2026, which was developed taking into account the Equatorial Guinean side and is comprehensive in nature. "The document covers 15 key areas of interaction, including cooperation projects, supplies of Belarusian machinery and organization of its maintenance, agriculture, healthcare, pharmaceuticals and sales of medical equipment, forestry,"<sup>284</sup>. Over the next three years, the parties agreed to implement 74 specific promising projects, including: construction of an agro-town with the necessary infrastructure; erection of one hundred social residential houses; creation of a ceramic brick factory with a capacity of up to forty million pieces per year; supply of fire-fighting vehicles, construction and other equipment, including for the implementation of a joint project on logging and creation of new agricultural lands; electrification of remote areas. In addition to the road map, more than fifteen bilateral agreements were adopted, including: on promotion and mutual protection of investments, on avoidance of double taxation and prevention of evasion of income and property taxes, on cooperation and mutual assistance in customs affairs; on cooperation in tourism; on mutual recognition of education documents; on cooperation in science and technology. In addition, a number of documents have been concluded at the interagency level, including memoranda of cooperation and understanding.

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<sup>284</sup> Presidents of Belarus and Equatorial Guinea signed a roadmap for the development of cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: [https://www.belta.by/president/view/prezidenty-belarusi-i-ekvatorialnoj-gvinei-podpisali-dorozhnuju-kartu-po-razvitiju-sotrudnichestva-604377-2023/?utm\\_source=belta&utm\\_medium=news&utm\\_campaign=accent](https://www.belta.by/president/view/prezidenty-belarusi-i-ekvatorialnoj-gvinei-podpisali-dorozhnuju-kartu-po-razvitiju-sotrudnichestva-604377-2023/?utm_source=belta&utm_medium=news&utm_campaign=accent)

Recall that in October 2023, Minsk hosted the first meeting of the Joint Belarus-Ekwatoguinea Permanent Permanent Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation, where the parties "agreed to ensure a steady increase in trade turnover to bring it in line with the potential of the two countries, as well as to promote specific projects in industry, technological development, agriculture, health, science, technology, education, culture, and construction"<sup>285</sup>. In addition, established bilateral sectoral working groups to achieve early results on major sectors of bilateral cooperation. "The focus is on industrial cooperation, mechanization of agriculture, Belarus' experience in ensuring food security, development of cooperation in the energy sector, health care, pharmaceuticals, petrochemicals, education"<sup>286</sup>. And already in November 2023, the first meetings of these working groups discussed the prospects for the implementation of projects for the joint construction of poultry farms, energy infrastructure facilities, social housing, enterprises for the production of construction materials, the possibility of joint activities in fish processing, the creation of agrarian clusters and production and logistics hub of Belarusian products.

In particular, at the meeting of the working group in the field of industry, the Belarusian side voiced its proposals in terms of mechanization of agriculture, construction of grain storage and drying complexes, supplies of various automotive and road-building machinery, Belarusian dump trucks, diesel generator and compressor stations, and industrial diesel engines. At the same time, Belarusian manufacturers offer not only complex projects, but also "adhere to a comprehensive approach, which provides not only for the supply of machinery, but also

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<sup>285</sup> Zaleskii, B.L. Objective - promotion of concrete projects / B.L. Zaleskii // Materials of the XX International scientific and practical conference "Fundamental and applied science - 2023", October 30 - November 7, 2023: Sheffield. Science and education LTD. - C. 11.

<sup>286</sup> About the visit of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belarus S. Aleinik to Equatorial Guinea. Aleinik's visit to Equatorial Guinea [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: [https://mfa.gov.by/press/news\\_mfa/ddb586f041dd247f.html](https://mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/ddb586f041dd247f.html)

for the provision of spare parts, service and warranty maintenance, training for local specialists in the operation and repair of machinery, and, if necessary, sending their technicians to put machinery into operation and teach them how to use it"<sup>287</sup>. In addition, it is also about the construction of a waste processing plant, the subsequent processing of this waste into finished products and the generation of electrical energy. This contract is tentatively valued at 100 million dollars. Another thing: "Equatorial Guinea will become a kind of a hub for the supply of Belarusian machinery to neighboring African countries in the future. In the future, we can also talk about setting up production facilities here"<sup>288</sup>.

As for the working group on agriculture, at the first meeting in November, the parties agreed to supply agricultural machinery and foodstuffs, Belarusian seeds of corn, potatoes, and other crops, based on interest, as well as to implement joint projects in poultry farming and vegetable growing, and plant protection products from our country. The fact is that the Belarusian side intends to get seriously involved in the actual creation and development of a modern agrarian sector in Equatorial Guinea, which "currently imports almost the entire volume of food consumed in the country, except for literally a few items traditionally grown in the country"<sup>289</sup>. So Belarus has offered comprehensive solutions in this regard. In particular, Belarusian specialists have already started studying soils in this African country

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<sup>287</sup> The Ministry of Industry of Belarus discussed the directions of bilateral cooperation with Equatorial Guinea [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/minprom-belarusi-obsudil-napravlenija-dvustoronnego-sotrudnichestva-s-ekvatorialnoj-gvineej-599714-2023/>

<sup>288</sup> Rogozhnik: Equatorial Guinea can become a hub for the supply of Belarusian equipment to neighboring countries [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/rogozhnik-ekvatorialnaja-gvineja-mozhet-stat-habom-dlja-postavki-belorusskoj-tehniki-v-sosednie-strany-604414-2023/>

<sup>289</sup> Belarus will help to feed people in Equatorial Guinea. Bartosh shared his ambitious plans [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-pomozhet-nakormit-ljudej-v-ekvatorialnoj-gvinee-bartosh-podelilsja-ambitsioznymi-planami-604413-2023>

both on the islands and on the mainland. In the first half of 2024, a laboratory will be set up here, where local specialists will determine the soil composition after training. After that, the implementation of priority plans will begin. First, to clean up the area where there are suitable soils. Secondly, to teach local workers to grow crops with mineral fertilizers. Third, to help build poultry farms - for 20,000 animals and egg production. Fourth, to assist in the construction of an agro-town. Fifth, to create a center for training of Equatoguinean specialists. Sixth, "cooperation will be established in the sphere of fishery (supply from Belarus and fish processing), as well as training of specialists from Equatorial Guinea in the spheres of mechanization, processing and fishery in agrarian universities of Belarus"<sup>290</sup>. So the program of the working group on agriculture turns out to be very rich.

The working group on cooperation in the field of health and pharmaceuticals also has its own plan for building a national health system in this African State. This plan is comprehensive and covers almost all activities to quickly solve the set tasks in three to five years. But for this, first of all, it is necessary to solve the problem of medical personnel in Equatorial Guinea, because "there are a number of medical buildings that have been built and are relatively operational. But they are not functioning, <...> there are no professional staff, including specialists who can service this medical complex"<sup>291</sup>. For this reason, the Belarusian side will help organize training in medical schools and faculties in Equatorial Guinea itself, but at the first stage - in Belarus. As for the treatment process, it will be organized with the use of Belarusian

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<sup>290</sup> Belarus plans to supply agricultural machinery, seeds and foodstuffs to Equatorial Guinea [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-planiruet-postavljat-v-ekvatorialnuju-gvineju-selhoztehniku-semena-i-prodovolstvie-599940-2023/>

<sup>291</sup> The health care system in Equatorial Guinea is offered to build on the Belarusian models [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/sistemu-zdravoochranenija-v-ekvatorialnoj-gvinee-predlagajut-postroit-po-beloruskim-lekalam-604422-2023>

medicines and medical devices. The logistics of the new projects have already been determined. For example, the Equatoguinean side offered the specialists from Belarus to open an oncology department at the La Paz clinic in Bata. As well as to solve "the issue of the work of the logistics center for the supply of medical equipment and medicines to African countries"<sup>292</sup> .

Finally, at the first meeting of the working groups on cooperation in science and technology and education, the parties identified the most priority areas of interaction. In the first case, these are the issues of "supplies of high-tech knowledge-intensive products and cooperation between scientific organizations, the possibility of participation in scientific and technical events and holding a joint Belarusian-Equatoguinean competition of scientific and technical projects"<sup>293</sup> . In the second case, these are the issues of "personnel training in engineering, engineering-technical, engineering-pedagogical, technological, agricultural specialties of higher education, vocational and specialized secondary education, as well as in the sphere of teaching Russian language to Equatoguinean citizens"<sup>294</sup> .

All these facts show that already in 2024 Belarus and Equatorial Guinea are going to realize a very large amount of work to implement the main provisions of the Roadmap for the development of cooperation, which will have to promote partnerships on a multi-level basis as effectively as possible to make the planned bilateral agreements a reality.

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<sup>292</sup> Equatorial Guinea is interested in joint projects with Belarus in the field of health care [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/ekvatorialnaja-gvineja-zainteresovana-v-sovmestnyh-proektah-s-belarusiju-v-sfere-zdravoohranenija-604276-2023>

<sup>293</sup> Belarus and Equatorial Guinea will develop cooperation in science and technology [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-ekvatorialnaja-gvineja-budut-razvivat-sotrudnichestvo-v-nauchno-tehnicheskoi-sfere-599740-2023/>

<sup>294</sup> Belarus and Equatorial Guinea will establish cooperation in personnel training [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-ekvatorialnaja-gvineja-naladzat-sotrudnichestvo-v-podgotovke-kadrov-599731-2023/>

## **Belarus - Zimbabwe: a new step towards realization partnership capacity**

In February 2024, the first meeting of the Joint Standing Committee on Cooperation between Belarus and Zimbabwe was held in Harare. The Committee considered practical steps to develop cooperation between the two countries in the political, economic, social and security spheres, and identified promising areas and cooperation projects to be implemented in the medium and long term and to increase bilateral trade turnover. In particular, "the intention to continue the third phase of the complex project of mechanization of Zimbabwean agriculture was confirmed, agreements were reached on the supply of passenger and special equipment"<sup>295</sup> .

It should be recalled that the first meeting of the commission was held against the backdrop of significant forward movement of the two countries in many areas. For example, the increase in exports of Belarusian products amounted to 103 percent by the end of 2023. The parties are successfully implementing tasks, primarily in the field of agricultural mechanization. Two phases of this project have already been implemented, "which allowed Zimbabwe to become self-sufficient in wheat production. By the end of 2023, Zimbabwe started exporting wheat to third countries for the first time in its history"<sup>296</sup> . And new promising projects in a variety of areas have been outlined and will be implemented in the near future.

In particular, Belarus and Zimbabwe will reach a new level of cooperation in industry in 2024. This is stated in the memorandum of

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<sup>295</sup> About the first meeting of the Joint Standing Committee on Cooperation between Belarus and Zimbabwe [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: [https://mfa.gov.by/press/news\\_mfa/c39b1509985063cc.html](https://mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/c39b1509985063cc.html)

<sup>296</sup> Transcript of the approach to the press of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs S. Aleinik on the results of his visit to Zimbabwe (February 23, 2024, Harare) [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://mfa.gov.by/press/smi/b0f6472abc0e46d5.html>



cooperation signed at the end of January this year by the two ministries - Industry of Belarus and Industry and Trade of Zimbabwe - to raise bilateral relations to a higher level and "to implement measures to develop international specialization and cooperation in production, to identify priorities in industries, as well as to promote the development and implementation of joint projects and programs"<sup>297</sup> .

Earlier, as part of the mechanization program launched in 2020, the Belarusian side supplied more than 1,800 tractors and about 80 combine harvesters to farms in Zimbabwe. "In addition to agricultural machinery, domestic fire trucks (more than a hundred in 2023) and BELAZs (more than fifty such vehicles are operating in Zimbabwe's quarries) are supplied to this country,"<sup>298</sup> . And in January 2024, more than 30 tractors purchased in Belarus were put into service in the Zimbabwean capital, Harare, and sent to all parts of the city to help with garbage collection and any other tasks in which they may be involved. Especially since "Zimbabwe has people trained to maintain these tractors and also has workshops should the equipment need repairs"<sup>299</sup> . Within the framework of the first meeting of the joint commission, the parties agreed to attract the necessary resources for the full implementation of the third phase of the mechanization program, "which provides for the supply of more than 3 thousand MTZ tractors and 80 Gomselmash combines to Zimbabwe" .<sup>300</sup>

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<sup>297</sup> The Ministries of Industry of Belarus and Zimbabwe signed a Memorandum of Cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://minprom.gov.by/18605-2/>

<sup>298</sup> Belarus starts to supply tractor machinery and combines to Zimbabwe [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-nachinaet-postavljat-traktornuju-tehniku-i-kombajny-v-zimbabve-616746-2024/>

<sup>299</sup> 31 tractors purchased in Belarus were put into operation in the capital of Zimbabwe [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/v-stolitse-zimbabve-vveli-v-ekspluatatsiju-31-traktor-zakuplennyj-v-belarusi-612817-2024/>

<sup>300</sup> Aleinik: Belarus is ready to organize a joint business forum with Zimbabwe in Minsk [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: [https://www.belarus.by/ru/business/business-news/aleinik-belarus-gotova-organizovat-v-minske-sovmestnyj-s-zimbabve-biznes-forum\\_i\\_167916.html](https://www.belarus.by/ru/business/business-news/aleinik-belarus-gotova-organizovat-v-minske-sovmestnyj-s-zimbabve-biznes-forum_i_167916.html)

On the margins of the commission meeting in Harare, the Zimbabwe-Belarus business forum "Building a Strong Partnership: Leveraging a Shared Vision for a Sustainable Future" was also held, during which, for example, negotiations were held on a wide range of issues of economic and investment cooperation in medicine and pharmaceuticals, and their outcome "was the signing of a memorandum between the management company of the holding company Belpharmprom and the Zimbabwean company Graniteside Chemicals (PVT) Ltd. The document provides for the development of cooperation in terms of registration and supply of Belarusian medicines"<sup>301</sup> . In addition, Belarus and Zimbabwe want to jointly enter the markets of southern African countries - Mozambique and Botswana. To this end, Minsk and Harare, moving on an upward trajectory, have outlined new projects. "These are joint assembly of Belarusian buses, cooperation in the gas mining industry, supply of Belarusian dairy products and baby food to Zimbabwe"<sup>302</sup> .

The forum also heard information that in April 2024 Belarus intends to organize a national stand at the Zimbabwe International Trade Fair 2024, a multi-sectoral international exhibition to be held in Bulawayo, which will showcase the industrial potential of Belarusian exporters. Last year the Made in Belarus exposition was represented by a range of products of 11 Belarusian companies. This time the products of Minsk Tractor Plant, Gomselmash, Minsk Automobile Plant, AMKODOR OJSC, Bobruiskagromash', Lidselmash and Pozhsnab OJSC will be demonstrated. "Also at the exhibition BELAZ OJSC will

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<sup>301</sup> Ministries of Health of Belarus and Zimbabwe have identified ways of cooperation in medicine [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/minzdravy-belarusi-i-zimbabwe-opredelili-puti-sotrudnichestva-v-meditsine-617370-2024/>

<sup>302</sup> Belarus and Zimbabwe want to enter the markets of southern African countries together [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/politics/view/belarus-i-zimbabwe-hotjat-vmeste-vyehodit-na-rynki-juzhnyh-stran-afriki-617255-2024/>

present a line of dump trucks and offer a number of services for further support and maintenance of its products"<sup>303</sup> .

A new element of interaction between Minsk and Harare in the trade and economic sphere in 2024 will be the integration of the exchange mechanism into mutual trade between the two countries, which will open up new opportunities for Belarusian and Zimbabwean business entities. In February this year, the Belarusian Universal Commodity Exchange (BUTB) held talks with representatives of the African country, during which the parties emphasized that cooperation between Belarusian and Zimbabwean companies through the BUTB platform will not only ensure the growth of mutual trade turnover, but will also facilitate access of Belarusian producers to the markets of third countries. Agriculture and metallurgy products are among the promising commodity areas. For example, "the possibility of using exchange trading to export Belarusian dairy products, rapeseed oil, and sugar to Zimbabwe is being considered. As for import transactions, Zimbabwean suppliers of non-ferrous metals, cotton and horticultural products will be attracted to the BUTB for this purpose"<sup>304</sup> .

And one more example in the context of cooperation between Belarus and Zimbabwe. An interesting continuation of cooperation between the two countries in the field of emergency response turned out to be at the end of 2023. In November in Harare, about 60 specialists from 22 Zimbabwean regions participated in training courses on two main programs - "Training of Operators of Fire Fighting and Rescue Equipment, Equipment and Tools in Fire Fighting" and "Training of Fire Fighting and Rescue Department Commanders" - based on the

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<sup>303</sup> Belarus will present a large-scale exposition at the multi-sectoral exhibition in Zimbabwe [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-predstavit-masshtabnuju-ekspozitsiju-na-mnogootraslevoj-vystavke-v-zimbabve-616800-2024/>

<sup>304</sup> Zimbabwe is interested in the development of exchange trade with Belarus [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/zimbabve-zainteresovano-v-razvitii-birzhevoj-torgovli-s-belarusju-617283-2024/>

Belarusian technical center Bison Agra Machinery and the Fire Brigade City of Harare. The participants of these courses "practiced skills in working with firefighting equipment and mastered the technologies of rescue operations, including firefighting in buildings and structures, extraction of victims, evacuation from the upper floors of buildings, elimination of the consequences of road accidents and first aid"<sup>305</sup>. The training has been a valuable experience in improving the skills and preparedness of Zimbabwean emergency responders.

All these examples show that Belarus and Zimbabwe are ready to further cooperate in a wide range of areas and to extend the opportunities of Belarusian-Zimbabwean cooperation to other countries of the Southern African region.

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<sup>305</sup> Special course in 35 days. Teachers of the University of Civil Protection of the Ministry of Emergency Situations trained specialists in Zimbabwe [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/spetskurs-za-35-dnej-prepodavately-universiteta-grazhdanskoj-zaschity-mchs-obuchili-spetsialistov-v-600251-2023/>

## Belarusian Universal Commodity Exchange: high rates dictate results

The Belarusian Universal Commodity Exchange (BUTB) has been showing impressive rates of sales of domestic goods to foreign companies since the beginning of 2024. Among the reasons for the successful performance of the exchange platform are the increase in the number of non-resident buyers, the opening of new markets, the introduction of additional commodity positions, as well as the opening of the exchange's representative office in Shanghai, the expansion of the network of exchange brokers in Central Asian countries, the introduction of the mechanism of exchange-targeted transactions, and the intensification of cooperation with Belarusian diplomatic missions abroad. As a result, "in January-February 2024, foreign participants of exchange trading concluded more than 1.5 thousand transactions for the purchase of Belarusian goods totaling \$170 million. In the same period last year, the number of transactions amounted to 155, and their amount was \$14 million"<sup>306</sup>. For reference: on March 1, 2024, 6995 non-resident companies from 70 countries were accredited on BUTB. In two months, companies from 23 countries bought Belarusian goods on BUTB.

Today, foreign clients of the Belarusian stock exchange are among the leaders in the production of domestic agriculture and woodworking industry. For example, sawn timber is actively imported by China, Azerbaijan, and Uzbekistan, while Kazakhstan is in first place in sugar purchases. At the same time, as of March 1, 2024, 167 companies from China, 116 from Kazakhstan, 108 from Uzbekistan have already been accredited to BUTB. 100 - from Azerbaijan. And in **Europe** - in the Baltic States and Switzerland - rapeseed oil, beet pulp and molasses are

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<sup>306</sup> Companies from 23 countries buy Belarusian goods on BUTB [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/kompanii-iz-23-stran-pokupajut-belorusskie-tovary-na-butb-620798-2024>

traditionally in demand. In 2024, a number of European countries plan to intensify cooperation with BUTB.

<sup>307</sup>In particular, in January of this year, BUTB agreed to cooperate with the Belarus-Italy Chamber of Commerce in the field of electronic exchange trade to facilitate the export of Belarusian agricultural products to the **Italian** market, as well as to establish supplies of Italian-made goods in demand in Belarus, including industrial equipment, special machinery, spare parts and components, since "Italian business is interested in working with Belarusian enterprises, and the BUTB platform is exactly the right tool that allows the Belarusian companies to cooperate with Italian companies. It should be noted that as of January 1, 2024, 22 Italian companies were already accredited on the Belarusian exchange platform. Last year, their exchange transactions were actually only for the purchase of "vet-blue" leather from Belarusian tanneries. This year, it seems that Belarusian rapeseed oil, beet pulp and molasses will also be in demand among Italian partners.

Beet molasses produced by Belarusian sugar mills is also in high demand on the Hungarian market. For this reason, the organization of its supplies through the BUTB can significantly increase the exchange turnover between the two countries. So companies from **Hungary** are already ready to be accredited at the Belarusian exchange platform and participate in the trades as sellers and buyers of agricultural products. "As for exports from Hungary, it could be agricultural seeds, which <...> are very much in demand among Belarusian exchange traders"<sup>308</sup>.

Another interesting partner of BUTB in Europe is **Serbia**. As of December 1, 2023, three companies from this country were accredited

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<sup>307</sup> BUTB will cooperate with the Belarus-Italy Chamber of Commerce [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-budet-sotrudnichat-s-torgovoj-palatoj-belarus-italija-611942-2024/>

<sup>308</sup> Hungarian business is interested in exchange trade in agricultural products with Belarus [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/vengerskij-biznes-zainteresovan-v-birzhevoj-torgovle-selhozproduksiej-s-belarusiju-615721-2024/>

on the Belarusian stock exchange, which, as a rule, limited themselves to the purchase of sawn timber. But at the end of last year, the first transaction for the sale of butter to Serbia was registered on the BUTB. "The volume of the trial shipment amounted to 20 tons, and the buyer was a Serbian food importer accredited in November 2023"<sup>309</sup>. It is to be assumed that once the whole scheme of purchasing this product is worked out, butter deliveries to the Serbian market will become regular.

Among **Asian** countries, companies from **China** have traditionally traded powerfully on the Belarusian stock exchange in 2024. BUTB plans to further increase both exports of Belarusian agricultural products and Chinese imports of metals and metal products by participating in international exhibition events in the Celestial Empire. In particular, in March this year BUTB specialists visited two authoritative forums at once. Firstly, at one of the largest food exhibitions in **China - China International Allfood Expo** in Shenzhen, Guangdong province, where more than one and a half thousand producers from all over the world participated. As a result of meetings with more than 50 Chinese companies "agreements were reached on accreditation of buyers of skimmed milk powder, whey powder and beef at BUTB. In addition, Chinese manufacturers of packaging lines, freezers, pasteurizers and beverage filling systems have shown interest in the Belarusian exchange platform"<sup>310</sup>. Secondly, at the **Qingdao International Metal Processing Equipment Expo**, an international specialized exhibition of metallurgy and metal **processing**, where "major suppliers of sheet steel, rolled pipes, foundry alloys and cable and wire products announced their

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<sup>309</sup> Belarusian butter for the first time realized in Serbia through BUTB [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/beloruskoe-slivochnoe-maslo-vpervye-realizovano-v-serbiju-cherez-butb-604633-2023/>

<sup>310</sup> BUTB took part in the food exhibition in China [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-prinjala-uchastie-v-prodovolstvennoj-vystavke-v-kitae-619317-2024/>

readiness to participate in exchange trading"<sup>311</sup>. And in general, Chinese residents of BUTB for two months of 2024 concluded exchange transactions totaling more than \$26 million, which is 3.5 times more than in January-February 2023.

Speaking about the plans for cooperation between BUTB and **Turkey** in 2024, we would like to remind you that last year the number of Turkish companies, accredited to participate in the exchange trading, increased from 32 to 70, which increased the amount of transactions during this period by 2.7 times. At the same time, woodworking products and scrap metals were in the greatest demand of Turkish economic entities, which accounted for more than 90% of the Belarusian-Turkish exchange turnover. Imports accounted for only about two percent. These were mainly supplies of viscose yarn for Belarusian textile enterprises. In March 2024, at the business forum organized by the National Marketing Center together with the **Association of Businessmen of Turkey**, a priority task was set to expand the range of goods involved in exchange trade with this country in order to "attract Turkish enterprises from such spheres as agriculture, machine building, chemical industry to the BUTB, which will contribute to the growth of Belarusian-Turkish exchange trade turnover"<sup>312</sup>. In the agro-industrial sector, Belarus is already working on supplies of Belarusian vegetable oils, milk powder, beet pulp and molasses to Turkey. Turkish spare parts and components for automobiles and machinery, as well as industrial equipment may be in demand in Belarus. As a result, agreements on accreditation of importers of meat products and oilseed processing products from Turkey to BUTB were reached within the framework of the business forum. In

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<sup>311</sup> BUTB plans to increase the supply of metals and metal products from China [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-planiruet-velichit-postavki-metallov-i-metalloizdelij-iz-kitaja-620557-2024/>

<sup>312</sup> The amount of transactions of Turkish companies on BUTB in 2023 almost tripled [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/summa-sdelok-turetskih-kompanij-na-butb-v-2023-godu-vyrosla-pochti-v-tri-raza-619661-2024/>



addition, suppliers of spare parts for construction machinery, sanitary equipment and polymer materials from this country are interested in participating in these tenders.

Finally, let's look at the development of cooperation of the Belarusian exchange platform with **African** countries. BUTB plans to promote effective e-commerce opportunities on this continent and has already formulated "clear objectives of using the exchange mechanism to intensify mutual trade and increase trade turnover this year with African partners"<sup>313</sup>, including from **Egypt**. And already in February 2024, the Egyptian company **International Co. for Industry & Projects** expressed its desire to become a broker of the BUTB. After all, it "has a wide network of business contacts in Egypt and beyond, as well as its own warehouse and office space in Cairo, which can be provided to Belarusian exporters working at BUTB"<sup>314</sup>. The most promising goods to be sold through the exchange to this African region are sawn timber, steel fittings, sugar, rapeseed oil, dairy products and meat products. Another business entity from Egypt, interested in accreditation at the BUTB for export-import activities in the Belarusian market, is **KATO Investment** Holding, which plans to supply Egypt with Belarusian sawn timber, dairy products, sugar, vegetable oils and synthetic fiber, and Belarus with Egyptian polymer products, cotton yarn and fruit and vegetable products. And "this is only a foundation on the basis of which further interaction between the Egyptian holding and the stock exchange will be built, since the range of mutual interests of Belarus and Egypt is much wider"<sup>315</sup>. It only remains to add that as of February 1, 2024, five

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<sup>313</sup> Zaleskii, B. Realization of economic potential in the conditions of global turbulence / Boris Zaleskii. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2024. - C. 70.

<sup>314</sup> BUTB is considering accrediting a broker in Egypt [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-rassmatrivaet-vozmozhnost-akkreditatsii-brokera-v-egipte-615805-2024/>

<sup>315</sup> BUTB will simplify the access of Egyptian business to the market of Belarus [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/butb-uprostit-dostup-egipetskogo-biznesa-na-rynok-belarusi-618011-2024/>

residents from this African country have already been accredited on the Belarusian stock exchange, the structure of transactions of which is dominated by imports of woodworking products from Belarus. But in the near future, the situation in this matter is likely to change for the better. Both in terms of the number of residents and the variety of transactions.

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7. 85 superfast charging complexes for electric cars will be installed in Belarus by the end of 2030 [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/v-belarusi-do-kontsa-2030-goda-ustanovjat-85-superbystryh-zarjadnyh-kompleksov-dlja-elektrokarov-569933-2023/>
8. In Belarus by the end of the year there will be more than 700 electric charging stations, in 2024 will be added another 105 [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/v-belarusi-k-kontsu-goda-budet-boleee-700-elektrozarjadnyh-stantsij-v-2024-m-dobavitsja-esche-105-571025-2023/>
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