

The reserves for growth are in the partnership

In the first quarter of 2022, Belarusian exports of goods and services increased by half a billion dollars. At the same time the surplus was a record high of almost one billion dollars, including 1.2 billion dollars in services. The main increase in exports of goods was provided by producers of food, vehicles, woodworking and metal products. Among services, the IT sector, transport and financial services made the greatest contribution. An important detail: these indicators were achieved at a time when the Belarusian economy was undergoing structural transformation. Logistics chains, supply and sales markets are being rebuilt. Imports of components and raw materials are being replaced by domestic products or from friendly countries. Of course, the restructuring of the whole economic mechanism will take time. How does the international economic cooperation of the Republic of Belarus in the post-Soviet space develop in this context, with Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan? What is characteristic for interaction with partners in Southeast Asia - Vietnam and Indonesia? What is the development of the territories with preferential treatment in Belarus itself? Answers to these questions can be found in this study.



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Belarus: import substitution as an additional impetus for production development

The Programme of Socio-Economic Development of the Republic of Belarus for 2021-2025 envisages the strengthening of the policy of rational import substitution, taking into account the production of new high-tech and export-oriented goods, including within the Eurasian Economic Union. Production of import-substituting products in the country is expected to "increase to \$22.3 billion by the end of the five-year period, with a total output increase of \$4 billion"¹. The December (2021) meeting of the Presidium of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus "included the following measures to encourage enterprises to substitute imports: increase localisation, develop technological chains, process local raw materials, and attract small and medium businesses"².

The enterprises of the Belarusian Ministry of Industry are now facing particularly strenuous tasks in this regard. In 2022 they will have to produce import-substituting products worth four and a half billion dollars, which is almost 20% more than in 2021. "The solution to this task requires a significant increase in exports - up to 70 percent of the output of goods (\$3.19 billion). Organizations of the Ministry of Industry must master the production of almost 400 new products"³. It should be noted that in the current economic situation many enterprises not only acknowledge the emerging problems, but also see

¹ Programme of socio-economic development of the Republic of Belarus for 2021-2025. - Minsk. 2021. - C. 28.

² Zalesky, B.L. Aim - maximum localization of domestic production / B.L. Zalesky // Materials of the XVIII International scientific and practical conference "Modern scientific potential - 2022", February 28 - March 07, 2022; Sheffield. Science and education LTD. - C. 57.

³ Parkhomchik, P. Belarusian industry in the conditions of sanctions / P. Parkhomchik // [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/interview/view/beloruskaia-promyshlennost-v-usloviiah-sanktsii-ministr-o-borbe-s-novymi-vyzovami-planah-po-proizvodstvu-i-8121/>

them as relevant impulses for technological advancement to open new directions and master new niches of development.

An interesting example in this regard is Mogilevliftmash, where in March 2022 the first batch of gearless winches was produced at the electric motor production site. "The company used to buy such winches from Spain, but due to sanctions restrictions there are interruptions with the import of winches"⁴. Now the company plans to increase the output of these components and completely abandon imported purchases, as well as to start selling them to other companies. Zenit is also actively working on import substitution, where it is developing high-tech electronic components and control stations, which will make it possible to create high-quality import-substituting components that will find their consumers not only in Belarus, but also in other post-Soviet countries.

The multifaceted efforts to replace imported supplies are also characteristic of the Belarusian energy sector, where there are great opportunities for organisations of the peat industry. Let us remind you that about two million tonnes of peat are extracted in Belarus annually. The priority here is given to the production of peat fuel, which makes it possible to replace the use of imported natural gas and hard coal. At the same time "a special attention is paid to increasing the supplies of this product to the organisations of the cement industry and the housing and communal services. For example, over the past five years, consumption of cut peat in boiler houses in the housing and utilities sector has increased 2.5 times: from 25.9 thousand tonnes

⁴ "Mogilevliftmash has mastered the production of new components and intends to completely abandon import purchases [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/mogilevliftmash-osvoil-vypusk-novykh-komplektujuschih-i-nameren-polnostju-uti-ot-importnyh-zakupok-494830-2022/>

in 2016 to 75.3 thousand tonnes in 2021"⁵ . By the end of 2025, these volumes are expected to increase to 160 thousand tons. And the use of peat in the cement industry after the implementation of the peat drying combustion project has increased its consumption from 80 thousand tonnes in 2015 to 358 thousand tonnes in 2021. Production of peat products for non-fuel purposes is also growing. In particular, the Brest Region is now working on the issue of creating a new type of its production - cover material for the cultivation of mushrooms. "The total volume of the domestic market of this product in the country is estimated at about 50,000 tonnes a year. Most of this volume was previously imported. Given the availability of our own raw material base, there are opportunities to substitute for these imports"⁶ .

The Brest Oblast is also working on the development of other areas to replace imported products with domestic ones. In particular, an appeal was sent to the Academy of Sciences on the need to finalize technologies for beneficiation of refractory clay for OJSC Berezastroymaterialy and quartz sands in the Stolín district. Another interesting example concerns small and medium-sized businesses ready to produce import-substituting products. For instance, a private investor plans to produce raw materials "from granitoids at RU1111 Granit" in exchange for Ukrainian basalt raw materials for the Gomel enterprise, which produces mineral wool. Domestic polymer producer Riona LLC is ready to expand production of polypropylene

⁵ Karankevich, V. Organizations of Ministry of Energy strengthened work on import substitution under sanctions / V. Karankevich // [Electronic resource]. - 2022 - URL: <https://www.belta.by/interview/view/organizatsij-minenergo-usilili-rabotu-po-importozamescheniju-v-uslovijah-sanktsij-8135>

⁶ Karankevich, V. Organizations of the Ministry of Energy strengthened work on import substitution in the conditions of sanctions / V. Karankevich // [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/interview/view/organizatsij-minenergo-usilili-rabotu-po-importozamescheniju-v-uslovijah-sanktsij-8135>

disposable tableware. To this end, meat and dairy companies are attracting €3 million in investments from the Development Bank"⁷ .

Note that the appeal to the private sector in this context is very relevant. Suffice it to say that in 2021, "637 small and medium businesses [were] involved in the implementation of import-substituting projects in the republic. They produced \$2.5 billion worth of products, or almost 36% of the country's import-substituting output."⁸ . So the potential here lies quite significant. In 2022, this interaction between the public sector and small- and medium-sized enterprises will be significantly expanded, so that entrepreneurs will be able to organically integrate into cooperative technological chains to replace foreign suppliers who have left the market. Work is being carried out on several fronts at once.

In particular, Belarus has already launched a 24/7 operational contact centre on the basis of the National Agency of Investment and Privatisation. In addition, the Belarusian Fund for Financial Support to Entrepreneurs has created a nationwide contracting information resource to facilitate the search for organisations interested in cooperative cooperation as much as possible. Finally, another important element of all this work, according to the Belarusian Ministry of Economy, is to make "every producer, even the smallest one, aware of this area of cooperation. <...> It is necessary to painstakingly 'manually' promote this idea to every entrepreneur, explaining the benefits and advantages of participation in cooperative

⁷ Shuleiko told the deputies of the Brest Regional Council about the main directions of import substitution [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/shuleiko-rasskazal-deputatam-brestskogo-oblsoboveta-ob-osnovnyh-napravlenijah-importozameschenija-492478-2022/>

⁸ Rusinovich, O. On the development of import substitution and production cooperation under sanctions / O. Rusinovich // [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/comments/view/o-razviti-i-importozameschenija-i-proizvodstvennoj-kooperatsii-v-uslovij-ah-sanktsij-8115/>.

chains"⁹ . And such work is already underway in Belarus.

For example, in March 2022, Minsk Automobile Plant, for which import substitution is an important factor of "strategic security that contributes to the rhythmic operation of the plants of the entire Belavtomaz holding and dozens of other Belarusian enterprises"¹⁰ , held an exhibition seminar for small and medium businesses. The event was attended by over a hundred representatives from 63 organisations, which might be involved in the cooperation with the flagship of Belarusian automotive industry. The company is confident that mastering new positions by entrepreneurs will certainly require both time and investment, but the import substitution products resulting from this interaction will be in demand not only at Minsk Automobile Plant, but also by other participants of the automobile market both in Belarus and Russia and other countries of the Eurasian Economic Union.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Kravchenko: sanctions restrictions intensify work on import substitution of components for MAZ [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/kravchenko-sanktsionnye-ogranichenija-aktivizirujut-rabotu-po-importozamesheniju-komplektujuschih-492137-2022/>.

Vitebsk Free Economic Zone: Optimisation with an eye on results

In April 2022 a decree of the Belarusian government performed optimization of the boundaries of sectors of the free economic zone (FEZ) "Vitebsk", as a result of which the area of the FEZ was reduced by approximately 500 hectares by excluding inefficient and unclaimed areas - floodplains, swamps, unused land, residential development. At the same time, this preferential area included new promising land plots for the implementation of significant investment projects involving the creation of at least 470 jobs.

In particular, 14 hectares were added in Vitebsk for a project worth over \$94 million, "Development of Production of Cable Wiring Products," where at least 320 jobs will be created. Two more FEZ sites appeared in Orsha and Dokshitsky district. In the first case a local investor plans to develop production of concrete mixes and create about 20 working places. In the second one "it is planned to locate an enterprise for processing low-grade wood and production of wood-fuel pellets. The cost of the project is estimated at about \$30 million, and the investor has calculated the possibility of creating about 50 jobs"¹¹.

Two more sites are included in the free economic zone in the Polotsk district. One of them will house the production of wood pellets, which will cost about \$30 million. The second one is to house innovative production of cross-linked wooden wall and floor slabs for the construction of housing and buildings of various functional purposes, as well as the production of glued laminated timber and fuel

¹¹ Optimisation of the boundaries of the Vitebsk FEZ sectors will attract more than \$200 million in investments [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/optimizatsija-granits-sektorov-sez-vitebsk-pozvolit-privlech-bolee-200-mln-investitsij-496811-2022/>.

pellets with an investment volume of \$60 million. In April 2022 "KimaBel" LLC became the new resident of the free economic zone with the project on modernization of the woodworking production, which foresees renewal of the production areas and introduction of new technological solutions for the organization of the production of innovative export-oriented wood products. The new resident, which has been operating in the Polotsk District since 2013 and specializes in the production of beams and boards and the sale of sawdust and chips, "markets of the Middle East, East and South-East Asia are being explored as promising export destinations for products"¹² .

Speaking about the new residents of the FEZ, it should be recalled that the first one here in 2022 is BRR Arshie Eco Health LLC, an enterprise with Iranian capital for the production of biodegradable tableware and packaging. "It is expected that by the end of 2022, the new resident will have solved all the issues of designing the production site in the Zhurzhevo sector on the outskirts of Vitebsk, and in 2023 will have already started the construction of the facility, where about 25 new jobs are expected to be arranged"¹³ . And there are at least five more projects in the pipeline, with the prospect of becoming a resident in the first half of 2022.

All in all, by the end of April, there were already 53 resident companies registered in the FEZ "Vitebsk", which are implementing projects with the participation of investors from 14 countries. And they do it very successfully. For instance, the Polotsk Forestry enterprise managed to triple its output in 2021 and the

¹² A new resident of FEZ "Vitebsk" will create production of innovative wood products [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/novyj-rezident-sez-vitebsk-sozdast-proizvodstvo-innovatsionnyh-izdelij-iz-drevesiny-498382-2022/>.

¹³ Zalessky, B.L. New residents - new projects / B.L. Zalessky // Materials of the XVIII International scientific and practical conference "Science without borders - 2022", March 30 - April 7, 2022: Sheffield. Science and education LTD. - C. 21.

Energokomplekt Production Association, LLC more than tripled its output. Vityaz, OJSC has increased export supplies of its products 2.7 times over the same period. Export of services by Raw Materials-Bel LLC grew by almost 10 times. In this connection, it is impossible not to mention Polymerkonstruksia Ltd., a renowned manufacturer of water treatment equipment and technologies, which has ensured nearly double growth of production output, the same increase in sales revenue, while the net profit has increased by almost six times. "The enterprise has been active in foreign markets, having more than doubled deliveries to foreign partners"¹⁴, and it has also demonstrated high innovative activity, having shipped innovative products worth three million Belarusian rubles to its consumers, which is 23(!) times higher than the same indicator of 2020. All these facts indicate that the FEZ is very serious about achieving high indicators in 2022 as well. This is confirmed by the performance of FEZ residents in the first quarter of this year. Suffice it to say that over these three months the industrial output here has grown by almost a quarter compared to the same period last year. Besides, "in January-March the residents attracted about 31 million foreign investments, of which more than \$16 million on a net basis"¹⁵.

The active international activity of FEZs should contribute to maintaining competitive advantages and favourable conditions for doing business. An important step in this direction is the signing in April 2022 of a memorandum of cooperation by the administrations of FEZ "Vitebsk" and the pilot zone of regional trade and economic

¹⁴ The best residents of FEZ "Vitebsk" according to the results of 2021 are seven enterprises [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/luchshimi-rezidentami-sez-vitebsk-po-itogam-2021-goda-priznany-sem-predpriyatij-487020-2022/>.

¹⁵ Residents of FEZ Vitebsk increased production by a quarter in the first quarter [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/rezidenty-sez-vitebsk-v-pervom-kvartale-narastili-na-chetvert-proizvodstvo-produktsii-496741-2022/>

cooperation "China-SCO", in which the parties have outlined promising areas for cooperation. One of them is "promotion of investment opportunities of FEZ "Vitebsk" and the pilot zone "SCO-China" as promising platforms for international cooperation under the initiative "One Belt, One Road"¹⁶. It should be noted that the China-SCO pilot zone in Shandong province, with which the Vitebsk region is linked by a cooperation agreement, appeared in 2018. It is located 40 kilometres from Qingdao in the coastal part of Jiaozhou. Thanks to its connection to the land, sea and air routes of this Chinese region, it represents a new platform for trade, economic and innovative cooperation projects between the SCO member states and their partners, which includes Belarus, which opens up very promising prospects for the development of cooperation.

¹⁶ FEZ Vitebsk and the China-SCO pilot zone will develop trade and investment cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/sez-vitebsk-i-pilotnaja-zona-kitai-shos-budut-razvivat-torgovo-investitsionoe-sotrudnichestvo-499010-2022/>

Belarus-Azerbaijan: points of growth - agriculture, construction, regions

The results of the year 2021 show that Azerbaijan has joined the ranks of those trade and economic partners of Belarus, with which cooperation is developing particularly intensively. This is evidenced by the fact that the trade turnover between Belarus and Azerbaijan almost doubled last year to \$885.5 million. At the same time, "Belarusian exports of goods grew 2.5 times and totaled USD 478.0 million, which was a record high in the history of bilateral relations"¹⁷. The main export items from Belarus to Azerbaijan were railway trains, wood-fiber plates, medicines, furniture, timber, electric transformers, as well as beef, butter, cheese and cottage cheese. The two sides have also devoted considerable attention to the **agriculture and food sector**, a promising area for bilateral cooperation. In September 2021 they even held the first meeting of the Belarusian-Azerbaijani working group for agriculture and food security, at which they "discussed the issues of cooperation in crop and livestock production, food security, agricultural education, expansion of trade and economic relations in the field of agriculture..."¹⁸. Coordination of joint efforts in this area has made it possible to achieve good results in bilateral trade in agricultural commodities and agricultural raw materials, the volume of which has grown by nearly 20 per cent - up to 41.6 million dollars - with Belarusian exports amounting to 35 million dollars by the end of 2021. It is important that these positive trends are still in place. "In January-February 2022, the turnover of

¹⁷ On the results of Belarus-Azerbaijan trade in goods in 2021 [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://azerbaiian.mfa.gov.bv/ru/embassv/news/a81fa7c9e40a3b23.html>

¹⁸ On the meeting of the Belarus-Azerbaijan Working Group on Agriculture and Food Security [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://azerbaiian.mfa.gov.bv/ru/embassv/news/b29ba1099335e43e.html>

food products and agricultural raw materials between Belarus and Azerbaijan amounted to \$5.7 million. Belarusian exports accounted for \$4.6 million"¹⁹.

Another promising area of Belarusian-Azerbaijani cooperation, where serious positive developments are expected in 2022, is **construction**. The fact is that this segment of the economy ranks second in Azerbaijan after the oil segment in terms of public investments. Belarusian companies may also be interested in the fact that there is a very high demand for sawn timber in that country, and there is a simplified tax for companies in the industry. In 2021, reinforced concrete and metal structures, equipment and spare parts made up the bulk of Belarusian construction exports to the Azerbaijani market. The following figures illustrate the dynamics of these supplies: "Organizations of the construction complex of Belarus delivered to Azerbaijan more than \$3.5 million worth of products in the first quarter of 2021. This is 2.2 times more compared to the same period in 2020."²⁰ Further bilateral cooperation in this area can be judged by some of the Belarusian exhibitors at the 26th BakuBuild international specialized exhibition, which was held in October 2021 in the Azerbaijani capital. In particular, the TSP Design Bureau research and production association demonstrated there its own innovative technology for the erection of arch structures for various applications developed by the specialists of Spets Mashinostroenie company, which is part of the TSP Design Bureau. Interestingly, the company has already built 19 industrial buildings in Azerbaijan using

¹⁹ Belarus and Azerbaijan increase food and agricultural inputs by almost 20% in 2021 [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-azerbajdzhan-v-2021-godu-uvelichili-tovarooborot-prodtovarov-i-selhozsyryj-a-pochti-na-20-496191-2022/>.

²⁰ Belarus' national pavilion to be presented at BakuBuild [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/natsionalnyi-paviljon-belarusi-budet-predstavlen-na-vystavke-bakubuild-463807-2021/>.

this technology.

Belarusian regions also see their own prospects for developing cooperation with Azerbaijani partners. For example, **Grodno Region** is going to actively expand these relations. It should be reminded that in 2021 the export of Grodno Region enterprises to Azerbaijan doubled and reached \$17.4 million. A total of about 40 business entities of all forms of ownership from the Belarusian region delivered goods to this South Caucasus country. At the same time, the Azerbaijani side remains highly interested in importing Belarusian agricultural machinery, woodworking products and foodstuffs. According to the sides, "we have enough promising areas for cooperation. They are the agriculture and machine-building. We will be redoubling our efforts to develop mutual relations."²¹ . Another interesting example in this context

- **Brest region**, whose trade turnover with Azerbaijan grew by almost half in the first quarter of 2022. "For example, supplies of machines and mechanisms for harvesting and threshing crops have increased 15-fold. Brest residents also export batteries and furniture"²² . The main export from the Belarusian region is food products, with dairy products predominating among them. Finally, the cities of **Gomel** and **Ganja**, which signed a friendship and cooperation agreement back in November 2013, are active participants in Belarusian-Azerbaijani interregional cooperation. There is an automobile plant in this Azerbaijani city, where "assembly facilities have already been set up for Belarusian tractors,

²¹ Grodno region is interested in expanding cooperation with Azerbaijan [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/grodnenskaja-oblast-zainteresovana-v-rasshirenii-sotrudnichestva-s-azerbajdzhanom-494171-2022/>.

²² Azerbaijan is interested in cooperation with Belarusian regions [Electronic resource]. - 2022. URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/azerbajdzhan-zainteresovan-v-sotrudnicestve-s-regionami-belarusi-499846-2022/>.

Gomselmash combine harvesters , Minsk Automobile Plant machinery, and Belkommunmash electric buses"²³ . The first PALESSE KZS-575 combine harvester was assembled here in 2019. At the same time, the parties noted that "there are many points of contact for further development of relations between the Belarusian and Azerbaijani cities in various industries, cultural, educational and sports spheres"²⁴ . So the reserves for the development of cooperation are considerable.

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²³ Zalessky, B.L. Belarus - Azerbaijan: from industrial cooperation - to participation in exhibitions / B.L. Zalessky // Materialy XV Miedzynarodowej naukowo-praktycznej konferencji "Aktualne problemy nowoczesnych nauk - 2019", Volume 5. Przemysl: Nauka i studia. - C. 22.

²⁴ Ganja Automobile Plant interested in joint production of combine harvesters with Gomselmash [Electronic resource]. - 2019. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/gjandzhinskij-avtozavod-zainteresovan-v-sovmestnom-proizvodstve-kombajnov-s-gomselmashem-333783-2019/>

Belarus-Uzbekistan: aiming for a qualitatively new level of cooperation

In April 2022, a Belarusian government delegation paid a visit to Uzbekistan, which resulted in the signing of contracts worth more than USD 25 million. An equally important outcome was that Minsk and Tashkent stated that new points of growth in cooperation had been found. And "the task now is to fill it with new content"²⁵ to bring the annual volume of mutual trade up to half a billion dollars.

The beginning of 2022 showed that the two sides are confidently approaching their goal. While in 2021 the trade turnover between Belarus and Uzbekistan increased by nearly 8 percent and exceeded \$300 million, with a surplus for the Belarusian side of nearly \$190 million, "in January-February 2022 the trade turnover totaled \$53.5 million and increased by 9.9 percent compared to the level of the corresponding period in 2021"²⁶. Trade and investments are expected to increase further, primarily through the implementation of joint cooperation projects.

It should be noted that 103 organizations with Belarusian investments have already been registered in Uzbekistan, as well as representative offices of Avtopromsnabspedition LLC, Softclub LLC, AmantisMed LLC, and Belvitunifarm LLC. One assembly plant of Belarusian equipment with participation of Belarusian capital - JV LLC AMKODOR-AGROTEXMASH was set up there. In particular, "production of loaders has been established on the basis of the Tashkent Tractor Plant, which indicates the demand for these

²⁵ Roman Golovchenko: Belarus and Uzbekistan can increase trade and investment, growth points found [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/10260>

²⁶ Belarus and Uzbekistan intensify the implementation of production and cooperation projects [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-uzbekistan-aktivizirufut-realizatsiiu-proizvodstvenno-kooperatsionnyh-proektov-495026-2022/>

products in the local and regional market"²⁷. In addition, cooperation between MAZ and KRANTAS GROUP, MTZ and Uzavtosanoat in the production of motor vehicles and tractors continues. And the Marko company is implementing a joint footwear production project in Uzbekistan. Svetlogorsk plant of welding electrodes is implementing an investment project in this country to produce welding electrodes. For this purpose in Tashkent is created IE LLC "MONOLITH ASIA"²⁸. And these ties continue to be actively strengthened.

In April 2022, the official distributor of the Minsk Automobile Plant in this Central Asian country, MAZ-TASHKENT Ltd. - has set up the industrial assembly of MAZ vehicles from CKO kits. "The first model was the MAZ-5337 chassis. The localization of the assembly plant in Uzbekistan will allow Minsk Automobile Plant to expand its presence in the market of the Central Asian countries and in perspective - Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan"²⁹. During the Uzbek-Belarusian business forum held in April in Tashkent, the MAZ distributor "signed a contract with OLIY TEXNIK for the purchase of 41 MAZ trucks. <...> The contract amount exceeded \$3 million"³⁰.

The Minsk Tractor Plant is also actively increasing its presence in the Uzbek market, having increased its machinery supplies by

²⁷ Machinery, equipment, scientific and technical developments. What Belarus will present at the exhibition in Tashkent [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/comments/view/tehnika-oborudovanie-nauchno-technicheskie-razrabotki-cto-belarus-prezentuet-na-vystavke-v-tashkente-8158/>.

²⁸ Roman Golovchenko: Belarus-Uzbekistan trade turnover needs to increase to at least \$500 million [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/10257>

²⁹ Minsk Automobile Plant has set up machinery assembly in Uzbekistan [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/minskij-avtozavod-naladil-sborku-tehniki-v-uzbekistane-496181-2022/>.

³⁰ "MAZ-Tashkent has signed a major contract with an Uzbek company to supply 41 vehicles [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/maz-tashkent-podpisal-krupnyj-kontrakt-s-uzbekskoj-kompaniej-na-postavku-41-avtomobilja-498224-2022/>

almost a quarter in the first quarter of 2022. "In total, more than \$10 million worth of machinery was shipped"³¹. It is interesting that during the entire year of 2021, \$31 million worth of Belarusian tractors were shipped to the Uzbek partners. And in late April and early May, a sales and service centre for Belarusian agricultural machinery was opened in Tashkent, which combines "a showroom and sales centre, a service centre and production facilities"³². The bank's branch is also located here and focuses on providing lending and leasing services. It is noteworthy that the Belarusian side plans to open similar centres in other Uzbek regions.

Belarus-Uzbekistan cooperation in the implementation of joint projects in medicine is also very promising. One of them is Belfarm, a joint venture to produce antibiotics, which has already invested over USD 8 million. In addition, the Belarusian side has offered its partners to set up a joint venture for blood processing. An important detail: "Today the organizations of the Belfarmprom holding have 166 registration certificates for medicines in Uzbekistan. Members of the holding have signed 12 contracts with Uzbek partners for supplies of pharmaceutical products. By the end of 2021 the export of products of the Belfarmprom holding companies to Uzbekistan amounted to \$14 million, in January-February 2022 - \$3 million"³³.

If we talk about other prospects for cooperation, there are several other areas. One of them concerns electric transport. The fact is that "Tashkent is considering resuming the tram service. The

³¹ MTZ increased its machinery deliveries to Uzbekistan by more than 23% in the first quarter [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/mtz-v-i-kvartale-narastil-postavki-tehniki-v-uzbekistan-bole-chem-na-23-499321-2022/>.

³² A sales and service centre for Belarusian agricultural machinery has opened in Tashkent [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/tsentr-prodazh-i-servisnogo-obsluzhivaniya-beloruskoj-selhoztehniki-otkrylsja-v-tashkente-499290-2022/>

³³ Belarus and Uzbekistan discuss deepening cooperation in the pharmaceutical industry [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-uzbekistan-obsuzhdaiut-uglublenie-sotrudnichestva-v-farmotrasli-49-8163-2022/>.

Belarusian side is ready to provide comprehensive solutions with the necessary infrastructure, planning and supply of rolling stock"³⁴ . If the decision on this matter is made, then the creation of a joint production facility on the Uzbek land will become realistic. The issue of supplying wooden houses from Belarus to Uzbekistan, where "it is a very fashionable trend now <...>, there is very great demand"³⁵ . There may be good prospects for the Belarusian newsprint factory, which has an assembly line production of such houses.

In the same context, it should be remembered that at the end of April 2022, the parties considered "the possibility of organising supplies of Belarusian peat substrates to the forestry industries of Uzbekistan for further use as a basis for the cultivation of plantation seedlings"³⁶ . Given the considerable experience of Belarusian peat companies in this area, and the export of the peat industry of Beltopgaz increased by more than a quarter in 2021, it can be predicted that Uzbekistan will become the 25th country to supply Belarusian peat as early as this year.

Belarusian light industry enterprises, which produce worsted, linen, synthetic and artificial fabrics with various properties, pile fabrics, corsetry and hosiery, see their prospects for increasing supplies of demanded products to the Uzbek market. These are Orsha flax mill, Mogotex and Kamvol, which became participants of the 4th international textile and fashion industry exhibition UzTextileExpo Spring 2022 held in April 2022 in Tashkent. They were joined by

³⁴ Roman Golovchenko: Belarus-Uzbekistan trade turnover needs to increase to at least \$500 million [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/10257>

³⁵ Golovchenko: Belarus is working on supplying wooden houses to Uzbekistan [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/golovchenko-belarus-prorabatvvaet-postavki-v-uzbekistan-derevj-annyh-domov-49-8185-2022/>

³⁶ Belarus interested in supplying peat substrates to Uzbekistan [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-zainteresovana-v-postavkah-torfianyh-substratov-v-uzbekistan-499019-2022/>

another five Belarusian chemical and petrochemical enterprises, which demonstrated to the numerous visitors of the business forum "man-made and chemical fibers for textile production, technical textiles for construction, polymer products, chemicals and fertilizers for agriculture, glass fiber"³⁷. In short, everything that arouses increased interest among the partners from Uzbekistan and could become the basis for new contracts.

Speaking about the participation of Belarusian exporters in foreign exhibitions, it should be noted that in 2021, when participating in exhibitions and forums organized by Belinterexpo, an exhibition company of the Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, they signed 86 agreements and contracts worth over \$80 million. At the same time, "agreements and contracts worth \$15 million were signed as part of the national expositions"³⁸. It is important to note that the national expositions organized as part of the Uzbekistan exhibitions - "INNOPROM. The Great Industrial Week and UzProdExpo/UzAgroExpo.

Speaking about the first of these, it should be noted that the "Great Industrial Week in Uzbekistan", held in April 2021 in Tashkent, was the largest event in this Central Asian country after a break caused by the pandemic. The exhibition then brought together "over 200 companies working in the fields of mechanical engineering, metallurgy, energy, pharmaceuticals, chemical industry and medicine from Armenia, Belarus, China, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Turkey, Uzbekistan,

³⁷ Belarusian light industry enterprises present their potential in Uzbekistan [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belorussskie-predpriyatija-legkoj-promyshlennosti-prezentujut-svoj-potentsial-v-uzbekistane-498369-2022/>

³⁸ Domestic enterprises signed contracts worth \$80 million at Belinterexpo forums and exhibitions [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/na-forumah-i-vystavkah-belinterekspos-otechestvennye-predpriatia-podpisali-kontrakty-na-80-mln-476100-2021/>

and the EAEC countries and Central Asia"³⁹. The Belarusian pavilion included 65 companies and organizations exhibiting engineering, metallurgy, chemical, pharmaceutical products, medical equipment, scientific developments and consumer goods. One of the concrete results of their participation in this exhibition was "signing of a letter of intent by a subsidiary of Minsk Automobile Plant in Uzbekistan, MAZ-Tashkent LLC, to supply chassis and vehicle assembly kits to the Uzbek market for \$10 million. Also a contract was concluded with a private Uzbek company to supply 50 MAZ vehicles for the total amount of \$3 million"⁴⁰. It is interesting that in April 2022 the Uzbek exhibition was held under a new name, "INNOPROM. Central Asia, and included six thematic sections: mechanical engineering, metallurgy, energy, chemicals, industrial automation, pharmaceuticals and medicine. There was also a plenary session entitled "Central Asia. The Space of Technological Breakthrough" and specialized sessions on infrastructure projects, logistics, financial instruments, and education. Belarusian participation in this business forum was no less representative due to the fact that "Belarusian exports to Uzbekistan have grown sixfold in five years. Machinery from Belarus (tractors and tractor units, trucks), chemical products, foodstuffs, ferrous and nonferrous metals, energy resources, and oil products are in the highest demand. In total, Belarus supplies 360 commodity items of all industries to Uzbekistan"⁴¹.

³⁹ More than 20 Belarusian enterprises took part in a major industrial exhibition in Uzbekistan [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/bolee-20-belorusskikh-predpriyatii-priniali-uchastie-v-krupnoi-promyshlennoi-vystavke-v-uzbekistane-436286-2021/>

⁴⁰ Zalesky, B. The key task is development. Collection of articles / B. Zalesky. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2021. - C. 40-41.

⁴¹ The Belarusian national pavilion will be represented at the INNOPROM' exhibition in Uzbekistan [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belorusskij-natsionalnyj-pavilion-budet-predstavlen-na-vystavke-innoprom-v-uzbekistane-480872-2022/>

As for the UzAgroExpo and UzProdExpo agricultural and food exhibitions, held in Tashkent in November 2021, they are the largest industry business forums in Uzbekistan, which this time brought together 120 companies from 18 countries. The national pavilion of Belarus, where 17 companies exhibited, demonstrated the export capabilities of domestic enterprises in three main areas: food industry; agricultural machinery; and science. The first one included beef in lingonberry sauce, soft cheese made according to the Italian technology from ricotta whey, high-quality coffee produced according to its own patented technology, peanut paste with sea salt, fruit bars made from a mixture of dried prunes, dried apples, oat flakes and syrup; protein milk chocolate with increased protein content; and "Belarusian whisky, an alcoholic blended drink made from artesian water on the basis of national cereals - rye, wheat, barley malt"⁴². Scientific developments in agro-industrial and food spheres, including technologies for rehabilitation of damaged soils, methods of production of innovative fermented milk drinks, cosmetics, have been demonstrated to numerous visitors of the exhibitions by Belarusian State University, Belarusian National Technical University, Belarusian-Russian University and Belarusian State University of Food and Chemical Technologies. Minsk Automobile Plant and Lidselmash also brought innovative equipment to the Uzbek capital, including a specially designed for the Uzbek market MAZ-65012K dump truck "with a metal body, which tilts using a hydraulic mechanism, and is designed for transportation of loose materials, including agricultural purposes"⁴³, and new modifications of a

⁴² National Pavilion of Belarus presented at exhibitions in Tashkent [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/natsionalnyi-pavilion-belarusi-predstavlen-na-vystavke-v-tashkente-471340-2021/>.

⁴³ Minsk Automobile Plant presented a new gas-powered dump truck at an exhibition in

cultivator for cotton cultivation - the most popular crop in this Central Asian country. A concrete result of the work at these exhibitions was "an agreement between the official distributor of the Minsk automobile plant in Uzbekistan the company MAZ-Tashkent and the enterprise Nurafshon Maxsus Texnika on the delivery of machinery products to the amount of \$1 million"⁴⁴. At the Uzbekistan-Belarus agrarian forum, agreements were reached on construction and reconstruction of a dairy complex using Belarusian technologies on Uzbek soil.

Another important area of interaction between the two countries is the intensification of partnership Belarusian-Uzbek regional ties, which are becoming one of the most important areas for the development of cooperation in the current environment. The I Forum of Belarusian and Uzbek Regions, which was held in Minsk in July 2019 and opened up new opportunities for partnership in such areas as industrial cooperation, agro-industrial complex and food industry, and brought together "over two hundred representatives of such regions as Andijan, Bukhara, Djizak, Namangan, Samarkand, Khorezm, Fergana and Tashkent regions" from the Uzbek side alone.

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On the Belarusian side, one of the active participants in this forum was the Vitebsk Region, whose positive dynamics of trade and economic cooperation with its Uzbek partners has been observed over the past few years. Suffice it to say that in 2019, Uzbekistan joined

Uzbekistan [Electronic resource]. -2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/mmskii-avtozavod-predstavil-novyi-gazovyi-samosval-na-vystavke-v-uzbekistane-471501-2021/>.

⁴⁴ MAZ has signed a \$1 million contract to supply machinery to Uzbekistan [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/maz-podpisal-kontrakt-na-postavku-tehniki-v-uzbekistan-na-1-mln-471344-2021/>.

⁴⁵ Zalesky, B. Sustainability as a growth formula. Features of international cooperation based on the innovation component / B. Zalesky. - Palmarium Academic Publishing, 2021. - C. 37.

the list of Vitebsk Region's key partners among the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States. Then the foreign trade turnover between the parties increased by more than a quarter and exceeded nine million dollars. Exports from the Belarusian region "grew by half to \$6.7 million. Food exports amounted to \$0.9 million, or 13.4% of the total. <...> Cheese and dairy products from the Postavy Dairy Plant, Verkhnedvinsk Butter and Cheese Plant, Polotsk Dairy Plant, as well as meat products from the Vitebsk meat processing plant are already familiar to Uzbek consumers and are in good demand with them.⁴⁶ . In addition, baby food, a wide range of vaccines to combat pet diseases and pharmaceuticals were successfully supplied to the Uzbek market from the Vitebsk Region at that time.

In 2021, Belarus' trade with Central Asia exceeded USD 12.5 million, with Vitebsk's export reaching almost USD 10 million, including medicines, cattle meat, dried milk and whey, butter, cheese, as well as polyethylene, plastic and fiberglass products, and fiber optic cables. In addition, a joint venture of the Marko leather and footwear holding company has been launched on Uzbek soil. Other manufacturing cooperation projects are on the horizon. In particular, since 2020 the Vitebsk Oblast has been holding talks on opening a joint venture with BelVitunifarm in Uzbekistan, which will initially sell drugs and later will start manufacturing them. A representative office of the Belarusian manufacturer of veterinary drugs was opened in Tashkent in December 2021. And already "financing issues of the project are being worked out in order to reach the sales of drugs in the

⁴⁶ Tikhonov, A. Belarus-Uzbekistan Agrarian Forum: afterword / A. Tikhonov // [Electronic resource]. - 2019. - URL: <https://produkt.by/story/belorusско-uzbekskiy-agrarnyy-forum-posleslovie>

amount of \$2 million per year"⁴⁷ .

Other promising areas of cooperation between enterprises of the region and its Uzbek partners in March 2022 included deliveries of fruit and vegetable and meat and dairy products, as well as cooperation in such segments of the industrial sector as mechanical engineering, energy, chemical and gas industries. A significant role here should be played by the activation of partnership relations between the Vitebsk Region and a number of Uzbek regions, especially Namangan Oblast. The fact is that Vitebsk and Namangan regions signed an agreement on cooperation in trade, economic, scientific, technical and cultural areas in July 2019 within the framework of the First Forum of Regions of Belarus and Uzbekistan, which has already been mentioned above. This document should help build mutually beneficial trade and economic ties between enterprises and organizations of the regions, provide "comprehensive support to business structures in the conclusion of mutually acceptable contracts for the supply of goods and services. It also deals with joint business seminars, exhibitions and fairs with the participation of representatives of entrepreneurial and business circles"⁴⁸ .

The agreement on cooperation between the administrations of free economic zones (FEZ) Vitebsk and Cosonsoy-Pharm, signed at the same time, is also intended to expand possible areas of trade, economic and investment cooperation between the Belarusian and Uzbek regions, which not only creates a basis for sharing experience and promoting partnerships between FEZ residents, but also forms the

⁴⁷ Pushnyakova, A. Uzbekistan can become a springboard for Vitebsk Oblast enterprises to supply Asia / A. Pushnyakova // [Electronic resource]. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/uzbekistan-mozhet-stat-dlia-predpriatii-vitebskoi-oblasti-tramplinom- dlj a-postavok-v-azij u-491940-2022/>

⁴⁸ Namangan region will cooperate with Vitebsk [Electronic resource]. - 2019. - URL: <https://nampravda.uz/ekonomika/namanganskaya oblast budet sotrudnichat s vitebskom.html>

basis for the parties to pool their capacities in conducting joint activities. Note that Cosonsoy-Pharm was among seven pharmaceutical FEZs established in May 2017 in six Uzbek regions. In addition, "Nukus-pharm" appeared then in Karakalpakstan, "Zomin-pharm" in Jizzak province, <...> Sirdaryo-pharm in Syrdarya province, "Boysun-pharm" in Surkhandarya province and "Bustonlikpharm" and "Parkentpharm" in Tashkent province"⁴⁹ . They are subject to special tax, customs and currency regimes. They all specialise in the development of companies in the pharmaceutical field. Several FEZ "Vitebsk" residents are also engaged in this sphere. That is why "attraction of investments into projects on creation of production of medicines, medical products is one of the most promising directions of cooperation between the administrations of the two FEZs"⁵⁰ . And there is every reason to believe that this interaction between the Belarusian and Uzbek free economic zones will further strengthen the emerging partnership between the Vitebsk and Namangan regions.

The documents that were signed in April 2022 during the visit of the Belarusian governmental delegation to Tashkent can also be used to identify other areas of Belarus-Uzbekistan cooperation in the very near future. Thus, the Ministry of Innovation Development of Uzbekistan signed a memorandum on cooperation with the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus and the executive program of scientific, technical and innovation cooperation for 2022-2023 with the State Committee on Science and Technology of Belarus. Two

⁴⁹ Seven pharmaceutical FEZs are being established in Uzbekistan [Electronic resource]. - 2017. - URL: <https://www.gazeta.uz/ru/2017/05/05/pharm/>.

⁵⁰ FEZ Vitebsk and Uzbek Cosonsoy-Pharm will develop investment cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2019. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/sez-vitebsk-i-uzbekskaja-kosonsoj-farm-budut-razvivat-investitsionoe-sotrudnichestvo-352766-2019/>

significant documents have also been signed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Food of Belarus: a memorandum of understanding - with the State Committee of Veterinary and Livestock Development of Uzbekistan; a road map for further development of cooperation in agricultural science, education and innovation development for 2022-2023 - with the Ministry of Agriculture of Uzbekistan, which in turn also signed a memorandum of understanding with the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus on further development of scientific and technological. Finally, an agreement on cooperation in the field of livestock breeding was signed by Belplemzhivodobstvo and the Uzbekchoryvanasl agency.

Back in the autumn of 2018, Belarus and Uzbekistan signed an intergovernmental agreement on social and economic cooperation for 2019-2023, which "reflects key agreements at the highest level to develop Belarusian-Uzbek relations and bring them to a qualitatively new level"⁵¹. As we can see, the parties are fulfilling the tasks set forth in this document very actively and successfully.

⁵¹ Zalessky, B. Vector of post-Soviet integration. A view from Belarus / B. Zalessky. - Palmarium Academic Publishing, 2019. - C. 228.

Great Stone Industrial Park: Development with a focus on new technologies

The results of the Chinese-Belarusian Industrial Park "Great Stone" in 2021 eloquently testify to the fact that this special economic zone in Belarus continues to develop steadily, attracting new technologies to investment projects. At the end of 2021, 85 residents were registered here. By early 2022 "more than \$718 million had already been invested in the park, with 37 companies producing products, conducting research and development, and providing services. Great Stone's enterprises have created more than 1,700 jobs <...>. Exports have also increased - by almost 17% compared to 2020. Deliveries are made to 20 countries around the world."⁵² . In the last days of 2021, Belarus-based SinRubEnego LLC became the 85th resident with a research project in the field of creating digital energy facilities and a smart city. "The company will develop integrated automation and dispatching systems"⁵³ .

With the arrival of 2022, the industrial park has continued to work actively both to increase the number of residents and the volume of their economic activity. Thus, as of mid-April 2022, 89 residents from 15 countries had "already registered here. The volume of announced investments amounts to \$1.24 billion, of which more than \$750 million have already been invested in the park's development. Residents have created over 1.8 thousand new jobs. In addition, almost half of the companies have commenced operations in the

⁵² Yaroshenko: Great Stone's enterprises supply products to 20 countries worldwide [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/iaroshenko-predpriatiia-velikogo-kamnia-postavliaiut-produktsiiu-v-20-stran-mira-479114-2022/>.

⁵³ A new Great Stone resident will build digital energy facilities [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novyi-rezident-velikogo-kamnia-zaimetsia-sozdaniem-tsifrovyyh-energoob'ektov-477402-2021/>

park"⁵⁴ .

The 86th resident of the industrial park in March 2022 was Bel Samoed Cloud Scientific and Technical Company LLC, which "will develop digital financial technologies and mobile payment systems. There are also plans to create an e-commerce centre in Belarus and provide services in this area to Belarusian and Chinese companies"⁵⁵ . An important detail: the initiator of this project is one of the largest cloud solution providers in China - Samoyed Cloud Technology Group Holdings Limited.

April 2022 was a particularly fruitful year for Great Stone in terms of new resident registrations. Earlier this month, for instance, the 87th resident was Hong Kong-based YuZZYu Science and Technology Company Ltd, whose founder works in product targeting and branding and has branches in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Chongqing, Hangzhou and Wuhan. The new resident "plans to create a digital promotion centre to organise e-commerce using Internet marketing technologies"⁵⁶ , will cooperate with Belarusian manufacturers to promote their goods in China and intends to provide training on e-commerce organisation.

A little later, the 88th resident, the Belarusian company CUBI RND LLC, registered in the industrial park with an investment project to produce equipment and components for modular construction of

⁵⁴ Yakimov, P . "Great Stone" opens broad opportunities for strengthening cooperation between Belarus and China / P. Yakimov // [Electronic resource]. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/comments/view/velikii-kamen-otkryvaet-shirokie-vozmozhnosti-dlia-ukrepleniia-sotrudnichestva-belarusi-i-kitai-a-8150/>

⁵⁵ A new Great Stone resident will take care of digital technologies and mobile payment systems [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novyi-rezident-velikogo-kamnia-zaimetsia-tsifrovymi-tehnologijami-i-sistemami-mobilnyh-platzhei-490657-2022/>

⁵⁶ Great Stone's new resident will take on digital promotion [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novyi-rezident-velikogo-kamnia-zaimetsia-tsifrovym-prodvizheniem-tovarov-493650-2022/>.

smart houses. "The production is based on the innovative Cuby technology, which is the company's own development. It makes it possible to produce high-tech constructions with high environmental characteristics."⁵⁷ . It is expected that 90 percent of the products produced in Velikiy Kamen by the new resident will be exported.

Finally, another Belarusian company, HomeLand Group LLC, became the 89th resident and plans to manufacture multifunctional noise-proof AeroCapsule cabins with an automated control system based on the Internet of Things - a data transfer concept - in the industrial park. Interestingly, this project won second place in the national innovation competition in 2021. The aero-capsules, created using smart technology and equipped with innovative embedded features, "can be widely used in open-air offices, airports, shopping centres, production plants, and allow the creation of optimal conditions for rest and work"⁵⁸

An important focus of Great Stone is the creation of sub-parks, understood as the arrival of not just one investor, but a pool of iconic companies led by a separate management company, which opens up broad prospects for large corporations. Cooperation with the Chinese province of Guangdong is particularly good in this regard. As a reminder, "back in January 2017 in its administrative centre, Guangzhou, there was a signing ceremony to establish the China (Guangdong) LED Sub-Park in the Great Stone Industrial Park, as well as five more documents on the intention of specific companies to join this sub-park"⁵⁹ . Today, this sub-park already has 15 residents

⁵⁷ A new Great Stone resident will start producing equipment for smart homes [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novyj-rezident-velikogo-kamnja-nachnet-vypuskat-oborudovanie-dlja-umnyh-domov-495324-2022/>

⁵⁸ A new Great Stone resident will produce innovative aero-capsules [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novyj-rezident-velikogo-kamnja-budet-proizvodit-innovatsionnye-aerokapsuly-495913-2022/>

⁵⁹ Zalessky, B.L. "Great Stone": perspective development - subparks / B.L. Zalessky // Materials

specialising in areas such as LED product manufacturing, integrated logistics, electric transport, unmanned systems and R&D. A joint innovation centre set up by the Guangdong Provincial Academy of Sciences and the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus will soon be added to them, focusing on research and development "in industrial and digital technologies, as well as new materials, biotechnologies and pharmaceuticals"⁶⁰ . So in this direction, too, we see the successful implementation of the plans outlined a few years ago.

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of the XVI International scientific and practical conference "Science and civilization - 2020", 30 January - 07 February, 2020. Economic sciences. : Sheffield. Science and education LTD. - C. 21.

⁶⁰ Yakimov, P. The Great Stone opens broad opportunities for strengthening cooperation between Belarus and China / P. Yakimov // [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/comments/view/velikij-kamen-otkryvaet-shirokie-vozmozhnosti-dlja-ukreplenija-sotrudnichestva-belarusi-i-kitaj-a-8150/>.

Belarus-Vietnam: from trust and respect to joint economic projects

The year 2022 marks the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Belarus and Vietnam. This Southeast Asian country is among those with which the Belarusian side is developing large-scale engagement in all areas of bilateral cooperation, and "diversification of trade and deepening economic cooperation with them is an important prerequisite for the growth of the export-oriented Belarusian economy"⁶¹. This is evidenced, in particular, by the fact that in 2021, in order to expand its diplomatic presence in the financial and industrial centres of the Asian continent, the Belarusian government decided to open a consulate general in the Vietnamese city of Ho Chi Minh City.

It should be reminded that last year the trade turnover between the two countries exceeded 200 million dollars. "Belarus exported potash fertilizers, livestock products, instrumentation products, medicines and cosmetics"⁶². And in terms of development of industrial cooperation in the province of Hung Yen "key Belarusian-Vietnamese projects are being implemented, including the assembly of MAZ trucks (JV Maz Asia LLC) and production of dairy products from Belarusian raw materials (Au Viet Milk)"⁶³. The entry into force in 2021 of "an additional protocol to the industrial assembly agreement with Vietnam, which creates favorable conditions for

⁶¹ Zaleski, B. Regional community journalism. Theory and practice / B. Zaleski. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing GmbH & Co. KG, 2013. - C. 99-100.

⁶² Vietnamese ambassador sees potential for doubling trade turnover with Belarus [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/posol-vjetnama-vidit-potencial-dlja-udvoenija-tovarooborota-s-belarusju-493021-2022/>.

⁶³ Belarus and Vietnam discuss prospects for developing joint ventures [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/belarus-i-vjetnam-obsudili-perspektivy-razvitiya-sovmestnyh-predpriyatij-478965-2022/>.

localization and development of the assembly production of MAZ"⁶⁴ became important in this connection. And the supply of Belarusian tractors to work in Vietnam's rice fields and quarry machinery of the Belarusian Automobile Plant is under development. In addition, Vietnam is interested in organizing the production of fire-fighting equipment and protective clothing for fire-fighting services using Belarusian technologies. Specifically, in April 2022, the two sides already discussed "practical steps for cooperation in the organization of joint production of Belarusian special-purpose machinery in Vietnam, as well as the manufacture of outfits for Vietnamese firefighting services"⁶⁵.

Another area of Belarusian-Vietnamese engagement that is likely to become significantly more active in 2022 is food supplies from Belarus. Back in 2020, after all the stages of approval and certification, Belarus started fully-fledged work on supplies of Belarusian dairy products to Vietnam. Similar efforts are now underway to certify Belarusian meat products - pork and beef - in the Vietnamese market. And there is every reason to believe that 2022 will become a kind of "reference point" in the development of this type of Belarusian export. The stand of the Belgospisheprom concern at the 31st international exhibition Vietnan Expo - one of the largest in the region of the Asian continent, held in April 2022 and attended by over 350 companies from 16 countries including Russia, China, the United States, Japan, India, Sri Lanka, Indonesia and Cuba - will give an idea of what Belarus will soon export to this

⁶⁴ Review of the Foreign Policy of the Republic of Belarus and the Activity of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2021 [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://mfa.gov.by/publication/reports/c0b615e3c82db7a8.html>

⁶⁵ Belarus and Vietnam are working on the possibility of joint production of equipment for fire services [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/belarus-i-vietnam-prorabatyvaiut-vozmozhnost-sovmestnogo-proizvodstva-ekipirovki-dlia-pozhamyh-sluzhb-494398-2022/>

Southeastern Asian country. The following 13 enterprises of the Concern "presented their products in Hanoi: Krintsa, Belsolod, Spartak, Minskkrystall, Minsk Sparkling Wine Factory, Slodych, Kommunarka, Krasny Pospelik, Mashpischeprod, Lidapischkontsy, Malorit cannery, Minsk Margarine Factory and Pinsk Winery"⁶⁶. And not just presented. For example, Belsolod OJSC even signed a contract to supply light malt with the Trust & Future Viet Nam Joint Stock Company.

It should be noted that the Belarusian national exposition received the "Special Guest" status at this exhibition, which "implies central placement in the exhibition hall, active advertising and information support and large-scale congress events, including the Belarusian-Vietnamese business forum"⁶⁷, the purpose of which is to find business partners and conclude export contracts. The status has been quite opportune for the scientific and technical section of the Belarusian exposition, where more than a hundred innovations in the field of hi-tech equipment have been presented, and about 30 of them were developed by the Belarusian State University - food additives, pharmaceuticals, technological equipment. Among them are "Cisplacel", "Prospidelong", "Temodex" anti-tumour drugs, aimed at combating malignant tumours of the head, neck and stomach cancers, and the medical unit for general hyperthermia "Ptich-M" for the treatment of oncological diseases of internal organs⁶⁸. An innovative

⁶⁶ Belgospisheprom's enterprises presented their products at an exhibition in Vietnam [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/predpriyatija-belgospisheproma-predstavili-produktsiju-na-vystavke-vo-vietname-495887-2022/>.

⁶⁷ A national exposition of Belarus will be presented at the Vietnam Expo in April [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/natsionalnaja-ekspozitsija-belarusi-budet-predstavlena-na-vietnam-expo-v-aprele-485336-2022/>.

⁶⁸ About 30 S&T developments will be presented by BSU at the International Exhibition VietnamExpo-2022 [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/okolo-30-nauchno-technicheskikh-razrabotok-predstavit-bgu-na-mezhdunarodnoj-vystavke-vietnamexpo-2022-495450-2022/>.

series of biopreparations for the treatment and prevention of diseases in farm animals also attracted the attention of visitors to the exhibition. Finally, another exhibition novelty of BSU specialists is Smart Windows. This invention, which has no analogues in the former Soviet Union, protects the room from sunlight, the penetration of ultraviolet radiation and partially blocks the infrared, which allows you to do without curtains and blinds. As we can see, the Belarusian side has something to offer to its Vietnamese partners in the field of scientific and technical and innovative developments, which, no doubt, will be reflected in new contracts.

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Belarus-Vietnam: aiming to expand scientific and technical cooperation

In March 2022 the 15th meeting of the Belarus-Vietnam intergovernmental commission on trade, economic, scientific and technical cooperation was held. The commission set specific directions of further interaction for 2022-2023 in virtually all spheres of the bilateral partnership, including science and technology, where many interesting results have been achieved over the past 30 years.

Scientific and technological cooperation between Belarus and Vietnam is based on the intergovernmental agreement on scientific and technological cooperation of June 5, 1995. The legal framework in this area already includes a number of agreements in various spheres of scientific and technological cooperation. And it continues to expand. In 2020, the National Economic University of Hanoi conducted a study, which showed that "scientific and technical organizations and enterprises of Vietnam are most interested in the following forms of cooperation with Belarus: exchange of scientific and technical information; exchange of specialists; implementation of joint scientific and technical projects; technology transfer"⁶⁹.

⁷⁰The fact that the Belarusian exposition at the 31st international exhibition Vietnam Expo in Hanoi in April 2022 included more than a hundred innovations in hi-tech equipment, about 30 of which were developed by the Belarusian State University - food supplements, pharmaceutical products, technological equipment -

⁶⁹ Potential BSUIR partners in Vietnam [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://iti.bsuir.by/files/science/%D0%9F%D0%B0%D1%80%D1%82%D0%BD%D0%B5%D1%80%D1%8B%20%D0%B2%D0%BE%20%D0%92%D1%8C%D0%B5%D1%82%D0%BD%D0%B0%D0%BC%D0%B5.pdf>

⁷⁰ Zalesky, B.L. From trust and respect to joint economic projects / B.L. Zalesky // Materials of the XVIII International scientific and practical conference "Cutting-edge science - 2022", April 30 - May 7, 2022: Sheffield. Science and education LTD. - C. 42.

attests to the importance of cooperation with this South-East Asian country in the field of science and technology. The Belarusian State University is one of the co-founders of the Belarusian-Vietnamese Innovation and Education Centre established in 2012 together with Binh Duong University and Vietnamese company Venture Capital & Equity Investment Holding Inc. Since then there have been implemented joint projects in priority directions of scientific and technological activities, aimed at "expanding and deepening scientific knowledge, being innovative in design and research methods, having scientific and practical importance"⁷¹. Among them are "Creating a composition of cellulolytic strains effective for degradation of plant residues", "Investigation of possibilities to obtain new fermented products from vegetable raw materials of Vietnam", "Cross-cultural differences in perception of visual-image information between Belarusian and Vietnamese businessmen". The Belarusian State University of Informatics and Radioelectronics, whose partners are the Ho Chi Minh Polytechnic University, Le Quy Don State Technical University, Hanoi University of Technology, Hanoi Power University, the Research Institute of Electronics, Information Technology and Automation of Vietnam, the Institute of Tropical Technologies of the Vietnam Academy of Sciences, Binh Duong University, are very actively cooperating with the Vietnamese side.

Active work on the establishment of joint research centres and laboratories with Vietnamese partners in the most promising fields is also underway at the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus (NASB), which by spring 2022 had "jointly implemented over 100

⁷¹ Belarusian-Vietnamese Innovation, Education and Science and Technology Centre [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: http://research.bsu.by/innovative-activity/int_sci_tech_cooperation/inter-innov-centre/belvietnam-centre/

projects and published about 150 scientific papers"⁷². In April 2022 the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus and the Vietnamese Academy of Science and Technology agreed to develop a roadmap of scientific and technical cooperation, which will include promising research areas of mutual interest. The first stage of this cooperation will be to activate the work of already existing joint structures. These include a joint centre for the development and production of technologies in the field of instrumentation and mechanical engineering, energy and chemical products, as well as a joint technology transfer centre and a joint laboratory on laser physics, engineering and technology. The parties are also discussing the possibility of creating new entities, one of which could become a Belarusian-Vietnamese tropical research and technology centre, where the Belarusian side could partner with the Central Botanical Gardens of the National Academy of Sciences. In the future, they are planning to start working on a dozen of new projects, from nanoindustry, composite materials and additive technologies, mechanical engineering, mechatronics and robotics to functional food and medicinal products, and a wide range of bio-products. A special role here should be played by new materials, which are the future in various spheres of the economy"⁷³. Annual grant competitions for scientific projects also play an important role in enhancing cooperation between Belarus and Vietnam in the field of science and technology. Three of them were held at once in 2020: the Joint Contest of Basic Research Projects of the National Academy of

⁷² On a meeting at the Vietnamese Academy of Science and Technology [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://vietnam.mfa.gov.by/ru/embassy/news/ceca12ba12b7979e.html>

⁷³ Scientists of Belarus and Vietnam to develop a roadmap for scientific and technical cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/uchenye-belarusi-i-vietnama-razrabotajut-dorozhnuju-kartu-nauchno-technicheskogo-sotrudnichestva-497257-2022/>.

Sciences of Belarus and the Vietnamese Academy of Science and Technology "NASB (BRFFI)-VANT-2021"; the Joint Belarusian-Vietnamese Scientific Projects Contest "BRFFI-VANT-2021"; the Belarusian-Vietnamese Scientific and Technical Projects Contest for 2021-2022 under the aegis of the State Committee on Science and Technology of Belarus and the Ministry of Science and Technology of Vietnam. The experience has shown that this partnership format should only be developed to open up new opportunities of scientific search.

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Belarus-Indonesia: cooperation with a focus on creativity

In April 2022, the seventh meeting of the Belarus-Indonesia Joint Commission for Trade, Economic and Technical Cooperation was held. The two sides discussed topical issues of the bilateral partnership "with a focus on the development of cooperation in the areas of industry, agriculture, pharmaceuticals, education, tourism, digital economy, and creative industries"⁷⁴. Recall that the sixth meeting of this commission was held in Jakarta in October 2017. At that time it was agreed "to intensify trade, economic and investment cooperation between the countries, including the prospects for increasing supplies of MAZ, BelAZ and MTZ products to Indonesia"⁷⁵.

Many facts show that the Indonesian market is very promising for the Belarusian side. Firstly, 270 million people now live here. Secondly, "Indonesia is an industrial and agricultural country, where more than half of the gross domestic product comes from industry, agriculture and fishing, where the main industries are oil and gas processing, metallurgy, machine building, chemical, food and textile industries"⁷⁶. And which is very interested in a significant increase in economic cooperation with Belarus, in increasing the supply of potassium chloride, automotive and tractor machinery, and dairy products from our country. In November 2019, at the Belarusian-Indonesian forum held in Minsk, which was attended by more than 30

⁷⁴ On the Seventh Session of the Belarus-Indonesia Joint Commission on Trade, Economic and Technical Cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/ee2bb4e24073dbac.html

⁷⁵ Belarus and Indonesia agree to intensify trade and investment cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2017. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-indonezija-dogovorilis-aktivizirovat-torgovoe-i-investitsionnoe-vzaimodejstvie-271768-2017/>

⁷⁶ Zaleski, B. Partnership Journalism. Theory and practice / B. Zaleski. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing GmbH & Co. KG, 2013. - C. 69.

enterprises and organizations from the two countries, it was noted that "the government's goal to reach \$1 billion in mutual trade turnover between Belarus and Indonesia is quite realistic for the near future"⁷⁷

It is true that in 2020 the volume of mutual trade between the countries was only 181 million dollars, which, according to the parties, was not in line with the partnership's existing potential. But already then 25 new items were supplied to the Indonesian market. In 2021 the trade turnover already reached 232.3 million dollars with the share of Belarusian exports exceeding two hundred million dollars. At the same time there was "a more than twofold increase in non-resource exports to Indonesia, including more than fourfold increase in dairy products"⁷⁸. So a further increase of Belarusian-Indonesian trade turnover remains a priority area for bilateral cooperation that should be filled with new content. This was the main topic of the seventh session of the Joint committee, which adopted the Action plan for key areas of cooperation for 2022-2023; decided to establish a working group in the field of agriculture, the first meeting of which will be held during the Belagro-2022 international agricultural exhibition; agreed to hold a major meeting in 2023, which will mark the 30th anniversary of Belarusian-Indonesian diplomatic relations.

It should be noted that the signed memorandums have complemented the contractual legal base of bilateral relations, which already consists of over 30 documents, in the area that is extremely relevant for the Belarusian side today. The first memorandum signed

⁷⁷ Bel'PSH: Increasing trade with Indonesia to \$1 billion is a realistic near-term goal [Electronic resource]. - 2019. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/beltpu-uvelichenie-tovarooborota-s-indoneziej-do-1-mlrd-realnaja-zadacha-na-blizhajshuju-perspektivu-368953-2019/>.

⁷⁸ Trade and economic relations with the Republic of Indonesia [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: [http://indonesia.mfa.gov.by/be/bilateral relations/trade economic/](http://indonesia.mfa.gov.by/be/bilateral%20relations/trade%20economic/)

by the State Committee for Standardization of the Republic of Belarus (Gosstandart) and Indonesian National Agency for Standardization stipulates not only exchange of information and experience, but also implementation of joint activities and projects. In particular, the Belarusian side is interested in official dissemination of national Indonesian standards in Belarus. The second document signed by Belarus State Standard and Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs concerns cooperation in the field of quality assurance of halal products and readiness of the Belarusian partners "to demonstrate to their colleagues from Indonesia the halal quality infrastructure created in the country, to confirm the possibility of implementing Indonesian requirements for halal products and conduct necessary conformity assessment procedures in Belarus"⁷⁹. An important detail: the only halal certification body in our country - BelHalal Ltd. - has already submitted the necessary documents for registration in the Indonesian national halal certification system. And the signed memorandum should officially start the process of its accreditation in this country of Southeast Asia.

Speaking about other areas of the food sector, a number of Belarusian companies have already been accredited as suppliers of dairy products to Indonesia. In particular, "the products of Savushkin Product OJSC, Babushkina krynka OJSC, Verkhnedvinskiy butter and cheese factory OJSC have received the necessary certificates and have already entered the high-capacity Indonesian food market"⁸⁰. This had an immediate effect on the results of Belarusian-Indonesian

⁷⁹ Belarus and Indonesia sign memoranda on standardisation and quality assurance [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-indonezija-podpisali-memorandumy-v-oblasti-standartizatsii-i-obespechenija-kachestva-497060-2022>.

⁸⁰ Kolesnik, V. Indonesia and Belarus: from potassium chloride and BELAZes to tourism market revival / V. Kolesnik // [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/indonezija-i-belarus-ot-hloristogo-kalija-i-belazov-dozhivlenija-turisticheskogo-rynka-473916-2021>

trade in 2021. Now halal exporters from Belarus should also become growth points in this regard, supplementing traditional items such as potash chloride and dump trucks.

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Belarus-Indonesia: growth reserves in cooperation between regions and educational institutions

⁸¹One of the outcomes of the seventh meeting of the Belarus-Indonesia Joint Commission on Trade, Economic and Technical Cooperation, held in April 2022, was the adoption of the Practical Action Plan to develop key areas of cooperation for 2022-2023 that would contribute to the further growth of mutual trade and expansion of business relations between Belarus and Indonesia, since "further growth of the Belarus-Indonesia trade turnover remains a priority area for bilateral cooperation

As a reminder, in February 2021, the National Marketing Center of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Belarus and the Indonesia Trade, Tourism and Investment Club signed a memorandum on cooperation and mutual support in the development of trade and economic relations. The Belarusian side sees its goals in the context of this document as "to activate contracts on a legal basis, exchange information on bilateral export and import supplies, and deepen cooperation between our countries."⁸² . The development of partnership relations between the regions of the two countries has great potential in this regard. The more so since "interaction has already been established between the Brest region and West Sumatra province, Mogilev region and South Sumatra province, Minsk region and East Kalimantan and East Java provinces as well as the cities of Minsk and Jakarta"⁸³ . With the help of regional branches of chambers

⁸¹ Zalesky, B.L. Cooperation with an emphasis on creativity / B. Zalesky // Materials of the XVIII International scientific and practical conference "Cutting-edge science - 2022", April 30 - May 7, 2022: Sheffield. Science and education LTD. - C. 45.

⁸² Belarus and Indonesia sign memorandum on trade and economic cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-indoneziia-podpisali-memorandum-o-torgovo-ekonomicheskom-sotrudnichestve-426979-2021/>

⁸³ Kolesnik, V. Indonesia and Belarus: from potassium chloride and BELAZes to tourism market

of commerce and industry, interaction with such provinces as Central Java, North Sumatra, West Nusa Tenggara, the special district of Yogyakarta, where they see considerable potential for development of trade and economic cooperation, educational and tourist exchanges with Belarusian partners, is also established.

For example, the Brest Region and the province of West Sumatra announced their intention to establish close contacts back in November 2015. Such areas as "fish farming, processing industry, tourism, healthcare, pharmacy" were named as promising for mutually beneficial cooperation then⁸⁴. Some other Indonesian provinces have been familiar with Belarusian automobile manufacturer's products for a long time. Thus, since 2012, the Indonesian province of East Kalimantan has been successfully operating a batch of nine Belarusian dump trucks with a payload capacity of 45 tonnes. In 2016-2017, the province of South Sumatra received 40 dump trucks with a payload capacity of 110 tonnes for the needs of PT Bukit Asam, the largest state-owned coal mining company. In 2018-2019, seven more 130-tonne dump trucks were shipped to private coal mining company PT Tambang Raya Usaha Tama. And in 2020, "eight more 130-tonne BELAZ-75131 dump trucks started working in a coal mine on Kalimantan"⁸⁵, where vehicles from Belarus with payload capacity from 45 to 130 tons were already in operation. The parties plan to actively continue this

revival / V. Kolesnik // [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/indonezija-i-belarus-ot-hloristogo-kalija-i-belazov-do-ozhivlenija-turisticheskogo-rynka-473916-2021>

⁸⁴ Vechorko, S. Brest region establishes cooperation with the Indonesian province of West Sumatra / S. Vechorko // [Electronic resource]. - 2015. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/brestskaja-oblast-nalazhivaet-sotrudnichestvo-s-indonezijskoj-provintsiej-zapadnaj-a-sumatra-59706-2014/>

⁸⁵ Eight BELAZ dump trucks have started work in Indonesia [Electronic resource]. - 2020. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/vosem-karjernih-samosvalov-belaz-pristupili-k-rabote-v-indonezii-387074-2020/>

collaboration.

A logical continuation of cooperation between the Belarusian and Indonesian regions is developing partnerships in the educational sphere, where cooperation is based on signed agreements: on cooperation - between the Brest State Technical University and the Sepuluh Nopember Institute of Technology; on mutual understanding - between the Belarusian State Agricultural Academy and the Bogor Agricultural Institute; on exchange of students - between the Minsk State Linguistic University and the Minsk State Linguistic University. In recent years, the Belarusian State University, the Belarusian State University of Informatics and Radioelectronics, and the Grodno State Medical University have also found partners in this South-East Asian country.

In particular, in November 2020, a memorandum of understanding was signed by BSU and Airlangga University. The parties agreed to organise academic exchanges, implement joint educational and research projects, and exchange research materials. The first step towards implementation of these agreements was "participation of BSU lecturers in DECOTA educational programme. It focuses on engaging renowned scientists to give online lectures to students of Airlangga University"⁸⁶. And BSU students were invited to take the Sura- Bali Community Immersion Program 2020 online programme, which involved studying Indonesian culture and tourism activities in the provinces of East Java and Bali, free of charge. Note that this university is one of the oldest in Indonesia. It was founded in 1954 in Surabaya. There are 14 faculties: from medical and law, to

⁸⁶ Memorandum of Understanding signed between BGU and the University of Airlangga [Electronic resource]. - 2020. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/memorandum-o-vzaimoponimani-podpisan-mezhdu-bgu-i-universitetom-airlangga-414083-2020/>.

sea, fishery, nursing and veterinary medicine. Almost forty thousand students get higher education here. In 2022 a number of other Belarusian universities signed memoranda of cooperation with Indonesian partners, which indicates further expansion of these ties.

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