

# Growth points of the Belarusian economy in the dynamics of global challenges

The Belarusian Universal Commodity Exchange 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 of May 1, 2024, 7192 non-resident companies from 70 countries were accredited at the Exchange. At the same time, 345 new bidders from 36 countries have come here since the beginning of this year. In four months, the amount of export transactions exceeded the amount of import contracts by \$138 million. This shows that the Belarusian exchange trade is developing on different continents and allows to significantly increase the exchange trade turnover with partners in Europe, Asia and Africa. And this is only one example of the development of the Belarusian economy in the dynamics of global challenges. This study also deals with other effective growth points.



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## Belarusian Universal Commodity Exchange: From Europe to Asia and Africa

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 exchange platform's successful performance are an 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 totalling \$170 million. In the same period last year, the number of transactions amounted to 155, and their amount was \$14 million"<sup>1</sup>.

Today, foreign clients of the Belarusian stock exchange are among the leaders in the 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 1 March 2024, 167 companies from China, 116 from Kazakhstan, 108 from Uzbekistan have already been accredited to BUTB. 100 - from Azerbaijan. In **Europe** - in the Baltic States and Switzerland - rapeseed oil, beet pulp and molasses are traditionally in demand. A number of European countries are planning to intensify their co-operation with BUTB in 2024.

<sup>2</sup>In particular, in January 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,

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<sup>1</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>

<sup>2</sup> BUTB will co-operate with the Belarus-Italy Chamber of Commerce [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-budet-sotrudnicat-s-torgovoj-palatoj-belarus-italija-611942-2024/>



as well as to establish supplies of Italian-made goods in demand in Belarus, including industrial equipment, special machinery, spare parts and components, as "Italian business is interested in working with Belarusian enterprises, and the BUTB platform is the right tool that can help to facilitate the export of Belarusian agricultural products to the Italian market. It should be noted that as of 1 January 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, organising 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 trading 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>3</sup>

Another interesting partner of BUTB in Europe is **Serbia**. As of 1 December 2023, three companies from this country were accredited 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 was 20 tonnes and the buyer was a Serbian food importer accredited in November 2023"<sup>4</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.

Speaking about BUTB's plans for cooperation with **Turkey** in 2024, we would like to remind that last year the number of Turkish companies accredited to participate in exchange trading increased from 32 to 70, which increased the

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<sup>3</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-bizhevoj-torgovle-selhozproduksiej-s-belarusiju-615721-2024/>

<sup>4</sup> Belarusian butter for the first time realised in Serbia through BUTB [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/beloruskoe-slivocnoe-maslo-vpervye-realizovano-v-serbiju-cherez-butb-604633-2023/>

amount of transactions 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 over 90 per cent of the Belarusian-Turkish exchange turnover. Imports accounted for only about two per cent. These were mainly supplies of viscose yarn for Belarusian textile enterprises. In March 2024, at the business forum organised by the National Marketing Centre in cooperation with the **Association of Turkish Businessmen**, 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 areas as agriculture, machine building, and chemical industry to the BUTB, which will contribute to the growth of Belarusian-Turkish exchange trade turnover"<sup>5</sup>. In the agro-industrial sector, Belarus is already working on supplies of Belarusian vegetable oils, milk powder, beet pulp and molasses to Turkey. Belarus may also demand Turkish spare parts and components for cars and machinery, as well as industrial equipment. As a result, within the framework of this business forum agreements were reached on accreditation of importers of meat products and oilseed processing products from Turkey at the BUTB. In addition, suppliers of spare parts for construction machinery, sanitary equipment and polymer materials from this country are interested in participating in these tenders.

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 and April of this year BUTB specialists visited three 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 1,500 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 the BUTB. In addition, Chinese manufacturers of

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<sup>5</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/>

packaging lines, freezers, pasteurisers and beverage filling systems have shown interest in the Belarusian exchange platform"<sup>6</sup>.

Secondly, at the **Qingdao International Metal Processing Equipment Expo, an international** specialised exhibition of metallurgy and metal **processing**, where "major suppliers of sheet steel, rolled pipes, foundry alloys and cable and wire products have announced their readiness to participate in exchange trading"<sup>7</sup>. And already in March, the first exchange deal was concluded on BUTB for the sale of import-substituting products by a Chinese resident. The subject of the deal was a trial batch of pipe cutting discs. The seller "was a large supplier of equipment, spare parts and components for the steel, cement and electric power industries from Qingdao (Shandong Province), and the buyer was a Belarusian metallurgical enterprise"<sup>8</sup>. This fact shows that the list of states whose residents supply their products to Belarus using the import substitution service available on the BUTB industrial and consumer goods platform has expanded to eight.

Thirdly, at the **135th Canton Fair** held in April in Guangzhou, where BUTB specialists held "substantive negotiations with a number of large manufacturers of lighting, video equipment, specialised machinery and electronics interested in entering the Belarusian market through exchange trading"<sup>9</sup>. The fact is that despite the shift in emphasis towards imports and domestic consumption, which has been observed in China in recent years, a significant part of Chinese companies are still export-oriented and are ready to use any opportunities to reach potential buyers, including with the help of the BUTB, considering not only exports, but also the conclusion of transit exchange transactions with companies from third countries, in particular, Central Asia - Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

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<sup>6</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/>

<sup>7</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-uvlechit-postavki-metallov-i-metalloizdelij-iz-kitaja-620557-2024/>

<sup>8</sup> The Chinese enterprise for the first time realised products through the BUTB import substitution service [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/kitajskoe-predpriyatje-vpervye-realizovalo-produktsiju-cherez-servis-importozameshenija-butb-622959-2024/>

<sup>9</sup> BUTB platform interested manufacturers of machinery and equipment from China [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/ploschadka-butb-zainteresovala-proizvoditelej-tehniki-i-oborudovanija-iz-kitaja-630456-2024/>

And in the same April, the second resident broker from the Celestial Empire, accredited by the BUTB in 2024 as part of a set of measures to develop exchange trade with China and other Asian countries, appeared - the company **VIA Technology Import and Export Limited**, which "intends to assist importing organisations from the countries of the far arc in the procurement of Belarusian goods at exchange trades"<sup>10</sup>. At the initial stage, the new broker plans to focus on South and Southeast Asia - India, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Cambodia. Earlier this company has already co-operated with buyers of sawn timber from China, and now it plans to extend its experience of co-operation with BUTB to other commodity positions, providing logistics and, if necessary, helping with mutual settlements. In general, as a result of the work carried out, the amount of transactions of Chinese companies on BUTB "in the first quarter [2024] increased 7.5 times to \$56.3 million"<sup>11</sup>. At the same time, wood products accounted for the entire volume of export sales.

Among East **Asian** countries, BUTB's co-operation with **Mongolia is of interest**. Firstly, in 2024 it is planned to increase exports of Belarusian sugar, which is currently in high demand among Mongolian producers of soft drinks, through exchange trading. "In the first quarter of this year alone, 2.7 thousand tonnes of Belarusian sugar were sold to Mongolia. The next stage is to organise purchases of dairy products and flour"<sup>12</sup>. In particular, the issue of supplying the Mongolian market with domestic butter, skimmed milk powder and wheat flour is being worked out. The relevant agreements have already been reached with potential buyers of these goods - large retail chains and distributors.

**As for Central Asian** countries, in 2024 BUTB plans to significantly increase trade turnover by realising the export potential of the exchange platform with **Turkmenistan**. In particular, the bet is made on such in-demand items in the Turkmen market as sawn timber, dairy products and sugar. "Currently 14 residents of Turkmenistan are accredited on the exchange, which use the exchange

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<sup>10</sup> The new broker BUTB will facilitate the export of Belarusian goods to the countries of the far arc [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novyj-broker-butb-posodejstvuet-eksportu-belorusskih-tovarov-v-strany-dalnej-dugi-625415-2024/>

<sup>11</sup> The amount of transactions of Chinese companies on BUTB in the first quarter increased 7.5 times to \$56.3 million [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/summasdelok-kitajskih-kompanij-na-butb-v-i-kvartale-voztrosla-v-75-raz-do-563-mln-630224-2024/>

<sup>12</sup> Mongolia is interested in importing Belarusian flour and dairy products [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/mongolija-zainteresovana-v-importe-belorusskoj-muki-i-molochnoj-produktsii-624977-2024/>

mechanism mainly for the purchase of softwood sawn timber"<sup>13</sup> . In order to expand the pool of buyers of these products, as well as to work out other promising areas of cooperation with the country's business circles, in March this year BUTB specialists visited Ashgabat. They held a number of meetings with potential importers of timber products and food industry enterprises of Turkmenistan interested in buying skimmed milk powder and white granulated sugar in Belarus. In addition, following negotiations with the **State Commodity and Raw Materials Exchange of Turkmenistan** (GTSBT), an agreement was reached to exchange experience, technologies and methodological developments in the field of electronic exchange trading, and the possibility of mutual accreditation of stockbrokers of BUTB and GTSBT to participate in trading on both platforms is being considered.

In **Kyrgyzstan**, BUTB will join efforts to develop exchange trading with the **Kyrgyz Chamber of Commerce and Industry**. Back in February 2024, the parties identified promising areas of cooperation, the implementation of which will increase the number of Kyrgyz companies using the exchange mechanism and multiply the volume of transactions concluded by residents of this Central Asian country on the BUTB platform. In particular, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Kyrgyzstan expressed its readiness to assist in attracting new participants from among the members of the Chamber, as well as to help in finding a company that would become a BUTB broker in this country. As for the commodity items of interest for mutual exchange trade, it is expedient to export sawn timber, sugar beet processing products, milk powder and steel fittings to Kyrgyzstan through the exchange platform, while food raw materials, groceries and cotton fibre will be in demand in the Belarusian market. We would like to add that as of mid-February this year, "25 residents of Kyrgyzstan are accredited at BUTB. At the end of 2023, the amount of transactions of exchange traders from this country increased by 34% due to purchases of Belarusian sawn timber and sugar"<sup>14</sup> .

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<sup>13</sup> BUTB counts on activation of exchange trade with Turkmenistan [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-rasschityvaet-na-aktivizatsiju-birzhevoj-torgovli-s-turkmenistanom-622734-2024/>

<sup>14</sup> Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Kyrgyzstan will promote the development of exchange trade with Belarus [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/torgovno-promyshlennaja-palata-kyrgyzstana-budet-sodejstvovat-razvitiju-birzhevoj-torgovli-s-belarusiju-617034-2024/>

And in **Kazakhstan**, in February 2024, BUTB accredited a new broker, **Profit Standard LLP**, which will focus on organising regular deliveries of products of the Belarusian timber industry to the Kazakhstan market. The point is that in 2023 the specific weight of sawn timber in the structure of transactions with residents of Kazakhstan was relatively small, so with the assistance of the Kazakh broker it is planned to increase this key indicator, as well as to attract new participants to the exchange, ready to work as sellers or buyers. It should be noted that "last year [2023] the sum of exchange transactions of Kazakhstan companies increased by 13%. At the same time, the lion's share of trade turnover was provided by imports of Belarusian sugar, and purchases of timber products were irregular. As a result, they accounted for only about 3% of total sales of Belarusian goods to Kazakhstan"<sup>15</sup>. For comparison, wood products account for a much larger share of trade with Kazakhstan's neighbours, such as Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan.

Finally, let us look at the development of co-operation between the Belarusian exchange platform and **African** countries. BUTB plans to promote efficient e-commerce opportunities on this continent and has already formulated "clear objectives of using the exchange mechanism to boost mutual trade and increase trade turnover this year with African partners"<sup>16</sup>, including from **Egypt**. And already in May 2024, the Egyptian company **International Co. for Industry & Projects** became the first BUTB broker in this African country. 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 for BUTB"<sup>17</sup>. BUTB's new partner plans not to limit itself to the Egyptian market, but to supply Belarusian goods to Algeria, Morocco, Sudan and Tunisia, where there is also a high demand for Belarusian products. It is planned to develop exchange trade between Belarus and Egypt both in the already developed commodity areas and to use new liquid positions, which include dairy products, sugar and potato starch. "In the past, Egyptian companies have already bought wood products on the exchange, so this direction is certainly one of the

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<sup>15</sup> BUTB accredited broker in Kazakhstan [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-akkreditovala-brokera-v-kazahstane-615531-2024/>

<sup>16</sup> Zaleskii, B. Realisation of economic potential in the conditions of world turbulence / Boris Zaleskii. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2024. - C. 70.

<sup>17</sup> BUTB considers accrediting a broker in Egypt [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-rassmatrivaet-vozmozhnost-akkreditatsii-brokera-v-egipte-615805-2024/>

priority ones. However, <...> Belarusian-made agricultural products are also very much in demand in Egypt. In this regard, the launch of supplies of milk powder and whey, beet sugar and potato starch to the Egyptian market will significantly increase the exchange trade turnover with Belarus"<sup>18</sup> . In the future, the new broker intends to export Belarusian goods to Egypt's neighbouring countries, which is a completely different scale and opportunities.

Another Egyptian business entity interested in being accredited by the BUTB to carry out 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 fibre, and Belarus with Egyptian polymer products, cotton yarn and fruit and vegetable products. And "this is only the foundation on which further interaction between the Egyptian holding and the stock exchange will be built, as the range of mutual interests of Belarus and Egypt is much wider"<sup>19</sup> . It only remains to add that as of 1 February 2024, five residents from this African country have already been accredited on the Belarusian stock exchange, whose transactions are dominated by imports of woodworking products from Belarus. However, 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.

Another potential partner on the African continent where BUTB intends to develop exchange trading is **Algeria**, as the market of this country is interesting for Belarusian exporters for a number of reasons. Firstly, due to the high solvent demand from local consumers. Secondly, there is an opportunity to enter the markets of neighbouring countries through Algeria. So, by applying the mechanism of exchange trading for supplies of meat, dairy and oil and fat products, which are in high demand here, trade in these goods through the exchange platform will provide an additional sales channel for Belarusian exporters, while Algerian importers will have an opportunity to buy directly from Belarusian producers. At the international exhibition of food industry DJAZAGRO, which was held in April this year in Algeria, BUTB specialists

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<sup>18</sup> BUTB broker in Egypt will supply Belarusian goods to North Africa [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/broker-butb-v-egipte-budet-postavljat-belorusskie-tovary-v-severniju-afriku-631847-2024/>

<sup>19</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/>

attracted Algerian companies that are ready to import agricultural products from Belarus, as well as partner organisations that can assist in the development of the Belarusian-Algerian exchange trade. Among them is the Algerian Association of Employers, which has already expressed interest in co-operation with BUTB in terms of informing the business community of this country about the potential and advantages of using the Belarusian exchange platform in mutual trade. As a result of these negotiations, "agreements were reached on the sale of Belarusian dried milk and rapeseed oil to the Algerian market, which are now actively supplied to European and Asian countries"<sup>20</sup> .

In 2024, BUTB also plans joint steps with another African country, **Tanzania**, to organise the participation of Tanzanian companies in agricultural and industrial commodities exchange trading. For this purpose, an action plan will be drawn up to inform Tanzanian business. The **Tanzanian Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture will be** involved in this work, "which unites about 9 thousand companies from different industries and agriculture. Many of them are actively engaged in export-import activities..."<sup>21</sup> . The parties also formed a preliminary list of commodity items to organise mutually beneficial exchange trade between Belarusian and Tanzanian companies. Thus, the list of promising goods for export to Tanzania includes plant protection products, microfertilisers, fodder additives and petrochemical products, while seeds for sowing, groceries, raw materials for the food industry and cotton yarn are included for supplies to Belarus.

To summarise. As of 1 May 2024, 7,192 non-resident companies from 70 countries were accredited on the BUTB. This indicates that since the beginning of this year, 345 new traders from 36 countries have come to the exchange. And for four months the amount of export deals concluded on BUTB "exceeded the amount of import contracts by \$138 million. At the same time, compared to January-April 2023, the volume of exchange exports increased in value terms by

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<sup>20</sup> BUTB intends to develop exchange trade in agricultural products with Algeria [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-namerena-razvivat-birzhevuju-torgovju-selhozproduksiej-s-alzhirom-630079-2024/>

<sup>21</sup> . BUTB is working out the participation of companies from Tanzania in stock exchange trading [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-prorabatvyaet-uchastie-kompanij-iz-tanzanii-v-birzhevyyh-torgah-622486-2024/>



10 times..."<sup>22</sup> . All these facts show that BUTB is developing exchange trade on different continents and in different countries, both in terms of developed commodity directions and facilitating the emergence of new export-import positions, which will significantly increase the exchange trade turnover of Belarus with partners - from Europe to Asia and Africa - in the near future.

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<sup>22</sup> BUTB foreign trade surplus from the beginning of the year totalled \$138 million [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/polozhitelnoe-saldo-vneshnej-torgovli-butb-s-nachala-goda-sostavilo-138-mln-632116-2024>

## Trends in future transport development

In June 2023, the fourth exhibition "Day of Electric Transport" was held in Minsk. More than 30 organisations - industrial enterprises, scientific organisations and companies-importers of electric vehicles - took part in the exhibition. 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 Wheeled Tractor Plant, a multifunctional city electric truck of the National Academy of Sciences, a new model of the AMKODOR electric loader"<sup>23</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 per cent more than in 2021. "This was facilitated by the global trend towards decarbonisation, 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>24</sup>. In 2023, the positive dynamics continued. At the same time, the share of new electric vehicles in the market reached 18 per cent (in 2020 there were only 4 per cent).

As for the Republic of Belarus, our country also has all the conditions for the development of the electric car market. And in 2023, this trend will already be felt much more strongly on Belarusian roads. "First of all, it is most noticeable in commercial transport. A lot of electric cars are appearing in taxis, carsharing and commercial transport. <...> One of the trends is the growth of deliveries from the leading country of electric vehicle technologies - China"<sup>25</sup>. Recall that the

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<sup>23</sup> More than 30 organisations 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>24</sup> Electricity consumption by charging stations for electric transport 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/>

<sup>25</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-ezs-belorusnefti-modifitsirujut-dlja-zarjadki-kitajskih-elektromobilej-569935-2023/>

first Chinese electric cars Geely Geometry C were imported to BELJI three years ago to gain experience of use in Belarus and to show new cars to buyers. "As for the domestic electric car, the work is now being done together 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>26</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 transport for BELJI will be to provide the market with more budget models and to develop the service. In particular, in 2023, 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, emphasising 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>27</sup> .

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 per cent 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>28</sup> .

By the way, in May 2023, the charging infrastructure of our country was recognised as a leader at the international environmental competition "Green Eurasia" among the countries of the Eurasian Economic Union, where it was

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<sup>26</sup> Sviderski: 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>27</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-opytnyj-obrazets-otechestvennogo-elektromobilja-571013-2023/>

<sup>28</sup> Electricity consumption by charging stations for electric transport 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-bole-chem-na-tret-569857-2023/>

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 kilometres"<sup>29</sup>. By 2025, these super-fast complexes will appear in Belarusian regional cities and on the M1 - Brest-Russian border highway, and by the end of 2030 they will be installed 86 all over Belarus. In the meantime, in 2024, "15 state-of-the-art superfast charging complexes will be built"<sup>30</sup>.

Another interesting issue in the context of this topic concerns the creation of components for electric transport. After all, Belarus is already ready to localise these components. These are power motors, which Mogilevliftmash produces in sufficient quantities as needed. These are also control electronics, which are produced by the 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>31</sup>. Belarus was already making prototypes 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 programme 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 programme 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 programme 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

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<sup>29</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-do-kontsa-2030-goda-ustanovjat-85-superbystryh-zarjadnyh-kompleksov-dlja-elektrokarov-569933-2023/>

<sup>30</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-elektrozarjadnyh-stantsij-v-2024-m-dobavitsja-esche-105-571025-2023/>

<sup>31</sup> Chizhik: Belarus creates components for electric transport and is ready for their localisation [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/chizhik-v-belarusi-sozdajut-komponenty-dlja-elektrotransporta-i-gotovyy-k-ih-lokalizatsii-569937-2023/>

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>32</sup>. And the March (2024) resolution of the Council of Ministers already says that in 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 the serial production of Belarusian electric vehicles, "it is expedient to evaluate two potential directions of automotive development - the electric car and the serial hybrid. The most promising of them is the organisation of production on the basis of serially produced passenger cars"<sup>33</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 finalisation of design documentation for the conditions of serial production. A roadmap for organising the production of a pilot batch of BELGEE eX50 electric passenger cars this year has also been approved"<sup>34</sup>. It is planned to complete the production of five electric cars in August-September. Further - trial operation and testing to approach the mass production of these cars by the end of this year. Also in the plans is "production of all component base for domestic electric cars at the enterprises of the Ministry of Industry. Specific factories have been identified and are preparing to produce the necessary components."<sup>35</sup>. So

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<sup>32</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/>

<sup>33</sup> The government updated the comprehensive programme 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>34</sup> Gorbunov, A. "Power reserve 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>

<sup>35</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>

there are reasons 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 electric transport pilot projects involving two domestic manufacturers of electric passenger transport have already been implemented in two regions of Belarus - the 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 travel in them standing. There is space for a wheelchair and a baby pram. Also in the cabin you can find connectors for charging gadgets, a 'warm' button for demanding a stop, installed both inside and outside"<sup>36</sup>. In addition, eight charging stations were set up in Shklov to service the new public transport. Secondly, 14 new electric passenger buses manufactured 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 kilometres and the total passenger capacity is 66 people."<sup>37</sup>. In addition, the vehicles are equipped with air conditioning and a driver's cabin climate system. In the cabin 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 - "the Vitebsk region is next in line, most likely the industrial city of Novopolotsk"<sup>38</sup>.

Now let's see how the work on the creation of electric trucks at a number of Belarusian enterprises is developing. 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

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<sup>36</sup> Convenience and environmental friendliness. New electric buses will go on the 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>37</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-neobhodimoy-infrastruktur-objektov-dlja-raboty-gorodskogo-elektrotransporta-624337-2024/>

<sup>38</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>

last year. The novelty is able to "carry a load of up to 7.8 tonnes at a speed of 90 km/h without recharging. Power reserve up to 200 kilometres. <...> Full charging in this mode is 90 minutes"<sup>39</sup>. For several months the electric truck, delivering goods from the logistics centre to hypermarkets, "rolled" more than 12 thousand kilometres. And on the whole, 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>40</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 a vehicle. Now the creators of the novelty are in the process of its finalisation. But in the current year the results obtained can be very interesting.

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 variant of the electric truck "is designed to transport goods up to 4.5 tonnes for a distance of up to 200 km without recharging (urban and suburban routes). At the same time, an almost one hundred per cent level of localisation of development and production has been achieved, which ensures import-independence of the component base and intellectual component used in it"<sup>41</sup>. The development of this promising new product shows that it has a future and even plans to increase capacity for such production.

Another important element of the Comprehensive Programme 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 1,000"<sup>42</sup>. Among them, as of 1 January 2024, the network of charging

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<sup>39</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>40</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-budushee-u-belorusskih-elektrogruzovikov-599641-2023/>

<sup>41</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-prodvigajetsja-rabota-nad-otechestvennym-elektrogruzovikom-602395-2023/>

<sup>42</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-razvernuta-set-zarjadnyh-stantsij-ih-chislo-prevyshaet-tysjachu-624347-2024>

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 charging speed of an electric car will be comparable to the speed of filling a car with petrol at a traditional petrol station"<sup>43</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 EV charging stations is developing in four directions: so-called ground-mounted and wall-mounted stations, fast and super-fast charging complexes"<sup>44</sup> . The annual output of such equipment in 2023 was about 300 units, which is almost one and a half times more than in 2022. However, 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>45</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 transport by the end of 2024. "In August, the National Academy of Sciences should report on the first Belarusian battery, which by the end of the year <...>

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<sup>43</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>44</sup> "Vityaz" at the end of the year plans to increase the output of electric charging stations by 1.5 times [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/vitjaz-po-itogam-goda-planiruet-v-15-raza-uvlechit-vypusk-elektrozarjadnyh-stantsij-594575-2023/>

<sup>45</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/>



should start testing"<sup>46</sup>. And this will be a very important factor in the development of the Comprehensive Electric Transport Development Programme for 2021-2025.

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<sup>46</sup> Tests of the Belarusian battery for electric transport are planned to start before the end of the year [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/ispytaniya-belorusskoj-batarei-dlja-elektrotransporta-planirujut-nachat-do-kontsa-goda-624870-2024/>

## Tool for innovative perspectives

One of the important mechanisms for implementing the innovation development strategy 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>47</sup>. The State Programme for Innovative Development of the Republic of Belarus for 2021-2025 provides support for small innovative entrepreneurship on the basis of science and technology parks or technoparks as one of the priority tasks for the accelerated development of infrastructure in the spheres of scientific, scientific-technical and innovative activities.<sup>48</sup> The mechanisms for solving this task include: creation and organization of technoparks in large district centres; formation and development of technological infrastructure in technoparks to provide relevant services to residents - centres for prototyping and industrial design, centres for collective use of equipment, engineering centres, laboratory complexes, co-working centres; "organization of implementation of educational programmes of additional adult education in technoparks 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 centres, the Belarusian Innovation Fund and the National Centre for Intellectual Property"<sup>49</sup>, where there are more than 250 residents of technoparks and more than 5,300 employees. "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

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<sup>47</sup> Zalessky, B. Looking ahead. Features of multi-vector partnership in modern conditions / B. Zalessky. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2021. - C. 117.

<sup>48</sup> State Programme of Innovative Development of the Republic of Belarus for 2021-2025 / edited by S.V. Shlychkov. - Minsk: GU "BelISA", 2022. - C. 13.

<sup>49</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-postavil-tehnoparkam-zadachi-na-2024-god-617472-2024/>

over Br350 million for export, which is 43% of the total volume of output, compared to 2022, this indicator increased 2.5 times"<sup>50</sup>.

Among the actively developing Belarusian innovation structures is the **Minsk City Technopark LLC**, established in November 2011 and currently uniting 54 resident enterprises, which are located at three sites in 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 motorbike factory, where a complex reconstruction is underway. Besides, "the new site on Partizansky Prospekt has a special management procedure: during 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>51</sup>. In general, the technopark helps residents to find foreign partners, financial, technological and human resources. And the profit tax is only 10 per cent. 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 management, feed additives, medical products for ophthalmology, otorhinolaryngology, exoprosthesis, commercial and warehouse equipment"<sup>52</sup>. An important detail: about 60 per cent 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 "**Unitehprom BSU**", established in 1999 and dealing with medicines and pharmaceutical substances, chemical-analytical and special technologies, measuring equipment, medical devices, ingredients of the

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<sup>50</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-beloruskikh-tehnoparkov-v-2023-godu-uvelichili-objemy-vypuska-produktsii-pochti-vdvoe-619889-2024/>

<sup>51</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/>

<sup>52</sup> Golovchenko: it is necessary to increase the effect of funds invested in scientific research [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/golovchenko-nuzhno-uvelichivat-effekt-ot-vlozhennyh-v-nauchnye-razrabotki-sredstv-598984-2023/>

food industry. In 2023, the first series of Temodex for local chemotherapy of malignant brain tumours was produced here, for which patents were obtained from the United States of America, India and the European Union. 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, "Antispike" is used for healing various wounds after surgical interventions, "Foscelantan" is used to enhance tissue regeneration in the treatment of trophic ulcers and abscesses of various kinds"<sup>53</sup>. For this purpose, in March 2023 in "Unitechprom" of the Belarusian State University opened a modernised 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 fundamental research, through applied development and implementation of commercialisation. The project of the fifth technological mode, therefore, belongs to the high-tech sphere"<sup>54</sup>. It remains to add that the modernisation of this site was carried out within the framework of the project "Organisation of production of original bioresorbable polyfunctional medicines", which is part of the state programme of innovative development and is scheduled until 2025.

And in 2024, the science and technology park "UP Unitechprom BSU" plans to launch the production of haemostatic napkins for hospitals and personal use, which are intended to be used as an additional tool during surgical interventions to stop capillary, venous and small arterial bleeding, as well as for household bleeding. The fact is that these napkins "are made of sterile absorbable tissue of white or yellowish-white colour, 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 clogging capillaries, activating a multi-stage blood clotting process that stops bleeding"<sup>55</sup>. The development is a Belarusian analogue of expensive imported haemostatic wipes, which are widely used around the world. It is planned that in 2024 their production will be launched,

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<sup>53</sup> Shlychkov: dozens of innovative products are developed in Belarus every year [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/shlychkov-v-belarusi-ezhegodno-razrabatyvajutsja-desjatki-vidov-innovatsionnoj-produktsii-568140-2023/>

<sup>54</sup> Unique antibacterial and antitumour drugs will start producing "Unitechprom BSU". [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/unikalnye-antibakterialnye-i-protivoopuholevyje-preparaty-nachnet-proizvodit-unitechprom-bgu-558361-2023/>

<sup>55</sup> Belarus plans to launch the production of haemostatic napkins for hospitals and personal use [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/v-belarusi-planirujut-zapustit-proizvodstvo-gemostaticeskikh-salfetok-dlja-bolnits-i-lichnogo-610519-2024/>

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 haemostatic materials, will be established in the future.

Another interesting example of Belarusian innovative entrepreneurship is the **Brest Science and Technology Park**, 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 specialises in the production of sports boats made of composites, the second specialises in the design and production of orthopaedic products. The third resident is engaged in the production of pneumatic units, the fourth - in the development of neurocorrection programme in speech therapy. At the beginning of 2023, the park increased its area by seven thousand square metres. "The technopark received the former workshop of the Brest Electromechanical Plant for its needs. 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 metres. The whole point is that the ceiling height in the former production premises reaches 7.2 metres. Each of the four floors will be divided in two and the distance from floor to ceiling will be reduced to 3.6 metres. The first phase of the renovation is nearing its completion"<sup>56</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 car park 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 centre, which is based on 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

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<sup>56</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-uvlechit-svoi-ploschadi-540149-2022>

bending machine, robot manipulator, additive machine for printing one-off sand moulds for the production of shaped castings, hydraulic profile bending machine, injection moulding machine, tool sharpening machine. The equipment has been assembled and commissioning works have been carried out"<sup>57</sup>. Conditions have also been created for residents and their partners to organise joint work and provide services. Besides, Brest Technopark is a participant of the programme "One Region - One Project", within the framework of which it acts in three directions. The first is the production of complex 3D moulds 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>58</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 near the factory of automatic lines. It is planned to build an industrial park on this territory, 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 metres."<sup>59</sup>. A logistics centre, a small administrative 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 entities are interested in organising the production of universal tractor semi-trailers, industrial film greenhouses, polymer composites, and recycling of secondary material resources"<sup>60</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.

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<sup>57</sup> Khokhlov, A. Brest Technopark: an important platform for union projects / A. Khokhlov // [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://посткомкр.рф/science/235728/>

<sup>58</sup> Reconstruction of Brest Technopark is planned to be completed in 2025-2026 [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/rekonstruktsiju-breestkogo-tehnoparka-planirujut-zavershit-v-2025-2026-godah-575770-2023/>

<sup>59</sup> Industrial park will be built in Baranovichi [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/industrialnyj-park-postrojat-v-baranovichah-540068-2022/>

<sup>60</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-strojashegosja-v-baranovichah-industrialnogo-parka-614591-2024/>

As for **Pinsk**, the decision to create a similar site there was taken at the end of 2022, as the industrial park should become a growth point in the city's development. 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 for the production of roofing materials and fertilisers. In early March 2024, at the meeting on the implementation of the programme 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>61</sup>, to create a comfortable environment for business and produce in-demand products with an innovative component. The implementation of this project was started on the basis of LLC "Technopark "Polesie". It is about providing ready industrial areas for organisations interested in producing innovative products. The proposed specialisation 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 metres 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". In the neighbourhood there are OJSC "Kuzlitmash", CJSC "Pinskdev", CJSC "Amkodor-Pinsk", OJSC "PINEMA", Pinsk plant of small mechanization means"<sup>62</sup>. The industrial potential of these enterprises can be used to attract residents of the park and create production co-operation 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.

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<sup>61</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>

<sup>62</sup> Industrial park will start building in autumn in Pinsk [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/industrialnyj-park-nachnut-stroit-osenju-v-pinske-545904-2023/>

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 centres. There is a need to modernise existing production facilities and create new, high-tech ones"<sup>63</sup>. So far, one resident of the 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 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 co-operation. 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 organisations were created, 5 of them - in the satellite town. Small and medium-sized businesses provide more than 35 per cent of 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>64</sup>. That such creative participants of the technopark will determine the future, this is no longer in question. For example,

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<sup>63</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/>

<sup>64</sup> For innovative production: in Gomel Regional Executive Committee announced the expansion of technopark "Coral" [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/dlja-innovatsionnogo-proizvodstva-v-gomelskom-oblispolkome-anonsirovali-rasshirenie-tehnoparka-korall-611043-2024/>



like the company IdeiRobotics, which developed an automated pharmacy in Gomel. This resident of the Coral Technopark specialises in software for robotisation of production and technological processes and the creation 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 an automated pharmacy are round-the-clock availability of medicines, online consultation with a pharmacist, reduction of the selling price of medicines"<sup>65</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 summarise. Technoparks in Belarus, including Minsk City Technopark, Unitehprom Science and Technology Park, Brest Science and Technology Park, and Coral Technopark, 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>66</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>65</sup> Gomel Technopark residents have developed an automated pharmacy [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/rezidenty-gomelskogo-tehnoparka-razrabotali-avtomatizirovanuju-apteku-584974-2023/>

<sup>66</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/>

## Facilitate the realisation 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 "reduced time for document processing, simplified administrative procedures for investors, simplified procedures for allocation of land plots within FEZs and demolition of unused buildings"<sup>67</sup>. In 2023, FEZs confidently confirmed the status of key investment attraction centres, which provide not only unique conditions for the functioning of resident enterprises, but also effective development of the regions, and form one fifth of the main national indicators - investment, exports and production.

Suffice it to say that as of 1 January 2024, 425 organisations were registered as FEZ residents, which "have already invested a total of about \$12.5 billion in the implementation of the announced projects"<sup>68</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. The administrations of these formations were authorised to develop detailed plans for the development of the territories. "Also, 7 large engineering and transport infrastructure facilities were built for a total amount of more than Br130 million"<sup>69</sup>.

For reference, 13 new infrastructure facilities were commissioned in the FEZ in 2022. 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

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<sup>67</sup> Golovchenko: an oasis of the most demanded business environment is created for investors in FEZ [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/golovchenko-dlja-investorov-v-sez-sozdaetsja-oazis-naibolee-vostrebovanoj-biznes-sredy-588296-2023/>

<sup>68</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-obschim-objemom-investitsij-157-mln-606717-2023/>

<sup>69</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/>

plant was put into operation in Svisloch district, and also allowed "in Grodno - to open 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 construction of an aircraft repair plant, in Gomel - to establish production of medical products"<sup>70</sup> .

One of the most powerful zones in Belarus is **FEZ Minsk**, whose share in the industrial production of all Belarusian FEZs reaches almost 20 per cent. In 2023, among the main tasks to be implemented in this zone are: "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>71</sup> . As of mid-December 2023, 105 enterprises with Belarusian and foreign investments were already operating here. Over a quarter of a century, 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>72</sup> . Last year, new residents came to the FEZ with interesting investment projects in various industries.

For example, in February 2023, the company **Carvalio LLC** was registered in FEZ "Minsk", which undertook the implementation of 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 implementation provides for the construction of the facility on a land plot of 1.5 hectares in the area of Fanipol (Minsk region)"<sup>73</sup> . More than 50 jobs will be created at the new enterprise, and the share of export supplies will be at least 80 per cent.

In March 2023, another - 100th resident - **Modul-Online LLC** was registered in the FEZ, which planned to "implement an investment project for the

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<sup>70</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>71</sup> Zaleskii, B. Export growth strategy. Opportunities and challenges of open economy in modern conditions / B. Zaleskii. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2023. - C. 51.

<sup>72</sup> Enterprises of FEZ "Minsk" [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://fezminsk.by/residenty/predpriyatiya-sez-minsk/>

<sup>73</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>

production of furniture parts based on laminated chipboard. Investment costs will be spent on the purchase of new production equipment and modernisation of its own production facilities on the territory of the free economic zone<sup>74</sup>. About one hundred jobs will be created at the enterprise. Apparently, the production will be a synthesis of a high-tech production process, a large potential of skilled workers, technologists, designers and management specialists. At the same time, more than 60 per cent 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**, which was founded by a leading multinational flexible packaging group for food and non-food products headquartered in Italy, operating on four continents through 11 production facilities and selling its products worldwide. The implementation of the investment project of the new FEZ resident "will contribute to achieving the task set by the programme 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>75</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 to create 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 processing paper products"<sup>76</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 product range, reduce the cost of production and increase sales volumes.

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<sup>74</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/>

<sup>75</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>76</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/>

The next new FEZ resident - in October 2023 - is the company with Turkish capital "**Diligent Company**", which plans an investment project on "organising the production of ABS and polypropylene plastic products (travel suitcases). The project envisages creation of 60 new jobs"<sup>77</sup>. And in early December, **Holz Inc.** came to the FEZ, one of the founders of which is the TMC group of companies 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 metres with all the necessary facilities and its equipping with technological equipment"<sup>78</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 organise high-tech production of coffee products with its own research base. This will ensure "the needs of domestic and foreign enterprises in quality products, increase the growth of export potential, create high-tech jobs"<sup>79</sup>. An important fact: the company has already allocated a third of its workplaces to workers with disabilities, who are directly involved in the production of products.

In the last days of 2023, the **KUP "Department of Road and Bridge Construction and Improvement of Minsk City Executive Committee"** became a resident with an investment project for the construction of a hot-dip galvanising 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 galvanising of metal structures of various shapes and sizes to both Belarusian and foreign companies. Sixty new jobs will be created here. "The plant's production capacity is to process products with a total weight of 24,000 tonnes per year. The start of production

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<sup>77</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>78</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>79</sup> A new resident of FEZ "Minsk" realises 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/>

activities under the project is scheduled for 2026<sup>80</sup>. As a result, imports of galvanising services will be reduced in the country by more than six million dollars annually.

An important event in the development of this FEZ in December 2023 was the opening of a significant energy infrastructure facility for the region - the 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>81</sup>. In 2022, a gas pipeline was commissioned here, and last year an on-site gas pipeline string over two kilometres long was built. The launch of this infrastructure 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. Firstly, **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 capacity of 4 thousand tonnes per year<sup>82</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 sheet metal pipes is widely used in various fields - from construction to transport and industry.

Secondly, **MetallBelMash LLC**, which will organise the production of hot-rolled coil sheet, which will allow to produce high-quality import-substituting products for Belarusian business entities. After all, hot-rolled metal products occupy a large niche among all rolled products and are used in a wide range of

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<sup>80</sup> A new resident of FEZ "Minsk" will take up an investment project for the construction of a hot-dip galvanising 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>81</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/>

<sup>82</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-zajmetsja-proizvodstvom-importozameschajuschej-produktsii-609600-2024/>

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 organise the production of sanitary and hygienic products for seven years. Production areas will be modernised and the necessary equipment will be installed - several lines, which are characterised by high productivity and allow for the production of a wide range of products. These "production capacities will allow to produce more than 1.5 million packs of products per year. The declared volume of investments in fixed assets under the project will amount to about 1 million euros"<sup>83</sup>. It is to be expected 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 vehicles as early as 2024 and will become a new player in this market segment. "The technological novelty of the investment project lies in the possibility of producing charging stations with a capacity of up to 750 kW, weldless construction, liquid cooling of charging cables. The company's production capacity allows it to produce up to 1,200 charging stations per year"<sup>84</sup>. More than 15 jobs will be created.

In general, in 2023, FEZ "Minsk" enterprises attracted investments in fixed capital 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 was about \$207 million, which is 7 per cent more than in 2022"<sup>85</sup>.

In 2024, FEZ Minsk plans to involve even more organisations and use all available territories. After all, this FEZ "was designed to give businesses a boost

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<sup>83</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/>

<sup>84</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/novyj-rezident-sez-minsk-zajmetsja-proizvodstvom-zarjadnyh-stantsij-dlja-elektromobilej-618320-2024/>

<sup>85</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-razvitiie-predpriyatij/>

to development in key industries"<sup>86</sup> . And a number of countries are already interested in investment co-operation 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>87</sup> in partnership with the FEZ "Minsk". In September 2023, the capital's FEZ expanded its interaction with partners from Tajikistan, when three agreements on cooperation with the FEZ - 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 implementation"<sup>88</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 emphasised "the expansion of bilateral trade and investment cooperation, including participation in joint projects, business events, trade and investment missions"<sup>89</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 industries 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 modernisation 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

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<sup>86</sup> Kartun: more organisations should be involved in FEZ 'Minsk' [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/kartun-v-sez-minsk-neobhodimo-vovlekat-bolshe-organizatsij-562537-2023/>

<sup>87</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/>

<sup>88</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>89</sup> FEZ "Minsk" and Iranian FEZ "Maku" signed a memorandum of co-operation [Electronic resource]. - 2023. -URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/sez-minsk-i-iranskaja-sez-maku-podpisali-memorandum-o-sotrudnichestve-594179-2023/>



mastering of new profitable types of products, as well as preserving the positions of enterprises of the free economic zone.

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## Investments as prerequisites for further growth

In 2024, Belarus' free economic zones (FEZs) continue to successfully implement investment projects that are related to increasing exports, developing import substitution and profit growth. For example, the FEZ "**Brest**" has the necessary potential for the implementation of regionally significant investment projects, residents of which in the first quarter of this year increased the volume of investment in fixed assets by 2.3 times, as well as "increased production (by 17%), added to the export of goods..."<sup>90</sup>. In particular, in February, **Barkhim OJSC**, a resident of the FEZ since 2011, implemented an investment project worth about three million Belarusian rubles under the programme "One District - One Project". It is a workshop for the production of liquid detergents. As a result, "a second filling line was built and the existing production was modernised. This makes it possible to significantly increase the output of products, including laundry gels, liquid soap, conditioners and bleaches for laundry"<sup>91</sup>.

Other FEZ residents will also ensure the pace of development of investment projects in key areas this year. In Pinsk, the establishment of an enterprise for the production of batteries will be completed. A complex for extruded aluminium profile production will be built in Brest district by the end of the year. New projects will also be launched: in Pinsk - the creation of plastic components for car batteries, in Kobrin - the creation of chrome-plated blanks for hydraulic cylinder rods. In addition, FEZ residents will continue to expand the geography of sales of their products with the development of new directions in the Asian and African regions. All this will be done in order to solve priority tasks of FEZ for the current year, including "to provide growth of investments in fixed assets by 25%, export of goods - by 8%, production - by 5%, wages of employees - by 11.6%"<sup>92</sup>, as well as to attract at least three new residents.

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<sup>90</sup> FEZ "Brest" residents in the first quarter increased 2.3 times the volume of investment in fixed assets [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/rezidenty-sez-brest-v-i-kvartale-narastili-v-23-raza-objem-investitsij-v-osnovnoj-kapital-630171-2024/>

<sup>91</sup> A resident of FEZ "Brest" implemented an investment project under the programme "One district - one project". [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://fezbrest.com/rezident-sez-brest%C2%BB-oao-%C2%ABbarxim%C2%BB-realizoval-investproekt-v-ramkax-programmyi-%C2%ABodin-rajon-%E2%80%93-odin-proekt%C2%BB>

<sup>92</sup> Abramenko: FEZ "Brest" has the necessary potential for the implementation of regionally significant investment projects [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL:

It should be reminded that now 78 residents are registered in FEZ "Brest". Four of them appeared in 2023. First, it is **SanSpectr LLC**, which is engaged in the implementation of an investment project to create a transport and logistics complex "West-East" on a section of railway tracks in the area of Brest-Severny station, where warehousing and storage of goods will be carried out, and related forwarding and customs services will be provided. The project implementation period is five years. The FEZ resident intends to "invest more than seven and a half million Belarusian rubles and create about 20 new jobs"<sup>93</sup>. This complex will contribute to solving bottlenecks in the handling of container trains within the Brest railway junction travelling in the East-West-East directions.

Secondly, it is the **Private Trade Unitary Enterprise "EViYAR"**, which implements an investment project on the vacant premises of Brest Electromechanical Plant, associated with the organisation of production of LED lighting fixtures and lighting systems for industrial and consumer use - for poultry farms and greenhouse complexes, for street lighting. As consumers of these products are considered the subjects of "agro-industrial complex, farms, housing and communal services and associations of owners. At the same time, a significant part of the enterprise's products is expected to be exported..."<sup>94</sup>. At least 500 thousand euros will be invested in the new production for three years and 20 additional jobs will be created.

Thirdly, it is **Sifania-Ekotechnika**, which plans to implement a project for export-oriented production of special machines and equipment for sorting and deep processing of waste, as well as grain drying equipment on a six-hectare plot of land. This resident produces full-cycle equipment that helps to solve problems in the field of ecology and environmental protection. "The production of new products will be set up in the production buildings formerly belonging to the Brestselmash plant, after reconstruction. Within the framework of the investment project it is planned to develop the production of technological equipment for processing rubber and plastics, which will be further used in the manufacture of

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<https://www.belta.by/economics/view/abramenko-sez-brest-obladaet-neobhodimym-potentsialom-dlja-realizatsii-regionalno-znachimyh-630919-2024/>

<sup>93</sup> Zaleskii, B. Hope for a positive future. Dynamics of partnerships under conditions of economic realism / B. Zaleskii. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2023. - C. 48.

<sup>94</sup> A new resident of FEZ "Brest" will establish the production of LED lamps [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/novyj-rezident-sez-brest-naladit-proizvodstvo-svetodiodnyh-svetilnikov-565824-2023/>

various products"<sup>95</sup>. In addition, the production of equipment for processing solid municipal and industrial waste using the latest technologies will be mastered.

Fourthly, it is **1 AK-Plastic Ltd**, which was registered in the FEZ on the eve of the new year with an investment project to create a production of plastic components for car batteries in Pinsk. We are talking, first of all, about the production of plastic casings, which are still purchased on foreign markets. "The project envisages investment in fixed capital in the amount equivalent to \$9.3 million. It is planned to employ about 90 workers at the additionally introduced workplaces"<sup>96</sup>. Production, storage and administrative premises will be built.

And in 2024, two more new residents appeared in FEZ Brest. The first one is a specialised enterprise **Kobrin Tool Plant SITOMO OJSC**, which is the only one in Belarus that manufactures locksmith and assembly tools used in machine building, repair service, technological equipment and as household tools. In cooperation with OJSC "BMZ - Managing Company of BMZ Holding", the new resident will establish "production of import-substituting, innovative for Belarus products, which will be used in the manufacture of hydraulic cylinders and shock absorbers. For this purpose it is planned to demolish the old production building and build a new shop where modern high-tech equipment will be installed"<sup>97</sup> and where chrome-plated blanks of hydraulic cylinder rods will be produced. This project will be implemented with the support of the Innovation Fund of the Brest Regional Executive Committee with the inclusion of SITOMO in the State Programme of Innovative Development for 2021-2025. The total investment over five years will exceed 28 million euros and the number of new jobs will exceed 40.

In the second case, a new FEZ resident - **Industrial Vostok Engineering-Bel LLC** - will organise in Baranovichi the production of non-standard equipment for the mining, chemical and oil refining industries, metallurgy, energy and construction industries. "The nomenclature of products planned for production

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<sup>95</sup> New resident of FEZ "Brest" plans to develop export-oriented production [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://fezbrest.com/novyij-rezident-sez-%C2%ABrest%C2%BB-planiruet-razvivat-eksportoorientirovannoe-proizvodstvo>

<sup>96</sup> 1 AK-Plastic Ltd - a new resident of FEZ "Brest" [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://fezbrest.com/ooo-%C2%AB1-ak-plastik%C2%BB-%E2%80%93-novyij-rezident-sez-%C2%ABrest%C2%BB>

<sup>97</sup> A new resident creates import-substituting production on the territory of FEZ "Brest" [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://fezbrest.com/novyij-rezident-sozdaet-na-territorii-sez-%C2%ABrest%C2%BB-importozameshchayushhee-proizvodstvo>

includes: gas cleaning and dust collecting equipment and its parts for various types of production; non-standard metal structures and non-standard equipment (valves, membranes, fans, pumps)<sup>98</sup> . At the first stage the vacant production premises of another enterprise-resident of FEZ "Brest" - **OJSC "Baranovich Automatic Lines Plant" - with the** area of about two and a half thousand square metres will be used.

And the potential of new participants of this free economic zone is not exhausted by these residents. For example, only this year the representatives of FEZ "Brest" have already taken part in such major business events as the Third Belarusian-Latin American Forum, the forum of business contacts "Brest-China. Strategic Partnership", the 53rd Chinese International Furniture Exhibition GIFF Guangzhou 2024, a meeting with representatives of Italian business circles from the association "Veneto-Belarus", where concrete negotiations with business entities from a number of countries interested in co-operation took place. And in February 2024 in Uzbekistan FEZ "Brest" Administration signed a Cooperation Agreement with FEZ "Angren" Directorate "with the purpose of direct contacts on trade and economic interaction and elaboration of perspective projects on the basis of production cooperation"<sup>99</sup> . The parties agreed to develop business cooperation, maintain bilateral contacts on issues of mutual interest. And such facts show that FEZ "Brest" continues to strengthen the work on improving and creating conditions for attracting new investors.

Now let us turn to the experience of the **FEZ Grodnoinvest**, which became the leader among other Belarusian FEZs in terms of the volume of accumulated foreign investments by its resident enterprises - \$880 million by the end of 2023. And this year the investment sites of this FEZ, having all the infrastructure for successful work, have all the prerequisites for further growth. Suffice it to say that "over the last 5 years foreign direct investment (FDI) on a net basis has grown 2.6 times, output - 1.9 times, revenue - 1.7 times <...>, export of products - 1.6 times"<sup>100</sup> . Residents of FEZ Grodnoinvest account for up to 85 per cent of FDI

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<sup>98</sup> "Industrial Vostok Engineering-Bel" - a new resident of FEZ "Brest". [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://fezbrest.com/%C2%ABindustrial-vostok-inzhiniring-bel%C2%BB-%E2%80%93-noviyj-rezident-sez-%C2%ABbrest%C2%BB>

<sup>99</sup> Business meeting with Uzbek partners [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://fezbrest.com/361959-delovaya-vstrecha-s-uzbekskimi-partnerami>

<sup>100</sup> Abramenko: investment sites of FEZ "Grodnoinvest" have all the infrastructure for successful work [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/abramenko-investploschadki-sez-grodnoinvest-obladajut-vsej-infrastrukturoj-dlja-ushpeshnoj-raboty-577583-2023/>

on a net basis, up to 25 per cent of industrial output and up to 43 per cent of exports in the regional indicators.

And in 2024 among the priority tasks of this FEZ should be named - "growth of investments in fixed capital by 5.7%, export of goods by 7.8%, wages of employees by 12.4%, registration of 4 new residents, development of engineering and transport infrastructure of FEZ with construction of 4 new facilities"<sup>101</sup>. Fulfilment of these indicators will be ensured by increasing production volumes by existing residents, including through new enterprises in Grodno and Svisloch districts, as well as the construction of a railway terminal in Svisloch district, a production building to organise the production of containers and packaging in Slonim and the expansion of a number of existing production facilities.

For reference, we would like to remind you that in the first quarter of 2023 alone, residents of FEZ Grodnoinvest commissioned nine production and engineering facilities totalling over eight million Belarusian rubles as part of the implementation of investment projects in Grodno Region. Among them is Aquapack Industrial LLC, which installed an automatic line for the assembly of grids as part of a project to create a production facility for packaging and flexible labelling. "Optik Plant" OJSC put a glass furnace into operation in the course of modernisation of fibre production. The Slonimmebel enterprise installed new equipment while modernising its production, Slonim cardboard and paper plant Albertin reconstructed local treatment facilities. BelGreenline LLC launched a new line for production and packaging of wet wipes"<sup>102</sup>. As for PT "Typhoon" LLC, the company reconstructed its storage facilities in the course of expanding the production of construction mixtures. Konus RUE completed the construction of the building of the administrative and household complex. Grodno Glass Plant, within the framework of the project on creation of glass container production using innovative energy-efficient and resource-saving technologies, organised the first ignition of the furnace and started the process of equipment debugging and

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<sup>101</sup> Abramenko: FEZ administrations need to keep under control the implementation of investment projects of residents [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/society/view/abramenko-administratsijam-sez-nuzhno-derzhat-na-kontrolje-hod-realizatsii-investprojektov-rezidentov-631354-2024/>

<sup>102</sup> FEZ "Grodnoinvest" residents put into operation 9 new objects in the first quarter of 2023 [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/rezidenty-sez-grodnoinvest-v-pervom-kvartale-2023-goda-vveli-v-ekspluatatsiju-9-novyh-objektov-559606-2023/>

industrial testing of production lines. "Smorgon Aggregate Plant" at this stage is carrying out technical armament to automate production processes, increase output and introduce new models of agricultural machinery.

Another important detail: in 2023, six new residents were registered in the FEZ Hrodnainvest. First, it is **ZapadTransGranitsa LLC**, which is building an international trade and logistics complex near Grodno airport - in the area of the agro-town of Obukhovo. "This complex will make it possible to use the logistic potential of Grodno region, to attract investments in the creation of a multimodal centre that has no analogues in the region, to involve in economic activity the building of the airport terminal that has not been completed, to attract tourists and foreign trading companies..."<sup>103</sup>

Secondly, it is the **Novogrudok Construction and Assembly Department OJSC**, which is implementing in Novogrudok the production of construction materials, including reinforced concrete and joinery products, metal structures, with the reconstruction of shops and maximum utilisation of existing capacities, as well as the purchase of new equipment. This project will "create new jobs with decent wages, expand the range of products and increase production volumes, and establish export deliveries..."<sup>104</sup>

Thirdly, it is **JSC Grodno Turning Chucks Plant BelTAPAZ**, which produces turning chucks and spare parts for the machine-tool and tool industries. "The investment project involves the purchase and installation of new technological equipment to expand the existing and master the production of a new product line. Realisation of the project will allow the plant to increase export supplies, to provide an increase in revenues to the budget and extra-budgetary funds, to increase its own financial potential"<sup>105</sup>. It should be noted that more than ten projects are already being implemented in the FEZ "Grodnoinvest" in the sphere of production of machinery and auto components, industrial equipment

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<sup>103</sup> Zaleski, B. International Co-operation and Media. Part IV. Collection of articles / B. Zaleskii. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2023. - C. 359.

<sup>104</sup> A new resident of FEZ "Grodnoinvest" will expand the production of construction materials in Novogrudok [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://grodnoinvest.by/press-center/novyj-rezident-sez-grodnoinvest-organizuet-proizvodstvo-stroitelnyx-materialov-v-novogrudke/>

<sup>105</sup> A new resident with export-oriented production is registered in FEZ "Grodnoinvest" [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novyj-rezident-s-eksportno-orientirovannym-proizvodstvom-zaregistririvan-v-sez-grodnoinvest-596436-2023/>

and construction machinery, optics and electronics, the annual output of which exceeds two hundred million dollars.

In November, the FEZ registered its fourth resident in 2023 - **LuckyPat LLC**, which intends to organise the production of dry and wet food, as well as various accessories and natural fillers for pets in Hrodna, in the Kolbasino district. It is expected that these products "will contribute to the substitution of similar goods imported to the market of the Republic of Belarus, as well as will be exported to the EAEU countries and neighbouring countries. The launch of finished products is scheduled for the second quarter of 2024"<sup>106</sup> .

In the same November last year, another resident of FEZ Grodnoinvest appeared - **ErNex Adaptive Technologies CJSC**, which creates innovative production of sodium and LED lighting fixtures for the needs of agriculture and medicine. The point is that these products are able to adjust to the state of a living organism taking into account its personal living conditions, growth phases, climatic components, time of day, as this is in demand for both the greenhouse industry and the animal world. "Construction of a modern production and storage complex and a research centre is planned. The total investment costs will amount to more than \$9 million. 82 new jobs are planned to be created during the whole period of the project implementation"<sup>107</sup> . In the course of the project implementation the initiators intend to participate in scientific developments and co-operation with major regional and foreign industry educational institutions. It is planned that the main part of manufactured products will be exported. The project will also be aimed at import substitution, as it will significantly reduce imports of similar products into Belarus.

The sixth FEZ resident in 2023 was **KOM-UNION LLC** with a project to expand the production of tools for the construction and agricultural sectors in Grodno district - in Novaya Goza. For this purpose, "it is planned to reconstruct the existing production facility, build an administrative and utility building and warehouses, as well as modernise and purchase additional equipment to expand

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<sup>106</sup> A new resident of FEZ "Grodnoinvest" organises the production of products for pets [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://grodnoinvest.by/press-center/novyj-rezident-sez-grodnoinvest-organizuet-proizvodstvo-produkcii-dlya-domashnix-zhivotnyx/>

<sup>107</sup> A new resident of FEZ "Grodnoinvest" organises innovative production of adaptive lighting systems [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novyj-rezident-sez-grodnoinvest-organizuet-innovatsionnoe-proizvodstvo-adaptivnyh-sistem-osveschenija-600747-2023/>



the range of products"<sup>108</sup>. Interestingly, this project also has an export and import-substitution orientation. On the one hand, supplies of finished products of the new resident will be made to the markets of the Eurasian Economic Union and the European Union. On the other hand, they will make it possible to systematically reduce imports of similar products to Belarus.

Finally, the 81st resident of FEZ Grodnoinvest was registered at the beginning of January 2024. This is **AgroFertCom LLC**, which is creating a multi-profile production of liquid fertilisers in the Aulsa district. The liquid fertilisers planned for production have high biological activity and provide better availability of nutrition elements for plants in comparison with the corresponding inorganic fertilisers. The products will be characterised by low toxicity and high manufacturability. "In order to implement the investment project, it is planned to acquire and reconstruct production areas, as well as modern technological equipment. It is planned to create more than 10 new jobs during the project implementation period"<sup>109</sup>. The products of the new resident will be oriented to the development of export supplies to near and far abroad countries.

All these facts show that the FEZ Grodnoinvest, where in 2023 six enterprises in the fields of logistics, mechanical engineering and metalworking, production of construction materials in Grodno, Grodno and Novogrudok districts with total investments of more than 50 million dollars became residents, will show even more impressive results in 2024, based on a well-thought-out strategy that can give a significant boost to the socio-economic development of the Grodno region.

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<sup>108</sup> A new resident of FEZ "Grodnoinvest" will expand the production of construction and agrotechnical tools [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://grodnoinvest.by/press-center/novyj-rezident-sez-grodnoinvest-rasshirit-proizvodstvo-instrumentov-dlya-stroitelnyx-rabot/>

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