

Vector of post-Soviet integration

The Commonwealth of Independent States has started concrete work on updating the Concept of further development of the CIS, adopted back in 2007, which should help to define common points of economic growth of the countries-participants of this international association and implement plans to develop joint development priorities. Experience shows that the potential for cooperation in the Commonwealth has not yet been exhausted, and appropriate steps should be taken to implement it. This will contribute to the competitiveness of national economies and the welfare of citizens. In this respect, the Republic of Belarus has consistently advocated strengthening the economic potential of this association of post-Soviet countries, expanding their trade and production ties. One of the effective levers for solving the tasks set in the CIS is further intensification of interregional cooperation, which since the existence of this international organization has become an effective instrument of interstate dialogue and an integral part of economic interaction. This paper describes how Belarus is developing relations with its partners in the post-Soviet space.



Professional experience in journalism is over forty five years. Now he is an associate professor of the International Journalism Department of the Journalism Department of the Belarusian State University. Areas of research: foreign policy of the Republic of Belarus, international journalism, international information exchange, export of media products and services.



Zalessky



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View from Belarus

Boris Zalessky

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Belarus - Commonwealth of Independent States: the evolution of regional cooperation

In February 2019, Moscow hosted a meeting of the Working Group on the preparation of a draft Strategy for Economic Development of the Commonwealth of Independent States for the period up to 2030, which "approved the content of the first four sections of the draft Strategy"¹. The fifth section is scheduled for discussion in April 2019. This fact shows that concrete work has begun in the CIS to update the Concept of Further Development of the CIS, adopted back in 2007, which should help identify common points of economic growth in the member states of this international association and implement plans to develop joint development priorities. It should be noted that the need to update the Concept was discussed back in September 2018 at the meeting of the Council of Heads of State of the Commonwealth of Independent States in Dushanbe, where it was stated that "the CIS potential for regional cooperation development is not exhausted, and appropriate steps should be taken to implement it. This will contribute to the competitiveness of national economies, the welfare of citizens and the development of humanitarian ties"².

In this regard, the Republic of Belarus has consistently advocated strengthening the economic potential of this association of post-Soviet countries, expanding their trade and production ties to consolidate the positive dynamics observed in the CIS: "Mutual trade within the CIS continues to grow. Last year [2017] the volume of trade turnover was 164 billion U.S. dollars, having increased by 25%"³. In the first seven months of 2018, "the value of mutual trade increased by 15% (\$102 billion) compared to the previous year".⁴ And at the end of the year there was a 20% growth of mutual trade turnover of the CIS countries.

¹ The meeting of the Working Group on the preparation of the draft Strategy of Economic Development of the Commonwealth of Independent States for the period up to 2030 was held in Moscow [Electronic resource]. -- 2019. - URL: <http://www.e-cis.info/news.php?id=21302>.

² On the results of the meeting of the Council of Heads of State of the Commonwealth of Independent States [Electronic resource]. -- 2018. - URL: <http://www.e-cis.info/page.php?id=26493>.

³ Results of the meeting of the CIS Heads of Government Council and the list of adopted documents (November 2, 2018, Astana, Republic of Kazakhstan) [Electronic resource]. -- 2018. - URL: <http://www.e-cis.info/page.php?id=26548>.

⁴ Participation in the session of the CIS Council of Heads of Government [Electronic resource]. -- 2018. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/8365>.

One of the effective levers for solving the tasks set in the Commonwealth is further intensification of interregional cooperation of its member states, which has become an effective instrument of interstate dialogue and an integral part of economic interaction since the existence of this international organization, as "it allows strengthening economic ties between regions, optimizing the location of infrastructure facilities, joint efforts to start solving large-scale investment projects, and increasing efficiency

Let us recall that back in 2004 the **Concept of Interregional and Cross-Border Cooperation of the Commonwealth of Independent States** was adopted. The Concept was dictated by the fact that "due to the formation of newly independent states, the population of the border territories where economic, labor, cultural and household ties were severed or significantly limited, found themselves in a particularly difficult situation. The severity of this situation confirms the need to realize the potential of interregional and cross-border cooperation to engage regions in foreign economic activity and implement a set of measures to ensure normal living conditions for the population of border regions"⁶.

It was this document that laid down the basic principles of interregional and cross-border cooperation in the Commonwealth of Independent States: Mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity of other CIS member states; inviolability of state borders; peaceful settlement of border disputes; mutual respect for national legislation governing interregional and cross-border cooperation, as well as relevant international treaties; ensuring mutual interests in interregional and cross-border cooperation; taking into account the peculiarities of border territories of CIS member states, including their diversity, the nature of interstate relations and historical ties with neighboring CIS member states, natural resources, socio-economic, town-planning, transport characteristics of border territories; ensuring security of life of citizens, non-infringement of the environment, economic and other interests of the states that carry out interregional and cross-border cooperation within the scope of national and international agreements

And among the main tasks were identified: to create an environment of trust, mutual understanding and good neighborliness between the population,

⁵ The development of interregional and cross-border cooperation is the most important factor in the consolidation of the Commonwealth [Electronic Resource]. -- 2015. - URL: <http://www.cis.minsk.by/news.php?id=5355>.

⁶ The concept of interregional and cross-border cooperation of the Commonwealth of Independent States [Electronic resource]. -- 2004. - URL: <http://www.cis.minsk.by/page.php?id=13214>.

authorities and business communities of the regions and border territories of the CIS member states; to stimulate the increase of mutually beneficial trade, development and strengthening of economic, cultural and humanitarian ties between the regions; to preserve the cultural heritage; to simplify mutual communication between interested authorities, business communities and population groups, including ethnic communities divided by state borders, to support the compatriots. creating conditions that will help reduce the time it takes for export and import goods to cross the border territory of a CIS member state, including assistance in setting up checkpoints across the state border with an electronic document flow and automatic identification system; improving transport infrastructure, customs warehouses and terminals, including the drafting and adoption of relevant regulations; and increasing the efficiency of the use of the production and social base across the border. creation of conditions for interaction of the systems for prevention and liquidation of emergency situations of the neighboring CIS member states, including information systems, in order to improve the efficiency of response to emergency situations with transboundary consequences; implementation of a coordinated policy in the field of ensuring the safety of life of citizens, environmental protection, prevention and liquidation of emergency situations of transboundary impact on the border territories.

In October 2008, the legal framework for interregional cooperation in the post-Soviet space was supplemented by the **Convention on Cross-Border Cooperation of the Commonwealth of Independent States**. The adoption of this document was due to the fact that by that time a number of prerequisites had already matured in the CIS for developing cross-border cooperation as the most active form of interregional cooperation. These include: a new vision of coordinated cross-border development leading to the formation of new competitive advantages; a new understanding of community interests, sociocultural, environmental and other public initiatives that rise above municipal and regional administrative borders; and "actualization of existing and formation of new formalized and informal institutions of interterritorial cooperation"⁷.

The Convention specified the main directions of joint activities of stakeholders: establishment of special or special economic zones (free economic zones) in border territories; border trade, ensuring its security; conducting joint monitoring activities by competent authorities in the field of environmental

⁷ Sachuk, T.V. Sachuk // Prospects of socio-economic development of border regions: Proceedings of the Fourth Scientific-Practical Conference with intergovernmental participation, [June 9, 2017, Petrozavodsk] / FIC "Karelian Scientific Center of RAS", Economics Institute of KarNC RAS; [edited by: T.V. Morozova]. - Petrozavodsk, 2017. - - C. 15.

protection, including transboundary rivers, and rational use of natural resources, ensuring sanitary and epidemiological, environmental, veterinary and sanitary well-being of the population, as well as protection of territories from infectious animal diseases; development of joint programs to protect the population and territories from natural and man-made emergencies, as well as integration of natural and man-made disaster management systems in border areas to improve the efficiency of response to emergencies with transboundary consequences; provision by the parties of support to compatriots living in border areas in maintaining and expanding humanitarian ties; coordination of efforts to increase efficiency of protection and defense of state borders of the parties; implementation of investment projects; industrial and technical cooperation; agriculture and food supply; transport; information technologies and communications; law enforcement activities; urban planning and public utilities; regulation of population migration; formation of labor market; h In the same 2008 the **Council for Interregional and Border Cooperation of the CIS** member states was established to solve the issues of "sustainable economic development of the regions and border territories, ensuring security of citizens, strengthening friendship and good neighborliness"⁸.

By 2010, active development of cooperation at the level of administrative-territorial units and border territories in the CIS countries began to really help solve or mitigate some problems of interstate relations, strengthen and develop historically established ties. By this time, the regional environment in the post-Soviet space is increasingly beginning to define "the competitiveness of national businesses in today's world market, promoting the development of knowledge-based production, which is dominated not by the scale of production and sales, but the ability to constantly update products through the introduction, creation and market promotion of fundamentally new products"⁹. Small and medium businesses are beginning to emerge from the "shadow" as the most adaptable to a rapid change in technology and capable of creating competitive products. Regional unions of scientists, entrepreneurs and local administrations are beginning to become a factor of success in the market. At the same time, intergovernmental commissions for cooperation of the CIS member states are becoming permanent formats that organize and coordinate interregional and cross-border cooperation. Thus, only "in the Republic of Belarus in 2009 there were 6 meetings of the

⁸ Regulation on the Council for Interregional and Cross-Border Cooperation of the Member States of the Commonwealth of Independent States [Electronic Resource]. - - 2008. - URL: <http://cis.minsk.by/reestr/ru/index.html#reestr/view/text?doc=2520>.

⁹ Development of interregional and cross-border cooperation in CIS member states (information and analytical note). - Moscow, 2010. - - C. 6.

intergovernmental commissions on trade and economic cooperation with Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Ukraine (2), 19 meetings of Belarusian parts of the intergovernmental commissions"¹⁰.

By 2014, interregional cooperation at the level of administrative and territorial entities is already "an important feature of modern interstate relations of the CIS member states, contributing to the strengthening and development of historically established ties, increasing mutual trade turnover. The use of its potential is one of the most effective factors contributing to real integration and playing an important role in creating a common market for goods, capital, services and labor"¹¹. Bilateral agreements regulating interregional cooperation already include 7 (out of 74) regions of the Republic of Azerbaijan, 10 (out of 11) - the Republic of Armenia, all regions of the Republic of Belarus, 16 (out of 17) - the Republic of Kazakhstan, all regions of the Kyrgyz Republic, 12 (out of 33) - the Republic of Moldova, 4 (out of 13) - the Republic of Tajikistan, 5 (out of 6) - Turkmenistan, all regions of the Republic of Uzbekistan, almost all regions of the Russian Federation. Such a form of interaction between the regions as bilateral forums, which provide a constant dialogue on a wide range of problems, is increasingly being developed. In particular, the first forum of regions of Belarus and Russia was held in Minsk in June 2014. Its theme was "Efficient development of agro-industrial complexes of Belarus and Russia is a crucial condition for food security of the Union State".

In May 2015, another important document appears in the framework of the Commonwealth of Independent States - the **Concept of Interregional and Cross-Border Cooperation of the CIS Member States for the Period until 2020**, which concludes that "interregional and cross-border cooperation has become an effective instrument of interstate dialogue"¹². And it is already aimed at developing cooperation not only between neighboring regions, but also with regions that are not neighboring, with which there are common interests and intentions to develop partnership on both multilateral and bilateral basis, as it allows to restore and strengthen economic ties between regions, optimize the location of infrastructure facilities through cooperation, eliminate inefficient financial costs associated with the creation of duplicate economic structures in the

¹⁰ In the same place. C. 13.

¹¹ Information on the role of the Interparliamentary Assembly of the CIS Member States in the development of interregional cooperation between the CIS Member States [Electronic resource]. - - 2014. - URL: <http://naviny.org/2014/10/10/by1130.htm>.

¹² The Concept of Interregional and Border Cooperation of the CIS Member States for the Period until 2020 [Electronic Resource]. - - 2015. - URL: <http://www.cis.minsk.by/reestr/ru/index.html#reestr/view/text?doc=5135>.

regions, jointly aimed at the following goals This document contains ten main tasks:

1. 1. Improvement of the legislation of the CIS member states taking into account existing bilateral and multilateral international treaties, including: a) legal regulation of interregional and cross-border cooperation in order to develop common approaches to its implementation; b) convergence of technical requirements and regulations in the economic sphere.

2. 2. Mobilization of existing opportunities in socio-economic and cultural spheres for solution of joint tasks, including: a) identification of socio-economic and cultural potential of the regions; b) development of modern forms of territory management; c) harmonization of approaches to the development of border areas.

3. 3. Organization of the Forum of Regions of the CIS member states, establishment of regional cooperation associations, in the framework of which the following activities are carried out: a) adoption of joint decisions on topical issues; b) exchange of experience in the effective management of regions and territorial communities; c) joint implementation of projects in various areas of cooperation with the aim of achieving a synergetic effect.

4. Agreed arrangement of the border infrastructure in order to: a) increase the efficiency of border crossing points between the CIS member states, including through: a) organization of joint control at these border crossing points; b) improvement of procedures of state border crossing between the CIS member states for the citizens of the CIS member states, first of all, when the residents of border territories cross state borders; c) creation of favorable conditions for carrying out passenger operations; d) improvement of the border crossing procedures for the citizens of the CIS member states.

5. 5. Development of trade, economic and investment cooperation between regions, including: a) assistance in establishing mutually beneficial direct ties between the economic entities of the regions; b) development of cross-border trade; c) implementation of joint major innovative investment projects in various areas of the economy and creation of joint competitive enterprises and financial and industrial groups

6. Strengthening the atmosphere of trust, mutual understanding and good neighborliness among the population of the regions through the development of humanitarian ties, including the following areas: a) organization and holding of joint festive events, exhibitions, concerts, regional studies and historical

researches, in particular, holding events dedicated to the celebration of memorable dates in the common history of the CIS member states; b) joint preservation and restoration of historical and cultural heritage objects of the peoples of the CIS member states; c) joint holding of sporting events; d) creation of conditions for mutual provision of services in the sphere of tourism, creation and joint operation of tourist infrastructure, including the following activities e) Establishing cooperation in conducting joint scientific research by higher education institutions and scientific organizations of the CIS member states; f) Developing and jointly implementing exchange programs for students and teachers for training and professional development of specialists of mutual interest; g) Collaborating in the field of youth work, including by involving young people in projects and activities on topical issues of interregional and cross-border cooperation of the member states

7. Health care and law enforcement and security, implemented, among others, in the following areas: a) Creation of conditions for mutual provision of medical services; b) Organization of mutual provision of services in the field of sanatorium-resort, rehabilitation treatment of population; c) Implementation of joint actions to prevent occurrence and spread of sanitary-epidemiological threats in border territories; d) taking concerted measures to prevent, prevent, detect, suppress, investigate and solve crimes and other offenses, fight organized crime, terrorism and extremism, cross-border criminal activity, including smuggling, illegal trafficking in narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and their precursors, drug addiction, poaching and human trafficking.

8. Rational and safe use of natural resources and implementation of economic activities, taking into account environmental safety, implemented, among other things, in the following areas: a) regulation of economic activities for the purpose of industrial waste management and organization of joint control over the use of harmful substances, as well as implementation of joint environmental programs and projects; b) joint protection and rational use of transboundary waters and their ecosystems; c) implementation of joint measures for conservation and reproduction of fish resources and control over their use; d) mutual training of specialists in the areas of mineral resources development and industrial safety; e) mutual training of specialists in the areas of mineral resources development and industrial safety.

9. Ensuring timely prevention and joint liquidation of natural and anthropogenic emergencies in border territories, including the following areas: a) timely and regular provision of information on infectious diseases, epizootics,

epiphytotics and quarantine pests, joint implementation of preventive measures and implementation of emergency measures to eliminate diseases, quarantine diseases and pests; b) improvement of systems for cross-border monitoring of natural environments and operational information exchange on the occurrence of emergencies of natural and man-made nature, organization of cooperation to prevent and eliminate them; c) assistance in crossing the state borders of the CIS member states in accordance with the procedure established by the legislation of the CIS member states or international treaties to which they are parties, groups of specialists and vehicles to eliminate natural and man-made emergencies

10. 10. Regulation of labor market and migration processes in border territories, implemented including the following directions: a) development of coordinated measures to regulate migration flows, exchange of information on national legislation in the sphere of migration and the order of crossing the state border of neighboring states by local residents; b) coordination of measures to prevent illegal migration in regions and in border territories; c) exchange of information on the situation on the labor market in border territories and in regions.

Finally, in September 2016, at the level of heads of state, the **Convention on Interregional Cooperation of Member States of the Commonwealth of Independent States**¹³ is adopted, which contains a detailed list of possible areas of interaction between regions in the post-Soviet space: creation of free (special, special) economic zones in the regions; carrying out joint activities by the competent authorities of the parties to monitor the environment, rational use of natural resources, ensuring sanitary-epidemiological and environmental well-being of the population, as well as protecting areas from the entry of animal and plant diseases; development and implementation of joint programs to protect the population and territories from natural and man-made emergencies, as well as integration of systems of prevention and liquidation of natural and man-made emergencies in order to improve the efficiency of response to emergencies with transboundary consequences; support of compatriots living in the regions in preserving and expanding humanitarian ties; implementation of investment projects; industrial and technical cooperation with the local authorities in the field of environmental protection; development and implementation of joint programs to protect the population and territories from natural and man-made disasters. agriculture and food supply; development of transport, transport communications

¹³ Convention on Interregional Cooperation of Member States of the Commonwealth of Independent States [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://cis.minsk.by/reestr/ru/index.html#reestr/view/text?doc=5474>.

and infrastructure, provision of transport services; information technologies and communications; cooperation in law enforcement activities, including protection of public order, prevention and suppression of crimes, including combating smuggling and illegal migration; urban planning and municipal services; labor market and labor migration; health care; education; scientific and humanitarian cooperation; culture and exhibition activity; sport and tourism; creation and development of nature protection territories, health-improving zones (localities) and resorts; support and development of all forms of youth cooperation, participation in implementation of international projects and programs aimed at solving youth problems; development and implementation of programs on protection and use of historical and cultural heritage objects; trade and fair activities.

The practical implementation of the provisions of all these documents led to the fact that at the beginning of 2018 the Register of signed international documents on interregional and cross-border cooperation within the Commonwealth of Independent States already had "about 5000 documents in trade and economic, scientific and technical and humanitarian spheres of interregional and cross-border cooperation, characterizing the current level of development of relations between the CIS member states"¹⁴. Among the most effective formats for realizing the potential for cooperation between regions of different countries in the post-Soviet space were such bilateral events as: Russian-Armenian and Russian-Azerbaijani interregional forums; Russian-Kyrgyz interregional conference; conference on interregional cooperation between Russia and Tajikistan; forums for interregional cooperation between Russia and Kazakhstan, Russia and Belarus. These forums are held annually alternately in the regions of the states with the participation of representatives of federal executive and legislative authorities, business community and mass media, scientific and expert circles, as well as representatives of the regions of member states. During each forum, the parties organize expositions of the regions of the participating states, which include presentations of promising investment projects. The existing format of forums organization allows to present and realize the potential of the regions of the states in all the spheres in need. Thus, in 2018 with the participation of the Belarusian side were held the Fifth Forum of Regions of Belarus and Russia, as well as the first Forum of Regions of Belarus and Ukraine. These

¹⁴ Development and activities of the Commonwealth of Independent States in 2017 (collection of information and analytical materials, issue No. 6). - Minsk, 2018. - - C. 75.

formats help to actively develop trade, economic and investment cooperation, as well as cooperation between the regions of the CIS countries.

All these facts once again show that interregional and cross-border cooperation, which is an integral part of economic interaction in the Commonwealth of Independent States, already today allows each participant to realize their economic opportunities, compensate for the peculiarities of development and deployment of productive forces, solve social issues. But even more extensive prospects will open up here in the near future with the implementation of new approaches to deepening cooperation between the CIS member states in the spheres of trade and economic cooperation, energy, transport and communications within the framework of updating the provisions of the Concept of further development of the Commonwealth of Independent States after 2020.

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Belarus - Eurasian Economic Union: regional cooperation and media

Today the Belarusian regional press is faced with large-scale creative tasks to cover all stages of the state policy of regional development in Belarus, "one of the most important components of which is the deepening of cross-border cooperation with foreign partners, which implies, among other things, adequate development of the international segment of Belarusian regional journalism¹⁵. At the same time, the interaction of Belarusian regions with foreign partners should be seamlessly integrated into the development of international cooperation of the Republic of Belarus as a whole, the most important criteria of which are sustainable growth rates of exports of goods and services, as well as achievement of a positive balance of foreign trade in goods and services.

In this regard, the Belarusian regional mass media are opening up a very broad thematic spectrum, which in the near future should be fully reflected in the pages of urban, district and regional newspapers. Let us highlight in this series those areas that emphasize the geography of interregional cooperation, which are discussed in the National Strategy for Sustainable Socio-Economic Development of the Republic of Belarus until 2030¹⁶: expansion of all-round cooperation with the regions of the European Union countries and especially within the framework of the Eastern Partnership initiative, as well as with the regions of the countries of the "Neighborhood Belt" - Poland, Lithuania, Latvia; deepening of cooperation with the regions of the countries participating in the mega-project "One Belt, One Way" and especially with the People's Republic of China; further intensification of trade and economic ties with the regions of the countries of the "Far Arc" - South-East Asia, Middle East, Africa, Latin America and especially with those where it is significant. But, perhaps, the most real development of large-scale economic integration so far has been observed with the regions of the Eurasian Economic Union countries (Russia, Kazakhstan, Armenia, Kyrgyzstan) and especially with the Russian Federation entities within the framework of the Union State.

¹⁵ Zalesky, B. Media reflection of the peculiarities of transboundary cooperation of the regions of Belarus / B. Zalesky // *Jurnalistka-2018: mill, problems i prospects: materialy 20 Mizhnar. science. 2018 / eds.: V.M. Samusevich (eds.) [iinsh]. - Minsk : BDU, 2018. -- C. 291.*

¹⁶ National Strategy for Sustainable Social and Economic Development of the Republic of Belarus for the period up to 2030. - Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Belarus. - Minsk, 2017. -- C. 137.

As for the **Eurasian Economic Union**, from the very beginning of its existence in terms of developing integration measures, it was considered that the level of regional cooperation is an indicator of the relevance and effectiveness of measures of supranational regulation, because historically there is an economic basis for the implementation of integration measures to stimulate regional development and inter-regional cooperation, as well as the potential for expanding cooperation in various areas and spheres of the economy at the level of regions of the EAEC Member States. As a result, "consideration of regional aspects allows for more effective implementation of measures to stimulate new areas of mutual trade, the construction of industry production chains, the formation of transport corridors and planning of infrastructure facilities and in the future to ensure social development and improve living standards¹⁷.

If we talk about the bilateral format of interregional cooperation in the framework of the Eurasian Economic Union, the undoubted leader and impetus for the development of the entire Eurasian integration here is the interaction between the regions of Belarus and **Russia** in the framework of the Union State. Suffice it to say that in the middle of 2018 the Belarusian regions maintained "direct trade and economic relations with 80 regions of the Russian Federation, of which 70 - on the basis of long-term cooperation agreements".¹⁸ And the top ten main trading partners included Moscow and St. Petersburg, the Republics of Tatarstan and Bashkortostan, the Perm Region, as well as the Bryansk, Kaluga, Moscow, Smolensk and Tyumen Regions.

The growing potential of Belarusian-Russian interregional cooperation was demonstrated by the results of the Fifth Forum of Regions of Belarus and Russia, which took place in Mogilev in October 2018 and covered such main thematic areas as: agrarian policy, unification and harmonization of legislation, digital economy, youth policy, international activities and economic security. It should be noted that today, to a large extent, it is from the point of view of Belarusian and Russian media that the Regional Forum is defined as "a key project of regional cooperation between Belarus and Russia, an effective platform for a partnership dialogue on economic integration and interregional cooperation¹⁹. And this is not

¹⁷ The main directions of economic development of the EAEC until 2030. - Eurasian Economic Commission. - - M., 2015. - - C. 42.

¹⁸ Myasnikovich, M. Rabota na Result / M. Myasnikovich // Priority areas of regional cooperation as a key factor of allied construction: inform.-integr. project / com., interviewing: K. Gusev, B. Zalesky. - Minsk: Biznesoftet, 2018. - - C. 5.

¹⁹ Myasnikovich, M. Regional Forum has become an effective platform for dialogue on integration and inter-regional cooperation / M. Myasnikovich // [Electronic resource]. - - 2018. - URL: <http://www.sovrep.gov.by/ru/interview-ru/view/forum-regionov-stal-effektivnoj-ploschadkoj-dlja-dialoga-po-voprosam-integratsii-i-mezhregionalnogo-256/>

an unfounded statement. Suffice it to say that at the said forum in Mogilev, contracts were signed for more than half a billion dollars.

The fact that 76 more documents were added to the legal framework of the Belarusian-Russian interregional cooperation within the framework of the fifth forum also says a lot. In particular, the Mogilev Regional Council concluded agreements on cooperation and development of relations with the legislative assemblies of the Kaluga Region and Krasnodar Krai. The Grodno Oblast Council will cooperate with the Kaliningrad Oblast Duma in trade, economic, scientific, technological and cultural spheres. The Gomel Regional Council and the Legislative Assembly of the Nizhny Novgorod Region, as well as the Mogilev Regional Executive Committee and the Government of the Novosibirsk Region, have identified similar areas for cooperation. But we are also talking not only about the integration of the regional or regional level, but also about the fact that "small cities are also involved in this process, which are quite actively cooperating, not only in the field of humanitarian relations, but building economic ties"²⁰. As a result, it turns out that today, at the interregional level, cooperation between Belarusian regions and the absolute majority of the Russian Federation's regions has already been established. But how is it fully reflected in the regional press of Belarus? The question is topical, with great unrealized potential.

The coverage in the Belarusian regional press of the cooperation of the regions of Belarus and with partners in **Kazakhstan** - another country that is a member of the Eurasian Economic Union, with which the Treaty on Social and Economic Cooperation until 2026 was signed in November 2017, aimed at implementing a qualitatively new stage in bilateral relations, including at the regional level - should become very diverse. Here it is worth recalling that back in 2000 Belarus and Kazakhstan signed an Agreement on Cooperation in the field of press and information, which in 2017 was supplemented by a provision that attaches "special importance to the expansion of cooperation in the field of mass media between the two states"²¹ and which came into force in October 2018.

The thematic range of publications in the regional press could be very broad in this regard. This is also the activity in Kazakhstan of joint assembly plants with the participation of the Belarusian side, which at the end of 2018 there were eight,

²⁰ Matveev, V. Over 70 regional agreements were signed at the V Forum of Regions of Belarus and Russia / V. Matveev // [Electronic resource]. -- 2018. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/bolee-70-regionalnyh-soglashenij-podpisano-na-v-forume-regionov-belarusi-i-rossii-321404-2018/>

²¹ Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Government of the Republic of Belarus on cooperation in the field of mass media [Electronic resource]. -- 2018. - URL: <http://pravo.by/document/?guid=12551&p0=101700071&p1=1>

including the production of BelAZ OAO, MTZ OAO, Gomselmash OAO, MAZ OAO, Bobruiskagromash MCH OAO for the production of quarry, mine, special utility and fire equipment, tractors, combines, engines, balers, medical equipment. This is also the implementation of the project of the Kazakhstan-Belarus Industrial and Technological Park of Agricultural and Municipal Equipment in Kokshetau, Akmola Oblast, the first phase of which was launched in 2016. It is also the implementation of several dozens of joint scientific and technical projects in Kazakhstan with the extensive use of Belarusian technologies, innovations and scientific developments. In this regard, we recall that Belarus and Kazakhstan should reach the volume of trade turnover of at least one billion dollars in 2020. Minsk and Astana believe that "the potential of interregional cooperation should be used to achieve this goal"²².

The topics of Belarusian-Kazakh interregional cooperation may be especially topical for the press of Gomel, Grodno and Mogilev regions. In particular, in 2014, Grodno and Akmola Regions adopted the Memorandum of Cooperation in Agriculture. In November 2016, the Gomel Oblast Executive Committee signed a cooperation agreement with the Pavlodar Oblast Akimat. The Mogilev Oblast has concluded similar agreements with the South Kazakhstan Oblast (2003) and the East Kazakhstan Oblast (2009). The Belarusian Mogilev and the Kazakh Family also have a cooperation agreement. The effectiveness of interregional cooperation between Mogilev Region and its Kazakh partners is demonstrated by such figures. In three quarters of 2018, "foreign trade turnover between the economic entities of the region and Kazakhstan increased by 57% to \$82.8 million, while exports to Kazakhstan increased by 52.4%"²³. In many ways, such significant figures were the reason for the opening of the Honorary Consulate of the Republic of Kazakhstan in November 2018 in Mogilev, which will help give new impetus to the development of Belarusian-Kazakh interregional cooperation. But what is the reflection of all these documents and results in the regional press? "They are not always adequately reflected in the media sphere. And this then has an impact on reducing the interest of partners and continuing cooperation as a whole"²⁴.

²² Belarus is interested in establishing new joint ventures with Kazakhstan - Myasnikovich [Electronic resource]. - - 2018. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-zainteresovana-v-sozdaniinovyh-sovmestnyh-predpriyatij-s-kazahstanom-mjasnikovich-323707-2018/>.

²³ Kulyagin, S. Honorary Consulate of the Republic of Kazakhstan was opened in Mogilev / S. Kulyagin // [Electronic resource]. - - 2018. - URL: <https://belta.by/politics/view/pochetnoe-konsulstvovrespubliki-kazahstan-otkryli-v-mogileve-325498-2018/>.

²⁴ Zaleskiy, B. International relations and media. The multidimensional foreign policy in the conditions of global crisis of confidence / B. Zaleskiy. - Palmarium Academic Publishing, 2018. - - C. 57.

The intensification of interregional cooperation is an important component in strengthening bilateral trade, economic and cultural cooperation with **Armenia**, another member state of the Eurasian Economic Union. Suffice it to say that to date, "21 agreements on twinning have been signed between the cities and regions of Belarus and Armenia"²⁵. Thus, back in 2008, within the framework of the development of cooperation between Minsk Region and Syunik Region, the twinned cooperation agreements were signed with Borisov, Nesvizh, Soligorsk, Slutsk and Myadel regions with such Armenian cities as Kapan, Goris, Agarak, Sisian and Meghri respectively. Moreover, "in May 2011 the list of Belarusian and Armenian regional partners was expanded to include Osipovich district and Sevan city, in June 2012 - Vitebsk region and Lori marz, cities of Orsha and Spitak, Vitebsk and Vanadzor, and in October 2012 - Lepel district and Tashir, Braslav district and Stepanavan"²⁶.

Taking into account the fact that the Belarusian-Armenian trade turnover has been growing in recent years, the parties need to reach a higher level of cooperation and establish joint production facilities to maintain this positive trend, and Belarus is ready to take part in the renovation of Armenia's passenger equipment fleet and in the program of elevator facilities renovation, parliamentarians of the two countries intend to update the agenda of interregional Belarusian-Armenian cooperation in 2019. In particular, it means that "work will be accelerated on an agreement on the establishment of twinned relations between Minsk and Yerevan. It is currently under consideration by the Armenian side"²⁷. Turning to the analysis of the implementation of already existing agreements, the regional press of Belarus and Armenia could proceed from the assumption that the Belarusian-Armenian interregional cooperation as a whole contributes to the intensification of joint business activity, the restoration of lost production ties, humanitarian and human contacts, ensures the promotion of bilateral economic projects and the creation of joint competitive products that are in demand both in domestic markets and in third countries.

Finally, in July 2018, Belarus signed an Agreement on cooperation in the field of information with another member country of the Eurasian Economic Union, **Kyrgyzstan**, to encourage the regular exchange of information materials

²⁵ Trade and economic relations [Electronic resource]. - - 2018. - URL: http://armenia.mfa.gov.by/ru/bilateral_relations/trade_economic/

²⁶ Zalessky, B.L. Belarusian International Journalism: Peculiarities, Trends, Perspectives: educational method / B.L. Zalessky. - Minsk: BSU, 2014. - - C. 221.

²⁷ Belarus is ready to participate in the renewal of the park of passenger equipment of Armenia [Electronic resource]. - - 2019. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-gotova-uchastvovat-v-obnovlenii-parka-passazhirskoj-tehniki-armenii-334782-2019/>.

on political, economic, social and cultural life of both countries, as well as to develop cooperation between the editorial offices. At the same time, "the Kyrgyz side also proposed a new direction of cooperation in the field of information. In particular, we are talking about cooperation at the level of regional journalism"²⁸. The fact that the thematic portfolio of publications in the regional press of Belarus and Kyrgyzstan in this regard can be very diverse is confirmed by many facts, based on the statement that "Kyrgyz-Belarusian relations are developing dynamically on a wide range of issues, including political and diplomatic sphere, economy, cultural and humanitarian sphere"²⁹.

For example, in 2017 Belarusian exports to this Central Asian country exceeded 300 commodity items: from dairy products and trucks to chipboard, furniture, wallpaper. There are more than 50 representative offices of subjects of commodity distribution network and distributors of Belarusian enterprises. In November 2016 here opened an assembly production of MTZ tractors and service center for agricultural machinery based on the Bishkek company "Avtomash Radiator". At the same time, "UPP "Niva-Holding" (Soligorsk) registered in the Ministry of Justice of Kyrgyzstan, the Belarusian company LLC "Niva-Shakhtospetsstroy", which plans to produce equipment for the mining industry and hydraulic engineering from components manufactured by the company "Niva-Holding"³⁰. The plans include the establishment of an assembly plant for Belarusian grain harvesters on Kyrgyz soil, which was the subject of the signed Memorandum of Cooperation between the Ministry of Agriculture, Food Industry and Land Reclamation of Kyrgyzstan, Gomselmash OJSC and the dealer of the Belarusian enterprise Avtomash Radiator LLC.

In addition, at the eighth meeting of the Kyrgyz-Belarusian Intergovernmental Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation, held in October 2018 in Bishkek, the Belarusian side proposed to Kyrgyz partners to implement a joint project to establish a dairy processing plant, interest in which was immediately expressed by the Ministry of Agriculture, Food Industry and Land Reclamation of the Kyrgyz Republic. In this case, we are talking about the

²⁸ Belarus and Kyrgyzstan signed an agreement on cooperation in the field of information [Electronic resource]. - - 2018. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-kyrgyzstan-podpisali-soglashenie-o-sotrudnichestve-v-sfere-informatsii-309989-2018/>

²⁹ Matveev, V. Heads of Foreign Ministries of Belarus and Kyrgyzstan confirmed their intention to intensify bilateral cooperation / V. Matveev // [Electronic resource]. - - 2018. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/glavy-mid-belarusi-i-kyrgyzstana-podtverdili-namerenie-aktivizirovat-dvustoronnee-sotrudnichestvo-324657-2018/>.

³⁰ Interview by A. Strachko, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Belarus to the Kyrgyz Republic to the information and analytical magazine "Market conjuncture" (№1, 2018) [Electronic resource]. - - 2018. - URL: <http://mfa.gov.by/press/smi/ba775717cb6a991b.html>

establishment of an enterprise in this Central Asian country, which could produce milk, ice cream, sour milk products - kefir, yoghurt, sour cream, cottage cheese and soft cheese on the basis of Belarusian raw materials and specially developed technology in Belarus. And "in the future it is planned to enter the Chinese market with the products of this enterprise"³¹. In addition, consistently developing regional economic ties with partners in Kyrgyzstan, the Belarusian side in August 2018 delivered to the Kyrgyz capital 15 low-floor trolleybuses produced by JSC "Belkommunmash", which will also be organized training for drivers of the Bishkek trolleybus department. An interesting detail: this "equipment was purchased under the project "Development of public transport in the city of Bishkek", funded by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development"³².

The Agreement on cooperation between the Belarusian National Centre for Marketing and Price Study and the exhibition company BI Expo from Bishkek is aimed at expanding the Belarusian-Kyrgyz cooperation in the exhibition and fair activity. The Agreement aims at active participation of Belarusian exporters in international exhibitions and fairs held annually in Kyrgyzstan. In 2018, the exposition of manufacturers from Belarus has already been presented at the international food industry exhibition FoodExpo Kyrgyzstan, which is the most important industry event in this country. Its products were demonstrated in the Kyrgyz capital JV "Spartak" OJSC, "Skidelskiy Agro Plant" OJSC, "Oshmyanskiy Meat Processing Plant" OJSC, "Managing Company of Holding "Concern Brestmyasomolprom" OJSC, "Smorgon Dairy Products" - branch of "Lida Dairy Canning Plant" OJSC, "Pinskiy Meat Processing Plant" OJSC. Apart from Belarusian exporters, companies from Bulgaria, Indonesia, Italy, Kazakhstan, Russia, Turkey, Uzbekistan, France, Sri Lanka took part in it. About three and a half thousand people visited this business forum, 95 percent of which were professionals of food industry.

Perhaps due to this exhibition as well, "the trade turnover between Belarus and Kyrgyzstan in January-October 2018 amounted to \$98.49 million, most of which falls on Belarusian exports (\$90.96 million)".³³ As the most important positions in Belarusian supplies to the Kyrgyz market are milk and dried

³¹ Belarus offers Kyrgyzstan a joint project to set up a milk processing enterprise [Electronic resource]. - - 2018. -- URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-predlagaet-kyrgyzstanu-sovmestnyj-proekt-po-sozdaniyu-molokopererabatyvajuschego-predpriyatija-322349-2018/>.

³² In Bishkek 37 trolleybuses manufactured in Belarus and Russia were delivered [Electronic resource]. - - 2018. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/v-bishkek-postavili-37-trollejbusov-belorusskogo-i-rossijskogo-proizvodstva-313496-2018/>

³³ Belarus will take part in Food Expo Kyrgyzstan in Bishkek [Electronic resource]. - - 2019. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-primet-uchastie-v-vystavke-foodexpo-kyrgyzstan-v-bishkeke-333552-2019/>.

condensed cream, butter, cheese and curd sugar. It should be noted that in April 2019 the exposition of Belarusian enterprises will be again presented at the FoodExpo Kyrgyzstan-2019 in such thematic sections as food, equipment for food industry, goods and services to equip catering enterprises, packaging products, halal industry.

In April 2018, Belarusian exporting companies also took part in the International specialized exhibition MedExpo in Bishkek. Among them were ALC "Belsept", JSC "Gomselmash", the Republican Scientific and Practical Center of Neurology and Neurosurgery Ministry of Health of Belarus, JSC "Exon", LLC "Arvitmedikl". Representatives of the Belarusian medical and pharmaceutical industries were brought to Kyrgyzstan by the fact that in 2017 in this country began implementation of the state program to modernize the health care system, and therefore by the end of 2018 it was planned to "buy modern medical equipment and quality medicines for \$7 million³⁴. This is why the presentation of medical and pharmaceutical products was very useful.

Let's summarize. In this study we have cited the facts of rapid development and growth of interregional cooperation of Belarus with partners only from the Eurasian Economic Union countries - Russia, Kazakhstan, Armenia, Kyrgyzstan. If we add to them similar trends observed today in the regions of the Commonwealth of Independent States, the European Union, the "far arc", the Economic Zone of the Silk Road, all of them will convincingly testify to the obvious: Even in the professional media environment, such a concept as "international regional journalism", which is still unfamiliar to hearing, should find its real contours in the media practice of the information and communication space of Belarus' regions as soon as possible, so that its representatives could competently build information strategies specific to the international regional issues, as well as "adequately reflect the fullness of international issues at the level of their region and effectively contribute to the solution of the problems faced here".³⁵ So that, as a result, the Eurasian theme - life and activity in the regions of the Eurasian Economic Union countries - becomes relevant for regional media structures and, accordingly, for their readers, viewers and listeners.

³⁴ Belarus will take part in MedExpo and FoodExpo exhibitions in Kyrgyzstan [Electronic resource]. - 2018. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-primet-uchastie-v-vystavkah-medexpo-i-foodexpo-v-kyrgyzstane-297380-2018/>.

³⁵ Zalessky, B. Belarus - Russia: edges of integration. Chronicle of allied construction / B. Zalesskiy. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2016. -- C. 96.

Belarus - Russia: goal - common information space

In May 2016 the Council of Ministers of the Union State of Belarus and Russia adopted a resolution "On the Plan of measures to create a common information space of the Union State for 2016-2020". This plan provides for activities in such areas as information support for the construction of the Union State, covers television and radio broadcasting, Internet, print media, as well as events in the field of mass communications. According to the Belarusian and Russian parties, "implementation of this plan will allow systematizing information activities in the Union State and improving the quality of thematic publications"³⁶. It should be reminded that Belarus and Russia have already signed an Agreement on Cooperation in the Sphere of Press. The adopted plan concretizes the interaction in the information sphere in order to facilitate comprehensive coverage of events, phenomena and processes that take place in the Republic of Belarus and the Russian Federation, as well as the whole complex of issues of large-scale Union building. At the same time, the task is set - "not only allied, but also other mass media should be involved in all this"³⁷.

The very fact that such a plan has been adopted until 2020 suggests that the importance of the common information space in the course of further Union Belarusian-Russian construction will only increase. And there are several reasons for this. One of them is that the Union State is now entering a qualitatively new stage of its development, when "by joint efforts, Belarus and Russia can and must ensure a breakthrough in the scientific and technological field, as well as develop regional partnership".³⁸ when it is necessary to significantly improve coordination of efforts of the parties to create new opportunities for mutual trade, support industrial production in both countries, investment and innovation cooperation, removal of existing barriers to cooperation.

It is no secret that over the past few years the volume of mutual Belarusian-Russian trade in dollar terms has been declining. Thus, in the first four months of 2016 alone, the trade and economic turnover between the countries decreased by another 12 percent to 7.6 billion dollars. But even with the reduction of solvent

³⁶ Meeting of the Council of Ministers of the Union State [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://government.ru/news/23002/>.

³⁷ The Ministry of Information of Belarus and the Ministry of Communications of Russia will sign the document on union information space [Electronic resource] on May 12. - - 2016. - URL: <http://octmogilev.gov.by/content/view/8778/>.

³⁸ The Third Forum of Regions of Belarus and Russia [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/uchastie-v-iii-forume-regionov-belarusi-i-rossii-13762/.

demand and investment, when, as noted at the May meeting of the Union Council of Ministers, the temptation to expand support for its own producer through government subsidies, to close the market through bureaucratic restrictions and informal barriers, to inflate national import substitution programs and subsidize lending is particularly great, to close state procurement procedures from partners, the economy of the Union State should not stand still, and move on the best ways to the fastest possible recovery of pre-crisis volumes of trade and economic interaction between Belarus and Russia using all the opportunities of free and equal competition, as well as concerted joint actions in the field of industrial cooperation. At the III Forum of Regions of Belarus and Russia held in Minsk in June 2016, the head of the Belarusian state named among such fundamentally important tasks of the Union's construction in modern conditions - creation of a common information space and intensification of interaction at the level of the regions of the two countries, as it is "in inter-regional cooperation is concentrated a huge potential that can accelerate the recovery of mutual trade turnover between Belarus and Russia"³⁹.

It is clear that the new level of development of integration construction in the Union State of Belarus and Russia will require adequate media articulation, which should be based on the fact, as noted in the resolution of XI Belarusian International Media Forum "Partnership for the Future", held in Minsk in May 2016, that "the media should assume special responsibility, become a factor of consolidation and creation, mutual understanding and cooperation, strengthening of mutual respect and friendship between countries and peoples"⁴⁰. Adequate media articulation in this case should be understood as the situation when the media space of the Union State member states should and will fully reflect almost all joint projects and processes of integration, thus contributing to the creation of a common information space.

It should be noted that the III Forum of Regions of Belarus and Russia, already mentioned above, became an important impetus on the way to the formation of such a space. First of all, within the framework of this Forum for the first time a separate specialized section was organized - "Mass media as a

³⁹ Meeting of the Presidents of Belarus and Russia [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/vstrecha-prezidentov-belarusi-i-rossii-13785/.

⁴⁰ Media should become a factor of consolidation, creation, strengthening of mutual respect and friendship between peoples - resolution of the media forum [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/society/view/smi-dolzhen-stat-faktorom-konsolidatsii-sozidanija-ukreplenija-vzaimovazhenija-i-druzhy-mezhdu-193266-2016/>.

⁴¹ Ananich: the regional dimension has a special role in the Belarusian-Russian integration [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/society/view/ananich-u-regionalnogo-izmerenija-osobaja-rol-v-belorusko-rossijskoj-integratsii-196420-2016/>.

significant factor of interregional interaction, formation of a common space of humanitarian values of the Union State". Secondly, this section for the first time recognized at such a high level that a special role in the processes of Belarusian-Russian integration belongs to the regional dimension, where the subjects of this information interaction - the editorial offices of regional newspapers and TV and radio companies, covering the development and implementation of specific joint projects and initiatives - have a very important business conversation about the most effective areas of cooperation for the citizens of the two countries, introducing into the mass consciousness of their readers, viewers and listeners the culture of cooperation. At the same time, the participants of the section sounded absolutely right in their speeches the idea that "information flows not only intersect, but also unite in a powerful way, creating an image of time, helping to solve problems. <...> In this regard, regional media can do a lot, because they are closest to the people" .

Concrete steps towards formation of the regional dimension of the common information space of the Union State of Belarus and Russia were the agreements on cooperation in the field of information exchange signed in Minsk last summer between the editorial offices of Vitebskie Vesti, Minskaya Pravda and the media holding Pskovskaya Pravda, as well as between the editorial offices of Gomelskaya Pravda and Bryanskiy Rabocha. It should be assumed that these documents will allow the parties to objectively and comprehensively inform about each other's lives, provide an opportunity to really immerse themselves in the lives of their neighbors, learn from them interesting and useful experience. "Such agreements are a powerful information driver for interregional cooperation".⁴² as they can stimulate both economic and humanitarian components of interaction between their regions.

In particular, a wide range of thematic publications is open to the partner newspapers Gomelskaya Pravda and Bryanskiy Rabocha. The starting point here may be the signing of an agreement on cooperation in trade and economic, scientific and technical, humanitarian and cultural spheres at the end of August 2016 in the framework of the V Slavonic Economic Forum held in Bryansk, Gomel and Bryansk regions, as well as the fact that "interregional cooperation between Gomel and Bryansk regions is developing within the framework of ten agreements on twinning and partnership relations and is based on the priorities of

⁴² Malashenkov, V. Matusевич: agreements between regional newspapers of Belarus and Russia - regional cooperation driver / V. Malashenkov // [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/matusевич-soglashenija-mezhdub-oblastnymi-gazetami-belarusi-i-rossii-drajver-regionalnogo-196482-2016/>.

foreign policy of the two states and mutual interests"⁴³. There is no need to go far for concrete examples of the successful experience of this cooperation - the joint venture for the production of agricultural machinery "Bryanskselmash", whose staff has increased from 35 to 250 people in ten years. Or another example: in 2009 in the city of Klinty, Bryansk region, a trading house "Dairy Lace" was opened, where dairy products from Gomel enterprises are sold. By the end of 2015, the volume of exports of meat and dairy products of the Gomel enterprises increased to 18 million dollars.

Apparently, very soon, new media partners can and should be added to the mentioned pairs, as the Belarusian-Russian interregional cooperation has recently been rapidly replenished with new forms, projects, initiatives, on which regional mass media of the two countries should focus their attention. Thus, in early August 2016, the first forum of interregional cooperation between Mogilev and Bryansk regions within the framework of the Union State was held, where 9 treaties and agreements on trade-economic, scientific-technical and cultural cooperation between regions and organizations of Bryansk and Mogilev region were signed. Each of these documents has a pronounced applied character. Several innovations are crucial in the organization of this forum, including the priority of economic cooperation, the involvement of young people in this process, and reliance on regional projects and initiatives. All of these have made it possible to call the Mogilev and Bryansk regions "pioneers in organizing regional cooperation on fundamentally new terms".⁴⁴ when it is necessary to concentrate efforts of regions on creation of worthy competition to foreign producers in separate branches of economy through strengthening of Belarusian-Russian cooperation ties, when it is necessary to organize joint ventures, assembly productions more intensively, using to the maximum extent possible competitive advantages of each other and possibilities of the Union State.

In the same August 2016 the cooperation agreement was signed by Vitebsk and already mentioned Bryansk region, appreciably expanding the similar document of 20 years ago at the expense of economic issues. In terms of industrial cooperation, a number of areas are considered here - from production of construction materials to the creation of logistics sites in the Bryansk region. And

⁴³ Sidorchik, V. Gomel and Bryansk regions signed an agreement on cooperation / V. Sidorchik // [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/gomelskaja-i-brjanskaja-oblasti-podpisali-soglashenie-o-sotrudnichestve-207342-2016/>.

⁴⁴ Yemelyanova, O. Myasnikovich: Mogilev and Bryansk regions - pioneers of regional cooperation in new conditions / O. Yemelyanova // [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/mjasnikovich-mogilevskaja-i-brjanskaja-oblasti-pionery-regionalnogo-sotrudnichestva-v-novyh-uslovijah-204559-2016/>.

even the first step in this direction has been taken recently - a contract for brick deliveries to Bryansk has been signed. In agriculture we are talking about the establishment of a joint cattle-breeding enterprise, as there are no elite dairy cows in Bryansk, which the Belarusian side has, as well as projects in the field of crop production. In a word, the parties intend to "cover almost the whole range of industries" with the new agreement⁴⁵. In order to implement the plans of cooperation, the parties created a joint working group on cooperation development, which could become one of the main and long-lasting topics in publications, programs and programs of regional media in Vitebsk and Bryansk regions.

In September 2016, the plan of measures to develop cooperation until 2018 was signed by the Mogilev and Orel regions. The document provides for "the expansion of supplies of chemical industry products to the enterprises of the Oryol region, the development of cooperation in the field of furniture production, including through the supply of materials from the Mogilev region".⁴⁶ as well as the production of modern elevator equipment with the participation of JSC "Mogilevliftmash" and industrial enterprises of Orel region, replacement of elevators that have reached the standard operating life, organization of elevators under the new construction projects in this Russian region. Cooperation in the field of design and construction of residential areas with social and engineering infrastructure facilities, agro-towns in the Oryol region can also be interesting.

Another relevant topic in the regional media of Belarus and Russia should become a gradually growing movement of twin cities and partner cities. Recall that in November 2015 in Russian Podolsk under the motto "Cooperation of twin cities of Belarus and Russia for the development of economic, investment, innovation and social projects in the Eurasian Economic Union" was the eighth meeting of twin cities of the two member states of the Union State. It was noted that already 137 Russian cities have partnership relations with Belarusian twin cities: "The close and fruitful interaction between them in various areas contributes to the socio-economic development of our states and is an important factor in strengthening the Union State"⁴⁷. In other words, the very logic of the

⁴⁵ Tikhonova, A. Vitebsk and Bryansk regions will create a working group on cooperation development / A. Tikhonova // [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/vitebskaja-i-brjanskaja-oblasti-sozdat-dut-rabochuju-gruppu-po-razvitiyu-sotrudnichestva-205153-2016/>.

⁴⁶ Brewery, E. Mogilev and Orel regions signed a plan to develop cooperation / E. Brewery // [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/mogilevskaja-i-orlovskaja-oblasti-podpisali-plan-po-razvitiyu-sotrudnichestva-211771-2016/>.

⁴⁷ Grishkevich, A. Meeting of twin cities of Belarus and Russia will strengthen the complex of relations between the two countries - Putin / A. Grishkevich // [Electronic resource]. - - 2015. - URL:

Union integration dictates that Belarusian and Russian regional media should focus on covering the most pressing issues related to the development and implementation of joint economic, investment and infrastructure projects, cooperation programs in the fields of culture, health care, and sports, as well as on ensuring effective exchange of experience between municipal authorities, scientific centers and educational institutions, public organizations and business associations.

It should be noted that the previous seven meetings of sister cities of Belarus and Russia, which began in 1998 in Belarusian Gomel, were then held in Mytishchi, Vitebsk, Bryansk, Novopolotsk, Smolensk and Minsk. Almost all of them became an eloquent illustration of the conclusion that the Belarusian-Russian twinning of cities creates a unique environment for productive trade and economic interaction, as well as for the spiritual component of the brotherhood of the two peoples and the development of public diplomacy. Ensuring cultural and civilization, spiritual compatibility of Belarusians and Russians, mutual acceptance of values is the key to a successful neighborhood policy, implementation of interstate economic, political and social programs, business projects. That is why "today the need to expand the format of civil society dialogue has increased many times, and the twinning of cities is of great importance"⁴⁸.

Speaking specifically about the scale of interaction between the cities of Belarus and Russia in the framework of long-term economic and integration processes, today more than eight thousand enterprises, representing almost all regions of the two countries, participate in the Union construction, in which the twinning of cities contributes to an atmosphere of learning each other, trust and corporate interests. After all, "the twinning strategy includes long-term and multi-vector programs, designed to involve many people, organizations and institutions".⁴⁹ Thus, developing a collective interest in the processes taking place between cities.

<http://www.belta.by/politics/view/vstrecha-gorodov-pobratimov-belarusi-i-rossii-posluzhit-ukrepleniju-kompleksa-svjazej-mezhdu-dvumja-171991-2015/>.

⁴⁸ Grishkevich, A. Belarusian-Russian city twinning creates an environment for productive economic interaction - Baturo / A. Grishkevich // [Electronic resource]. - - 2015. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/society/view/belorusko-rossijskoe-pobratimstvo-gorodov-sozdaet-sredu-dlja-produktivnogo-ekonomicheskogo-172010-2015/>.

⁴⁹ Grishkevich, A. Podolsk will increase economic interaction with Belarusian twin cities / A. Grishkevich // [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/society/view/podolsk-budet-naraschivat-ekonomicheskoe-vzaimodejstvie-s-belorusskimi-gorodami-pobratimami-172025-2015/>.

Among the active participants in the brotherhood movement within the framework of the Union State is the Russian Podolsk, which established brotherhood ties with the Belarusian Borisov as early as 1992, and a little later - with Soligorsk district of Minsk region. The emphasis in this cooperation with Belarusian partners is shifted to the intensification of comprehensive economic ties. For example, Belarusian cities are already receiving supplies from a number of Podol enterprises of cable products, plastic and rubber goods, heat insulation, furniture, electrical and pharmaceutical products. The Belarusian side is interested in the experience of Orsha district of Vitebsk region, which has 19 partnership agreements with cities and regions of far and near abroad, 10 of which are in Russia. The products of Orsha manufacturers are exported to 62 Russian regions.

It is also important to note that the process of development of twinning and partnership relations between cities and districts of Belarus and Russia continued to actively develop in 2016. Thus, in March, Belarusian Vitebsk and Beloyarsky District of Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug - Yugra came out for signing a document on cooperation. The parties saw a mutually beneficial prospect in cooperation between the animal farms of the Russian District and Vitebsk Fur Combine, which is part of the footwear holding and is undergoing modernization. "The management of Vitebsk and Beloyarsky are now in a close dialogue about signing a brotherhood agreement"⁵⁰.

In May, the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation was signed by the Belarusian Polotsk (Vitebsk region) and the Russian Kansk (Krasnoyarsk Krai), who declared their willingness to cooperate effectively "in industry, small and medium business, trade, transport, agriculture, science, education, health care, ecology and the rational use of natural resources, tourism, sports, culture and art"⁵¹. It should be noted that this document has clearly not appeared in an empty place. After all, over the past decade the leading enterprise of the Belarusian city JSC "PolotskFiberglass" has already actively supplied partners in the Krasnoyarsk region its glass fiber products. The volume of foreign trade turnover between Polotsk and the region in 2015 doubled to 285.7 thousand dollars. Taking into account the fact that Kansk has developed chemical, leather, fur, footwear, textile,

⁵⁰ Knyazeva, E. Vitebsk and Beloyarsky Raion of Russia identified promising interaction points / E. Knyazeva // [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/vitebsk-i-belojarskij-rajon-rossii-opredelili-perspektivnye-tochki-vzaimodejstviya-186534-2016/>.

⁵¹ Tikhonova, A. Belorussky Polotsk and Russian Kansk intend to establish friendly relations / A. Tikhonova // [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/belorusskij-polotsk-i-rossijskij-kansk-namereny-ustanovit-druzhestvennye-otnosheniya-193752-2016/>.

timber, woodworking, pulp and paper industries, the parties hope to fill the signed contract with a powerful concrete content.

In the same May, the agreement on cooperation in the social and economic sphere was adopted by Vitebsk Raion and Rostov Municipal Raion, Yaroslavl Oblast, to establish, first of all, cooperation in the sphere of pharmaceuticals. The fact is that veterinary medicines produced at the Vitebsk biofactory are practically not represented in Yaroslavl Oblast, where two large dairy factories operate in Rostov Raion - for 2 thousand and 5 thousand cattle. In addition, Vitebsky Raion acquainted its Russian partners with an investment proposal to organize the production of medicinal products for people. In Yaroslavl Oblast "there is a whole pharmaceutical cluster, and directly in Rostov Raion - a factory producing substances and raw materials for vaccines"⁵². So, the signed document on cooperation between the Belarusian and Russian regions should find common ground for mutually beneficial cooperation.

In July, Rylsky Raion, Kursk Oblast, and Belyniha Raion, Mogilev Oblast, signed a protocol on establishing brotherhood. "Earlier, the districts of Kursk Oblast established twin links with 13 Belarusian districts and towns"⁵³. In the same month, twin links were established in Mogilev and Moscow's Falcon Mountain District of the Eastern Administrative District of the Russian capital. And in the very near future the signed agreement "will be filled with concrete projects, which will touch upon various areas of interaction, including economic relations"⁵⁴. In August, Kobrin (Brest region) and Gusev (Kaliningrad region) added to the list of cooperating twin cities. They fixed their intention "to develop long-term partnership relations on mutually beneficial terms in economic, scientific, technical, cultural and educational spheres"⁵⁵. In mid-October the memorandum on economic, social and cultural cooperation was adopted by the Russian Kurgan

⁵² Tikhonova, A. Friendship of districts strengthens interstate relations between Belarus and Russia - Head of Rostov district / A. Tikhonova // [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/druzhba-rajonov-ukrepljaet-mezhgosudarstvennye-svjazi-belarusi-i-rossii-glava-rostovskogo-rajona-193090-2016/>.

⁵³ Belarus and Kursk region signed three documents on cooperation [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-kurskaja-oblast-podpisali-tri-dokumenta-otrudnichestve-200355-2016/>.

⁵⁴ Pivovarov, E. Mogilev and Moscow district Sokolinaya Gora have established twin links / E. Pivovarov // [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/mogilev-i-moskovskij-rajon-sokolijnaja-gora-ustanovili-pobratimskie-svjazi-201617-2016/>.

⁵⁵ Chernovolova, A. Kobrin and Russian Gusev became twin cities (in Russian) / A. Chernovolova // [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/kobrin-i-rossijskij-gusev-staligorodami-pobratimami-207126-2016/>.

and Belarusian Gomel, and a little bit later the agreement on partnership cooperation was signed by Russian Izhevsk and Belarusian Brest.

All these facts show that cooperation between specific cities and districts within the Union State is objectively the most important area of cooperation, in which Belarus and Russia will be particularly intensive in the coming years in order to transfer national economies to the innovation path of development, promote mutual investment, create highly efficient and high-tech industries and expand production cooperation. Therefore, "it is the development of regional partnerships that will determine the transition to a qualitatively new state of union integration - total interaction at all levels"⁵⁶. This is why regional mass media in Belarus and Russia have great potential for creating a common information space of the Union State. At the same time, it is important to remember that active promotion of the ideas of union integration into the mass consciousness of millions of citizens of the two countries "implies no less active creative stance of the mass media and their historical responsibility to society"⁵⁷.

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⁵⁶ Surikov, A. Cities Diplomacy - an effective way of regional integration not only of the Union State, but also of the Eurasian Economic Union / A. Surikov // Belarus - Russia: Diplomacy of Cities : inform.- integr. project / edited by interviewer: B. Zalessky, M. Valkovsky, A. Mostovoy. - Minsk : Biznesosset, 2013. - -- C. 3.

⁵⁷ Welcome Address of the Minister of Information of the Republic of Belarus L.S. Ananich // Inter-ethnic harmony and tolerance - the value basis of the Eurasian integration : Mate. Interdepartmental Scientific and Practical Conference, Resp. Belarus, Minsk, December 9, 2014 //International Consent and Tolerance - the Value Base of Eurasian Integration : Mate. - Minsk : Law and Economics, 2015. - -- C. 13.

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Belarus - Russia: union programs and regional cooperation

Today, there are over two hundred regional integration associations in the world, whose activities, based on the common interests of the participants in the implementation of a coordinated policy, are aimed at mutually beneficial economic, social and cultural cooperation. The obvious leader of Eurasian integration in the post-Soviet space is the Union State of Belarus and Russia, the format of which pursues the main goal - "to improve people's lives through the addition of joint potentials for the development of industrial and agricultural production, advanced scientific developments in countries interested in accelerating development and real improvement of the quality of life of society"⁵⁸.

The most important tool to promote this integration construction is the implementation of union programs, which "on the platform of the Union State have already been completed about 50"⁵⁹. In 2014-2015, six programs in the field of electronic instrumentation, medicine, agriculture and space technology were completed. In February 2016, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union of Belarus and Russia adopted the budget of the Union State for this year in the amount of 6.6 billion Russian rubles, much of which will be used to finance seven existing programs.

Four new programs are also planned to be launched in 2016: 1) "Development of complex technologies for the creation of materials, devices and key elements of space facilities and advanced products of other industries"; 2) "Development of critical standard technologies for the design and manufacture of nanostructured micro- and optoelectronics products, devices and systems based on them, and equipment for their production and testing"; 3) "Development and improvement of a single system of technical cover for the region's railroads"; 4) "Development of a new generation of electronic components for control systems and safety"; 5) "Development of a unified system of technical cover for the region's railroads". In addition, the Union budget provides for the possibility of

⁵⁸ Surikov, A. In the current situation our countries consolidate their political, economic and business efforts to overcome the crisis phenomena even more / A. Surikov // Interaction of regions: the Union State - the locomotive of the Eurasian integration: inform.-integratsii project / essay, interviewing : B. Zalessky, M. Valkovsky, A. Greshnikov. - Minsk: Biznesoftet, 2016. -- C. 5.

⁵⁹ Brewer, E. More than half of the Union State budget funds is spent on innovation projects - Light / E. Brewer // [Electronic resource]. - - 2015. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/society/view/bolee-poloviny-sredstv-bjudzheta-sojuznogo-gosudarstva-tratitsja-na-innovatsionnye-proekty-legkij-171482-2015/>.

financing two more additional programs: 1) "Development of spinal systems with the use of prototyping technologies in surgical treatment of children with severe congenital deformities and spinal cord injuries"; 2) "Development of innovative geneographic and genomic technologies for identification of personality and individual features of a person on the basis of studying the gene pools of the Union State regions".

The main feature of both the programs already implemented and under development is their applied orientation and focus on a concrete result. Thus, recently the Council of Ministers of the Union State has approved the program "Autodiesel", according to which it is planned to develop more than 40 technological solutions for the automotive industry. Another example is the implementation of several programs on space subject, where it is a question of "creation of target scientific on-board equipment for remote sensing, microelectronic and electronic component base, software and hardware complexes for digital processing of space information"⁶⁰. In the same line - the program "Autoelectronics", aimed at creating experimental models of on-board electronic systems and blocks of intelligent control and diagnostics of the vehicle, monitoring its technical condition, control of electrical equipment and microclimate in the cabin, as well as monitoring the type and speed of obstacles in poor visibility conditions. The Scythian Subsoil Program, which was launched in April 2015 and will last for four years, is designed to reduce exploration costs and optimize well construction by creating application software for geological and geophysical material processing, because "one running kilometer of well drilling currently costs about \$1 million"⁶¹.

High expectations of the developers are connected with the implementation of the BelRosLact program, which provides for the creation of industrial production of drugs using human lactoferol - a unique development of Belarusian and Russian scientists, which currently has no analogues in the world. The main goal of this program is to create a "series of drugs based on human lactoferol for different needs. For example, to improve bowel function, body function in general, as well as child nutrition and immunity"⁶². This program will be a continuation of the projects that have already been implemented. We would like

⁶⁰ Andrey Kobaykov met with Igor Komarov [Electronic Resource]. - - 2015. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/5941>.

⁶¹ A road map of the union program "Scythian Subsoil" [Electronic Resource] was formed. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/society/view/sformirovana-dorozhnaja-karta-sojuznoj-programmy-skif-nedra-178374-2016/>.

⁶² Rapota, G. The Union State Program "BelRosPharm" will be implemented / G. Rapota // [Electronic resource]. - - 2014. - URL: <http://www.soyuz.by/news/smi/6053.html7/>.

to remind that joint Belarusian-Russian research to produce lactoferin-based medicines began in 2003 when the first allied program BelRosTransgen was launched. In 2009, scientists started the next program - BelRosTransgen-2. "As a result, we managed to breed a herd of modified goats with lactoferin in their milk"⁶³.

Speaking at the II Forum of Regions of Belarus and Russia, which was held in September 2015 in Sochi, Russian President Vladimir Putin said that only "close industrial cooperation will increase the competitiveness of the two countries, attract investment and generally beneficial to the welfare of peoples"⁶⁴. In other words, the main priorities of the Union State development today lie in the successful implementation of the industrial programs of the two countries, aimed at combining them into a single import substitution program. Evaluating the results of the Russian-Belarusian cooperation in 2015 within the framework of the Union State, the heads of the governments of the two countries have recently come to an unambiguous conclusion: "Belarus and Russia need to look for new joint points for economic growth"⁶⁵. And the facts show that such a search is already underway.

In particular, for 2017-2020, the concepts for 18 programs have already been prepared, which will cover various areas, including nanomaterials and radio electronics. In the same line, a particularly important area of Union construction is automotive components, taking into account the engineering profile of Belarus and Russia, producing many cars and engines, but also importing a certain part of their components. "The new program for auto components will help to reduce imports as much as possible"⁶⁶. It also envisages the development of such interesting areas of joint activities within the framework of the Union State as stem cell treatment and the use of supercomputers for forecasting mineral extraction.

The parties see the future of the Union program construction in the sharply increasing role of regional partnership in the Russian-Belarusian integration

⁶³ The NAS of Belarus is preparing concepts for four new allied programs [Electronic Resource]. - - 2015. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/society/view/nan-belarusi-gotovit-kontseptsii-chetyreh-novyh-sojuznyh-programm-159403-2015/>.

⁶⁴ Brewery, E. Russia is ready for the closest industrial cooperation with Belarus - Putin / E. Brewery // [Electronic resource]. - - 2015. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/politics/view/rossija-gotova-k-samomu-tesnomu-promyshlennomu-sotrudnicestvu-s-belarusju-putin-163211-2015/>

⁶⁵ Andrey Kobyakov met with Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev [Electronic Resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/6284>.

⁶⁶ The concepts of 18 new alliance programs will be implemented in 2017-2020 [Electronic Resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/society/view/kontseptsii-18-novyh-sojuznyh-programm-realizujut-v-2017-2020-godah-184618-2016/>.

processes and development of import substitution policy on this basis. This is evidenced by the fact that the focus of the permanent seminar on the Union State construction, which took place in Veliky Novgorod in March 2016, included such topics as: the formation of food clusters in the framework of interregional cooperation between Belarus and Russia; interregional cooperation as a factor accelerating economic integration in the Union State; Union State programs as a way to implement the structural industrial policy of Belarus and Russia; improvement of the mechanism of import substitution policy in the framework of the Russian-Belarusian cooperation; and the development of the import substitution policy.

From the Belarusian side, when determining priorities in cooperation with the Russian federal districts and individual regions, their geographical location, resource potential, the level of development of knowledge-intensive industries, and the need for cooperative ties are taken into account. The government recommends the use of such cooperation schemes as export leasing, export credit and insurance, compensation of interest rates for loans to non-resident banks for the purchase of Belarusian goods, and tied loans at the state level through bilateral intergovernmental agreements. "The task is to open representative offices of Belarusian manufacturers in the Russian Federation more efficiently; in addition to direct sales of Belarusian products, joint ventures and production facilities are to be established. It is also tasked to organize regional fairs and trade in finished industrial, construction and food products more actively⁶⁷.

On the Russian side, for example, according to S. Orlova, Governor of the Vladimir Region, "scientific, technological and innovation programs are a unique integration tool created and developed within the Union State. They allow for effective solution of important tasks in various industries. And here, of course, it is important to consider regional interest⁶⁸. In the Union programs, this Russian region is more interested in agriculture, machine and machine building, development of technologies and organization of pilot production of highly effective and biologically safe medicines of new generation, increase of food production efficiency through processing of products on the basis of progressive technologies and techniques, creation of component base and technology for

⁶⁷ Mikhail Myasnikovich instructed the heads of government agencies to more actively develop cooperation with Russian regions [Electronic Resource]. - - 2013. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/5026>.

⁶⁸ Orlova, S. Orlova // Interregional Cooperation - an effective mechanism for solving a wide range of problems in trade, economic and cultural spheres / S. Orlova // Interaction of regions: the Union State - a locomotive of the Eurasian integration: inform.-integratsiyu project / ess., interviewing : B. Zalesky, M. Valkovsky, A. Greshnikov. - Minsk: Biznesoftet, 2016. - - C. 123.

production of light composite materials of new generation on the basis of fabric. But special attention should be paid to the new Union program "Innovative development of potato and topinambur production", aimed at providing the population of the Union State with potatoes of high quality. In addition, one of the most important problems of agriculture is to increase production of fodder for animal husbandry at the lowest cost. In this respect, topinambur seems to be an extremely profitable agricultural crop with high food and feed advantages and universal use. Therefore, under this program, agricultural producers in Belarus and Russia will be able to reduce costs and increase competitiveness not only in the domestic but also in the global agricultural market.

In the Kaluga region, the A.F. Tsyb Medical Radiological Research Center - a branch of the Federal State Budgetary Institution "National Medical Research Radiological Center" of the Ministry of Health of the Russian Federation is implementing a program of joint activities to overcome the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster within the Union State for the period up to 2016. "The work of specialists is aimed at improving the level of medical care, including specialized and high-tech medical care, citizens of Belarus and Russia, living in the adjacent territories and belonging to the radiation risk groups⁶⁹.

In Tomsk region back in 2007 within the framework of the Union State supercomputer program "SKIF-GRID" the supercomputer "SKIF Siberia" was put into operation. It is designed for calculations in the field of geology, meteorology, engineering, astronomy, as well as modeling of explosions and nuclear tests. Today the Research Institute of Medical Genetics of TNC SB RAMS is among the developers and co-developers of the project "DNA Identification", which is expected to begin in 2016. The goal of the program is to create new methods and software products for use by criminal investigators in the investigation of crimes in terms of identifying the perpetrator or victim. In this Russian region it is hoped that "the portfolio of joint programs in the future will be replenished based on the priority areas of scientific and technical development of the two countries, and financing of the already implemented will be carried out on a stable basis⁷⁰.

⁶⁹ Artamonov, A. Life shows our complete mutual understanding and willingness to support each other / A. Artamonov // Interaction of regions: the Union State - the locomotive of the Eurasian integration: inform.-integr. project / ess., interviewing : B. Zalessky, M. Valkovsky, A. Greshnikov. - Minsk: Biznesofset, 2016. -- C. 159.

⁷⁰ Zhvachkin, S. Agreement on cooperation we plan to sign this year / S. Zhvachkin // Interaction of regions: the Union State - the locomotive of the Eurasian integration: inform.-integr. project / ess., interview : B. Zalessky, M. Valkovsky, A. Greshnikov. - Minsk: Biznesofset, 2016. -- C. 250.

In the Ulyanovsk region there is serious interest in the program "Development of innovative technologies and techniques for the production of competitive composite materials, matrixes and reinforcing elements". The fact is that in 2015 in this region was opened Russia's first plant of composite materials, based on the latest technologies, which already provides competitive products for aircraft of the new generation. And its capabilities can be successfully used within the Union State. Or such program as "Improvement of the system of protection of common information resources of Belarus and Russia on the basis of high technologies". The potential of the Ulyanovsk region's participation in this program is practically not used yet, and this region is "one of the Russian centers of information technology development, our companies fulfill orders of major foreign partners and work all over the world, including the famous American Silicon Valley"⁷¹.

In the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), a project of the United Institute of Mechanical Engineering of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus to create new equipment and technologies for the development of the Far North will be implemented. This Belarusian institute has developed a unique model of a multi-link dump truck that could be used in Yakutia's quarries. "Such a road train is able to take ore out of the quarry on a very narrow road and then transport it up to 400 km. away. It helps to reduce costs during quarrying"⁷².

In short, even these few examples show that the Union State programs are also of the most lively interest at the regional level, as their implementation is aimed at the implementation of coordinated actions for joint scientific and technical support to address the most important socio-economic issues of mutual interest. And, to all appearances, the parties have approached today to a number of new approaches in realization of priority directions of scientific and technical cooperation.

In particular, within the framework of the Program "Development of Space and Ground-based Means of Providing Russian and Belarusian Users with Remote Sensing Information" for 2013-2017, it is planned to create experimental sites for complex monitoring aimed at solving applied thematic tasks in the interests of Russian and Belarusian information consumers using information

⁷¹ Morozov, S. Morozov // Interaction of regions: the Union State - the locomotive of the Eurasian integration: inform.-integratsiyu project / comp., interviewing : B. Zalessky, M. Valkovsky, A. Greshnikov. - Minsk: Biznesoftet, 2016. - -- C. 266.

⁷² Belarusian scientists will take part in the creation of equipment for the development of the Far North [Electronic Resource]. - -- 2014. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belorussskie-uchenye-primut-uchastie-v-sozdanii-tehniki-dlja-osvoenija-rajonov-krajnego-severa-55323-2014>.

from space means in combination with air and ground facilities. And in the near future "it is important to solve problems within the framework of allied programs related to the creation of fundamentally new materials, target equipment and completion of standards for the space industry in order to better integrate into the world economic space to provide services to third countries"⁷³.

Deepening of the Russian-Belarusian integration and cooperation should be facilitated by the creation of a single engineering company - an integrator for the development of machine-tool competencies of business entities of both countries. The agreement to this effect was reached in November 2015. On the Russian side, the company's participants are the Industrial Development Fund, "Stan Group" LLC, MSTU "Stankin", on the Belarusian side - Belstankoinstrument Holding and OJSC "Minsk Electrotechnical Plant named after V.I. Kozlov". At the same time, it was decided to develop a strategy for the development of machine-tool industry of the two countries, which will give an additional impetus to the development of a common scientific, technical and production base. "An example of such cooperation may be the joint development of new types of machine-tool products with the involvement of state support measures provided by Russia and Belarus"⁷⁴.

Even before the end of 2016 the first joint innovation projects should be financed by the Belarusian-Russian venture fund, which is currently being created with the participation of "Russian Venture Company" LLC. In addition, work is continuing today on the creation of the Belarusian-Russian Technopark, in which it is planned to develop technologies for the transfer of scientific developments of young scientists into commercial use. The parties are now working on the "list of universities, which will be included in it. The Belarusian State University was the first to express its interest. The universities of St. Petersburg and Novosibirsk are currently under consideration from Russia"⁷⁵. In due course this project will become a good basis for the development of more than one more Union State program.

⁷³ Vityaz, P. There are a number of legal and economic issues that need to be discussed and solved / P. Vityaz // Interaction of regions: the Union State - the locomotive of the Eurasian integration: inform.-integr. project / comp., interviewing : B. Zalessky, M. Valkovsky, A. Greshnikov. - Minsk: Biznesoftet, 2016. - - C. 278.

⁷⁴ Brewery, E. Belarus and Russia intend to jointly develop machine tool building / E. Brewery // [Electronic resource]. - - 2015. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-rossija-namereny-sovmestno-razvivat-stankostroenie-169549-2015/>.

⁷⁵ The Belarusian-Russian Venture Fund should finance the first projects by the end of the year [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/society/view/belorusko-rossijskij-fond-venchurnyh-investitsij-dolzhen-profinansirovat-pervye-proekty-do-kontsa-goda-184617-2016/>.

Summing up these considerations, it should be noted that the programs of the Union State, being the basic element of the Union construction, contribute to the achievement of development goals in the main priority areas of Belarusian-Russian integration. Among them are the introduction of common principles of agrarian and industrial policy with the implementation of major integration projects and provision of conditions for increasing exports to the markets of third countries; development of bilateral relations in the transport and logistics sphere with access to involving national transport systems into the schemes of transnational transport corridors; cooperation in the energy sphere, including the construction of the Belarusian NPP; expansion of the sphere of implementation of allied programs and projects with access to practical application of new and high technologies; formation of joint defense policy, ensuring cooperation in the military-industrial sphere, expansion of access of economic entities of the two countries to the defense order of the two states; ensuring equal rights of citizens, conducting coordinated social and migration policy, as well as "development of interregional cooperation"⁷⁶.

And now the issue of significant intensification of the joint Belarusian-Russian media policy in terms of communicating information about joint events, interregional ties, allied programs to the general public not only in Belarus and Russia, but also in other post-Soviet countries comes to the foreground. So far, not all opportunities to convey information about the Union State programs, the results of its work and prospects for its creation, and social and cultural policy have been used. And it is difficult to disagree with the conclusion that "until we achieve that our information will be disseminated regardless of whether it is commercial or not, but simply because it is necessary for our peoples, for our future and for our present state, problems will arise"⁷⁷.

⁷⁶ Interview with Igor Petrishenko, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Belarus to the Russian Federation, Information Agency "Regions of Russia", 23 September 2013. [Electronic resource]. - - 2013. - URL: <http://mfa.gov.by/press/smi/e52d43fe109243c9.html>.

⁷⁷ The possibilities of mass media to present the Union State are not used to the full extent - the deputy [Electronic resource]. - - 2014. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/politics/view/vozmozhnosti-smi-po-prezentatsii-sojuznogo-gosudarstva-ispolzujutsja-ne-v-polnoj-mere-deputat-40898-2014>.

Belarus - Russia: reserves of the twin cities movement

The beginning of 2017 showed an important trend in the development of the Union State of Belarus and Russia. Despite the existing problems of bilateral nature in the fuel and energy sector, only "in January the growth rate of trade turnover was almost 144%. Moreover, the growth is observed both on the part of Belarus for deliveries to Russia and for deliveries of Russian goods to Belarus"⁷⁸.

The most important component of allied integration is the partnership at the level of regions of the two countries, the expansion of which allows to solve such important tasks as import substitution, promotion of export-oriented production, bridging the technological gap with Western countries. About 80 agreements on trade, economic, scientific, technical and cultural cooperation at the level of the government of Belarus and administrations of Russian regions, as well as about 300 agreements between Belarusian regions and subjects of the Russian Federation and municipalities, testify to the scale of current Belarusian-Russian interregional cooperation. In addition, "heads of ministries, concerns, regional executive committees and the Minsk City Executive Committee coordinate cooperation with 57 regions of Russia"⁷⁹. Actually, such branched out interregional ties allow the Union State participants not only to develop trade relations, but also to create strong technological chains in mechanical engineering, petrochemistry, pharmaceuticals and a number of other industries.

The most important element of interaction between the regions of Belarus and Russia is the twin city movement of the two countries, which has almost 25-year history. The first agreement on brotherhood was signed on June 18, 1992. At that time Borisov and Podolsk were related. Today the movement unites "49 cities and district centers of Belarus with 67 cities of Russia. A significant number of Belarusian and Russian cities are in contractual relations on cooperation"⁸⁰. At the ninth meeting of twin cities held in late March 2017 in Mogilev, Belarus, which was attended by representatives of 35 Russian and 24 Belarusian cities, the

⁷⁸ Meeting with Prime Minister of the Russian Federation Dmitry Medvedev [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/7139>.

⁷⁹ Grishkevich, A. Regions of Belarus and Russia have accumulated considerable experience of industrial cooperation - Solovyov / A. Grishkevich // [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/regiony-belarusi-i-rossii-nakopili-znachitelnyj-opyt-promyshlennoj-kooperatsii-solovjev-240368-2017/>.

⁸⁰ Grishkevich, A. Belarus cooperates in trade and economic sphere with 80 regions of Russia / A. Grishkevich // [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-sotrudnichaet-v-torgovo-ekonomicheskoy-sfere-s-80-regionami-rossii-240326-2017>.

leitmotif was the statement that "largely due to the movement of twin cities in recent years, in general, significantly increased the Belarusian-Russian trade turnover. <...> Further unity between the peoples of the two countries should be supported by interregional and brotherly ties" .

The meeting held in Mogilev demonstrated the movement observed today in the twinning relations of Belarusian and Russian cities towards strengthening, first of all, the economic component. And a very eloquent example in this respect is Mogilev itself, which trades with 92 countries and exports local products to more than 50 countries. But his main partner remains Russia, which accounts for three-quarters of foreign trade and 85% of exports. The leading role belongs to the industry, where the leading positions are occupied by chemical, light and processing industries, as well as mechanical engineering and metalworking. To a large extent, the results of such cooperation are explained by the fact that this Belarusian regional center has a wide range of contacts with Russian regions. "Mogilev has three sister cities, 13 partner cities with which it has signed cooperation agreements. <...> For example, today Mogilev courtyards please the citizens of Penza, Tula, Moscow and Yekaterinburg, while Moscow and Tula courtyards please the residents and guests of Mogilev" .⁸¹ And in the free economic zone "Mogilev" only the implementation of the project with the participation of the Russian company "Omsk Carbon Group" to create an enterprise for the production of technical carbon is estimated at 175 million dollars.

In Russia, the experience of Volgograd, which has 45 twin cities and partner cities, where they believe that "public diplomacy is an effective way to preserve and steadily develop interstate relations" is of great interest⁸². In 2000 Volgograd concluded a cooperation agreement with Minsk, and since 2014 has positioned itself as a center of public diplomacy, which is engaged in systematization of "the experience of international activity of Russian cities".⁸³ and implementation of projects at the interregional level. In July 2017, Volgograd signed an agreement

⁸¹ Kulyagin, S. About 85% of Mogilev's exports come from Russia - Tsumarev // [Electron resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/okolo-85-eksporta-mogileva-prihoditsja-na-rossiju-tsumarev-240333-2017/>.

⁸² Grishkevich, A. Public diplomacy plays an important role in the development of interstate relations - the mayor of Volgograd / A. Grishkevich // [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://m.belta.by/society/view/obschestvennaja-diplomatija-igraet-znachimuju-rol-v-razviti-mezhgosudarstvennyh-otnoshenij-mer-240378-2017/>.

⁸³ Kosolapov, A. Politics of the city is aimed at maximum involvement of civil society institutions in international relations / A. Kosolapov // Eurasian Economic Union: urban interaction: inform.-integr. project / edited by interviewer: B. Zalessky, M. Valkovsky, A. Greshnikov. - Minsk : Business Network, 2015. -- C. 35.

on cooperation in the economic, scientific and technical and socio-cultural spheres with Vitebsk to legalize "relations in the field of education, culture, art, sports, tourism, economy"⁸⁴.

Experience shows that in 2016-2017 the movement of twin cities and partner cities within the Union State of Belarus and Russia continued to develop actively, acquiring new forms and depth of content. An interesting experience in this regard was demonstrated, for example, by Minsk and Omsk, which signed the Agreement on Cooperation and Partnership back in March 2013. Already in May 2015, the Days of Omsk took place in Minsk as a follow-up to this document. And in July 2017, the Days of Minsk were held in Omsk, which gave rise to a number of interesting initiatives and projects in the interaction of cities. In particular, this time the Minsk City Council of Deputies and the Omsk City Council signed a protocol on cooperation and interaction - a document that "will provide more opportunities to share experiences in law-making, education, healthcare and improvement"⁸⁵. They were supported by the Minsk branch of the Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Omsk Chamber of Commerce and Industry, which issued a similar document. The business forum held as part of the Days of Minsk in Omsk, which was attended by about 50 Omsk companies, organizations and institutions from Russia alone, came to an end with real business agreements. Thus, an agreement was signed to organize in Omsk region the production of tractor components and repair parts for providing services to tractors of OJSC "MTW". In addition, "an agreement was reached on the supply of confectionery products of Minskhhlebprom to the regional market"⁸⁶. And congress and exhibition activities and business tourism will be the basis for cooperation and collaboration of LLC "Agency of Business Tourism and Events" Momentum "and the state institution" Information and Tourist Center "Minsk". In other words, the results of direct negotiations between representatives of business circles of the two partner cities open new opportunities for strengthening economic ties, give a start to the development of new areas of cooperation. As a

⁸⁴ Tikhonova, A. Vitebsk and Volgograd signed a cooperation agreement / A. Tikhonova // {Electron resource}. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/vitebsk-i-volgograd-podpisali-soglashenie-o-sotrudnichestve-257446-2017/>.

⁸⁵ The councils of deputies of Minsk and Omsk signed an agreement on cooperation [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/sovety-deputatov-minska-i-omska-podpisali-soglashenie-o-sotrudnichestve-258768-2017/>.

⁸⁶ Production of MTZ tractor components and repair parts will be established in Omsk region [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/proizvodstvo-traktornyh-komponentov-i-remdetalej-mtz-budet-sozdano-v-omskoj-oblasti-258832-2017/>.

result, "despite external challenges, trade turnover between Omsk and Minsk is expanding⁸⁷.

Another important strategic partner of Minsk in Russia is St. Petersburg, the days of which took place in the Belarusian capital in October 2016 "to enhance humanitarian cooperation, development of economic ties between St. Petersburg and Minsk, the search for potential partners, the creation of joint venture⁸⁸⁸⁹.

It actively develops cooperation with the Russian side at the level of cities and districts of Vitebsk region, the main export partners of which include Moscow region, Moscow, Smolensk region, St. Petersburg, Republic of Tatarstan, as well as Pskov, Bryansk, Leningrad, Novgorod, Nizhny Novgorod and Sverdlovsk regions. At the beginning of 2016 Vitebsk region "concluded 81 regional agreements on trade and economic, scientific and technical and humanitarian cooperation with the administrations of regions of the Russian Federation, including 22 regional executive committees and 59 regional executive committees"⁹⁰. In 2017, this trend continued: "In the last 3-4 months, more than 20 agreements have been concluded between the self-government and administrative bodies of Vitebsk Region and Russian regions, primarily Pskov, Smolensk and Tver Regions. For the most part, relations between districts and cities are being established now"⁹¹.

Thus, in the middle of March 2017 two cooperation agreements were signed at once: Gorodok District of Vitebsk Region and Usvyatsky District of Pskov Region - between the executive authorities and between the deputy corps. With the help of these documents, based on the spiritual kinship and community of historical fates of the population of the districts, geographical proximity and the

⁸⁷ Brewer, E. Belarusian products are of high quality and are in demand in Omsk - city government / E. Brewer // [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/beloruskaja-produktsija-otlichaetsja-vysokim-kachestvom-i-vostrebovana-v-omske-rukovodstvo-goroda-258735-2017/>.

⁸⁸ Karuna, O. St. Petersburg remains a strategic partner for Minsk / O. Karuna // [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/sankt-peterburg-ostaetsja-dlja-minska-strategicheskim-partnerom-karpenko-213498-2016/>.

⁸⁹ Matveeva, N. Minsk and St. Petersburg are implementing the project "Two Quarters" / N. Matveeva // [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/minsk-i-sankt-peterburg-realizujut-proekt-dva-kvartala-213697-2016/>.

⁹⁰ Sherstnev, N. The main issue remains the issue of mutual increase in the supply of products with a high degree of processing / N. Sherstnev // Interaction of regions: Union State - the locomotive of the Eurasian integration : inform.-integr. project / ess., interviewing : B. Zalessky, M. Valkovsky, A. Greshnikov. - Minsk : Biznesosset, 2016. - - C. 114.

⁹¹ Tikhonova, A. Vitebsk region and Russian regions are intensifying cooperation at the city and district level / A. Tikhonova // [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/vitebskaja-oblast-i-rossijskie-regiony-aktivizirujut-sotrudnichestvo-na-urovne-gorodov-i-rajonov-242742-2017/>.

desire of people to strengthen economic, historical, cultural and humanitarian ties, the parties intend to update the direct contacts of power structures, deputy associations, enterprises of all forms of ownership, and public organizations. It should be noted that before that Gorodok Raion had "signed a cooperation agreement with Nevelsky Raion of Pskov Oblast and a protocol of intentions with Babayevo town of Vologda Oblast"⁹².

At the end of March 2017, a twinning agreement was signed between the Sharkovshchyna district of Vitebsk region and the Pskov district. According to the parties, this document should "give a new impetus to the relationship between the two districts".⁹³ to promote mutually beneficial economic cooperation and attract new investments into the regional economy, which, in turn, will contribute to the development of both territories, the growth of living standards of the population of Sharkovshchyna and Pskov districts.

On the eve of the Day of Unity of the Peoples of Belarus and Russia in 2017, the Treaty of Friendship, Good Neighborliness and Cooperation also adopted Lioznensky district of Vitebsk region and Demidovo district of Smolensk region. Documents, similar to the named Treaty, "have already consolidated good neighborhood relations Lioznensky district with Rudnyansky, Yelninsky, Velizhsky and Pitelinsky districts."⁹⁴ By contributing to the development of interaction between the parties not only in the cultural but also in the economic sphere.

In April 2017, a protocol on joint actions to implement the cooperation agreement between Vitebsk Regional Council of Deputies and the Legislative Assembly of the Tver Region was signed. And as a result of the visit to Tver at the same time, the delegation of Vitebsk region "reached a specific agreement on the signing of documents for the supply of bakery, confectionery, dairy products, breakfast cereals directly between the heads of enterprises".⁹⁵ and also considered

⁹² Tikhonova, A. Border Gorodok and Usviatsky districts will sign a cooperation agreement / A. Tikhonova // [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/prigranichnye-gorodokskij-i-usvjatskij-rajony-podpishut-soglashenija-o-sotrudnichestve-237509-2017/>.

⁹³ Kulyagin, S. The twinning agreement was signed by Sharkovshchinsky and Pskovsky districts / S. Kulyagin // [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/dogovor-oporodnenii-podpisali-sharkovschinskij-i-pskovskij-rajony-240341-2017/>.

⁹⁴ Tikhonova, A. Lioznensky and Demidovsky districts will celebrate the Day of Unity of the Peoples of Belarus and Russia with the Treaty of Friendship / A. Tikhonova // [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/ljoznenskij-i-demidovskij-rajony-otmetjat-den-edinenija-narodov-belarusi-i-rossii-dogovorom-o-druzhbje-239817-2017/>.

⁹⁵ Tikhonova, A. Vitebsk region plans to supply the Tver region with seedlings of coniferous trees / A. Tikhonova // [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/vitebskij-region-planiruet-postavljat-v-tverskuju-oblast-sazhentsy-hvojnyh-derevjev-242765-2017/>.

proposals for the supply of seedlings of conifers, flax and rapeseed from the Belarusian side in the Russian region.

The end of April 2017 was marked by the adoption of two more documents on cooperation of Vitebsk region districts with Russian regions. Firstly, Tolochinsky district established twinning relations with Safonovsky district of Smolensk region to develop friendly and business relations between youth, cultural, creative, sports, educational institutions, commercial and public organizations, industrial and trade enterprises and create conditions for strengthening economic and trade relations. Secondly, Braslav district, which due to its geographical location has more contacts with the nearest regions of Latvia and Lithuania, nevertheless signed a partnership and cooperation agreement with Pskov district, which is aimed primarily at establishing trade and economic relations and implies exchange of experience, learning about social and economic life of the two districts, interaction in the fields of culture and education, healthcare, sports and tourism. If we talk about concrete projects, the implementation of which is real literally today, we can see them, for example, in the field of education. In particular, thanks to the adopted agreement, in Braslavsky Raion "expect to increase the enrollment of Pskov students in the Vidzov State Vocational Technical College of Agricultural Production. Now there are only three children from the Russian region, although previously there were more⁹⁶.

In May 2017, the Treaty on Establishment of Fraternal Relations was signed by the Russian Volgogradsk, which is in the Rostov region, and Orsha district, which has half of the 24 existing agreements on cooperation and brotherhood with Russian cities and regions. The adopted document envisages implementation of "joint projects in the sphere of trade and economic relations, education, culture, sport and tourism".⁹⁷ As well as exchange of experience in the sphere of housing and communal services, joint solution of problems in the sphere of environmental protection and holding exhibitions and fairs of products of enterprises of the Russian city and the Belarusian district. Despite the distance of one and a half thousand from Orsha to Volgogradsk, the parties are confident in the success of

⁹⁶ Knyazeva, E. Braslavsky and Tolochinsky districts will cooperate with Smolensk and Pskov regions / E. Knyazeva // [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/braslavskij-i-tolochinskij-rajony-budut-sotrudnicat-s-regionami-smolenskoj-i-pskovskoj-oblastej-244869-2017/>.

⁹⁷ Knyazeva, E. The Russian city of Volgogradsk became a twin of the Orshansky District / E. Knyazeva // [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/rossijskij-gorod-volgogradsk-stal-pobratimom-orshanskogo-rajona-247584-2017/>.

mutually beneficial trade and economic cooperation and twinning partnerships in all areas.

In July 2017, the protocol of intent to organize cooperation was approved by the cities of Glubokoe, which is in Vitebsk region, and Uvarovo from Tambov region, stating their firm plans to develop cooperation. Interestingly, these cities annually hold "Cherry Festivals", so the parties plan to start with cultural exchange. For this purpose, at the festival in Uvarovo may be organized a site of the festival of De luxe, and in De luxe will operate a site Uvarovskogo "Cherry Orchard". And then, "taking this topic as a basis, we will strengthen ties in education, trade"⁹⁸.

Five agreements on cooperation between the cities and districts of Vitebsk region and the Russian Federation, as well as between regional business associations were signed at the international business conference "Innovation is the way to successful integration", which was held in July 2017 in Vitebsk, and from the rostrum of which the purpose of these documents was stated: "For the economic potential of bilateral cooperation to be higher, it is necessary to make more active use of the resources of such partnership agreements between the regions, to involve in this process enterprises, business circles, business associations, chambers of commerce and industry"⁹⁹. Partnership agreements in the framework of the conference were concluded by Novopolotsk and Buzuluk in Orenburg Oblast, Chashnik and Buzuluk Raions, the deputy corps of Vitebsk and Ivanovo Raions of the same name, as well as the Vitebsk Regional Union of Employers and the Orenburg Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs.

Actually, the same goal - to promote the development of production and logistics potential of the territories - pursues the cooperation agreement signed a few days earlier between the free economic zone "Vitebsk" and the special economic zone "Lotus", which is in Narimanovsky district of Astrakhan region. The fact that "major European transport corridors pass through Vitebsk region, and Astrakhan region is located at the intersection of emerging international

⁹⁸ Tikhonova, A. City of Glubokoe will develop cooperation with Uvarovo from Tambov region / A. Tikhonova // [Electronic resource]. -- 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/gorod-glubokoe-budet-razvivat-sotrudnichestvo-s-uvarovo-iz-tambovskoj-oblasti-258311-2017/>.

⁹⁹ Five agreements on cooperation were signed at the international business conference in Vitebsk [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/pjat-soglashenij-o-sotrudnichestve-podpisany-na-mezhdunarodnoj-biznes-konferentsii-v-vitebske-257665-2017/>.

transit corridors "North - South" and the northern part of the Great Silk Road"¹⁰⁰ makes this document especially relevant.

The Brest Region, which has established "good relations with more than 80 Russian regions, with 22 of them signed cooperation agreements", is also implementing extensive plans to develop comprehensive interaction with Russian cities and districts¹⁰¹. The fact that Russian regions account for three quarters of the exports of Brest Region's enterprises, which in the first four months of 2017 shipped goods worth \$540 million, also speaks volumes. Brest's most active partners are in Kaliningrad, Moscow, Bryansk, Smolensk regions, Moscow and St. Petersburg. In particular, in November 2016 in the same Kaliningrad region was held a business forum "Economy Days of the Brest region in Kaliningrad", in which representatives of the Belarusian region from the construction industry, light industry, tourism held a contact and cooperation exchange with entrepreneurs of the Russian enclave. Experience shows a high efficiency of such meetings, which then has a very positive impact on the volume of bilateral trade: "Mutual trade turnover with the Kaliningrad region in January-September was almost \$10 million. The growth rate against the same period last year - 138.7%. At the same time, the export of goods amounted to \$8.8 million (growth rate - 121.7%)¹⁰².

It should be assumed that Udmurt Republic will soon be among the active partners of this Belarusian region. The basis for this interaction may be the agreement on the establishment of twinning ties, which in November 2016 concluded Brest and Izhevsk and in which "the parties agreed to develop relations in industry, trade, education, youth policy, culture, sports, tourism and other areas of mutual interest¹⁰³. At the IV Forum of Regions of Belarus and Russia, held in June 2017 in Moscow, Brest region signed a partnership agreement with Penza region and a plan of measures to develop cooperation in 2017-2019 with the

¹⁰⁰ FEZ "Vitebsk" and Astrakhan FEZ "Lotus" will develop production and logistics capacities [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/sez-vitebsk-i-astrahanskaja-oez-lotos-budut-razvivat-proizvodstvennyj-i-logisticheskij-potentsialy-257199-2017/>.

¹⁰¹ Brest region intends to further develop comprehensive cooperation with Russian regions - Anatoly Lis [Electronic Resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/brestskaja-oblast-namerena-i-dalshe-razvivat-vsestoronnee-sotrudnichestvo-s-regionami-rossii-anatolij-253168-2017/>.

¹⁰² Economy Days of Brest region will be held in Kaliningrad on November 28-29 [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/dni-ekonomiki-brestskoj-oblasti-projdet-v-kaliningrade-28-29-nojabrja-220443-2016/>.

¹⁰³ Chernovolova, A. Brest and Izhevsk became twin cities / A. Chernovolova // [Electron resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/brest-i-rossijskij-izhevsk-stali-gorodami-pobratimami-217807-2016/>.

Bryansk region. In addition, "the issue of signing agreements on cooperation with the Smolensk and Irkutsk regions is under consideration"¹⁰⁴.

In the Mogilev region, the development of twinning relations with Russian cities is one of the constant priorities of interregional cooperation for such a city as Bobruisk, which signed a twinning agreement with Russian Vladimir back in 1998 and with Naro-Fominsk in 2006. In 2012, the citizens of Bobruisk adopted an Agreement on trade, economic, scientific, technical and cultural cooperation with the Municipal Council of the Intra-City Municipality of St. Petersburg - the year of Kolpino and an Agreement on establishing friendly relations with Kostroma. And in February 2017 this list of documents was supplemented by the Protocol of Intentions to develop all-round cooperation with the city of Luga in the Leningrad region, where the parties outlined steps to develop trade and economic, scientific and technical and economic relations, to create "favorable conditions for the development of cooperation between organizations registered or operating on the territories of the parties, including the exchange of information materials and establishing contacts between them"¹⁰⁵.

As for Grodno region, the decision of the Belarusian government assigned to it the active development of cooperation with the Komi Republic of the Russian Federation. In November 2016, the first meeting of the working group on this issue was held, where specific measures were outlined to increase trade turnover between the parties, to ensure the increase in volumes and diversification of exports of goods and services. The starting point for the participants in this cooperation is as follows: "The trade turnover of Grodno region with the Republic of Komi of Russia in 2015 amounted to \$663.3 thousand, including export of \$427.5 thousand, import of \$235.8 thousand"¹⁰⁶. But, of course, the interests of Grodno residents in the Russian regions are not limited to the Komi Republic alone. For example, only builders of Grodno region have business interests in several Russian regions: in Moscow and Kaluga regions - JSC "Grodnozhihstroy" signed contracts for construction of objects; in Kaliningrad region - JSC

¹⁰⁴ Brest and Penza regions are planning to sign a cooperation agreement at the Regional Forum [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/brestskaja-i-penzenskaja-oblasti-planirujut-podpisat-dogovor-o-sotrudnichestve-na-forume-regionov-252937-2017/>.

¹⁰⁵ Kulyagin, S. Bobruisk and the Russian city of Luga will develop comprehensive cooperation / S. Kulyagin // [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/bobrujsk-i-rossijskij-gorod-luga-budut-razvivat-vsestoronnee-sotrudnichestvo-231419-2017/>.

¹⁰⁶ Grodno region represents investment, tourism and agricultural potential in Komi [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/grodnenskaja-oblast-predstavljaet-investitsionnyj-turisticheskij-i-selskohozjajstvennyj-potencial-v-220545-2016/>.

"GrodnoOlselstroy", where "will build objects of agroindustrial complex and housing"¹⁰⁷.

Speaking about the Gomel Region, it should be noted that Russian regions account for more than 60 percent of its trade turnover with foreign countries, "at the same time Moscow and Moscow Region firmly hold leading positions among Russian regions in this area"¹⁰⁸. And Gomel itself is implementing 13 agreements on cooperation with Russian cities, including Anapa, Armavir, Bryansk, Voronezh, Kaliningrad, Krasnoselsky and Vasileostrovsky districts of St. Petersburg, Kursk, Protvino, Rostov-on-Don, Surgut, Ulyanovsk, Cheremushki district of the South-West Administrative District of Moscow. Gomel residents attach "special importance to using the potential of the twinned relations for the development of trade and economic cooperation"¹⁰⁹. Partners from Bryansk clearly stand out against this background with their activity. In particular, at the international business forum "Business Days in Gomel" held in October 2016, representatives of the Bryansk Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Bryansk Regional Business Incubator came up with the initiative to hold a specialized contact exchange for individual entrepreneurs and business leaders of the Bryansk and Gomel regions during the forum in order to "make such meetings of individual entrepreneurs traditional in the future, and exchange information via videoconferencing. According to the Russian partners, joining efforts of the two border regions should support small businesses in competition with larger players on the goods and services market"¹¹⁰.

Concluding this review, it should be noted that the high potential for cooperation between regions, cities, districts of Belarus and Russia is also reflected in such facts. At the IV Forum of Regions of Belarus and Russia already mentioned above, the parties concluded contracts for \$450 million, signed a new package of almost 80 intergovernmental agreements on regional cooperation,

¹⁰⁷ Grodno builders will work in four regions of Russia [Electronic Resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/grodnenskie-stroiteli-budut-rabotat-v-chetyreh-regionah-rossii-213339-2016/>.

¹⁰⁸ Sidorchik, V. Vladimir Dvornik: The Days of the Gomel region in Moscow are a landmark event in bilateral economic relations (in Russian) / V. Sidorchik // [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/vladimir-dvornik-dni-gomelskoj-oblasti-v-moskve-znakovoe-sobytie-v-dvustoronnih-ekonomicheskikh-212208-2016/>.

¹⁰⁹ Kirichenko, P. Special importance is attached to the use of twinning relationships for the development of trade and economic cooperation / P. Kirichenko // Belarus - Russia: Diplomacy of Cities: Informative-Integ. Project / edited by interviewer: B. Zalessky, M. Valkovsky, A. Mostovoy. - Minsk : Biznesosset, 2013. - - C. 35.

¹¹⁰ Sidorchik, V. Regional Cooperation is the basis of trade and economic relations between Russia and Belarus - the expert / V. Sidorchik // [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/sotrudnichestvo-regionov-javljaetsja-osnovoj-torgovo-ekonomicheskikh-otnoshenij-rossii-i-belarusi-214369-2016/>.

reached an unprecedented high level of interaction, in which most Russian regions work closely with Belarusian regions, including bilateral cooperation agreements, in which projects are implemented both at the interregional level and through municipalities, chambers of commerce and industry, scientific centers, It is difficult to disagree with Russian President Vladimir Putin in this regard. It is difficult to disagree with President Putin, who unequivocally stressed in his speech at the Forum: "The number of such mutually beneficial projects will only grow"¹¹¹.

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¹¹¹ Russia is interested in mutually beneficial projects with Belarus - Putin [Electronic Resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/rossija-zainteresovana-vo-vzaimovyygodnyh-proektah-s-belarusju-putin-255271-2017/>.

Belarus - Volga: a modern vector of regional interaction

Interregional cooperation is the main potential for the development of economic ties between Belarus and Russia, as it allows implementing a large number of local projects that are important for a particular region or oblast. The current extent of cooperation between the two countries at the regional level is evidenced by the fact that "there are more than 2,500 companies with Russian capital in Belarus and more than a thousand Belarusian firms in Russia"¹¹². But for the third year in a row, the Union State of Belarus and Russia has seen a drop in mutual trade turnover. Only in 2015, it fell by more than a quarter. That is why at a meeting of the Supreme State Council of the Union State, held in February 2016 in Minsk, it was noted that interregional cooperation can and should bring "a higher return for the development of economic ties."¹¹³ For only under this condition can this negative trend be reversed by joint efforts.

Such a statement of the issue concerns most of the cooperating regions of Belarus and Russia, including six republics and seven regions located in the Volga Federal District. After all, this okrug is one of the top three after the Central and Urals okrugs, which hold leading positions in mutual trade with Belarus. And the Orenburg and Nizhny Novgorod Oblasts and the Republic of Tatarstan, located on the Volga River, are among the top ten regions of the Russian Federation that interact with Belarus most fruitfully, accounting for over 70 percent of Belarusian-Russian trade turnover. The fact that three cities of this federal district - Nizhny Novgorod, Ufa and Kazan - have branches of the Belarusian Embassy in Russia, whose activities "contribute to the prompt resolution of issues of bilateral trade and economic relations with Russian regions"¹¹⁴.

The Volga Federal District is somewhat similar to Belarus, as its geographical location "is characterized by a lack of access to the World Ocean and a relative distance from seaports. However, this situation does not prevent

¹¹² Savko, S. Belarus and Russia will strengthen coordination in ensuring stable growth of SG economy / S. Savko // [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-rossija-usiljat-koordinatsiju-v-obespechenii-stabilnogo-rosta-ekonomiki-sg-183181-2016/>.

¹¹³ Meeting of the Supreme State Council of the Union State [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/vgs-minsk-13169/.

¹¹⁴ Cooperation between Belarus and Russian regions [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: http://mfa.gov.by/bilateral/russia_regions/.

trade on domestic and international markets"¹¹⁵. Indeed, the Volga Region has a unique transit position, as it is located at the crossroads of international transport corridors "North - South" and "East - West", connecting Siberia and Far East, as well as countries of East Asia with the European part of Russia and European states. The presence of significant production potential in the Okrug is evidenced by such figures. A quarter of all Russian industrial production is concentrated here, 85% of Russian auto industry, 65% of aircraft building, 40% of petrochemistry, 30% of shipbuilding, 30% of defense industry. One third of Russian innovation-active enterprises are located here, and about half of the Russian equipment export volume is supplied from here. Five regions of this federal district - the Republic of Bashkortostan, the Republic of Tatarstan, the Perm Krai, the Nizhny Novgorod and Samara Oblasts - are in the leading group of subjects of the Russian Federation in terms of development of their aggregate investment potential.

Before the decline in Belarusian-Russian trade and economic interaction a few years ago, the Volga Federal District had been developing various forms of cooperation with Belarus, focusing on partnerships in the development of innovative technologies and products, participation in joint production and sales, the establishment of sustainable channels for scientific, technological and research exchange between enterprises and organizations, and the development of innovation infrastructure. This multidisciplinary approach to cooperation with Belarusian partners has been successful. For example, in 2008, the combined turnover of the Volga Federal District entities with Belarus reached a "record high of almost \$4.5 billion".¹¹⁶ And the basis of cooperation was "cooperation between machine-building and petrochemical complexes, the work of joint ventures to produce agricultural machinery, technological modernization of agro-industrial complexes"¹¹⁷.

All these facts show that today, when "the Union State should become the core of the Eurasian Economic Union".¹¹⁸ When the coordination of Belarusian-Russian cooperation in terms of diversification of national economies, cooperation in the industrial sector, creation of new industries, development of

¹¹⁵ Strategy of social and economic development of the Volga Federal District for the period until 2020. -- M., 2011. -- C. 3.

¹¹⁶ Alexander Lukashenko met with a delegation from the Volga Federal District of the Russian Federation [Electronic Resource]. -- 2009. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/aleksandr-lukashenko-vstretilsja-s-delegatsiej-privolzhsckogo-federalnogo-okruga-rossijskoj-federatsii-4826/

¹¹⁷ Belarus and the Volga Federal District are working on projects to establish joint high-tech production facilities [Electronic Resource]. -- 2009. - URL: <http://export.by/?act=news&mode=view&id=15205>.

¹¹⁸ Working visit to the Russian Federation [Electronic resource]. - - 2015. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/vstrecha-s-prezidentom-rossii-vladimirom-putiny-m-12139/.

human capital should be raised to a qualitatively new level, it would be useful for the parties to once again turn to their own experience of interregional integration construction to take from it all the best that has already passed the test of time. This approach to using the potential of the Union State of Belarus and Russia in 2016 is already demonstrated by a number of Volga Federal District entities.

For example, the **Republic of Bashkortostan**, the Agreement on trade-economic, scientific-technical and cultural cooperation with which the Belarusian side signed back in July 1999. In December 2012, the Program of Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of Belarus and the Government of the Republic of Bashkortostan for 2013-2015 was adopted, envisaging joint work in a number of priority areas in industry, construction, road facilities, petrochemistry, agriculture, healthcare. Bashkortostan sees the potential of interaction with Belarus in those activities where it is possible to get the maximum practical effect from the union integration. This applies primarily to petrochemical, machine-building and agro-industrial complexes, robotics and electronics. That is why they consider it "timely to adopt in December 2012 the decision of the Council of Ministers of the Union State to concentrate joint efforts on the development of five spheres of the real economy sector: engineering, agriculture, science, pharmacology and biotechnology, as well as the creation of new materials"¹¹⁹. And this pragmatic approach was supported by concrete actions. As of the end of September 2012, 15 joint ventures established with the participation of Belarusian capital were already operating in Bashkortostan. And "one of the successful examples is the Belarusian-Bashkir enterprise JV Belarus-Inmash LLC, established in October 2009 in Sterlitamak"¹²⁰. In the same row, one can also recall the cooperation between the State Unitary Enterprise "Bashelkhoztehnika" and "Bobruiskagromash". The assembly plant they established in 2011 produces several items of equipment.

Nevertheless, in 2015 the volume of Belarusian-Bashkir mutual trade was only about \$520 million. The fact is that back in 2011 the trade turnover between the parties reached 1.4 billion dollars. Perhaps, and taking into account this fact in early March 2016 at a meeting of Deputy Prime Ministers of Belarus V. Semashko and Bashkortostan D. Sharonov outlined an ambitious goal - to maximize the Belarusian-Bashkir trade turnover and "reach \$1.4 billion in three

¹¹⁹ Mavrin, E. We see at least five principal growth points / E. Mavrin // Common Economic Space: integration of regions: inform.-integ. project / edited by interviewees: B. Zalessky, M. Valkovsky, A. Mostovoy. - Minsk: Biznessoftet, 2013. -- C. 40.

¹²⁰ Mirsayapov, R. We must be able to be flexible and respond to the challenge of time / R. Mirsayapov // Customs Union: interaction of regions. View from Russia: inform.-integr. project / edited by interviewer: B. Zalessky, M. Valkovsky, A. Mostovoy. - Minsk: Theseus, 2012. -- C. 10.

years' perspective¹²¹. In 2015, the basis of Belarusian exports to this Russian region was formed by refrigerators and freezers, chipboard, glass fiber, as well as dried and condensed milk, complex synthetic yarns, trucks, pipes and profiles made of ferrous metals, washing machines and shoes. The main supply positions from Bashkortostan to the Belarusian market were oil, carbonates, acoustic soda and hydrocarbons. If we take into account the fact that the key factor of the Union State's economic growth in the near future should be the development of industrial cooperation, the growth of joint production of more knowledge-intensive products, it will be obvious that the existing untapped potential of Belarusian-Bashkir cooperation is quite large.

Back in 2012, the leader of Bashkortostan R. Khamitov said: "With the help of the Belarusian side set up production of small tractors that are in demand, it is planned to open an assembly plant for tractors on the track. Together with Gomselmash, the assembly of trailed harvesters has been set up. <...> Bashkortostan is also interested in Belarusian forage and grain harvesters. There are also good prospects for establishing joint production facilities"¹²². At the same time, the parties agreed on a number of possible promising cooperation directions: in the field of chemical industry, since Bashkortostan successfully operates enterprises of this profile, modern technologies and products in demand in Belarus are being created; in agriculture, where joint work was planned in seed production, as well as in the development and creation of machines for the production of grain; in the glass industry, where the parties were going to work out the issue of creating a joint holding to combine efforts to create a joint holding. Finally, "an agreement was reached on joint approaches to the construction of a 300,000-tonne soda ash plant in Belarus with the prospect of increasing it to 600,000 tonnes. This area is new for Belarus, and Bashkortostan is ready to provide engineering support at the first stage of the project to prevent its slippage. There are investments for construction of a new plant in Belarus¹²³. In other words, another area of potential Belarus-Bashkortostan cooperation is construction. All the more so because in the construction complex of the Republic of Bashkortostan "it is planned to implement projects with the participation of foreign companies, including the construction of a cement plant in Uchalinsky

¹²¹ Vladimir Semashko met with a delegation from Bashkortostan [Electronic resource]. -- 2016. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/6303>.

¹²² Alexander Lukashenko met with President of Bashkortostan Rustem Khamitov [Electronic resource]. - - 2012. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/aleksandr-lukashenko-vstretilsya-s-prezidentom-bashkortostana-rustemom-khamitovym-3491/.

¹²³ Belarusian Prime Minister Mikhail Myasnikov met with President of Bashkortostan Rustem Khamitov [Electronic Resource]. -- 2012. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/4440>.

District and the construction of a gypsum board plant in Ufa District¹²⁴. In addition, in 2012 the parties signed a "protocol of intent, which provides for the possibility of Belarusians to build a house-building plant in Bashkortostan".¹²⁵ as well as participation of Belarusian construction trusts in the construction of large-panel houses.

There is every reason to believe that the meeting of the Working Group on Cooperation between Belarus and Bashkortostan held in Minsk in early March 2016 and the development of a plan of joint activities for 2016-2018 will open a new page in the development of Belarusian-Bashkir partnership, because the parties have agreed on the main thing: "Cooperation between Belarus and Bashkortostan in the future will continue in the traditional directions. It is mechanical engineering, agriculture, high technologies"¹²⁶. And they have already made new concrete steps in this direction. In particular, back in February 2016, "Gomselmash" signed an agreement on the production of Belarusian grain and forage harvesting equipment in Bashkortostan. It is expected that "the production volume will be about 200 harvesters per year. The company plans to assemble about 5 items of machinery"¹²⁷. It should be noted that so far Gomel-based forage and grain harvesters have been sold to Bashkortostan only fully assembled in Belarus.

Another region of the Volga Federal District, which has outlined its serious intentions to intensify cooperation with the Republic of Belarus since early 2016, is the **Orenburg region**, in the system of international relations with foreign countries, where Belarus has traditionally occupied one of the most important places. The parties signed an intergovernmental agreement on trade, economic, scientific, technological and cultural cooperation back in May 1998. The legal framework of these bilateral relations is also formed by agreements on cooperation of this Russian region with Gomel, Minsk and Brest regional

¹²⁴ Strategy of social and economic development of the Volga Federal District for the period until 2020. - - M., 2011. - - C. 10.

¹²⁵ Markovich, E. Bashkortostan is interested in cooperation with Belarus in construction / E. Markovich // [Electronic resource]. - - 2012. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/bashkortostan-zainteresovan-v-sotrudnichestve-s-belarusju-v-oblasti-stroitelstva-79448-2012>.

¹²⁶ Ivanyuk, T. Bashkortostan in 2016 expects to increase oil supplies to Belarus / T. Ivanyuk // [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/bashkortostan-v-2016-godu-rasschityvaet-narastit-postavki-nefti-v-belarus-184238-2016/>.

¹²⁷ Ivanyuk, T. "Gomselmash" plans in the first half of the year to open in Bashkortostan assembly production combines / T. Ivanyuk // [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/newscompany/view/gomselmash-planiruet-v-i-polugodii-otkryt-v-bashkortostane-sborochnoe-proizvodstvo-kombajnov-184262-2016/>.

executive committees, as well as with the Ministry of Industry of the Republic of Belarus.

In the first decade of this century, the partnership between the Republic and the region was developing quite dynamically and progressively. "In 2010 the volume of mutual trade of the Orenburg region with the Republic of Belarus increased by almost 6% and reached about 200 million dollars. This growth resulted in an increase in Belarusian goods imports, which exceeded \$30 million"¹²⁸. In 2013, trade turnover continued to grow and exceeded one billion dollars. The results of 2014 showed a decline in bilateral trade volumes by almost half - to 543 million dollars. In addition to unfavorable external factors, the fact that 98 percent of Orenburg exports to Belarus were crude oil supplies played a role in this decline.

Already in spring 2015, the parties came to a very simple conclusion: "Such a situation requires prompt measures to restore the positive dynamics of bilateral relations"¹²⁹. It became obvious that in relations with Belarusian partners a maneuver is needed to expand the range and volume of commodity exchange. In fact, a similar approach to development is dictated by the current Quality and Efficiency Strategy in Orenburg Oblast, which sets a course "to ensure food security, import substitution, expansion of cooperation borders with the countries of the Eurasian Union, and a cardinal increase in exports"¹³⁰.

After a thorough joint elaboration of specific promising areas of cooperation, the Belarusian side declared its readiness: 1) offer Orenburg partners the necessary equipment for cattle breeding complexes, assist in their construction and design; 2) expand the supply of Belarusian multifunctional agricultural equipment, consider both the range of equipment to be assembled and the volume of its assembly depending on the needs and orders of the region's farmers; 3) participate in the renewal of motor and electric transport in the region, both for urban and inter-city routes, including taking into account the requirements for the transfer of urban autotransports to the region. Finally, we also discussed the

¹²⁸ Shorikov, V. Shorikov // Customs Union: regional interaction. View from Russia: inform.-integr. project / edited by interviewer: B. Zalesky, M. Valkovsky, A. Mostovoy. - Minsk: Theseus, 2012. - - C. 149.

¹²⁹ Meeting with the Governor of the Orenburg region of the Russian Federation Yuri Berg [Electronic resource]. - - 2015. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/vstrecha-s-gubernatorom-orenburgskoj-oblasti-rossijskoj-federatsii-juriem-bergom-11063/.

¹³⁰ "Speech at the plenary session of the V Eurasian Economic Forum "Orenburg - 2015" on "Russia and the UES countries: from integration policy to development projects". [Electronic resource]. - - 2015. - URL: <http://www.orenburg-gov.ru/power/governor/speeches/vystuplenie-na-plenarnom-zasedanii-v-evraziyskogo-ekonomicheskogo-foruma-orenburzhe-2015-po-teme-ros/>.

transition "to new forms of relations: establishment of joint ventures, assembly facilities"¹³¹. By the way, in the middle of March 2015 in the Orenburg region there were only two assembly plants of the Belarusian equipment - the harvester of the production association "Gomselmash" and MTZ tractors.

In turn, from the Orenburg side, such large enterprises of the region as the machine-building concern "ORMETO-YUZM", the plant of synthetic alcohol, Orsk plant of metal constructions, the plant of drilling equipment declared their interest in expanding trade contacts with Belarusian partners. As a result, in order to coordinate all this joint work with the Orenburg side, it was suggested to "consider the possibility of opening a trade representative office of Belarus in the region"¹³². This proposal was included in the plan of measures to develop cooperation between the governments of Belarus and the Orenburg region for 2015-2017. And we must assume that in 2016 it will be implemented in practice, as the parties are committed to the most effective partnership, as evidenced by other facts.

Thus, at the II Forum of Regions of Belarus and Russia, held in autumn 2015 in Sochi, the Orenburg and Gomel regions signed an agreement on cooperation. And in early March 2016 in Gomel came a representative delegation from the Orenburg region. The fact is that in the fields of this Russian region "operates more than 400 units of Gomselmash, which has proved itself on the positive side. Replacement of old harvesters and increase of agricultural equipment fleet will allow the region's agrarians to significantly reduce the time of harvesting works. The Government of the Orenburg region has adopted a compensation program for the purchase of equipment from 300 thousand to 1.5 million Russian rubles"¹³³.

Or such fact. In November 2015, in this Russian region was opened industrial park "Orenburg Down Shawl", which includes production workshops, training center, a museum of the shawl and a studio of folk crafts. But six months before this event, a tripartite agreement on cooperation with the industrial park was signed by the Belarusian Fashion Center and Alesya. The purpose of the

¹³¹ Belarus is ready to expand supplies of multifunctional agricultural machinery to the Orenburg region [Electronic resource]. - - 2015. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-gotova-rasshirit-postavki-mnogofunktionalnoj-selhoztehniki-v-orenburgskuju-oblast-161490-2015/>.

¹³² Berg suggested opening a trade mission of Belarus in the Orenburg region [Electronic resource]. - - 2015. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/berg-predlagaet-otkryt-torgovoe-predstavitelstvo-belarusi-v-orenburgskoj-oblasti-161493-2015/>.

¹³³ Sidorchik, V. Orenburg region is interested in purchasing Belarusian combines / V. Sidorchik // [Electron resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/orenburgskaja-oblast-zainteresovana-v-zakupkah-belorusskih-kombajnov-184056-2016/>.

document is to consolidate the directions of the Belarusian-Russian cooperation in the light industry: "First of all, the parties intend to form a list of Belarusian enterprises - manufacturers of light industry goods and goods for children with stable sales of their products in Russia to study the possibilities of placing their production facilities in the industrial park¹³⁴. In addition, the current topics of interaction were: the organization of production of yarn in the park area "Orenburg down kerchief" for the needs of knitting enterprises in Belarus and Russia, joint execution of orders for tailoring uniforms for schoolchildren in the Orenburg region, the creation of Belarusian fashion designers collection of women's clothing using elements of the Orenburg down kerchief.

These and a number of other examples show that the joint work started in spring 2015 after the meeting of the governor of Orenburg region with the head of the Belarusian state to expand the nomenclature and volumes of commodity exchange has already shown very encouraging results of diversification of the structure of mutual trade between Orenburg region and the Republic of Belarus in the sectors of light industry, mechanical engineering, mining, metallurgical and agro-industrial complexes, once again proving and showing the huge sweat of the Orenburg region.

¹³⁴ Pivovar, E. Representatives of the Belarusian light industry agreed to cooperate with the Orenburg Puffy Shawl park / E. Pivovar // [Electronic resource]. - - 2015. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/predstaviteli-beloruskogo-legproma-dogovorilis-sotrudnichat-s-parkom-orenburgskij-puhovvj-platok-152520-2015/>.

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Belarus - Urals: expansion of production cooperation with emphasis on cluster development

Cooperation with regions of the Russian Federation in the Republic of Belarus belongs to the priority areas of Belarusian-Russian interaction, which "serves as a foundation for trade and economic, scientific and technical and socio-cultural relations"¹³⁵. At the same time, the leading positions in mutual trade with Belarusian partners, along with the Central, Volga and North-Western regions, are occupied by the Urals Federal District, a large industrial hub established in May 2000. It is one of the main raw materials and processing centers of Russia, which stretches from the border with Kazakhstan to the coast of the Arctic Ocean by almost two and a half thousand kilometers, the total area of which exceeds the territory of Germany, France, Great Britain and Spain combined. This region, which includes the Khanty-Mansiysk and Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Districts, Kurgan, Sverdlovsk, Tyumen and Chelyabinsk regions, "accounts for 63 percent of Russia's total oil production and 87 percent of natural gas. <...> Up to 45 percent of the gas demand in Western and Eastern Europe is met from the fields of the Urals Federal District" . In addition, the list of minerals mined here includes vanadium, graphite, asbestos, chrome ore, manganese, talc, bauxite, kaolin, cadmium, zinc, iron ore, bentonite, quartzite, bismuth, sulfur, copper, zeolites, gold, cobalt, nickel, uranium.

The main prospects for the development of the Urals economy are connected with two mega-clusters: the West-Siberian part is a fuel and energy complex provided with a resource base of world significance and a unique system of pipeline transport; the industrial Urals is a base for Russia complex of manufacturing industry - mechanical engineering and metallurgy, provided with a system of research and educational centers. These key clusters are to be consolidated by the inter-regional complex investment project "The Industrial Urals - The Polar Urals", which provides for the construction of transport and energy infrastructure, introduction into economic turnover of solid minerals complex located on the eastern slopes of the Ural Mountains.

As for the priority areas of foreign economic activity of the regions of the Ural Federal District, the first place is given to expanding ties "with the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States on the basis of establishing long-

¹³⁵ Cooperation between Belarus and Russian regions [Electronic resource]. - – 2015. - URL: http://mfa.gov.by/bilateral/russia_regions/.

term cooperation".¹³⁶ development of transport corridors, inbound tourism, creation of logistic complexes with them. At the same time, one of the leaders of cooperation with the Urals partners is Belarus, whose trade turnover with the regions of the Urals Federal District in 2012 came close to \$ 12 billion, which made it the second in this indicator among all federal districts of Russia after the Central. "In the Ural region there are 10 direct objects of the Belarusian commodity distribution network and 5 assembly plants of agricultural and cargo equipment"¹³⁷. The structure of the Urals import into the Belarusian market was traditionally dominated by oil, rolled metal and ferroalloys, while Belarusian exports were based on trucks, liquid crystal devices, tires, electric transformers and foodstuffs.

In 2013, the volume of mutual trade between Belarus and the Urals fell to \$7.1 billion, indicating a pressing problem for both sides: not only to restore the previously achieved volumes of bilateral cooperation, but also to significantly surpass them. All the more so because there are real opportunities for this. Even today the Urals are interesting for Belarusian enterprises, first of all, for their industrial potential. There are a lot of oil and gas producing companies, defense and machine-building plants that increase their orders and implement a great number of investment projects. And here "are in demand our quarry dump trucks, trucks, buses, road-building and logging, municipal equipment, building materials, food products, light industry goods"¹³⁸. Obviously, the solution to this problem lies in the optimization of interaction of the Belarusian side with each of the regional subjects of the Urals Federal District. The prospects of cooperation with the Sverdlovsk Region, which is one of the top twenty regions of the Russian Federation in terms of most of the main indicators of social and economic development, are particularly tempting in this respect.

Let us recall that "at one time the Republic of Belarus was the first foreign country with which the Sverdlovsk region has worked out a mechanism of effective interaction, both between government agencies and other organizations interested in cooperation. This experience has become a good example of competent building of relations at the regional level"¹³⁹. The agreement on trade,

¹³⁶ Strategy of social and economic development of the Ural Federal District for the period until 2020. - - M., 2010. - - C. 66-67.

¹³⁷ Interview with Igor Petrishenko, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Belarus to the Russian Federation, Information Agency "Regions of Russia", 23 September 2013. [Electronic resource]. - - 2013. - URL: <http://mfa.gov.by/press/smi/c52d43fe109243c9.html>.

¹³⁸ Polyaniin, V. Ural Ridge of Cooperation / V. Polyaniin // SB - Belarus today. - - 2014. - 31 July.

¹³⁹ Rossel, E. At the regional level we have created a sufficient basis for the full development of business contacts / E. Rossel // Belarus - Russia: cooperation of regions: inform.-integrat. project / com. B.L. Zalessky, E.A. Korovkin, M.E. Korovkin. - Minsk: BelTA, 2010. - - C. 249.

economic, scientific, technical and cultural cooperation between the Republic and the region was signed back in 2001. This framework document allowed the parties to organize work on the real filling of bilateral interaction with economic and humanitarian projects and control over their implementation. Action plans for the period of two-three years began to be formed on the basis of proposed projects. Since then, Belarus has become one of the main foreign trade partners of this Russian region, consistently taking third place in terms of trade turnover after Kazakhstan and Ukraine. The main goal set by the governments of the republic and the region from the very beginning was to "promote direct contacts and cooperation between specific enterprises. And there are a lot of them. Among them < ...> - manufacturers of automobile loaders, excavators, road-building, municipal and forestry equipment, construction, road and municipal enterprises from both sides" .

Thus, back in the pre-crisis period, the parties noted good prospects for cooperation in a number of areas. In particular, in 2008 two dump trucks of the Belarusian Automobile Plant were assembled on the basis of the open joint-stock company NPK Uralvagonzavod. At the same time, it was planned to assemble up to forty such dump trucks per year in Nizhny Tagil. In the same year of 2008, a cooperation agreement was signed between Belenergo Association and the joint-stock companies Ural Turbine Works and Ural Turbine Works Service Department, which allowed specialists of the Sverdlovsk Region to take part in the overhaul of turbine units at Minsk CHPP-3 and CHPP-4, as well as to analyze the condition of the equipment and its operation time at Belarusian CHPP. At the same time, the parties discussed specific prospects for organizing the production of medical equipment developed by Urals enterprises in the Mogilev free economic zone. And the timber enterprises of the Sverdlovsk region prepared proposals on the use of the equipment of Belarusian manufacturers - Amkodor and Minsk Tractor Plant - in logging. In a specific application in the Middle Urals considered the possibility of participation of the Belarusian side in the technical re-equipment of woodworking and pulp and paper enterprises of the Sverdlovsk region. All these examples of the pre-crisis period undoubtedly testified to the fact that "integration of the huge intellectual and industrial potential of the Republic of Belarus and the Sverdlovsk region within the framework of industrial projects will allow to bring our enterprises to a qualitatively new level, will promote social and economic development of the parties"¹⁴⁰.

¹⁴⁰ Grechin, A. Joint projects reach a new level / A. Grechin // Belarus - Russia: cooperation of regions: inform.-integrat. project / com. B.L. Zalessky, E.A. Korovkin, M.E. Korovkin. - Minsk: BelTA, 2010. -- C. 251.

When signing in October 2009 in Ekaterinburg the Plan of measures for the development of cooperation for 2010-2012, the parties emphasized that "there is a real opportunity to achieve by 2012 the volume of trade turnover of \$1.5-2 billion (in 2008 it was over \$500 million)¹⁴¹. At the same time, it was decided to create a Business Cooperation Council between Belarus and the Sverdlovsk region. However, due to the economic and financial crisis, events began to develop under a different scenario. In 2012, the trade turnover between the republic and the region amounted to 578.2 million dollars, and in 2013 even less - 502.4 million dollars. The first meeting of the Business Cooperation Council was held only in the fall of 2014.

But even during the crisis period, the Sverdlovsk region, located on the border of Europe and Asia - at the intersection of transcontinental flows of raw materials, goods, financial, labor and information resources - was considered by the Belarusian side as one of the most promising Russian regions in terms of inter-regional partnership development, as "here we are constantly working to establish such cooperation, we are working out promising areas and forms of interaction aimed at developing integration projects¹⁴². The establishment and development of Russian-Belarusian cooperation in the manufacturing sector and the creation and development of modern knowledge-intensive industries using modern innovative technologies were seen as the most promising in this region and during the crisis period. In fact, both the region and Belarus have a large number of innovative technologies that can be exchanged to help them modernize their production facilities.

Actually, this is the time when the Sverdlovsk Oblast representatives have to intensify negotiations with Belarusian partners to expand mutual trade in goods with high added value. Such as engineering products and high-tech equipment with the organization of full service on site and the transfer of existing technologies for the future organization of assembly plants. In addition, the region began to focus on the development of integration processes with Belarus not only in the field of industrial cooperation, but also in services, finance, transport and logistics.

The visit to Minsk in October 2014 of a large delegation of the Sverdlovsk region, headed by the Governor of this Russian region E. Kuyvashev, was

¹⁴¹ Belarus and the Sverdlovsk region signed a plan of measures to develop cooperation for 2010-2012 [Electronic resource]. -- 2009. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/419/print>

¹⁴² Kharlov, A. The priority is given to projects in production sphere / A. Kharlov // Common economic space: integration of regions: inform.-integ. project / comp., interviewees: B. Zalessky, M. Valkovsky, A. Mostovoy. - Minsk : Biznesosset, 2013. -- C. 213.

certainly a landmark event in terms of enhancing cooperation between the parties. During the visit, the Belarusian side stated at the highest level the need to expand production cooperation with the enterprises of the Middle Urals, set the task - to restore the previous volumes of mutual trade, discussed joint plans in the field of energy, engineering, machine-tool construction, science. The Head of the Belarusian State stressed Belarus' readiness "to cooperate widely with the Sverdlovsk Oblast in all areas, in particular, to supply agricultural, automobile, road-building and municipal equipment"¹⁴³.

It should be noted that in this Russian region the Republic of Belarus is considered in a rather broad context of partnership relations. On the one hand, the Belarusian market is a consumer of Urals metals and their products, various engineering and chemical products, railway and electrical equipment, cosmetics and plastics. On the other hand, Belarus is a supplier of engineering products, food, furniture, footwear, paper and cardboard, ceramic and glass products to the Sverdlovsk region. In addition, much of the Urals harvest is grown and harvested with the help of Belarusian agricultural machinery. Thus, in 2014 alone, agricultural producers of this Russian region have purchased more than 170 units of Belarusian-made equipment - tractors, grain and forage harvesters. In addition, the region is interested in expanding the supply of Belarusian logging equipment, road construction equipment, buses, joint production of machine tools, tires, waterproofing materials, agricultural machinery and equipment.

Back in July 2014, Belarus and the Sverdlovsk region announced their intention, expanding interregional cooperation, "to work out a road map of joint projects under import substitution programs in the Union State"¹⁴⁴. This can be explained by the fact that all regions of the Ural Federal District are now actively working on import substitution programs. And only in the Sverdlovsk Region it is planned to find analogues for 6.5 thousand items of the commodity nomenclature. And it is not easy to replace one part with another. It is a more complex and serious task - to produce more advanced elements, to increase the level of production by several stages at once, to create such cooperative chains, which would allow enterprises to develop promising plans for several years ahead and plan to enter new markets, both in the neighboring post-Soviet republics and

¹⁴³ Meeting with the governor of the Sverdlovsk region Evgeny Kuyvashev [Electronic resource]. - - 2014. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/vstrecha-s-gubernatorom-sverdlovskoj-oblasti-evgeniem-kujvashevym-9993/.

¹⁴⁴ Brewery, E. Belarus and Sverdlovsk region will work out a road map of joint projects on import substitution / E. Brewery // [Electronic resource]. - - 2014. - URL: http://www.belta.by/ru/all_news/economics/Belarus-i-Sverdlovskaja-oblast-prorobotajut-dorozhnyu-kartu-sovmestnyx-proektov-po-importozamescheniju_i_674609.html

outside the Eurasian Economic Union. In the case of the Sverdlovsk Region, one should also take into account the fact that it has become one of the four pilot regions where the first Russian machine tool cluster will be formed, in which Belarusian partners could also take an active part, for which it is all the more important "to bring their machines as close to the consumer as possible, since they are twice as cheap as their Western European counterparts, and 30-40% cheaper than their Eastern European counterparts. The site in the city of Berezovsky has already been selected"¹⁴⁵.

It has already been mentioned above that in 2012 the parties established the Business Cooperation Council with members of the government of the Republic and the region in order to coordinate joint work and increase efficiency of trade and economic interaction. Very soon the demand for this structure began to grow rapidly. After all, at the end of 2014 the trade turnover between the Republic of Belarus and the Sverdlovsk region decreased by 22.4%, amounting to 387.7 million dollars. "At the same time, analyzing the results of foreign trade over the past few years, we can talk about the high degree of realization of its potential and the need for a gradual transition to new forms of economic cooperation"¹⁴⁶.

In spring 2015, this council initiated the development and adoption of a road map for bilateral partnership in the form of concrete steps for the implementation of joint projects in mechanical engineering, machine tools and microelectronics. In particular, the Sverdlovsk region proposed to intensify the dialogue on the implementation of projects for the establishment of Belstankoinstrument holding assembly production in its territory and on the organization of a machine-building cluster for the production and sale of a complex of machines for the mining industry, which is already working together to produce hydraulic excavators that can compete in the world markets with counterparts produced in the United States, Japan and Europe.

Emphasizing the establishment of joint Russian-Belarusian enterprises, the parties: developed a plan of action for cooperation between Uralmash and the Belarusian Automobile Plant in the production of machines for the mining industry; outlined the prospects for the production of element base chips by the Belarusian association "Integral" for radio electronic equipment, which is assembled in the Sverdlovsk region; provided proper dynamics to the projects of

¹⁴⁵ Polyaniin, V. Ural Ridge of Cooperation / V. Polyaniin // SB - Belarus today. -- 2014. - 31 July.

¹⁴⁶ Kuivashev, E. Kuivashev // Interaction of regions: the Union State - the locomotive of the Eurasian integration : inform.-integr. project / ess., interviewing: B. Zalesky, M. Valkovsky, A. Greshnikov. - Minsk: Biznesoftet, 2016. -- C. 240.

Uraltransmash OJSC with Belarusian enterprises Monitor-Service, Belfingroup and Stanexim; agreed to "create a single engineering center, use the competence of each enterprise to apply cheaper, better and more reliable technologies of the Urals and Belarusian enterprises"¹⁴⁷. Another major project to be implemented is the construction of the Penetron-Russia waterproofing materials plant in Belarus, where it is planned to produce the entire range of these products, thus fully meeting the needs of the Belarusian market. With the use of Russian waterproofing has already been built and reconstructed in Belarus objects of the company "Belaruskali", subway and Minsk water park, as well as numerous residential buildings and commercial complexes.

The second session of the Business Cooperation Council of the Republic of Belarus and the Sverdlovsk region, which took place in July 2015, outlined measures to enhance industrial cooperation and trade and economic interaction, and highlighted priority joint projects. Among them: delivery of Belarusian buses using NGV fuel, which is especially important for Yekaterinburg in the period of preparation for the 2018 FIFA World Cup; introduction of D-185 diesel engines of the Ural Diesel Engine Plant in cooperation with the Minsk Motor Plant into the platform of Belarusian dump trucks of BelAZ brand; location in the Russian region of the production of antiseptics of Belarusian company BelAseptika for food industry; renewal of the locomotive fleet of the Belarusian Railway and industrial enterprises of Belarus by the Urals electric locomotives of alternating current 2ES7; cooperation between OAO "Sinara - Transport Machines" and "BelAZ Holding", which may result in a "contract for serial production of new generation diesel engines under the import substitution program"¹⁴⁸.

All these facts show that cooperation between the Republic of Belarus and the Sverdlovsk region in terms of industrial cooperation development has acquired an active and offensive character, involving new areas of partnership in this interaction. In the field of energy is the participation of JSC "Ural Turbine Works" in the modernization projects of Minsk CHP-3. In the field of forestry, the Ural State Forestry University and the Ural Union of Timber Industrialists, together with its Belarusian partner OJSC Amkodor, are implementing a project to set up a joint production facility in the Sverdlovsk Region to assemble a unified

¹⁴⁷ Specific steps for cooperation between the Sverdlovsk region and the Republic of Belarus will be reflected in the road maps [Electronic resource]. - - 2015. - URL: <http://www.embassybel.ru/departments/yekaterinburg/news/konkretnye-shagi-po-sotrudnichestvu-mezhdu-sverdlovskoj-oblastyu-i-respublikoj-belarus-budut-otrazheny-v-dorozhnyh-kartah.html>.

¹⁴⁸ Belarus and the Sverdlovsk region of Russia will intensify their efforts to increase industrial cooperation [Electronic Resource]. - - 2015. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-sverdlovskaja-oblast-rossii-aktivizirujut-rabotu-po-naraschivaniju-promkooperatsii-6165-2015>.

skidder loader based on the Amkodor forwarder with a set of Sverdlovsk-made attachments. Based on the signed agreements, Glubokoye and Nevyansk, Molodechno and Kachkanar are already cooperating in intermunicipal cooperation. The plan of measures for 2015-2016 is being implemented by the Minsk City Executive Committee and the administration of Yekaterinburg. In addition, "we have a common potential in such areas as the introduction of innovative developments of academic institutions, exchange of experience in higher and vocational education, development of joint educational projects"¹⁴⁹.

As we see, this interregional cooperation in the format of the Union State has a very high potential and serious prospects covering a wide range of thematic areas. It should be assumed that it will receive new impulses for development in the Plan on development of cooperation between the Government of the Republic of Belarus and the Government of the Sverdlovsk region for 2016-2018, which is currently being developed.

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¹⁴⁹ Kuivashev, E. Sverdlovsk Region is ready to offer Belarus a number of mutually beneficial industrial projects / E. Kuivashev // [Electronic resource]. - - 2014. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/interview/view/sverdlovskaja-oblast-gotova-predlozhit-belarusi-tselyj-rjad-vzaimovogodnyh-promyshlennyh-proektov-4160>.

Belarus - North Caucasus: topical issues of interaction

Back in May 2016 the Council of Ministers of the Union State of Belarus and Russia adopted a resolution "On the Plan of measures to create a common information space of the Union State for 2016-2020", the implementation of which would allow to systematize information activities in the Union State and improve the quality of thematic publications, including on cooperation between the regions of Belarus and Russia, which is the most important area of bilateral relations within the Union State. After all, as it was noted at the V Forum of Regions of Belarus and Russia, held in October 2018 in Mogilev, "it is in the regions of our countries begin a lot of production, technological chains for the production of joint products¹⁵⁰. Suffice it to say that the contractual and legal framework of this interaction includes more than three hundred agreements relating to the increase in the volume of mutual supplies of goods, expanding the distribution network, strengthening production cooperation, creating assembly plants. Even today, it is very important that the implementation of these joint projects be constantly in the focus of attention of central and, what is especially important, regional mass media of the two countries.

It should be noted that the Central, Ural, Volga and North-Western Federal Districts have been leading the Belarusian-Russian interregional cooperation for many years. The North Caucasus FD is lagging behind them in the development of partnership relations with the Republic of Belarus, but undoubtedly has a lot of potential and prerequisites to achieve positive changes in this regard. After all, it "has favorable conditions for the development of agro-industrial complex, tourism, health-resort, mining and manufacturing sectors, as well as developed transit functions¹⁵¹. These natural advantages of the region can be realized by actively developing foreign economic relations, taking into account the fact that one of the key factors of long-term social and economic development of the North Caucasus Federal District, as written in the Strategy for Social and Economic Development of the North Caucasus Federal District until 2025, is integration into the Euro-Asian economic space, which "will ensure the inflow of investments into the regions of the North Caucasus Federal District, provided a favorable

¹⁵⁰ Address at the plenary session of the V Regions Forum of Belarus and Russia [Electronic resource]. - - 2018. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/vystuplenie-na-plenarnom-zasedanii-v-foruma-regionov-belarusi-i-rossii-19684/.

¹⁵¹ Strategy for socio-economic development of the North Caucasus Federal District until 2025 [Electronic resource]. - - 2010. - URL: <http://skfo.gov.ru/district/soc/sed/>.

investment and business climate"¹⁵². The Republic of Belarus can be one of the effective partners of the SCFD entities. Analysis of publications in the Belarusian media shows that so far the clear leaders in establishing partnerships with Belarus in the SCFD are **Stavropol Krai, Chechen Republic and Republic of Dagestan**.

Thus, the Agreement on trade-economic, scientific-technical and social-cultural cooperation between the governments of the **Stavropol Territory** and the Republic of Belarus was signed in mid-March 2017. This document significantly expanded the existing legal framework for cooperation between the Russian region and Belarus, once again eloquently emphasizing the conclusion that "integration with the regions of Belarus is a conceptual direction of foreign relations of Stavropol Krai"¹⁵³. Back in 2000 and 2002, the Stavropol government signed cooperation agreements with the Brest and Gomel regional executive committees, which provide for interaction in trade, economic, scientific, technological and cultural areas. And in 2008, an Agreement on Cooperation was adopted between the Stavropol Territory Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Even today, products of a number of leading Belarusian industrial enterprises are widely represented in the Krai. Among them are Minsk Tractor Plant and Minsk Automobile Plant. Belarusian food products are also popular here, which was the motive for opening a chain of stores selling meat and dairy products from Belarus in Stavropol. In turn, Stavropol enterprises have mastered the supply to the Belarusian market: agricultural raw materials and products of its primary processing - wheat, flour, sunflower and sunflower oil, sheep wool; engineering products - electricity meters and semi-trailers; chemical industry products - polymer materials, plastics, aerosols.

All these facts show that Stavropol Krai is one of the most promising economic partners of Belarus in Russia. Back in 2013, the trade turnover of the Krai and the Republic increased by half compared to 2012 and amounted to 6.7 billion Russian rubles. However, then there was a certain decline. And only in 2016 the volume of mutual trade reached 140 million dollars. This meant that after two years of decline, its growth dynamics exceeded 9 percent. At the same time, this fact testifies to the fact that the Stavropol Territory and the Republic of Belarus now have a real potential to significantly increase trade turnover and

¹⁵² Amirova, E.A. Analysis of features of social and economic differentiation of development of regions of the SCFD / E.A. Amirova // Regional problems of economic transformation. -- 2014. -- №9. -- C. 159.

¹⁵³ Vladimirov, V. Market expansion is always a good thing for entrepreneurs / V. Vladimirov // Eurasian Economic Union: regional aspect: inform.-integ. project / com., interviewer. B. Zalessky, M. Valkovsky, A. Mostovoy. - Minsk: Biznesoftet, 2014. -- C. 56.

expand bilateral cooperation. That is why the visit of Stavropol Governor V. Vladimirov to Belarus in March 2017 was considered in Minsk as a serious intention of the Russian side "to significantly increase mutual trade and launch new promising projects in sectors where we are interesting and useful to each other"¹⁵⁴. Such promising directions of the parties include: development of industrial cooperation ties; effective interaction in the agro-industrial sector; implementation of promising projects in the construction sphere; activation of cooperation in the light industry; and updating the innovative component of the partnership.

As for industrial cooperation, in 2013 it was noted that "in the Stavropol Territory more than ten enterprises with the participation of Belarusian investments are registered"¹⁵⁵. Further, in order to expand cooperation relations, the Belarusian side proposes to "implement joint projects of MAZ and holding "Autocomponents" with the Stavropol Territory enterprises"¹⁵⁶. Moreover, the Stavropol Territory "wants to return to the issue of organizing assembly production of Belarusian equipment and its maintenance"¹⁵⁷. We are also talking about expanding the supply of various equipment from Belarus to the Russian region - passenger, municipal, cargo and road-building - to implement major infrastructure projects there. At the same time, "equipment supplies are possible on leasing terms"¹⁵⁸. In the agro-industrial sphere, two directions are of the greatest interest: supplies of modern technological equipment to Stavropol Krai for the reconstruction of dairy farms with the involvement of Belarusian specialists in the projects of reconstruction and construction of cattle-breeding complexes; supplies of specialized equipment of Minsk Tractor Plant, taking into account Stavropol Krai's plans for the development of viticulture. In the field of innovations, Belarusian and Stavropol scientists can really cooperate in robotics

¹⁵⁴ Negotiations with the Governor of the Stavropol Territory of Russia Vladimir Vladimirov [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/peregovory-s-gubernatorom-stavropolskogo-kraja-rossii-vladimirom-vladimirovym-15800/.

¹⁵⁵ Vysheslavov, V. In the future - joint development of innovative technologies / V. Vysheslavov // Common economic space: integration of regions: inform.-integ. project / edited by interviewees: B. Zalesky, M. Valkovsky, A. Mostovoy. - Minsk: Biznesofet, 2013. - - C. 79.

¹⁵⁶ Meeting with the governor of the Stavropol Territory of Russia [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/7111>.

¹⁵⁷ Negotiations with the Governor of the Stavropol Territory of Russia Vladimir Vladimirov [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/peregovory-s-gubernatorom-stavropolskogo-kraja-rossii-vladimirom-vladimirovym-15800/.

¹⁵⁸ Belarus expects to increase the supply of equipment to the Stavropol Territory and create new joint ventures - Kobayakov [Electronic Resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-rasschityvaet-na-uvelichenie-postavok-tehniki-v-stavropolskij-kraj-i-sozdanie-novyh-sp-kobjakov-237868-2017/>.

and resource saving, geoinformatics and geophysics, microbiology and biotechnology.

As for the **Chechen Republic**, it signed the Agreement on trade, economic, scientific, technical and cultural cooperation with the Republic of Belarus in June 2017 at the Fourth Forum of Regions of Belarus and Russia. This document has seriously strengthened the legal framework for cooperation between Minsk and Grozny in virtually all areas of partnership, which was initiated by the agreement between the Russian region and the Minsk City Executive Committee on trade, economic, scientific, technological and cultural cooperation, signed back in July 2002. At that time, this document became one of the first agreements between the Chechen Republic and foreign countries after the beginning of the reconstruction period. "However, due to objective reasons available at that time, including the general socio-economic situation in [Chechnya] and concerns of potential investors about possible risks in the field of investment activity, these agreements, unfortunately, did not receive further development"¹⁵⁹.

But years later, when the Chechen government significantly stepped up its work to implement all previously signed agreements with foreign countries, progress began in relations with the Belarusian side as well. New impulses to cooperation between Belarus and Chechnya were given to the understanding that this Russian region has a significant economic and resource potential, which allows it to form a competitive economy that has a positive impact on the development of interaction with Belarusian administrative and territorial entities, business structures, public and cultural organizations. That is why "the first visit of the delegation of the Chechen Republic headed by the Deputy Prime Minister of the Chechen Republic to Belarus took place on July 6, 2015 to discuss the issues of mutually beneficial cooperation"¹⁶⁰. And supplies of Belarusian household appliances, textiles, cosmetics, tires, as well as road-building, municipal and agricultural equipment of Amkodor Holding started in the Russian region.

But, of course, a new stage in the interaction between the parties was opened by the visit of the head of the Chechen Republic R. Kadyrov to Belarus in September 2017, during which the attention was focused both on the development

¹⁵⁹ Kadyrov, R. It is necessary to give a new impetus to cooperation with Belarus / R. Kadyrov // Belarus - Russia: cooperation of regions: inform.-integrat. project / com. B.L. Zalessky, E.A. Korovkin, M.E. Korovkin. - Minsk: BelTA, 2010. -- C. 58.

¹⁶⁰ Umarov, D. Umarov // Interaction of regions: the Union State - the locomotive of the Eurasian integration: inform.-integrat. project / ess., interviewing : B. Zalessky, M. Valkovsky, A. Greshnikov. - Minsk: Biznesoftet, 2016. -- C. 60.

of trade cooperation and on the key topic of bilateral cooperation - industrial cooperation, which both in Minsk and Grozny are considered the most advanced, mutually beneficial form of cooperation, "which allows to meet the needs of the regional market and create high-tech jobs"¹⁶¹. As for trade cooperation, according to the parties, the potential for its multiple increase in the coming years lies in the supply of Belarusian passenger, cargo, quarry, agricultural, road-building and municipal equipment to Chechnya. A specific project in this regard could be the participation of the Minsk Automobile Plant in the modernization of the Chechen truck and bus fleet.

The first step in the development of the Belarusian-Chechen production cooperation should be the establishment of an assembly plant in this Russian region by "Bobruiskagromash" from Belarus. At least, an agreement has already been signed with the Chechen Ministry of Agriculture in this regard, and there is also clarity both with the sites and with the stages of this project. And this may become a kind of a prologue to large-scale cooperation between the parties in the field of industrial cooperation, as "Belarus and Chechnya need to develop other joint projects, in particular, the supply of equipment and spare parts holding" Autocomponents "to the enterprises of the automotive industry in Chechnya"¹⁶². Among other promising areas of cooperation, the parties identified such as: the agricultural sector - the introduction of advanced technologies in the production and processing of agricultural products, the creation of dairy farms, the supply of modern milking parlors, crop production, livestock breeding, veterinary medicine; construction and housing and communal services - road construction, design and construction of housing and infrastructure, supply of road construction and communal equipment, building materials and elevators.

In other words, Minsk and Grozny seriously undertook to fill the agreement signed in June 2017 with concrete mutually beneficial projects, taking into account the principle voiced by the Chechen leader - "it is the interest of the Chechen side to work directly, without intermediaries"¹⁶³. And there is every reason to believe that the implementation of the action plan for 2018-20120, which sets out all the promising areas of Belarusian-Chechen cooperation, will be

¹⁶¹ Meeting with the head of the Chechen Republic Ramzan Kadyrov [Electronic Resource]. -- 2017. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/vstrecha-s-glavoj-chechenskoj-respubliki-ramzanom-kadyrovym-17164/.

¹⁶² Meeting with the head of the Chechen Republic Ramzan Kadyrov [Electronic Resource]. -- 2017. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/7518>.

¹⁶³ Kadyrov, R. On the Word of the President, Image of Chechnya and Cooperation / R. Kadyrov // [Electron resource]. -- 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/interview/view/o-slove-prezidenta-imidzhe-chechni-i-sotrudnichestve-kadyrov-podelilsja-vpechatlenijami-ot-vstrechi-s-5791/>.

another eloquent illustration of the fact that the establishment of ties between Belarus and Chechnya is a new stage in the strengthening of Belarusian-Russian relations.

As for another subject of the North Caucasus Federal District, the **Republic of Dagestan**, the Agreement with this Russian region on trade, economic, scientific, technical and cultural cooperation was signed by the Republic of Belarus back in 2002. In April 2014, the legal framework of this interregional cooperation was supplemented by the Agreement between the Standing Committee of the Union State and the Government of the Republic of Dagestan on cooperation in the sphere of trade, economic, scientific, technical and cultural cooperation between Belarus and Russia, creation of appropriate organizational, economic, legal and other conditions to strengthen partnership between the regions, ensuring effective interaction, exchange of experience and information. In the framework of this document, the parties have expressed their intention to assist in the implementation of joint programs and activities aimed at developing economic relations between the regions of Belarus and Dagestan, to create conditions for the expansion of trade and economic relations between business entities of the parties, as well as to cooperate in the development of solutions for investment and innovation activities, including the attraction of foreign capital and advanced foreign technologies. At the time, Dagestan stated that it was interested in supplying Belarusian agricultural equipment because "Dagestan needs to organize processing of agricultural products"¹⁶⁴.

In the same 2014, the foreign trade turnover between Belarus and Dagestan came close to \$14 million with the share of Belarusian exports - about \$13 million, based on "mineral products, metal products, wood, pulp and paper products, machinery, equipment and vehicles, chemical industry products, rubber, textiles, textiles and footwear, leather goods, fur products, food products and agricultural raw material"¹⁶⁵. At the event "Forum of regions of Belarus and Russia" held in June 2014 in Makhachkala, the parties agreed to work out "the issue of introduction of Belarusian technologies of cultivation of agricultural products, milk processing technologies, cheese production, cultivation of poultry meat of

¹⁶⁴ A Cooperation Agreement has been signed with the Standing Committee of the Union State of Russia and Belarus [Electronic resource]. - - 2014. - URL: https://www.riadagestan.ru/news/president/podpisano_soglashenie_o_sotrudnichestve_s_postoyannym_komitetom_soyuznogo_gosudarstva_rossii_i_belorussii/

¹⁶⁵ Abdulatipov, R. Regional cooperation is strategically necessary in the conditions of sanctions policy of the West / R. Abdulatipov // Interaction of regions: the Union State - the locomotive of the Eurasian integration: inform.-integr. project / ess., interviewing : B. Zalessky, M. Valkovsky, A. Greshnikov. - Minsk: Biznesoftet, 2016. - - C. 22.

broilers, use of new technologies in egg production" within the framework of implementation of joint investment projects in Dagestan land¹⁶⁶. In September 2014, the parties agreed to create and implement joint projects aimed at forming rural tourism infrastructure. In particular, the Treaty of Intent was then signed by the Committee on Tourism of Dagestan and the Belarusian public association "Rest in the village". This document "implies cooperation of the parties in the sphere of rural tourism and cultural cooperation, attraction of tourists, promotion of Dagestan brand as a tourist territory"¹⁶⁷.

In March 2015 Minsk Tractor Works opened its dealer center in Dagestan on the basis of "Dagselmash" company in Buynak district, where at the first stage "the restoration of tractors, and in the future - the implementation of new equipment"¹⁶⁸. To this end, they took up the task of preparing the exhibition site of Belarusian tractors, as well as training specialists, providing them with the opportunity to get the necessary skills for maintenance and repair of equipment in the training center of Minsk Tractor Works. In the same year 2015 a bright event of interregional cooperation was the Fair of Belarusian commodity producers, which took place in Dagestan and presented the goods of agro-industrial complex and light industry: sweets, honey of different sorts, sausage products, clothes, footwear, textile and many other things. As a result, the Dagestani side estimated that in 2017 it had "the largest trade transactions with Azerbaijan - \$47.93 million, Iran - \$34.54 million, China - \$ 17.81 million, Belarus - \$ 16.67 million"¹⁶⁹.

Let's summarize. All these facts clearly demonstrate how broad the thematic range of media publications of the two countries to organize cooperation between the regions of Belarus and the Stavropol, Chechnya and Dagestan is already becoming. The most important task facing Belarusian, Stavropol, Chechen and Dagestani media today in this regard is to ensure the level of adequate media articulation of this interregional cooperation, where all joint projects should be fully reflected in the media space in order to eventually ensure

¹⁶⁶ Dagestan and Belarus have agreed on cooperation in business [Electronic resource]. - -- 2014. - URL: <http://www.dag.aif.ru/society/details/1186729>.

¹⁶⁷ Belarusians will teach Dagestanis to develop rural tourism [Electronic resource]. - -- 2014. - URL: <https://www.interfax.by/news/belarus/1167841>.

¹⁶⁸ _MTZ opened a dealer center in Dagestan [Electronic resource]. - -- 2015. - URL: https://www.belarus.by/ru/business/business-news/mtz-otkryl-dilerskij-tsentr-v-dagestane_i_0000020779.html.

¹⁶⁹ _On the results of foreign trade of the Republic of Dagestan for 2017. [Electronic resource]. - -- 2018. - URL: https://makhachkala.mid.ru/mezdunarodnoe-sotrudnicestvo/-/asset_publisher/ZPNsLt1FS6Qn/content/ob-itogah-vnesnej-torgovli-respubliki-dagestan-za-2017-g-?inheritRedirect=false.

the transition of union integration into a qualitatively new state - total interaction at all levels.

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Belarus - Far East: peculiarities of intensification of mutually beneficial cooperation

The most important instrument of intensification of cooperation between Belarus and Russia, deepening of allied socio-economic, scientific, scientific and technological, educational, cultural and humanitarian ties is further consistent expansion of Belarusian-Russian interaction at the regional level with the aim of "strengthening the Union State, development of the Eurasian Economic Union, and stimulation of integration processes in the CIS space"¹⁷⁰. At the same time, the 3rd Forum of Regions of Belarus and Russia, which took place in June 2016 in Minsk, noted among the main trends observed in the Union State the fact that "recently, the Urals, Siberia and the Far East have been actively involved in cooperation"¹⁷¹.

Particular interest in this regard is caused by the intensification of partnership relations of the Republic of Belarus with the most remote Russian region - the Far East, whose population does not even reach seven million people. But due to the fact that this part of Russia has the richest reserves of natural resources - almost the entire Mendeleev's table, and the main areas of the economy are mining, gold mining, fishing and forestry, non-ferrous metallurgy and shipbuilding, it is quite realistic today the forecast that "the Far East in ten-twenty years will become the center of economic life in Russia. The countries of the Asian-Pacific region are now experiencing a powerful economic growth"¹⁷².

At the Second Eastern Economic Forum, held in early September 2016 in Vladivostok, the Russian leadership voiced an ambitious and ambitious goal - to make the Far East one of the centers of socio-economic development of Russia - a powerful, dynamic and advanced. Its geography, natural resources and direct access to the most promising markets give the region inexhaustible opportunities to apply entrepreneurial initiative and make it one of the most important national

¹⁷⁰ The results of the Regional Forum confirm the effectiveness of the chosen form of interaction - the final document [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/society/view/rezultaty-foruma-regionov-podtverzhajut-effektivnost-vybranoj-formy-vzaimodejstviya-itogovyj-dokument-196724-2016/>.

¹⁷¹ Belarus and Russia should speed up coordination of allied programs - Rapota [Electronic Resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/politics/view/belarusi-i-rossii-nado-uskorit-soglasovanie-sojuznyh-programm-rapota-196625-2016/>.

¹⁷² Far Eastern Federal District [Electron resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://dfo.gov.ru/district/>.

priorities of Russia, whose development strategy should be based on "openness to cooperation, to broad international cooperation"¹⁷³.

That is why both for the Russian Federation itself the subjects of the Far Eastern Federal District become a platform for entering the promising markets of Asian countries, and the active promotion of Belarusian interests here "will not only strengthen bilateral trade and economic relations, but also enter the markets of neighboring countries - China, Japan, the Republic of Korea"¹⁷⁴. For this purpose, the parties are already taking concrete measures to update bilateral cooperation, considering trade, tourism, construction and agriculture among the most promising areas of cooperation.

In 2016, the clear leader in terms of specific projects of inter-regional cooperation with Belarus among the subjects of the Far Eastern Federal District was the **Sakhalin region**, whose economic potential is localized in three zones of economic growth - South Sakhalin, Kuril and North Sakhalin. The gross regional product is generated here mainly by such industries as oil, natural gas and coal mining, fish and food industry, and construction materials industry. Among the main priority elements of Sakhalin's economic development, stimulating the tasks of modernization, diversification and competitiveness of the regional economy, there is foreign economic activity, the development of which should have a decisive impact on cooperation and integration of the region's economy into the economy of Asia-Pacific countries. It should be noted that the geography of Sakhalin's foreign trade activity is very diverse and represented by more than one hundred countries. At the same time, "the strategic goal of foreign economic activity development until 2025 is to ensure a harmonious entry of the region's economic complex into the system of global economic relations of the Asia-Pacific region, to increase the foreign trade turnover of Sakhalin Oblast through the growth of export supplies of products with a high share of value added, and to attract investments into the creation of export-oriented industries"¹⁷⁵.

The trade turnover of the Republic of Belarus with this Russian region until recently has traditionally fluctuated between two and four million dollars a year. The Belarusian-Sakhalin interaction received a strong impetus in October 2015,

¹⁷³ Vladimir Putin took part in the plenary session of the Eastern Economic Forum [Electronic Resource]. - - 2016. - URL: https://forumvostok.ru/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/03.09_Plenarnoe_zasedanie.pdf.

¹⁷⁴ Belarus plans to expand business ties with the Far East [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-planiruet-rasshirjat-delovye-svjazi-s-dalnim-vostokom-208745-2016/>.

¹⁷⁵ Sakhalin Oblast Development Strategy [Electronic resource]. - - 2014. - URL: <http://sakhalin.gov.ru/index.php?id=139>.

when it was stated at the highest level in Minsk that "Belarus is interested in projects to create on Sakhalin the territory of advanced development. <...> Priority directions may become industrial cooperation, agriculture, construction sphere" . In particular, it was about Belarus' readiness to assist Sakhalin Oblast in modernizing its agricultural complex, active participation of Belarusian specialists in building roads and logistics centers, and closer cooperation in passenger transport. At the same time, the Sakhalin side expressed its interest in acquiring a wide range of Belarusian equipment - municipal, passenger, woodworking, as well as in deepening industrial cooperation, procurement of meat and dairy agricultural products, the participation of Belarusian builders in the construction of rental and mortgage housing on the island. By the end of 2015, the parties have prepared an action plan for bilateral cooperation for 2016-2018, which prescribed specific measures that "will contribute to the development of trade and economic relations between Belarus and Sakhalin region"¹⁷⁶.

Among the main directions of cooperation is the construction of an agro-town and a dairy farm, which should be located on the land of the state farm "Korsakovsky" in the area of Razdolnoye village, where "a modern cattle-breeding complex for 1.2 thousand heads with all the necessary infrastructure will be erected, all conditions for the permanent residence of the inhabitants of the agro-town will be created: asphalted roads, social facilities, street lighting, gasification"¹⁷⁷. In other words, it will be a whole agricultural complex with a vegetable base, a car and tractor station, a large dairy plant, which will also produce baby food. By August 2016, a part of the silage trenches had already been equipped here, which will provide cattle with quality feed to develop meat cattle breeding at the state farm. As it is known, Sakhalin does not yet fully provide itself with food, so cooperation with Belarus may be a good help in solving this problem. This conclusion is also supported by a number of other facts.

In particular, in 2016, after a 30-year break, the Belarusian side resumed cultivation on Sakhalin potatoes, planting on the island its seeds on the first 40 hectares. And in 2017 it is planned to use only Belarusian seed potatoes. For this purpose, "the Belarusian Potato Center will take on the work associated with the

¹⁷⁶ Andrey Kobayakov met with the governor of Sakhalin Oblast [Electronic Resource]. - - 2015. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/6059>

¹⁷⁷ Belarus plans to complete the construction of the 1st stage of the agro-town on Sakhalin by the end of 2016 [Electron resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-planiruet-zavershit-stroitelstvo-1-j-ocheredi-agrogorodka-na-sahaline-do-kontsa-2016-goda-185195-2016/>.

creation of the seed center¹⁷⁸. It is also interesting that two Sakhalin municipalities are already preparing areas for fruit trees, which will be grown using Belarusian technologies. One of these sites is located in Korsakovsky Raion, not far from the agricultural town mentioned above. The second garden is being planted in Kholmsky Raion. "Trees on two sites are planned to be planted in the spring of 2017, they will be delivered from Belarus¹⁷⁹. In general, a marked revival of Belarusian-Sakhalin relations allowed only in the first half of 2016 to increase trade relations for the supply of food from Belarus to Sakhalin five times at once and bring it to one billion Russian rubles through exports of milk powder, meat products, potatoes.

In June 2016 the parties signed several documents aimed at intensifying the Belarusian-Sakhalin interaction. First of all, in the sphere of agriculture mechanization - for the supply of three potato-sorting lines worth 721 thousand Euro, 50 Minsk tractors, 50 haylayers produced by JSC "Managing Company of Holding "Bobruiskagromash", precision sowing machines of JSC "Lidagroprommash". Agreements were also reached on delivery to Sakhalin of three electric buses and two stopping points with charging stations of Belkommunmash Holding Management Company OJSC and ten mobile trade trailers of MAZ-Kupava Automobile Trailer and Body Plant LLC. In total then "contracts for more than 400 million Russian rubles were concluded with Sakhalin region"¹⁸⁰. Particular attention in this list of agreements is drawn to mention the Belarusian electric buses, delivery of which is scheduled for the end of 2016. This equipment, due to the absence of hazardous emissions, low noise level and use of clean energy sources, is considered the most important component of the "green economy". Sakhalin residents in electric buses are also attracted by the fact that equipped with Chinese supercapacitors, they have already "excelled in operation on urban routes in Bulgaria and China"¹⁸¹. In total, the Sakhalin region plans to buy in Belarus by the end of 2016 about 250 units of municipal and bus equipment. And this is just the beginning.

¹⁷⁸ Mihovich, S. Belarusian scientists will take part in creation of a seed center in Sakhalin region / S. Mihovich // [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/society/view/beloruskie-uchenye-primut-uchastie-v-sozdanii-semennogo-tsentra-v-sahalinskoj-oblasti-196634-2016/>.

¹⁷⁹ Brewery, E. Gardening on Sakhalin will be developed on the basis of Belarusian technologies / E. Brewery // [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/sadovodstvo-na-sahaline-budut-razvivat-na-osnove-beloruskih-tehnologij-207030-2016/>.

¹⁸⁰ Mihovich, S. Belarusian Orchard will appear in Sakhalin region / S. Mihovich // [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/beloruskij-fruktovyj-sad-pojavitsja-v-sahalinskoj-oblasti-197006-2016/>.

¹⁸¹ Karuna, O. Belarusian Electric Buses will appear on the streets of Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk // [Electron resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/beloruskie-elektrobusy-pojavjatsja-na-ulitsah-juzhno-sahalinska-196908-2016/>.

Another subject of the Far Eastern Federal District of Russia, with which Belarus has significantly increased its interaction in recent years, is **Amur region**. The first declarative agreement with it was concluded by Belarus back in late 2002. But it was not until seven years later that principal agreements on mutually beneficial cooperation were reached. It is worth recalling that Amur Oblast is not accidentally called the breadbasket of the Far East. For example, about 65% of all Russian soybeans are grown here. In 2014, the grain harvest in the region, having increased by several times, was 1.4 million tons, including soybean - about one million tons. It is clear that the growth of plant production requires an increase and renewal of the machine and tractor fleet of the region. That is why agricultural machine-building has become a priority area of Belarusian-Amur interaction.

In 2010, it was established assembly production of equipment from Belarusian components on the basis of the plant "Kranspetsburmash", the main partners were JSC "Gomselmash", JSC "Minsk Tractor Works", JSC "Leedselmash", JSC "Minsk Automobile Plant", JSC "Lidagroprommash". During five years of this project implementation, over 700 units of Amur assembly equipment adapted to natural and climatic conditions were supplied to agricultural producers of this Russian region. First of all, grain harvesters. "At the initial stage, the level of localization did not exceed 5 percent, but now it has reached 35 percent. The plans are to bring it up to 50 percent. More than half of the harvest in 2015 was harvested from the Amur fields with this technique¹⁸².

In 2012 in the Amur region was organized the assembly of energy-saturated tractors from Belarusian components, as well as 28 dump trucks of the Belarusian Automobile Plant with a capacity of 130 tons were delivered here. In 2013 it was already discussed that "the Belarusians will help Russians with the construction of grain streams, dairy complexes of various types and their acquisition, as well as the construction of agro-towns¹⁸³. And in February 2014, the parties signed a program of cooperation for 2014-2018. By that time in the Amur region have already been placed "five assembly plants of the Belarusian industrial sector¹⁸⁴. In addition, the Belarusian side expressed its willingness to expand this

¹⁸² Kozlov, A. The priority area of interaction is agricultural engineering / A. Kozlov // Interaction of regions: the Union State - the locomotive of the Eurasian integration: inform.-integr. project / comp., interviewing : B. Zalesky, M. Valkovsky, A. Greshnikov. - Minsk : Biznesoftet, 2016. -- C. 90.

¹⁸³ On 5 February Alexander Lukashenko met with Amur Oblast Governor Oleg Kozhemyako [Electronic Resource]. -- 2013. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/5-fevralja-aleksandr-lukashenko-vstretilsja-s-gubernatorom-amurskoj-oblasti-olegom-kozhemjako-1530/

¹⁸⁴ Ivanyuk, T. Enterprises of the Ministry of Industry of Belarus will supply in 2014 mini-equipment for farms of the Amur region / T. Ivanyuk // [Electronic resource]. - - 2014. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/predprijata-minproma-belarusi-budut-postavljat-v-2014-godu-mini-tehniku-dlja-fermerskih-hozjajstv-amur-36247-2014>.

cooperation in terms of supply not only a line of agricultural - from ploughs to grain dryers - equipment, but also quarry, construction, road, logging, utilities - with the simultaneous establishment of service and dealer centers for its maintenance, as well as warehouses and logistics centers. In practical terms, the question of creating a joint venture for the processing of dairy products with its subsequent delivery not only to the market area, but also to neighboring countries, particularly China, and even meat and dairy cluster, which "will include a dairy farm, pig complex, feed mill, agricultural and processing enterprises"¹⁸⁵.

As a result, the foreign trade turnover between Belarus and Amur region in 2014 increased by 2.5 times and amounted to more than 104 million dollars. At the third meeting of the permanent working group on the development of bilateral cooperation between the Republic and the Amur region in March 2015, the parties agreed "to increase exports of Belarusian agricultural products"¹⁸⁶. In particular, it was discussed the continuation of cooperation in the field of animal husbandry with the supply of a thousand heads of breeding young cattle from Belarus to Amur region in 2015, and in 2016 - two thousand. In addition, the Belarusian side expressed its willingness to create in the region Far Eastern Trade and Exhibition Center of products manufactured in Belarus. On the Amur side, there was a proposal to consider specific projects for future cooperation in the field of logging. All these facts testify to a very rich and diverse program of partnership between Belarus and Amur. The experience of their development shows one thing: long distances are no longer an obstacle to mutually beneficial Belarusian-Russian interregional cooperation.

The subject of the Far Eastern Federal District, such as **Khabarovsk Krai**, which has access to the Sea of Okhotsk and the Sea of Japan, has a significant potential for the development of interregional cooperation with the Republic of Belarus. The basic branch of its economy is the fuel and energy complex, where two thirds of the territory is covered with forests, a tenth of the Far Eastern gold and a quarter of platinum reserves are found in the depths, Half - copper, one fifth - tin, as well as numerous deposits of iron, manganese, lead and zinc, molybdenum, titanium-apatite and copper-nickel ores, phosphorite and alumina, which require additional geological study, where "two independent railway lines - Trans-Siberian and Baikal-Amur, which are the basis of the transcontinental land

¹⁸⁵ Grigorovich, T. Belarus offers assistance in creation of meat and dairy cluster in Amur region / T. Grigorovich // [Electronic resource]. - - 2014. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-predlagaet-amurskoj-oblasti-pomosch-v-sozdanii-mjaso-molochnogo-klastera-51576-2014>.

¹⁸⁶ Belarus and Amur Oblast intend to increase mutual trade [Electronic resource]. - - 2015. - URL: <http://www.belarus.by/ru/business/business-news/belarus-i-amurskaja-oblast-namereny-uvlechit-objemy-vzaimnoj-torgovli-i-20298.html>.

bridge Europe - Asia", are identified¹⁸⁷. At the same time, the share of manufacturing industries in the total industrial output of the region is already 60 percent.

It is also interesting that Khabarovsk Krai has two territories with special economic regime - Khabarovsk and Komsomolsk-on-Amur, which today attract special attention of foreign investors. The first specializes in agriculture and food production, construction materials production, transport and logistics. The second specialization is metal processing and mechanical engineering, production of composite materials and component parts for aircraft and shipbuilding, deep processing of wood.

As for interaction between Belarus and Khabarovsk Krai, the parties signed an Agreement on trade, economic, scientific, technological and cultural cooperation back in 2003, and in 2014, for the progressive development of bilateral cooperation, they adopted an Action Plan for the implementation of the Agreement, which provides for measures to expand mutual trade turnover, cooperation in production, investment, agricultural, scientific and technological spheres. Minsk sees great prospects for cooperation with this Russian region, because "Khabarovsk Krai imports about \$1 billion annually, while the share of Belarusian supplies is only about 1%, which is very small¹⁸⁸.

In the adopted plan, among the priorities for the development of bilateral cooperation, the parties noted primarily agriculture and agreed "on the supply of Belarusian agricultural machinery to Khabarovsk Krai on a lease basis¹⁸⁹. The Belarusian side also offered to help the region to build a dairy farm and equip it with robots or milking parlors made in Belarus. In addition, they discussed the establishment of a Belarusian company in Khabarovsk Krai of its own distribution network, as well as the opening of a whole network of Belarusian food stores.

It should be noted that exactly in this Russian region there is a branch of the Embassy of the Republic of Belarus in the Russian Federation, the main purpose of which is to activate interregional integration of Far Eastern regions with Belarusian partners. And a bilateral working group was created, which in 2014-2015 was engaged in the development of bilateral cooperation in a wide

¹⁸⁷ Industry and transport [Electronic resource]. - - 2015. - URL: <https://www.khabkrai.ru/khabarovsk-krai/Razvitie-kraya/184>.

¹⁸⁸ Meeting with the Governor of the Khabarovsk Territory Vyacheslav Shport [Electronic resource]. - - 2014. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/vstrecha-s-gubernatorom-xabarovskogo-kraja-rossii-vjacheslavom-shportom-9310/.

¹⁸⁹ Mikhail Myasnikovich met with Vyacheslav Shport [Electronic Resource]. - - 2014. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/5624>.

range of areas, including the organization of supplies to the region of Belarusian communal, road-building, fire and agricultural equipment, cargo-passenger, elevator equipment, increasing supplies of Belarusian agro-industrial products and environmentally friendly food. As a result, "the first distribution center for orders and supplies of Belarusian products in the Far East was established in the region, and it was decided to expand the range of imported products¹⁹⁰. However, the region is interested not only in increasing mutual trade through imports of high-quality Belarusian products, but also in developing industrial cooperation. That is why they are working on establishing an assembly plant for elevators at Vostokmetallurgremont and Mogilevliftmash, as well as Belarusian agricultural machinery. These intentions may become a good prologue for the implementation of new joint not only production but also innovative projects in the field of information technologies, materials science, creation and use of new measuring devices. Strong ties between the scientific community of the republic and the region are a guarantee of this.

In 2015 the partnership with the Republic of Belarus and the subject of the Far Eastern Federal District of Russia, such as **Kamchatka region**, has significantly intensified. At the Second Forum of Regions of Belarus and Russia, held in September 2015 in Sochi, the governments of the Republic and the region signed an Agreement on trade and economic, scientific and technological and cultural cooperation, which is designed to create favorable conditions for interaction between the economic entities of the parties. The fact is that in 2014 the Belarusian-Kamchatka trade turnover did not exceed two million dollars. At the same time, it was based on Belarusian supplies of meat and food meat by-products, sugar and confectionery products, wood and wood products, clothing, land transport, boats and floating structures.

The document signed in Sochi should contribute to a significant increase in mutual trade - by 18-25 percent - and expand the product range on both sides. In this case, cooperation with Belarusian manufacturers of automobile and road equipment may become a very promising area for real cooperation. The region hopes that the participation of Belarusian road and construction companies in contests for urban amenities and infrastructure development in Kamchatka will help attract new technologies in road construction to the region. In its turn, Belarus is interested in direct supplies of Kamchatka fresh frozen fish, fish products and seafood directly from the region's fishing companies, as so far high-quality

¹⁹⁰ Shport, V. Krai intends to actively strengthen bilateral relations with Belarus / V. Shport // Interaction of regions: the Union State - the locomotive of the Eurasian integration: inform.-integr. project / ess., interviewing : B. Zalessky, M. Valkovsky, A. Greshnikov. - Minsk : Biznesoftet, 2016. -- C. 86.

Kamchatka fish products have not been supplied directly to Belarus. That is why "in this matter the most promising is the establishment of Russian-Belarusian joint ventures"¹⁹¹.

In general, the interest of the Kamchatka business community to expand trade, economic and investment cooperation with Belarusian partners is formed today in the following areas: joint implementation of projects in the territory of the leading social and economic development of "Kamchatka"; creation of enterprises for deep processing of fish and seafood in the Kamchatka region; implementation of projects in the field of agriculture; development of tourism infrastructure in the region with the participation of investors from Belarus in the construction industry.

Another subject of the Far Eastern Federal District, which has a significant unrealized potential in cooperation with the Republic of Belarus, is the **Primorsky Krai** - an outpost of Russia in the Far East, where areas of advanced development are being created with more favorable conditions for investors, various benefits for business. The Krai's foreign trade relations are mainly aimed at four countries in the Asia-Pacific region - China, Japan, South Korea and the United States. They account for over 80 percent of Primorye's foreign trade turnover. As for the Republic of Belarus, in 2013 the volume of its mutual trade with the Krai amounted to 64.1 million dollars. Today this figure looks much more modest: "Thus, in January-June 2016, the volume of exports to the Primorsky Krai was \$5.3 million, imports from the Primorsky Krai - \$ 0.7 million"¹⁹². Obviously, these figures in no way reflect the real potential of cooperation. But in order for them to change, the parties need to significantly intensify contacts and fill with new content the Agreement on Cooperation in the Trade, Economic, Social and Cultural Spheres, signed back in 1998.

The Belarusian side sees real prospects for cooperation with Primorsky Krai "in the field of industry, transport, fuel and energy complex, as well as supply of Belarusian mechanical engineering products for mining, agriculture, roads and utilities of Primorye"¹⁹³. Minsk understands that the construction of large enterprises, which has begun in this Russian region, will lead to the development

¹⁹¹ Saturday, M. Conclusion of the agreement contributes to the increase of trade and economic cooperation / M. Saturday // Interaction of regions: the Union State - the locomotive of the Eurasian integration : inform.-integr. project / ess., interviewing : B. Zalesky, M. Valkovsky, A. Greshnikov. - Minsk: Biznesoftet, 2016. - -- C. 74.

¹⁹² Business mission of Primorsky Krai will visit Belarus [Electronic resource]. - -- 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/biznes-missija-primorskogo-kraja-posetit-belarus-208280-2016/>.

¹⁹³ The head of the embassy office in Khabarovsk V. Maximov visited Primorsky krai [Electronic resource]. - -- 2013. - URL: <http://embassybel.ru/departments/khabarovsk/news/a9648c49dd86.html>

of industry, which will need high quality machinery, which is also produced in Belarus. In this connection, there are real opportunities to supply Belarusian quarrying, agricultural, snowplow and snowplow equipment, as well as light, food, woodworking and other industries to Primorye. That is why for the implementation of these plans the possibility of creating in Primorsky Krai "a dealer center for the supply of forestry loading and skidding equipment and organization of its technical, warranty and service maintenance, as well as the possibility of creating an assembly production of grain and forage harvesters on the basis of Primorsky Krai enterprises with the participation and possible involvement of foreign investors" is being studied¹⁹⁴. Also under consideration are the prospects of appearance in the region of a consignment warehouse to sell the products of machine-building enterprises of the Ministry of Industry of the Republic of Belarus with the organization of service and maintenance of Belarusian equipment, assembly production of trailed sowing and harvesting machines, a dealer center to increase the supply of Belarusian elevators and elevator equipment. In short, despite the considerable geographic distance between the parties, there are prospects for Belarusian-Coastal cooperation. And this is encouraging.

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¹⁹⁴ Starichkov, A. Starichkov // Eurasian Economic Union: regional aspect : inform.-integr. project / com., interviewer. : B. Zalessky, M. Valkovsky, A. Mostovoy. - Minsk : Biznesosset, 2014. - -- C. 50–51.

Belarus - Kostroma region: from agreement to real cooperation

The Ministry of Information of the Republic of Belarus and the Administration of the Kostroma region of the Russian Federation signed a memorandum of cooperation in the field of press and information in the framework of the IV Forum of Regions of Belarus and Russia, which took place in Moscow in late June 2017. This document contains provisions on mutually beneficial cooperation in the field of mass media, so that, developing practical projects in the media sphere, they could be directed to integration processes, as, according to the Belarusian Minister of Information L. Ananich, "implementation of our joint information projects is aimed not just at information exchange, but at building a strong future for our peoples"¹⁹⁵.

It should be noted that the Ministry of Information of the Republic of Belarus has long and actively cooperated with a number of Russian regions. In particular, three agreements are currently being implemented - with the Republic of Bashkortostan, Moscow and the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous District, as well as six protocols on cooperation - with the Bryansk, Kaliningrad, Leningrad, Moscow, Nizhny Novgorod and Ulyanovsk regions. "In addition, cooperation in the field of information and the press is provided for by the provisions of 11 government protocols and action plans to develop cooperation between the Republic of Belarus and Russian regions"¹⁹⁶. That is why the expansion of this list of partners at the expense of the Kostroma region can be called another important and concrete step towards creating a common information space between the Union State of Belarus and Russia. Such a focus of the parties' attention on the expansion of the media and information segment of the Union integration is explained by the fact that, as it was stated from the rostrum of the IV Forum of Regions of Belarus and Russia, "public opinion turns into a real political force that cannot be ignored, and therefore, more than ever before it is necessary to

¹⁹⁵ Belarus and Kostroma region will develop cooperation in mass media [Electronic resource]. - - 2017.
- URL: <http://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-kostromskaja-oblast-budut-razvivat-sotrudnichestvo-v-oblasti-massovoj-informatsii-255131-2017/>.

¹⁹⁶ Agreements [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.mininform.gov.by/ru/soglasheniya-ru/>.

actively develop joint projects, launch new interesting initiatives and involve young people in their implementation"¹⁹⁷.

Recall that the theme of information cooperation between our republic and the Kostroma region was discussed at the III Forum of Regions of Belarus and Russia, held in Minsk in June 2016. The parties then "noted the importance of regional interaction of mass media, including specific TV channels".¹⁹⁸ that could exchange interesting programs and, in general, establish closer creative ties in order to introduce into the mass consciousness of their audience the culture of international integration interaction, so that, eventually, they could reach the level of adequate media articulation, which in this case we understand as "the situation when the media space of the Union State member states should and will fully reflect almost all joint projects and processes of integration construction, can At the same time, when discussing promising areas of cooperation and opportunities for joint projects, the Belarusian side "expressed its readiness to ensure the supply of passenger elevators, road construction and municipal equipment to this Russian region, as well as to increase exports of meat and dairy products, potatoes and vegetables"¹⁹⁹.

Here it is important to emphasize that the cooperation of Kostroma region with the Republic of Belarus for the last fifteen years has been based on bilateral agreements "with observance of the principle of civilized equal partnership in the interests of supply of food and consumer goods to the population of the region, creation of conditions for improvement of investment climate and attraction of investments into the regional economy, as well as more active promotion of Kostroma goods on the Belarusian market"²⁰⁰. The starting point in the coverage of the interaction between the Republic of Belarus and the Kostroma region today could be the agreement signed in February 2017 between the Belarusian government and the administration of the Russian region on trade and economic,

¹⁹⁷ The Memorandum of Cooperation in the field of printing and information was signed at the Regional Forum [Electronic Resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/society/view/memorandum-o-sotrudnichestve-v-oblasti-pechati-i-informatsii-podpisan-na-forume-regionov-255207-2017/>.

¹⁹⁸ Belarus offers the Kostroma region to expand cooperation in the information field [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-predlagaet-kostromskoj-oblasti-rasshirit-sotrudnichestvo-v-informatsionnoj-sfere-231787-2017/>.

¹⁹⁹ Belarus and Kostroma region will sign an agreement on cooperation in economics, science and culture [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-kostromskaja-oblast-podpishut-soglashenie-o-sotrudnichestve-v-ekonomike-nauke-i-kulture-211290-2016/>.

²⁰⁰ Kononov, A. It is necessary to provide for preliminary discussion of the parties' possibilities when developing compatible project proposals / A. Kononov // Customs Union: regional interaction. View from Russia: inform.-integr. project / edited by interviewer: B. Zalesky, M. Valkovsky, A. Mostovoy. - Minsk : Theseus, 2012. -- C. 95.

scientific and technical and social and cultural cooperation. In August 2017, this agreement was supported and specified in the Plan of joint activities for 2017-2019, which provides for close cooperation between the parties "in the following areas: industry, construction, housing and utilities agro-industrial and forestry, information, education, health, science, culture and art, exhibition and information marketing activities"²⁰¹.

It should be noted that even earlier similar agreements were signed between Kostroma region and some Belarusian regions - Brest (2003), Vitebsk (2005) and Mogilev (2006). This interregional cooperation is complemented by twinning arrangements at the intermunicipal level. Back in 2009, Kologrivsky Raion, Kostroma Oblast, "concluded an agreement of friendship and cooperation with Smorgonsky Raion, Grodno Oblast. In 2012, Bobruisk became a twin of Kostroma"²⁰² leading creative specialists of the cities²⁰³. Apparently, the implementation of these twinning relationships can have a very good effect, given the experience that Kostroma already has in this format of international cooperation, which twelve years ago highly appreciated the Council of Europe - this independent body of inter-parliamentary cooperation: "The Commission on Local Self-Government of the Parliamentary Assembly at a meeting on April 28, 2005 decided to hand the flag of the Council of Europe to the city"²⁰⁴. And if we take into account that the Kostroma region now has 179 municipalities, including six urban districts, 24 municipal districts, 12 urban and 137 rural settlements, it is not difficult to assess the prospects for further development of cooperation between Belarus and this Russian region at the inter-municipal level. It should be reminded that just a few years ago the parties were already considering "the conclusion of similar agreements between the city of Manturovo and Polotsk District of Vitebsk Oblast, Ostrovsky District and Dribinsky District of Mogilev Oblast"²⁰⁵.

In the same series of partnerships - cooperation with Belarusian colleagues of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Kostroma region, which signed the

²⁰¹ Expansion of cooperation of Kostroma region with the Republic of Belarus [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://investkostroma.ru/mobile/news/1392.html>.

²⁰² Alekseev, P. Cooperation should be aimed at utilization of available potentials / P. Alekseev // Common Economic Space: integration of regions : inform.-integ. project / edited by interviewees: B. Zalessky, M. Valkovsky, A. Mostovoy. - Minsk : Biznesosset, 2013. - - C. 135.

²⁰³ The Kostroma became a twin of Bobruisk [Electronic Resource]. - - 2012. - URL: <http://k1news.ru/news/culture/kostroma-stala-pobratimom-bobruyska/>

²⁰⁴ International activities [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: http://www.gradkostroma.ru/i/u/power/international/international_action.pdf.

²⁰⁵ Slyunyaev, I. Slyunyaev // Belarus - Russia: cooperation of regions : inform.-integrat. project / com. B.L. Zalessky, E.A. Korovkin, M.E. Korovkina. - Minsk: BelTA, 2010. - - C. 143.

relevant agreements with Brest and Minsk branches of the Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry. This list of existing bilateral documents gives grounds for the Belarusian side to state at the highest level that "Kostroma region has long been a promising and reliable partner of Belarus"²⁰⁶.

The statistics shows that in recent years the administration of the Kostroma region has been pursuing a very active internal and open foreign policy aimed at creating optimal conditions in the region for attracting investments, innovative technologies and creating knowledge-intensive industries. Suffice it to say that in 2016 the foreign economic activity of the region's enterprises and organizations was carried out with 89 countries. The first three main trading partners of the Russian region in 2016 were Kazakhstan, Belarus and Finland. Only after them were China, United Arab Emirates, Germany, Ukraine, Italy, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Czech Republic, Sweden, Netherlands, Turkey, United States of America, Poland, France and Egypt. The following fact also speaks for itself: in 2016 the foreign trade turnover of the region increased at once by 45.6 percent, having made 439,8 million dollars. Perhaps this is also due to the fact that "the region's companies are Russia's leaders in the production of oil and gas lifting equipment, cylinder piston group parts, microprocessor-based engine control system elements, shipbuilding products, cotton yarn, garments, mineral fertilisers and lumber"²⁰⁷.

In the commodity structure of export of the Kostroma region to the Republic of Belarus the leading place is occupied by machines and equipment, spare parts for them, as well as spare parts for textile equipment, chemical and forest products. In total, the Kostroma region imports to the Republic of Belarus more than 30 items of products manufactured in the region. Over 80 items of products are supplied from Belarus to this Russian region. These include foodstuffs, trucks, knitwear, footwear, furniture, medical products. Kostroma processing enterprises have longstanding cooperation in the exchange of goods and mutual supplies of raw materials, equipment, technical means and food

²⁰⁶ Meeting with the Governor of the Kostroma region Sergey Sitnikov [Electronic resource]. - – 2017. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/search_ru/getExtendedResults/?query=&search_type=type_all_words&group=0&from_day=7&from_month=2&from_year=2017&to_day=7&to_month=2&to_year=2017&search_type_sort=desc&search_ok.x=27&search_ok.y=9&search_mode=&search_node=news&search_node_id=374&search_title_name=events.

²⁰⁷ Foreign economic activity of Kostroma region [Electron resource]. - – 2017. - URL: <http://investkostroma.ru/vneshneekonomicheskaya-deyatelnost/vneshneekonomicheskaya-deyatelnost/vneshneekonomicheskaya-deyatelnost-kostromskoy-oblasti>.

products. Belarusian consumer goods are widely represented in shopping centers of Kostroma region.

Interestingly, back in 2012, "the Belarusian side has offered to open a network of branded stores in the region, "Goods from Belarus," where customers can buy food, as well as light industry goods (clothing, footwear and much more)".²⁰⁸ to expand the range of equipment supplied here. And today in the Kostroma region there are already operating dealer centers of "MTZ", "Gomselmash", "Zapagromash" LLC. There is also a trade and firm network of JV "Milavitsa" (two stores in Kostroma) and JV "Belvest" (two more stores in the same Kostroma). Besides, "Belarusian Shoes" store was opened, where products of footwear enterprises "Marco", "San Marco", "Neman", "Red October", as well as leather goods factory "Galantea" are presented²⁰⁹.

The main issue that the Belarusian and Kostroma mass media should contribute to solving today through their publications, programs and programs is to find ways to increase the volume of interaction between the parties, since "the potential for cooperation between Belarus and the Kostroma region is much higher than the more than \$77 million that we have in our trade and economic partnership"²¹⁰. Reserves here lie in a number of promising areas of cooperation, among which the parties clearly give priority to industrial cooperation, under which they could jointly produce products that would be in demand not only in the Eurasian Economic Union. All the more so because "there are already successful examples of such cooperation - we are talking about Minsk Engine Plant and Kostroma Automotive Components Plant"²¹¹. A number of enterprises of this Russian region have a great cooperation potential with Belarusian partners. These are: Galich Automobile Crane Plant (supplies of cranes on the road), Trading House "Saimaa" (exports of frozen berries and mushrooms), LLC "Spetsstanak" (supplies of metal cutting equipment).

The products of the Kostroma concern "Medved" are in great demand in the Belarusian market. It produces more than 2000 types of products: heat curtains, heaters, air heaters, plate heat exchangers, fans, draught machines and

²⁰⁸ Kostroma region and Belarus: prospects for cooperation [Electronic resource] were discussed. - - 2012. - URL: http://www.postkomsg.com/news/sotrudnichestvo_regionov/189526/

²⁰⁹ Kostroma region [Electron resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <https://export.by/kostroma>.

²¹⁰ Belarus counts on a significant increase in the turnover with the Kostroma region [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-rasschityvaet-nasuschestvennoe-naraschivanie-tovarooborota-s-kostromskoj-oblastju-231783-2017/>.

²¹¹ Andrey Kobayakov met with the governor of Kostroma region [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/7018>.

thermomasters (temperature regulators)²¹². And Bui chemical plant located near Kostroma supplies fertilizers for greenhouse complexes and components - simple salts - for JSC "Belaruskali". In 2016, other Belarusian companies became consumers of Kostroma fertilisers: Belrekhim, Dnepr-Agro, Interros and PromSipInvest. In the same list - Kostroma enterprise "Tsvet", capacitive equipment for food, chemical and petrochemical, perfume and cosmetics, pharmaceutical, textile industries purchased by such Belarusian enterprises as JLLC "Unimilk-Shklov", JLLC Unimilk-Pruzhany, UPP Vitella, LLC Kronohem, JSC Naftan, JSC Nesvizh Factory of Medicines, JLLC Conte Spa, RUPTP Orsha flax mill, JSC Slonimskaya worsted spinning mill, RUPP Groniteks, LLC Mogotex.

In Kostroma region, the promising areas of joint production cooperation with Belarusian regions are seen in a number of industries: in the machine-building industry - organization of assembly production of tractors "Belarus" and municipal machines at the industrial park "Industrial"; in the textile and clothing production - cooperation in the production of linen fabrics with the use of chemical fibers through the creation of joint production on the basis of one of the textile enterprises, creation of joint ventures for the production of textile accessories, spinning and roving machines, creation of centers for the design of clothing made of linen and other domestic materials on both sides of the production line. in the chemical industry, expanding the range of chemical fertilisers produced through the creation of a joint sales network; in the construction industry, joint projects using cost-effective construction materials and technologies for low-rise construction in rural areas; in the woodworking industry, joint projects to develop new technologies for using wood and creating joint production facilities to produce finished products and restore forests; in the energy-saving sector, joint projects to develop boilers.²¹³

If we talk about specific projects, which are described in the above mentioned Action Plan for 2017-2019 for the implementation of the Agreement between the Administration of the Kostroma region of the Russian Federation and the Government of the Republic of Belarus on trade and economic, scientific and technical and socio-cultural cooperation, in the field of industry, attention is drawn to such of them as: the possibility of organizing the supply of electric buses

²¹² Skudayeva, A. This is the whole salt / A. Skudayeva // [Electron resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <https://www.sb.by/articles/v-etom-vsya-sol-bel-rus-sotrud.html>.

²¹³ Anokhin, A. Interregional interaction on food safety issues is necessary / A. Anokhin // Eurasian Economic Union: regional aspect : inform.-integr. project / com., interviewer. : B. Zalessky, M. Valkovsky, A. Mostovoy. - Minsk : Biznesosset, 2014. - - C. 132.

from Belarus to the organizations of the Kostroma region and creation of the infrastructure for their operation; providing the transport complex of this Russian region with the Belarusian passenger vehicles operating on liquid fuel; creation in the region of a single center for sales and service of Belarusian equipment, taking into account the simultaneous expansion of the fleet of equipment from Belarus. We would like to remind you that today Minsk Tractor Plant machines, grain and forage harvesters, forage equipment of RUE "Gomselmash", JSC "Bobruyskselmash", JSC "Bobruiskagromash", fodder preparation equipment of LLC "Zapagromash" successfully operate in the agricultural complex of the region.

In the agricultural sphere, one of the main promising areas of cooperation with Belarus is the development of potato growing in the region. In this regard, "Kostroma Research Institute of Agriculture carries out fruitful cooperation with the Republican Unitary Enterprise "Scientific and Practical Center of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus on Potato and Horticulture" (SPC NAS Belarus). Tests and protection of breeding achievements of 31 varieties of potatoes were carried out by the SPC NAS of Belarus"²¹⁴. Traditionally, the Kostroma Research and Development Institute holds "Belarusian Potato Day in Russia". As a result of these trials, such potato varieties as "Scarb", "Zhivitsa", "Zhuravinka", "Krinitsa" have appeared in the Kostroma fields and proved to be well-proven.

If we talk about the scientific and technical interaction of the parties in general, it is based on close partnerships between higher educational institutions of the republic and the region. In particular, Kostroma State Technological University has an agreement on scientific and technical cooperation with RUE "Scientific and Practical Center of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus on Agricultural Mechanization". Kostroma State University named after N.A. Nekrasov cooperates in the framework of agreements with Minsk State Linguistic University, Mogilev State University named after A.A. Kuleshov, Belarusian State Technological University and Belarusian State University.

Very promising is the interaction of the parties in the sphere of cultural, educational, event, ecological, health-improving tourism, where the priority directions could be: expansion of opportunities and conditions for creation of new tourist products and their promotion in the tourist market; expansion of variety of

²¹⁴ Alekseev, P. One of the promising areas of cooperation is the development of potato growing on the territory of the region / P. Alekseev // Interaction of regions: Union State - the locomotive of Eurasian integration : inform.-integr. project / ess., interviewing : B. Zalesky, M. Valkovsky, A. Greshnikov. - Minsk : Biznesosset, 2016. - - C. 170.

types of group and individual tourism, including amateur, children's and youth, recreational and other types of social tourism; participation in exhibitions, forums and other events held by the parties; assistance in the development of the tourism industry; participation in exhibitions, forums and other events.

All these facts, ideas and plans show how wide and diverse the thematic range of mass media publications in the Republic of Belarus and the Kostroma region can and should be in order to go a difficult way from the signed memorandum in the field of press and information to its adequate media articulation corresponding to the current level of integration construction within the Union State of Belarus and Russia. All the more so because the section of the Plan of events for 2017-2019, which deals with cooperation in the field of information, refers to the need to promote "media coverage of the bilateral cooperation between Belarus and Kostroma region"²¹⁵.

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²¹⁵ Plan of measures for 2017-2019 to implement the Agreement between the Administration of the Kostroma region of the Russian Federation and the Government of the Republic of Belarus on trade, economic, scientific, technological and social and cultural cooperation [Electronic resource]. - – 2017. - URL: http://investkostroma.ru/uploads/file/Plan_meropriyatiy_2017-2019.pdf.

Belarus - Rostov region: opportunities to intensify cooperation

Rostov region in Belarus is called one of the key partners among the regions of the Southern Federal District of the Russian Federation. This is largely due to the fact that among the main directions of the region's international activities the priority is "strengthening economic and humanitarian ties within the framework of cross-border cooperation and expanding partnerships with CIS countries"²¹⁶. The region has about three thousand legal entities - participants of foreign economic activity, which in 2016 carried out export-import operations with 149 countries, including the Republic of Belarus, which, along with Turkey, Ukraine, Switzerland, Egypt, China and Kazakhstan, is one of the first seven states - the main trading partners of Rostov region.

The parties signed an agreement on cooperation in trade, economic, scientific, technical and cultural spheres back in April 2002. Since then, the relations between the Republic and the region have been developing quite consistently and systematically, which is greatly facilitated by the activities of the established joint working group, the regulations of which presuppose the holding of annual joint meetings, where the development of cooperation between enterprises and organizations of the Republic of Belarus and the Rostov region in such areas as trade and economic relations, medicine, education, culture and sports are considered.

Productive interaction between the parties after the signing of the agreement soon led to the registration of several joint ventures with Belarusian capital in Rostov region. "This is Atlant-Yug CJSC, which sells refrigeration equipment manufactured in Belarus. This is BelarusYugService LLC, which sells and services Belarusian tractors and other agricultural machinery. This is LLC "BMZ Trading House", which is the representative of the largest metallurgical plant in Belarus, which supplies the Russian market with construction fittings and imports to Belarus components for metallurgical production. This is LLC "BelAvtoMaz", which represents the Minsk Automobile Plant, sells its products and provides subsequent service"²¹⁷.

²¹⁶ Ministry activity - International cooperation of the Rostov region [Electronic resource]. -- 2017. - URL: <http://mineconomikiro.ru/a25.php>.

²¹⁷ Pavlatenko, G. Pavlatenko // Belarus - Russia: cooperation of regions: inform.-integrat. project / com. B.L. Zalessky, E.A. Korovkin, M.E. Korovkin. - Minsk: BelTA, 2010. - - C. 219.

In 2011, a branch of the Embassy of the Republic of Belarus in the Russian Federation began operating in Rostov-on-Don, which contributed to strengthening interaction between the parties. In June 2011, an Agreement on cooperation was signed between the Regional Information and Analytical Center and the Belarusian National Centre for Marketing and Price Study. And in November the same year, JSC "NIAEP" and the Ministry of Architecture and Construction of the Republic of Belarus signed a protocol on the participation of the Belarusian construction complex in the construction of facilities - units 3 and 4 of the Rostov NPP - for the period 2011-2012.

In 2011, among the main export positions of Rostov citizens in the Belarusian market were: electric machines and equipment, their parts; animal or vegetable fats and oils and products of their splitting; food products; coal; chemical products; products of ferrous and non-ferrous metals; lamps and electronic tubes. And from Belarus to the Rostov region were actively supplied: engineering products; aluminum and aluminum products; equipment and mechanical devices, their parts for boilers; products made of ferrous metals; rubber, rubber and products made of them; dairy products, eggs of birds, natural honey; food products of animal origin; vegetables; finished products from meat and fish; plastics and products made of them; paper products; synthetic fibers and products made of them; electric machines and equipment. In addition, Belarusian manufacturers supplied other hygiene products, cosmetics, electrical goods, household appliances and furniture.

Such enterprises of the region as PK LLC "NovoCherkassk Electric Locomotive Plant", LLC "Combine Plant "Rostselmash", OJSC "Energomashinostroitelny Alliance", CJSC "Don-Tex" successfully cooperated with partners from Belarus. At the same time, OOO Belneftekhim-RUS continued to supply polyethylene products manufactured in Belarus to enterprises in Rostov-on-Don. "And on October 1, 2010 in Oktyabrsky district of Rostov region a joint Russian-Belarusian enterprise "BelaRus-South" on assembly of tractors "Belarus 320" was opened²¹⁸. It was planned to create a trade and logistics center for selling Belarusian products in the Southern Federal District on the basis of BeltechTorg. Even a land plot in Bataisk, Rostov region, was allocated for its construction.

²¹⁸ Gavrilenko, E. The range of goods from Belarus is quite wide and is not limited only to clothing and food products / E. Gavrilenko // Customs Union: regional interaction. View from Russia: inform.-integr. project / edited by interviewer: B. Zalesky, M. Valkovsky, A. Mostovoy. - Minsk : Theseus, 2012. - - C. 164.

Record trade turnover "between the region and the republic was achieved in 2012, amounting then to 423.3 million dollars"²¹⁹. Let us recall that in the same year, a landmark for interaction between the parties took place the meeting of the Belarusian leader A. Lukashenko with the Governor of Rostov region V. Golubev, which noted that "it is necessary to reach the level of implementation of joint economically integrated projects and programs. Use the synergetic effect of merging our production, technological and intellectual resources"²²⁰. And at the same time, the parties identified the most promising areas of cooperation, one of which is the agro-industrial complex, where they outlined the possibilities of joint projects on modernization and development of agricultural infrastructure, production base, introduction of progressive technologies for production and processing of agricultural products. The fact is that at that time the Rostov citizens came forward with an initiative to become a pilot site for the implementation of the Union State programs in the agricultural sector, where two programs have already been implemented, aimed at the introduction of modern technologies, primarily in the field of agriculture, the development of promising resource-saving environmentally friendly technologies, equipment for the production of biologically valuable feed, as well as to increase the efficiency of food production through the processing of their waste on the basis of advanced technologies. Another area of interaction is participation of Belarusian companies in road development programs, transport infrastructure projects, water supply and drainage systems, and construction of residential, social, cultural and sports facilities in the Russian region. At that time, the opportunities for cooperation in the transport sector aroused particular interest, as major projects such as the construction of an airport complex and upgrading of the Rostov universal port were being prepared in Rostov region.

As a result, the parties concluded that they could significantly increase the volume of mutual trade by implementing a number of joint projects: first, by organizing the assembly of Belarusian elevators in Rostov region and establishing a further system of their service; second, by joining efforts to produce agricultural machinery; third, by implementing a major integration project for the production of turkey meat; and fourth, by jointly producing steel structures and panels at the production site in the Belarusian Klimovichi. Projects to create a joint venture in

²¹⁹ Golubev, V. Golubev // Interaction of regions: the Union State - the locomotive of the Eurasian integration: inform.-integr. project / comp., interviewing : B. Zalessky, M. Valkovsky, A. Greshnikov. - Minsk: Biznesoftet, 2016. -- C. 235.

²²⁰ Alexander Lukashenko met with Governor of Rostov region Vasily Golubev [Electronic resource]. - 2012. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/aleksandr-lukashenko-vstretilsja-s-gubernatorom-rostovskoj-oblasti-vasiliem-golubevym-974/.

Rostov-on-Don to produce confectionery products, as well as joint production of sunflower and rapeseed oil were named as promising then. And in the following years, a number of concrete steps were taken to implement the plans. In particular, with the help of the Belarusian company Beltranslift in 2013-2014 in the housing and communal services of the Rostov region was replaced and installed 513 elevators. In 2015-2016, this Russian region has purchased 43 Belarusian buses of large capacity and 15 trolley buses.

Nevertheless, in 2016 the volume of mutual trade slightly decreased - to 339 million dollars. For this reason, signing in May 2017 in Minsk Road Map of Cooperation for 2017-2019, the parties clearly outlined plans for the medium term in terms of increasing trade turnover: "We have all the possibilities over the next two years to 2019 to bring it to \$500 million"²²¹. At the same meeting of the Belarusian leader with the Governor of Rostov, the two sides expressed their firm belief that the parties have every opportunity to "significantly increase the volume of trade and economic cooperation in the coming years and master new promising areas of interaction"²²². In particular, it was about "bringing back to life joint production of energy-saturated tractors in Bataisk"²²³ to implement plans to build a bypass road around Rostov-on-Don with the participation of the Belarusian side, to develop cooperation in the field of livestock breeding. As for the resumption of assembly production of Belarusian tractors in Bataisk, it is worth recalling that the Minsk Tractor Works' Trading House owns in Rostov region "a production site prepared for assembly of energy-saturated equipment - tractors of 5th and 6th traction classes with capacity from 300 to 500 hp. The Russian party is considering the possibility of subsidizing the production from the budgets of different levels"²²⁴.

²²¹ Matveev, V. The potential for cooperation with Belarus is huge - the Governor of the Rostov region / V. Matveev // [Electronic resource]. - – 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/politics/view/potential-sotrudnichestva-s-belarusiju-gromadnyj-gubernator-rostovskoj-oblasti-246760-2017/>.

²²² Meeting with the Governor of the Rostov region Vasily Golubev [Electronic resource]. - – 2017. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/search_ru/getExtendedResults/?query=&search_type=type_all_words&group=0&from_day=11&from_month=5&from_year=2017&to_day=11&to_month=5&to_year=2017&search_type_sort=desc&search_ok.x=31&search_ok.y=5&search_mode=&search_node=news&search_node_id=374&search_title_name=events.

²²³ Meeting with the Governor of the Rostov region of Russia [Electronic resource]. - – 2017. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/7227>.

²²⁴ Rostov region is interested in assembly production of BELARUS tractors [Electronic resource]. - – 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/rostovskaja-oblast-zainteresovana-v-sborochnom-proizvodstve-tractorov-belarus-246848-2017/>.

Among the 225 most effective ways to increase the volume of mutual trade between the Republic of Belarus and the Rostov region, the Roadmap for Cooperation for 2017-2019 also indicates the transition from regional interaction at the level of two states - Belarus and Russia - to effective partnerships at the level of cities and districts, which can provide new incentives and prospects, as they allow "to strengthen existing contacts and develop new economic ties, unite creative and intellectual potential, strengthen trust and mutual respect.

One of the first documents in this regard, the Partnership Development Agreement, was signed between Rostov-on-Don and Gomel in 2009. Five years later, when this document expired, the parties adopted a new agreement, already indefinite, agreeing that "cooperation between partner cities from now on will be more dense, and meetings - more frequent"²²⁶. The main areas of cooperation between Rostov-on-Don and Gomel were defined as "mutual supplies of agricultural machinery, road-building machinery and agricultural products"²²⁷.

In 2012, on the margins of the seventh joint meeting of the Working Group on Cooperation between the Republic of Belarus and the Rostov region, the Treaty on Fraternal Relations was signed between the Zernograd District of the Rostov region and the Goretzky District of Mogilev region, indicating their intention to develop comprehensive cooperation not only in the field of culture, but also in science, between agricultural universities working in these areas: "They have already found common points of contact. They have plans for further development in the economic sphere. There is a breeding center in Zernogradsky Raion, where new varieties of wheat and grains are bred; they are interested in Belarusian corn and winter crops. In the future, ties will also be established here"²²⁸.

At the same time, in 2012, the Agreement on establishing direct cooperation was signed between Kogalnitsky District of Rostov Region and Smolevichi District of Minsk Region - in order to direct their efforts "to intensify information exchange and mutual cooperation in the field of promoting economic development, governance, health care, education, culture, regional planning,

²²⁵ Voronina, T. The Twinning of Minsk and Rostov-on-Don will be a logical step - an economist / T. Voronina // [Electronic Re6 Resource]. - - 2018. - URL: <http://eurasia.expert/pobratimstvo-minska-i-rostova-na-donu-budet-logichnym-shagom-ekonomist/>.

²²⁶ Lucik, A. Rostov-on-Don + partner cities = new prospects for constructive cooperation / A. Lucik // [Electronic resource]. - - 2015. - URL: <http://rostov.mk.ru/articles/2015/09/29/rostovnadonu-gorodapartnery-novye-perspektivy-konstruktivnogo-sotrudnichestva.html>.

²²⁷ Signing of cooperation agreements between the city of Rostov and the cities of Gomel, Volgograd and Glasgow [Electronic resource]. - - 2015. - URL: <http://www.don-plaza.ru/press/news/881/>.

²²⁸ Belarusians of Russia: View from Rostov-on-Don [Electronic resource]. - - 2014. - URL: <http://www.soyuz.by/news/region/1054.html>.

environmental protection, development of districts as a whole, to expand direct contacts between representatives and public organizations of the twin districts"²²⁹.

Finally, in late June 2018, Minsk and Rostov-on-Don signed a twinning agreement aimed at improving trade and economic relations, cooperation in the social sphere and partnerships. According to the parties, this document "opens even more opportunities for the two cities, including the implementation of projects in the field of urban management, cooperation between secondary and higher educational institutions, sports events and festivals. Besides, it is planned to develop fair trade"²³⁰. The facts show that previously the citizens of Minsk and Rostov had long-standing mutually beneficial relations. Rostov enterprises exported sunflower oil, women's clothes, paintwork to the Belarusian capital. Foodstuffs and footwear, engineering and chemical products were supplied to the Don from Minsk. Only in 2017, the Rostov administration bought 75 Minsk low-floor buses of large capacity for transportation of tourists and residents during the World Cup 2018. As a result, "the turnover of enterprises in Rostov-on-Don with Belarusian companies in 2017 was \$ 143.6 million"²³¹. And in April 2018 was opened direct air service Minsk - Rostov-on-Don. Since then, the aircraft of the Belarusian air carrier regularly departs from the Rostov airport on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays, and from Minsk - on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays. It should be assumed that both the opening of direct flights and the signing of the Treaty on twinned relations will allow the enterprises of Minsk and Rostov-on-Don to cooperate more actively, create new joint projects, which, in turn, will increase bilateral trade turnover.

Among other directions of cooperation the parties intend to pay attention to the development of cooperation in scientific and 232educational spheres. Moreover, the Southern National Center of the Russian Academy of Sciences has been cooperating with the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus for many years. "Cooperation with Belarusian scientists is developing most dynamically under the Agreement on Scientific and Technical Cooperation between the Gubkin Institute of Metal-Polymer Systems Mechanics of the Russian Academy of Sciences and the Gubkin Institute of Metal-Polymer Systems Mechanics of the

²²⁹ Smolevichi [Electronic resource]. - - 2012. - URL: <http://kaglarayon.donland.ru/news/2012/09/05.aspx>.

²³⁰ Brewer, E. Minsk and Rostov-on-Don established a twin relationship / E. Brewer // [Electronic resource]. - - 2018. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/minsk-i-rostov-na-donu-ustanovili-pobratimskie-otnoshenija-308489-2018/>.

²³¹ Will Minsk and Rostov-on-Don become twin cities? [Electronic resource]. - - 2018. - URL: <https://regnum.ru/news/2371856.html>.

²³² Barteniev, V. Barteniev // Single economic space: integration of regions: inform.-integ. project / edited by interviewer: B. Zalessky, M. Valkovsky, A. Mostovoy. - Minsk: Biznesoftet, 2013. - - C. 200.

Russian Academy of Sciences. The most dynamically developing cooperation is with Belarusian scientists within the framework of the Agreement on Scientific and Technical Cooperation between the State Scientific Institution "V.A. White National Academy of Sciences of Belarus Institute of Metal Polymer Systems Mechanics" and the Southern National Center of the Russian Academy of Sciences and the International Project on Large-Scale Environmental Risk Assessment by ALARM methods supported by the 6th Framework Program of the European Commission <...> with participation of scientists from the Republic of Belarus, Germany, Lithuania, Russia and other countries" .

Cooperation between Belarusian and Rostov scientists in the field of agriculture is very promising, where the Federal State Budget Scientific Institution "All-Russian Scientific Research Institute of Viticulture and Winemaking of Ya.I. Potapenko's estate" signed an agreement on scientific cooperation with the Republican Scientific Production Subsidiary Unitary Enterprise "Fruit Farming Institute", which provides for the exchange of initial selection material of fruit, berry crops and grapes. In addition, back in 2015, Novocherkassk Engineering and Reclamation Institute named after A.K. Kortunov FSBEI HPE "Don State Agrarian University" and the Belarusian RUE "Institute of Reclamation" conducted work on the exchange of experience in research work and participation in scientific conferences. Since 2016, the Donskoy Experimental Station named after L.A. Zhdanov of the All-Russian Research Institute of Oilseeds Crops named after V.S. Pustovoit has established cooperation with Belarusian enterprises on the issues of selection, variety testing of early-ripening hybrids of sunflower, oil flax, rapeseed and soybean.

About three dozen signed agreements and contracts include cooperation of Rostov region higher educational institutions with Belarusian educational and scientific institutions. These documents provide for the development and implementation of joint scientific projects and training programs to improve education based on new information and pedagogical technologies and concepts, implementation of joint publications, exchange of published scientific and methodical literature, holding of scientific seminars, conferences and symposiums to exchange positive experience. In particular, in April 2011, the Faculty of Nanotechnologies and Composite Materials and the Department of Technology of Structural Materials of Don State University and the Belarusian Institute of Powder Metallurgy signed an Agreement on Cooperation, which provides for innovative, research and development work, as well as improving the scientific, technical and professional level of staff. Fruitful creative links have also been established between Rostov and Belarusian State Economic Universities.

All these facts testify to the fact that the Republic of Belarus and the Rostov region still have a lot of opportunities for expanding mutually beneficial cooperation, mastering new promising areas of cooperation and deepening existing partnerships in trade, economic, industrial and operational, as well as scientific and technological spheres, in order to successfully meet the challenges to increase mutual trade turnover in the coming years.

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Belarus - Ukraine: potential for interaction between regions

During the official visit of the Belarusian President to Ukraine in July 2017, the parties stated a mutual desire to double the Belarusian-Ukrainian trade turnover over the next two years to reach the level of \$ 8 billion in 2019. Noting the importance of the development of cooperation in the current conditions, the creation of new and implementation of joint industrial production, implementation of joint projects to modernize road and transport infrastructure, the introduction of innovative technologies, among the priority areas of cooperation between Minsk and Kiev also mentioned the intensification of Belarusian-Ukrainian interregional ties, which can give a huge effect with their competent organization. The parties even "agreed to organize appropriate cooperation and hold the first interregional forum in Gomel. The second such event will take place in Ukraine"²³³.

Two years ago V. Makei, the head of the Belarusian Foreign Ministry, speaking about the possibilities of the Belarusian-Ukrainian cooperation, noted that "interregional cooperation is of special interest for us because sometimes regions at their level can agree on some projects more quickly than the central authorities"²³⁴. Therefore, the importance of holding a forum of regions of Belarus and Ukraine is explained not only by humanitarian goals, but also by much more pragmatic ones. After all, "in Ukraine there was a redistribution of financial flows between the center, Kiev and the regions. 60% of finance remains in the regions. As a result, today there are 55 billion hryvnia in deposits with governors. This is more than \$2 billion"²³⁵.

It should be noted that the topic of strengthening interregional ties was discussed in detail among the priority areas of bilateral cooperation as early as the twenty-fourth session of the Intergovernmental Belarusian-Ukrainian Mixed Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation, held in November 2016 in Minsk. It was there that it was noted that after budget decentralization Ukraine

²³³ Official visit to Ukraine [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/ofitsialnyj-vizit-v-ukrainu-16683/.

²³⁴ Transcript of the interview of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus V. Makei to the TV channel "ONT" during his visit to Ukraine (August 14, 2015) [Electronic resource]. - - 2015. - URL: http://mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/cf6bc6e2f8dc3647.html.

²³⁵ Belarus and Ukraine expect to double their turnover in two years [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-ukraina-rasschityvajut-uvelicit-tovarooborot-vdvoe-za-dva-goda-258460-2017/>.

had almost doubled its local budgets. This means that procurement of equipment and other similar issues are already largely under the supervision of local authorities. Hence the conclusion: "it is necessary to more actively build relations at the interregional level between Minsk and Kiev, Mozyr and Vinnytsia or Lviv"²³⁶. That is why the twenty-fifth meeting of the Intergovernmental Belarusian-Ukrainian Mixed Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation, held in July 2017 in Kiev, "expressed interest in intensifying interregional cooperation under agreements between the regions of Belarus and Ukraine"²³⁷.

It should be reminded that in general, the legal framework of the Belarusian-Ukrainian relations today exceeds 210 bilateral international treaties and other international legal documents, most of which relate to the interaction of regions and the development of twinned relations between cities, regions and districts of the two countries. Suffice it to say that "all regions of Ukraine and Belarus have agreements on cooperation in trade, economic, humanitarian and cultural spheres".²³⁸ and partnership agreements are now in force between more than 40 cities in Belarus and Ukraine. Back in May 1997, an intergovernmental agreement on cooperation between the border regions of the two countries was signed. And in November 2013 the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Belarus and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on inter-regional and cross-border cooperation came into force. Separate issues of cooperation between the regions of the two countries are also regulated by an intergovernmental agreement on trade fairs in goods of national production in the border regions of Belarus and Ukraine, which came into force in July 2010.

About 90 Belarusian and more than 380 Ukrainian companies representing various regions of the two countries took part in the Belarusian-Ukrainian business forum held in Kiev in July 2017 and "were interested in developing cooperation in the fields of mechanical engineering and industrial production, agriculture, petrochemistry, energy and electrical engineering, construction and development of infrastructure, transport, tourism, pharmaceuticals"²³⁹. Within the

²³⁶ Ukraine is considering the possibility of providing farmers with subsidies to buy Belarusian equipment [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/ukraina-rassmatrivaet-vozmozhnost-vydelenija-fermeram-subsidij-dlja-pokupki-belorusskoj-tehniki-218636-2016/>.

²³⁷ On the twenty-fifth meeting of the Commission [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://ukraine.mfa.gov.by/ru/embassy/news/a34815b6a08a5205.html>.

²³⁸ Interview by Igor Sokol, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Belarus to Ukraine to the scientific annual magazine "Ukraina Diplomaticiena" (№ 17, 2016) [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://mfa.gov.by/press/smi/c210c1737ece09bb.html>.

²³⁹ Businesses of Belarus and Ukraine demonstrate a great interest in cooperation - UkrCCI [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/biznes-belarusi-i-ukrainy-demonstriruet-ogromnuju-zainteresovannost-v-sotrudnichestve-ukrtpp-258234-2017/>.

framework of this business event, contracts worth more than 40 million dollars were signed. This shows that in Ukrainian regions there are good opportunities to connect Belarusian partners to a number of infrastructure projects. In particular, "this is the renewal of the road network, passenger fleet, municipal equipment"²⁴⁰. And a number of Ukrainian administrative entities are already taking concrete steps to intensify interaction with representatives of Belarusian regions.

It is clear that at the forefront of Belarusian-Ukrainian interregional cooperation are the capitals of the two countries, **Minsk** and **Kiev**, which "account for 38% of bilateral trade turnover between Belarus and Ukraine"²⁴¹. Suffice it to say that in 2016 Kiev bought 50 Belarusian buses, and at the end of 2015 bought 30 Belarus tractors - for cleaning sidewalks and yards in the autumn-winter period, which, according to the Kiev city authorities, "effectively worked all season - without breakdowns and any downtime"²⁴².

How promising is the potential of Belarusian exports of complex technical products to the Ukrainian regions was very eloquently demonstrated by the exhibition of passenger and municipal equipment from Belarus, which was held in April 2017 on the basis of public utilities Kiev City State Administration, where the products of such Belarusian manufacturers as "Amkodor", "Belkommunmash", Minsk Automobile and Tractor Works, Bobruisk plant of tractor parts and units and a number of others were presented. An interesting fact: it was during this exhibition that the authorities of the Ukrainian capital, speaking about their big plans to replace the existing public transport in the city with a new and modern one, announced their intention to "buy 80 trolleybuses and 100 buses in Belarus"²⁴³. In addition, it seems that the interaction between the two capitals very soon may go beyond just the supply of municipal equipment, as Kiev wants to go further in this cooperation - to study the Minsk experience in road

²⁴⁰ Matveev, V. Contracts worth over \$40 million will be signed at the Belarusian-Ukrainian business forum / V. Matveev // [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/kontrakty-na-summu-bolee-40-mln-budut-podpisany-na-belorussko-ukrainskom-biznes-forume-258116-2017/>.

²⁴¹ Vladimir Semashko made a working visit to Kiev [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/7150>.

²⁴² Mayor of Kiev: Belarusian equipment meets European standards [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/mer-kieva-belorusskaja-tehnika-otvechaet-evropejskim-standartam-241055-2017/>.

²⁴³ Kiev plans to buy 80 trolleybuses and 100 buses in Belarus [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://m.belta.by/economics/view/kiev-planiruet-zakupit-80-trollejbusov-i-100-avtobusov-v-belarusi-241046-2017/>.

maintenance, green economy, improvement of the city, because "judging by the result, as Minsk looks like, there is much to learn"²⁴⁴.

Interesting joint projects can be implemented by residents of Kiev and in cooperation with partners from **Brest region**. At least in April 2016, the heads of large industrial enterprises and small businesses in the agricultural sector, chemical industry, mechanical engineering and cosmetology took part in the Contact and Cooperation Exchange of the First International Forum and Exhibition of Business Contacts "Brest-2016" as part of a delegation of the Kiev Chamber of Commerce and Industry. "They are all interested in finding Belarusian partners. Cooperation directions and forms can be different. For example - high-tech developments and directions"²⁴⁵.

There are partners in Belarus in Kiev and **Vitebsk region**. Back in 2014, an agreement on cooperation was signed by the administration of the free economic zone "Vitebsk" and the Kiev Center for Innovation and Development. According to this document, the parties plan to develop bilateral relations in the field of attracting investments and commercial activities on mutually beneficial terms, to assist enterprises in implementing projects on the territory of each other, as well as to help in finding foreign investors. The parties to the agreement are confident that it will "open new opportunities for implementation of a number of promising projects, including in the field of renewable energy sources"²⁴⁶.

Kiev region is characterized by active participation of the region in industrial cooperation with Belarusian partners. For example, in Brovary there is a production of roller shutter systems of the Belarusian group of companies "Alutech". And in Vyshgorod since 2005 there is a joint production of elevator equipment with "Mogilevliftmash", which is already 40-70% depending on the model is localized in Ukraine. Only in 2016 there were collected about 500 elevators. In 2017, production growth will be 60 percent with an annual turnover of seven million dollars. This will be facilitated by the fact that "JSC"

²⁴⁴ Karuna, O. Kiev delegation intends to adopt Minsk experience in city improvement / O. Karuna // [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/delegatsija-kieva-namerena-perenjat-opyt-minska-po-blagoustrojstvu-goroda-190454-2016/>.

²⁴⁵ Vechorko, S. Belarus and Ukraine have a huge potential for cooperation - the head of Kiev CCI / S. Vechorko // [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-ukraina-imejut-kolossalnyj-potencial-dlja-sotrudnichestva-glava-kievskoj-tpp-190524-2016/>.

²⁴⁶ Bogacheva, O. Bogacheva // [Electronic resource] signed a cooperation agreement with FEZ "Vitebsk" and the Kiev Center for Investment and Development. - - 2014. - URL: <https://news.tut.by/economics/385667.html>.

Mogilevliftmash "will supply LLC" Karat-liftkomplekt "(Ukraine) 200 units of elevator equipment"²⁴⁷.

Among other participants, actualizing today the Belarusian-Ukrainian interregional cooperation, it is possible to name **Zhitomir region** where in August 2017 experts of JSC "Road-building trust 14 of Brest" started to carry out road repair. The cost of the facility exceeds one million dollars. It should be noted that before that Brest road builders participated in auctions in Volyn, Kyiv, Zhytomyr and Zaporizhzhya regions. In Zhytomyr, they became winners. Besides, 'Brest Road Construction Trust has an opportunity to take part in repairing streets in Kyiv. In particular, it is about the reconstruction of the Naberezhnoye Highway section"²⁴⁸.

In **Poltava region** Belarusian oilmen are already completing a contract for 50 hydraulic fracturing operations for Ukrgazdobycha. And in July 2017 RUE PO Belarusneft won the international tender for drilling four more production wells at the Semirenkovskoye gas condensate field in the same Poltava region. "The drilling period is 2017-20120"²⁴⁹. Intensification of presence in this Ukrainian region is part of the plans of another Belarusian company - Amkodor, which plans to increase supplies of its equipment to the Ukrainian market several times. In particular, "actively working on the supply of grain drying complexes for enterprises in the Odessa and Poltava regions"²⁵⁰. Besides, this Belarusian manufacturer, which has been present at the Ukrainian market for seven years already, intends to increase the sales of its machinery here within the framework of implementation of projects on road-building, agricultural and timber industries. It is also a question of creating an assembly plant, which will allow to assemble equipment from the supplied machine sets and then promote it on the Ukrainian market.

²⁴⁷ "Mogilevliftmash will supply 200 units of equipment to the Ukrainian Karate-Lift Komplekt [Electron resource]. -- 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/mogilevliftmash-postavit-ukrainskomu-karat-liftkomplektu-200-edinits-oborudovanija-258270-2017/>.

²⁴⁸ Brest road builders will repair the road in Zhytomyr region of Ukraine [Electron resource]. -- 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/brestskie-dorozhniki-budut-remontirovat-dorogu-v-zhitomirskoj-oblasti-ukrainy-259513-2017/>.

²⁴⁹ Sidorchik, V. "Belorusneft" won the tender for drilling wells at the gas condensate field in Ukraine / V. Sidorchik // [Electronic resource]. - -- 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belorusneft-vyigrala-tender-na-burenie-skvazhin-na-gazokondensatnom-mestorozhdenii-v-ukraine-257746-2017/>.

²⁵⁰ Matveev, V. "Amkodor" plans to increase in times the supply of equipment to Ukraine / V. Matveev // [Electron resource]. -- 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/amkodor-planiruet-v-razy-narastit-postavki-tehniki-v-ukrainu-258136-2017/>.

As for **Odessa region**, it has partnership relations with **Grodno and Mogilev regions**. One of the concrete results of this inter-regional cooperation is, for example, the fact that "Mogilev elevators have been installed in the building of the Odessa Oblast Administration"²⁵¹. In addition, back in summer 2015, Odessa and Mogilev regions agreed to emphasize the development of cooperation on tourism. As for economic cooperation, the parties are discussing the possibility of creating joint production facilities in the areas of agricultural processing, woodworking, elevator and machine building. In particular, the citizens of Mogilev suggested that Odessa "interested in selling natural grape wines in Belarus, to establish a bottling production on the basis of one of the processing enterprises of the region"²⁵². This interregional cooperation also focuses on expanding cooperation in higher education and promoting exchange of new technologies and achievements. Let us recall that in 2015 in the Odessa region there were 21 higher education institutions, where more than 110 thousand students studied.

Today this Ukrainian region is also the object of the closest attention of such Belarusian manufacturer as "Belkommunmash", which in July 2017 signed a contract for the supply of 47 units of its equipment to Odessa as a result of the won tender. And it plans to further participate in the tenders of a number of Ukrainian regions to supply there more than a hundred units of its vehicles. If we take into account that "Belkommunmash" has already opened an assembly plant in Ukraine, the work was done to obtain the relevant documents".²⁵³The Ukrainian direction in its foreign economic expansion can definitely be called a very promising one. In addition, this Ukrainian region is of particular interest to the Belarusian side in terms of "increasing transshipment of our goods through the ports of Odessa, Ilyichevsk and other southern ports of Ukraine"²⁵⁴.

²⁵¹ Transcript of the interview of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus V. Makei to the TV channel "ONT" during his visit to Ukraine (August 14, 2015) [Electronic resource]. -- 2015. - URL: http://mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/cf6bc6e2f8dc3647.html.

²⁵² Kulyagin, S. Mogilev and Odessa regions intend to emphasize the development of cooperation in tourism / S. Kulyagin // [Electronic resource]. - - 2015. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/mogilevskaja-i-odesskaja-oblasti-namereny-sdelat-aktsent-v-razvitiu-sotrudnichestva-na-turizme-5826-2015>.

²⁵³ Matveev, V. "Belkommunmash" will participate in tenders for the supply of more than 100 units to Ukraine / V. Matveev // [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belkommunmash-primet-uchastie-v-tenderah-na-postavku-v-ukrainu-bolee-100-edinits-tehniki-258137-2017/>.

²⁵⁴ Transcript of the approach to the press of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belarus V. Makei following the results of negotiations with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine P. Klimkin (August 12, 2015, Kiev) [Electronic resource]. - - 2015. - URL: http://mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/c9ba3e062e46db7.html.

In **Nikolaev region** the prospects of cooperation with Belarusian partners are seen in such areas as cooperation "in the field of industry and transport production, strengthening of humanitarian cooperation, development of brotherly and friendly relations"²⁵⁵. It should be reminded that in Nikolaev itself there is a group of companies "Technotorg" - the official dealer in Ukraine of Minsk Tractor Works and JSC "Gomselmash". Like in Nizhyn, **Chernigiv region**, here they collect energy-saturated equipment of Minsk Tractor Works with capacity up to 350 horsepower. So the basic level of pragmatic inter-regional partnerships in the region is already present, so now it is especially important to make new concrete steps for its further development.

With **Dnepropetrovsk** and **Donetsk regions** connected contracts of JSC "BELAZ", signed at the Belarusian-Ukrainian business forum in Kiev in July 2017, "for the supply of five dump trucks BelAZ-75131 with PJSC" Arcelor Mittal Krivoy Rog ", as well as two dump trucks BelAZ-75473 with PJSC" Novotroitskoe quarry management"²⁵⁶. The total sum on these two contracts was six million dollars. It should be noted that today the share of mining equipment of the Belarusian Automobile Plant in the Ukrainian market exceeds 90%. "In Ukraine there are more than 2 thousand BELAZ dump trucks"²⁵⁷.

Khmelnitsky region is characterized by high interest in establishing joint ventures with partners from Brest region in the agricultural sector. And the parties are already discussing the idea of organizing such an enterprise to produce corn seeds, which can be mutually beneficial. After all, in Khmel'nitsky region there are natural conditions for their cultivation and maturation, but there are no funds for the project. There are technologies and means in Brest region. As a result, "such an enterprise would work for the benefit of both parties"²⁵⁸.

Rivne region has been actively cooperating with Belarusian partners for many years. The commodity structure of its export operations with the regions of Belarus "is dominated by traditional goods of the region's manufacturers: stone

²⁵⁵ Belarus is interested in supplying transport to the Nikolaev region of Ukraine - Ambassador [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-zainteresovana-postavljat-transport-v-nikolaevskuju-oblast-ukrainy-posol-253463-2017/>

²⁵⁶ Contracts worth over \$45 million were signed at the Belarusian-Ukrainian Business Forum [Electronic Resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/kontrakty-na-summu-bolee-45-mln-podpisany-na-belorussko-ukrainskom-biznes-forume-258242-2017/>

²⁵⁷ The share of BelAZ dump trucks on the Ukrainian market exceeds 90% [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/dolja-karjernih-samosvalov-belaz-na-ukrainskom-rynke-prevyshaet-90-258250-2017/>

²⁵⁸ Chernovolova, A. Brest and Khmel'nitsky regions are interested in joint ventures / A. Chernovolova // [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/brestskaja-i-hmelnitskaja-oblasti-zainteresovany-v-sozdanii-sovmestnyh-predpriyatij-218574-2016/>

and crushed stone products, mineral fertilizers, basalt raw materials, Portland cement, polished chipboard, agricultural and industrial products²⁵⁹.

Another Ukrainian region, which should be mentioned in the context of the current intensification of relations with Belarusian partners, is **Vinnitsa region**, which signed a cooperation agreement with the Gomel region in October 2014. The parties agreed that this document will be the basis for the development of contacts in various areas of industry and agriculture, interaction between higher education institutions. In particular, "for the Ukrainian side of interest is agricultural machinery PO "Gomselmash", and for agricultural enterprises of Gomel region - the possibility of purchasing oilseeds meal, valuable protein feed for animals"²⁶⁰.

On the Belarusian side, a special place in mutual trade with Ukrainian partners is occupied by the border **Gomel region**, whose companies' share in exports from Belarus is the largest. Besides, Ukrainian businessmen take an active part in investment projects in the Gomel region. Among such projects, which ensured direct Ukrainian investments into Belarusian economy, is the production of railcars at Gomel Carriage Works CJSC with the participation of Ukrainian PJSC Kryukov Carriage Works. Among the actual projects - "construction of soybean processing plant in Gomel region with the volume of investments up to 50 million dollars"²⁶¹.

Another interesting example in this regard is LLC "Svetlogorsk Welding Electrode Plant", the owner of which since 2011 is the Ukrainian company Plasma Tec. The company already occupies more than 30% of the Belarusian electrode market. "Due to the new equipment and technologies, the production volume of electrodes for 4 years has grown at the enterprise almost 50 times"²⁶². And in 2015 the same company from Ukraine undertook to establish in Rogachev, Gomel region, the production of granite products with an investment volume - about two million dollars - and a full range of work: design, design, manufacture of products

²⁵⁹ Rivne region [Electron resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://eaptc.eu/ru/program/view-belarus-ukraine.html>.

²⁶⁰ Sidorchik, V. Gomel and Vinnitsa regions signed a cooperation agreement / V. Sidorchik // [Electronic resource]. - - 2014. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/gomelskaja-i-vinnitskaja-oblasti-podpisali-soglashenie-o-sotrudnichestve-57611-2014>.

²⁶¹ Interview by Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Belarus to Ukraine Valentin Velichko to the International Bankir magazine (December, 2014) [Electronic resource]. - - 2014. - URL: <http://mfa.gov.by/press/smi/dcaab6f7f1905d41.html>.

²⁶² Sidorchik, V. The Ukrainian company invests \$2 million in creation in Rogachev of manufacture of products from a granite / V. Sidorchik // [Electronic resource]. - - 2015. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/ukrainskaja-kompanija-investiruet-2-mln-v-sozdanie-v-rogacheve-proizvodstva-izdelij-iz-granita-3513-2015>.

of any complexity, laying and installation. Confidence in the successful implementation of this project is added by the fact that the company Plasma Tec in Ukraine has its own granite mine. This, of course, will help to solve the problem of providing new production with raw materials. In total on the territories of regions of two countries at present "there are 13 joint assembly productions, 7 of which are in Ukraine"²⁶³.

Very effective interaction between the regions of Belarus and Ukraine promises to become in alternative energy. Implementation of joint projects in this area is envisaged by the road map for cooperation in the sphere of energy efficiency improvement and use of local fuel and energy resources for 2017-2020. First of all, it is about joint development of powerful pilot projects - energy clusters in the regions where the borders of Ukraine and Belarus cross. The fact is that northern Ukrainian regions are well suited for growing energy crops, which are valuable raw materials for biomass, successfully used for heat production. In order to intensify joint activities in this area, the parties plan to "sign cooperation agreements between the regions of Belarus and Ukraine"²⁶⁴ in the near future.

Another promising area of Belarusian-Ukrainian interregional cooperation is the promotion of the Belarus-Ukraine Regional Cooperation Support Program under the European Union's Eastern Partnership initiative. It was discussed back in November 2013 at the conference in Zhytomyr "The Way to Strengthen Territorial Cooperation of the Eastern Partnership Countries": Belarus-Ukraine Territorial Cooperation Program". Then representatives of Belarus and Ukraine took up the task of developing their operational programs on such thematic priorities as: socio-economic development of regions; solving common problems in border areas; environmental protection; unemployment; health; culture, education, sports. "Mandatory condition: all projects must be joint, Belarusian-Ukrainian and business entities are not eligible to participate in them"²⁶⁵. And today it is already "the first EU-funded cross-border cooperation program for the Eastern Partnership countries, in which they work together, without EU partners.

²⁶³ Matveev, V. Contracts worth over \$40 million will be signed at the Belarusian-Ukrainian business forum / V. Matveev // [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/kontrakty-na-summu-bolee-40-mln-budut-podpisany-na-belorusko-ukrainskom-biznes-forume-258116-2017/>.

²⁶⁴ Belarus and Ukraine intend to implement projects on alternative energy [Electron resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://белта.бел/economics/view/belarus-i-ukraina-namereny-realizovyvat-proekty-po-alternativnoj-energetike-254265-2017/>.

²⁶⁵ Sidorchik, V. Border regions of Belarus and Ukraine will create joint projects on territory development / V. Sidorchik // [Electronic resource]. - - 2013. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/prigranichnye-regiony-belarusi-i-ukrainy-sozdadut-sovmestnye-proekty-po-razvitiju-territorij-30660-2013/>.

Neighboring partner countries are able to define their own priorities and jointly address cross-border issues, thus contributing to local economic and social development"²⁶⁶. The European Union has allocated over three million euros to strengthen territorial cooperation between the border regions of Belarus and Ukraine. Brest and Gomel oblasts take part in this program from Belarus and "Chernigov, Kiev, Zhitomir, Rivne and Volyn oblasts from Ukraine"²⁶⁷. In Brest region, Berezovsky, Brest, Drohichi, Ivanovo and Maloritsky districts have shown active interest in the program, and in Gomel region - Rogachevsky, Buda-Koshelevsky, Vetkovsky, Zhitkovich, Gomel and Khoyniksky districts. It is interesting that "applicants from Brest region focus on project ideas in tourism, culture, health care, and from Gomel region on health care, safety and environmental protection"²⁶⁸. In February 2017, at a meeting in Chernihiv, members of the Joint Steering Committee of the Belarus-Ukraine Territorial Cooperation Program identified a preliminary list of grant projects. A total of 148 project proposals were submitted by Belarusian and Ukrainian partners from the participating regions of both countries, of which "18 cross-border teams were selected to receive funding from the European Union for projects related to the joint solution of common problems in the neighboring regions of Belarus and Ukraine"²⁶⁹. The amount of one grant under this program may vary from 60 to 250 thousand euros.

It should be assumed that all these measures aimed at enhancing interaction between the regions of Belarus and Ukraine are already beginning to have a positive impact on the overall state of bilateral interstate cooperation. This is evidenced, for example, by the following figures: "Trade turnover has grown by 28% over the last period and amounts to \$4 billion"²⁷⁰. It is also obvious that this trend in the current Belarusian-Ukrainian relations should be adequately reflected in the media sphere of the two countries, especially at the regional level. The fact

²⁶⁶ Chernovolova, A. More than 3 million euros will be allocated by the EU to strengthen cross-border cooperation between Belarus and Ukraine / A. Chernovolova // [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/society/view/bolee-3-mln-evro-vydelit-es-na-ukreplenie-prigranichnogo-sotrudnichestva-belarusi-i-ukrainy-179850-2016/>.

²⁶⁷ Sidorchik, V. Regions of Belarus show interest in the cross-border cooperation program with Ukraine / V. Sidorchik // [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/regiony-belarusi-projavljajut-interes-k-programme-prigranichnogo-sotrudnichestva-s-ukrainoj-180186-2016/>.

²⁶⁸ Vechorko, S. Brestchane shared their experience of transboundary cooperation at the seminar in Kiev / S. Vechorko // [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/brestchane-podelilis-opytom-transgranichnogo-sotrudnichestva-na-seminare-v-kieve-187742-2016/>.

²⁶⁹ The list of recipients of grants under the Belarus-Ukraine Territorial Cooperation Program [Electronic Resource] has been determined. - - 2017. - URL: <http://eaptc.eu/ru/eaptc-news-events/view-grantees-of-the-belarus-ukraine-territorial-cooperation-programme-identified.html>.

²⁷⁰ Zubko: \$7.9 billion - a benchmark for trade turnover between Ukraine and Belarus [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/zubko-79-mlrd-orientir-dlja-tovarooborota-mezhdu-ukrainoj-i-belarusju-257844-2017/>.

that the parties have such a desire is evidenced by the fact that in February 2015 a press tour to Gomel region was organized by about 30 Ukrainian journalists representing national and regional TV channels and print media. In addition to representatives of Ukrainian media from the capital city, the press tour included 'employees of the editorial offices of newspapers in Lviv, Kirovograd, Cherkassy, Poltava, Donetsk and other regions'²⁷¹. They were able to learn about the potential of partnerships in the south-eastern region of Belarus, which has yet to be fully revealed. It is believed that such press tours could become a regular practice for journalists from both countries to raise the media coverage of the rapidly developing strategic partnership between the two brotherly countries to a new level and fill the implementation of the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Belarus and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on cooperation in the field of information, which entered into force on August 4, 1999.

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²⁷¹ Representatives of the Ukrainian media will meet with their colleagues from the Gomel region [Electronic resource]. - - 2015. - URL: <http://mininform.gov.by/pda/ru/news-ru/view/predstaviteli-ukrainskix-smi-vstretjatsja-s-kollegami-iz-gomelskoj-oblasti-165/>.

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Belarus-Moldova : cooperation in the conditions of transition to a new level

The Republic of Moldova is among those countries that are members of the Commonwealth of Independent States with which the Republic of Belarus has, over the past five to six years, seen a steady increase in trade turnover and the expansion of partnerships in a number of areas of mutual interest. Interestingly, this trend is developing against the background of Moldova's obvious gravitation towards integration with the European Union.

This course of Chisinau was especially clear in the middle of 2009, when representatives of right and center-right parties, which had joined the Alliance for European Integration, came to power in the country. New impulses to this vector of the Moldovan foreign policy were conveyed by the events that followed - Moldova initialled the Association Agreement with the European Union at the end of November 2013 at the Eastern Partnership Summit in Vilnius and signed the Agreement with the European Union at the end of June 2014, providing for the country's entry into the free trade area with the EU and stipulating jointly approved priorities for the period until 2016 to prepare for the implementation of the Association Agreement with the European Union. This course in Moldova itself is explained by its initial historical belonging to the European civilization and European culture, since "the choice of regional directions and partners in foreign economic relations, the nature and scope of relations with different countries should be oriented to the effective use of international cooperation for the benefit of socio-economic development of Moldova"²⁷².

But in order to integrate into European structures as an equal partner, Chisinau needs to ensure an appropriate level, first of all, of economic development. That is why the increasing role of economic diplomacy is seen in Moldova as an effective way to promote the country's economic interests in a globalizing world, to deepen the integration of national economies and to increase competition on the world market. That is why one of the main priorities of the Moldovan foreign policy remains "strict implementation of friendship and cooperation agreements concluded by Moldova within the CIS, in a climate of

²⁷² Conceptual bases of the Moldovan state foreign policy [Electronic resource]. - - 2011. - URL: <http://www.moldovenii.md/ru/section/595>

mutual trust and respect, maintenance of favorable relations in the field of politics, economics, science and technology, culture²⁷³.

Following this priority, Moldova ratified in September 2012 the CIS Free Trade Area Treaty, which is designed to contribute to the expansion of trade with the Commonwealth of Independent States, as it aims at eliminating barriers to trade in the post-Soviet space and creates conditions for attracting new investments. For Chisinau, this is especially important when, as the statistics shows, "the dynamics of growth of Moldovan exports to the Commonwealth countries exceeds the average growth rate of the total Moldovan products supply. Despite the vector of European integration, strengthening economic ties in the CIS is a priority of the country's foreign policy"²⁷⁴. Given all these circumstances, Minsk hopes that Moldova's signing of an association agreement with the European Union will not affect its relations with Belarus. At least, "different vectors of integration development between Belarus and Moldova should not interfere with bilateral economic cooperation"²⁷⁵.

It should be reminded that a large-scale Treaty on long-term trade and economic cooperation for 2000-2008 was signed by Belarus and Moldova in June 2000. In 2010, the Belarusian side noted that there are significant prospects for expansion in cooperation between Belarus and Moldova. The dynamic development of relations between the two countries is facilitated by the complementary nature of economies, lack of competition in foreign markets, as well as the fact that "in the most difficult times Belarus and Moldova were close by. Belarus negotiated with any power in Moldova, because any power has always been based on the interests of the people"²⁷⁶. Even today, there is a clear understanding in Minsk and Chisinau that the current dialogue between the parties, which takes into account Belarus' commitments in the Eurasian Economic Union and Moldova's orientation towards the European Union, should find additional ways of partnership.

²⁷³ Main priorities of Moldova's foreign policy [Electronic resource]. - - 2011. - URL: <http://www.moldovenii.md/ru/section/596>.

²⁷⁴ Gusin, A. Moldova ratified the Treaty on free trade zone in CIS / A. Gusin // [Electronic resource]. - - 2012. - URL: <http://www.cis.minsk.by/news.php?id=893>.

²⁷⁵ Official visit to the Republic of Moldova [Electronic resource]. - - 2014. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/aleksandr-lukashenko-24-25-sentjabrja-sovershit-ofitsialnyj-vizit-v-respubliku-moldova-9861/.

²⁷⁶ On October 25 the head of state accepted credentials of ambassadors of foreign states [Electronic resource]. - - 2010. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/25-oktjabrja-glava-gosudarstva-prinjal-veritelnye-gramoty-poslov-inostrannyx-gosudarstv-5000/.

In September 2014, in this regard, a joint working group was established, which focused on the whole range of issues of bilateral Belarusian-Moldovan economic cooperation "in the context of the signing of the Agreement on the creation of a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area between Moldova and the European Union"²⁷⁷ with an emphasis on identifying specific areas of cooperation that would allow to expand the export potential of the parties to the markets of third countries, in particular - the EU and the EAEC. The work already done in this respect allows to conclude that "Belarus can become a good example for other countries to use the opportunities provided by Moldova to promote jointly manufactured products on the markets of third countries".²⁷⁸ as evidenced by specific figures and facts.

In 2014, the trade turnover between Belarus and Moldova amounted to 411.8 million dollars, becoming a record since the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries on November 19, 1992. Five years ago this figure was 1.6 times less. In 2009, the economic crisis had a negative impact on the dynamics of Belarusian-Moldovan bilateral trade. But the economies of the two countries, as mentioned above, are complementary. On the one hand, Moldovan consumers are well acquainted with Belarusian household appliances, consumer goods, dairy products and medicines. In its turn, Belarus takes a leading position in the import of wine products from Moldova: "At present, Belarus accounts for 35% of all Moldovan wine exports in quantitative terms and 27% - in value terms, as well as for more than 10% of all deliveries of Moldovan fruit and vegetable products"²⁷⁹. This complementarity has helped the parties to make the right decisions in difficult times to overcome the crisis.

In February 2010 Minsk and Chisinau signed the Economic Cooperation Treaty for 2010-2013, in which they declared their intention to "expand cooperation in the field of industrial cooperation"²⁸⁰. In this document, the parties agreed to redirect their efforts in cooperation from simple "buy-sell" schemes,

²⁷⁷ Gusin, A. Belarus and Moldova have identified areas of cooperation to increase exports to the EU and CIS markets / A. Gusin // [Electronic resource]. - - 2014. - URL: http://www.belta.by/ru/all_news/economics/Belarus-i-Moldova-opredelili-napravlenija-sotrudnichestva-dlja-uvlichenija-eksporta-na-rynki-stran-ES-i-SNG-i-681233.html.

²⁷⁸ Gusin, A. Gusin, Belarus can become a good example of using the opportunities of Moldova to promote products in the EU markets - Lazar / A. Gusin // [Electronic resource]. - - 2014. - URL: http://www.belta.by/ru/all_news/economics/Belarus-mozhet-stat-xoroshim-primerom-ispolzovanija-vozmozhnostej-Moldovy-po-prodvizheniju-produktsii-na-rynki-ES---Lazer-i-681197.html

²⁷⁹ Gusin, A. Belarus and Moldova will increase trade and economic cooperation / A. Gusin // [Electronic resource]. - - 2014. - URL: http://www.belta.by/ru/all_news/economics/Belarus-i-Moldova-budut-naraschivat-torgovo-ekonomicheskoe-sotrudnichestvo-i-674023.html.

²⁸⁰ Belarus and Moldova signed an economic cooperation agreement for 2010-2013 [Electronic resource]. - - 2010. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/284>.

which have prevailed in bilateral relations for almost two decades, to the creation of joint ventures for the production of high value-added products and their sale, including in the markets of third countries.

Taking into account the fact that the Moldovan economy is based on the agro-industrial sector, which employs up to half of the country's able-bodied population, while the structure of industrial production is dominated by the agricultural sector, the "first swallow" for the implementation of the planned course was a project on joint assembly of tractors in Moldova based on the supply of their kits from Belarus. Already in 2011 40 such machines were assembled in Chisinau. In the following years, the output has increased to 50 units. In 2015, Moldova will also "receive 50 tractor kits for the industrial assembly of garden and Vinogrador tractors for a total of about \$ 1.5 million"²⁸¹. The corresponding contract was signed by RUE "Smorgon Auto Aggregate Plant" and "Agrofermotech" LLC in September 2014.

The next direction of Belarus-Moldova cooperation in the field of industrial cooperation was the renewal of urban passenger electric transport. The first step in the implementation of these partnerships was the signing in November 2010, following an international tender, of a contract between JSC "Belkommunmash" and the Electric Transport Administration of Chisinau for the supply of 102 trolleybuses to the Moldovan capital, which was successfully implemented in 2011. But the partnership relations between the parties did not end there.

Due to the fact that more than 150 trolleybuses needed to be replaced in Chisinau, as they were physically and morally outdated, Belarus and Moldova agreed in summer 2012 to implement another joint project - the assembly of Belarusian trolleybuses in Chisinau with the participation of Minsk enterprise "Belkommunmash". These vehicles began to be assembled on a modernized line for the repair of trolleybuses of the Electric Transport Administration of the Moldovan capital by employees who had received training in Minsk. Thus, on July 17, 2012, the first Belarusian trolleybus of Moldovan assembly appeared on the streets of Chisinau. Totally 10 units of this equipment were assembled that year. In 2013, the Chisinau City Hall has allocated about three million euros for the assembly of 20 trolleybuses, so that in subsequent years to bring this figure to 50-60 cars.

²⁸¹ Polezhay, T. Belarus and Moldova concluded contracts for \$20 million / T. Polezhay // [Electronic resource]. -- 2014. - URL: http://www.belta.by/ru/all_news/economics/Belarus-i-Moldova-zakljuchili-kontrakty-na-20-mln_i_681203.html.

The Moldovan side paid attention to the Belarusian equipment for several reasons. First, Minsk trolleybuses consume 35 percent less electricity than the old cars. Secondly, they allow to increase the number of transported passengers and increase income from one trolleybus to 22 percent. Third, "Belarusian trolleybuses fully comply with all European standards. They favorably differ from Russian and Ukrainian optimal combination of price and quality, reliability, modern design, increased comfort for passengers and drivers, energy efficiency, maximum comfort for people with disabilities"²⁸². All these arguments were the basis for the conclusion made by the municipal authorities of the Moldovan capital that "the implementation of the project will make it possible to completely modernize the electric transport fleet in Chisinau and Balti, and in the future the modern trolleybuses "Belkommunmash" produced in Chisinau will be successfully promoted on the European markets, taking into account the preferences in trade with the European Union"²⁸³.

During the visit of the Head of the Belarusian State to Moldova in September 2014, it was noted that Belarus considers promising cooperation with the Moldovan side in industrial cooperation to eventually enter the market of third countries and the European Union. Prerequisites for such a development have already been created in the form of the assembly of Belarusian agricultural machinery and trolleybuses operating on Moldovan soil. "Assembly of buses is next in line. 284< ... > In this connection, Belarus and Moldova should focus on increasing trade turnover to \$ 1 billion". The stated goal intensified the search of Minsk and Chisinau and other new opportunities and directions of production cooperation.

So, if we talk about the assembly of Belarusian buses equipped with "Mercedes" engine, this project is especially important for the Moldovan capital: "At present, most of the vehicles in the Chisinau bus fleet are morally and physically outdated. About 150 buses are in need of replacement"²⁸⁵. That is why,

²⁸² Gusin, A. Chisinau authorities are satisfied with the efficiency of the trolleybuses "Belkommunmash" / A. Gusin // [Electronic resource]. -- 2013. - URL: http://www.belta.by/ru/all_news/economics/Vlasti-Kishineva-dovolny-effektivnostju-raboty-trollejbusov-Belkommunmash_i_628481.html

²⁸³ Gusin, A. On routes in Chisinau till the end of the year 20 Belarusian trolleybuses collected in Moldova will leave / A. Gusin // [Electronic resource]. - - 2013. - URL: http://www.belta.by/ru/all_news/economics/Na-marshruty-v-Kishineve-do-kontsa-goda-vyjdut-20-beloruskix-trollejbusov-sobrannyx-v-Moldove_i_645401.html

²⁸⁴ Official visit to the Republic of Moldova [Electronic resource]. - - 2014. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/aleksandr-lukashenko-24-25-sentjabrja-sovershit-ofitsialnyj-visit-v-respubliku-moldova-9861/.

²⁸⁵ Gusin, A. In Chisinau it is planned to establish assembly of MAZ buses / A. Gusin // [Electronic resource]. - - 2014. - URL: http://www.belta.by/ru/all_news/economics/V-Kishineve-planiruetsja-naladit-sborku-avtobusov-MAZ_i_657398.html.

under a joint project with Minsk Automobile Plant, it is planned to open a special assembly line with components and spare parts to be imported from Belarus. As for other areas of the planned cooperation, the parties are already discussing the prospects of producing biofuel-powered power equipment in Moldova with the help of the Belarusian side.

Characteristically, given the overall positive dynamics of bilateral interaction, Minsk and Chisinau consider that there is still a large untapped potential for cooperation and there are good prospects for increasing the volumes of mutual trade. In particular, the Belarusian side is ready to meet even more the needs of the Moldovan partners in engineering and petrochemical products, light industry goods, construction materials, household appliances, medicines and food. But perhaps, the greatest potential in increasing the volume of Belarusian-Moldovan trade and economic cooperation is observed in the agro-industrial sphere.

It should be reminded that today the legal framework of relations between Belarus and Moldova "includes more than 100 bilateral international treaties, which cover almost all areas of cooperation"²⁸⁶. Nevertheless, in the summer of 2014, the Moldovan government approved another document - the Agreement on economic, scientific and technical cooperation between the agrarian departments of the parties, which "should contribute to the increase of mutual supplies of products, attract investments in the agricultural sector of the two countries, enhance cooperation between research institutions operating in the agricultural sector"²⁸⁷.

The agreements reached in the agreement provide for the development of cooperation in all sectors and directions of agriculture, introduction of modern technologies, exchange of scientific and technical information, statistics and market situation data, results of scientific research, support in organizing the participation of Belarusian and Moldovan business circles in exhibitions and fairs, scientific seminars, symposiums, exchange of seed, planting and biological material samples. In addition, the parties intend to intensify interaction in crop, vegetable, horticulture, livestock, food industry, and agricultural mechanization.

²⁸⁶ O. Onyla, O. Belarus - Moldova: common business, common interests / O. Onyla // [Electronic resource]. - - 2014. - URL: <http://www.businessclass.md/%D0%B4%D0%B5%D0%BD%D1%8C%D0%B3%D0%B8/Belarusi-moldova-obshie-interesi-obshij-biznes/>

²⁸⁷ Gusin, A. Agreement on cooperation between the Ministries of Agriculture of Belarus and Moldova was approved in Chisinau / A. Gusin // [Electronic resource]. - - 2014. - URL: http://www.belta.by/ru/all_news/economics/Soglashenie-o-sotrudnichestve-mezhdu-Minselxozami-Belarusi-i-Moldovy-odobreno-v-Kishineve-i-671493.html

It is also a question of creation in Moldova of new subjects of a commodity distribution network of subordinated organizations of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food of Belarus.

So far in this country with the participation of the Belarusian capital there have been established such structures of the distribution network as MTZ-Leader trading house, Santa Breeze JV, Westayle JV, Agrobelmilk JV. "Simultaneously, the structure of the Belarusian commodity distribution network includes more than 60 Moldovan companies selling Belarusian products on the basis of dealer agreements and direct contracts"²⁸⁸. In September 2014 in Chisinau took place the opening ceremony of the commercial center for the sale of ceramic tiles and sanitary ceramics of the leading Belarusian company "Ceramin", which became a landmark event that witnessed the emergence of business cooperation between the two countries to a qualitatively new level.

So, the Belarusian side has experience in creating new forms of promotion of its products on the Moldovan soil. Therefore, today it is a question of filling these forms of interaction with new content. In agriculture, several interesting ideas are discussed in this respect. In particular, "Belarus plans to grow grapes on the industrial scale and is interested in the Moldavian technologies of cultivation of this crop"²⁸⁹. Moreover, in some Belarusian regions vineyards have already been laid and even the first vintages of grapes have been obtained. The "grape" theme also refers to the agreement, which was signed in September 2014 by the JSC "Minsk plant of grape wines" and the largest producer of wine materials in Moldova, which owns extensive vineyards and the most modern equipment for wine production - JSC "Vinaria din Vale". Two enterprises, the history of cooperation of which counts almost 15 years, have agreed that the wine material produced from the grapes grown on the plantations in Cahul region of the Moldavian south will be supplied to Belarus. Its peculiarity is that here, on an area of about 160 hectares, they receive grapes that meet all environmental standards of the European Union, which is especially important for Belarus, which was seriously affected by the Chernobyl accident.

Noting all these facts of progressive development of cooperation between Belarus and Moldova, special emphasis should be placed on the activities of such an important instrument of partnership coordination as in this case the

²⁸⁸ Trade and economic relations [Electronic resource]. - - 2015. - URL: http://moldova.mfa.gov.by/ru/bilateral_relations/trade_economic/.

²⁸⁹ Belarus is interested in the Moldavian technologies of industrial cultivation of grapes [Electronic resource]. - - 2012. - URL: http://www.belta.by/ru/all_news/economics?id=616877.

Intergovernmental Belarusian-Moldovan Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation. Established back in the mid-1990s, it played a significant role in 2000–2008, when bilateral trade turnover between Belarus and Moldova increased almost fivefold. The need for active transition to new forms of cooperation organization - cooperative supplies, establishment of joint ventures and production facilities, including those oriented to third countries - actualized the growing influence of the intergovernmental commission in the post-crisis period on the adoption of adequate decisions on the development of long-term strategy of mutually beneficial cooperation between the two countries in all sectors and spheres of national economy.

Thus, at the 12th meeting of the Commission in February 2010, the parties defined the measures to develop cooperation in priority areas and to stimulate the growth of mutual trade turnover. The next meeting - in October 2011 - was marked by the elaboration of new initiatives and agreements reached on the development of cooperation on the mutually beneficial use of trade regime within the Customs Union of Belarus, Russia and Kazakhstan and trade preferences regime of Moldova with the European Union. At the same time it was mentioned about "intensification of joint work in the field of selection and seed production of agricultural crops, reproduction of cattle of different breeds bred in Belarus and Moldova"²⁹⁰.

At the 14th meeting in November 2012, the parties stated the beginning of the transition from simple trade to cooperation and the establishment of assembly plants of Belarusian equipment on the Moldovan soil, as well as focused on new directions of intersectoral and interregional cooperation. In particular, in connection with the serious reconstruction of its railroad and the renewal of its rolling stock, the Moldovan side announced its intention to purchase cars in Belarus in the future. In the field of ecology, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection of Belarus and the Ministry of Environment of Moldova adopted a joint plan of cooperation till 2015. In the field of agro-industrial complex, the parties "agreed on the strategy of Belarusian sugar supply to Moldova, as well as on the supply of wine materials to Belarus"²⁹¹.

Strengthening ties between the regions, plans and programs of joint activities for 2013-2014 were approved then by the Minsk City Executive

²⁹⁰ On the 13th meeting of the Belarusian-Moldovan Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation [Electronic resource]. - - 2011. - URL: http://mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/c5e2ac51a65082b5.html.

²⁹¹ Belarus and Moldova have agreed to develop cooperation [Electronic Resource]. - - 2012. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/4717>

Committee and the Chisinau City Hall, Polotsk and Balti, while the Frunze district of Minsk and the Chisinau Botanica municipal sector signed an Agreement on friendly relations and cooperation. In spring 2013, the cities of Orsha and Balti also activated their interregional cooperation. Orsha residents declared their willingness to exchange experience and cooperate with Balti "in the field of housing and public health".²⁹² and the Moldovan JSC "Incomlac" was interested in organizing the delivery of packaging, semi-finished products and other products used in its production process from Belarus.

In autumn 2014, Minsk and Chisinau expanded their plan of joint activities in the field of economic, scientific, technical and socio-cultural cooperation for the years 2015-2016, proving by their own example the high efficiency of interaction at the level of capitals and showing the huge potential of regional partnerships, which are now also established between the Mogilev region and the autonomous territorial unit of Gagauzia, Bobruisk and Anenii Noi, Gomel and Edinets. These facts eloquently testify to the growth of interaction at the level of specific regions and oblasts of the two countries, which also creates "a foundation necessary for further development of bilateral relations between Belarus and Moldova"²⁹³.

A concrete outcome of the 15th meeting of the Intergovernmental Belarusian-Moldovan Commission for Trade and Economic Cooperation in December 2013 was the signing of "four contracts for the supply of sets and trolleybuses in 2014 in Moldova for their subsequent assembly, ceramic tiles and confectionery products"²⁹⁴. Among the new areas of cooperation was stated readiness of the Belarusian government to financially participate in the development of such instruments of cooperation as the purchase of Belarusian road, automotive equipment, any other rolling stock in the framework of cheapening interest rates on loans, as well as in the creation of "super modern technologies for the delivery of passengers by small trains from the center to regional cities or from the capital to the airport"²⁹⁵.

²⁹² Gusin, A. Twin Cities of Orsha and Balti (Moldova) intensify trade and economic cooperation / A. Gusin // [Electronic resource]. - - 2013. - URL: http://www.belta.by/ru/all_news/regions/goroda-pobratimyy-orsha-i-beltsy-moldova-aktivizirujut-torgovo-ekonomicheskoe-sotrudnichestvo_i_626012.html

²⁹³ Belarus and Moldova will increase their trade turnover up to \$500 million [Electronic resource]. - - 2012. - URL: http://naviny.by/rubrics/economic/2012/06/29/ic_news_113_396505/

²⁹⁴ On holding a meeting of the Belarusian-Moldovan commission on trade and economic cooperation [Electronic resource]. - - 2013. - URL: http://mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/e4346086de71b253.html

²⁹⁵ Gusin, A. Belarus and Moldova will pass from equipment assembly to creation of joint ventures / A. Gusin // [Electronic resource]. - - 2013. - URL: http://www.belta.by/ru/all_news/economics/Belarus-i-Moldova-perejdut-ot-sborki-tekhniki-k-sozdaniyu-sovmestnyx-predpriyatij_i_654187.html

As for expansion of the range of supplied products and inclusion of new enterprises into cooperation production relations, the parties agreed to work through this commission meeting: possibility of participation of RUE "Factory "Mogilevliftmash" in programs of Moldova on modernization of elevator facilities in the municipal housing stock; questions of repair and purchase of rolling stock, including by realization of leasing schemes with attraction of "Promagroleasing" JSC, and also to continue "capital repair in "Minsk car-repair factory" JSC of cars of inventory park of the state enterprise "Railway of Moldova"²⁹⁶. In 2014, in order to develop these areas of cooperation, the Moldovan side presented to the Belarusian partners opportunities for cooperation in the field of mechanical engineering on the platform of industrial parks and free economic zones, which caused a great interest in Minsk "to develop the potential in this area of industry, to open in the future a factory in Moldova"²⁹⁷.

The rapid pace of development of business cooperation between the two countries, even in today's difficult conditions is also evidenced by this fact. In September 2014, the Belarusian-Moldovan business forum was held in Chisinau, where the participants signed contracts for \$20 million. In particular, JSC "Keramin" and JV TC "Keramin-Kishinev" agreed on the supply of ceramic tiles to Moldova in 2015 for 10 million dollars. OAO "Stadler-Minsk" and the municipal enterprise "Directorate of Municipal Electric Transport" of Chisinau signed a contract in the amount of 8 million dollars for export to the capital of Moldova in 2015-2018 of 80 sets of trolley buses. OJSC "Brest Distillery "Belalco" and Tiraspol wine and cognac factory "Quint" also agreed on long-term supplies of alcohol from Belarus.

As we can see, even in the conditions of multi-directional integration with large regional blocs, Belarus and Moldova, nevertheless, demonstrate an extremely pragmatic and concrete approach to the implementation of the planned bilateral perspective plans, contributing to the realization of a significant potential for mutually beneficial cooperation, "the basis of which is traditionally friendly relations between our countries"²⁹⁸.

²⁹⁶ Gusin, A. Belarus and Moldova will deepen industrial cooperation and investment cooperation / A. Gusin // [Electronic resource]. - - 2013. - URL: http://www.belta.by/ru/all_news/economics/Belarus-i-Moldova-uglubjat-promyshlennuju-koooperatsiju-i-investitsionnoe-sotrudnichestvo_i_654464.html.

²⁹⁷ Gusin, A. Moldova intends to exclude all barriers in trade and economic relations with Belarus / A. Gusin // [Electronic resource]. - - 2014. - URL: http://www.belta.by/ru/all_news/economics/Moldova-amerena-iskljuchit-vse-barjery-v-torgovo-ekonomicheskix-otnoshenijax-s-Belarusju_i_675772.html.

²⁹⁸ Congratulations to the President of the Republic of Moldova Nicolae Timofti [Electronic resource]. - - 2014. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/pozdravlenie-prezidentu-respubliki-moldova-nikolaju-timofti-10497/.

Belarus-Moldova: make good use of partnership potential

Belarus and Moldova are two former Soviet republics, which today gravitate towards different integration associations. Moldova has a free trade agreement with the European Union, Belarus is a member of the Eurasian Economic Union. At the same time, the Belarusian side does not particularly dramatize the situation with Moldova's orientation towards the European Union, believing that under any circumstances it is necessary to look for options to use this situation for the benefit of the two countries, since "a balanced and balanced approach can not only minimize the risks to bilateral trade, but also take advantage of the advantages for multi-directional integration, becoming a kind of bridge between the two integration structures"²⁹⁹.

How this approach is used in practice, says the facts of supply to the Moldovan market of Belarusian exports that are in demand there - car tractors, petrochemical complex products, medicines, refrigerators, gas stoves, light industry goods, dairy products. In 2014, their volume exceeded 260 million dollars with the total volume of trade turnover - more than 410 million dollars. At the same time, we continued to study the supply of new types of goods - grain drying and irrigation equipment, cars "BelGi". This cooperation is also beneficial for Moldovan producers. After all, in the same 2014, 42 percent of Moldovan wine export and about 25 percent of fruit and vegetable production came from Belarus. Obviously, the visit of the Belarusian leader to Moldova in September 2014, significantly strengthening the bilateral political dialogue between Minsk and Chisinau, gave a tangible impetus not only to the Belarusian-Moldovan trade and economic cooperation, but also to the realization of the very idea of "integration of integration" from the Pacific to the Atlantic Ocean, which was voiced in the Belarusian capital a few years ago.

Recent experience shows that the parties continue to develop bilateral cooperation quite successfully. Thus, "in January - July 2016 there was a growth of trade turnover, which increased by 9.5 percent compared to the same period in

²⁹⁹ Official visit of the President of Moldova Nicolai Timofti to Belarus [Electronic resource]. - - 2015. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/prezident-moldovy-nikolaj-timofti-posetit-belarus-s-ofitsialnym-vizitom-11774/.

2015 and amounted to 137.4 million dollars"³⁰⁰. Such dynamics of cooperation actualized the task that the parties announced in early October 2016 during the visit of Belarusian Prime Minister A. Kobyakov to Moldova - in the near future to return to the level of 2014, when the Belarusian-Moldovan trade turnover amounted to 411.8 million dollars. At the same time, both in Minsk and Chisinau continue to believe that their belonging to different integration platforms in the bilateral plan is not so much a hindrance as a promising potential, because "if you approach and use this potential correctly, it will be mutually beneficial cooperation"³⁰¹. Therefore, the parties' main goal now is "to find new growth points to significantly strengthen trade and economic interaction"³⁰². Such points both in Belarus and Moldova see, first of all, in the implementation of joint cooperation projects, as well as in the development of interregional cooperation and twinning between specific territories of the two countries.

The fact that interaction on the level of specific areas and regions of the two countries is the foundation for further development of bilateral relations between Belarus and Moldova is evidenced, for example, by this fact: by 2016, cooperation relations have been established between the districts of Bobruisk and Anenii Noi, Gomel and Edinets, Svetlogorsk and Kalarash, Volkovyssk, Borisov and Strasen, Slonim and Telenesti, Kobrin and Cahul, Molodechno and Floresti, Kletsky and Kaushany, Dzerzhinsky and Ryshkan, Gantsevichsky and Leova, Baranovichi and Glodeni, Grodno and Orhei, Rechitsa and Oknitsa, Bykhovsky and Ceadyr-Lunga, Soligorsky and Ceadyr-Lunga, Bykhov and Kopchak village. Interregional twinning relations have also been established "between large cities and administrative units of two countries: Minsk with Chisinau and Tiraspol; Vitebsk, Polotsk, Orsha, Rechitsa with Balti, Mogilev region with Gagauzia"³⁰³. The establishment of twinning relations of Taraclia district of Moldova with one of the regions of Belarus is under consideration in order to intensify cooperation, "including mutual deliveries of agricultural products, use of Belarusian trade and logistics centers, organization of counter deliveries of goods"³⁰⁴. In general,

³⁰⁰ Materials of the briefing by D. Mironchik, Head of the Information Department - Press Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Belarus, held for media representatives on September 29, 2016. [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: http://mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/b6ac03c2e46a93ec.html

³⁰¹ Andrei Kobiakov is on an official visit to Moldova [Electronic Resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/6711>

³⁰² The official visit of Andrei Kobyakov to Moldova [Electronic Resource] has come to an end. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/6712>

³⁰³ On interregional cooperation between Belarus and Moldova [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: http://moldova.mfa.gov.by/ru/bilateral_relations/region/

³⁰⁴ Gusin, A. Belarus intensifies cooperation with Taraclia region of Moldova / A. Gusin // [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-aktiviziruet-sotrudnichestvo-s-taraklijskim-rajonom-moldovy-182226-2016/>

interaction between the regions of Belarus and Moldova is based on a solid legal and contractual framework. More than 20 cooperation agreements have already been concluded between the cities and districts of the two countries, which indicates a high interest of the parties in the effective use of this format of partnership. And "it is only necessary to achieve concrete work and practical benefits from regional interaction"³⁰⁵.

How the potential of these growth points is realized in practice can be seen in the development of partnership between Belarus and Gagauzia - an autonomous territorial unit in the south of Moldova. In 2015, the trade turnover between Belarus and Gagauzia exceeded four million dollars. It was based on supplies from Belarus of engineering industry products, oil refining products, plastic products, wood, knitwear, household chemicals and cosmetics. Gagauzian exports to the Belarusian market were dominated by alcohol and juices, fruit and sunflower seeds.

A new page in interregional cooperation between the Belarusian side and Gagauzia was opened by the Memorandum of Cooperation signed in November 2015 during the First International Investment Forum in Comrat between the Gagauz company Budzhakagrotexservice and the Bobruisk plant of tractor parts and units, within the framework of which the parties in the following months agreed and worked out technical, technological and logistic issues of joint assembly production, which "is located in the production areas of the Gagauz autonomy". The 306 first samples of tractors were also collected and successfully passed the bench and production tests. As a result, in October 2016, in this autonomous territorial unit in the south of Moldova, an assembly plant was opened for small tractors "Belarus", which are in demand in the agricultural sector and housing and communal services not only in Gagauzia, but all over Moldova. The partners are planning to significantly increase the production volume up to 45 vehicles per year.

This fact very eloquently illustrates the potential of cooperation between the Belarusian and Gagauz partners in terms of expanding trade and economic cooperation and implementing new investment projects, already discussing at the regional level promising projects in the food industry, housing construction,

³⁰⁵ Interview with the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Belarus to Moldova Sergey Cichuk to the Belarusian Telegraph Agency (July 15, 2015) [Electronic resource]. -- 2015. - URL: <http://mfa.gov.by/press/smi/fcc57590610a6099.html>.

³⁰⁶ Kulyagin, S. In Moldova assembly production of small-size tractors "Belarus" was opened / S.Kulyagin // [Electronic resource]. -- 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/v-moldove-otkrylos-sborochnoe-proizvodstvo-malogabaritnyh-tractorov-belarus-213107-2016/>.

energy industry, oil refining, information technology with the use of the existing opportunities of the "free enterprise zone in Vulcanesti, industrial parks and business incubator, action plan of the "free enterprise zone".³⁰⁷

It should be assumed that the implementation of the Plan of measures for 2017-2019 to enhance cooperation between the Minsk Regional Executive Committee and the Executive Committee of ATU Gagauzia, adopted in October 2016, will also contribute to the moneybox of interregional cooperation between Belarus and Moldova. The signing of the Plan of measures emphasized the rapid development of brotherhood and partnership between Belarus and Gagauzia.

Continuing the search for new growth points in Belarusian-Moldovan cooperation, we would like to remind that with almost 150 million dollars for the first seven months of 2016, Moldova ranks fourth in the total trade turnover of Belarus with the Commonwealth of Independent States. This fact alone testifies to the fact that Belarusian-Moldovan interaction is based not only on traditional, historically friendly relations between Minsk and Chisinau, but is also characterized by "active aspiration of the two countries to deepen all-round ties"³⁰⁸.

Based on the serious legal framework of bilateral relations - about 80 documents in various fields - and acting in conditions of free trade without exceptions and limitations, the parties are now planning a course for a sharp updating of production and operational relations. This was discussed at the 16th session of the Intergovernmental Belarusian-Moldovan Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation held in Minsk in July 2015. Having considered practically the whole range of bilateral cooperation, including trade and economic, interregional ties, cooperation in the spheres of health care, culture, sports, tourism, support of national minorities of the two countries, in the sphere of economy the parties focused "on the development of cooperation relations between Belarusian and Moldovan enterprises, creation of joint production

³⁰⁷ Gusin, A. Gagauzia offers Belarus to implement new investment projects in the region / A. Gusin // [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/gagauzija-predlagaet-belarusi-realizovat-novye-investproekty-v-regione-212996-2016/>.

³⁰⁸ Congratulations to the President of the Republic of Moldova Nicolae Timofti [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/pozdravlenie-prezidentu-respubliki-moldova-nikolaju-timofti-14289/.

facilities, cooperation in transport, construction, energy sectors".³⁰⁹ to bring the mutual turnover to 500 million dollars in the next year or two.

In particular, the Moldovan side proposed to the Belarusian partners to organize a joint production of low-floor buses using gas fuel, to participate in projects on development of railway transport infrastructure, construction of the ring road around Chisinau, as well as to create a joint venture for the production of road, municipal and construction equipment with the participation of such Belarusian enterprises as Minsk Automobile Plant, Amkodor, Beldor Technics. The fact is that Moldova has a need for such equipment under various government programs, which are funded by both the budget and donor organizations. The following fact says a lot: "The total number of settlements in Moldova exceeds 800 units, today they are staffed with old worn-out equipment or are not staffed at all"³¹⁰.

As for building materials, in 2014 a commercial center for the sale of ceramic tiles and sanitary ceramics of the Belarusian enterprise "Ceramin" was opened in the Moldovan capital. At the 16th meeting of the intergovernmental commission, where a plan of joint projects between the two countries for the coming years was prepared, the task for the Belarusian exporters sounded wider - to deliver here furniture for bathrooms and sanitary facilities. And for the needs of agriculture, "Belarus will supply Moldova with new forms of mineral fertilizers under an order"³¹¹.

Minsk Tractor Works, which supplies to this country almost the entire range of its machines in the range from 80 to 200 horsepower, has an assembly plant with a large-knot assembly and trading house "MTZ-Leader". In July 2015 the management of the enterprise has designated the goal - "to restore the volumes of equipment deliveries to Moldova and to bring them to 500 units per year"³¹². The statistics states that the Moldovan market consumes from 400 to 700 tractors

³⁰⁹ Mikhail Rusyi took part in the meeting of the Intergovernmental Belarusian-Moldovanian Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation [Electronic Resource]. - - 2015. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/5955>.

³¹⁰ Ogneva, Yu. Moldova offers Belarus to organize a JV of road, communal and construction equipment / Yu. Ogneva // [Electron resource]. - - 2015. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/moldova-predlagaet-belarusi-organizovat-sp-dorozhnoj-kommunalnoj-i-stroitelnoj-tehniki-150156-2015/>.

³¹¹ Lisatovich, T. Belarus and Moldova prepared a plan of joint projects by the end of 2015 and for the following years / T. Lisatovich // [Electronic resource]. - - 2015. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-moldova-podgotovili-plan-sovmestnyh-proektov-dokontsa-2015-go-i-na-posledujuschie-gody-150077-2015/>.

³¹² Mihovich, S. MTZ plans to restore the volume of equipment supplies to Moldova / S. Mihovich // [Electronic resource]. - - 2015. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/mtz-planiruet-vosstanovit-objemy-postavok-tehniki-v-moldovu-152299-2015>.

"Belarus" per year, which are traditionally used here in vineyards and gardens. At the same time, about 65% of the local market of tractors are Belarusian machines, 95% of which are tractors in the capacity range from 80 to 100 horsepower. MTZ-Leader Trade House, which today has 14 branches all over the country and annual turnover of about ten million dollars, was opened here in 2004. For more than ten years it has supplied here about four thousand Belarusian cars. Now the main task of this structure is to replace the capacity range of machines, as farms are being enlarged in Moldova. That is why the prospect is to sell more powerful tractors. And the first steps in this direction have been made: "If before one or two tractors of 130 hp were sold per year, last year [2014] 30 units were sold already"³¹³. In addition, tractors with a capacity of 220 horsepower entered the Moldovan market.

The results of the 17th meeting of the Belarusian-Moldovan Commission for Trade and Economic Cooperation and the Belarusian-Moldovan Economic Forum, which took place in early October 2016 and brought together "more than 70 Moldovan and 34 Belarusian companies" in Chisinau, were no less significant³¹⁴. Among the newly adopted documents that expand the legal basis of the Belarusian-Moldovan relations, it is worth mentioning the Agreement between the Ministry of Industry of the Republic of Belarus and the Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Moldova on the implementation of a joint project to renovate the passenger transport fleet on the Moldovan soil.

In this regard, the implementation of a joint project on the renewal of the Moldovan bus fleet looks very promising. The project provides for the assembly of buses of the Minsk Automobile Plant in Chisinau, equipped with modern motors that meet the Euro-4 environmental standard. The urgency of this issue for the Moldovan side is obvious: only "on the balance of the Chisinau City Bus Park there are more than 130 buses, of which almost 12% are not used due to excessively long service life (22-25 years)"³¹⁵. At the same time, the modernization of the bus fleet will make it possible to reduce the maintenance costs of the Chisinau vehicle fleet by 200 thousand Euros annually at the expense of spare parts and materials, to increase the number of transported passengers by

³¹³ Mihovici, S. Moldova is interested in using new models of MTZ machinery in agriculture / S. Mihovici // [Electronic resource]. - - 2015. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/moldova-zainteresovana-v-ispolzovanii-novyh-modelej-tehniki-mtz-v-selskom-hozjajstve-152293-2015>.

³¹⁴ On the meeting of the Belarusian-Moldovan Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation and the holding of the Belarusian-Moldovan Economic Forum [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://moldova.mfa.gov.by/ru/embassy/news/a61ac74e8c0a5d61.html>.

³¹⁵ Gusin, A. Belarus and Moldova plan to create new JVs / A. Gusin // [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-moldova-planirujut-sozdavat-novye-sp-182224-2016/>.

almost three million people, to create new jobs. At the same time, "the cost of the bus equipped in Chisinau will be 10 thousand euros less than its cost when purchased from the Belarusian manufacturer"³¹⁶.

We would also like to remind you that Moldova has already established a successful production of Belarusian trolleybuses. On the basis of the Cooperation Agreement between the municipal enterprise "Municipal Electric Transport Administration of Chisinau" and the Belarusian company "Belkommunmash" 102 new trolleybuses were delivered to the Moldovan capital earlier, and 92 more were assembled here. An important detail: for the implementation of this joint project, about ten million euros have been allocated from the budget of the Moldovan capital since 2012. Moreover, 30 new Belarusian trolleybuses were collected in 2015, which is half more than in 2014. It is expected that in the future Chisinau will produce up to 50 such vehicles annually. The implementation of this project "will allow a complete modernization of the electric transport fleet in Chisinau and Balti, and in the future the production of modern trolleybuses "Belkommunmash" is planned to be successfully promoted on the European markets, taking into account the preferences of Moldova in trade with the European Union"³¹⁷.

Now we are also talking about the assembly in Moldova of Belarusian wireless trolleybuses with an autonomous power supply, equipped with batteries, which allow driving up to 60 kilometers without connecting to the electricity network. The first such car has already been produced in the streets of the Moldovan capital. Five more - will have to ensure the opening of a new experimental eco-friendly route here by the end of 2016. It is expected that the use of this equipment "will facilitate access to quality public transport for the city residents, ensure environmental protection and will not require significant financial resources in the construction of electric trolleybus lines"³¹⁸. Indeed, the statistics of this promising project are quite attractive. The cost of one wireless trolleybus is about 200 thousand euros, and the construction of one kilometer of

³¹⁶ Gusin, A. Gusin // [Electronic resource]. The Government of Moldova approved a draft agreement with Belarus on assembly of MAZ buses in Chisinau. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/pravitelstvo-moldovy-odobrilo-proekt-soglasheniya-s-belarusiju-po-sborke-avtobusov-maz-v-kishineve-179376-2016/>.

³¹⁷ Gusin, A. In Chisinau the number of "Belkommunmash" trolleybuses collected in 2015 increased by 50% / A. Gusin // [Electronic resource]. - - 2015. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/v-kishineve-kolichestvo-sobrannyh-v-2015-godu-trollejbusov-belkommunmash-uvlichilos-na-50-172921-2015/>.

³¹⁸ Gusin, A. In Chisinau the first wireless trolleybus "Belkommunmash", assembled in Moldova, is released on the line / A. Gusin // [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/v-kishineve-vypuschen-na-liniju-pervyj-sobrannyj-v-moldove-besprovodnoj-trollejbus-belkommunmash-213005-2016/>

ordinary trolleybus line is about 30 thousand euros. Therefore, in 2017 it is planned to assemble in Chisinau 20 more such cars with an autonomous power supply.

The transport theme in business cooperation between the two countries was continued by the Protocol of Intentions signed within the framework of the Belarusian-Moldovan Economic Forum between OJSC "Minsk Automobile Plant", the company "CBS Motors" SRL and the Association of Mayor's Offices of Moldova on joint work on delivery and sale of buses and municipal equipment of Minsk automobile plants. Both this document and a number of others, adopted at the economic forum in Chisinau, have demonstrated a high commitment of the parties to a concrete final mutually beneficial result.

Thus, Smorgon Auto Aggregate Plant, which produces agricultural machinery and spare parts for it, reached an agreement with Agrofermtch, which sells agricultural machinery and spare parts, tires and oils, for the supply of 30 machine sets for industrial assembly of horticultural and grape tractors in 2017. Signing of contracts for supply of 500 tractors to Moldova by Minsk Tractor Plant in 2017 was a landmark. The Belarusian manufacturer of construction materials and equipment for the improvement of playgrounds "Zhilkomplekt" will send one thousand containers for garbage collection to its Moldovan partner - the company Energoplat in 2017. And the Belarusian joint stock company "Ceramint" will supply its business partner in Chisinau more than one million square meters of ceramic tiles. The subject of the agreements between the Belarusian "Gomselmash" and the Moldovan company Emteh-Agro is the export of 10 units of grain harvesting equipment from Gomel with average capacity in 2017.

A document providing for opportunities to activate cooperation "in the field of design and construction of housing, in particular, intended for socially vulnerable groups of population".³¹⁹ approved in autumn 2016 by the Ministry of Architecture and Construction of Belarus and the Ministry of Regional Development and Construction of Moldova. At the same time, Minsk is interested in organizing joint processing of Moldovan fruit and vegetable products on the basis of Belarusian sugar factories for their further delivery to the market of the Eurasian Economic Union countries. After all for last two years only "import of grapes from Moldova has increased in 2,5 times and has made 20,6 thousand tons

³¹⁹ Gusin, A. Belarus and Moldova will expand cooperation in the field of housing construction / A. Gusin // [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-moldova-rasshirjat-sotrudnichestvo-v-oblasti-stroitelstva-zhilja-212980-2016/>.

in 2015, or almost 46 % from total import to Belarus of the given crop".³²⁰ That is why the idea to establish joint production of "sparkling" and "quiet" wines in Belarus has a good base. As well as new investment projects proposed now for discussion in the field of waste utilization, development of renewable energy sources and biomass. All these facts testify to the wide possibilities of development of new stages of industrial cooperation between Belarus and Moldova in terms of developing the existing reserves for the advance increase of mutual trade volumes not only up to the required 500 million dollars, but also many times higher than this planned indicator.

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³²⁰ Belarus and Moldova are considering the possibility of creating a JV in the field of food production [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-moldova-rassmatrivajut-vozmozhnost-sozdaniya-sp-v-sfere-pischevogo-proizvodstva-203987-2016/>.

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Belarus-Kazakhstan: topical media topics of bilateral cooperation

Agreement on cooperation in the field of press and information Belarus and Kazakhstan signed back in 2000. In this document, the parties agreed to maintain and encourage partnerships between mass media editors and news agencies in order to promote "the formation of a single or common information space and the strengthening of friendly relations between the two brotherly peoples - the Belarusian and Kazakhstani peoples"³²¹. In April 2014, the legal framework of the Belarusian-Kazakh relations in the media sphere was supplemented by another document - an agreement between the Belarusian Telegraph Agency and Kazinform Agency, which "implies cooperation in the exchange of information, photo materials and other media content, in addition, the parties have agreed to train journalists"³²². And in November 2017, a new version of the intergovernmental agreement was adopted, the preamble of which states that the parties attach "special importance to the expansion of cooperation in the field of mass media between the two states"³²³. And this reflects the current stage of development of the information spaces of Belarus and Kazakhstan, and also lays a serious legal basis for expanding cooperation between agencies and organizations of the two countries in the direction of mutual presence in the media space of each other.

The appearance of a new agreement on cooperation in the field of mass media is significant because it took place in the year of 25 years since the establishment of Belarusian-Kazakh diplomatic relations - in November 2017, when the presidents of Belarus and Kazakhstan signed the Agreement on social and economic cooperation until 2026 with a program of specific activities for its implementation for the same period. "This program document is designed to consolidate the promising relations between the two countries and open new

³²¹ Zalesky, B.L. Belarusian International Journalism: Features, Trends, Prospects / B.L. Zalesky. - Minsk, BSU, 2014. - - C. 186.

³²² BelTA and Kazinform have agreed on cooperation [Electronic resource]. - - 2014. - URL: <http://bsj.by/2014/04/belta-i-kazinform-dogovorilis-o-sotrudnichestve/>.

³²³ Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Government of the Republic of Belarus on cooperation in the field of mass media [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: http://egov.kz/wps/portal!/ut/p/b0/04_Sj9CPykyssy0xPLMnMz0vMAfIjc7PyChKtUvKTS3NT80r0w_Wj9KNGPM8U_cgAQzMDEDAzMQBJ5STmpZcmpqfqRxaV6hfk5lqUOyoqAahz7G/#z6.

opportunities for the development of comprehensive cooperation".³²⁴As the parties have come to the conclusion that the base of bilateral partnerships that has been formed since 1992 allows today Minsk and Astana to move to a new technological level of interaction with an emphasis on innovation and high technology. All the more so because in three quarters of 2017 the trade turnover between the countries increased at once by almost 65 percent and amounted to about \$500 million. But, according to the heads of state, even this positive dynamics does not yet correspond to the potential of integration cooperation between Belarus and Kazakhstan. That is why the governments of both countries have a tense task to bring the volume of mutual trade turnover to one billion dollars in the next two or three years by implementing promising projects in various fields: petrochemistry, agriculture, energy, transport, logistics and new technologies. At the same time, the main engine of bilateral economic cooperation will remain the industrial cooperation, in the framework of which the Belarusian side has declared its readiness to increase the level of localization of jointly manufactured products in Kazakhstan, which will create additional jobs there. By the way, "today 260 Belarusian enterprises work in Kazakhstan"³²⁵. Actually, this document defines today the direction of actions of Belarusian and Kazakh mass media on coverage of the subject of bilateral cooperation, which in the coming years should get a powerful development.

Specific ways of solving the task of increasing the volume of Belarusian-Kazakh mutual trade were thoroughly considered by the parties at the business forum held in Minsk in November 2017, the largest in the history of cooperation between Belarus and Kazakhstan, which was attended by about 400 representatives of business circles of the two countries, and at the exhibition, which worked in parallel, 55 Belarusian enterprises presented more than 100 advanced developments, each of which deserves the attention of representatives of the media sector.

There are great prospects for increasing Belarusian supplies to Kazakhstan, for example, in the woodworking industry. Suffice it to say that in the period from January to September 2017, the enterprises of the Belarusian concern Bellesbumprom increased exports of their products to the Kazakh market by 42.3% or up to \$ 18.3 million. It is noteworthy that "the concern's enterprises

³²⁴ Official talks with President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev [Electronic resource]. - – 2017. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/ofitsialnye-peregovory-s-prezidentom-kazaxstana-nursultanom-nazarbaevym-17546/.

³²⁵ Relations between Belarus and Kazakhstan have reached a high strategic level - Nazarbayev [Electronic Resource]. - – 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/politics/view/otnosheniya-belarusi-i-kazahstana-vyshli-na-vysokij-strategicheskij-uroven-nazarbaev-278130-2017/>.

supply to Kazakhstan almost all types of woodworking products, primarily furniture, which accounts for over 60% of total exports. The second position in terms of sales volume is occupied by chipboard"³²⁶. And then follow wood-fiber boards, plywood, lumber, doors, windows, wallpaper, paper, cardboard, matches. And almost each of these export positions in the Kazakh market shows a systematic growth in volumes.

Trucks and agricultural machinery are another solid export article from Belarus to Kazakhstan. Thus, in the framework of the already called Belarusian-Kazakh business forum, the Belarusian Automobile Plant and AstanaBelAZService LLP signed a contract for the supply of 25 mining dump trucks for almost \$25 million to this Central Asian country. In addition, in accordance with the signed memorandum between the Minsk Automobile Plant and the company Hyundai Trans Auto in Kazakhstan it is planned to supply 100 sets of dump trucks and utility vehicles in 2018. Finally, in the same 2018 Minsk Tractor Works will ship two thousand of its machines to the "Belarusian Tractor Trading House" LLP, and "Gomselmash" JSC - 500 machine sets to the harvesters of Kazakhstan JSC "AgromashHolding". It is also important that the Gomel residents have provided their partners - JSC "Agromashholding" - with exclusive dealer rights to sell the entire range of their products in Kazakhstan, which will allow them to seriously expand the range of exported combines. In particular, it is a question of "supplying equipment for rice harvesting to the southern part of Kazakhstan"³²⁷. Gomselmash" has such a machine, which is now being prepared to be put into mass production.

Belarus and Kazakhstan also have ambitious plans for cooperation in the development of digital transport corridors to Western and Northern Europe, which is very important given the geographical location of both countries on the Silk Road economic belt. The strategic goal here is to double the volume of container transit to transport "1 million containers a year by 2020 and 2 million by 2025"³²⁸. At the same time, it is important that on average a container from Central Asia

³²⁶ Enterprises of "Bellesbumprom" in January-September increased exports to Kazakhstan by 42.3% [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/predpriyatija-bellesbumproma-v-janvare-sentjabre-uvelichili-eksport-v-kazahstan-na-423-278065-2017/>.

³²⁷ Dylenok, Yu. The exclusive dealer of Gomselmash in Kazakhstan became Agromashholding JSC /Yu. Dylenok // [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/ekskljuzivnym-dilerom-gomselmasha-v-kazahstane-stalo-ao-agromashholding-278165-2017/>.

³²⁸ Dylenok, Yu. Belarus and Kazakhstan are intensifying cooperation in the development of digital transport corridors / Yu. Dylenok // [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-kazahstan-aktivizirujut-sotrudnichestvo-v-razvitiisifrovyh-transportnyh-koridorov-278213-2017/>.

reaches Western Europe within two weeks. The parties intend to cope with this task through coordinated work with Chinese and Russian colleagues. This means that the topic of creating digital transport corridors becomes relevant for many years not only for international journalists from Belarus and Kazakhstan, but also for their colleagues in Russia and China.

The Treaty on Social and Economic Cooperation between Belarus and Kazakhstan signed in November 2017, until 2026, and aimed at "implementing a qualitatively new stage in bilateral relations, involving the mutual penetration of capital with an emphasis on innovation and high technology".³²⁹ As mentioned above, it implies that the strategic Belarusian-Kazakh partnership will continue to be the locomotive of projects that allow creating joint products with high added value and providing employment. Recall that at the end of 2017 there were eight joint assembly facilities in Kazakhstan, where "the assembly of quarry, mine, special utility and fire equipment, tractors, combines, engines, balers, medical equipment"³³⁰. It should be noted at once that the specific experience of each of them can and should always remain in the focus of media attention of the two countries, both at the central and regional levels. But, unfortunately, this has not been observed yet. But there is a lot to tell your readers, spectators and listeners.

Thus, one of the obvious Belarusian leaders of presence in the market of Kazakhstan is the Minsk Automobile Plant, which in 2010 opened in Astana, LLP "Trade House" MAZ - Kazakhstan "and to date has formed its distribution network in this country, which includes nine dealers, as well as a network of 12 authorized service stations for the Belarusian automotive equipment. A logical continuation of this cooperation was the opening in June 2017 in Almaty at the car assembly plant of Hyundai Trans Auto, part of the "Astana Motors" group, of the production of heavy dump trucks MAZ 5516X5 and MAZ 6501H9 "with a capacity of 20 tons. In this case the full cycle of welding, assembly and painting" is performed³³¹.

³²⁹ Review of the results of the foreign policy of the Republic of Belarus and the activities of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2017 [Electronic resource]. - - 2018. - URL: <http://mfa.gov.by/publication/reports/a8a5169b6e487b3b.html>.

³³⁰ Matveeva, N. Relations between Belarus and Kazakhstan have become allied and strategic - Bulegenov / N. Matveeva // [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/politics/view/otnoshenija-belarusi-i-kazahstana-priobrel-i-sojuznicheskij-i-strategicheskij-harakter-bulegenov-266564-2017/>.

³³¹ Production of MAZ automotive equipment [Electronic resource] has been launched in Kazakhstan. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/v-kazahstane-zapuscheno-proizvodstvo-avtotehniki-maz-256106-2017/>

Next example. Even earlier - in 2007 - the cooperation between the Belarusian JSC "Gomselmash" and the Kazakh JSC "AgromashHolding" started. For ten years, the Belarusian-Kazakh joint assembly plant, which is located in the city of Kostanai on the basis of JSC "AgromashHolding", managed to collect more than three thousand combine harvesters. And this is provided that the capacity of the Kazakh market in this equipment is one thousand new machines per year. In 2018, the joint venture will master the production of two more new models of agricultural machinery. In this case we are talking about the models KZS-575 and KZS-10. "These machines will expand the range of combine harvesters, which are produced in Kostanay, which will allow more flexible response to the needs of the local market³³².

Another good example of the development of bilateral mutually beneficial Belarusian-Kazakh cooperative cooperation was the commissioning in 2016 of the first phase of the project to create the Kazakhstan-Belarus Industrial and Technological Park of Agricultural and Communal Equipment. The implementation of this major investment project began in 2012 - in order to organize in Kokshetau city of Akmola region under the licenses of a number of Belarusian plants "a full cycle of production line for the assembly of trailers, balers, attachments, roll and forage implements, excavators, loaders of various sizes and modifications"³³³. The first stage of the project is almost 10 thousand square meters of area. "After the commissioning of the second phase and full load of the company will be created about 230 new jobs³³⁴. The parties are sure that successful implementation of this project will allow to create a powerful cluster of Belarusian-Kazakh machine-building in Kokshetau and will serve as a good example for spreading this positive experience of production cooperation to other spheres of cooperation. In particular, "it is planned to create similar parks for the production of passenger buses, quarry and mining equipment, road-building machinery³³⁵. Implementation of these plans is another thematic area of publications in the Belarusian and Kazakh press.

³³² Sidorchik, V. Two new models of grain harvesters will be mastered at the Belarusian-Kazakh joint venture in 2018 / V. Sidorchik // [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/newscompany/view/dve-novye-modeli-zernouborochnyh-kombajnov-osvojat-belorussko-kazahstanskom-sp-v-2018-godu-278818-2017/>.

³³³ . How in the field raise the economy of Kazakhstan [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: https://forbes.kz/process/economy/kak_v_polevyih_usloviyah_podnimayut_ekonomiku_kazahstana

³³⁴ Akashin, V. Minsk - Kokshetau: a mutually beneficial project / V. Akashin // [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://apgazeta.kz/2016/10/01/minsk-kokshetau-vzaimovyygodnyj-proekt/>.

³³⁵ Interview with Anatoly Nichkasov, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Belarus to the Republic of Kazakhstan, to the Kazakh news agency Khabar (11 June 2014) [Electronic resource]. - URL: <http://mfa.gov.by/press/smi/d8d30fc5ce4d68be.html>

In total, several dozens of joint scientific and technical projects are planned for the coming years with the extensive use of Belarusian technologies, innovations and scientific developments. In particular, a project "to create a joint production of unmanned aerial complexes"³³⁶ with the organization of their production in Kazakhstan is planned. Joint cooperation projects in the oil sector, including geological exploration, operation of wells, introduction of various methods of production intensification and oil recovery enhancement, discussed at the meeting of the heads of government of the two countries, A. Kobyakov and B. Kobyakov, may also become new directions for successful work of Belarusian companies with Kazakh partners. Sagintaev in August 2017 in Astana. In total, today in Kazakhstan, "six joint assembly facilities are still in the active phase of formation".³³⁷ that testifies to very high readiness of the parties to continue active search of new forms of production cooperation. At the same time, a lot will depend on the ability of the regions of the two countries to realize their cooperation potential. Accordingly, the role of regional press of the two countries in media support of implementation of these cooperation prospects is increasing many times.

Recall that in 2016 the trade turnover between Belarus and Kazakhstan was about 420 million dollars. That is why in early 2017, and in Minsk and Astana set an ambitious goal - in the coming years to return to a record level of Belarus-Kazakhstan mutual trade in 2014, when its volume was expressed in the value of \$ 966.8 million. At the same time, one of the effective tools for addressing this task was identified - the intensification of interaction between the regions of the two countries, which is an important condition for their dynamic socio-economic development and a factor ensuring the promotion of trade and economic relations in the framework of the free movement of goods, services, capital, technology, labor and the establishment of joint ventures, declared in the Eurasian Economic Union. The conclusion is that "the regions of Belarus and Kazakhstan have many promising areas for mutually beneficial economic cooperation".³³⁸ The participants of the inter-regional meeting of representatives of Kazakhstan's Pavlodar and Belarus' Gomel regions held in April 2017 came as well.

³³⁶ Belarus and Kazakhstan are planning a project to establish joint production of drones [Electronic Resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-kazakhstan-namechajut-proekt-po-sozdaniju-sovmestnogo-proizvodstva-bespilotnikov-278212-2017/>.

³³⁷ Bilateral trade and economic cooperation [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: http://kazakhstan.mfa.gov.by/ru/bilateral_relations/trade_economic/.

³³⁸ Sidorchik, V. The regions of Belarus and Kazakhstan have many promising areas for cooperation - Vladimir Dvornik / V. Sidorchik // [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/u-regionov-belarusi-i-kazahstana-est-mnogo-perspektivnyh-napravlenij-dlja-sotrudnichestva-vladimir-243748-2017/>.

It should be noted that Pavlodar region is among those Kazakh regions where business interests "develop within the framework of one of the main directions in the economic policy of Kazakhstan, Russia and Belarus - the Common Economic Space. For our region, this cooperation is a priority area in foreign economic activity"³³⁹. At least this fact testifies to the seriousness of its intention to fill its partnership with Belarusian regions with concrete economic content. The agreement on cooperation with the Gomel regional executive committee was signed by the akimat of Pavlodar region in November 2016. And if for the whole of 2016 the volume of mutual trade between Gomel and Pavlodar residents was noted at the level of two and a half million dollars, then only "in January-February 2017 trade turnover between the regions was \$1.4 million (growth rate - 393.8%), including exports - \$ 0.9 million (256.1%). The main export items: condensed milk and cream, equipment for railway tracks, metalware, dining dishes and porcelain kitchenware. Imported from Pavlodar region ferrosilicon"³⁴⁰ for the needs of the Belarusian Steel Works.

The Interregional Meeting in Gomel showed that the parties intend to significantly expand the framework of interregional interaction. For example, Pavlodar residents were very interested in the Belarusian experience of improvement of settlements, including small towns. In this connection, the Kazakh side even suggested inviting Gomel architects and housing and communal services workers to Pavlodar to work there for a while, sharing their experience. Another promising area of cooperation is the purchase of agricultural machinery "Gomselmash": "We are talking about a combine KZS-5, designed to work in the fields of a small area, primarily in farms"³⁴¹. These promising areas of cooperation between the Belarusian and Kazakhstan regions can be complemented by the planned purchases of young cattle in the Gomel region for the development of dairy cattle breeding in Kazakhstan and the expansion of supply of Belarusian furniture there. The interaction of free economic zones located in the regions, the agreement on which was signed in Gomel in the framework of an interregional meeting, could also be very productive. The fact is that the Pavlodar Oblast's FEZ

³³⁹ Bozumbayev, K. Interaction of regions plays an important role in development and strengthening of integration / K. Bozumbayev // Eurasian Economic Union: regional aspect: inform.-integ. project / comp., interviewer. : B. Zalesky, M. Valkovsky, A. Mostovoy. - Minsk: Biznesofset, 2014. - C. 177-178.

³⁴⁰ Sidorchik, V. Delegation of Pavlodar region of Kazakhstan will visit Gomel region on April 19-20 / V. Sidorchik // [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/delegatsija-pavlodarskoj-oblasti-kazahstana-posetit-gomelskij-region-19-20-aprelja-243412-2017/>.

³⁴¹ Sidorchik, V. The head of the Pavlodar region was interested in the Belarusian experience of city improvement / V. Sidorchik // [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/glavu-pavlodarskoj-oblasti-zainteresoval-belorusskij-opyt-blagoustrojstva-gorodov-243790-2017/>.

invites interested partners to participate in projects on shared use of mineral resources in its territory. In particular, now in this Kazakhstan region "an aluminum cluster is being created with involvement of large companies from Germany, Poland and Turkey".³⁴² which Belarusian representatives of this market segment could also take part in.

It is important to note that Pavlodar Oblast's interests in developing partnerships in Belarus are not limited to the Gomel Oblast alone. Thus, in Minsk region, the Kazakh side has shown great interest in cooperation in the construction of dairy complexes. While handing over a package of standard projects of agricultural facilities to Pavlodar residents, representatives of the Belarusian capital region expressed their readiness not only to consult them on this topic, but also to build dairy complexes on mutually beneficial terms. Ekibastuz city, located in Pavlodar region, and Partizansky district of Minsk, signed an agreement in April 2017, which provides for "expansion of trade and economic cooperation, assistance in establishing contacts between businesses, exhibitions, fairs, business forums, as well as the development of interaction in education, culture, sports and tourism"³⁴³.

The topical issue of activation of interaction with the Kazakh regions is also for Mogilev region, which concluded "agreements on cooperation with the East Kazakhstan (2009) and South Kazakhstan (2003) regions"³⁴⁴. Since then, many enterprises of the Mogilev region have become exporters of their products to the Kazakh market: JSC "Belshina", JSC "Mogoteks", JSC "Bobruisk Machine-Building Plant", RUE "Mogilev plant Strommashina", JSC "Osipovich Dairy Plant", JSC "Bykhovmoloko", KUP "Legpromrazvitie", JLLC "Jockey Plastic", JLLC "Stl-Extrusion", the company "Grandma Krynka". Almost all of them are only ready to increase their supplies to the Kazakh regions. Representatives of the international media segment of the Mogilev region, who have creative contacts with their Kazakh colleagues, could help them in advertising and media promotion of export products.

³⁴² Pavlodar and Minsk regions are mutually interested in developing cooperation in agriculture [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/pavlodarskaja-i-minskaja-oblasti-projavljajut-vzaimnyj-interes-k-razvitiyu-sotrudnichestva-v-selskom-243719-2017/>.

³⁴³ Partisan district of Minsk signed a cooperation agreement with the Kazakh city of Ekibastuz [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/partizanskij-rajon-minskaja-podpisal-soglasenie-o-sotrudnichestve-s-kazahstanskim-gorodom-ekibastuzom-243437-2017/>.

³⁴⁴ Tkacheva, O. Kazakhstan is interested in activation of inter-regional cooperation with Mogilev region / O. Tkacheva // [Electronic resource]. - - 2013. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/kazahstan-zainteresovan-v-aktivizatsii-mezhregionalnogo-sotrudnichestva-s-mogilevskoj-oblastju-31160-2013>.

³⁴⁵Back in 2014, Akmola and Grodno regions met to establish close partnerships. They signed a memorandum on cooperation in agriculture and noted the large reserves of cooperation "in terms of investment, trade in goods and services. Examples of such intentions can be continued. The question is that they are not always adequately reflected in the media sphere. This then has an impact on diminishing partner interest and continued cooperation in general. In order to prevent this from happening, it should be assumed that Minsk and Astana have updated the agreement on cooperation in the field of mass media, adopted back in 2000.

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³⁴⁵ Stasukevich, E. Akmola region of Kazakhstan is interested in adopting the agricultural experience of Grodno region / E. Stasukevich // [Electronic resource]. - - 2014. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/akmolinskaja-oblast-kazahstana-zainteresovana-perenijat-selskohozjajstvennyj-opyt-grodnenskoj-oblasti-38047-2014>.

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Belarus - Tajikistan: cooperation based on respect, mutual support and consideration of interests

In March 2016 it will be 20 years since the establishment of Belarusian-Tajik diplomatic relations. Today in Minsk, Tajikistan is seen as an important and reliable partner in Central Asia, interaction with which is based on mutual trust, respect and friendly support, the implementation of agreements with which "will seriously increase the dynamics of multifaceted partnership"³⁴⁶.

Let us recall that in the 90s of the last century this former Soviet republic, more than 90% of whose territory is occupied by mountains, after the collapse of the Soviet Union had to go through a 5-year civil war, which took the lives of more than 100 thousand people, as well as a difficult period of recovery of the national economy. But, thanks to the sustainable socio-economic development in the following years, Tajikistan has managed to significantly strengthen its position and authority in the world community, expanded productive cooperation with many countries and reputable international organizations. Today it is recognized by 147 countries and maintains diplomatic relations with 128 countries.

By implementing an "open door" policy, which creates effective means of combining national interests with international ones, Tajikistan demonstrates its commitment to developing regional cooperation within the framework of existing international organizations that promote the achievement of purely national objectives. Thus, within a very short period of time, the United Nations has already approved three initiatives of this country: declaration of 2003 as the International Year of Clean Water, approval of 2005-2015 as the Decade of Action "Water for Life" and declaration of 2013 as the International Year of Water Cooperation.

Tajikistan's contribution to the strengthening of the Commonwealth of Independent States is also significant, as evidenced by specific facts. In particular, at the summit in Dushanbe in 2007, the heads of state approved the Concept of further development of the CIS, which formulated the immediate and future goals of this formation in the post-Soviet space, as well as specific ways to achieve them. In addition, "under the auspices of the chairmanship of Tajikistan in the

³⁴⁶ Congratulations to the President of the Republic of Tajikistan Emomali Rahmon [Electronic resource]. - - 2014. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/pozdravlenie-prezidentu-respubliki-tadzhikistan-emomali-raxmonu-9755/

Commonwealth in 2011, the fundamental documents were adopted, including the agreement on free trade zone, interstate program of innovative cooperation, the concept of strategic development of railway transport, the framework program "Cooperation Atom-CIS", the concept of cooperation in the field of culture³⁴⁷.

Speaking about the CIS space, the President of Tajikistan E. Rahmon noted that in Dushanbe "defined the specifics and beneficial aspects of cooperation with member states, i.e. with their traditional partners, and we will promote the development and improvement of integration processes in the Commonwealth space in order to use their creative potential and develop mutually beneficial cooperation³⁴⁸. The Tajik side sees the Republic of Belarus among such specific partners in the post-Soviet space, which have significant creative potential and are able to use it effectively in the implementation of integration processes.

The first impulses to activate bilateral Belarusian-Tajik relations were the visits of the heads of two states to Dushanbe and Minsk in April 2000 and July 2001, respectively. As a result of this dialogue at the highest level, a basic document appeared - the Treaty on Friendship and Cooperation, which "defined the basic principles of bilateral relations - mutual respect for independence and state sovereignty, equality, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, mutual desire to establish mutually beneficial partnership economic ties³⁴⁹.

Even earlier - in 1999 the Belarusian-Tajik Intergovernmental Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation was established. Its sphere of interest covers such priority areas as: delivery of engineering products based on new leasing schemes; cooperation in the field of agro-industrial complex and energy; participation in joint economic projects; creation of a network of joint production enterprises in the territory of both countries. But a truly new page in relations between Belarus and Tajikistan was opened by the visit of the Head of the Belarusian State to Dushanbe in October 2011, during which the Belarusian side expressed its interest in active development of mutually beneficial cooperation with Tajikistan in all areas, from agriculture and industry to security and cooperation within international organizations. The Tajik side, in turn, noted

³⁴⁷ Garkun, V. Tajikistan makes a significant contribution to strengthening and improvement of CIS activity / V. Garkun // [Electronic resource]. - - 2014. - URL: http://www.belta.by/ru/person/opinions/Vladimir-Garkun_i_514987.html.

³⁴⁸ Speech at the meeting with the diplomatic staff of the country on the occasion of opening the new building of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan [Electronic resource]. - - 2013. - URL: <http://www.prezident.tj/ru/node/4114>.

³⁴⁹ Cooperation of the Republic of Tajikistan with the Republic of Belarus [Electronic resource]. - - 2012. - URL: <http://khovar.tj/rus/foreign-policy/30297-sotrudnichestvo-respubliki-tadzhikistan-s-respublikoy-belarus.html>

that "relations with Belarus occupy one of the leading positions in the foreign policy and foreign economic strategy of Tajikistan. We are interested in their progressive development"³⁵⁰.

These negotiations resulted in the signing of a number of bilateral Belarusian-Tajik documents that defined the nature of relations between the two countries for the near and long term. First, the heads of Belarus and Tajikistan adopted a joint statement in which they instructed the governments to focus on priority areas of economic, scientific, technological and humanitarian interaction. Second, the parties signed the Treaty on Long-Term Cooperation for 2011-2020, under which they decided to "promote creation of favorable conditions for the development of trade and economic relations, strengthening of interbank relations, formation of separate projects and programs, joint production structures and investment activities"³⁵¹.

Third, the Interstate Cooperation Program for 2011-2020 was approved, where the parties identified nine main directions of Belarusian-Tajik cooperation as priorities for the long-term perspective:

1) cooperation in agro-industrial complex, machine building, petrochemical industry, food and light industry;

2) deliveries of Belarusian quarry and road-building machinery, heavy dump trucks for the needs of the Republic of Tajikistan, further development of the service and warranty repair system;

3) establishing assembly facilities for industrial products, including tractors and other agricultural machinery;

4) supply of agricultural machinery, including the use of leasing schemes;

5) supplies of cotton fiber, fruit and vegetable and other products from Tajikistan;

6) development of regional cooperation and interaction through chambers of commerce and industry;

³⁵⁰ Alexander Lukashenko makes an official visit to Tajikistan [Electronic resource]. - - 2011. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/aleksandr-lukashenko-sovershaet-ofitsialnyj-vizit-v-tadzhikistan-5173/.

³⁵¹ Treaty between the Republic of Belarus and the Republic of Tajikistan on long-term cooperation for 2011 - 2020 [Electronic resource]. - - 2011. - URL: <http://www.tajembassy.by/files/dpb-2.pdf>

7) involving Belarusian companies in the development of mineral deposits in Tajikistan;

8) military and technical cooperation;

9) cooperation in the field of freight transport³⁵².

At the same time, the Chambers of Commerce and Industry of the two countries established the Tajik-Belarusian Business Council, which set its main goal as expansion and development of business contacts and mutually beneficial cooperation between entrepreneurs, promotion of business in the markets of both countries and attraction of mutual investments in Belarus and Tajikistan. And already at the 8th meeting of the Intergovernmental Belarusian-Tajik Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation, held in April 2013 in Dushanbe, the parties spoke about concrete opportunities to expand bilateral trade turnover, legal framework and partnership between the regions of the two countries, as well as cooperation in agriculture, transport, social protection, migration, health care, education and culture, industry, "including the establishment of joint ventures for the processing of agricultural products, assembly production of tractors RUE "MTZ" in Tajikistan, the supply of quarry equipment JSC "BelAZ" in 2013-2014 and organization of its service and maintenance³⁵³.

The timeliness of the measures taken was obvious, as in 2012 the volume of Belarusian-Tajik trade turnover decreased by 20.6% to \$57.7 million with a surplus for the Belarusian side of \$39 million. The basis of Belarusian exports were then "sugar, ferrous metals, tires, furniture, machinery, equipment, medicines, vehicles, wood and wood products, inorganic products"³⁵⁴. But the downward trend in bilateral trade between Belarus and Tajikistan continued in 2013, when its volume amounted to 41.8 million dollars. At the same time, Belarusian exports fell significantly - by almost 40% - and the commodity structure of Belarus underwent certain changes. "The main trend is a decrease in the share of food and raw material supplies due to a reduction in the supply of sugar, fluoroaluminates and petroleum products, with a significant increase in the share of engineering products due to the resumption of supplies of BelAZ quarry

³⁵² Interstate Cooperation Program between the Republic of Belarus and the Republic of Tajikistan for 2011 - 2020 [Electronic resource]. - - 2011. - URL: <http://www.tajembassy.by/files/dpb-2.pdf>.

³⁵³ On the regular meeting of the Intergovernmental Belarusian-Tajik Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation [Electronic resource]. - - 2013. - URL: http://mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/be5f2ec75d7008b2.html.

³⁵⁴ On the meeting of the Intergovernmental Belarusian-Tajik Commission [Electronic resource]. - - 2013. - URL: http://mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/a6bf2f8f586c159a.html.

equipment"³⁵⁵. This alarm signal was the main topic of discussion at the 9th meeting of the intergovernmental commission held in Minsk in early May 2014. Within this format of interaction, the parties, noting the decline in the dynamics of trade turnover growth, stated the need to "intensify trade and economic cooperation in agriculture, food and light industry, mechanical engineering and humanitarian sphere"³⁵⁶.

This topic was discussed even more deeply by the two heads of state during the visit of Tajik leader E. Rahmon to Belarus in late May 2014. On the Belarusian side, a very specific position was stated then: "We need not only to restore the economic relations that once were, but also to significantly surpass them, despite the fact that we have a certain decline in trade last year"³⁵⁷. To solve this problem, official Minsk has announced a number of concrete initiatives.

In particular, Tajik partners were offered to supply Belarusian goods under leasing schemes, as well as with the use of preferential lending, including the participation of Tajik banks. Taking into account the fact that the priority task in Tajikistan is now to renovate the machine park and the establishment of service centers for its maintenance, the Belarusian side expressed its willingness to fully meet this demand for both equipment and complex service support. For this purpose, a network of machine and tractor stations could be formed together with the Tajik side, as well as joint assembly plants for agricultural machinery. In this regard, the idea of creating the production of agricultural attachments and trailers on Tajik land was considered promising.

As a result, the parties adopted a solid package of documents expanding Belarusian-Tajik cooperation in a number of areas. In the field of construction, cooperation was agreed upon by the Ministry of Architecture and Construction of Belarus and the Committee on Architecture and Construction under the Government of Tajikistan; in the field of sports - by the National Olympic Committees of the two countries; in the field of mass media - by the National State Television and Radio Company of Belarus and the Committee on Television and Radio under the Government of Tajikistan; in the field of industry - by the

³⁵⁵ On trade and economic cooperation between Belarus and Tajikistan in 2013 [Electronic resource]. - - 2014. - URL: <http://tajikistan.mfa.gov.by/ru/embassy/news/ab80403d8ea1de2f.html>.

³⁵⁶ Belarus and Tajikistan intend to intensify cooperation in agriculture, food and light industry [Electronic resource]. - - 2014. - URL: http://www.belta.by/ru/all_news/economics/Belarus-i-Tadzhikistan-namereny-aktivizirovat-sotrudnichestvo-v-selskom-xozjajstve-pischevoj-i-legkoj-promyshlennosti-i-667853.html.

³⁵⁷ Alexander Lukashenko met with President of Tajikistan Emomali Rakhmon [Electronic Resource]. - - 2014. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/aleksandr-lukashenko-vstretilsja-s-prezidentom-tadzhikistana-emomali-raxmonom-8846/.

concern Bellegprom and the Ministry of Industry and New Technologies of Tajikistan, in the field of education - by Grodno. The significant intensification of bilateral interregional cooperation was evidenced by the agreements on trade and economic, scientific and technical, cultural cooperation, which were signed in the framework of this summit in Minsk and Sughd regions, Uzden and Yavansk districts, cities of Mogilev and Khujand.

Speaking about the need to more actively use the potential of regional cooperation, both sides drew attention to the need to involve small and medium businesses, as well as business associations of the two countries in joint work. In this regard, it is important to note that in Tajikistan, "increasing the effectiveness of the use of national wealth, especially human potential and fixed assets"³⁵⁸ is considered one of the priorities in the long-term state strategies and programs until 2030. After all, the population of this small Central Asian country today is more than eight million people, which indicates a solid surplus of labor force. That is why here, pursuing the policy of "open doors", they think, first of all, about production cooperation with foreign partners, about creation of new jobs: "This is an opportunity to create small businesses in the free economic zones of Tajikistan, use of transport and communication corridors to establish cooperation between different companies working in the field of business"³⁵⁹.

For this reason, the Tajik side is seriously interested in the appearance of joint ventures with Belarus on its territory, including those aimed at export to Afghanistan, Pakistan and India, which could be created on the basis of existing enterprises in Tajikistan by expanding their production capacity. "We are talking about enterprises that will use semi-finished products manufactured in Belarus, as well as Belarusian technologies, investments and software"³⁶⁰.

The work on creation of such enterprises is carried out today, in particular, in the territory of the free economic zone "Dangara" in Dangara district of Khatlon region, where it is planned to organize the assembly of Belarusian tractors. In total, four FEZs have been created in Tajikistan - Sughd, Panj and Ishkashim. The type of FEZ "Dangara" is industrial, which "is aimed at stimulating the development of industry in the surrounding areas through the effective use of local

³⁵⁸ Message from the President of Tajikistan Emomali Rahmon Majlisi Oli of the Republic of Tajikistan [Electronic resource]. - - 2015. - URL: <http://www.prezident.tj/ru/node/8137>.

³⁵⁹ Koimododov, K. Tajikistan: doors for cooperation are open / K. Koimododov // [Electronic resource]. - - 2015. - URL: <http://www.kurier.lt/tadzhikistan-dveri-dlya-sotrudnichestva-otkryty/>.

³⁶⁰ S. Savko, S. Tajikistan offers Belarus to create multi-profile joint ventures in the construction industry / S. Savko // [Electronic resource]. - - 2014. - URL: http://www.belta.by/ru/all_news/economics/Tadzhikistan-predlagaet-Belarusi-sozdat-mnogoprofilnye-SP-v-stroitelnoj-otrasli_i_670360.html.

resources. A railroad runs close to the Dangara FEZ and the construction of a road bridge to Afghanistan continues, contributing to the development of logistics and transportation services³⁶¹. And in Gissar district of Tajikistan, an assembly plant for attachments and trailers of Bobruiskagromash OJSC is to appear.

Interesting prospects are opening up in Belarusian-Tajik cooperation and in a number of other areas of cooperation. Thus, in the field of healthcare, the parties are expected to focus their efforts on "solving the issues related to the increase of supply of Belarusian medicines and medical equipment to Tajikistan, provision of educational services, as well as exchange of experience in the field of transplantology³⁶². At the same time, special attention of Tajik partners is drawn to the possibility of cooperation with Belarus in the field of postgraduate education and training of Tajik doctors in Belarusian health care institutions.

Recall that, speaking in May 2014 at the Belarusian State University, Tajik President E. Rahmon noted that his country is in demand today skilled professionals in a number of areas, including international relations, engineering, medicine. For this reason, "Belarus and Tajikistan intend to actively <...> develop new projects in the field of education, especially in the field of university science and the sphere of receiving and improving education" .

Prior to that, on May 31, 2013, the parties signed an intergovernmental agreement on cooperation in the field of higher and postgraduate education, creating a legal framework to enhance cooperation in this area. And now each of the parties has the opportunity to annually accept "a full course of study: the first stage of higher education five students; the second stage of higher education (master's degree) two students; for the degree of candidate of sciences of one student"³⁶⁴. As a result, in 2013/2014 academic year "245 citizens of Tajikistan studied in Belarusian educational institutions, which is 2 times more than in the previous academic year"³⁶⁵.

³⁶¹ Karimova, M.T. The role of free economic zones in the development of industry in Tajikistan / M.T. Karimova // Actual issues of economics and management : Proceedings of II International scientific conference. (Moscow, October 2013). - Moscow: Buki-Vedi, 2013. - - C. 123.

³⁶² On the meeting of Ambassador O. Gavruk with the Minister of Health of Tajikistan [Electronic resource]. - - 2013. - URL: http://mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/a96995adef720ff7.html

³⁶³ The diploma of BSU opens for students of Tajikistan the gates to the future - Rakhmon [Electronic resource]. - - 2014. - URL: http://www.belta.by/ru/all_news/society/Diplom-BGU-otkryvaet-dlja-studentov-Tadzhikistana-vorota-v-budushee---Raxmon_i_670351.html.

³⁶⁴ Tajik-Belarusian relations [Electronic resource]. - - 2014. - URL: <http://www.tajembassy.by/politicheskije/>

³⁶⁵ Grishkevich, A. Belarus and Tajikistan have common approaches to solving actual problems of our time / A. Grishkevich // [Electronic resource]. - - 2014. - URL:

It is also interesting that since 2012, on the basis of the Tajik Technical University named after Academician M.S. Osimi there is a joint engineering and technical faculty with the Belarusian National Technical University. Training here is carried out in two stages in Russian based on integrated curricula developed by Belarusian teachers. In the first stage, students who do not speak Russian study in Tajikistan for preparatory courses, and those who do not know Russian study in the first and second years. At the second stage, 3-5 years of training is conducted in Belarus with the protection of the diploma project and the awarding of the relevant qualification. "The first graduation of students who entered this faculty will take place in 2017. The main training profiles are construction-architectural, energy, mechanical engineering and metallurgy, road transport, information technologies, economic"³⁶⁶. Based largely on this already existing experience, the Belarusian Ministry of Education in 2014 came up with the initiative "to create a joint secondary professional education institution in Tajikistan"³⁶⁷. And in the near future, the parties intend to increase both the number of students and the list of specialties, as well as expand training and exchange of trainees and young specialists.

The measures planned for May 2014 at the highest level to intensify the Belarusian-Tajik cooperation had already yielded results by autumn. During the first 10 months of this year the volume of deliveries from Belarus to Tajikistan increased by 11.1%, while the range of Belarusian exports included 140 commodity items, 37 of which were new. The largest shipments of new goods items were "frozen beef, engines for repair of trucks, gas stoves, timber longitudinal-sawn, hot-rolled steel bars"³⁶⁸.

These facts clearly demonstrate the growing interest of the two former Soviet republics in fruitful cooperation in a wide variety of areas. Thus, modern high-performance machinery and equipment manufactured in Belarus can find effective application in Tajikistan not only in the already mentioned areas, "not only in the construction of hydraulic structures, but also in the development of mineral deposits of this country - mining of Tajik gold, silver, rare metals,

http://www.belta.by/ru/all_news/politics/Belarus-i-Tadzhikistan-imejut-obschie-podxody-k-resheniju-aktualnyx-problem-sovremennosti_i_679524.html.

³⁶⁶ The Joint Faculty of BNTU and Tajik Technical University will open on September 11 in Dushanbe [Electronic Resource]. - - 2012. - URL: <http://www.moyby.com/news/92466/>.

³⁶⁷ On the meeting of Ambassador O. Gavruk with the Minister of Labor, Migration and Employment of Tajikistan [Electronic resource]. - - 2014. - URL: http://mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/c6a6e78ca4fcef82.html.

³⁶⁸ On trade and economic cooperation between Belarus and Tajikistan for 10 months 2014 [Electronic resource]. - - 2014. - URL: http://tajikistan.mfa.gov.by/ru/bilateral_relations/trade_economic/statistics/c3e89aa71e790a80.html.

polymetallic ores, uranium, precious stones³⁶⁹. That is why there is every reason to believe that the parties' efforts aimed at comprehensive development of the existing potential of the bilateral Belarusian-Tajik relations will soon bring them to a qualitatively new level.

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³⁶⁹ Belarus - Tajikistan: Customs Union as an incentive for mutually beneficial cooperation [Electronic resource]. - - - 2010. - URL: http://export.by/resources/izdaniya_i_publicacii/belarus_%E2%80%94_tadzhikistan_tamozhennii_soy_uz_kak_sti.html.

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Belarus - Uzbekistan: target - billion dollars

In June 2019, Minsk hosted the seventh meeting of the Belarusian-Uzbek intergovernmental commission on bilateral cooperation, within the framework of which the parties discussed the priority areas of cooperation, including the agro-industrial complex, machine building, food and pharmaceutical industries, light industry, with special attention to **industrial cooperation**. The fact is that back in September 2018, during the negotiations of Heads of State A. Lukashenko and S. Merzиеv, it was noted that "the countries have the potential for growth of trade turnover up to \$1 billion³⁷⁰. It is planned to solve the task in three or four years, updating all possible areas of cooperation. But the priority area of cooperation "should be the expansion of industrial cooperation in mechanical engineering, agro-industrial complex, transport and pharmaceutical industries, information technology³⁷¹. A little later, in November 2018, at the level of heads of government of the two countries it was announced that the parties "will work on the creation of joint production of milk, medicines, medical equipment, mini-tractors and attachments, as well as bicycles, joint transport and logistics enterprise³⁷².

It should be reminded that by the time of signing the road map for cooperation between Belarus and Uzbekistan three assembly plants of Belarusian equipment were already operating on Uzbek soil. In particular, the joint venture "Amkodor-Agrotehmarsh" produces road-building machines. "UzBelAgromash" produces the line of machinery "Bobruiskagromash": these are tractor trailers, feed mixers, mowers. Besides, MTZ tractors are collected at Tashkent Agricultural Machinery Plant's facilities. Cooperation between the enterprises was started in 2016³⁷³. As for Minsk Tractor Plant, in September 2018, at the

³⁷⁰ Matiyevsky, M. Lukashenko and Merzиеv consider it possible to raise the level of trade turnover to \$1 billion / Matiyevsky // [Electronic resource]. - - 2018. - URL: https://www.belta.by/president/view/lukashenko-i-mirzиеv-schitajut-vozmozhny-m-podnjat-uroven-tovarooborota-do-1-mlrd-317697-2018/?utm_source=belta&utm_medium=news&utm_campaign=accent.

³⁷¹ Negotiations with President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Merzиеv [Electronic resource]. - - 2018. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/peregovory-s-prezidentom-uzbekistana-shavkatom-mirzиеvym-19489.

³⁷² Signing of the road map on cooperation development between Belarus and Uzbekistan [Electronic resource]. - - 2018. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/8364>.

³⁷³ M. Matiyevsky, M. Belarus and Uzbekistan are planning to establish joint ventures in pharmaceuticals, mechanical engineering and agriculture / M. Matiyevsky // [Electronic resource]. - - 2018. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/special/economics/view/belarus-i-uzbekistan-planirujut-sozdat-sovmestnye-predpriyatija-v-farmatsevtike-mashinostroenii-i-apk-317534-2018/>.

Belarusian-Uzbek business forum in Tashkent, the company's management voiced plans to open another assembly plant in Uzbekistan - this time caterpillar and garden equipment. "The new enterprise, which was agreed to be located in Karakalpakstan, will produce about 200 agricultural machines per year"³⁷⁴.

Considers possibilities of creation of joint assembly manufactures of technics in territory of Uzbekistan and holding "Gomselmash" which experts have spent in February, 2019 negotiations "with representatives of khokimiyat of the Tashkent area, a management of JSC "Uzagroteksanoatholding", JSC "Technologist", have visited the dealer center of Open Company "SN INVEST"³⁷⁵. Interesting prospects for the development of industrial cooperation with Uzbek partners are opening up today to other business entities in the Gomel region. Among them - Gomel Regional Agricultural Experimental Station, confectionery factory "Spartak", as well as JSC "Svetlogorsk Khimvolokno", whose products in this Central Asian country are in great demand. For this reason, "Uzbek investors are ready to invest their capital for the development of the enterprise"³⁷⁶.

Grodno region also plans to contribute to the development of Belarusian-Uzbek production cooperation. Thus, in the framework of the international business forum "Euroregion "Neman-2018", held in September 2018 in Grodno, it was announced the beginning of construction with the participation of Uzbek capital of the plant for processing cotton in Smorgon. "The volume of investments will be about 30 million euros, < ... > At the enterprise will work about 1.2 thousand workers" . And it is planned to put into operation the new enterprise within two years. Important detail: the construction of the plant will occupy a resident of the free economic zone "Grodnoinvest" - Uzbek LLC "Europlastics Invest". The products of the enterprise are planned to be exported to the markets of the European Union countries - Poland, France and Germany. At the same time, in September 2018, Baranovichi Cotton Production Association entered the Uzbek cluster of cotton producers. The essence of this interaction is to grow

³⁷⁴ _MTW will open an assembly plant of caterpillar and garden machinery in Uzbekistan [Electronic resource]. - - 2018. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/mtz-otkroet-sborochnoe-proizvodstvo-gusenichnoj-i-sadovoj-tehniki-v-uzbekistane-318069-2018/>.

³⁷⁵ "Gomselmashch" plans to establish joint assembly plants in Uzbekistan [Electronic resource]. - - 2019. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/gomelmash-planiruet-sozdat-sovmestnye-sborochnye-proizvodstva-v-uzbekistane-338356-2019/>.

³⁷⁶ Uzbekistan is interested in industrial cooperation with Gomel region [Electronic resource]. - - 2018. - URL: <https://belta.by/regions/view/uzbekistan-zainteresovan-v-promyshlennoj-kooperatsii-s-gomelskoj-oblastju-327270-2018/>

cotton on Uzbek land, process it and "take the material on yarn, threads, which are necessary < ... > at the mill. It turns out to be cheaper and more reasonable³⁷⁷.

In addition, an active participant in industrial cooperation with Uzbek partners plans to become "Motovelozavod" LLC, which in August 2018 signed an agreement of intent with the khokimiyat of Andijan region to establish production of bicycle equipment in the region. The parties have agreed "on establishment of long-term and mutually beneficial cooperation, as well as on granting privileges and privileges to JVs established for other joint ventures with foreign investments in Uzbekistan"³⁷⁸. Since 2018 the enterprise on manufacture of footwear "UzShoes" operates on the Uzbek land, the founder of which is the Belarusian holding "Marco". Note also that "in September 2018 in Tashkent, Presidents of Belarus and Uzbekistan opened a new plant for the assembly of machinery" Amkodor "³⁷⁹. Finally, Belarus and Uzbekistan intend to develop mutually beneficial cooperation in the confectionery industry, where "it is a question of creating a licensed production. On the Belarusian side, the confectionary factory "Kommunarka" takes part in the project³⁸⁰.

Within the framework of the seventh meeting of the Intergovernmental Commission, the Belarusian side proposed to implement new large-scale projects in the sphere of **mechanical engineering** to establish production facilities for cargo, special and trailer vehicles, buses using NGV fuel. All the more so because Minsk Automobile Plant is already "ready to take part in setting up such productions with a high degree of localization"³⁸¹. As for the cooperation in the sphere of **agriculture**, the parties reached an agreement to establish dairy complexes in Uzbekistan "at the expense of the Uzbek side with the involvement of Belarusian design and construction organizations, with the supply of Belarusian

³⁷⁷ Matiyevsky, M. Baranovichsky combine was included in Uzbek cluster of cotton producers / M. Matiyevsky // [Electronic resource]. - - 2018. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/baranovichskij-kombinat-voshel-v-uzbekskij-klaster-proizvoditelej-hlopka-317839-2018/>.

³⁷⁸ The Motor Plant will establish a JV in Uzbekistan [Electronic Resource]. - - 2018. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/motovelozavod-sozdast-sp-v-uzbekistane-314017-2018/>.

³⁷⁹ Belarus - Uzbekistan [Electronic resource]. - - 2019. - URL: <http://mfa.gov.by/bilateral/cis/uzbekistan/>.

³⁸⁰ Belarus and Uzbekistan plan to create a joint production of confectionery products [Electronic resource]. - - 2018. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-uzbekistan-planirujut-sozdat-sovmestnoe-proizvodstvo-konditerskih-izdelij-306531-2018/>.

³⁸¹ Vladimir Dvornik took part in the session of intergovernmental commission on bilateral cooperation between Belarus and Uzbekistan [Electronic resource]. - - 2019. - URL: <http://government.gov.by/ru/content/8847>.

equipment, as well as with the supply of Belarusian selection cattle"³⁸². And we have already made concrete steps in this direction. In particular, back in April 2019 in Tashkent region was established a joint venture "Zdravushka Tashkent", which will build a plant for processing milk and dairy products for one thousand cattle.

Speaking about the prospects for cooperation in the **light industry**, it should be noted that in the first quarter of 2019 the trade turnover of Bellegprom concern enterprises with Uzbekistan exceeded four and a half million dollars. From Belarus to the Uzbek market were supplied fabrics of "Mogotex", "Kamvol", "Belfa" pile fabrics, corsetry JV "Milavitsa". The basis of import was cotton yarn, knitted fabrics and cotton fiber. Nevertheless, the concern "Bellegprom" is considering additional opportunities for cooperation and development of cooperative relations with Uzbek partners. It is a question of joint work "on delivery of demanded production - yarn from synthetic fibers, fabrics, pile cloth, corsetry and hosiery, cotton yarn"³⁸³.

New opportunities for Belarusian-Uzbek cooperation in the **pharmaceutical industry** opens up signed in June 2019 by the administrations of free economic zones "Vitebsk" and "Kosonsoy-Pharm" that in Namangan region of Uzbekistan, an agreement on cooperation in the investment and information areas. The fact is that FEZ "Kosonsoy-Pharm", established in May 2017, specializes in the development of pharmaceutical industry enterprises, the activities of which are conducted by several residents of FEZ "Vitebsk". Why "attraction of investments into projects on creation of production of medicines and medical products is one of the most promising areas of cooperation between the administrations of the two FEZs"³⁸⁴.

In 385autumn 2018 Belarus and Uzbekistan also signed an intergovernmental agreement on socio-economic cooperation for 2019-2023, which reflected the key agreements at the highest level to develop Belarusian-

³⁸² The Government of Belarus offers Uzbekistan large-scale projects on equipment production [Electronic resource]. - - 2019. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/pravitelstvo-belarusi-predlagaet-uzbekistanu-masshtabnye-proekty-po-proizvodstvu-tehniki-113-2019/>.

³⁸³ "Bellegprom plans to expand cooperation with Uzbekistan [Electronic Resource]. - - 2019. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/bellegprom-planiruet-rasshirit-sotrudnichestvo-s-uzbekistanom-333-2019/>.

³⁸⁴ FEZ "Vitebsk" and Uzbek "Kosonsoy-Farm" will develop investment cooperation [Electronic Resource]. - - 2019. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/sez-vitebsk-i-uzbekskaja-kosonsoj-farm-budut-razvivat-investitsionoe-sotrudnichestvo-352766-2019/>.

³⁸⁵ Belarus and Uzbekistan signed an agreement on cooperation in science and technology [Electronic resource]. - - 2018. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-uzbekistan-podpisali-soglashenie-o-sotrudnicestve-v-oblasti-nauki-i-tehnologii-317747-2018/>.

Uzbek relations and bring them to a qualitatively new level, including in **science and technology**. At the same time, the State Committee on Science and Technology of Belarus and the Ministry of Innovation Development of Uzbekistan reached an agreement on cooperation in the field of science and technology, which provides for the development and strengthening of long-term scientific and technical cooperation in such priority areas as energy, medicine, nano and biotechnology, information and communication technologies, robotics, agro-industrial technologies, as well as the agreement "to carry out joint scientific and technical cooperation in the field of science and technology". To coordinate this cooperation, the parties established a joint commission on cooperation in science and technology, the first meeting of which was held in April 2019 in Minsk and within the framework of which an executive program of scientific-technical and innovation cooperation for 2019-2020 was signed.

According to this document, the two former Soviet republics agreed to develop scientific and technical cooperation on advanced technologies, implement joint scientific and technical projects, cooperate in the field of exchange of scientific and technical information, conduct research and development of mutual interest. These are projects in the sphere of mechanical engineering, agriculture and agro-industrial technologies, medicine and pharmacy, new materials, information and communication technologies, genetics of biotechnologies, selected "as a result of the contest of joint scientific-technical projects for 2019-2021, which was held on priority directions of bilateral cooperation <...>. In addition, the parties plan to establish at least two joint research laboratories in Belarus and Uzbekistan"³⁸⁶. In total, a list of 15 joint projects in various areas for co-funding has been agreed upon. And a number of concrete steps to develop this area of cooperation have already been taken.

Thus, in February 2019, the Belarusian National Technical University and the Tashkent State Technical University named after Islam Karimov agreed to create a joint scientific and technological park, which will be the first university subject of innovation infrastructure in Uzbekistan. As a co-founder of this project, the Science and Technology Park of BNTU "Polytechnic" will participate, which "will allow to integrate the scientific and innovation potential of BNTU and Tashkent State Technical University, to scale up the experience of the Belarusian University in business incubation of high-tech projects, to jointly develop high-tech industries of international level with the participation of students, masters

³⁸⁶ _Belarus and Uzbekistan are implementing 15 joint scientific and technical projects [Electronic resource]. - - 2019. - URL: <https://belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-uzbekistan-realizujut-15-sovmestnyh-nauchno-tehnicheskikh-proektov-343295-2019/>.

and doctoral candidates of both universities"³⁸⁷. The first joint innovation project at the Technopark will be the development and production of medical devices.

In April 2019 it became known that the same universities - the Belarusian National Technical University and the Tashkent State Technical University - will be the founders of the Belarusian-Uzbekistan Interindustry Institute of Applied Technical Qualifications, where the main direction of work will be "training, retraining, training and professional development of personnel in areas strategically important for Uzbekistan on the basis of joint educational programs, as well as the implementation of scientific, innovative activities and its commercialization. Training at the new institute will be conducted in Russian in such areas as intelligent devices, machines and production, computer mechatronics, biotechnical and medical devices and systems, management of innovative projects of industrial enterprises. Important detail: the graduates will be awarded a diploma of the Belarusian university, which is recognized as a document of higher education in this Central Asian country.

Belarusian State University is also seriously committed to cooperation with Uzbek partners. The thematic range of potential cooperation in the innovation sphere was clearly demonstrated by its exposition at the exhibition of Belarusian manufacturers Made in Belarus, held in September 2018 in Tashkent, where more than 30 scientific and technical developments in the fields of agriculture, medicine and pharmaceuticals, food industry were presented, as well as measuring instruments, equipment for the production of polyurethane foam products, technologies for applying functional coatings, creation of heat-resistant water purification materials. Great interest of exhibitors and visitors of the exhibition was also aroused at the stand of BSU "Tumodex", "Prospidelong" and "Zisplacel". They cause the death of cancer cells, prevent metastasis, contribute to reducing the toxic load on the body³⁸⁹. It should be noted that this topic is important for Belarus and Uzbekistan in terms of industrial cooperation. After all, "the parties plan to establish two pharmaceutical enterprises. One of them will specialize in production of oncological preparations, the other - in production of medicines,

³⁸⁷ The first university technopark [Electronic resource] is being established in Uzbekistan with the participation of BNTU. - - 2019. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/special/society/view/v-uzbekistane-priuchastii-bntu-sozdaetsja-pervyj-universitetskij-tehnopark-335511-2019/>.

³⁸⁸ The Belarusian-Uzbek Institute of Applied Technical Qualifications will be established in Tashkent [Electronic resource]. - - 2019. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belorusko-uzbekskij-institut-prikladnyh-tehnicheskij-kvalifikatsij-sozdadut-v-tashkente-345862-2019/>.

³⁸⁹ More than 30 scientific and technical developments will be presented by BSU at the exhibition in Tashkent [Electronic resource]. - - 2018. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/bolee-30-nauchno-tehnicheskij-razrabotok-predstavit-bgu-na-vystavke-v-tashkente-317246-2018/>.

developed on the basis of herbs growing in Uzbekistan"³⁹⁰. All in all, more than one hundred scientific and technical developments from organizations of the Ministry of Education and the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus were presented at this exhibition in Tashkent.

The Belarusian State Pedagogical University named after M. Tank also actively cooperates with Uzbek partners. In September 2018 the Belarusian-Uzbek educational center was opened on the basis of the Nizami Tashkent State Pedagogical University, which is considered by the parties "as a platform for the development and strengthening of Belarusian-Uzbek cooperation in education and culture"³⁹¹. In addition, these universities are now jointly implementing an educational program in the specialty "speech therapy" and a project under the program at the second level of higher education in a network form of interaction on specialties "inclusive education" and "remedial pedagogy."

As we can see, the documents adopted in the autumn of 2018 at the level of heads of state and government of Belarus and Uzbekistan quickly began to yield real results. It is enough to say that already following the results of 2018 "mutual trade turnover has increased in 2,5 times"³⁹². And there are all grounds to believe that if the existing dynamics of expansion of Belarusian-Uzbek cooperation is preserved, the task set by the presidents of two countries to achieve mutual trade turnover of one billion dollars in the coming years will be successfully fulfilled.

³⁹⁰ M. Matievsky, M. Belarus and Uzbekistan are planning to establish joint ventures in pharmaceuticals, mechanical engineering and agriculture / M. Matievsky // [Electronic resource]. - - 2018. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/special/economics/view/belarus-i-uzbekistan-planirujut-sozdat-sovmestnye-predpriyatija-v-farmatsevtike-mashinostroenii-i-apk-317534-2018/>.

³⁹¹ Grishkevich, A. Belarusian-Uzbek educational center was opened in Tashkent Pedagogical University / A. Grishkevich // [Electronic resource]. - - 2018. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belorusko-uzbekskij-obrazovatelnyj-tsentr-otkrylsja-v-tashkentkom-peduniversitete-318451-2018/>.

³⁹² Trade turnover growth and new projects - Ambassador of Uzbekistan on the dynamics of relations with Belarus [Electronic resource]. - - 2019. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/rost-tovarooborota-i-novye-proekty-posol-uzbekistana-o-dinamike-otnoshenij-s-belarusju-333099-2019/>

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Belarus - Georgia: new initiatives and areas of cooperation

Georgia is among those countries located in the post-Soviet space, relations with which Belarus builds on the principles of friendship, mutual understanding and equal dialogue. Perhaps, for this reason too, "Belarusian-Georgian ties are growing stronger every year, filling with new initiatives and areas of cooperation"³⁹³. The experience of 2017 - early 2018 shows that these are the first of all:

- 1) development of **parliamentary diplomacy**;
- 2) strengthening **interaction between regions of the two countries**;
- 3) improving the efficiency of the Intergovernmental Belarusian-Georgian **Commission on Economic Cooperation**.

In November 2017, the first **parliamentary visit** to Minsk in the history of Belarusian-Georgian relations was made by a high-level delegation headed by the Speaker of the Georgian Parliament I. Kobakhidze, which may give new impulses to the development of the whole complex of relations between the two countries. After all, Minsk is based on the understanding that people's diplomacy and "strengthening inter-parliamentary ties create a very good basis for building the same trade and economic relations. This is a good basis, and without it, it is impossible to create very deep, long-term relations between the countries"³⁹⁴. It is especially important to take that factor into account when it comes to Georgia, where the parliament plays its decisive role in the life of the state and where the deputies' influence on Georgian society is very high.

The visit of Georgian parliamentarians to Belarus took place at a time when trade and economic cooperation between the two countries began to show positive dynamics. Thus, "at the end of 2016, mutual trade turnover between Belarus and

³⁹³ Message of congratulations to the President of Georgia George Margvelashvili [Electronic Resource]. - - 2017. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/pozdravlenie-prezidentu-gruzii-georgiju-margvelashvili-16270/.

³⁹⁴ Meeting with Speaker of the Georgian Parliament Irakli Kobakhidze [Electronic Resource]. - - 2017. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/vstrecha-s-predsedatelem-parlamenta-gruzii-irakliem-kobaxidze-17492/.

Georgia increased by 63% to \$73.2 million"³⁹⁵. At the same time, Belarusian exports increased 2.5 times. This dynamic of interaction demonstrated the real opportunities to increase the volume of mutual Belarusian-Georgian trade to \$100 million by the end of 2017, and to \$200 million in the medium term. Such a large-scale task can be accomplished even if "relations between the legislative bodies of Belarus and Georgia have to reach a new level".³⁹⁶ in which the parliamentarians of the two countries will, within their competence, not only support governments in improving the contractual and legal framework and strive to develop a constructive dialogue on legislative activities, but also to promote the activation of interregional contacts and build their capacity in promising areas, as well as help establish direct links between business entities. In the framework of I. Kobakhidze's visit, the Speakers of the National Assembly of the Republic of Belarus and the Parliament of Georgia signed a joint statement in which they outlined the main essence of cooperation between parliamentarians - "to contribute to the deepening of bilateral cooperation in trade and economic, investment, scientific and technological, cultural, youth policy, education, tourism, information technology, logistics, communications and information"³⁹⁷.

It should be noted that the activation of Belarusian-Georgian inter-parliamentary contacts began in the last few years when friendship groups were established in the parliaments of both countries. Today they have already been assigned a new task: "For the purpose of substantive interaction, the leaders of the friendship groups from both sides could draw up road maps and plan their work taking into account the aspects envisaged in them"³⁹⁸. These road maps would be based on one or several large-scale projects, around which not only the parliamentary dimension of Belarusian-Georgian cooperation could be deepened, but also the production and cooperation dimension, aimed at creating business centers to organize the work of companies with joint competence and interest. In fact, today we are already talking about the restart of the work of friendship groups of parliaments, which "should not only carry out the activities outlined by the

³⁹⁵ Belarus and Georgia are intensifying cooperation in the field of competition policy implementation [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://белта.бел/economics/view/belarus-i-gruzija-aktivizirujut-sotrudnichestvo-v-oblasti-realizatsii-konkurentnoj-politiki-276796-2017/>.

³⁹⁶ Relations between the legislative bodies of Belarus and Georgia should reach a new level - Kobakhidze [Electronic Resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/politics/view/otnoshenija-zakonodatelnyh-organov-belarusi-i-gruzii-dolzny-vyiti-na-novyj-uroven-kobahidze-276669-2017/>.

³⁹⁷ The speakers of the Belarusian and Georgian parliaments signed a joint statement on cooperation [Electronic Resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/politics/view/spikery-belorusskogo-i-gruzinskogo-parlamentov-podpisali-sovmestnoe-zajavlenie-o-sotrudnichestve-276782-2017/>.

³⁹⁸ The Belarusian MPs are determined to work with the Georgian Parliament - Andreichenko [Electronic Resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/politics/view/belorusskie-deputy-nastroeny-na-predmetnuju-rabotu-s-parlamentom-gruzii-andrejchenko-276707-2017/>.

heads of parliaments, but also conduct quite active independent work"³⁹⁹. And in this respect, the activity of parliamentary friendship groups to create conditions for fruitful regional, economic interaction and development of contacts between business communities looks very promising. Moreover, Belarus and Georgia already have useful experience of interregional cooperation.

In January 2018, Minsk hosted the fourth meeting of the Intergovernmental Belarusian-Georgian Commission on Economic Cooperation, in which the parties stated their intention to bring the volume of bilateral trade to 200 million dollars by 2020. One of the effective ways to solve this problem is the development of **Belarusian-Georgian interregional cooperation**, the potential of which is "huge, and it should be fully utilized"⁴⁰⁰. The Program for 2018-2019 signed at the fourth meeting of the intergovernmental commission to implement the agreement between the Minsk Regional Executive Committee and the administration of the state commissioner - governor of Kakheti on trade, economic, social and cultural cooperation was a concrete step to further realize the potential of partnership between the regions of the two countries. This document once again underscores the fact that today Minsk and Kakhetiya have much in common. Suffice it to say that at the three mining enterprises of Georgia - JSC "RMG Cooper", JSC "Rustavi MK" and LLC "Sakementi" - now "operates 41 dump trucks" BELAZ "with a payload capacity of 45-55 tons"⁴⁰¹, produced in Minsk region. Of course, the above example of partnership development between the regions of the two mills is not the only one. In general, "in the field of regional and brotherly cooperation agreements/morandums have been signed between Minsk and Tbilisi, <...> Brest and Batumi, Polotsk and Tskaltubo, Gomel and Kutaisi, Mogilev region and Autonomous Republic of Adjara".

Undoubtedly, the flagship of this partnership is the interaction between the two capitals, which began in 1994, and in September 2015, Minsk and Tbilisi signed an Agreement on twinning, in order to "promote the establishment and expansion of bilateral relations in the economic, scientific, technological, cultural spheres, development of investment and innovation activities, cooperation in health care, education, culture and sports, exchange of information on the

³⁹⁹ Belarus considers Georgia one of its strategic partners, Myasnikovich [Electronic Resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/politics/view/belarus-schitaet-gruziju-odnim-iz-strategicheskikh-partnerov-mjasnikovich-276652-2017/>.

⁴⁰⁰ The Regional Forum on Sustainable Development is planned to be held in Minsk in early 2018 [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/politics/view/regionalnyj-forum-po-ustojchivomu-razvitiiju-planiruetsja-provesti-v-minske-v-nachale-2018-goda-264868-2017/>.

⁴⁰¹ Within the framework of the celebration of the 80th anniversary of the Minsk region, a delegation of the Georgian region Kakhetiya [Electronic Resource] visited OAO BELAZ. - - 2018. - URL: http://www.belaz.by/press/news/2018/oao_belaz_v_ramkah_prazdnovani/.

development of cities, taking into account the organization of local self-government⁴⁰². In just one year, exports of Belarusian goods and services to Georgia's capital doubled. "Medicines, agricultural and municipal equipment, and foodstuffs produced in Belarus were in demand among our brothers and sisters"⁴⁰³. As a result, trade and economic interaction between the capital's enterprises is now stable and is constantly expanding, "Belarusian meat and dairy products are very popular in Tbilisi, and Georgian wines and mineral waters, fruits and vegetables are very popular in Belarus"⁴⁰⁴. This fact also speaks volumes. The first Belarusian food store appeared in Tbilisi back in September 2016, and the second one in November of the same year. Today in the capital of Georgia has six food stores that sell Belarusian products. The range of products presented in them is quite wide. "Dairy products are especially popular among locals - butter, milk, sour cream, cheese, cottage cheese, yogurt. Moreover, over the last two years, sales volumes have increased significantly. Georgian dealers can develop a network of up to 25 stores"⁴⁰⁵.

In the same year 2015, Brest and Batumi adopted a sisterhood agreement in order to establish permanent friendly relations for mutual acquaintance with the life, history and culture of the twin cities, as well as to develop cooperation in all areas, including the exchange of experience in urban management. "It is planned that at the first stage, the twin cities will focus on the tourism industry, which should pull the economy behind them"⁴⁰⁶. Already two years later, the parties came to the conclusion that it is time to bring the relations to a higher level, so that "not only Brest and Batumi have connections, but also closer contacts between the Brest region and the Autonomous Republic of Adjara"⁴⁰⁷. And it is planned to open a Belarusian trade center in Batumi in the future, where products manufactured in Brest region would be presented. It is worth recalling here that "Ajara is the most developed region not only in Georgia, but also on the coast.

⁴⁰² Minsk and Tbilisi became sister cities [Electronic resource]. - - 2015. - URL: <http://mamuli.by/minsk-i-tbilisi-stali-gorodami-pobratimami/>.

⁴⁰³ Zhdanovich, V. Twin. Minsk and Tbilisi / V. Zhdanovich // [Electron resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <https://minsknews.by/pobratimyi-minsk-i-tbilisi/>.

⁴⁰⁴ On the meeting of Ambassador of Belarus to Georgia M. Myatlikov with Chairman of Tbilisi Sakrebulo G. Tkemaladze [Electronic Resource]. - - 2018. - URL: <http://georgia.mfa.gov.by/ru/embassy/news/c2a863c0c016dd7f.html>.

⁴⁰⁵ Belarusian food products are in great demand in Georgia [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/beloruskie-produkty-pitanija-polzujutsja-bolshim-sprosom-v-gruzii-276694-2017/>.

⁴⁰⁶ Nedashkovskaya, M. Brest and Batumi became twins / M. Nedashkovskaya // [Electron resource]. - - 2015. - URL: <http://mamuli.by/brest-i-batumi-stali-pobratimami/>.

⁴⁰⁷ The Belarusian Trade Center is planned to open in Batumi [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/beloruskij-torgovij-tsentr-planiruetsja-otkryt-v-batumi-259344-2017/>.

The Republic contributes over \$1 billion to the country's GDP⁴⁰⁸. Back in 2015, the Belarusian side offered this Georgian region the highest level of cooperation in engineering, construction and tourism. As we see, those plans are beginning to be gradually implemented.

And in Gomel, which signed the Agreement on Friendship and Cooperation with Kutaisi in 2016, priority in interregional cooperation is given to trade and economic relations. In fact, in 2015 alone, Gomel's trade turnover with Georgia reached \$1.1 million. Exports of goods amounted to \$0.8 million and imports to \$0.3 million⁴⁰⁹. Exporters of their products to the Georgian market were open joint-stock companies "Gomel Chemical Plant", "Gomeldrev", "Gomel Electrotechnical Plant", "GZIP", "Gomelsteklo", as well as PUE "Gomeloboi", IPUE "Alkopak", ALC "Vimala", "Antech", "Belplastkhim".

As for the cooperation between the cities of Polotsk and Tskaltubo, they established a partnership in June 2015, and in February 2017 signed a Cooperation Agreement in order to more actively develop partnerships in industry, entrepreneurship, small and medium business, trade, agriculture, science, education, health care, environment and tourism. The document was prompted by the fact that a number of Polotsk enterprises had already had experience of business relations with Georgian partners. In particular, "the dairy farmers were delivering milk to Georgia, the flour was being shipped rye flour, and the architects and builders were erecting houses according to their designs"⁴¹⁰.

In addition, in September 2016, in the framework of the third meeting of the Belarusian-Georgian intergovernmental commission on economic cooperation, held in Tbilisi, the Mogilev region and the Autonomous Republic of Adjara signed a memorandum of cooperation. Goretzky District and Khashura Municipality, Bobruisk with the cities of Kobuleti and Batumi, as well as the Mogilev branch of the Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Ajara Chamber of Commerce and Industry adopted a number of other documents on cooperation. In September 2017, the establishment of friendly relations was already announced by Mogilev and Batumi. In the signed memorandum, they agreed to "develop mutually beneficial cooperation in all spheres. The first step

⁴⁰⁸ Official visit to Georgia [Electronic resource]. - - 2015. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/ofitsialnyj-vizit-v-gruziju-11241/.

⁴⁰⁹ Baidan, E. Gomel and Kutaisi signed an Agreement on Friendship and Cooperation / E. Baidan // [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://newsgomel.by/news/mezhdu-gomelem-i-kutaisi-podpisano-soglashenie-o-druzhbe-i-sotrudnichestve>.

⁴¹⁰ Shuiskaya, O. Heart open for friendship / O. Shuiskaya // [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://belsmi.by/archive/article/73054>.

will be to develop a program of joint activities for the next year, as well as to prepare specific projects for further implementation⁴¹¹. At the same time, they signed a memorandum of cooperation between the Mogilev Regional Development Agency and the Ministry of Finance and Economy of Adjara, as well as a contract for the supply of products between Bakaleia Mogilev OJSC and Adjara Wine House Company. And the Belarusian State Agricultural Academy in Gorki, Mogilev region, has agreed on cooperation with Batumi State University named after Shota Rustaveli. Obviously, involving parliamentarians in these projects can only accelerate their implementation.

The fourth session of the Intergovernmental Belarusian-Georgian **Commission on Economic Cooperation**, discussed above, also demonstrated the growing influence of this formation on the development of the whole complex of relations between the two former Soviet republics, which have recently become stable. And this despite the fact that "only recently, just 5-7 years ago, we did not know at all how to build logistics in trade with Georgia⁴¹². As a reminder, at the third meeting of the intergovernmental commission, the attention of the parties was focused on the fact that "the governments of Belarus and Georgia must remove the barriers that prevent business from operating⁴¹³. At the fourth meeting, it was stated that "serious approaches have been developed in all areas, from trade to the creation of joint ventures and jobs in such areas as mechanical engineering and elevator equipment⁴¹⁴. At the same time, the parties' intention to develop mutually beneficial cooperation, primarily in such areas as trade and industrial cooperation, was brought to the fore.

As for **trade**, in 2016 the range of Belarusian exports to the Georgian market amounted to 318 items, the main of which were "railroad cars, trucks, dairy products, synthetic yarns, medicines, furniture, sausage products, sugar,

⁴¹¹ Kulyagin, S. Mogilev and Batumi signed a memorandum on establishing friendly relations / S. Kulyagin // [Electronic resource]. -- 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/mogilev-i-batumi-podpisali-memorandum-ob-ustanovlenii-druzhestvennyh-svjazej-265669-2017/>.

⁴¹² Presentation of credentials by ambassadors of foreign countries [Electronic resource]. -- 2018. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/vruchenie-veritelnyx-gramot-poslami-zarubezhnyx-gosudarstv-17869/.

⁴¹³ Ogneva, Y. Russy: the governments of Belarus and Georgia must remove the barriers that prevent businesses from working / Y. Ogneva // [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/rusyj-pravitelstva-belarusi-i-gruzii-dolzny-snjat-barjery-kotorye-meshajut-biznesu-rabotat-208221-2016/>.

⁴¹⁴ Mikhail Rusyi took part in the session of the Intergovernmental Belarusian-Georgian Commission on Economic Cooperation [Electronic Resource]. - - 2018. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/7814>.

malt, woodworking products⁴¹⁵. Mineral waters, wines, spirits, nuts, ferroalloys, spices, vegetables, fruits and tea dominated the supplies from Georgia to Belarus.

One of the main and effective tools to promote its exports to Georgian consumers, the Belarusian side has chosen to participate in major exhibition and fair events in Georgia. In particular, in early September 2016, more than 140 Belarusian companies took part in the first National Exhibition of Belarus, organized in Tbilisi. They were based on "exporters of products, goods and services in mechanical engineering, industrial equipment, agriculture, consumer goods, food, construction materials, petrochemical industry, health care, sports, tourism, transport, logistics, science, educational services, information technology, telecommunications"⁴¹⁶. The fruits of participation in this business forum have appeared quite quickly. Already in March 2017, the Belarusian and Georgian parties signed an agreement for the supply of 90 Belarus tractors and took up the task of "organizing joint assembly of small class tractors"⁴¹⁷. At the same time, we talked about additional deliveries of heavy-duty equipment of the Belarusian Automobile Plant, and "the company" Stadler "sent the first batch of trains to Georgia, intends to continue to participate in the project to develop rail traffic between Tbilisi and Batumi"⁴¹⁸. At the end of 2016, more than a third of the shipment of its products to Georgia increased the concern "Bellesbumprom". Supplies of chipboards and newsprint increased 6 times and plywood 2.3 times. Shipments of wallpaper increased by 30% and matches by 35%⁴¹⁹. Pinskdiv even won a tender to supply furniture to Georgian hotels. As a result, Georgia has become one of the Group's most promising markets.

The participation of Belarusian exporters also became very effective in the exposition Made in Belarus, organized in the framework of the international exhibition of agriculture and food industry Agro Food Drink Expo, held in Tbilisi in November 2017, where, in addition to Belarus, a wide range of agricultural

⁴¹⁵ Belarus and Georgia are discussing the implementation of trade and cooperation agreements [Electronic Resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-gruzija-obsuzhdajut-realizatsiju-dogovorennostej-po-razvitiju-torgovli-i-kooperatsii-273506-2017/>.

⁴¹⁶ Mikhail Rusyi took part in the opening of the Belarus National Exhibition in Georgia [Electronic Resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/6663>.

⁴¹⁷ Matveev, V. Belarus plans to increase trade turnover with Georgia almost three times in two years - Rusy / V. Matveev // [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-za-dva-goda-planiruet-uvlechit-torgovij-oborot-s-gruziej-pochti-v-tri-raza-rusyj-235499-2017/>.

⁴¹⁸ In Georgia, the network of stores with Belarusian products will be expanded - Ambassador [Electronic Resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/v-gruzii-rasshirtsja-set-magazinov-s-belorusskoj-produktsiej-posol-225439-2016/>.

⁴¹⁹ Enterprises Bellesbumprom "in 2016 increased exports to Georgia by 35.4% [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/predpriyatija-bellesbumproma-v-2016-godu-uvlechili-eksport-v-gruziju-na-354-235514-2017/>.

products was presented: machinery, products of plant growing, animal husbandry, equipment for food processing and storage, packaging products from Ukraine, Russia, Great Britain, Netherlands. Georgian customers were particularly keen on the products of the Belarusian company Krasny Gestavik - marshmallow and marmalade. Pinsk Meat Processing Plant also took part in this exposition. Back in June 2017 it entered the Georgian market and sells its entire export line here - boiled, smoked, raw smoked and dried products. "A total of 150 products are supplied to Georgia⁴²⁰. In addition, Belsolod supplies a large quantity of malt for beer production in this country. Today, every fifth carton of milk produced in Georgia is produced from skimmed Belarusian milk powder⁴²¹.

In general, at the end of 2017 the enterprises of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food of Belarus increased exports of their products to Georgia by 2.9 times. This was also due to the opening of a Belarusian network of specialized stores in this country, where they sell only Belarusian goods: meat and dairy products, groceries, confectionery, alcoholic bakery products. By mid-February 2018, there were already nine such stores in Georgia. "This direction is developing not only in the capital, but also in the regions of the country⁴²². And the Belarusian side plans to expand the range of supplied agricultural products, increase the number of specialized stores for its sale and enter the local trade networks.

Speaking about the prospects for the development of Belarusian-Georgian **cooperation ties**, it should be reminded that even during the official visit of the Belarusian President to Georgia in April 2015, an agreement was reached at the highest level that "industrial cooperation will be fundamental in bilateral relations"⁴²³. At the same time, the parties agreed to implement pilot projects to set up an assembly plant in Georgia for Belarusian elevators and tractors of various modifications. Already in August 2017 in Tbilisi, with the participation of the Belarusian OJSC "Mogilevliftmash" was created consortium "Georgian Elevator," which planned to "organize the assembly of the Belarusian elevators at

⁴²⁰ Belarusian food products are in great demand in Georgia [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/beloruskie-produkty-pitanija-polzujutsja-bolshim-sprosom-v-gruzii-276694-2017/>.

⁴²¹ Belarus and Georgia are working on alternative routes to supply products [Electronic resource]. - - 2018. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-gruzija-prorabatyvajut-alternativnye-marshruty-dlja-postavok-produktsii-287901-2018/>.

⁴²² In 2017, the Ministry's enterprises increased their exports to Georgia by 2.9 times [Electronic Resource]. - - 2018. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/predprijatija-minselhozproda-v-2017-godu-narastili-eksport-produktsii-v-gruziju-v-29-raza-290507-2018/>.

⁴²³ Official visit to Georgia [Electronic resource]. - - 2015. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/ofitsialnyj-vizit-v-gruziju-11241/.

the Georgian Technical University⁴²⁴. And by the end of the same year, 22 elevators had already been assembled. The tasks for the future are much more ambitious: in 2018 to assemble more than 200 units of this equipment, as "break-even point elevator farm - about 250 units per year."⁴²⁵ and then "set up production of up to 2,000 elevators in Georgia"⁴²⁶.

As for the assembly of Belarusian tractor equipment on Georgian soil, the assembly facility based on the Georgian company World Technik was established "in accordance with a memorandum signed in 2015 between the Georgian company and the Minsk Tractor Works".⁴²⁷ and the first result of its work were tractors models "Belarus-320.4" and "Belarus-622" assembly of JSC "Bobruisk plant of tractor parts and units", presented at the already mentioned above first National Exhibition of Belarus in Tbilisi in autumn 2016. The development of cooperation in the agro-industrial complex continues the plans announced at the third meeting of the Intergovernmental Commission on Economic Cooperation to build a 500-head dairy farm on Georgian soil to "transfer their dairy farming technologies to Georgia."⁴²⁸ as well as the parties' intentions to implement joint projects aimed at establishing breeding and breeding centers for animal husbandry. All these facts show that Belarus really views Georgia as an important and promising partner in Transcaucasia and intends only to intensify bilateral contacts in industry, agriculture, petrochemistry, pharmaceuticals and humanitarian sphere.

⁴²⁴ Transcript of the speech of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belarus V. Makei to the mass media following the talks with the Vice Prime Minister - Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia (September 4, 2017, Minsk) [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: http://mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/d71a81478f220672.html.

⁴²⁵ Meeting with the First Deputy Prime Minister of Georgia [Electronic Resource]. - - 2018. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/7812>.

⁴²⁶ Mikhail Rusyi took part in the session of the Intergovernmental Belarusian-Georgian Commission on Economic Cooperation [Electronic Resource]. - - 2018. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/7814>.

⁴²⁷ Kulyagin, S. The first tractors of Belarusian-Georgian assembly are presented in Tbilisi / S. Kulyagin // [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/pervye-traktory-belorussko-gruzinskoj-sborniki-predstavleny-v-tbilisi-208304-2016/>.

⁴²⁸ Ogneva, Yu. Belarus will build a dairy farm for 500 heads in Georgia / Yu. Ogneva // [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-postroit-v-gruzii-molochnuju-fermu-na-500-golov-208213-2016/>.

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Belarus-Georgia: complementarity gives results

It is known that in recent years Belarusian-Georgian bilateral relations have become stable. The dynamic development of cooperation between the two countries is largely due to their complementary economies, as "Belarus is in demand for Georgian fruit and vegetables and Georgia is interested in supplying Belarusian machinery, pharmaceuticals, wood processing, mineral fertilisers and food products"⁴²⁹. This prompted the parties to declare a few years ago their intention to achieve a \$200 million trade turnover by 2020. And it should be said that a number of concrete steps have been taken recently in this direction. Thus, in 2017 the volume of Belarusian-Georgian foreign trade in goods and services amounted to 112 million dollars. In this case, the product range of goods supplied from Belarus to Georgia has expanded significantly. Even today, it is represented in almost all sectors of the Georgian economy. "In particular, agricultural products - from seed potatoes to food products, agricultural machinery and trucks. Medicines are well represented, and they have good rates of entry and registration on the Georgian market. There are also petrochemical products such as tires, synthetic threads and cables. Belarusian furniture is also available"⁴³⁰. We are talking about Belarusian food products that are sold in dozens of stores of two Georgian retail chains in a very wide range of products, from bread to liquor and vodka. As a result, "Belarusian products account for 15% of Georgia's total imports, butter for 12%, cheese for about 9%, sausages and meat products for 20%"⁴³¹.

In March 2019, the fifth meeting of the Intergovernmental Belarusian-Georgian Commission on Economic Cooperation in Tbilisi discussed how to solve the problem of further growth in the volume of bilateral trade by expanding trade and economic interaction. Among other things, the meeting discussed ways to implement specific projects in such areas as industrial cooperation, transport and logistics, science and technology, development of interregional ties.

The focus on **production cooperation** in this case is quite understandable, since "Belarus is interested in launching a joint Georgian-Belarusian tractor

⁴²⁹ Belarus and Georgia: promising cooperation [Electronic resource]. - - 2018. - URL: <https://export.by/news/belarus-i-gruziya-perspektivnoe-sotrudnichestvo>.

⁴³⁰ Interview with M. Myatlikov, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Belarus to Georgia to BelTA news agency. (March 21, 2018) [Electronic resource]. - - 2018. - URL: <http://mfa.gov.by/press/smi/aaeb2c722e229f16.html>.

⁴³¹ In the same place.

assembly facility in Georgia, while the Georgian side is interested in opening a Georgian agricultural produce store in Belarus⁴³². Those plans took shape at the fifth meeting of the intergovernmental commission, as "agreements were eventually reached on further development of the Mogilevliftmash elevator assembly plant in Georgia, the opening of an assembly plant for small Belarusian tractors in Batumi, continuing cooperation in livestock breeding and mutual supply of agricultural products⁴³³.

A project to set up an assembly plant for elevators is already underway in Georgia. The fact is that in this country "full replacement requires about 25 thousand elevators, including at least 50% of the Belarusian production ("Mogilevliftmash"), supplied back in the Soviet period. That is why the project is primarily aimed at the Georgian market, in cities such as Tbilisi, Batumi and Kutaisi. <...> This is the project that makes it possible to make a JV with the necessary level of localization. The plans to develop production and cooperation ties in the pharmaceutical sector also look attractive. For this reason, it is planned to "open a Belarusian pharmaceutical company in Georgia in 2020. Today, the export of this group of goods makes a significant contribution to the total turnover of the two countries"⁴³⁴. Suffice it to say that during the Belarusian-Georgian Business Council, held in Tbilisi in March 2019, eight of the 15 signed agreements related to the supply of pharmaceutical products.

Interesting plans for cooperation are also planned by the parties in the field of **transport and logistics**, where today there is a positive trend of growth in freight traffic between Belarus and Georgia. In particular, "in 2018, the total volume of transportation was 94 thousand tons, which is 10.6% more than in 2017. The volume of foreign trade in transportation services also increased compared to the previous year - by 27.6% to \$16.4 million⁴³⁵. This is despite the fact that the only way to deliver products to Georgia today is the Georgian Military Road, a pass through the Caucasus Ridge. The fifth meeting of the intergovernmental commission considered several other promising projects in that

⁴³² Belarus and Georgia are planning to launch a joint production to collect tractors [Electronic Resource]. - - 2019. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-gruzija-i-planirujut-zapustit-sovmestnoe-proizvodstvo-po-sboru-tractorov-340718-2019/>.

⁴³³ Mikhail Rusyi paid a visit to Georgia [Electronic Resource]. - - 2019. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/8695>

⁴³⁴ Belarus and Georgia are expanding their areas of cooperation [Electronic resource]. - - 2019. - URL: <https://belarus24.by/news/economics/belarus-i-gruziya-rasshiryayut-sfery-sotrudnichestva/>.

⁴³⁵ . Belarus, Georgia and Azerbaijan will discuss the possibility of container transportation by rail between their capitals [Electronic resource]. - - 2019. - URL: <https://belta.by/special/economics/view/belarus-gruzija-i-azerbajdzhan-obsudjat-vozmozhnost-kontejnernyh-perevozok-po-zhd-mezhdu-ih-stolitsami-341087-2019/>.

area. First, it was decided to study the issue of forming a one-off consignment of ships from Belarus to be delivered to Georgia by water in direct communication. We are referring to the development of ferry service and transit of Belarusian cargo to Georgia via Ukraine. Secondly, the question was about the possibility of organizing rail container transportation along the Tbilisi-Baku-Minsk route, taking into account the existing experience of such transportation in Tbilisi-Baku-Tbilisi communication.

Finally, interaction between Belarus and Georgia in the field of **science and technology** can be very effective. This is evidenced, in particular, by the results of the first meeting of the Belarusian-Georgian Commission on Science and Technology Cooperation, held in March 2019 in Tbilisi. As part of this new format of partnership coordination, the parties agreed to hold a contest of joint scientific and technical projects in topical areas of bilateral cooperation, including agriculture, medicine and pharmaceuticals, nanotechnology and biotechnology.

Recall that the parties signed an agreement on cooperation in science and technology in Minsk in 2016. "At present, Georgian and Belarusian scientists are jointly involved in six projects within the European Union, in particular, graphene, new genetic tools for biological assessment of aquatic ecosystems in Europe, improvement of living space in the premises: intelligent living"⁴³⁶. In addition to bilateral projects, one of the priorities of scientific and technical cooperation with Georgian partners is joint submission of applications to European Union programs, including Horizon 2020. In addition, Belarus and Georgia are participating in the Eastern Partnership Program Initiative, which implements EaP Connect, a project aimed at supporting links between researchers and students.

The great potential for cooperation in science and technology is also evidenced by the following fact: at the exhibition Made in Belarus, held in Tbilisi in March 2019, the Belarusian side presented 125 scientific, technical and innovation developments of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Belarus, the National Academy of Belarus. As part of the exhibition itself, the Central Botanical Garden of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus signed two new agreements on scientific cooperation - with the Institute of Phytopathology and Biodiversity of Batumi State University and the Botanical Institute of Ilya State University. In general, the exposition offered an opportunity to learn about

⁴³⁶ Belarus and Georgia will hold a contest of joint scientific and technical projects [Electronic Resource]. - - 2019. - URL: <https://belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-gruzija-provedut-konkurs-sovmestnyh-nauchno-tehnicheskikh-proektov-340739-2019/>.

the most innovative and promising projects in a variety of fields - from new materials and biotechnologies to potato growing and innovative coffee roasting technologies.

As for the development of **interregional relations**, as early as in March 2018, at the highest level, the Treaty on the foundations of cooperation between Belarus and Georgia was signed, in which the parties expressed their intention to promote the expansion of interregional cooperation. Specific facts show that the capitals of the two states, Minsk and Tbilisi, are a very eloquent illustration of the implementation of this commitment in practice.

Minsk and Tbilisi became sister cities in September 2015, having agreed then to promote investment and innovation activities, cooperation in health care and education, sports, culture, exchange of experience in organizing local self-government. These twinning relations became a good impulse to intensify Belarusian-Georgian cooperation in various spheres in the years to come. Suffice it to say that "at the end of 2017, the trade turnover between the enterprises of Minsk and Georgia increased by 13.5% to \$18.8 million, exported goods by \$7.9 million, and imported goods by \$10.9 million. Deliveries were made on 161 commodity items. There were 14 companies with Georgian capital (including 5 joint ventures and 9 foreign ones) registered in Minsk⁴³⁷.

In March 2018, the Georgian capital hosted the Days of Minsk, during which the parties tried to make the best use of such tools as the Belarusian-Georgian business forum and the exhibition of goods of Minsk manufacturers to strengthen partnerships and twinning relationships. The format of these events allowed Minsk citizens to generously share with their Tbilisi colleagues their experience in implementing the "Smart City" system, to show the possibilities and conveniences of travel with a guest card of the Belarusian capital, to demonstrate the peculiarities of designing and construction of the subway, innovations in passenger transport, new technologies in food industry. Georgian businessmen were able to thoroughly get acquainted with the products of such Belarusian exporters as Kommunarka, Confectionery Factory Slodych, Minsk Crystal, Minskkhlebprom, Belita JV, Modum - our cosmetics, Minsk Automobile Plant, Amkodor, Minsk Tractor Plant.

⁴³⁷ Belarusian-Georgian business forum will be held during the Days of Minsk in Tbilisi [Electronic resource]. - - 2018. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/belorusско-gruzinskij-biznes-forum-projdet-vo-vremja-dnej-minska-v-tbilisi-293959-2018/>.

The official part of the Days of Minsk in Tbilisi was also saturated. Firstly, the parties signed the Program of Trade and Economic Cooperation for 2018-2020, in which they defined the directions of partnership in economy, tourism, culture, education, transport and housing. In particular, "the cities intend to share experience in providing services to the population, maintenance and overhaul of housing stock, energy conservation, high technology and innovation, as well as investment proposals, advertising and information materials"⁴³⁸. Second, a number of documents on cooperation between Minsk companies and their Georgian partners were agreed upon at the business forum mentioned above. For example, "as part of the Modern Minsk and Tbilisi section," a memorandum was signed between Kommunarka and Bel Trade and an agreement was signed between the Minsk Tourist Information Center and Resistorgeo LLC.⁴³⁹ As well as the agreement between LLC "Minsk City Technopark" and the Technopark of Tbilisi. In addition, under the contract with the Georgian company OOO Profauto, the Minsk Automobile Plant has granted the company exclusive rights to sell vehicles on Georgian soil and will deliver 20 dump trucks for more than one million dollars to Georgia. The company has also worked out possible contracts for the supply of fire-fighting equipment to the Georgian Ministry of Emergency Situations and discussed "the possibility of supplying passenger buses to Tbilisi"⁴⁴⁰. The Minsk Tractor Plant signed a contract with Georgian agricultural equipment supplier Hermes LLC to supply 50 kits and opens an assembly plant for Belarusian tractors in Batumi. At the same time, the management of the Belarusian company is confident that "2018-2020 will be the most successful years for the tractor factory in the Georgian market"⁴⁴¹. The plant is expected to assemble at least two hundred to three hundred tractors a year, since Georgia needs different tractor equipment, from low-power to energy-saturated.

Finally, interesting prospects are opening up in the Georgian market, where not only Tbilisi needs to renew its public transport fleet and is interested in using electric buses, for Minsk-based Belkommunmash. A similar interest has also been

⁴³⁸ Minsk and Tbilisi will determine the cooperation program for 2018-2020 [Electronic resource]. - - 2018. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/minsk-i-tbilisi-opredeljat-programmu-sotrudnichestva-na-2018-2020-gody-293935-2018/>.

⁴³⁹ Matveev, V. Matveev // [Electronic resource]. About 30 documents were signed at the Georgian-Belarusian forum in Tbilisi. - - 2018. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/okolo-30-dokumentov-podpisano-na-gruzinsko-belorusskom-biznes-forume-v-tbilisi-295186-2018/>.

⁴⁴⁰ . Matveev, V. MAZ will deliver \$ 1 million worth of dump trucks to Georgia / V. Matveev // [Electronic resource]. - - 2018. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/maz-postavit-v-gruziju-samosvaly-na-1-mln-295227-2018/>.

⁴⁴¹ Matveev, V. Assembly production of Belarusian tractors is opened in Batumi / V. Matveev // [Electron resource]. - - 2018. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/sborochnoe-proizvodstvo-belorusskih-tractorov-otkryvaetsja-v-batumi-295203-2018/>.

expressed by the three other major Georgian cities. That is why the creators of the Belarusian electric buses are already thinking about the possibility of localizing production of their environmentally friendly cars on Georgian soil. In particular, "the production of Belarusian electric buses could be established in Tbilisi"⁴⁴². In the meantime, in the next few months, the Minsk residents will deliver one electric bus to the Georgian capital for trial operation, and later - a detailed concept and business plan of the production cooperation project.

The tendency for expansion of Belarusian-Georgian interregional cooperation was supported by the Agreement on cooperation in socio-economic, scientific-technical, cultural and humanitarian fields signed in July 2018 between Glubokoe District Executive Committee of Vitebsk Region and Telava municipality. In practice, the parties have been cooperating since 2014, but until recently - mainly in the field of culture. By signing the agreement, Glubokoe and Telavi announced real plans to expand the areas of partnership. In particular, the Georgian side expressed its willingness to cooperate "in medicine, agriculture and sports"⁴⁴³.

Another very effective way to expand trade and economic relations between Belarus and Georgia is to intensify **exhibition and fair** cooperation. The experience of the last few years shows that "annual holding of Belarusian exhibitions in Georgia has become a good tradition and reflects the active development of cooperation between the two countries: the range of supplied products is expanding, stores with national goods are opened in Tbilisi and Minsk"⁴⁴⁴. Recall that the national exhibition of Belarus was held in the Georgian capital in 2016. In 2017 and 2018, large-scale Belarusian expositions were demonstrated in Tbilisi as part of the international exhibition AgroFood. And in March 2019 in the central pavilion of the exhibition center Expo Georgia has already held an exhibition of Belarusian manufacturers Made in Belarus, where their best products demonstrated more than 70 companies from almost all regions of Belarus. And at the end of which 13 contracts were signed for the supply of Belarusian products in Georgia.

⁴⁴² Matveev, V. Production of Belarusian electric buses can be established in Tbilisi / V. Matveev // [Electronic resource]. - - 2018. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/proizvodstvo-belorusskih-elektrobusov-mozhet-byt-sozdano-v-tbilisi-295211-2018/>.

⁴⁴³ Shcherbitsky, A. Deep will cooperate with the Georgian city of Telavi / A. Shcherbitsky // [Electronic resource]. - - 2018. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/glubokoe-budet-sotrudnichat-s-gruzinskim-gorodom-telavi-311294-2018/>.

⁴⁴⁴ The Prime Minister of Georgia got acquainted with Belarusian products at the exhibition in Tbilisi [Electronic Resource]. - - 2019. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/premjer-ministr-gruzii-oznakomilsja-s-belorusskoj-produktsiej-na-vystavke-v-tbilisi-340835-2019/>.

Thus, Minsk Tractor Plant showed "agricultural machinery in Georgian assembly: tractors for mountainous areas, gardens and vineyards "Belarus 322.1", "Belarus 321", "Belarus 311", "Belarus 311", "Belarus 320.4" and "Belarus 622"⁴⁴⁵. Another enterprise in the capital, Belkommunmash, demonstrated an innovative type of transport - an electric bus, which, after 6 minutes of charging at special charging stations, can provide traffic along the route up to 25 kilometers long. The largest Belarusian manufacturer of finishing materials and tiles, Keramin, brought over twenty modern collections to the Georgian capital for demonstration. Minsk is also home to the Republican Scientific and Practical Center of Cardiology, which has shown in Tbilisi innovative developments in heart transplantation - a unique operation that has been performed by Belarusian surgeons since 2009. For 10 years the center has performed over 300 operations for patients of all age categories.

Among the Palesse brand forage and grain harvesters and tillage equipment presented by Gomselmash, attention was drawn to a small potato digger-loader KMP-1.5, which in September 2018 was successfully tested on Georgian fields. Other Gomel companies that took part in the exhibition included the Gomel Chemical Plant and the Mozyr Refinery. Innovative integrated solutions for automating railway tracks, which make travel by train comfortable and safe, formed the basis of the Brest Electrotechnical Plant's exposition. The Mogilev region was represented at the exhibition by the plant "Strommashina" and Mogilev Metallurgical Plant, Vitebsk - "Polotsk-Fiberglass" and "Naftan", and Minsk - Plant of Mountain Wax from Svisloch.

In order to participate in the global infrastructure development program "Georgia 2020", Belneftekhim Concern, which unites the largest Belarusian petrochemical enterprises, demonstrated in Tbilisi rubber tires, fast drying paint for any surfaces, as well as paint for road markings. Traditionally, Belarusian food products, high quality and natural ingredients of which are already well known in Georgia, were widely represented at the exhibition. It should be assumed that the samples of meat and dairy products and confectionery, as well as alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks from such manufacturers as Kommunarika, Krinitsa, Minsk Kristall, Spartak, Zdravushka Milk, Pinsk and Oshmyansk meat processing plants will soon be available in much larger quantities in Georgian stores.

⁴⁴⁵ The best brands of Belarus will be presented at a large-scale exhibition in Tbilisi [Electronic resource]. - - 2019. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/luchshie-brendy-belarusi-budut-predstavleny-na-masshtabnoj-vystavke-v-tbilisi-340191-2019/>.

Finally, this exhibition Made in Belarus is also interesting because for the first time in the practice of such events, the Belarusian side used a new logo, which is a "linen flower, painted in the colors of the national flag and inscribed in a pentagonal figure, reminiscent of the state mark of quality flower petals are shown as people who have taken up arms, which reflects the idea of national unity and common work to strengthen the Belarusian independence, identity and prosperity⁴⁴⁶.

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⁴⁴⁶ The Prime Minister of Georgia got acquainted with Belarusian products at the exhibition in Tbilisi [Electronic Resource]. - - 2019. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/premjer-ministr-gruzii-oznakomilsja-s-belorusskoj-produktsiej-na-vystavke-v-tbilisi-340835-2019/>.

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