

The goal is long-term dynamics

Comprehensive development of relations with the countries of the long arc is a long-term strategy of Belarus within the framework of our multi-vector foreign policy and diversification of foreign trade relations. Asia is one of the main and promising areas, where priority is given to the development of cooperation with many major geoeconomic players and partners. The course towards the diversification of foreign trade partners made it possible to increase Belarusian exports to Asia to nearly two and a half billion dollars in 2021. China stands out among Belarus's partners in the Asian continent. In September 2022, the two countries adopted a joint declaration on the establishment of an all-weather and all-round strategic partnership to develop trade, economic, industrial, cooperative and scientific-technical cooperation. As for India, a roadmap has already been approved, which deals with significant Belarusian-Indian projects that will be implemented in various areas. Belarus's cooperation with Iran is also characterized by high development dynamics. How Belarus interacts with these and other partners in Asia is discussed in the proposed study.



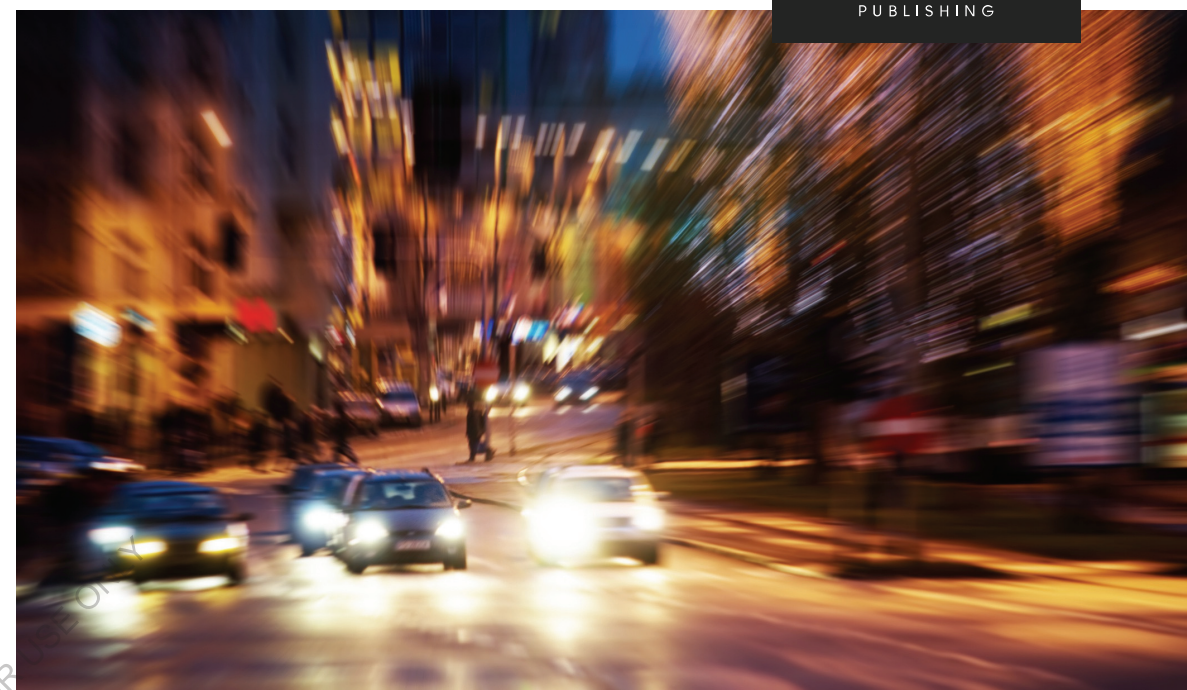
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Realization of the potential of economic interaction The Republic of Belarus with partner countries

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Cooperation projects need to be developed

In 2023, Belarus and Armenia will celebrate the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations. There has been a positive trend in bilateral trade in recent years. Over the last year the trade turnover between the two countries has grown: in 2021 it was about \$100 million. The trend continues this year as well. "Thus, in January-June 2022, trade turnover increased by more than 70% to \$60.3 million."¹ . This applies both to exports to Armenia and imports from Armenia to Belarus. Furthermore, the countries ensured mutual growth in the supply of agricultural and food products, outlined industrial cooperation projects, and maintained a high frequency of air flights on the Minsk-Yerevan-Minsk route.

In October 2022, the 16th meeting of the Belarusian-Armenian Intergovernmental Commission for Trade and Economic Cooperation was held in Yerevan, where the parties came to the conclusion that the extensive way of developing trade by increasing supplies of traditional groups of goods is outdated and it is necessary to develop cooperative projects that would guarantee long-term cooperation. At the same time, "the key focus of this work should be to strengthen production cooperation ties and combine efforts to create joint competitive products that are in demand not only in the domestic and EAEU markets, but also in third countries."² .

Overall, the signed protocol of the meeting of the intergovernmental commission included a variety of activities aimed at strengthening and developing cooperation in a number of areas: mutual trade; industry and industrial cooperation; innovation, digital transformation and postal

¹ Belarus is interested in supplying lumber products to Armenia [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-zainteresovana-v-postavkah-piloproduktsii-v-armeniju-523446-2022/>

² Kulik on trade development with Armenia: cooperation projects are needed [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/kulik-o-razvittii-torgovli-s-armeniej-nuzhny-kooperatsionnye-proekty-526560-2022/>

communication; transport and energy; agriculture; science and technology cooperation; education, culture, youth, sports, tourism, health, labor and social protection; environmental protection; and interregional cooperation. In particular, "Belarus and Armenia will work out the issue of the use of national currencies in settlements."³ . The parties have agreed to assist Armenian and Belarusian business entities in expanding the commodity distribution network on the territory of both countries. The Armenian side will work on the issue of establishing an "Armenia Trading House" in the territory of Belarus, which will have an exporter/importer status. The partners will also "continue cooperation in mechanization of the Armenian agro-industrial complex, and consider setting up cooperative projects in Armenia. An agro-industrial forum is planned, where products of Belarusian and Armenian manufacturers will be exhibited."⁴ . In addition, the Armenian side expressed interest in introducing Belarusian experience in the use of innovative technologies in agriculture.

Speaking about Belarusian-Armenian production cooperation, in October 2022, "Minsk Automobile Plant signed a contract to supply 500 vehicle sets of passenger vehicles to Armenia worth \$73 million <...>. Passenger vehicles assembled in Armenia are intended for deliveries to third countries."⁵ . Belarus is also ready for further expansion of cooperation in forestry. Construction and reconstruction of housing in Armenia is currently in full swing. Belarus is ready to supply construction materials, including lumber products, to this South Caucasus country.

³ Belarus and Armenia are interested in using national currencies for settlements [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-armenija-zainteresovany-v-ispolzovanii-natsionalnyh-valjut-pri-raschetah-526881-2022>

⁴ The 16th meeting of the Armenian-Belarusian Intergovernmental Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation was held in Yerevan. - 2022. - URL: https://cis.minsk.by/news/24151/v_erevane_sostojalos_16-e_zasedanie_armjano-belorusskoj_mezhpravitelstvennoj_komissii_po_torgovo-ekonomicheskomu_sotrudnichestvu.

⁵ Minsk Automobile Plant will supply 500 vehicle sets of passenger vehicles to Armenia [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/minskij-avtozavod-postavit-500-mashinokomplektov-passazhirskoj-tehniki-v-armeniju-527026-2022>

Belarus and Armenia are also very actively developing cooperation in exhibition activities in 2022. More than 170 companies, associations, unions and organisations participated in the 21st universal regional trade and industrial exhibition forum Armenia EXPO-2022 in Yerevan in September 2022. Participating countries included Armenia, Belarus, China, the Czech Republic, Georgia, Germany, India, Iran, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia and Ukraine."⁶ . The exposition of Made in Belarus was also presented. In particular, 12 enterprises of the Belarusian State Food Concern Belgospisheprom - Krasny Pisobrovik, Kommunarka, Spartak, KF Slodych, Maloritsky KOSK and Starodorozhsky Fruit and Vegetable Factory displayed their products, "Mashpischeprod", Slutsk Sugar Refinery, "Minsk Crystal" - managing company of Minsk Crystal Group Holding, Minsk Margarine Plant, "Lidapischekontsentraty", "Belsolod". For example, a wide range of confectionery products, instant products, food concentrates, baby food, alcoholic beverages, sauces and vegetable oil, fruit and berry products, including a new line of morses and nectars, jams, jams, mushrooms and other food products were on display. In this regard, it should be noted that "almost all the products manufactured by Belgospisheprom Concern organizations are exported to Armenia. In the first 7 months of 2022, the volume of exports increased by 1.2 times compared to the same period last year, primarily due to an increase in supplies of malt, beer, food concentrates, potato products and fat and oil products"⁷ .

On the whole, as it was noted at the 16th session of the Intergovernmental Commission, the potential for cooperation between Belarus and Armenia continues to develop: from mutually beneficial trade,

⁶ Zalessky, B.L. Reserve - exhibitions and interregional cooperation / B.L. Zalessky // Materials of the XVIII International scientific and practical conference "Prospects of world science - 2022", July 30 - August 7, 2022: Sheffield. Science and education LTD. - C. 8.

⁷ "Belgospisheprom" presented its products at the "Armenia EXPO 2022" exhibition in Yerevan [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belgospisheprom-predstavil-svoju-produktsiju-na-vystavke-armenia-expo-2022-v-crevane-524117-2022/>

economic and innovative cooperation to production and inter-sectoral cooperation.

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Priorities for the roadmap

Belarus and Tajikistan signed a roadmap for 2022-2026 in Dushanbe in October 2022. In the context of the implementation of this Central Asian country's accelerated industrial development programme, Tajik partners are interested in developing cooperation with the Belarusian side in the light, food, pharmaceutical, chemical and mining industries. In addition, "the agrarian sector in the area of industrial cooperation and interregional cooperation have been identified as priority areas for economic cooperation"⁸.

The two former Soviet republics have also signed a number of important bilateral documents. These include intergovernmental agreements on a mutual trade facilitation system and on cooperation in youth policy. The Prosecutor General's Office of Belarus and the Agency for State Financial Control and Anti-Corruption of Tajikistan have adopted a document on cooperation in combating corruption. The Ministry of Sports and Tourism of Belarus and the Tourism Development Committee under the Government of Tajikistan agreed to develop cooperation in tourism. The National Centre for Marketing and Price Study of Belarus and the Export Agency under the Government of Tajikistan also signed an agreement on cooperation. The National Academies of Sciences of the two countries have agreed on training in virology, microbiology, molecular biology, epidemiology, biotechnology and pharmacology. In addition, a "action plan to develop trade, economic and humanitarian cooperation between the Minsk city executive committee and the Dushanbe city executive body for 2023-2024" was approved.

⁸ Rahmon outlines priority areas for cooperation with Belarus [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/rahmon-oboznachil-prioritetnye-napravlenija-sotrudnichestva-s-belarusju-528619-2022/>

Mogilev District has established twinning ties with the Spitamen District of Sughd Region of Tajikistan..."⁹

This October, Dushanbe also hosted a Tajik-Belarusian business forum, which was attended by representatives of 73 companies from Belarus, and almost fifty of them presented their products at the Made in Belarus exhibition. "Almost all sectors of the Belarusian economy were represented at the business forum: machine building, metallurgy, food, woodworking, and light industry. The total amount of contracts signed was about \$46 million. In addition, another \$2 million worth of agreements were secured during online negotiations."¹⁰

In particular, Minsk Tractor Plant has signed contracts with Tajik companies worth 11 million dollars. "For instance, the company Madadi Tursunzoda will be supplied with 170 units of BELARUS tractors worth about \$4 million. A trade agreement has been signed with the company Agrotekhservis for the supply of 320 tractors worth over \$7 million"¹¹. It should be mentioned that about 370 Belarusian tractors have been supplied to Tajikistan for the first three quarters of this year. This is an increase of almost 50 percent compared to January-September 2021. An important detail: in November 2017, an assembly facility for BELARUS tractors was opened in Gissar, and contracts were signed for the production of seven models.

Another fact: Minsk Automobile Plant will supply 14 units of motor vehicles to the Tajik market for almost 500 thousand dollars. The contract in

⁹ Belarus and Tajikistan signed a road map for 2022-2026 and several other important documents [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-tadzhikistan-podpisali-dorozhnuju-kartu-na-2022-2026-gody-i-esche-neskolko-vaznyh-dokumentov-528597-2022/>

¹⁰ Tajik-Belarusian Business Forum takes place in Dushanbe [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/fotofakt-tadzhiksko-belorusskij-biznes-forum-prohodit-v-dushanbe-528500-2022/>

¹¹ MTZ signs \$11 million worth of contracts with Tajik companies [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/mtz-zakljuchil-kontrakty-s-kompanijami-iz-tadzhikistana-na-11-mln-528650-2022/>

the framework of the Tajik-Belarusian business forum was signed by MAZ and Obi Zulol CJSC, "the largest producer of bottled water, carbonated drinks and natural juices in Tajikistan. In 2019, MAZ delivered 18 units of machinery to the company, among them road trains and flatbed trucks with trailers" .¹²

Another participant of the Tajik-Belarusian business forum was Concern Belgospischeprom, whose eight enterprises took part in the Made in Belarus exhibition and even signed a number of contracts with Tajik partners to supply sugar, brewing malt and confectionery products. By the way, "Tajikistan ranks first among the concern's trading partners in Central Asia and the Middle East this year in terms of export volume"¹³ .

And representatives of the Bellegprom Concern explored the possibility of investing in cotton production in Tajikistan as part of a business forum. The heads of the Orsha flax mill and the Baranovichi Production Cotton Association, who visited Dushanbe, negotiated the possibility of importing cotton yarn and fiber, as the price of cotton yarn has become more affordable for Belarusian producers in Tajikistan in recent years. Note that there are other interests in the light industry cooperation between the two countries. "This [2022] year, the Belarusian company Mogotex supplied its products to Tajikistan for the first time. It exported technical fabrics and the transaction amounted to \$250 thousand. Mogilev Oblast agreed to export to Tajikistan in 2023 as well. <...> Mogotex will supply technical fabrics for \$300 thousand "¹⁴ .

¹² MAZ will supply machinery to Tajikistan for almost \$500 thousand. [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/maz-postavit-tehniku-v-tadzhikistan-pochti-na-500-tys-528637-2022/>

¹³ Zhidkov: Tajikistan is one of the key partners for Belgospischeprom in the Central Asian market [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/zhidkov-tadzhikistan-odin-iz-kljuchevyyh-partnerov-dlja-belgospischeproma-na-tsentralnoaziatskom-rynke-528642-2022/>

¹⁴ Belarus explores the possibility of investing in cotton production in Tajikistan [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-izuchaet-vozmozhnost-investirovaniya-v-proizvodstvo-hlopka-v-tadzhikistane-528489-2022>

The Vitebsk Carpets Holding will also be represented in the Tajik market, which with its Tajik partners is setting up a joint production facility in Khujand, Sughd Region. Interestingly, in mid-April 2022, a joint Belarusian-Tajik assembly plant for lifts of JSC Molilevliftmash was officially opened in that city, with Khujandtorgmash being its partner. The new workshop for the production of lifts provided jobs for 50 residents of Khujand, where "using modern equipment and technology, different types of lifts will be produced - lifting passenger lifts for high-rise knowledge, manufacturing enterprises, as well as health care facilities"¹⁵.

All these facts show that Belarus and Tajikistan are interested "in expanding areas of cooperation, which could be the development of assembly production of Belarusian lifts, <...> the creation of joint ventures for the production of carpets..."¹⁶ and other roadmap projects.

¹⁵ Emomali Rahmon took part in the opening of the assembly production of lifts "Mogilevliftmash" in Tajikistan [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/emomali-rahmon-prinjal-uchastie-v-otkrytii-sborochnogo-proizvodstva-liftoy-mogilevliftmash-v-496483-2022/>

¹⁶ Zalessky, B.L. Prospective directions go to a new level / B.L. Zalessky // Materiały XVII Międzynarodowej naukowo-praktycznej konferencji "Nauka i inowacja - 2022", Volume 1. Przemysł: Nauka i studia. - C. 10.

Prospects - industrial cooperation, agribusiness, construction

In October 2022, a high-level working meeting of representatives of the governments of Belarus and Kazakhstan was held in Astana, where the parties outlined priorities in industrial cooperation, agro-industry and construction.

In the field of industrial cooperation, there are seven Belarusian companies operating in Kazakhstan, including Gomselmash, Minsk Tractor Plant, and Bobruiskagromash. They are steadily stepping up deliveries of machine sets to this country for the production of machinery. A shop for the manufacture of unified cabins with the capacity of up to 10 thousand pieces a year has been built in the industrial zone in Kostanai as part of one of the biggest projects to set up tractor production. "The parties are exploring the possibility of organizing production not only of components and units of tractor machinery, but also of machine tools, engines for tractor machinery, diesel generators, pump sets and optical products"¹⁷.

As for new prospects of cooperation, we are discussing the production of fire-fighting vehicles on the chassis of the Minsk Automobile Plant and Pozhsnab enterprise. This is a new promising niche that needs to be filled with Belarusian equipment. On the whole, "we can increase mutual supplies with Kazakhstan by \$200 million."¹⁸. In this regard, the experience of Minsk Motor Works (MMZ), whose trading house was opened in early 2022 in Kazakhstan and which successfully and with increasing figures sells Belarusian engines, special-purpose machinery and spare parts, is

¹⁷ Golovchenko: Belarus and Kazakhstan need to move forward with industrial cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/golovchenko-belarusi-i-kazahstanu-nuzhno-dvigatsja-dalshe-v-oblasti-promkooperatsii-531879-2022/>

¹⁸ Snopkov: The basis for cooperation between Belarus and Kazakhstan is industrial cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/snopkov-bazoj-sotrudnichestva-belarusi-i-kazahstana-javljaetsja-proizvodstvennaja-kooperatsija-506651-2022/>

interesting. In this context in October 2022 MMZ took part in the international exhibition KazAgro-2022, which is the largest and most visited in Central Asia. The objective of the Belarusian company at the forum is to "expand business and commercial prospects, opportunities for product promotion, and increase brand awareness"¹⁹. With the same purpose, more than 30 Belarusian business entities took part in international trade fairs on mechanical engineering and metalworking, as well as the manufacturing industry, in September 2022 in Astana. The enterprises of the Ministry of Industry of the Republic of Belarus and the Ministry of Education were "represented by collective stands, and the Minsk Tractor Plant and machine-tool enterprises were represented by separate stands"²⁰. This shows that new projects in Belarusian-Kazakh industrial cooperation, as they say, are on the way.

In the agricultural sector, the Ministry of Agriculture of Kazakhstan has confirmed its interest in building a 1,200-head dairy farm on Kazakhstani land, where "Belarusian technologies, materials and equipment will be used and dairy cattle will be supplied. Work will start this year and will continue in 2023"²¹. Work continues on the establishment of production of veterinary drugs in Kazakhstan, both to meet the needs of the domestic market and for prospective exports to third countries. BelVitunifarm will participate in this project on the Belarusian side. In addition, the Kazakh side expressed interest in supplies of Belarusian mixed fodder, premixes, amino acids, as well as in switching to potato seeds of Belarusian selection.

¹⁹ Minsk Motor Plant presented its products at an exhibition in Kazakhstan [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/minskij-motornyj-zavod-predstavil-produktsiju-na-vystavke-v-kazahstane-528774-2022/>

²⁰ More than 30 Belarusian enterprises participate in industrial exhibitions in Kazakhstan [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/bolee-30-belorusskih-predpriyatij-uchastvujut-v-vystavkah-promyshlennosti-v-kazahstane-525159-2022/>

²¹ Production of veterinary drugs and construction of MTFs. How Belarus and Kazakhstan will cooperate in agribusiness [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/proizvodstvo-vetpreparatov-i-stroitelstvo-mtf-kak-budut-sotrudnicat-belarus-i-kazahstan-v-apk-531987-2022/>

The Belarusian and Kazakh partners are also planning several projects in the construction sector in the near future. "Among them there are symmetrical ones - construction of a Belarusian quarter in Astana and a Kazakh quarter in Minsk. <...> At this stage the plan is to determine the land plots and the concept and to involve state-owned developers"²². Another project is joint production of ceramic tiles. There are many minerals in Kazakhstan, so there are plans to set up production involving Belarusian specialists and technology.

Another interesting fact: Belarus and Kazakhstan are also planning to develop cargo transportation by rail. In October 2022, a Belarusian-Kazakh round table was held in Astana, where more than 80 participants, including about 40 Kazakhstani companies from the mining, oil, chemical, gas, metallurgical and agricultural sectors, carriers and transport and logistics companies of the country, as well as representatives of Belarusian timber, woodworking and food processing companies, transport and forwarding companies discussed the prospects of existing projects and current transport and logistics solutions for long-distance transportation. At the same time, "considerable attention was paid to the issues of smooth transit of cargoes from Belarus to Kazakhstan and also to China by transit through Kazakhstan, including those in container trains"²³.

Interregional cooperation is another important component of Belarusian-Kazakh bilateral cooperation. It should be reminded that "about 30 agreements are in effect between the regions of Belarus and

²² A Belarusian quarter in Astana, a Kazakh quarter in Minsk. What new projects are discussed in construction [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/beloruskij-kvartal-v-astane-kazahstanskij-v-minske-kakie-novye-proekty-obsuzhdajut-v-stroitelstve-531980-2022/>

²³ Belarus and Kazakhstan plan to develop cargo transportation by rail [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-kazahstan-planirujut-razvivat-gruzoperevozki-po-zheleznoj-doroge-530740-2022/>

Kazakhstan"²⁴ . In particular, cooperation with Kazakhstan is among the priority areas for the development of foreign economic ties of the Gomel region. Enterprises of the southeastern region of Belarus have the most serious intentions to develop cooperation ties with Kazakhstani partners in import substitution and logistics capabilities. A good example is the joint production of Gomselmash OJSC and AgromashHolding KZ JSC, which has been operating in Kazakhstan since 2007. Today, it is not just an assembly shop, but a real production facility. "During the time of cooperation the plant has supplied the Kazakh market with products worth more than \$ 320 million, sold a total of more than 3.7 thousand units of machinery jointly produced"²⁵ . Products of other enterprises of the Gomel region, including the Belarusian Steel Works and the open joint-stock company Milkavita, are also in demand in Kazakhstan.

The Mogilev region also cooperates closely with this country in Central Asia, which is starting to step up its work in trade and economic cooperation. "In the seven months of this year [2022], the foreign trade turnover between the Mogilev Oblast and Kazakhstan was about \$40 million"²⁶ . But there is still plenty of room for the parties to work together. Kazakhstan is one of the most important trade and economic partners for the Belarusian region, ranking second among the Eurasian Economic Union countries in terms of foreign trade turnover in 2021 and the first in the seven months of 2022. The main export items are cars and car parts, dairy products, poultry, lifts, and railway cars. Mogilev Oblast, in turn, buys equipment,

²⁴ Zalesky, B. The goal is sustainable growth. Collection of articles / B. Zalesky. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2021. - C. 52.

²⁵ Enterprises of the Gomel region intend to develop cooperative ties with Kazakhstan [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/predpriyatija-gomelskoj-oblasti-namereny-razvivat-kooperatsionnye-svjazi-s-kazahstanom-512360-2022>

²⁶ Isachenko at a meeting with Kazakhstan's ambassador: it is time to strengthen work in the trade and economic sphere [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/isachenko-na-vstreche-s-poslom-kazahstana-prishlo-vremja-usilit-rabotu-v-torgovo-ekonomicheskoy-sfere-525098-2022/>

chemical products and various raw materials from Kazakhstan. It should be noted that almost 45 percent of all imports of the region falls on paraxylene, which is used by "Mogilevkhimvolokno". There are also a number of proposals for cooperation with Kazakhstani partners from other enterprises in the Belarusian region, including those from the Mogilev Free Economic Zone.

Grodno Region is also stepping up cooperation with Kazakhstan, having already signed five agreements with Kazakhstani regions. Grodno Region is actively supplying agricultural, processing and woodworking products to its partners. But "it is time to step up the work and fill these agreements with real projects and agreements that will intensify the relationship between the two countries"²⁷.

As for cooperation between Belarus and Kazakhstan in the field of education, the year 2022 also added new colours to the interaction between the two sides. In particular, Baranovich State University in October offered cooperation to Shakarim University, which is located in the city of Semey, Abay Oblast. The teaching and research centre in Kazakhstan's north-eastern region has more than seven thousand students in five faculties. The two institutions are interested in "implementing joint educational programmes for students and teachers, academic exchanges and summer and winter schools. There are ideas for research and innovation projects"²⁸.

One more thing: in September 2022 a round table "Kazakhstan and Belarus: the Road of Friendship and Cooperation" was held in Minsk, where it was noted that "in 2021 trade turnover between Kazakhstan and Belarus

²⁷ Ambassador of Kazakhstan at meeting with Karanik: our task is to help businessmen of the two countries find each other [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/posol-kazahstana-na-vstreche-s-karanikom-nasha-zadacha-pomoch-biznesmenam-dvuh-stran-najti-drug-druga-514826-2022/>

²⁸ BarGU aims to work closely with a university from Kazakhstan [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/bargu-natselen-tesno-sotrudnichat-s-universitetom-iz-kazahstana-530948-2022/>

exceeded \$1 billion²⁹, but there are still considerable reserves for increasing trade turnover: not only industrial cooperation, agro-industrial complex, transport, deepening of interregional cooperation, joint ventures, but also interaction in cultural and humanitarian spheres.

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²⁹ Ambassador of Kazakhstan: Belarus is a country to which one always wants to come back [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/posol-kazahstana-belarus-strana-v-kotoruju-vsegda-hochetsja-vozvrascatsja-526048-2022/>

The course of intensifying scientific and technological ties

In September 2022, the Republic of Belarus and the People's Republic of China adopted the Joint Declaration on the Establishment of an All-round and Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, in which they expressed their willingness to "intensify scientific and technological cooperation, expand practical cooperation between research institutions, higher education institutions and enterprises, and encourage the creation of platforms as joint applied research and laboratories"³⁰. For instance, the National Academy of Sciences [NAS] of Belarus alone has already established over 20 international research centres and laboratories jointly with Chinese partners, which are engaged in the development and adaptation of advanced technologies, as well as their promotion in the markets of Belarus, China and third countries. "Contractual documents have already been signed by the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus with leading scientific organizations of China - the Chinese Academy of Sciences, academies of sciences of several provinces of the PRC, large manufacturing corporations of China - Huawei, AVIC..."³¹.

In particular, in April 2022, the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus signed an agreement on scientific and technical cooperation with the Chinese company SAMSE. Environmental Technologies", which specializes in environmental protection issues. The signed agreement, which aims to promote scientific and technical cooperation and the practical implementation of joint scientific and technical developments in the field of environmental protection, primarily concerns soil remediation technologies,

³⁰ Zalessky, B.L. Belarus-China: Universities expand practical cooperation / B.L. Zalessky // *Materials XVIII Mezinárodní vědecko-praktická konference "Nástolení moderní vědy - 2022"*. Volume 3: Prague. Publishing House "Education and Science". - C. 12.

³¹ More than 20 joint centres and laboratories with Chinese partners have been set up at the NAS [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/v-nan-sozdano-bolee-20-sovmestnyh-tsentrov-i-laboratorij-s-partnerami-iz-kitaja-494752-2022/>

which are of particular interest to the Chinese partners. The fact is that the Chinese company, bringing together designers, scientists, equipment manufacturers, investors and operators in the field of environmental protection, today focuses on expanding activities in the field of municipal water supply and sanitation, industrial wastewater treatment, solid waste management, energy conservation and management of cyclical use of waste as a resource. At the same time, the Chinese Engineering Corporation CAMS was established, which also signed a cooperation agreement with the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus. This document defines the priority areas of cooperation as "energy saving and environmental protection, new energy sources, new materials, optics, precision instruments, semiconductors and biomedicine, as well as expansion of commercial application of the results of joint scientific activities"³².

When it comes to cooperation between higher education institutions of the two countries, more than 540 direct cooperation agreements have already been signed. "Today almost 500 citizens of the Republic of Belarus are studying in the PRC, the number of Chinese students in Belarusian universities has reached 8,000. The parties have developed over 30 joint educational programmes..."³³. The Belarusian universities actively developing cooperation with Chinese partners in science and education include the Belarusian State Technological University (BSTU) and the Brest State Technical University (BRSTU).

In particular, BSTU has already concluded 17 cooperation agreements with universities and organizations of China, which are located in many

³² Biomedicine and new energy sources. The National Academy of Sciences of Belarus signed an agreement with a Chinese corporation [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/biomeditsina-i-novye-istochniki-energii-nan-belarusi-podpisala-soglashenie-s-kitajskoj-korporatsiej-498676-2022/>

³³ Belarus and China hold a videoconference on cooperation in education [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-kitaj-proveli-videokonferentsiju-posotrudnichestvu-v-sfere-obrazovanija-526453-2022/>

regions of the country, including Guangdong province. "In cooperation with Chinese partners, joint educational programmes in such areas as "Machines and apparatuses of chemical production and building materials enterprises", "Automation of technological processes and productions", "Mechatronics" have been created and are functioning successfully"³⁴. In addition, in March 2022 BSTU signed memoranda: with Guangzhou Knowledge City - Technology Industrial Service Company - on strategic cooperation in the field of energy saving and environmental protection to promote the construction of a "carbon-free community"; with JSC Guangzhou Hengyun Group - in the field of hydrogen technology for the joint construction of hydrogen energy industrial park.

As for BrSTU, in 2022 a joint Belarusian-Chinese project in the sphere of information technologies funded by the Belarusian Republican Foundation for Fundamental Research and the National Natural Science Foundation of China was launched here. And in April 2022 it became known that a joint educational program between the Belarusian State Technical University and Xinjiang University was launched to train students in the field of engineering technology. "Training will take place in the full-time format on the territory of the People's Republic of China on the materials presented by Brest University. A large block of the programme will be presented to Chinese students directly by BrStU lecturers"³⁵.

In October 2022, Brest-based university also established cooperation with Guangdong Construction Vocational College to create long-term conditions for training qualified personnel in Belarus in the interests of the construction sector in China and to cooperate in terms of organizing a joint

³⁴ BSTU and Belarusian companies signed memorandums of cooperation with Guangzhou [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/bgtu-i-belorusskie-kompanii-podpisali-memorandumy-o-sotrudnichestve-s-guanchzhou-489362-2022>

³⁵ BrStU and Sinyanskiy University launched a joint programme [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/brgtu-i-sinsjanskij-universitet-nachali-realizatsiju-sovmestnoj-programmy-496937-2022/>

educational program to train specialists in architecture and construction. It should be noted that the Chinese partner of BRSTU is "the only state college in Guangdong province that trains highly qualified specialists in the field of construction. The college was founded in 1979 and has graduated more than 200,000 highly qualified personnel in 43 years"³⁶ .

In July 2022, the sixth meeting of the Commission for Cooperation in Education of the Belarusian-Chinese Intergovernmental Cooperation Committee was held, where it was noted that interaction "between the two countries is developing systematically and dynamically, its result is the implementation of large-scale joint educational and scientific projects and programs in a wide range of areas"³⁷ . Suffice it to say that the close cooperation between educational institutions of two countries recently resulted in 10 new joint educational programmes, 6 of which are being implemented since the current academic year 2022/2023. And this is not the limit.

³⁶ BrStU and Guangdong Construction Vocational College have agreed to establish cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/brgtu-i-guandunskij-stroitelnyj-proftehkolledzh-dogovorilis-naladit-sotrudnichestvo-530263-2022/>

³⁷ Belarus-China: Education as a Foundation for Cooperation in All Spheres [Electronic Resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://edu.gov.by/news/belaruskitay-obrazovanie--fundament-dlya-sotrudnichestva-vo-vsekh-sferakh/>

Regions expand practical cooperation

In the Joint Declaration on the Establishment of an All-round and Comprehensive Strategic Partnership adopted in September 2022, the Republic of Belarus and the People's Republic of China commended the expansion of deep trade and economic cooperation of Belarusian regions with cities and provinces of the Middle Kingdom. Turning to the task of expanding interregional ties, "which is one of the priorities in the development of Belarusian-Chinese relations,"³⁸, it is possible to note the successful experience of such Belarusian regions as the Vitebsk, Grodno and Brest regions in 2022.

For example, in October 2022, **the Vitebsk region** and the Chinese **province of Jiangxi** signed an agreement on cooperation in economy, education, health, sports and will establish contacts in trade, science and technology. The parties will interact in a comprehensive manner. For example, there are plans to organize meetings via videoconferencing in which leading enterprises of the Vitebsk Oblast, their developments and technologies, which can be useful and interesting to companies from Jiangxi, will be presented to their Chinese partners. In particular, we are talking about joint projects for the development of agriculture, mechanical engineering as well as science parks and university developments. Note that the two regions, Belarus and China, have already held events before: a conference on professional education and training of specialists in engineering and technology, as well as on combating COVID-19. In addition, "container trains regularly run to Nanchang, the city district where the Jiangxi authorities are based, and are formed by a logistics company from Orša, among others. Nanchang and Orsha have partnership ties, and another city

³⁸ Zalessky, B. Time for concrete solutions. Chronicle of international cooperation / B. Zalessky. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2022. - C. !00.

in the province, Funzhou, has ties with Polotsk³⁹ ". The signed agreement appears to help the northern region of Belarus and the Chinese province, located in southeastern China, to reach a new level of relations. In the context of this topic, it is interesting that in September 2022, in the framework of the Year of Regions of Belarus and China, Days of the Vitebsk Region were held in another Chinese province, **Heilongjiang**, where the "potential for cooperation of the twin regions in trade, economic, manufacturing, tourism and investment spheres" was presented⁴⁰ . By the way, more than 30 million people live in this region of China.

And in October 2022, the cities of **Grodno** and **Lanzhou**, the administrative centre of China's Gansu province, also signed an agreement on the establishment of friendly exchanges and cooperation, where the parties envisaged "deepening bilateral cooperation, expanding exchanges and cooperation between the regions in trade, economic, scientific, technical, cultural, tourist and other spheres. The document also aims at strengthening friendly ties between the residents of the two cities."⁴¹ . It will be recalled that a memorandum on twinning arrangements between **Gansu province** and **Grodno region** was signed in 2007. There have been more than 10 different agreements signed between the regions in 15 years. Especially dynamic is the development of trade and economic cooperation. In April 2022, Gansu and Grodno Region signed the Program of Cooperation for 2022-2023 which is filled with concrete joint projects. It "further elaborated the areas where cooperation is not yet so active <...>. They are agriculture,

³⁹ Pushniakova, A. Trade, science, sport: Vitebsk region signed agreement on cooperation with Chinese Jiangxi / A. Pushniakova // [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/torgovlja-nauka-sport-vitebskaja-oblast-podpisala-soglashenie-o-sotrudnichestve-s-kitajskoj-tszjansi-532401-2022>

⁴⁰ Days of Vitebsk region are held in Chinese province Heilongjiang [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/dni-vitebskoj-oblasti-prohodjat-v-kitajskoj-provintsii-hejluntszjan-525147-2022/>

⁴¹ Grodno and China's Lanzhou signed an agreement on the establishment of friendly exchanges [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/grodno-i-kitajskij-lanchzhou-podpisali-soglashenie-ob-ustanovlenii-druzhestvennyh-obmenov-532444-2022/>

tourism, technology exchange, and traditional Chinese medicine"⁴² . For reference, it should be noted that the Grodno Region has also signed an agreement on twinning relations with **the Hainan Province**.

And another interesting example: **the Brest Region and Hubei Province**. In May 2022 the parties signed an action plan to develop trade and economic, scientific, technical and cultural cooperation in 2022-2024 which provides for development of international interregional cooperation in four main areas: mutual trade, investment, medicine and education. In particular, Brest Region manufacturers have been supplying food and wood products to the Chinese province for several years. But the plan is to expand this interaction, including by establishing direct business ties between business entities. Thus, for instance, it is planned to establish investment cooperation between the Brest free economic zone and enterprises of the automotive industry of Hubei province as well as between the Berezovsk Engine Repair Plant and producers of diesel engines in this region of China. The possibility of participation of Chinese investors in the implementation of projects in Brest region concerning the organization of production of charging units for electric cars, powder and liquid detergents production on the basis of Barkhim, technical re-equipment of Baranovichi cotton production association, production of clinker products on the basis of Horyn Construction Materials Plant, development of Gorodnoe glass sand deposit"⁴³ will also be studied. As for the medical sphere, the prospects of cooperation between the Brest Oblast and the Hubei Province are linked to the joint production of ultrasound diagnostic equipment and organization of the production of disposable blood transfusion systems and medical

⁴² Grodno Region intends to expand cooperation with China's Gansu Province [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/grodnenskaja-oblast-namerena-rasshirjat-sotrudnichestvo-s-kitajskoj-provintsiej-gansu-498323-2022/>

⁴³ Brest Region and Hubei Province signed a road map for cooperation for 2022-2024 [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/brestskaja-oblast-i-provintsija-hubej-podpisali-dorozhnyu-kartu-sotrudnichestva-na-2022-2024-gody-503065-2022/>

solutions. There are also plans to set up a traditional Chinese medicine centre on the basis of the Brest Regional Clinical Hospital, for which purpose the physiotherapeutic building can be reconstructed there.

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Collaboration yields fruitful results

In September 2022, the Republic of Belarus and the People's Republic of China decided to bring the interaction between the two countries to the level of iron brotherhood, exemplary all-round strategic cooperation and all-weather partnership. Moreover, the development of bilateral relations has moved to a new stage, when "the interaction between research institutions and enterprises of the two countries in the field of innovations is constantly strengthening. Spheres, mechanisms and methods of science and technology cooperation are constantly expanding"⁴⁴. In particular, Minsk and Beijing have decided to intensify practical cooperation between research institutes, higher education institutions, to encourage the creation of platforms as joint applied research and laboratories. For instance, "more than 20 joint international research centres and laboratories have already been established with Chinese partners at the National Academy of Sciences [NAS] of Belarus alone"⁴⁵. In November 2022, at the IX Belarus-China Youth Innovation Forum "New Horizons - 2022" in Minsk, it was noted that this year the State Committee for Science and Technology of Belarus jointly with the Ministry of Science and Technology of China held a competition for Belarusian-Chinese science and technology projects. "Based on its results, 35 projects will receive state support from the two countries"⁴⁶.

The Belarusian National Technical University (BNTU) is an active participant in Belarusian-Chinese science, technology and innovation

⁴⁴ Xie Xiaoyun: Belarus-China cooperation in science and technology is continuously strengthening [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/se-sjajun-sotrudnichestvo-belarusi-i-kitaja-v-sfere-nauki-i-tehnologij-neprevyuno-ukrepljaetsja-534171-2022>

⁴⁵ Zalesky, B.L. Course of intensification of scientific and technical communications / B.L. Zalesky // Materials of the XVIII International scientific and practical conference "Fundamental and applied science - 2022", October 30 - November 7, 2022: Sheffield. Science and education LTD. - C. 7.

⁴⁶ Young scientists from Belarus and China develop cooperation in innovation [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/tech/view/molodye-uchenyje-belarusi-i-kitaja-razvivajut-sotrudnichestvo-v-sfere-innovatsij-534160-2022/>

cooperation. In particular, in February 2022 the BNTU signed an agreement with the Shenyang Technological University (STU) on scientific and technical cooperation to create the China-Belarus Innovation Training and Research Centre for hardening, restoration and corrosion protection of machine parts, which will concentrate in one place new technologies and equipment, promptly produce prototype parts for testing at Chinese enterprises and pilot batches of parts to Chinese orders "The centre will concentrate all the new methods of hardening, restoration and corrosion protection of machine parts. There is no other centre like it in China."⁴⁷ . At the STU's request, the centre will incorporate such Belarusian technologies as: flame spraying of thermoplastic polymer powders; hypersonic metallization; deformation plating with flexible tools; flame spraying of metal, ceramic, polymer and composite powders; laser cleaning of surfaces from organic and inorganic contaminants, rust, scale and paint coatings; plasma spraying of metal, ceramic and composite powders; restoration of work surfaces with metal, ceramic and composite materials. And already in October 2022, the centre was inaugurated at the Shenyang University of Technology.

Another fact: a conference on scientific exchange between BNTU and the Institute of Applied Chemistry of the Chinese Academy of Sciences was held in Changchun in October 2022. As a reminder, in December 2019, the parties signed an agreement to establish a joint Sino-Belarusian laboratory of advanced materials and production "One Belt, One Road", which started its activities in February 2020. This entity is "engaged in the development of high-performance sodium-ion and potassium-ion batteries, catalysts for water electrolysis, hydrogen production, research in solid oxide electrolysis

⁴⁷ Kravchuk, M.A. Opening of the Sino-Belarusian innovative training, scientific and production centre for hardening, restoration and corrosion protection of machine parts / M.A. Kravchuk // [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://times.bntu.by/news/11923-otkrytie-kitajsko-belorusskogo-innovacionnogo-uchebno-nauchno-proizvodstvennogo-centra>

for efficient production of green hydrogen and green ammonia"⁴⁸. Within the framework of the conference Belarusian specialists drew attention to BNTU's experience in the field of modification of machine parts surfaces by methods of high-energy impact and study of their structure and properties, which in future will allow to expand the field of scientific research and application of its results in Chinese industry.

High scientific, technological and innovation cooperation between Belarus and China is also evidenced by the fact that in November 2022 at the China International Import Expo (CIIE) in Shanghai, the largest exhibition event in the Celestial Empire, where almost three thousand companies from 127 countries participated, 126 scientific and technological developments of scientists from 32 organizations of the Belarusian National Academy of Sciences and institutions of the Ministry of Education and Science were presented in the Belarusian country pavilion "High-tech equipment and information technologies".⁴⁹ In particular, the exposition section of the Ministry of Education included such areas of cooperation as "digital information and communication technologies and interdisciplinary production based on them; biological, medical, pharmaceutical and chemical technologies and industries; energy, construction, ecology and environmental management; mechanical engineering, machine building, instrument engineering and innovative materials; agricultural and food technologies; ensuring human and social security" xml-ph-0000@d

Among the presented novelties were ultra-small orbiting spacecraft created by the Belarusian State University (BSU). The first nanosatellite was launched into orbit four years ago. The second nanosatellite has already been

⁴⁸ Sheleg, V.K. Conference on scientific exchange between BNTU and Institute of Applied Chemistry of Chinese Academy of Sciences / V.K. Sheleg, M.A. Kravchuk // [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://times.bntu.by/news/11931-konferenciya-po-nauchnomu-obmenu-bntu-i-institut-prikladnoj-himii-an-kitaya>

⁴⁹ Universities of Belarus at the V China International Import Expo [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://times.bntu.by/news/11970-vuzy-belarusi-na-v-china-international-import-expo>

created under the State programme "Science-intensive Technologies and Technology"; its design is based on an innovative modular layout of on-board subsystems of a small spacecraft. BSU is also introducing the anti-tumour drugs Temodex, Prospidelong and Cisplacel"⁵⁰. Another interesting novelty is an electric scooter manufactured by the JSC "Instrument-making plant Optron" of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus. Maximum speed is 60 kilometres per hour and payload capacity 200 kilograms. Besides, such advanced developments were presented in Shanghai as "unmanned aerial vehicle Burevestnik (Scientific and Production Center of Multifunctional Unmanned Complexes of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus), automated system of registration of welding processes (Belarusian-Russian University), heat-resistant impact-resistant coatings (F. Skaryna State University of Gomel), bread of high nutritional value (Belarusian State University of Food and Chemical Technologies)..."⁵¹

All these facts show that the multifaceted cooperation in science, technology and innovation between the two countries, when partners work systematically and purposefully to develop ties, is yielding fruitful results.

⁵⁰ More than 120 Belarusian developments are presented at the China International Import Exhibition [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/tech/view/bolee-120-beloruskich-razrabotok-predstavleny-na-kitajskoj-mezhdunarodnoj-vystavke-importa-533702-2022/>

⁵¹ Food industry innovations and spacecraft: what Belarus will present at the China Import Fair [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novinki-pisheproma-i-kosmicheskie-apparaty-chto-predstavit-belarus-na-vystavke-importa-v-kitae-533240-2022/>

To achieve a strategic relationship

In November 2022, New Delhi hosted the 11th meeting of the Belarusian-Indian Intergovernmental Commission for Cooperation in Trade, Economy, Industry, Science, Technology and Culture, where the sides analyzed the results achieved and identified promising projects in strategic areas of cooperation. While discussing the agenda of the Commission it was noted that over the last 30 years the Belarusian-Indian cooperation has grown stronger in virtually all spheres of mutual interest. And this despite considerable geographical distance between the two countries. Nevertheless, "Belarus views the development of full-fledged cooperation with India as one of the priorities of its foreign policy"⁵². And in this connection the Belarusian government has approved a roadmap to develop key areas of cooperation with this South Asian state, which is reflected in the minutes of the 11th meeting of the commission, and which considers "a full range of issues of bilateral cooperation, primarily in developing cooperation in logistics, industrial cooperation, agriculture, finance, healthcare and pharmaceuticals, science, education, tourism and other fields"⁵³. It is about significant Belarusian-Indian projects in the trade, economic and investment sectors that can be implemented through joint efforts of the partners in various areas.

First, speaking of trade cooperation, let us recall that in 2021, the bilateral trade turnover between Belarus and India amounted to USD 567 million. At the same time, "potash fertilizers traditionally account for the largest share of Belarus's export to India, followed by nitrogen fertilizers,

⁵² Makiej: Despite the difficult global situation, cooperation with India is positive. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/makej-nesmotrja-na-slozhnuju-obschemirovujusituatsiju-sotrudnichestvo-s-indiej-idet-v-pozitivnom-534208-2022/>

⁵³ Agreements at ministerial and big business level. Makeya's visit to India [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/dogovorennosti-na-urovne-ministerstv-i-krupnogo-biznesa-sostojalsja-vizit-makeja-v-indiju-534194-2022/>

tyre raw materials and some types of steel. India mostly supplies Belarus with medicines, raw materials for tobacco products, processed tobacco products, cotton yarn, electric transformers, tea, coffee, rice and some nylon products"⁵⁴ . At its 11th session, the Belarusian side has focused on increasing the supply of potash fertilizers to India, as well as exports of dump trucks, agricultural products, linen fabric, medicines, petrochemicals and wood processing products. In particular, the Belarusian Automobile Plant (BELAZ) is actively developing exports of its products to the Indian market, having sent a new shipment of vehicles to India in August 2022. "This time the Indian consumer has chosen the 220-tonne dump trucks BELAZ-7530 series. The technical solutions used in heavy trucks are maximally adapted to the conditions of their operation. The trucks are equipped with high-performance air conditioning system, the system of control of loading and fuel, the system of active video - 360 degrees, the system of smart light"⁵⁵ . It remains to add that during two and a half years mine dump trucks BELAZ with payload capacity of 136 tons work in conditions of extremely high temperatures - up to 50 degrees - in a coal mine in Chhattisgarh state of India. And the Belarusian equipment has proved its worth.

Second, the Belarusian partners are ready "to support the growing Indian industrial cluster, including participation in government programmes such as 'Made in India' and modernisation of the Indian agricultural sector. The two sides are moving towards the establishment of assembly facilities in India for Belarusian tractors, combines and other agricultural machinery."⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Ambassador: India and Belarus seek ways to overcome difficulties in mutual trade. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/posol-indija-i-belarus-ischut-puti-preodolenija-slozhnostej-vo-vzaimnoj-torgovle-518941-2022/>.

⁵⁵ BELAZ develops product deliveries to India [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belaz-razvivaet-postavki-produktsii-v-indiju-517579-2022/>

⁵⁶ Belarus and India finalise work on launching a direct flight between the capitals [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/belarus-i-indija-zavershajut-rabotu-po-zapusku-prjamogo-rejsa-mezhdu-stolitsami-534209-2022/>

. Thirdly, Belarusian specialists can help develop India's urban infrastructure under the state programme Smart Cities and export eco-friendly electric buses, which are produced by Belarus' leading companies - Minsk Automobile Plant and Belkommunmash. Fourth, there are interesting plans of the two sides to further develop economic cooperation in the agricultural sector, including exchange of technologies and know-how in crop cultivation and expansion of supplies of a range of Belarusian meat and dairy products to the Indian market.

Fifth, Belarus and India have been very effective in developing science, technology and innovation ties. In particular, "high-tech exports to India in 2021 totaled \$343.1 million"⁵⁷. And now the State Committee on Science and Technology of Belarus and the Ministry of Science and Technology of India are holding a tender for joint Belarusian-Indian scientific and technical projects for 2022-2023 in such areas as information and communication technologies with a focus on artificial intelligence, the Internet of Things, machine learning, cloud services, new materials, biotechnology, including medicine and pharmaceuticals. Sixth, as for the Indian side, it has three ideas that have great potential for cooperation with Belarus. "The first one is tourism. The second is IT, IT opportunities, and the third is current developments and production."⁵⁸.

Overall, the 11th meeting of the intergovernmental commission showed that "India is among those partner countries of Belarus in Asia, large-

⁵⁷ Belarus and India intend to develop science, technology and innovation cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-indija-namereny-razvivat-nauchno-tehnicheskoe-i-innovatsionnoe-sotrudnichestvo-501726-2022/>

⁵⁸ Tourism, IT, advanced developments. In which areas India is interested in cooperation with Belarus [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/turizm-it-pereodovye-razrabotki-v-kakih-sferah-indija-zainteresovana-v-sotrudnichestve-s-belarusju-503301-2022/>

scale interaction with which is developing in all areas of cooperation"⁵⁹ to eventually achieve strategic relations between Minsk and New Delhi.

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⁵⁹ Zalesky, B.L. Indian direction of Belarusian regions / B.L. Zalesky // Materiały XVII Międzynarodowej naukowo-praktycznej konferencji "Naukowa przestrzeń Europy - 2022", Volume 2. Przemysł: Nauka i studia. - C. 10.

The formula for success: a high level of mutual understanding

In November 2022, the Belarusian government delegation visited Iran, where various meetings and negotiations at the interstate level took place, which noted that the engagement between the two countries is currently characterized by high development dynamics in virtually all areas. In particular, this year Minsk and Tehran "have considerably increased the volume of cooperation in many areas, from commodity turnover to cargo flows and freight turnover"⁶⁰. But it appears that the two sides still need to take a number of steps, conclude important documents, and conduct many new activities in order to realize the full potential that Belarus and Iran have in industry, science, and technology, and agree on the approaches laid out in the draft roadmap for comprehensive cooperation for 2023-2026. It is worth noting that during the first three quarters of 2022, trade between the two countries "grew to \$63.6 million (2.9 times more than in the same period of 2021), exports to \$48.6 million (4.4 times more), imports to \$15 million (a 41.8% increase). The balance is positive - \$33.6 million"⁶¹.

An important event in the relations between the two countries was the Iran-Belarus Business Forum held in the Iranian capital in November 2022, organized by the Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI) and the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture, "which has been the main partner of BCCI in Iran for 20 years"⁶². More than 120 executives and representatives of Belarusian and Iranian companies took part in this forum. Exporters from the fields of industrial production and

⁶⁰ Roman Golovchenko: Belarus and Iran can achieve more in trade, economic and investment cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/10474>

⁶¹ Golovchenko: the positions of Belarus and Iran coincide across the full range of issues on the economic agenda [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/golovchenko-pozitsii-belarusi-i-irana-sovpadajut-po-vsemu-krugu-voprosov-ekonomicheskoy-povestki-dnja-536376-2022/>

⁶² Iran-Belarus Business Forum [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.cci.by/o-palate/novosti/iransko-belorusskiy-biznes-forum/#>

mechanical engineering, woodworking, light and food industry were represented from Belarus. The Iranian side suggested a number of measures to stimulate mutual trade. These include: empowering small and medium-sized enterprises of the two countries, strengthening banking and insurance cooperation, identifying new joint projects, developing and simplifying visas for businessmen and tourists, creating the necessary infrastructure for the development of economic relations, especially in the commercial, industrial and technical sectors. In addition, it was announced "the opening of a \$100 million credit line for Belarusian traders interested in buying Iranian products"⁶³. Following the business forum, the parties signed a number of joint documents. In particular, an agreement on cooperation was adopted by the BelCCI and the Iranian Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture, which "will give a new impetus to the development of relations between the two countries"⁶⁴.

Last summer, at the 15th meeting of the joint Belarusian-Iranian commission for economic cooperation, Minsk and Tehran expressed their interest in increasing trade between the two countries. After all, in the best years Belarus and Iran used to have foreign trade volumes of up to \$250-300 million. Therefore, the parties intend to reach a trade turnover of about \$500 million in a short period. Minister of Industry, Mines and Trade of Iran S. Amin even made a forecast for an even larger turnover. Amin even predicted even higher figures in the medium term and expressed confidence that "we plan to increase cooperation in various areas. All this will enable us to reach \$1 billion in trade turnover in the near future"⁶⁵. In particular, there are great

⁶³ The Iran-Belarus Business Forum takes place in Tehran [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://iran.ru/news/analytcs/121826/V_Tegerane_prohodit_irano_belorusskiy_biznes_forum

⁶⁴ Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Belarus and Iran sign cooperation agreement [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/torgovo-promyshlennye-palaty-belarusi-i-irana-podpisali-soglashenie-o-sotrudnichestve-536244-2022/>

⁶⁵ Iran's Industry Minister: trade turnover with Belarus may reach \$1 billion in the near future [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/ministr->

opportunities to expand supplies of Belarusian machinery for the Iranian mining industry. The more so because this sector is developing very rapidly in Iran. Cooperation in agriculture and food between Belarus and Iran is another important area for the development of trade and economic cooperation in 2022. It is primarily about stepping up supplies of "Belarusian crop, meat, and dairy products, as well as animal feed and premixes to Iran, and counter deliveries of vegetables, fruits, fish, and seafood from Iran to Belarus" to the Iranian market .⁶⁶

With regard to cooperation between Minsk and Tehran in the scientific sphere, a number of contracts, agreements and memoranda have already been signed between the institutes of the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) of Belarus and scientific organizations and universities of Iran. For instance, "according to the agreement on scientific and technical cooperation between the NAS and the Islamic Azad University, 16 Iranian scientists have graduated and defended PhD theses at the postgraduate courses of the scientific organizations of the Academy of Sciences"⁶⁷ . But the sides intend to expand joint efforts to work on specific scientific areas and projects. To this end, in May 2022 the Belarusian side offered its Iranian partners a package of proposals on which they could work together to achieve effective results. Among them are new materials and technologies, production of medicines and pharmaceutical products, technologies and equipment for comprehensive treatment of drinking water, mineral processing technologies, unmanned aerial vehicles, training and exchange of students,

[promyshlennosti-irana-tovarooborot-s-belarusju-v-blizhajshee-vremja-mozhet-dostich-1-mlrd-516242-2022/](https://www.belta.by/society/view/nan-belarusi-razrabotaet-proekt-dorozhnoj-karty-sotrudnichestva-s-nauchnymi-organizatsijami-irana-500275-2022/)

⁶⁶ Zalesky, B.L. Industry, Regions, Agriculture / B.L. Zalesky // Materials for XVII International Scientific Practical Conference, Innovations on Scientific Progress - 2022, 17 - 25 August 2022: Sofia. "Byal GRAD-BG". - C. 59.

⁶⁷ The National Academy of Sciences of Belarus will draft a roadmap for cooperation with scientific organisations in Iran [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/nan-belarusi-razrabotaet-proekt-dorozhnoj-karty-sotrudnichestva-s-nauchnymi-organizatsijami-irana-500275-2022/>

internships for scientists and teachers. It is planned that a draft roadmap for cooperation with scientific organisations in Iran will be developed at the initiative of the National Academy of Sciences, which will include promising areas of mutual interest.

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Collaboration with a focus on performance

Increasing supplies of Belarusian goods to Asian and Middle Eastern countries is one of the top priorities of the Belarusian Universal Commodity Exchange (BUCE). Figures show that by the end of 10 months of 2022, exports of Belarusian goods through the BUCE to a number of Asian countries grew considerably: to China - twice, to Singapore - 6.6 times, to Turkey - 21 times, to Uzbekistan - 30 times. BUTB also has big plans with other countries of the continent, including **India, Pakistan and Turkey**.

For example, in September 2022, the BUTB and the Inventivepreneur Chamber of Commerce and Industries (ICCI) headquartered in New Delhi, **India**, decided to join efforts to attract Indian companies interested in entering the Belarusian market to the exchange platform. After all, the use of the exchange mechanism will not only help strengthen trade relations between Belarus and India, but also create favorable conditions for closer cooperation in related areas. As a reminder, ICCI has over 10 thousand members all over India. These are mainly small and medium-sized enterprises operating in various sectors of industry and agriculture that use the services of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry to effectively conduct their business, including market analysis, assistance in attracting investments, staff development courses and finding business partners in India and abroad. The main objective of the ICCI is to assist in the scaling up of businesses, which usually involves entering markets in other countries, including Belarus. Given the low risks, wide product range and direct access to leading Belarusian companies, BUTB is the optimal solution for starting an ICCI in Belarus. In particular, "there is a high demand for Belarusian acrylic fibre and other petrochemical products in India, as transactions in this

group of goods are regularly made <...>. Equally promising items are lumber, dairy products and light industry products"⁶⁸ .

Another curious fact: in November 2022, a pharmaceutical company from India, Tosco Pharmachem, which produces and sells special chemical compounds and reagents for the Indian pharmaceutical industry, was accredited for the first time on BUTB to purchase petrochemical products. "Tosco Pharmachem plans to buy acetone cyanohydrin on the Belarusian exchange platform and, in the future, other chemicals and preparations it needs"⁶⁹ . There are several reasons for the company's interest in the BUTB platform. Firstly, India is one of the world's top three producers of pharmaceuticals. Secondly, the Indian company will open up new export opportunities for Belarusian companies in the petrochemical sector through exchange trading. Third, in addition to increasing the Belarusian-Indian exchange trade turnover, the BUTB will help gain experience in the Indian market, which can be useful in selling other sought-after commodity items, including synthetic fibers, to that South Asian country.

In 2022, certain steps have also been taken to intensify exchange trading between Belarus and **Pakistan**. Specifically, the first broker company from that country has already been accredited to the BUTB, and thanks to the efforts of the Embassy of Pakistan in Belarus, the central office of the exchange was visited by 70 representatives of the Pakistani business community, who are interested in purchasing products from Belarus. And it's not just lumber, but also chemical and petrochemical products. For example, "Belarusian acrylic fiber is in high demand in Pakistan, which has recently

⁶⁸ The BUTB and the Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry plan to collaborate on exchange trading [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-i-indijskaja-torgovo-promyshlennaja-palata-planirujut-sotrudnicat-v-sfere-birzhevoj-torgovli-524659-2022/>

⁶⁹ BUTB plans to start exporting petrochemicals to the Indian pharma industry [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-planiruet-nachat-eksport-neftehimicheskij-produktsii-dlja-indijskoj-farmotrasli-535977-2022/>

been regularly supplied to this market through our trading platform. Transaction volumes are not very large yet, so expanding the circle of Pakistani buyers is a task of paramount importance."⁷⁰ , in order to really increase trade turnover between Belarus and Pakistan.

Another country in Asia that is very promising in terms of marketing Belarusian goods through the BUTB is **Turkey**. During the three quarters of 2022, 27 Turkish companies were accredited to the exchange. "This year they have bought domestic lumber, as well as scrap and waste of non-ferrous metals on the exchange trading. If compared to January-September last year, the amount of transactions made by Turkish participants has increased by almost 1.5 times"⁷¹ . Not only traditional export-import transactions involving Belarusian companies, but also transit transactions between non-residents are considered as possible areas of cooperation. In November 2022, the BUTB agreed to develop exchange trade in agro-industrial and wood products with the Istanbul Commodity Exchange (ISTIB) to "combine efforts to increase mutual trade between Belarus and Turkey, with the main focus on agricultural and wood products, the demand for which is consistently high in both countries"⁷² . In this regard, Belarusian partners hope for support and assistance on the part of ISTIB, whose members comprise over ten thousand Turkish enterprises, and for many of them ISTIB could become a "window" to the market of Belarus and the Eurasian Economic Union. After all, the exchange platform is an effective tool for establishing direct contacts between producers and consumers in the two

⁷⁰ BUTB arranges supplies of Belarusian lumber to Pakistan's industry [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-organizuet-postavki-belorusskih-pilomaterialov-dlja-promyshlennosti-pakistana-535371-2022/>

⁷¹ BUTB to present the benefits of exchange trading at an exhibition in Turkey [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-predstavit-preimuschestva-birzhevoj-torgovli-na-vystavke-v-turtsii-529829-2022/>

⁷² BUTB and the Istanbul Mercantile Exchange will develop trade in agro-industrial products and wood products [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-i-stambulskaja-tovarnaja-birzha-budut-razvivat-torgovlju-produktsiej-apk-i-derevoobrabotki-533002-2022/>

countries to organise regular trade in highly liquid commodity items such as lumber and dairy products.

Overall, with regard to the cooperation of the BUTB with Asian countries, this area of cooperation has enormous export potential. And "in the near future this cooperation will already show high results"⁷³ . And the first steps in this respect have been taken.

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⁷³ Zalessky, B. The potential of the exchange mechanism. Collection of articles / B. Zalessky. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2022. - C. 52.

The search for investors continues

Attracting foreign investment is an important issue for the development of free economic zones (FEZs) in Belarus, which is showing a positive trend in 2022. Suffice it to say that for three quarters this figure increased 1.7 times, to over USD 415 million. In addition, "this year 22 new residents with projects in wood processing, chemical industry, logistics, agriculture and metalworking have been registered. The total investment will amount to \$167 million. 1,080 new jobs will be created"⁷⁴. FEZ Grodnoinvest shows good results in this regard, where "in the first half of the year it attracted more than USD 150 million worth of foreign investments"⁷⁵ and where the search for new investors and residents continues.

In November 2022, Kronos-Grodno LLC was registered in FEZ Grodnoinvest with an investment project to establish a multi-purpose production of furniture and wood products. The new resident will build a new complex including production, storage and administrative premises and purchase modern technological equipment. "Implementation of the project will make it possible to create about 30 new jobs, expand the range of products and increase exports, and increase deductions to the budget and non-budgetary funds"⁷⁶. All this will be implemented within the effectively operating furniture cluster FEZ "Grodnoinvest" in the Grodno Region, which involves over 20 FEZ residents of various production directions.

⁷⁴ Abramenko: Net FDI in FEZs increased 1.7 times in January-September [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/abramenko-pii-na-chistoj-osnove-v-sez-za-janvar-sentjabr-vozsosli-v-17-raza-536597-2022>

⁷⁵ Zalessky, B.L. Tool for Investment, Innovation and Export / B.L. Zalessky // Materials for XVII International Scientific and Practical Conference, Scientific Potential for Light - 2022, 17 - 25 September 2022: Sofia. "Byal GRAD-BG". - C. 4.

⁷⁶ A new FEZ resident, Grodnoinvest, will create a multi-profile production of upholstered furniture in Grodno [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://grodnoinvest.by/press-center/novyj-rezident-sez-grodnoinvest-sozdast-v-grodno-mnogoprofilnoe-proizvodstvo-myagkoj-mebeli/>

Cooperation will make it possible to create a product with high added value, concentrate resource potential within the region, and increase the profitability of products. Earlier in 2022, a new FEZ resident, LLC Barinpak, announced the implementation of a project within the furniture cluster with an investment project to set up packaging production.

A little later, in November 2022, another resident was registered in FEZ Grodnoinvest, Terminal West CJSC, with an investment project to set up an industrial and logistics enterprise. The company will transship liquefied hydrocarbon gases from broad gauge railway tank wagons to narrow gauge, as well as from tank wagons to road transport. In addition, cleaning and compounding services for liquefied hydrocarbon gases will be provided. "The project will be implemented at sites #4 (Grodno) and #12 (Svisloch district) of FEZ Grodnoinvest. During the implementation the company will purchase new process equipment, perform technical upgrading of gas filling stations and improve the infrastructure"⁷⁷. It should be noted that the company "Terminal West" became the fifth resident of the FEZ registered this year. Earlier in the year 2022 in the logistics sector Grodnoinvest registered the company Unionway LLC, which implements the project on construction of a container terminal near the railway freight station Svisloch. The construction of the first stage began this year, and the company will start providing services from 2025. The total investment outlays will exceed \$23 million. We are planning to create 70 new jobs within the project period"⁷⁸. In addition, the following residents are already successfully implementing logistics projects in the FEZ: Portela, which is building a transport and logistics centre in Grodno District; Vilaris, with

⁷⁷ A new production and logistics enterprise will be created in FEZ Grodnoinvest [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/v-sez-grodnoinvest-sozdadut-novoe-proizvodstvenno-logisticheskoe-predpriyatie-535377-2022/>

⁷⁸ A new FEZ resident, Grodnoinvest, will build a container terminal in Svisloch [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://grodnoinvest.by/press-center/novyj-rezident-sez-grodnoinvest-postroit-v-svislochi-kontejnernyj-terminal/>

capital from the United Arab Emirates; and Silva Logistic BeeWye, with investments from the Netherlands.

The opportunities of FEZ "Grodnoinvest" were repeatedly demonstrated at international conferences and exhibitions in 2022. For example, in November the proposals of the FEZ in the investment, trade and economic and tourism fields were presented at the Turkish-Belarusian Investment Forum within the framework of the MUSIAD EXPO international exhibition in Istanbul. New investment projects in the Grodno region "including the creation of Grodno Industrial Park with participation of Turkish companies, the expansion of trade and economic relations and development of industrial cooperation in chemical, wood processing, machine building and other spheres" were discussed⁷⁹. One of the topics of discussion was an ambitious new project of building an industrial park "Grodno" with ready infrastructure and developed logistics. The advantages of the special tourist and recreation park "Avgustovsky Canal" were also presented. The negotiations resulted in signing of a Memorandum on cooperation between the administration of FEZ "Grodnoinvest" and the Association of Independent Industrialists and Entrepreneurs MUSIAD which envisages broader cooperation between Belarusian and Turkish companies in production, investment, financial, trade and economic areas. For reference, it should be noted that in the FEZ operates a resident with Turkish capital - LLC Europlastex Invest, which implements two projects in the industrial park in Smorgoni to organize the production of cotton yarn and production of steel pipes.

In the same November, BMS proposals were also considered in Dubai at the Eurasian Business Forum "Focus on Belarus", where talks were also

⁷⁹ Turkish businesses are presented opportunities for investment on the territory of FEZ "Grodnoinvest". [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://grodnoinvest.by/press-center/tureczkie-kompanii-zainteresovany-v-rasshirenii-sotrudnichestva-v-ramkax-sez-grodnoinvest/>

held with the Sharjah Chamber of Commerce and Industry and prospects of "cooperation in trade and investment, organisation of mutual supply of products and joint work in the Middle East and North African markets" were discussed⁸⁰. The parties agreed to cooperate.

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⁸⁰ FEZ Grodnoinvest and Sharjah Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the United Arab Emirates agreed to cooperate [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://grodnoinvest.by/press-center/sez-grodnoinvest-i-tpp-shardzha-obedinennyx-arabskix-emiratorov-dogovorilis-o-sotrudnichestve/>

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