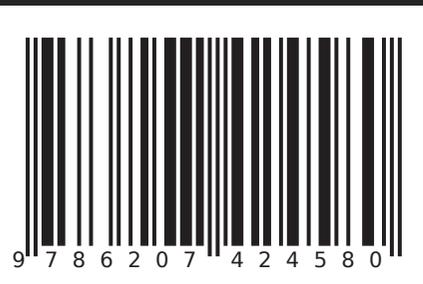


# Point of reference - multi- vectorality Part II

In 2023, the Republic of Belarus maintained stable positions of the country's socio-economic development. At the end of 11 months, the gross domestic product growth rate amounted to almost four percent. At the same time, almost all sectors continued to grow: industry, construction, and agriculture. And investments in fixed capital increased at a record pace for the last five years - by almost 14 percent. High demand for Belarusian products in foreign markets continued in 2023. Suffice it to say that exports from Belarus remain at an 11-year high. This is facilitated by increased sales in Asia, Latin America, and China. In 2024, Belarusian exports to the countries of the far arc are planned to increase to almost four billion dollars. We are talking about supplies of food products, machinery, equipment, chemical products. Among the measures that will have to solve this task is the organization of exhibitions and expositions Made in Belarus in various countries. What measures are taken by Belarusian exporters in this regard in order to utilize all the opportunities? This is the subject of the proposed study.



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# Point of reference - multi- vectorality Part II

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Boris Zalessky

**Starting point – multi-vector**

Part II

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## Sustainable Development Goals and Media

In August 2019, the Ministry of Information of the Republic of Belarus created a working group to promote the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Belarus, which included department specialists in the field of interaction with the media and representatives of television and print media. The goal of this group is to increase awareness of the Belarusian society about the implementation of the SDGs in our country.

Let us recall that in September 2015, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the resolution “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, which set out 17 Sustainable Development Goals, aimed, in particular, at ending poverty and hunger, fighting inequality and injustice, solving problems related to climate change. This event required all states of the planet, including the Republic of Belarus, to take up the creation of mechanisms to achieve the SDGs.

Just a year and a half later - in May 2017 - an institutional framework was formed in our country to manage the work in the implementation of the plans: firstly, the post of national coordinator for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals was established; secondly, a national architecture for managing the implementation of the SDGs has been built, which includes the Council for Sustainable Development, parliamentary, regional and partner groups for sustainable development, ensuring effective interaction of the public sector with public organizations, scientific and business communities, and foreign partners. Having started its work, the Council for Sustainable Development assigned each of the 17 SDGs to the state bodies of Belarus, whose competence includes resolving relevant issues. As a result, “all involved government bodies are part of four sectoral blocks: economics, ecology, social sphere, monitoring<sup>1</sup>. ”

Following the United Nations recommendation to conduct a three-level – global, regional, national – analysis of progress in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, Belarus already in 2017 presented at the international level its voluntary report on the progress of the 2030 Agenda, then took part in the presentation of the Eurasian Economic Union’s report on sustainable

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<sup>1</sup> Shchetkina, M. Sustainable development depends on each of us / M. Shchetkina // [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/interview/view/ustojchivoe-razvitiye-zavisit-ot-kazhdogo-iz-nas-6646/>

development at the UN headquarters, and in 2018 she organized a regional forum of national coordinators dedicated to building partnerships between countries and organizations involved in direct work to achieve the SDGs. As a result, according to the index of achievement of the global Sustainable Development Goals for 2018, which was calculated for 156 countries of the world based on one hundred indicators related to the implementation of the SDGs, Belarus took 23rd place, receiving “a score above the average for the region of Eastern Europe and Central Asia <sup>2</sup>. ”

One of the conditions for the successful implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in Belarus is national legislation. In 2018, the Belarusian parliament adopted a number of laws aimed at achieving the SDGs. Among them - about specially protected natural areas, about the production and circulation of organic products. In 2019, bills related to healthcare and the rights of people with disabilities were considered. It is also assumed that it is the Sustainable Development Goals that will become an organic component of the country's socio-economic development in order to reach a gross domestic product of one hundred billion dollars by 2025 and “join the group of countries with average per capita incomes at purchasing power parity above the world average <sup>3</sup>. ”

Another important condition for the successful achievement of the SDGs is the synchronization of the work of regional groups, since “sustainable development of the country as a whole is possible only in the case of sustainable development of all its regions <sup>4</sup>. ” That is why territorial development plans should be proposed not only by republican government bodies, but also, first of all, by representatives of local government bodies, taking into account the needs and interests of citizens. That is why the comprehensive plan for the development of more than 30 Belarusian regions lagging behind in terms of socio-economic development, developed in August 2019 by the Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Belarus together with regional executive committees, seems extremely important in this context, the implementation of which would allow these territories to be brought up to the national average level. Suffice it to say that “today a package of 280 projects

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<sup>2</sup> Belarus took 23rd place among 156 countries in achieving the SDGs for 2018 [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/special/politics/view/belarus-zanjala-23-e-mesto-sredi-156-stran-v-dostizhenii-tsur-za-2018-god-333890-2019/>

<sup>3</sup> Belarus views the 2030 Agenda as the basis for a new global policy - Myasnikovich [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/belarus-rassmatrivaet-povestku-2030-kak-osnovu-dlja-novoj-globalnoj-politiki-mjasnikovich-333892-2019/>

<sup>4</sup> Meeting of the Presidium of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <http://www.government.by/ru/content/8943>

has been formed. Approximately 54 projects will be created from scratch, about 80 are investments in existing production facilities, and 140 projects are related to infrastructure (about 30% are industrial infrastructure, the rest are social facilities)<sup>5</sup>. " In addition to these 280 projects, there are another 224 investment proposals. It is also important that some of the projects from this comprehensive plan will be financed by "foreign investors, as well as international financial organizations that direct funds primarily to infrastructure development, for example, the construction of water deferrization stations or the conversion of boiler houses to local fuels, the development of alternative types of energy. World Bank funds will be used to repair schools and hospitals<sup>6</sup>. "

In January 2019, the first National Forum on Sustainable Development was held in Minsk, at which more than four hundred participants reviewed the national experience of Belarus in achieving the SDGs, the progress of the implementation of the National Strategy for Sustainable Social and Economic Development of the country until 2030, as well as the features of the preparation of the National Strategy for Sustainable Development for period until 2035. It noted the positive experience in this regard of the Brest and Mogilev regions. And today we are talking about overcoming the different speed of movement to organize this work in other Belarusian regions.

At the same first National Forum on Sustainable Development, it was noted that the country's media should play an important role in the implementation of the main provisions of the 2030 Agenda in national strategic documents, sectoral and regional programs, which "still have a lot to do for a broad public understanding of the essence of the SDGs and the role of each person in achieving them<sup>7</sup>. " That is why in August 2019, the Ministry of Information of the Republic of Belarus created a working group in the national architecture for managing the achievement of SDGs, composed of journalists deeply immersed in this topic, to conduct information work on all 17 Sustainable Development Goals. But today it is obvious that the efforts of one working group in implementing such a large-scale media project will not be

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<sup>5</sup>It is proposed to include 280 projects in the development plan for lagging regions of Belarus [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/v-plan-razvitija-otstajuschih-regionov-belarusi-predlagaetsja-vkljuchit-280-proektov-359816-2019/>

<sup>6</sup> Shchetkina: the work of regional groups to achieve the SDGs in Belarus needs to be synchronized [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/schetkina-rabotu-regionalnyh-grupp-po-dostizheniju-tsur-v-belarusi-nuzhno-sinhronizirovat-333887-2019/>

<sup>7</sup> The media will form a separate group in working to achieve the SDGs in Belarus - Shchetkina [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/smi-sostavjat-otdelnuju-gruppu-v-rabote-nad-dostizheniem-tsur-v-belarusi-schetkina-333874-2019/>

enough. That is why, in the same August 2019, the country's Ministry of Information, with the support of the national project coordinator of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), "Supporting the functioning of the management architecture for the process of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals Republic of Belarus", a republican competition "From Global Goals to Local Actions" was announced in order to involve Belarusian society in the process of achieving the SDGs and to intensify the work of journalists "on a broad discussion of this topic in the media <sup>8</sup>."

Until December 1, 2019, this competition accepted essays, interviews, articles, television and radio broadcasts, cycles of publications and broadcasts in seven nominations, including such areas as: 1) environmental; 2) social issues, including issues of gender equality and youth issues; 3) economic; 4) topics related to vulnerable segments of the population, including people with disabilities, and the implementation of the principle "Leave no one behind"; 5) interdepartmental interaction to achieve the SDGs; 6) projects aimed at achieving the SDGs and implemented by businesses, including impact investment projects; 7) public initiatives aimed at achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

The results of the competition showed that it became a good test of the level of competence, first of all, of Belarusian journalists and another opportunity for them to reveal their creative potential. Thanks to this format of creative competition, the Belarusian press hosted a very diverse discussion of the main directions and Goals of Sustainable Development, the possibilities for their implementation and implementation. After all, not only leading journalists took part in it. The competition also attracted the interest of a wide audience of readers, television and radio listeners, once again confirming the conclusion that "the media is not just one of the main channels in informing the population about the SDGs. In this context, they play a critical role – educating citizens about the opportunities to make informed and responsible

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<sup>8</sup> A republican competition for the media "From Global Goals to Local Actions" has been announced [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/objjavlen-respublikanskij-konkurs-dlja-smi-ot-globalnyh-tselej-k-lokalnym-dejstviam-359398-2019/>

decisions regarding themselves, their families, and also influence the decisions of the authorities on the implementation of the SDGs <sup>9</sup>. ”

An important detail: in 2020, work to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals should be significantly strengthened in the Republic of Belarus, primarily at the regional level. At the same time, regional media should again have their say in resolving this issue, since, according to the national coordinator for achieving the SDGs M. Shchetkina, “without informing the population, without involving them in the work to achieve the SDGs, practically nothing can be done ” <sup>10</sup>. This means that the range of publications on this topic in regional media should be very extensive, covering almost all 17 Sustainable Development Goals and taking into account the priorities of the country’s socio-economic development until 2030. It is worth recalling here that the work of the media is very closely related to Goal No. 16, which involves promoting the development of a peaceful, open society and partnership.

As for other SDGs, Goal No. 5: “Decent work and economic growth”, which sets the task of developing the economy of the Belarusian regions at an accelerated pace, is of particular relevance for the Republic of Belarus in modern conditions. A characteristic detail in this regard is that “the traditional economy has practically exhausted its growth reserves, and further development is only possible with the creation of new industries, including with the attraction of foreign investors <sup>11</sup>. ” In other words, as First Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Belarus D. Krutoy said, “one of the most important tasks will be to attract investment, improve relevant legislation and revise the entire investment agenda <sup>12</sup>. ” At the same time, regional policy will be placed in the center of attention. In particular, today the Belarusian government is actively engaged in three large pilot projects: the Orsha district of the Vitebsk region, working with areas lagging behind in terms of socio-economic development, as well as in 11 large cities.

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<sup>9</sup> The editorial teams of “7 Days” and “Belarusian Dumki” won the competition to highlight the SDGs [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/special/society/view/kollektivny-redaktsij-7-dnej-i-belaruskaj-dumki-pobedili-v-konkurse-po-osvescheniju-tsur-373180-2019/>

<sup>10</sup> In Belarus in 2020, efforts will be intensified to achieve the SDGs at the regional level [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/v-belarusi-v-2020-godu-usiljat-rabotu-po-dostizheniju-tsur-na-regionalnom-urovne-373167-2019/>

<sup>11</sup> Sergei Rumas: An action plan is being developed in Belarus to create conditions for economic development [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <http://www.government.by/ru/content/9175>

<sup>12</sup> Sergei Rumas introduced the First Deputy Prime Minister to the team [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <http://www.government.by/ru/content/9155>

In addition, in 2019, the country implemented the most important investment projects in such areas as the automotive industry, metallurgical and construction industries, pulp and paper, woodworking and light industries, oil refining, petrochemical and energy complexes. In total, as of mid-December 2019, “out of 34 particularly significant investment facilities, 22 have already been put into operation <sup>13</sup>,” 12 of which have reached their designed capacity. But not only these large projects should be in the area of special attention of the regional media.

Thus, at the regional level, the Vitebsk region demonstrates positive dynamics in attracting foreign investments, in particular Latvian ones. Over the three quarters of 2019, their volume from Latvian investors increased three and a half times here, exceeding two million dollars. There are already 90 organizations registered in the Vitebsk region in the fields of trade, woodworking, the provision of motor transport services, tailoring services, and the production of plastic products. Not the least role in strengthening these positive trends, of course, is played by the fact that “33 cooperation agreements have been concluded between the districts and cities of the Vitebsk region and the local governments of Latvia <sup>14</sup>. ”

Even more significant indicators are characteristic in this context for the Brest region, into whose economy in 2020 it is planned to attract at least \$90 million of foreign direct investment on a net basis. Half of them are supposed to be sent to the Brest free economic zone. As for specific cities in the region, “the target for Brest is about \$15 million in foreign direct investment, Baranovichi and Pinsk - over \$6 million <sup>15</sup>. ” At the same time, slightly less than half of these funds will be used to purchase machinery, equipment, and vehicles in order to open about six and a half thousand new jobs through the modernization and technical re-equipment of existing enterprises and the creation of new production facilities.

At the level of specific business entities, an interesting experience in working with foreign investments is demonstrated by an enterprise with almost

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<sup>13</sup> Sergey Rumas: 22 out of 34 particularly significant investment facilities have been put into operation. [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <http://www.government.by/ru/content/9174>

<sup>14</sup> Shcherbitsky, A. The volume of Latvian investments in the Vitebsk region increased 3.5 times over 9 months / A. Shcherbitsky // [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/objem-latvijskih-investitsij-v-vitebskuju-oblast-za-9-mesjatsev-vyros-v-35-raza-371103-2019/>

<sup>15</sup> Direct foreign investment in the economy of the Brest region in 2020 will amount to at least \$90 million [-Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/prjamye-inostrannye-investitsii-v-ekonomiku-brestskoj-oblasti-v-2020-godu-sostavjat-ne-menee-90-mln-374236-2019/>

60 years of history - OJSC Gorynsky Agrokombinat, located in the working village of Rechitsa, Stolinsky district, Brest region, which only in August 2019 emerged from the reorganization procedure by concluding a settlement with creditors agreements. Having actively worked with foreign investors, the team of the joint-stock company received about 800 thousand dollars from the Polish partner to complete the production of green peas. Modernization of existing production facilities has made it possible to expand the range of products. In particular, here “the production of a new type of product has begun – boiled sterilized vegetables in vacuum packaging. This is an absolutely natural product without added preservatives, even harmless ones like sugar and salt. The shelf life of such ready-made vegetables is six months, and the color, quality and taste of the product are preserved <sup>16</sup>. ” Considering that the work on introducing new technology into production at the agricultural complex has already been almost completed and even made it possible to conclude a contract with a Russian company for the supply of a new line of products to the retail chain, then this experience of attracting foreign investment can be considered doubly successful. And it can become the subject of detailed study not only in the Brest regional press, but also in the media of other Belarusian regions.

All the above facts eloquently illustrate the conclusion that the implementation of each of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, including SDG No. 5, related to the topic of attracting foreign investment and their effective use in the Belarusian regions, should be firmly entrenched on the front pages of regional , district and city newspapers and reflect as fully as possible the experience of specific business entities already accumulated in this regard. It is also important to intensify the work of the media in this direction for the reason that “the media not only record our idea of reality, but actually model reality itself, the scenario and dynamics of events...” <sup>17</sup>. At the same time, the task of the media is to, by reflecting reality with all its problems,

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<sup>16</sup> . A Polish investor invested Br 1.6 million in the production of the Goryn agricultural plant [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/polskij-investor-vlozhi-v-proizvodstvo-gorynskogo-agrokombinata-br16-mln-373083-2019/>

<sup>17</sup> Kuntsevich, A. Responsibility to society distinguishes a journalist from other subjects of creating information / A. Kuntsevich // [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/opinions/view/otvetstvennost-pered-obschestvom-otlichaet-zhurnalista-ot-drugih-subjektov-sozdanija-informatsii-7110/>

complexities and contradictions, “further influence the change in the situation for the better”<sup>18</sup>.

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<sup>18</sup> Karlyukevich, A. The main task of the media is to reflect reality with all the problems and difficulties / A. Karlyukevich // [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://news.21.by/other-news/2019/12/11/1940593.html>

## E -sport as a response to challenges

Sustainable economic growth at a rate of three to four percent per year - this is the specific goal set today in the Republic of Belarus to ensure stable socio-economic development of the country for the medium term. To solve it successfully, it is necessary to fulfill a number of conditions - "to ensure the effective operation of each enterprise, the uniform and sustainable development of the country's regions; create conditions for attracting foreign and domestic investment; increase exports, including to new markets <sup>19</sup>. " The presence of the export topic in this list of the most important conditions is explained by the fact that "export is the basis of the open Belarusian economy, as it ensures the flow of foreign currency into the country, profits for enterprises, and taxes into the budget of the Republic of Belarus <sup>20</sup>. " Among the Belarusian enterprises that are actively operating in the current difficult conditions in foreign markets, one should name, first of all, the world's largest manufacturer of mining dump trucks and transport equipment for the mining and construction industries, which occupies about a third of the world market for mining dump trucks with particularly heavy load capacity - **the Belarusian Automobile Plant** , the export of which in 2020 is developing along several main vectors.

Vector one – **regions of Russia** . Thus, in April 2020, the next batch of 180-ton BELAZ-75180 mining dump trucks was shipped to **the Murmansk region** to the Kirov branch of Apatit JSC in accordance with the agreement signed in September 2019. In February 2020, three 130-ton vehicles have already arrived in this Russian region. In total, in the next three years, at least 50 mining dump trucks will go there, which will be used to develop apatite nepheline deposits in the Khibiny. It is expected that the 180-tonne dump trucks "will subsequently be modified into intelligent ones and will acquire new technical characteristics. Additional installed equipment will allow you to control them over a long distance. An experimental site for the operation of

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<sup>19</sup> Kochanova's speech at the opening of the second session of the Council of the Republic of the National Assembly of Belarus of the seventh convocation [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/vystuplenie-kochanovoj-na-otkrytii-vtoroj-sessii-soveta-respubliki-natsionalnogo-sobranija-belarusi-385692-2020/>

<sup>20</sup> Zalesky, B.L. Export culture and mass consciousness / B.L. Zalesky // Journalism-2016: state, problems and prospects: materials of the 18th International Conference. science-practical Conf., publication 95-godju BDU, 10-11 sheets. 2016, Minsk / editorial office: S.V. Dubovik (adc. ed.) [i.e.]. – Vol. 18. – Minsk: AAT "Paligrafkombinat named after Y. Kolas", 2016. – P. 234.

quarry equipment in unmanned mode is planned to be created in the Nyorpakh quarry of the Eastern mine <sup>21</sup>. ”

In the same April 2020, six more mining dump trucks of the Belarusian manufacturer began work in **the Krasnoyarsk Territory** at the Achinsk Alumina Refinery, which is part of JSC Rusal Achinsk. Updating the fleet of mining transport equipment at the Mazulsky mine will increase labor productivity and reduce costs for the technological process of raw material extraction. A characteristic detail: in 2020, the Rusal company, one of the world’s largest aluminum producers, plans to purchase several dozen Belarusian machines, since “this equipment has high performance characteristics, it is more economical in terms of fuel and lubricant consumption. The driver’s cabins have improved visibility and control systems, are equipped with comfortable seats and climate control systems <sup>22</sup>. ”

Another Russian region, where the second 130-ton BELAZ-75131 mining dump truck was shipped this spring since the beginning of 2020, is **the Sverdlovsk region** , where eleven 130-ton Belarusian vehicles are already operating at the Uralasbest OJSC mining and processing enterprise, each of which transports up to one and a half thousand tons of rock per shift. How important this is for the Russian side is shown by these numbers. BELAZ trucks operate “on the basis of the Bazhenovskoye field, the proven reserves of which will last for more than 150 years. The deposit is being developed by open pit mining. The length of the quarry is 8 km, width – 2.5 km, depth – 350 m <sup>23</sup>. ”

The second vector is the countries **of the Eurasian Economic Union** . In particular, **Armenia** , where in the spring of 2020 three 90-ton BELAZ-75585 dump trucks were sent at once. They replenished the equipment fleet of the Sotk mine, a gold deposit, the largest in Armenia for the extraction of pure gold, the reserves of which are estimated at more than 120 tons. Let us note that 130-ton Belarusian machines are already operating here with high

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<sup>21</sup> BELAZ delivered another batch of dump trucks to the Russian “Apatit” [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belaz-postavil-ocherednuju-partiju-samosvalov-rossijskomu-apatitu-386828-2020/>

<sup>22</sup> Nemankova, Yu. BELAZ mining dump trucks started working in the Krasnoyarsk Territory / Yu. Nemankova // [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/karjerye-samosvaly-belaz-pristupili-k-rabote-v-krasnojarskom-krae-386202-2020/>

<sup>23</sup> Nemankova, Yu. The next 130-ton BELAZ dump truck will begin work on the Russian Uralasbest / Yu. Nemankova // [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/ocherednoj-130-tonnyj-samosval-belaz-nachnet-rabotu-na-rossijskom-uralasbeste-385689-2020/>

efficiency. The new dump trucks were equipped with diesel engines with a capacity of up to 1,200 horsepower. “To improve the reliability of the main load-bearing elements of the dump truck, new high-strength steels were used, and cast elements were used in the most stressed areas<sup>24</sup>. ”

The third vector is the **far arc countries** , whose share in the exports of the Belarusian Automobile Plant has increased by almost one and a half times since the beginning of 2020 and amounted to 40 percent. So, in April, eight 130-ton BELAZ-75131 dump trucks immediately began work at a coal mine located on the island of Kalimantan in **Indonesia** . Their configuration took into account all the wishes of Indonesian partners and climatic operating conditions. And these are such tropical options as “appropriate tires, air conditioning, special cooling system<sup>25</sup>. ” The Belarusian Automobile Plant is actively working to increase its presence on the African continent in **Algeria** , where in the spring of 2020 it shipped the next batch of five BELAZ-78221 front loaders. And the company’s plans include “participation in specialized exhibitions and conducting direct negotiations with interested consumers of quarry equipment in the region<sup>26</sup>. ”

Among the Belarusian enterprises actively operating in foreign markets even in such difficult conditions as we see today is **the Gomselmash holding** , a manufacturer of grain and forage harvesters, cob and potato harvesters, mowers and other agricultural equipment that is already working in the fields of Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Chile, Slovakia, Romania, Bulgaria, Argentina, China, South Korea, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia. In the first quarter of 2020, the holding's enterprises shipped more than 400 units of equipment to their consumers. “At the same time, 278 self-propelled combines and machine kits for them were delivered outside Belarus. The list of countries where the equipment was sent includes Russia, Kazakhstan, Ukraine, and Moldova. <...>

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<sup>24</sup> Nemankova, Yu. BELAZ sent mining dump trucks to Armenia / Yu. Nemankova // [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belaz-otpravil-v-armeniju-karjernye-samosvaly-385547-2020/>

<sup>25</sup> Eight BELAZ mining dump trucks started working in Indonesia [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/vosem-karjernih-samosvalov-belaz-pristupili-k-rabote-v-indonezii-387074-2020/>

<sup>26</sup> Nemankova, Yu. Batch of BELAZ loaders shipped to Algeria / Yu. Nemankova // [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/partija-pogruzchikov-belaz-otguzhena-v-alzhir-385911-2020/>

In total, shipments increased by 373% compared to the same period in 2019.  
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Another enterprise that is now actively promoting its products to foreign markets is **the Minsk Tractor Plant**. Thus, more than 250 tractors have been shipped to Pakistan alone since the beginning of 2020. This eloquently demonstrates that “even despite the crisis in many Asian countries and restrictive measures introduced due to the difficult epidemiological situation, supplies remain at the planned level <sup>28</sup>. ” In total, since 1955, Minsk tractor manufacturers have shipped more than 120 thousand of their vehicles to this South Asian country. The company does not forget about other export directions. In particular, about five hundred units of equipment and tractor sets were sent to the markets of European countries in the first quarter of this year. This fact speaks volumes: “Exports of MTZ OJSC products to African countries in the first quarter of 2020 increased by 70% <sup>29</sup>. ” For one of the countries of this continent - Sudan - in April of this year, another “batch of more than 100 tractors <...> was formed. This is the second shipment in 2020.  
<sup>30</sup>” These figures complement this picture very convincingly. “Since the beginning of the year, the company has increased supplies to Russian regions by 20%. The export of Belarusian agricultural machinery to Uzbekistan, Moldova, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Armenia has also increased <sup>31</sup>. ” Deliveries to Tajikistan increased especially significantly - doubling - where more than a hundred tractors and tractor sets were shipped in the first three months of this year. This dynamics is largely explained by the fact that “since January 2020, spare parts and components imported into Tajikistan for further assembly of agricultural machinery are not subject to VAT and customs duties

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<sup>27</sup> “Gomselmash” supplied more than 270 combines and machine sets to foreign markets in the first quarter [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/gomselmash-vi-kvartale-postavil-na-vneshnie-rynki-bolee-270-kombajnov-i-mashinokomplektov-388443-2020>

<sup>28</sup> Since the beginning of the year, MTZ has supplied more than 250 tractors to Pakistan [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/mtz-s-nachala-goda-postavil-v-pakistan-bolee-250-traktorov-388294-2020/>

<sup>29</sup> Nemankova, Yu. Export of MTZ products to African countries increased by 70% / Yu. Nemankova // [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/eksport-produktsii-mtz-v-strany-afriki-vyros-na-70-386540-2020/>

<sup>30</sup> Nemankova, Yu. MTZ will supply the second batch of equipment to Sudan / Yu. Nemankova // [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/mtz-postavit-vtoruju-partiju-tehniki-v-sudan-386164-2020/>

<sup>31</sup> MTZ has good export figures: deliveries to Russia increased by 20%, and to Africa by 70% [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://ont.by/news/u-mtz-horoshie-pokazateli-po-eksportu-na-20-vyrosli-postavki-v-rossiyu-na-70-v-afriku>

<sup>32</sup>. ” And in total, in the first quarter of this year, the products of the Minsk Tractor Plant were shipped to the markets of more than thirty countries, including 22 foreign countries.

**The Minsk Automobile Plant** immediately increased supplies of equipment to non-CIS countries almost two and a half times in the first quarter of 2020 . An important component in achieving this indicator was the fact that at the beginning of this year the enterprise, together with Borisov LLC Pozhsnab, entered into a contract for the supply of 73 units of fire and rescue equipment to the Mongolian Emergency Situations Agency. And MAZ has already “started fulfilling the contract for the supply of chassis and is assembling passenger equipment for export to Mongolia. The joint project will be implemented during this year <sup>33</sup>. ”

In the spring of 2020, the unitary enterprise **Amkodor-DOMZ** , located in Dzerzhinsk, Minsk region, seriously updated its export plans, shipping the first batch of its products to the Russian region - the Republic of Karelia - in April. There, these seven overhead cranes with a lifting capacity from 3.2 to 16 tons will be used to implement an investment project to which the government of Karelia attaches great importance - “to create, on the premises of the former Onega Tractor Plant, a high-tech import-substituting full-cycle production of forestry equipment: harvesters and forwarders middle and heavy class” <sup>34</sup>. A characteristic detail: the overhead cranes sent to Karelia are new generation equipment that is controlled from the floor using a radio signal, which ensures high safety standards for personnel. It is also important that this spring it is planned to send a second batch of equipment to Karelia from Belarusian Dzerzhinsk.

Another Belarusian enterprise that significantly strengthened its position in the Russian market in the first quarter of 2020 is **SJSC BELGI**. Here, in the first three months of this year, 5,059 cars were assembled, and a total of 5,230 cars were sold. At the same time, “supplies to the Russian market increased by

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<sup>32</sup> MTZ increased exports of products to Tajikistan by 2 times [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/mtz-uvlichil-eksport-produktsii-v-tadzhikistan-v-2-raza-387386-2020/>

<sup>33</sup>Nemankova, Yu. MAZ in the first quarter increased exports to non-CIS countries by almost 2.4 times / Yu. Nemankova // [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/maz-vi-kvartale-uvlichil-eksport-v-dalnee-zarubezhje-pochti-v-24-raza-387079-2020/>

<sup>34</sup> “Amkodor-Onego” in Karelia received the first batch of overhead cranes [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/amkodor-onego-v-karelii-poluchil-pervuju-partiju-mostovyyh-kranov-388008-2020/>

2.5 times, 2,705 cars were exported there in the first quarter<sup>35</sup>. ” In total, in 2020 the company plans to sell 28 thousand cars, of which 18 thousand will be sent to Russia.

Belarusian producers of agricultural products and food products continue to increase their supplies abroad. In the first quarter of 2020, their exports to 83 countries grew by almost 10 percent, amounting to almost one and a half billion dollars. An important detail: an increase in supplies was observed in almost all areas. In particular, “exports to Russia increased by 4.4%, to the CIS countries excluding Russia - by 24.7%, countries of Asia and Oceania - by 2.2 times, America and the Caribbean - by 52.4%, the EU – by 54.3%. The Chinese direction showed an increase of 2.4 times<sup>36</sup>. ” At the same time, in the first three months of 2020, supplies to foreign markets of Belarusian meat and meat products, milk and dairy products, and potatoes increased especially rapidly. These positive trends were largely a continuation of the powerful export work that the Belarusian agro-industrial complex demonstrated in 2019.

Let us recall that at that time, supplies of agricultural products and food products to 104 countries of the world exceeded in monetary terms the figure of five and a half billion dollars, amounting to almost a sixth of the commodity exports of the Republic of Belarus in 2019. A number of positive trends contributed to the achievement of this level. Firstly, “the supply of milk and dairy products, rapeseed oil, prepared or canned fish, canned vegetables and fruits, soybean oil, poultry, eggs, chocolate and other prepared products containing cocoa, and potatoes has increased<sup>37</sup>. ” Secondly, the geographic diversification of Belarusian exports has expanded. The number of new markets included countries on almost all continents: in Asia - Afghanistan; in Africa - Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Guinea, Kenya, Mauritania, Mozambique, Niger, Sudan, Uganda; in America and the Caribbean - Belize, Cuba, Uruguay; in Europe - Luxembourg, Finland, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina. The variety of supplies from Belarus to these new countries could be seen in the following examples. Thus, supplies of whey and skimmed

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<sup>35</sup> “BELGEE” increased exports to Russia by 2.5 times in the first quarter / Yu. Nemankova // [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/beldzhi-vi-kvartale-uvlichil-eksport-v-rossiju-v-25-raza-386430-2020/>

<sup>36</sup> Exports of Belarusian agricultural products in the first quarter increased by 9.8% [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/eksport-beloruskoj-selhozproduksii-vi-kvartale-vyros-na-98-389760-2020/>

<sup>37</sup> Exports of Belarusian agricultural products in 2019 exceeded \$5.5 billion [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/eksport-beloruskoj-selhozproduksii-v-2019-godu-prevysil-55-mlrd-378531-2020>

milk powder began to Afghanistan, malt to Angola and Burkina Faso, skimmed milk powder to Benin, Mozambique and Niger, canned milk and milk powder to Cuba, alcoholic beverages to Uruguay, Finland - fur raw materials, Albania - sugar and potatoes, Bosnia and Herzegovina - potatoes.

Thirdly, Belarusian exports of agricultural products and food products to the market of Belarus' strategic partners – Russia and China – increased in 2019. In particular, its volume to Russia increased by three percent and amounted to \$4.3 billion. Let us note that “the main driver of growth in supplies to Russia was dairy products. Its export revenue increased by 23%. The supply of eggs, flax fiber, gelatin, seeds, and rapeseed oil has also increased<sup>38</sup>. ”

As for China, supplies there from Belarus increased by almost 60 percent and amounted to \$131.5 million. This made it possible to increase the share of Belarusian exports to the Chinese market in the structure of all exports to Asia and Oceania to 68 percent. At the same time, “the volume of supplies of processed meat products with high added value (beef and poultry) increased by \$53.3 million and reached 44.1% in the total structure of food exports to China<sup>39</sup>. ” And this is along with the fact that supplies of rapeseed oil, flax fiber, chocolate, alcoholic beverages, mineral waters, skimmed milk powder and whey powder have increased to the Celestial Empire.

Even more intense plans for the development of exports of agricultural products and food products were adopted in Belarus for 2020 - “to increase supplies by 4.2% compared to 2019 and reach an amount exceeding \$5.7 billion<sup>40</sup>. ” At the same time, hopes were placed not only on dairy products, but also on crop products, as well as meat. In particular, 3.6 million tons of dairy and 316 thousand tons of meat products will be sent to Russia alone. Interesting prospects are also opening up in China, where in January 2020 another 14 new producers of meat products from Belarus were accredited. These include 11 new beef producers - Pinsk, Brest, Zhlobin, Gomel, Grodno, Vitebsk, Slonim, Volkovysk, meat processing plants, enterprises Brest Traditions, Vakhavyak Plus, Miron, as well as three chicken producers -

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<sup>38</sup> Nemankova, Yu. Belarus plans to supply more than 3 million tons of milk and 316 thousand tons of meat to Russia in 2020 / Yu. Nemankova // [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-planiruet-postavit-bolee-3-mln-t-molochki-i-316-tys-t-mjasa-v-rossiju- v-2020-godu-378543-2020>

<sup>39</sup> The first container train with meat products is planned to be sent to China this year [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/pervyj-kontejnernyj-poezd-s-mjasnoj-produktsiej-planirujut-otpravit-v-kitaj-v-etom-godu-378553-2020>

<sup>40</sup> Belarus plans to increase food exports by 4.2% in 2020 [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-planiruet-uvelichit-eksport-prodovolstvija-na-42-v-2020-godu-378535-2020>

Belorusneft -Osobino” and two sites of the “Rassvet” poultry farm. For another five enterprises, the range of products that can be exported to the Chinese market has been expanded, “including chicken feet, wing tips and offal<sup>41</sup>. ”

All these facts indicate the main thing: whoever does not give up in the most difficult conditions ultimately wins, helping to overcome the consequences of the unfavorable epidemiological situation in the world.

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<sup>41</sup> Another 14 manufacturers have been accredited to supply Belarusian meat products to China [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/dlja-postavok-belorusskoj-mjasnoj-produksii-v-kitaj-akkreditovany-esche-14-proizvoditelej-375197-2020/>

## On the way to export diversification

One of the priority tasks for the development of the Belarusian economy, set in the Program of Activities of the Government of the Republic of Belarus for the period until 2025, is product and country diversification of exports, which should ensure an increase in Belarusian supplies in 2025 to \$50 billion, as well as “promotion of goods and services in new markets”<sup>42</sup>. It is clear that those enterprises that have already created a certain foundation in the development of foreign markets can help solve this problem. These, of course, include, first of all, the flagships of the Belarusian industry.

Thus, despite the coronavirus pandemic, the Minsk Tractor Plant exported products worth \$530 million in 2020. At the same time, it increased supplies to non-CIS countries by 18.5 percent. And although the main importers of its equipment remained Russia, Kazakhstan and Ukraine, “in total, products were supplied to 45 countries, including nine countries where they were not sold in 2019 (Burundi, Great Britain, Haiti, Guatemala, Guinea, Dominican Republic, Zimbabwe, Indonesia, Spain)”<sup>43</sup>.

The Belarusian Metallurgical Plant shipped two million tons of metal products to 52 countries in 2020. At the same time, the share of European Union countries in total exports exceeded 45 percent. The fact that “the volume of shipments to Spain, Slovenia and France has increased twice or more times” says a lot. Deliveries to Austria, Ireland, Romania, Poland and Finland increased by more than 30%<sup>44</sup>. “The greatest demand in the markets of these countries was for wire rod, bead bronze and steel wire, as well as structural rolled products intended for the automotive industry.

But the Minsk Motor Plant (MMZ) in 2020 increased its supplies to Russia alone by more than 12 percent, exceeding \$40 million. This is largely due to the fact that in the neighboring country MMZ “cooperates with 59

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<sup>42</sup> Program of activities of the Government of the Republic of Belarus for the period until 2025. – Minsk, 2020. – P. 46.

<sup>43</sup> In 2020, MTZ increased exports of products to non-CIS countries by 18.5% [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/mtz-v-2020-godu-uvlichil-eksport-produktsii-v-dalnee-zarubezhje-na-185-427593-2021/>

<sup>44</sup> BMZ increased the export of metal products to 13 EU countries [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/bmz-narastil-eksport-metalloproduktsii-v-13-stran-evrosojuza-426139-2021/>

Russian industrial assembly enterprises, and is also working to establish partnerships with ten more <sup>45</sup>. ”

Enterprises of the Bellegprom concern are also starting the new five-year period from fairly high positions in exports, which last year sent about 60 percent of all their manufactured goods to 52 countries around the world, having also achieved a positive balance of foreign trade in excess of \$170 million. At the same time, “exports to Lithuania (128.7%), Germany (104.6%), Estonia (115.3%), Japan (296.2%), Uzbekistan (107.3%), Sweden (102) increased. .8%), Bulgaria (158.2%), Slovakia (176.2%), Czech Republic (115.8%), Israel (129.4%), Denmark (360.3%), Australia (361.2 %), Austria (261.4%)” <sup>46</sup>.

The enterprises of the Bellesbumprom concern also increased the export of their goods by five percent in 2020, the volume of which to the markets of 70 countries reached almost \$610 million and amounted to a record three-quarters of the volume of all products produced by the concern. This was largely achieved by increasing the volume of sales of export items to non-CIS countries. In particular, supplies to Albania, Ireland, Iceland, Cyprus, and Mexico were resumed, but the highest growth rate was observed in the USA, Canada, Austria, Great Britain, Switzerland, Finland, Turkey, India, and Indonesia. In addition, “exports to China increased by almost 1.3 times at the end of the year. Exports to Russia increased by 5.2%, and to Ukraine by 7% <sup>47</sup>.

It must be assumed that in 2021 these and other Belarusian enterprises will try to slow down the current pace. At least, the results of January of this year show that business entities in our country took up the task of exporting very responsibly, increasing the supply of goods and services to foreign countries by 13.5 percent - to more than three billion dollars. At the same time, “exports of goods increased by 19.4% to \$2.36 billion <...>. The balance was

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<sup>45</sup> MMZ increased its supplies to Russia by more than 12% in 2020 [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/mmz-v-2020-godu-narastil-objemy-postavok-v-rossiju-bolee-chem-na-12-425977-2021/>

<sup>46</sup> “Bellegprom” supplied products to 52 countries around the world in 2020 [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/bellegprom-v-2020-godu-postavil-produktsiju-v-52-strany-mira-427383-2021/>

<sup>47</sup> Bellesbumprom enterprises increased product exports by 5% in 2020 [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/predpriyatija-bellesbumproma-v-2020-godu-velichili-eksport-produktsii-na-5-427809-2021/>

positive in the amount of \$100.2 million (in January 2020 it was negative and amounted to \$61.2 million <sup>48</sup>. "

Among those who have already made a significant contribution to achieving this indicator, we should again note the enterprises of the Bellesbumprom concern, which in January were able to increase the supply of their products abroad by another 18 percent - up to \$55.5 million. This happened due to the growth in exports of wood panels, furniture, pulp, plywood, paper and cardboard. In total, almost 50 product items were shipped to the markets of 48 countries. An important detail: more than half of the export volume – almost \$30 million – went to non-CIS countries. In addition, “shipments to the countries of the European Union increased by 15.5%, to China – by 35.9%. Supplies to CIS markets increased by 10.6% <sup>49</sup>. " Among the countries, the leaders in this list are Russia, Poland and China. In general, in 2021, the enterprises of the Bellesbumprom concern plan to “continue to increase the export of goods by less than 6.5% compared to the level of 2020. <sup>50</sup>” This should be facilitated by both the modernization of existing production facilities and the emergence of new ones. In particular, in this regard, this year it is planned to put into operation a plant for the production of multilayer cardboard on the basis of the Dobrush paper mill “Hero of Labor” and a new production of wood fuel - pellets - in Vitebsk.

Domestic high-tech products can and should make their contribution to achieving high levels of export diversification. In 2020, the Republic of Belarus set a goal to maintain the volume of its exports at the level of \$15 billion, both through supplies of existing items and due to the emergence of new priorities. Let us recall that last year deliveries of such products abroad were carried out in such areas as radio electronics, instrument making, mechanical engineering, and medicines. “The ICT sector makes a significant contribution to exports. The demand for Belarusian intellectual property is also growing <sup>51</sup>. ” A very effective tool for promoting Belarusian high-tech products

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<sup>48</sup> In January, Belarus increased exports of goods and services by 13.3% to \$3.057 billion [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-v-janvare-uvulichila-eksport-tovarov-i-uslug-na-135-do-3057-mlrd-432023-2021/>

<sup>49</sup> Bellesbumprom enterprises increased product exports by 18% in January [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/predpriyatija-bellesbumproma-v-janvare-uvulichili-eksport-produktsii-na-18-432143-2021/>

<sup>50</sup> Bellesbumprom enterprises plan to increase exports by at least 6.5% in 2021 [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/predpriyatija-bellesbumproma-v-2021-godu-planirujut-uvelichit-eksport-ne-menee-chem-na-65-429310-2021/>

<sup>51</sup> Belarus expects to maintain the volume of exports of high-tech products at \$15 billion this year [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-rasschityvaet->

to foreign markets was the participation of domestic developers in international exhibitions held in the fall of 2020.

Thus, in November, the exposition of Belarusian manufacturers Made in Belarus was represented at the international exhibition and forum of telecommunications and information technologies Cairo ICT in the capital of Egypt, which was attended by more than 400 companies from countries such as Russia, China, USA, France, Germany, Italy, Great Britain, Republic of Korea, Saudi Arabia. A distinctive feature of the Belarusian exposition was the latest developments of research organizations of the National Academy of Sciences and higher educational institutions of the Ministry of Education, which have high export potential. In particular, the Belarusian State University demonstrated in Cairo a number of medical developments: a set of medical programs in the field of cardiology, mathematical models for surgical practice, computer modeling for creating drugs against the SARS - CoV coronavirus . Developments in the field of information security for banking and customs enterprises were presented by the Belarusian State University of Informatics and Radio Electronics. The Belarusian-Russian University attracted the attention of exhibition visitors and forum participants with its “Electronic Guide” information and advertising system designed for public transport. As for the Joint Institute for Informatics Problems of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, it “demonstrated an intelligent micromodule for on-board recognition of images of surfaces and objects, as well as a cluster personal supercomputer UIIP - OFFICE , designed for complex scientific calculations, modeling, solving engineering problems and teaching technology at universities parallel programming”<sup>52</sup>.

The national exposition of Belarus within the framework of the third China International Import Exhibition in an online format was also a good help for promoting Belarusian high-tech exports. Suffice it to say that the Belarusian side presented more than a hundred scientific, technical and innovative developments in the field of information and communication technologies, healthcare, biotechnologies, new materials, and agriculture. Among them, we should note the more than current development of the Republican Scientific and Practical Center for Transfusiology and Medical

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[v-etom-godu-sohranit-objem-eksporta-vysokotekhnologichnoj-produktsii-na-urovne-15-421250-2020/](http://v-etom-godu-sohranit-objem-eksporta-vysokotekhnologichnoj-produktsii-na-urovne-15-421250-2020/)

<sup>52</sup> Exposition of Belarusian manufacturers Made in Belarus is presented at the international exhibition in Cairo [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/ekspozitsija-belorusskih-proizvoditelej-made-in-belarus-predstavlena-na-mezhdunarodnoj-vystavke-v-kaire-417549-2020/>

Biotechnology - “anti-Covid immunoglobulin for the treatment of patients with severe COVID -19 infection, as well as patients with viral encephalitis and meningoencephalitis <sup>53</sup>. ” The Belarusian National Technical University showed here a unique acoustic system for the treatment of skin oncological diseases, which has higher efficiency in comparison with traditional methods and at the same time allows reducing the patient’s radiation dose by a quarter. At the import exhibition, the National Academy of Sciences demonstrated an office supercomputer, which is small in size and at the same time capable of carrying out complex scientific calculations and processing a large amount of data, and the Belarusian State University demonstrated plant protection products based on natural ingredients that can be used in organic farming. Among the innovative developments of the Belarusian State Technological University at the China exhibition International Import Expo in Shanghai presented “nickel-diamond coating technology, self-cleaning antibacterial composite coatings, radioprotective glass, thin sheet glass and flexible glass films for solar panels <sup>54</sup>,” as well as technology for the formation of imitation decorative coatings on wood, slabs, cladding and composite materials and dental cements and materials for dental purposes.

Finally, a wide range of Belarusian high-tech scientific and technical developments was presented at the international industrial online exhibition TeMEx , which, under the auspices of the Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, took place for three months, starting in mid-October 2020, and in which more than 70 companies from eight countries took part peace. An absolutely new product – an electric bus – was demonstrated by the Minsk Automobile Plant. The “Intellectual Quarry” project was demonstrated by the Belarusian Automobile Plant. All these and a number of other facts confirm the conclusion that “the main core factor in the development of the industrial complex of Belarus is the growth of the innovative component of manufactured products <sup>55</sup>,” which, in turn, will inevitably contribute to the growth of Belarusian high-tech exports in the near future.

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<sup>53</sup> Belarus will present more than 100 scientific and technical developments at the Chinese Import Exhibition [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/bolee-100-nauchno-tehnicheskikh-razrabotok-predstavit-belarus-na-kitajskoj-vystavke-importa-414174-2020/>

<sup>54</sup> Innovative developments of BSTU will be presented at an exhibition of goods and services in Shanghai [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/innovatsionnye-razrabotki-bgtu-predstavjat-na-vystavke-tovarov-i-uslug-v-shanhaj-414078-2020/>

<sup>55</sup> Kharitonchik: the main factor in the development of the industrial complex of Belarus is the growth of innovative products [Electronic resource]. 2020. – URL: [https://www.belta.by/economics/view/kharitonchik-glavnym-faktorom-razvitiya-promkompleksa-belarusi-javljajetsja-rost-innovatsionnoj-410940-2020/?utm\\_source=belta&utm\\_medium=news&utm\\_campaign=accent](https://www.belta.by/economics/view/kharitonchik-glavnym-faktorom-razvitiya-promkompleksa-belarusi-javljajetsja-rost-innovatsionnoj-410940-2020/?utm_source=belta&utm_medium=news&utm_campaign=accent)

Another priority area for the development of Belarusian exports is agricultural products and food products. In the above-mentioned Program of Action of the Government of the Republic of Belarus for the period until 2025, in the section “Efficient and environmentally friendly agriculture”, tasks are set to increase the competitiveness of agricultural production and increase export potential, in order to ultimately reach the “export of food products and agricultural raw materials in 2025.” year - 7 billion US dollars <sup>56</sup>. " At the same time, the government plans to “bet on all segments: both crop production and livestock production <sup>57</sup>,” as well as on the diversification of export supplies.

In addition, the state program “Agricultural Business” for 2021-2025 has been approved in the Republic of Belarus. It provides for the achievement of such goals as increasing the competitiveness of agricultural products and food products, developing environmentally friendly agriculture, ensuring adequate nutrition and a healthy lifestyle for the population, as well as “increasing export potential <sup>58</sup>. ” The program contains nine subprograms related to such areas as: 1) crop production; 2) seed production; 3) livestock farming; 4) breeding; 5) fishery activities; 6) land reclamation; 7) engineering flood control measures to protect agricultural lands; 8) ensuring general conditions for the functioning of the agro-industrial complex; 9) support for small businesses. Subject to their successful implementation, “the export of food products and agricultural raw materials is projected to increase in 2025 by 21.3 percent by 2020 (up to 7 billion US dollars) <sup>59</sup>. ” It is quite possible to achieve this provided that the raw material base of agro-industrial production is strengthened, the modernization of existing and the development of new competitive industries, the digitalization of industries and sub-sectors of the agro-industrial complex, the development of breeding and genetics for the needs of sustainable agriculture. And the immediate goal for 2021 is “to

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<sup>56</sup> Program of activities of the Government of the Republic of Belarus for the period until 2025. – Minsk, 2020. – P. 35.

<sup>57</sup> Growth in production volumes and diversification of exports - Alexander Subbotin outlined the tasks for the meat industry [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <http://www.government.by/ru/content/9783>

<sup>58</sup> Food security and increasing exports - directions for the development of agricultural business have been determined [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/prodbezopasnost-i-naraschivanie-eksporta-opredeleny-napravlenija-razvitiija-agrarnogo-biznesa-427294-2021/>

<sup>59</sup> State program “Agricultural Business” for 2021-2025 [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://pravo.by/document/?guid=12551&p0=C22100059&p1=1&p5=0>

increase the export of agricultural products by 4.3% compared to the 2020 level. This will amount to a little over \$6 billion <sup>60</sup>. "

Belarusian exporters intend to move forward in this direction, relying on several basic priorities. Firstly, it is important to maintain what has been achieved in traditional markets, which include Russia, as well as Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan. Suffice it to say that the share of the Russian market in Belarusian agricultural exports in 2020 amounted to almost three-quarters of the total volume or \$4.3 billion. And this is not only meat and dairy, but also high-tech products. "These are seeds and planting material, breeding stock, plant protection products, veterinary drugs, feed additives, modern agricultural machinery <sup>61</sup>. " At a joint meeting of the board of agricultural departments of the two countries, held in March 2021, the parties outlined further necessary measures to increase mutual trade and the main directions for the integration of the Belarusian and Russian agricultural complexes in the Union State, which gives good reason to believe: interaction in the field of agriculture of Belarus and Russia will only increase.

As for Uzbekistan, in 2020 the trade turnover of agricultural products and food products with this country in Central Asia exceeded \$87 million, an increase of 76 percent. An important detail is that "exports of Belarusian food in 2020 more than doubled and reached \$73 million. Supplies of Belarusian beef to Uzbekistan increased by more than 2 times, sugar by 3.5 times, and milk powder by 2 times," times, fish and fish products – 1.5 times <sup>62</sup>. " The parties also actively interacted in other areas of the industry. Speaking about livestock farming, we must remember the supply of about 400 head of Belarusian-bred cattle to Uzbekistan in 2020. In order to increase the volume of this cooperation, the Belarusian enterprises Belplemzhivoobedinenie and the Uzbek VostokMedGeruda have created a joint selection and genetic center, which is engaged in the purchase and supply of Belarusian breeding cattle to Uzbekistan, as well as scientific and technological support. In the field of veterinary medicine, the Belarusian OJSC BelVitunifarm, together with the Samarkand Institute of Veterinary Medicine and the Veterinary Research

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<sup>60</sup> Belarus expects to increase exports of agricultural products to \$7 billion in 2025 [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-rasschityvaet-v-2025-godu-narastit-eksport-selhozproduksii-do-7-mlrd-427628-2021/>

<sup>61</sup> More than 70% of Belarusian food exports in 2020 went to Russia [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/bolee-70-belorusskogo-eksporta-prodovolstvija-v-2020-godu-prihodilos-na-rossiju-432008-2021/>

<sup>62</sup> Exports of Belarusian food to Uzbekistan more than doubled in 2020 [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/eksport-belorusskogo-prodovolstvija-v-uzbekistan-v-2020-godu-vyros-bolee-chem-v-dva-raza-431838-2021/>

Institute, decided to create a joint venture for the production of veterinary drugs and vaccines on Uzbek territory. In the field of breeding, the result of interaction between the Scientific and Production Center of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus and the Research Institute of Vegetables, Melons and Potatoes of Uzbekistan was the production of 45 varieties of vegetables and 6 varieties of melons of Belarusian selection. There are results in seed production, where partnerships are being actively developed by the Belsemena RO and the Seed Production Center of Uzbekistan. In 2020, samples of seeds of peas, beans, carrots, onions, and tomatoes of Uzbek selection were sent to Belarus for testing, and seeds of tomatoes, onions, beets, radishes, carrots, and beans of Belarusian selection were successfully grown on Uzbek soil. Finally, in the field of education, the Tashkent State Agrarian University and the Grodno State Agrarian University created joint faculties in Tashkent and Andijan and began accepting students for undergraduate studies in the areas of “Plant Protection and Quarantine” and “Technology of Storage and Processing of Animal Raw Materials.”

Exports of Belarusian agricultural products to Azerbaijan increased by more than 10 percent last year. To be more precise, “in 2020, the trade turnover of agricultural products and food products reached \$35 million and increased by 5.3% compared to 2019. Export of goods – \$30.4 million (or 110.7%), import – \$4.6 million<sup>63</sup>. ” This happened due to the supply from Belarus of a wide range of dairy and meat products from such Belarusian exporting enterprises as JSC Belovezhskie Cheeses, JSC Luninets Dairy Plant, JSC Molochny Mir, JSC Rogachevsky Dairy Canning Plant, PUP Kalinkovich Dairy Plant”, JSC “Lida Milk Canning Plant”, JSC “Minsk Dairy Plant No. 1”. In June 2021, enterprises from Belarus will take part in the international food industry exhibition InterFood Azerbaijan , which will allow them to open up new opportunities to enter the consumer market of this South Caucasian country. So the prospects for increasing exports are quite good.

Secondly, special attention will be paid to the diversification of sales markets and the development of exports to other countries of the world. In particular, it is planned to actively develop food supplies to the Chinese market, which almost doubled in 2020 alone due to the export of beef, poultry, milk powder, whey powder, ice cream, cheeses, butter, as well as sugar, starch, potato chips and fish products. And this is far from the limit. Note that in 2020,

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<sup>63</sup> Exports of Belarusian products to Azerbaijan increased by 10.7% in 2020 [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/eksport-belorusskoj-selhozproduksii-v-azerbajdzhan-v-2020-godu-vyros-na-107-433105-2021/>

Belarusian agricultural products and food products were supplied to 116 countries. At the same time, 20 new markets were opened. “Among them are Kuwait (began supplying flour confectionery products and candies), Nepal (protein substrates), Algeria and Madagascar (flour), Congo (corn seeds), Mali (corn grits), Morocco (beet pulp), Namibia (milk powder), Somalia (sugar), Sierra Leone (egg products), Equatorial Guinea (poultry), South Sudan (whole milk powder). The list also includes Paraguay, Saint Lucia, Djibouti, Ireland, Cyprus, Malta, Portugal and Croatia<sup>64</sup>. ” In general, the share of far arc countries in the total volume of Belarusian exports of agricultural products in 2020 increased to \$796 million and amounted to almost 14 percent.

In total, in 2020, food exports from Belarus increased by 4.3 percent and exceeded \$5.8 billion. This allowed our country, for example, to gain a foothold in the top five world exporters for a number of types of dairy products - butter, cheese, milk powder, whey. At the same time, the Belarusian side strives to ensure that “not to export raw materials, but to process grain, milk and meat as much as possible in the country and supply products with high added value abroad, so that these goods end up on store shelves and buyers form a stable, loyal opinion about the Belarusian product”<sup>65</sup>.

A good example of such an approach to developing and consolidating its positions in foreign markets is demonstrated, in particular, by OJSC Rogachevsky MKK. The main trends in the foreign economic development of the enterprise in 2020 were: increasing supplies to already developed markets - Russia, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Ukraine, Israel, the USA, as well as entering new markets - the UAE, Singapore, South Korea and Afghanistan. This also happened for the reason that in 2020, “the range of products supplied to foreign markets was expanded, where consumers appreciated condensed milk with the addition of cocoa, coffee and chicory,”<sup>66</sup> making a choice in favor of safe and natural products.

Another interesting example in this context is the Turov Dairy Plant, where “foreign consumers now account for 80% of their products. Deliveries

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<sup>64</sup> In 2020, Belarus began supplying agricultural products to 20 new markets [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-v-2020-godu-nachala-postavki-selhozproduktov-na-20-novykh-rynkov-427631-2021/>

<sup>65</sup> Exports of Belarusian agricultural products in 2020 increased by 4.3% [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/eksport-belorusskoj-selhozproduktov-na-2020-godu-vyros-na-43-427620-2021>

<sup>66</sup> In 2020, Rogachevsky MCC expanded exports by supplying new markets in four countries [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/rogachevskij-mkk-v-2020-godu-rasshiril-eksport-za-schet-postavok-na-novye-rynki-chetyreh-stran-427607-2021>

to other countries brought the company almost \$87 million, which is 20% more than in 2019. <sup>67</sup>” In total, dairy products from Turov were supplied to 16 countries in 2020. At the same time, Mongolia, Turkmenistan, and Iraq became new markets. In 2021, export volumes at the plant are planned to increase by more than a quarter. These plans are based on the active re-equipment of the enterprise. In 2020, the cream cheese production capacity was increased here and whey processing and condensation lines were installed. In 2021, it is planned to modernize the line of extracted cheeses.

All these examples show that the potential and opportunities for the successful implementation of the goals set for the new five-year plan to diversify exports from the Republic of Belarus are quite real and achievable with the active work of Belarusian business entities both in industry, in the production of high-tech products, and in the agro-industrial complex.

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<sup>67</sup> In 2020, the Turov Dairy Plant produced a third more cheeses and earned \$110 million [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/turovskij-molochnyj-kombinat-v-2020-godu-proizvel-na-tret-bolshe-syrov-i-vyruchil-110-mln-427862-2021/>

## To promote trade and economic interests

Every year in Belarus the Plan of national exhibitions of the country in foreign countries is approved. Its distinctive feature is the focus of the Belarusian side on promoting its trade and economic interests in the countries of Asia, Africa, Latin America - Vietnam, Mongolia, South Korea, India, China, Turkey, Qatar, Iran, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Brazil. In this regard, the Asian continent is especially important, where “there are still many opportunities in this direction <...>. In order to use them successfully, it is necessary to continue systematic and consistent work, developing mutual interest and initiating new formats of contacts, as is, in fact, what is happening in the development of partnerships with a number of Asian countries <sup>68</sup>,” including **Vietnam, Iran, Mongolia, Turkey, Pakistan, China** , where Belarusian exporters actively participate in specialized exhibition events.

It is characteristic that representatives of Belarus are participating in a number of exhibition events not for the first time, but already using the experience accumulated there earlier in promoting their interests. These include, in particular, the **Vietnam Trade Fair Expo** , which has been held annually since 1990, is one of the largest in Southeast Asia, regularly attracting hundreds of exhibitors and tens of thousands of professional visitors. In December 2018, this business event was held in Ho Chi Minh City for the 16th time. At it, Belarus was represented by a national exposition, the participants of which were more than 50 large enterprises, which focused “on high-tech, complex technical products, as well as agricultural products and food products <sup>69</sup>.”

In particular, only the Belarusian State University (BSU) then presented about 30 scientific and technical developments in the field of agriculture, instrument engineering, chemistry, healthcare, and information technology. “In particular, the exhibition included the complex microbial preparation “Zhytsen”. Its use has proven effective in increasing grain yields, it improves

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<sup>68</sup> Zalesky, B. Horizons of the far arc. Potential for interaction of the Republic of Belarus with the countries of Asia and Africa / B. Zalesky. – Palmarium Academic Publishing, 2022. – C. 25 .

<sup>69</sup> Grishkevich, A. The national exposition of Belarus is presented at a trade exhibition in Ho Chi Minh City / A. Grishkevich // [Electronic resource]. – 2018. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/natsionalnaja-ekspozitsija-belarusi-predstavlena-na-torgovoj-vystavke-v-hoshimine-328209-2018/>

soil quality and accelerates the decomposition of stubble and straw<sup>70</sup>. " BGU biopesticides for complex plant protection "Aurin", "Stimul", which are used to stimulate the growth and development of plants and protect them from bacterial and fungal infections, were also presented here. Ultrasonic gas metering devices, a device for remote monitoring of the movement of mobile objects "Agent B-602", a medical unit for general hyperthermia "Ptich-M", antitumor drugs, disinfectants, and edible packaging films also aroused great interest among visitors to the exhibition.

The possibilities of Belarusian food exports were demonstrated in Ho Chi Minh City by such enterprises as OJSC Krinitza, OJSC Belsolod, JV OJSC Spartak, OJSC Minsk Crystal - the management company of the Minsk Crystal Group holding, OJSC Minsk Sparkling Wine Factory, OJSC "Confectionery factory "Slodych", SOJSC "Kommunarka", OJSC "Krasny Pishevik", OJSC "Krasny Mozyryanin", OJSC "Lidapischekontsentraty". Their interest in this business forum can be explained by the fact that "Vietnam is not only a profitable consumer market with more than 92 million people, but also a kind of trade gateway to the entire region of Southeast Asia, whose population exceeds 600 million people."<sup>71</sup>.

In 2022, more than 350 companies from 16 countries took part in this forum, including China, the USA, Japan, India, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, and Cuba. At this forum, Belarus presented more than 100 scientific, technical and innovative developments in the field of high-tech equipment. The event is held under the auspices of the Ministry of Industry and Trade of Vietnam. "The topics of the exhibition are IT and telecommunications, science and education, mechanical engineering and industrial equipment, agriculture , food, pharmaceutical and medical products, building materials, chemical products, light industry, consumer goods ."<sup>72</sup>

As for **Iran , the International Exhibition of Agriculture and Food Industry** Iran took place in June 2022 Agrofood . The National Exposition of the Republic of Belarus was organized at the Tehran International Exhibition

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<sup>70</sup> BSU will present scientific and technical developments at a trade fair in Vietnam [Electronic resource]. – 2018. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/bgu-predstavit-nauchno-tehnicheskie-razrabotki-na-torgovoj-jarmarke-vo-vjetname-327981-2018/>

<sup>71</sup> Belgospischeprom enterprises will present their products at an exhibition in Vietnam [Electronic resource]. – 2018. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/deprijatija-belgospischeproma-predstavjat-produktsiju-na-vystavke-vo-vjetname-327182-2018/>

<sup>72</sup> Belarus will present more than 100 projects at the Vietnam exhibition Expo [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/bolee-100-proektov-predstavit-belarus-na-vystavke-vietnam-expo-495765-2022/>

Center. This forum is the key industry event in the field of food production and agriculture in Iran. The main sections of the exhibition: agricultural machinery, food and drinks, equipment for their production, catering, storage and packaging, ingredients. The exhibition is held annually. In 2021, 311 organizations and enterprises became its participants. This time Belarus, Brazil, Germany, Italy, Turkey, the Netherlands and others presented their products. Belarusian manufacturers showed a wide variety of products. Thus, the range of goods of the Vitba confectionery factory included more than 100 items, including breakfast cereals, waffles and cookies.

The National Academy of Sciences of Belarus demonstrated innovative developments in several areas. For example, the Scientific and Practical Center of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus for Animal Husbandry proposed a number of veterinary drugs and dietary supplements based on nanoparticles for farm animals. The Belarusian State Technological University presented “new types of mineral fertilizers, technologies for processing agricultural waste to produce construction and composite materials, technologies for processing plant raw materials and medicinal herbs to produce biologically active additives, new methods for analyzing the quality of flax and flax products” for the guests of the exhibition <sup>73</sup>. The Belarusian State University presented 15 scientific and technical developments at the international exhibition Iran Agrofood. Among the BSU innovations are edible films and coatings based on polysaccharides and plant antimicrobial and antioxidant additives. “They are the only type of biodegradable polymer packaging that does not require sorting or special disposal conditions and preserves the taste, aroma, aesthetic appearance and sterility of products. The new type of wrap is non-toxic, completely decomposes in the human and animal body, and can significantly reduce the use of plastic <sup>74</sup>. ”

And in **Mongolia**, in September 2022, the National Exposition of Belarus was presented at the 47th international multidisciplinary exhibition Ulaanbaatar Partnership in Ulaanbaatar. The exhibition was attended by large export-oriented Belarusian companies - manufacturers of food products, pharmaceutical products, engineering enterprises, scientific and technical organizations and others. “The Ulaanbaatar Partnership exhibition is universal

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<sup>73</sup> A wide range of Belarusian goods will be presented at the Iran exhibition Agrofood [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/shirokij-spektr-belorusskih-tovarov-budet-predstavlen-na-vystavke-iran-agrofood-507944-2022/>

<sup>74</sup> Edible films, vitamins, veterinary preparations: BSU presents 15 developments at exhibitions in Iran [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/sjedobnye-plenki-vitaminy-vetpreparaty-bgu-predstavljajet-15-razrabotok-na-vystavke-v-irane-508439-2022/>

in nature and covers a wide range of thematic sections: food and drinks, agriculture, mechanical engineering, construction, healthcare, pharmaceuticals, light industry, consumer electronics. The event is one of the largest multi-industry exhibitions in Mongolia: in 2021 it brought together 110 companies and 12 thousand visitors <sup>75</sup>. ” Belarus took part in the exhibition in Ulaanbaatar in the format of a national exposition in 2019. Then the exposition presented the products and services of 15 companies: mechanical engineering, food industry, science and education organizations. The business program included the Belarusian-Mongolian business forum with the participation of representatives of 60 Mongolian enterprises.

In **Turkey**, the National Exposition of Belarus was presented at the beginning of November 2022 in Istanbul - as part of the international multi-industry exhibition MUSIAD Expo. The participation of domestic enterprises and organizations in the national exposition within the framework of this exhibition contributed to the establishment of new business contacts with potential partners, increasing Belarusian exports and diversifying the product range. Türkiye is an important partner of Belarus. “Last year, trade turnover between the two countries amounted to \$1,081.6 million (146% by 2020), including exports - \$360.5 million (270%), imports - \$721.1 million (119%). In 2021, the turnover of services between Belarus and Turkey amounted to \$94.8 million (162%), exports – \$52.8 million (134%), imports – \$42 million (220%) <sup>76</sup>. ” As for the exhibition in Istanbul, MUSIAD Expo is the largest multidisciplinary event in Turkey, which is held every two years. In 2020, more than 500 companies and over 100 thousand visitors from 125 countries took part in it. The main sections of the exhibition are food industry, agriculture, construction, mechanical engineering and automotive industry, machine tool industry, metallurgy, petrochemical industry, pharmaceuticals and healthcare, services, tourism, real estate, consumer goods, furniture, energy, logistics, information technology, textile, clothing and footwear industry, leather goods.

In 2023, national exhibitions of Belarus will be organized in a number of Asian countries. Particularly in **Pakistan**. Let us recall that at the International Trade and Industry Fair, which was held in the Pakistani city of

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<sup>75</sup> Belarus will present an exposition at an exhibition in Mongolia in September [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-v-sentjabre-predstavit-ekspozitsiju-na-vystavke-v-mongolii-511811-2022/>

<sup>76</sup> The national exposition of Belarus will be presented at a multi-industry exhibition in Turkey [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/amp/economics/view/natsionalnaja-ekspozitsija-belarusi-budet-predstavlena-na-mnogootraslevoj-vystavke-v-turtsii-514624-2022>

Karachi in November 2021, about 60 scientific, technical and innovative developments were presented at the Belarusian collective stand of the State Committee for Science and Technology. Institutions of the Ministry of Education, as well as in correspondence format, organizations of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus showed their exhibits in the field of processing and modification of surfaces, chemical technologies and materials, physical materials science and new materials. "Among the most interesting developments are the technology for producing optically selective composite absorbing coatings for solar collectors, smart windows based on the bistable effect, a multifunctional complex for the preparation and automatic filling of filled and unfilled multicomponent hybrid-composite mixtures, a technology for the production of energy-saving flat and flexible aluminum heaters with a resistive element carbon fiber<sup>77</sup>." This year there will be even more Belarusian participants.

Speaking of **the China** International Import Exhibition, which is held annually in Shanghai, in November 2022 it has already become the fifth. 27 organizations from the food industry, logistics, science and education took part in the Belarusian exposition. The Belarus pavilion at the import exhibition included "two main sections: "Food and Agricultural Products" and "High-Tech Equipment and Information Technologies<sup>78</sup>." The total exhibition area of Belarus was about 100 square meters. In 2023 it will become even larger.

Let us note that in recent years Belarusian exhibitions have also been presented on the African continent. For example, in **Kenya**, Belarus' interest in the Kenya business forum International Trade Exhibition ( KITE ) is due to the fact that it is the largest exhibition event in East Africa. In 2019, our country was represented there for the first time with a national exposition at the 22nd international exhibition of food, hospitality and agriculture FoodAgro in Nairobi, which is part of KITE . At that time, enterprises of the Belgospisheprom concern, OJSC Management Company of the Lidselmash Holding, as well as Gomselmash, MTZ, MAZ, Bobruiskagromash, Lidakhleboprodukt, and Smorgon Bread Products Plant demonstrated their products in the capital of Kenya. Participation in the exhibition opened up

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<sup>77</sup> About 60 Belarusian scientific and technical developments will be presented at the international exhibition in Pakistan [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/tech/view/okolo-60-belorusskih-nauchno-tehnicheskikh-razrabotok-predstavjat-na-mezhdunarodnoj-vystavke-v-pakistane-469010-2021/>

<sup>78</sup> The China International Import Exhibition opened in Shanghai [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/world/view/v-shanhae-otkrylas-kitajskaja-mezhdunarodnaja-vystavka-importa-533320-2022/>

“new opportunities for them to promote Belarusian agricultural machinery and equipment, fertilizers, food, and agricultural products to the Kenyan market<sup>79</sup>,” and also showed them the way to enter the markets of other countries in East and Southern Africa. In particular, a memorandum of understanding was adopted there between the official representative of the Belarusian enterprises MTZ, Lidagroprommash, Bobruiskagromash, Gomselmash, Lidselmash, MAZ and the Pewin company Motors and an agreement was reached on the supply of Belarusian agricultural machinery - tractors, agricultural machines, equipment, accessories. For example, only the “Management Company of the Bobruiskagromash Holding” signed an agreement for the supply of its equipment in the amount of about 500 thousand dollars. “The greatest interest among visitors [to the exhibition] was caused by tillage equipment, tractor trailers and semi-trailers, as well as forage equipment (mowers, rakes, balers)<sup>80</sup>. ” In addition, “Lidselmash OJSC and Peter Wanjohi Company have established cooperation for the construction of grain procurement and grain processing complexes in Kenya, Uganda and other countries in the region<sup>81</sup>. ” And the Belgospisheprom concern agreed to supply the first batches of sunflower oil and light canned beer to this African country. Finally, at the same time, “agreements were signed on the construction of a reinforced concrete plant on Kenyan soil and the creation of a fish farm with a total value exceeding one hundred million dollars<sup>82</sup>. ”

In **Zimbabwe** in April 2022, the National Exposition of Belarus was presented at the 61st Zimbabwe International Trade Fair, the largest multidisciplinary exhibition event in South Africa. More than 400 companies from 15 countries showed their products, including Kenya, Mozambique, South Africa, Japan, and the United States of America. At the Belarusian stand in Bulawayo, “a wide range of technology and equipment, scientific and

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<sup>79</sup> The national exposition of Belarus opened at the FoodAgro exhibition in Kenya [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/natsionalnaja-ekspozitsija-belarusi-otkrylas-na-vystavke-foodagro-v-kenii-356942-2019/>

<sup>80</sup> “Bobruiskagromash” will supply equipment and spare parts worth \$500 thousand to Kenya [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/bobrujskagromash-postavit-v-keniju-tehniku-i-zapchasti-na-500-tys-358196-2019/>

<sup>81</sup> Belarusian enterprises at FoodAgro agreed to supply agricultural equipment to Kenya [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/beloruskie-predpriyatija-na-foodagro-dogovorilis-o-postavkah-selhoztehniki-v-keniju-357705-2019/>

<sup>82</sup> Zalessky, B.L. Belarus – Kenya: promising growth points identified / B.L. Zalessky // Materials for the XV International Scientific and Practical Conference, News on Scientific Progress - 2019, August 15 - 22, 2019: Sofia. “Byal GRAD-BG”. – P. 3.

technical developments, and medicines” were presented<sup>83</sup>. The total exhibition area of the pavilion was about 170 square meters.

Foreign importers showed particular interest in the pharmaceutical products presented in the Belarusian pavilion. In particular, representatives of RUE Belmedpreparaty, part of the Belfarmprom holding, held effective negotiations. “This is expected to expand the presence of Belarusian medicines on the African market<sup>84</sup>. ” The Zimbabwean side voiced its intention to develop cooperation in this area, as well as to act as representatives of Belarusian companies in the regional market. The National Academy of Sciences of Belarus has concluded a number of cooperation agreements with educational institutions and scientific organizations in Zimbabwe, and BELAZ has concluded a number of agreements on the supply of auto parts.

The interest of the Belarusian side in this forum is also explained by the fact that “today Zimbabwe is actively expanding mining, has significant reserves of coal, diamonds, gold, lithium, copper and is one of the promising export destinations for BELAZ equipment<sup>85</sup>. ” For reference, we note that in Zimbabwe they use Belarusian mining dump trucks with a carrying capacity of 55 and 130 tons, bulldozers, loaders, tow trucks and watering machines. At the exhibition in Bulovayo, a manufacturer from Belarus held negotiations with the National Diamond Mining Company ZCDC , “which operates more than 20 mining dump trucks with a lifting capacity of 55 tons and other BELAZ special equipment, as well as with the coal company HWANGE Colliery ”<sup>86</sup>. As a result, agreements were reached on the development of existing partnerships.

In 2023, Belarusian exhibitions will be presented in other African countries - **Algeria** and **Egypt** . In particular, the FIA international exhibition will be held in **Algeria** . For the first time, the Belarusian exposition at this exhibition forum was organized back in 2017. At that time, Belarus was

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<sup>83</sup> The national exposition of Belarus is presented at the largest exhibition in Zimbabwe [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/natsionalnaja-ekspozitsija-belarusi-predstavlena-na-krupnejshoj-vystavke-v-zimbabve-499129-2022/>

<sup>84</sup> Belarusian drug manufacturers will present their products at an exhibition in Zimbabwe [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/beloruskie-proizvoditeli-lekarstv-predstavjat-svoju-produktsiju-na-vystavke-v-zimbabve-498300-2022/>

<sup>85</sup> BELAZ will take part in the largest exhibitions on three continents [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belaz-primet-uchastie-v-krupnejshih-vystavkah-na-treh-kontinentah-497525-2022/>

<sup>86</sup> BELAZ intends to develop cooperation and strengthen ties with companies in Zimbabwe [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belaz-nameren-razvivat-sotrudnichestvo-i-ukrepljat-delovye-svjazi-s-kompanijami-zimbabve-499547-2022/>

represented by the products of enterprises of the Ministry of Industry, including OJSC MAZ, OJSC Gomselmash and OJSC Minsk Electrotechnical Plant, as well as the developments of the State Committee for Science and Technology, the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, and the Ministry of Education. “The exposition of Belarus at FIA 2017 aroused increased interest among representatives of Algerian government bodies, large private companies and enterprises, as well as the diplomatic corps. Based on the results of the negotiations that took place during the exhibition, memorandums of cooperation were signed between OJSC MTZ and the Belarus Motor Algeria company, as well as between the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus and potential partners <sup>87</sup>. ” In total, about one thousand companies from 40 countries took part in the FIA 2017 exhibition in Algeria. In 2023, apparently, there will be even more forum participants.

As for the international exhibition of food and beverages Food Africa Cairo, which is held annually in **Cairo** , the Belarusian exposition this year will be organized at this site for the fifth time. In December 2022, the exhibition Belarus. The Taste of Nature was presented at **the Egyptian** International Exhibition Center. As part of the exposition, 14 Belarusian enterprises presented a wide range of dairy, meat, starch products, as well as baked goods. “Enterprises of the Grodnomyasomolprom holding” (OJSC Bellakt, OJSC Molochny Mir, Lida Dairy and Canning Plant and its branch Smorgon Dairy Products, Rogoznitsa Starch Plant, Volkovysk and Slonim Meat Processing Plants), as well as the Skidelsky Agricultural Plant demonstrated their products to foreign visitors to the exhibition. , Smorgon Bread Products Plant, Primemilk LLC, Lidakhleboprodukt OJSC, Slutsk Cheese-Making Plant and Minsk Dairy Plant No. 1 OJSC <sup>88</sup>.

All these facts point to one thing: participation in major exhibition events in African countries can open up new export opportunities for Belarusian enterprises, the potential of which is truly enormous.

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<sup>87</sup> Belarus and Algeria have all the prerequisites for expanding cooperation - Rachkov [Electronic resource]. – 2017. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-alzhir-imejut-vse-predposylki-dlja-rashshirenija-sotrudnichestva-rachkov-247000-2017/>

<sup>88</sup> The Belarusian exposition was presented at the food exhibition in Egypt [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/beloruskaja-ekspozitsija-predstavlena-na-prodovolstvennoj-vystavke-v-egipte-538642-2022/>

## **With free and special economic zones as growth points in the regions**

The Law of the Republic of Belarus “On Free Economic Zones”, adopted on December 7, 1998, defines as one of the main goals of creating SEZs the attraction of “investments in the creation and development of export-oriented and import-substituting industries based on new and high technologies<sup>89</sup>. ” More than 20 years of experience in the activities of SEZs created in the country shows that during this period this model of economic relations in the regions has demonstrated many positive trends, and in the future it can turn into an even more effective tool for the socio-economic development of the Belarusian state.

**The Minsk FEZ** , created in Belarus in 1998, is moving quite successfully towards achieving this goal . At the beginning of February 2020, it had already united 116 resident enterprises on its territory, 57 of which had foreign investments. Over its more than 20-year history, the capital's SEZ has attracted investments in excess of two billion dollars, including from investors from more than 20 countries. Occupying an area of about three thousand hectares, it today includes 23 sites in Minsk and the capital region, including in such cities as Molodechno, Zhodino, Fanipol, Borisov, where mechanical engineering and metalworking, chemical and petrochemical, forestry and construction industry. A unique calling card of the Minsk FEZ are such well-known manufacturers not only in Belarus, but also abroad, as: “Stadler-Minsk” – electric trains and trams; Alutech group of companies – components for protective roller shutters and gate systems; “Adani” – X-ray technology; “BELGI” – passenger cars and light-duty vehicles; “Ec - N -A Europe Industries Bisov” – bimetallic band and end saws.

The fact that this industrial center on the business map of Belarus continues to develop very actively is evidenced by facts. Suffice it to say that in 2019, the administration of the Minsk FEZ registered another 17 new resident companies. One of them in December 2019 was Belagromash OJSC, which intends to create on the territory of the Molodechno Metal Structures Plant the production of specialized steel railway containers, the innovative properties of which will increase the speed of loading and unloading of goods

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<sup>89</sup> Law of the Republic of Belarus On Free Economic Zones [Electronic resource]. – 1998. – URL : <http://pravo.by/document/?guid=3871&p0=H19800213>

due to the fact that new containers can be lifted from one type transport to another - from a railway platform to a road platform and vice versa. This project is also attractive due to the fact that “the main customer of containers is a foreign company, so the new production will be as export-oriented as possible. At least 130 jobs will be created <sup>90</sup>. ”

On the eve of 2020, the limited liability company “BelMetri” became a resident of the FEZ, whose plans include the implementation in Zhodino of an investment project for the production of anti-vandal water meters with improved characteristics. These include: antimagnetic protection; anti-fraud device against external influence on the lid; high sensitivity of the counter; eliminating fogging of the upper part of the body. And let “production at the initial stage be carried out on rented premises, in the future it is planned to build a new production building <sup>91</sup>. ”

The ranks of residents of the Minsk FEZ began to swell quite intensively in 2020. In mid-January, the company JV Techno-Express, one of the leading Belarusian manufacturers in the field of life support systems for passenger cars, was registered here. In the FEZ, the company plans to implement an investment project to produce electrical equipment for locomotive-hauled passenger cars. In particular, we are talking about the production of air conditioning converters - “devices designed to power asynchronous motors of air conditioning units on railway passenger cars as part of electrical equipment and life support complexes <sup>92</sup>. ” This project has both import-substituting and export-oriented potential, because the main consumer of these products will be not only the Belarusian Railway, but also interested companies in neighboring countries.

A week later, the second resident of 2020, BEL-DOZER LLC, appeared in the FEZ. His plans include the construction of a plant in Fanipol for the production of a wide range of special equipment intended for excavation, construction and transportation work. Here they intend to “produce backhoe loaders - multifunctional machines for construction and repair work, as well as

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<sup>90</sup> The production of cargo containers will be established in Molodechno [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/produzvodstvo-gruzovyh-kontejnerov-naladjat-v-molodechno-372673-2019/>

<sup>91</sup> An investment project for the production of water meters will be implemented in Zhodino [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/special/economics/view/investitsionnyj-proekt-po-produzvodstvu-schetchnikov-vody-budet-realizovan-v-zhodino-374581-2019/>

<sup>92</sup> The first resident in 2020 was registered in the Minsk FEZ [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/pervyj-v-2020-godu-rezident-zaregistrovan-v-sez-minsk-376013-2020/>

graders - productive special equipment that is actively used in the construction and maintenance of highways and airfields. <...> The volume of investments in the implementation of the project will amount to more than 1 million euros<sup>93</sup>.”

Another new resident of the Minsk FEZ, Emfil Eil LLC, registered here in early February 2020, will also be located there, in Fanipol. A distinctive feature of his investment project will be the pronounced export orientation of the products. The fact is that “the company plans to launch the production of dust-removing, as well as chemically active filter elements for air purification, on the basis of which the production of innovative high-tech equipment will be organized<sup>94</sup>,” the design, development and production of which will be carried out exclusively to order.

Finally, a very recent example. In May, the seventh resident in 2020 was registered in the Minsk FEZ - Zaslavskie Paints LLC, which plans to organize the production of special paints and varnishes for road markings in Zhodino. “The cost of the investment project is estimated at \$10 million<sup>95</sup>.” As we can see, with the advent of 2020, the Minsk FEZ is not slowing down its growth rate, promoting the socio-economic development of not only the capital region, but also the country as a whole.

**The Brest free economic zone** was the first to be created in the Republic of Belarus. This happened in 1996. And today it is a diversified economic territory where production, technological, and logistics activities can develop. In addition, part of it is adjacent to the road and railway checkpoints across the state border and can be used as a logistics component. Since the creation of the SEZ, the total volume of investments here has exceeded one and a half billion dollars. These investments certainly pay off. Over the three quarters of 2019, residents of the Brest FEZ almost doubled their contributions to the budget - from 20.9 million Belarusian rubles in 2018 to 41 million now. Today, there are already 73 enterprises from 20 countries operating on its territory. It is noteworthy that in 2018 they “exported goods worth \$700 million; the export

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<sup>93</sup> The new resident of the Minsk FEZ will build a plant for the production of special equipment in Fanipol [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novyj-rezident-sez-minsk-postroit-v-fanipole-zavod-po-proizvodstvu-spetstehniki-376899-2020/>

<sup>94</sup> The new resident of the Minsk FEZ will produce non-standard equipment for air purification [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/novyj-rezident-sez-minsk-budet-vypuskat-nestandardnoe-oborudovanie-dlja-ochistki-vozduha-378734-2020>

<sup>95</sup> A plant for the production of paints and varnishes will be built on the territory of the Minsk FEZ in Zhodino [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/zavod-po-proizvodstvu-lakokrasochnyh-materialov-postrojat-na-teritorii-sez-minsk-v-zhodino-390518-2020>

geography includes 70 countries around the world <sup>96</sup>. ” A year later - at the beginning of 2020 - “FEZ business entities exported goods worth \$718 million, and the export geography includes 75 countries of the world <sup>97</sup>. ”

Among foreign countries, Germany is the leader in terms of investment in SEZs. German investors account for a third of the total amount of foreign investment made here. And enterprises with German capital show high economic efficiency. Among them are “Santa Bremor”, “Diskom”, “Salamander window and door systems”, whose products are well known both in Belarus and abroad. In particular, in April 2019, a new production of paint and varnish materials “Diskom” opened in the FEZ, the construction of which involved an investment of about two million euros. This company is part of the German concern DAW SE , founded in Germany back in 1895. “Today the Diskom company employs more than 250 specialists. The opening of the new plant made it possible to create about 20 additional jobs for residents of Brest <sup>98</sup>. ”

Italian entrepreneurs are very active in the Brest FEZ, who “have already invested 3 million euros in new projects and created 150 jobs. In 2018, a new production facility of the Italian-Belarusian enterprise Frisa Industry was opened at the Airport site. Energy-saving devices for refrigeration equipment are manufactured here” <sup>99</sup> and show one of the highest export growth rates among SEZ enterprises. Let us recall that back in 2010, the Ministry of Economic Development of Italy, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Belarus and the Brest Regional Executive Committee signed a declaration on the creation of an Italian industrial district on the territory of the FEZ, the territory of which is 26 hectares. A year later, a Memorandum of Understanding was adopted in Trieste on the development of this industrial district, which provided for the creation of the most favorable conditions for attracting Italian investors and outlined “the development of the Italian industrial zone in Brest as a transport and logistics center providing transshipment and transit of goods between the European Union , the Customs Union, and in the future – China

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<sup>96</sup> Residents of the Brest FEZ doubled their contributions to the budget [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/rezidenty-sez-brest-vdvoe-uvelichili-otchislenija-v-bjudzhet-367876-2019/3>

<sup>97</sup> History [Electronic resource]. –2020. – URL : <https://fezbrest.com/history>

<sup>98</sup> Opening of a new production facility “Disk” [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://fezbrest.com/otkrytie-novogo-proizvodstva-%C2%ABdiskom%C2%BB>

<sup>99</sup> Discussion of issues of the Belarusian-Italian business forum continued in Brest [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://fezbrest.com/obsuzhdenie-voprosov-belorussko-italyanskogo-biznes-foruma-prodolzilos-v-breste>

<sup>100</sup>. ” So the prospects for Italian business in the Brest FEZ are simply enormous.

Polish businessmen are also showing great interest in the SEZ. Today there are 11 enterprises with Polish capital operating here, including Stomil Sanok BR. Investors from this European country “rank third after Germany and Russia. In the total volume, the share of Polish investments is 17 percent <sup>101</sup>. ” In particular, in March 2019, English Windows LLC was registered here with Polish investments. “The new enterprise plans to create at least 20 jobs <sup>102</sup>. ” It is quite possible that in 2020, the Cooperation Agreement signed in April 2017 between the administration of the Brest FEZ and the Lower Silesian Economic Development Agency will be further developed in the form of specific projects.

Israeli entrepreneurs who have a good example to follow are also showing interest in cooperation with the Brest FEZ: the current resident of the free economic zone is “a company with Israeli capital “Fa-uN”, which has established the production of feed additives for agricultural production in the FEZ <sup>103</sup>. ” In September 2019, the experience of the Brest FEZ was thoroughly studied by the delegation of the Israeli city of Ashdod, whose port is the largest in Israel, since 60% of all cargo imported into this Middle Eastern country passes through it, including from the FEZ resident - the Santa company - Bremor.” It must be assumed that the dialogue that has begun between the parties on establishing cooperative ties between enterprises in Brest and Ashdod will develop in the near future.

Swiss entrepreneurs are interested in SEZs. They are attracted, first of all, by the favorable location of Brest Airport, which allows it to be used for private aviation flights. And then we can talk about locating here “the production facilities of enterprises with Swiss capital related to mechanical engineering and food production <sup>104</sup>. ”

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<sup>100</sup> Zalesky, B. International relations and media. A view from Belarus / B. Zalesky. – Palmarium Academic Publishing, 2014. – P. 147.

<sup>101</sup> Strengthening partnerships [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://fezbrest.com/2-ukreplyaya-partnerskie-svyazi>

<sup>102</sup> A new resident of the FEZ “Brest” has been registered [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://fezbrest.com/zaregistrovan-novyj-rezident-sez-%C2%ABrest%C2%BB>

<sup>103</sup> The administration of the FEZ “Brest” held a meeting with a delegation from Israel [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://fezbrest.com/v-administraczii-sez-%C2%ABrest%C2%BB-proshla-vstrecha-s-delegaczij-iz-izrailya>

<sup>104</sup> The administration of the FEZ “Brest” discussed proposals from Swiss business circles [Electronic resource]. – 2018. – URL : <https://fezbrest.com/v-administraczii-sez-%C2%ABrest%C2%BB-obsudili-predlozheniya-delovyx-krugov-shvejczarii>

In 2019, the volume of exports of resident enterprises of **the free economic zone “Grodnoinvest” came close to one billion dollars**, increasing by almost 10% compared to 2018. This made it possible to increase the share of the SEZ in the total volume of exports of industrial goods of the Grodno region to 42 percent. In general, the trade turnover of FEZ residents exceeded one and a half billion dollars with a positive balance of more than 380 million dollars. In the geography of these exports, two main vectors can be distinguished: post-Soviet – Russia, Ukraine; European - Poland, Lithuania, Romania, Latvia. At the same time, the basis of supplies outside Belarus “was formed by companies from the sectors of woodworking and furniture production (30% of total exports), food manufacturing (27%), mechanical engineering and metalworking<sup>105</sup>. ” In the same series, enterprises of the chemical and textile industries, as well as manufacturers of vehicles and equipment, rubber and plastic products should be noted. The prospects for development in the FEZ are seen in attracting new residents, who through their activities could contribute to a further increase in the volume of exports of goods and services.

Let us recall that the SEZ “Grodnoinvest”, created in 2002, today includes 12 territories not only in Grodno, but also in such cities of the Grodno region as Mosty, Novogrudok, Slonim, Shchuchin, Smorgon, Svisloch. As of mid-January 2020, 75 companies with capital from 41 countries operated in the FEZ. In 2019, four companies from Belarus, Austria and Poland became residents of the FEZ, where potential investors are offered land plots and production areas with engineering and transport infrastructure, tax, customs and other preferences that can significantly reduce project costs and increase the competitiveness of their products. engaged in the field of woodworking and the production of non-metallic mineral products, with a total volume of declared investments of more than 190 million dollars, including in fixed assets - more than 160 million dollars. They intend to build highly efficient factories in Grodno and Svisloch, creating more than 560 new jobs there. At the same time, “most of the products will be supplied to the countries of the European Union<sup>106</sup>. ”

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<sup>105</sup> Exports of residents of the Grodnoinvest FEZ in 2019 approached \$1 billion [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/eksport-rezidentov-sez-grodnoinvest-v-2019-godu-priblizilsja-k-1mlrd-379958-2020>

<sup>106</sup> In 2019, 4 companies with investment projects worth \$190 million became residents of the Grodnoinvest FEZ [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/rezidentami-sez-grodnoinvest-v-2019-godu-stali-4-kompanii-s-investproektami-na-190-mln-375887-2020/>

In this context, the year 2020 started very productively for the SEZ. In particular, in February, the EUEcoPAK company was registered as a resident here, which intends to invest more than one million dollars in creating production facilities for the production of disposable paper packaging and tableware. This topic is, of course, very relevant today for Belarus, where measures are now being taken at the legislative level to encourage the transition of enterprises to the use of environmentally friendly packaging, including paper. The new FEZ resident plans to produce paper craft bags with and without handles, cardboard packaging such as “Lunchbox”, paper cocktail straws and cups for cold and hot drinks. It is expected that these products “will be sold primarily in foreign markets. The share of export supplies will exceed 85%. The main markets will be the countries of the European Union<sup>107</sup>. ” In addition, 25 new jobs will be created here.

In the same February 2020, the ZOV-MARKET company became a resident of the FEZ, which, on the basis of an unfinished construction site in Grodno, will create a modern enterprise for the production of dry edged boards, timber, and furniture blanks. It is characteristic that “70% of products will be exported to the countries of the European Union<sup>108</sup>. ” One of the new residents of the FEZ in the near future may be the logistics company Berango from France, which is interested in implementing an investment project on the territory of the FEZ Grodnoinvest “to create a multimodal logistics terminal for processing and cleaning containers and tanks . ”<sup>109</sup> Negotiations on this specific issue took place with the administration of the FEZ in Grodno in February 2020.

Existing FEZ residents are also actively expanding the production of export-oriented products. Thus, in February 2020, Terrazit Plus LLC demonstrated a new innovative VPC control knob ALPHA Grip series Constellation as part of the innovative Virpil project Controls for the creation of devices for virtual control of airplanes, helicopters, prototypes of spacecraft. It is important in this regard that this “product is in demand in the Western

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<sup>107</sup> The production of paper packaging will be created by a new resident of the FEZ “Grodnoinvest” [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/proizvodstvo-bumazhnoj-upakovki-sozdast-novyj-rezident-sez-grodnoinvest-379035-2020/>

<sup>108</sup> ZOV-MARKET LLC is registered as a resident of the FEZ Grodnoinvest [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://grodnoinvest.by/press-center/ooo-zov-market-zaregistrirovano-v-kachestve-rezidenta-sez-grodnoinvest/>

<sup>109</sup> A company from France is considering the possibility of creating a terminal in the Grodnoinvest FEZ [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/kompanija-iz-frantsii-rassmatrivaet-vozmozhnost-sozdaniya-terminala-v-sez-grodnoinvest-379266-2020/>

European market, almost all production is exported,”<sup>110</sup> and pilots, designers, constructors and software developers are involved in the project.

In 2019, Belabedding LLC, which has been a resident of the FEZ since 2006, began producing new products - continental beds of the Boxspringbett type. And now “more than 80% of the company’s products are exported to Western European countries<sup>111</sup>. ” It must be assumed that the measures taken in the FEZ will bring even more significant results in terms of increasing the export of products from residents of the Grodnoinvest free economic zone in 2020.

In June 2019, a **special economic zone (SEZ) regime came into force in the Republic of Belarus for the Bremino-Orsha** multimodal logistics complex, located in the village of Bolbasovo, Orsha district, Vitebsk region. This means that a second economic complex has appeared in Belarus, functioning in a similar mode. The first in this list of SEZs back in 2015 was the Chinese-Belarusian industrial park “Great Stone”. Note that the Customs Code of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) strictly limits the possibility of creating such territorial formations in the member countries of the integration association. In particular, only “three such zones can be created in Russia, two in Belarus, one each in Armenia, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan<sup>112</sup>. ” Let us recall that the term “special economic zone” is usually used to designate a territory that has “a special legal status in relation to the rest of the country and preferential economic conditions for entrepreneurs<sup>113</sup>. ” SEZs are created with the aim of attracting foreign direct investment, creating new jobs for highly qualified personnel, developing an export base, minimizing costs due to the absence of export and import duties, bringing production closer to the consumer, using cheaper labor, and developing territories.

The Bremino-Orsha SEZ intends to attract investors with a range of benefits and tax advantages. In particular, zero rates of taxes on profits (for 9 years), on real estate (for 20 years), on dividends (until January 1, 2033), as well as zero rates of offshore duty, export value added tax (VAT) on the export

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<sup>110</sup> Resident of FEZ “Grodnoinvest” LLC “Terrazit Plus” presented new innovative products [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://grodnoinvest.by/press-center/rezident-sez-grodnoinvest-ooo-terrazit-plyus-predstavil-novuyu-innovacionnyuyu-produkciyu/>

<sup>111</sup> Resident of FEZ “Grodnoinvest” IOO “Belabedding” launched the production of new products [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://grodnoinvest.by/press-center/rezident-sez-grodnoinvest-iooo-belabedding-zapustila-vypusk-novoj-produkcii/>

<sup>112</sup> The special economic zone “Bremino-Orsha” began operating in Bolbasovo [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://news.21.by/other-news/2019/06/27/1827049.html>

<sup>113</sup> Special economic zone (SEZ) [Electronic resource]. – 2018. – URL : [https://www.audit.ru/terms/taxation/osobaya\\_ekonomicheskaya\\_zona.html](https://www.audit.ru/terms/taxation/osobaya_ekonomicheskaya_zona.html)

of manufactured goods goods outside the EAEU, VAT on the sale, rental or leasing of real estate by residents (until January 1, 2033), finally, a special legal regime for a period of 50 years to engage in industrial processing, wholesale trade, e-commerce, logistics and warehouse services, postal services, information and administrative services, research and development work. For this purpose, two sectors are created in the SEZ - industrial and logistics. The first of them will house the production of household appliances and electronics, pharmaceutical products and drugs, food products - coffee, tea, rice, as well as auto parts, perfumes and cosmetics, household chemicals, and jewelry. There will also be stores of finished products, showrooms, warehouses, a business center and parking.

As for the logistics sector, it “will include road, rail and air terminals. On the territory of the special economic zone there will be a departmental customs clearance point operating around the clock, phytosanitary and veterinary services, a bank branch, an insurance agent and a customs brokers office<sup>114</sup>.” By December 2023 – the project completion date – investments in this multimodal industrial and logistics complex will amount to \$200 million. In total, it is planned to build 17 thousand square meters of office space, 190 thousand - warehouse, 280 thousand - production. Plus 1.7 thousand parking spaces for trucks. The railway terminal will process cargo flows between the countries of Europe and Asia, which allow us to plan today that “in 2018-2022, the total transit flow through Bremino-Orsha will be 10 million tons, reaching full capacity - 12 million tons of cargo in year is planned for 2026.<sup>115</sup>”

It is important to note that the first steps in the implementation of this project have already been taken. So, back in February 2019, the first export train with Belarusian goods - more than forty containers - departed from here to the Chinese city of Nanchang. His travel time is ten days. “Transportation by sea would take 40 days. The train will run SEZ once a month<sup>116</sup>. ” In the same February 2019, Bremino Group LLC opened the first stage of the Bremino-Orsha complex in Bolbasovo, into which about \$20 million was invested. An automobile logistics terminal with parking for 212 trucks has opened here, which already ensures the transshipment of almost two million tons of cargo

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<sup>114</sup> The special economic zone “Bremino-Orsha” began to operate in Bolbasovo [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/osobaja-ekonomicheskaja-zona-bremino-orsha-nachala-rabotat-v-bolbasovo-352502-2019/>

<sup>115</sup> The second special economic zone with a preferential tax regime began to function in Belarus [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : [https://interfax.by/news/biznes/novosti\\_kompany/1260614/](https://interfax.by/news/biznes/novosti_kompany/1260614/)

<sup>116</sup> Zakrzhevsky, G. “Bremino-Orsha”: at the crossroads / G. Zakrzhevsky // Transport Bulletin. – 2019. – February 14. – P. 9.

per year. The administrative and amenity premises house customs, veterinary and phytosanitary control services, which operate seven days a week, 24 hours a day. The created infrastructure already allows for the packaging and processing of cargo, and obtaining the necessary services to support the logistics process.

And at the beginning of December 2019, the Bremino Group company signed with the Chinese partner Shaanxi Zhongqiao Silk Road Technology Development Co. Ltd agreement providing for the emergence of an international trade town of the Silk Road in the SEZ, which, located on 62 hectares, will represent a large-scale trade and exhibition complex. It is expected that here “wholesale and small-scale wholesale trade in consumer goods, delivery of goods and warehousing, operations on trade from electronic platforms, as well as exhibitions of products from various Asian countries”<sup>117</sup>. " The amount of investment in this project, which is being implemented within the framework of the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative, will exceed 128 million Belarusian rubles.

All these examples very eloquently illustrate one simple truth: despite the difficult situation in the global economy due to the coronavirus pandemic, we should never stop looking for new ways of development. Moreover, the contours of tomorrow are already in many ways beginning to appear today. These in Belarus can rightfully include the functioning of free and special economic zones, the influence of which on the economic life of the country is becoming increasingly noticeable and significant.

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<sup>117</sup> An international trade town will appear in the special economic zone “Bremino-Orsha” [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/mezhdunarodnyj-torgovyj-gorodok-pojavitsja-v-osoboj-ekonomicheskoj-zone-bremino-orsha-371406-2019/>

## Investment and export drivers of regional development

In the five-year development program being developed today in the Republic of Belarus and the target forecast for the next three years, among the most important segments that should receive new impetus for development in the medium term, free economic zones (FEZs) operating in the country are identified, the number of residents in which at the beginning of autumn 2020 year exceeded 450 business entities. The high potential of SEZs is also evidenced by the fact that “today free economic zones form almost 17% of industrial production, 20% of foreign direct investment and almost 20% of the country’s exports <sup>118</sup>. ” And there is every reason to believe that in the current difficult conditions of development of the Belarusian economy, it is SEZs that can and should become the main investment locomotive, on the basis of which the innovative, production and export potential of the territories in which they are located could develop. Moreover, “our neighbors are forming zones with completely different preferential conditions and functions <sup>119</sup>. ” In Belarus today, it is necessary to continue to actively develop SEZs, not only in terms of improving legislation, land relations and infrastructure development, but also in terms of ways to increase the influx of investments and increase economic efficiency. Moreover, Belarusian SEZs have already accumulated some experience in resolving these issues. Suffice it to say that in the first half of 2020 alone, the number of residents in the free economic zones of Belarus increased by more than 60 business entities. And in the first quarter of the same year, foreign investors invested nearly three billion dollars in the real sector of the country’s economy. “The main investors of Belarusian organizations were business entities from Russia (35.7% of all incoming investments), Cyprus (15%) and Austria (8.4%). The inflow of foreign direct investment amounted to \$2.1 billion, or 75.1% of all incoming foreign investment <sup>120</sup>. ” These facts clearly show that in Belarus there are many examples of successful solutions

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<sup>118</sup> More than 60 residents were registered in the FEZ of Belarus in the first half of the year [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/bolee-60-rezidentov-zaregistrirovano-v-sez-belarusi-vi-polugodii-405375-2020/>

<sup>119</sup> . SEZs should become the main investment locomotive - Nikitina // [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/sez-dolzhen-stat-osnovnym-investitsionnym-lokomotivom-nikitina-405379-2020/>

<sup>120</sup> Foreign investors invested \$2.8 billion in the Belarusian economy in the first quarter [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/inostrannye-investory-vlozhili-vi-kvartale-v-ekonomiku-belarusi-28-mlrd-390601-2020/>

to investment problems that contribute to the socio-economic development of the country as a whole.

**the Minsk FEZ** demonstrated high rates of development in 2020, where at the beginning of September there were 118 resident companies, 69 of which had foreign investments, and where more than \$118 million was received from abroad in the first half of the year. At the same time, “foreign direct investment on a net basis for January-June amounted to almost \$70 million, which is 76% more than the same period last year. The key investors were the Swiss Confederation, the Republic of Cyprus and the People's Republic of China <sup>121</sup>.

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This influx of investment had a very positive impact on the volume of exports of FEZ residents, which in the first half of 2020 came close to \$560 million. The main part of it consisted of electronic products and components, medical equipment, cable products, metal structures, automobile and electric transport, railway and tram cars, parts and equipment for cars, electrical equipment for passenger cars. We must assume that the range of export positions in the capital's SEZ will only expand in the near future, since a number of significant investment projects are currently being implemented here. These include the production of control valves for the petrochemical industry, innovative high-tech equipment and air filtration systems, special paints and varnishes for road markings, electrical equipment for passenger locomotive traction cars, paper packaging, as well as assembly of structures and products made of ferrous and non-ferrous metals. Each of these projects already makes it possible to open new jobs in the SEZ. Suffice it to say that in the six months of 2020, 482 people were hired here.

Facts show that the Minsk FEZ did not intend to slow down the pace of development in the second half of 2020. So, in October, the 14th resident of 2020 was registered here. (For the entire 2019 there were 17 of these!). This is the company “BAZISPRO-GROUP”, whose intentions include the implementation of an investment project “for the production of aluminum spacer frames for translucent enclosing structures” <sup>122</sup>, the consumers of which will be not only Belarusian construction companies, but also from neighboring

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<sup>121</sup> Over \$118 million of investments were received in the Minsk FEZ from abroad in the first half of the year [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/svyshe-118-mln-investitsij-postupilo-vi-polugodii-v-sez-minsk-iz-za-rubezha-406018-2020/>

<sup>122</sup> The new resident of the Minsk FEZ will build a plant for the production of aluminum products [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/novyj-rezident-sez-minsk-postroit-zavod-po-proizvodstvu-izdelij-iz-aljuminija-411877-2020/>

countries. After all, fences made using aluminum frames are widely used today in the construction of modern buildings. And in November 2020, the 15th resident of the current year was registered in the FEZ - the company MKtrade, which specializes in the manufacture of products made of galvanized steel with various types of polymer coatings. Her arrival here is due to the fact that she plans to open a new production facility for the production of fence and roofing elements for cottage-type buildings, for which she “intends to expand her own capacity and organize a new workshop at the production area in Fanipol”<sup>123</sup>.

The investment project of the InKata company to create a science and technology park in the capital’s SEZ to provide services to technology startups also seems very promising. For its successful implementation, prefabricated pneumatic frame buildings will be built in the area of the village of Privolny, Minsk region, which “will house a design bureau, a research engineering ( R & D ) center and a prototyping center. Offices will be allocated for production consultants, investors and business mentors”<sup>124</sup>. This will make it possible to update in the Minsk FEZ the development of innovative entrepreneurship in such fields of science and technology as nanotechnology, microelectronics, aerospace technologies, power electronics, robotics, in order to, through additional competitive advantages, help residents of this scientific and technological park ultimately successfully enter the international market.

In terms of investment interaction, cooperation between the capital’s FEZ and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development may turn out to be interesting. In June 2020, it became known about the intention of this international financial structure to provide a loan of almost 15 million euros “for the construction of the Cherkasy substation for power supply to the Minsk free economic zone”<sup>125</sup>. It is expected that this loan will be raised in 2020-2022 for a period of 15 years.

As for **the Brest FEZ**, in 2021 it will turn 25 years old. Today it is located on more than ten thousand hectares. Its borders include land plots located not only in Brest and the Brest region, but also in cities such as

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<sup>123</sup> The new resident of the Minsk FEZ will produce roofing and facade materials [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/novyj-rezident-sez-minsk-budet-proizvodit-krovelnye-i-fasadnye-materialy-415998-2020/>

<sup>124</sup> A science and technology park to help startups will be built on the territory of the Minsk FEZ [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/nauchno-tehnologicheskij-park-v-pomosch-startapam-postrojat-na-territorii-sez-minsk-411305-2020/>

<sup>125</sup> Belarus wants to attract 14.11 million euros from the EBRD for the construction of a substation for the Minsk FEZ [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-hochet-privlech-ot-ebrr-1411-mln-evro-na-stroitelstvo-podstantsii-dlja-sez-minsk-394602-2020/>

Baranovich, Pinsk, Kobrin, Gantsevichi. As of mid-February 2020, over 70 residents from two dozen countries were registered here, including 47 with foreign capital, where more than 21 thousand people already work. In 2019, \$107 million of investments were attracted to the SEZ, and the volume of exports of its residents to 75 countries reached almost \$730 million. These positive trends continued in 2020, during the first quarter of which the SEZ attracted foreign direct investment on a net basis in the amount of almost \$50 million, which is four times the target. The dynamics of SEZ development today are such that all performance indicators for 2019 may be exceeded in 2020. The prerequisites for this were serious. So, if in 2018, due to the opening of new production facilities of residents in the FEZ, 721 jobs were created, and in 2019 - 890, then in 2020 it was planned to open at least one thousand of them. With such development potential, five new residents with Polish and German capital come here at once, whose activities are focused in light industry, woodworking, cosmetology, and the production of metal products, components and assemblies for the automotive industry.

Note that at the end of April 2020, two more land plots with a total area of more than one hundred hectares, located in Ivatsevichi and Ivatsevichi district and intended for the implementation of investment projects with the participation of foreign capital, were included in the Brest FEZ. Already in June 2020, a new resident of the FEZ was registered here - Polipol Furniture Bel LLC, part of the Polipol holding company, well-known on the European market Products Verwalfund GmbH, which has been producing upholstered furniture for 30 years. Its ten factories, which employ more than seven thousand people, are located not only in Germany, but also in other European countries. At the industrial site in Ivatsevichi, the new resident plans to build a workshop for the production of upholstered furniture and a number of other related facilities. "The implementation of the project is planned for six years. During this time, the company intends to invest over 25 million euros in furniture production and create more than 1 thousand jobs. At the same time, 90% of the products will be exported <sup>126</sup>. " An important detail: Polypol Furniture Bel LLC has become the seventh company in the FEZ with German capital. In general, entrepreneurs from Germany occupy first place here in terms of investment level, since their share makes up more than a third in the total investment portfolio of the FEZ.

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<sup>126</sup> The new resident of the Brest FEZ intends to invest more than 25 million euros in furniture production [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novyj-rezident-sez-brest-na-meren-investirovat-v-proizvodstvo-mebeli-bolee-25-mln-evro-394124-2020/>

Other new residents also come here with interesting projects. Thus, an enterprise with Belarusian capital, Savantdrev LLC, registered as a resident of the FEZ in May 2020, plans to invest half a million euros in organizing the production of lumber - boards, timber, various building structures. At the production site in the area of Krasnogvardeyskaya Street in Brest, it is planned to produce fuel pellets or pellets from wood waste, which are very popular in the countries of the European Union. That is why “Savantdrev expects to supply up to 85% of its products to the foreign market <sup>127</sup>. ” The full-scale production cycle will begin here in 2021. The new enterprise will create at least 15 jobs.

Also in May 2020, Lady-X LLC was registered in the FEZ, which plans to locate its production facilities in the unused areas of the Baranovich Automatic Lines Plant. The Belarusian company plans to “invest about 2 million euros in the project to produce collectible clothing. <...> Upon reaching design capacity in 2024, the number of employees of the enterprise will reach 260 people <sup>128</sup>. ” In addition, previously registered residents must begin activities in the FEZ. In particular, LLC BTV-Agro built the first complex for growing mycelium for JLLC Bonshe, which produces champignons. Jobs will also be created there. The issue of organizing the production of automotive wiring and campers on the territory of the SEZ is being considered <sup>129</sup>. ”

The Italian industrial district should also make its contribution to solving the problems facing the SEZ, the creation of the infrastructure of which is planned to be completed in the near future. There, in the Airport industrial zone, a 5 MW transformer substation and a sewage pumping station have already been built. In addition, a road network, water supply and storm drainage systems are being laid. The facility should be put into operation in 2021. Since a significant part of this territory is already provided with the necessary engineering infrastructure, including energy, gas and water supply,

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<sup>127</sup> The new resident of the Brest FEZ will engage in woodworking [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/novyj-rezident-sez-brest-zajmetsja-derevoobrabotkoj-392514-2020/>

<sup>128</sup> . The new resident of the Brest FEZ will produce collectible clothing [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novyj-rezident-sez-brest-budet-vypuskat-kollektsionnuju-odezhdu-392737-2020/>

<sup>129</sup> They plan to create 1 thousand jobs in the Brest FEZ [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/v-sez-brest-planirujut-sozdat-1-tys-rabochih-mest-380116-2020/>

sewerage and telephony, “this allowed the economic entities of the SEZ to locate 10 enterprises here. Two more are under construction <sup>130</sup>. ”

Let us recall that the idea of creating such a district in the Airport industrial zone was voiced about ten years ago, when in June 2011 a Memorandum of Understanding was adopted in Trieste on the development of an industrial district in the Brest region , which provided for “the creation of the most favorable conditions for attracting Italian investors and their implementation of projects in Belarus <sup>131</sup>. ” Today, not only Italians can come to the territory of the district, but also any investor who wants to organize and develop their business here, taking advantage of the advantages of the free economic zone. Therefore, there are already two enterprises with investments from Germany, as well as companies with Israeli, British, Polish, and Russian capital. “In 2018, a new production facility of the Italian-Belarusian enterprise Frisa Industry began operating at the Airport site for the production of energy-saving elements for commercial refrigeration equipment. Today, the joint venture has one of the highest export growth rates among SEZ enterprises <sup>132</sup>. ” All these examples certainly inspire optimism when assessing the prospects for the development of the Brest FEZ.

An interesting example of development is shown by **the Grodnoinvest FEZ** , whose residents in the first three months of 2020 attracted a record amount of foreign direct investment on a net basis - \$59.8 million - out of a total volume of \$157 million of incoming foreign capital. “The main investor countries were Russia (over \$45 million), Austria (\$39 million), and the Netherlands (\$34 million). Investments came from 15 countries, including the UAE, Germany, the USA, and the UK <sup>133</sup>. ” In total, over the 18 years of its existence, the Grodnoinvest SEZ has attracted more than \$900 million of foreign investment from 40 countries, including Japan, Cyprus, Turkey, Canada, and Poland, into the economy of the Grodno region.

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<sup>130</sup> FEZ 'Brest' is completing the development of the Italian industrial district [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/sez-brest-zavershaet-obustrojstvo-italijanskogo-promyshlennogo-okruga-418092-2020/>

<sup>131</sup> Zalessky, B. Belarus - Europe: partnership potential. Multi-vector policy in the context of global challenges / B. Zalessky. – LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing , 2016. – C. 43.

<sup>132</sup> FEZ “Brest” will complete the creation of infrastructure in the Italian industrial district this year [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/special/regions/view/sez-brest-zavershaet-v-etom-godu-sozdanie-infrastruktury-v-italijanskom-promyshlennom-okruge-380751-2020/>

<sup>133</sup> Residents of the Grodnoinvest FEZ attracted a record volume of FDI on a net basis in the first quarter [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/rezidenty-sez-grodnoinvest-vi-kvartale-privlekli-rekordnyj-objem-pii-na-chistoj-osnove-389251-2020/>

The growing investment attractiveness of this production site, of course, could not appear out of nowhere. This is largely explained by the attention of the FEZ administration to the development of the infrastructure of the free economic zone. The following statistics are very eloquent: since 2015, to increase the investment attractiveness of industrial sites in Grodno and the Grodno region, Lida and Smorgon, about nine million Belarusian rubles have been invested in their infrastructure from the SEZ Development Fund. Thus, on a section of the FEZ near Grodno in the Novaya Gozha area, a transformer substation was built, which provided electricity to new production facilities of residents, and also created the necessary reserve for potential investors. In Lida, at an industrial site in the Severny district, water supply, sewerage, communications and electricity networks were laid.

In Smorgon, at the expense of the same SEZ Development Fund, in 2019 they began a large-scale project to reconstruct Industrial Avenue, which connects the city with the industrial site of the SEZ, where the production of such residents as the Kronospan Group of Companies, Smorgon Aggregate Plant, Europlastics Invest is located, "Shinaka Furniture Bel". The result of the project should be a 4-lane highway with stopping pavilions and small architectural forms, outdoor lighting, electricity and water supply, rainwater drainage and external communication systems. All this is being done with the sole purpose: "The new infrastructure will make the site more attractive for potential investors and participants in the Furniture Cluster in the Grodnoinvest FEZ." <sup>134</sup>

Here it is necessary to explain that today "an effective furniture cluster has been formed in the Grodno region, which includes more than 20 enterprises producing packaging for wood products, wood panels, furniture and much more" <sup>135</sup>. Let us note that the share of wood processing in the SEZ accounts for about half of all investments. Therefore, should we be surprised by the fact that in 2019, residents of the Grodnoinvest FEZ attracted \$436 million in investments, which amounted to a quarter of the figure for all FEZs in Belarus. And as a result, this one of the youngest Belarusian SEZs became the leader in terms of the volume of attracted investments from foreign investors.

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<sup>134</sup> SEZ "Grodnoinvest" has invested about Br 9 million in infrastructure development over five years [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/sez-grodnoinvest-za-pjatl-et-investirovala-v-razvitie-infrastruktury-okolo-br9-mln-387801-2020/>

<sup>135</sup> Residents of the FEZ Grodnoinvest attracted \$436 million in investments in 2019 [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/rezidenty-sez-grodnoinvest-v-2019-godu-privlekli-436-mln-investitsij-385388-2020/>

In November 2020, 75 companies with capital from 40 countries were already operating here. At the same time, a number of new FEZ residents appeared in 2020. Among them are the Irish company Skywatt with a project to build a photovoltaic station, the Belarusian company ZOV-MARKET with a project to create a wood processing plant, and the Belarusian-Russian company EUECoPack with an ongoing project to create a paper packaging production facility. Another company, MBA Investment, is implementing the project as a resident of the special tourist and recreational park “Augustovsky Canal”<sup>136</sup>. Particularly interesting in this regard is the project of the Irish investor Skywatt, the investment volume of which exceeds five million euros, to create a network of photovoltaic stations to provide residents of the FEZ with green energy. Its implementation will allow, among other things, “to establish cooperative ties with international concerns that have requirements for the use of energy from renewable sources”<sup>137</sup>.

And in mid-December 2020, the first stone at the construction site of a modern woodworking enterprise in the Svisloch region on site No. 12 of the Grodnoinvest SEZ was laid by LLC HSSBelakon, a subsidiary of the Austrian HS Timber Group, which is one of the leading wood processing companies in Europe. Construction is planned to be completed in 2022. “The investment amount will be about \$84 million. They plan to process up to 500 thousand cubic meters here. m of coniferous species per year. The main focus will be on waste-free production and the creation of pellets”<sup>138</sup>. Plus, about 230 people will be provided with work here, which is important for a region like Svislochsky.

The emergence of new residents in the Grodnoinvest FEZ is largely dictated by the obvious advantages of this Belarusian region, among which the presence of both wide and narrow gauge railways stands out. This allows logistics companies to quickly and efficiently deliver goods from Asia to Europe and back<sup>139</sup>. That is why in the summer of 2020, the administration

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<sup>136</sup> Since the beginning of the year, residents of SMEZ Grodnoinvest have paid more than Br 157 million in taxes [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/s-nachala-goda-residence-sez-grodnoinvest-uplatili-bole-157-mln-nalogov-415012-2020/>

<sup>137</sup> Resident of FEZ “Grodnoinvest” will create a network of photovoltaic stations [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/rezident-sez-grodnoinvest-sozdast-set-fotoelektricheskikh-stantsij-410108-2020/>

<sup>138</sup> An Austrian investor will build a wood processing enterprise in the Svisloch region [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/avstrijskij-investor-postruit-derevoobrabatyvajuschee-predpriyatje-v-svislochskom-rajone-420771-2020/>

<sup>139</sup> An investor from Germany is considering the possibility of building a container terminal near Grodno [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/investor-iz->

of the FEZ invited potential investors to participate in the creation of a multimodal logistics center on the Belarusian-Polish border, where ten pairs of trains could be processed per day. We are talking about the implementation of infrastructure subprojects here - the construction of a highway, access and exhibition railways, and utility networks. Let's hope this proposal resonates with interested business people. Moreover, “since 2018, five companies with investments from Belarus, the Netherlands, the United Arab Emirates, and China have become residents of the Grodnoinvest FEZ in the field of logistics<sup>140</sup>.”

And in 2020, a characteristic feature of the activities of FEZ residents continued to be their active investment policy. Over the 10 months of this year, they invested nearly one and a half hundred million Belarusian rubles in fixed capital, of which the majority - over 60 percent - was spent on the purchase of high-tech machinery and equipment. This trend is especially visible at enterprises located on the industrial sites of the SEZ in the Smorgon region, where more than 90 million Belarusian rubles have been invested and where companies with foreign capital such as Kronospan, Szynaka, Sodrugestvo operate successfully. Let us remind you that the industrial zone of the FEZ “Grodnoinvest” in the Smorgon region was created in 2015. Now it consists of three sectors. “In just a few years, eight new residents have appeared here with investments from the Netherlands, Poland, Turkey and Cyprus. <...> FEZ residents invested \$425 million in the creation of joint production facilities<sup>141</sup>.” As a result, residents of the FEZ today already form over 90 percent of the industry of the Smorgon region, where more than two thousand people work, and the export volume is approaching \$500 million. As for the residents of the FEZ in Grodno and the Grodno region, from January to November 2020 they invested 30 million Belarusian rubles in fixed assets. At the same time, “Bigan”, “ZOV”, “Makei”, “Gronitex”, “Belagrofert” companies are actively modernizing and expanding their production facilities<sup>142</sup>.

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[germanii-rassmatrivaet-vozmozhnost-stroitelstva-pod-grodno-kontejnernogo-terminala-417507-2020/](https://www.belta.by/germanii-rassmatrivaet-vozmozhnost-stroitelstva-pod-grodno-kontejnernogo-terminala-417507-2020/)

<sup>140</sup> Investors are offered a project of a multimodal logistics center on the Belarusian-Polish border [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/investoram-predlagajut-proekt-multimodalnogo-tsentra-logistiki-na-belorussko-polskoj-granitse-396558-2020/>

<sup>141</sup> In Smorgon, the reconstruction of the main part of Industrial Avenue has been completed [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/v-smorgoni-zavershili-rekonstruktsiju-osnovnoj-chasti-industrialnogo-prospekta-405149-2020/>

<sup>142</sup> Residents of the FEZ “Grodnoinvest” invested Br 144 million in fixed capital [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/rezidenty-sez-grodnoinvest-vlozhili-br144-mln-investitsij-v-osnovnoj-kapital-417225-2020/>

The active investment policy of residents of the Grodnoinvest FEZ allows them to ultimately successfully resolve issues of exporting their products. Over the 10 months of 2020, they supplied almost \$778 million to 55 countries. At the same time, exports to the United States alone tripled. In addition, “the supply of products from FEZ residents to Canada (4.7 times), the Netherlands (2.4 times), the United Arab Emirates (2.3 times), Estonia (1.9 times), Turkey (1.5 times), as well as Switzerland and Afghanistan <sup>143</sup>. ” But the main export destinations remain Russia, Poland and Ukraine. Two thirds of all supplies to other countries from the SEZ are food and agricultural products, furniture and woodworking products.

All these facts once again confirm the idea that it is free economic zones in the Republic of Belarus that are becoming an instrument for economic development, the potential of which is just beginning to be truly realized and can bring even more significant results for the benefit of the entire country.

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<sup>143</sup> Exports of residents of the Grodnoinvest FEZ to the USA increased threefold in January-September [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/eksport-rezidentov-sez-grodnoinvest-v-ssha-za-janvar-sentjabr-voztros-v-tri-raza-416050-2020/>

## Projects of the future are being laid today

The Program of Activities of the Government of the Republic of Belarus for the period until 2025 sets the task of achieving in five years the level of innovative development of the leading countries in the Eastern European region. To achieve this, it is planned to create new growth points for the Belarusian economy, including through the implementation of complex “projects of the future” - “new innovative projects in the areas: electrical industry, electric transport, bioindustry, pharmaceuticals, robotics, instrument engineering, production of composite materials”<sup>144</sup>, as well as the development of a line prototypes of fundamentally new technology for Belarus and organization of mass production based on them.

Note that the solution to this problem should and will be based on certain experience of previous years. Moreover, there is something to build on here. Suffice it to say that over the last five years Belarus has increased the production of innovative products by one and a half times - to almost seven and a half billion dollars. At the same time, “the share of exports of science-intensive and high-tech products increased from 30% in 2015 to 38% in 2020, the share of innovatively active organizations - from 19.6% to 26%<sup>145</sup>. ” In addition, the country has already created a network of 17 technology parks, which cover all Belarusian regions and become centers of attraction for innovative production and development.

Great hopes in this regard are today placed on residents of the Chinese-Belarusian industrial park “Great Stone”, where at the end of 2020 68 companies from 14 countries were registered. An important detail: 12 residents already belong specifically to the field of science, innovation, and new, absolutely unique developments. One of these business entities is the innovative Chinese-Belarusian enterprise “Aviation Technologies and Complexes”, the presentation of its products was held at the Great Stone in December 2020 - multi-rotor and aircraft-type unmanned aerial vehicles, as well as multi-purpose hybrid unmanned aerial systems. It is no secret that the demand for such equipment in the world is now very high. That is why the

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<sup>144</sup> Program of activities of the Government of the Republic of Belarus for the period until 2025. – Minsk, 2020. – P. 25.

<sup>145</sup> Over five years, Belarus has increased the production of innovative products by 1.5 times [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-za-pjat-let-uvlechila-proizvodstvo-innovatsionnoj-produktsii-v-15-raza-415135-2020/>

manufacturing company has already reached an agreement with the Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry “to promote the active promotion of Belarusian equipment and technologies in the field of remote control in foreign markets<sup>146</sup>. ” For such innovative products, you can be sure that there will be no delays in sales in near and far abroad. Another promising resident appeared here in December 2020 - the Solidpipe System company, which will implement a project in the field of new materials related to the production and application of innovative protective coatings on components for equipment used in the mining industry. The fact is that “this technology is unique for Belarus and the countries of the Eurasian region. The start of production is planned for 2021.<sup>147</sup>”

The Chinese-Belarusian center for cooperation in the field of scientific and technological achievements, which opened here in December 2020, will house research laboratories, areas for incubation and acceleration of startups, a testing and small-scale production center, and a demonstration hall to promote the development of innovative production in the Great Stone industrial park. scientific and technical achievements. It is noteworthy that “among those who will work in the opened center is the China-Belarus Innovation Center for Industrial Technologies, which was created by the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus and the Academy of Sciences of Guangdong Province (PRC). In the first quarter of 2021, the Iskra program will launch here, which will help the development of research projects in the two countries<sup>148</sup>. ” In addition, in December 2020, construction of an international exhibition center began here, which “will become one of the important links in the business infrastructure of the industrial park, along with a trade and logistics park, commercial and trade exhibition centers<sup>149</sup>. ”

In general, in 2021, “Great Stone” plans to include support for the implementation of investment projects of residents, as well as the development

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<sup>146</sup> The company “Aviation Technologies and Complexes” was presented at the “Great Stone” [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/v-velikom-kamne-prezentovali-kompaniju-aviatsionnye-tehnologii-i-kompleksy-421952-2020/>

<sup>147</sup> A resident of “Great Stone” is implementing a project in the field of new materials [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/rezident-velikogo-kamnja-realizuet-proekt-v-sfere-novyh-materialov-420268-2020/>

<sup>148</sup> The Chinese-Belarusian Center for Cooperation in the Field of Scientific and Technical Achievements was opened in the “Great Stone” [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/kitajsko-belorusskij-tsentr-sotrudnichestva-v-oblasti-nauchno-tehnicheskikh-dostizhenij-otkryt-v-421475-2020/>

<sup>149</sup> Construction of the international exhibition center began in the “Great Stone” [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/stroitelstvo-mezhdunarodnogo-vystavochnogo-tsentra-nachalos-v-velikom-kamne-421518-2020/>

of a program for high-quality development of an industrial park and a feasibility study for its second stage facilities, which provides for “further expansion of production sectors to attract investments, active promotion of the creation of a platform for regional research cooperation<sup>150</sup>. ” More specifically, during the implementation of the second stage of development of the “Great Stone” and the development of an area of almost one thousand hectares, “it is planned to create a smart city - environmentally friendly, with non-standard solutions, the introduction of advanced innovations in the field of telecommunications, information, mobile, unmanned technologies, artificial intelligence, quantum computing<sup>151</sup>. ” All these facts indicate that the plans associated with the Great Stone industrial park, as an innovative “project of the future,” are quite real, concrete and feasible, which is especially important in the current difficult conditions for the development of the Belarusian economy.

Among the main priorities included in the program of socio-economic development of the Republic of Belarus until 2025, strong regions are also named, which mean “comfortable and safe living and working conditions, high-quality and accessible social infrastructure, high mobility, investments in new production and productive employment<sup>152</sup>. ” At the same time, the regional development strategy implies the implementation of investment projects in lagging regions - to use local resources and create new industries, and in territories with preferential treatment - to create high-tech export-oriented industries. It is clear that the more efficient jobs are in the regions, the higher productivity there is, the more attractive life itself will become outside the capital. In this regard, “the first task is to create conditions for the emergence in the regions of enterprises with highly productive jobs, with a certain level of wages<sup>153</sup>. ” A particularly good foundation for the successful solution of this task in the new five-year plan has already been created in the Belarusian free economic zones (FEZ), which “are becoming an instrument of economic development, the potential of which is just beginning to be truly

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<sup>150</sup> Yan, G. Will Chinese business continue to invest in Belarus / G. Yan // [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/interview/view/prodolzhit-li-kitajskij-biznes-investirovat-v-belarus-jan-gan-o-novyh-tsentrah-prijazhenija-7602/>

<sup>151</sup> The declared investments of Great Stone residents are estimated at more than \$1.2 billion [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/zajavlennye-investitsii-rezidentov-velikogo-kamnja-otsenivajutsja-v-bolee-chem-12-mlrd-421491-2020/>

<sup>152</sup> Main provisions of the draft program of socio-economic development of the Republic of Belarus for 2021-2025 [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.sb.by/articles/osnovnye-polozheniya-proekta-programmy-sotsialno-ekonomicheskogo-razvitiya-respubliki-belarus-na-202.html>

<sup>153</sup> GDP growth and regional development - the Minister of Economy on plans for the five-year period [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/rost-vvp-i-razvitie-regionov-ministr-ekonomiki-o-planah-na-pjatiletku-428671-2021/>

realized and can bring even more significant results for the benefit of the entire country”<sup>154</sup>. This is evidenced by concrete facts.

Suffice it to say that as of January 1, 2021, 440 business entities were registered as residents of the FEZ. And now projects are being implemented there, attracting investments from more than 30 countries totaling about seven billion dollars. In 2020 alone, 43 new residents were attracted to the FEZ of Belarus, about half of which were with foreign capital, with a total volume of declared investments of about two hundred million dollars. And in terms of other indicators, the dynamics of these territorial complexes cannot but rejoice. “Compared to 2019, there was an increase in foreign direct investment on a net basis by 1.5 times (up to \$307 million), industrial production volumes and sales revenue - by 10% <...>, exports of goods - by 2.2% ( up to \$5.9 billion). Depending on the SEZ, residents generated up to 85% of investments, up to half of goods exports and a third of regional industrial production volumes<sup>155</sup>. ”

Thus, only in the FEZ “Gomel-Raton”, where at the beginning of 2021 there were 70 business entities operating as residents, of which 32 companies with foreign capital from 16 countries, almost 110 million were attracted for the implementation of investment projects in 2020 dollars of foreign direct investment, which amounted to almost half of the total investment in the region. And this gave the corresponding result. FEZ residents sold most of their products outside Belarus. The volume of these supplies exceeded one billion dollars. In total, goods were supplied to the markets of 63 countries. “The largest share in exports is occupied by Russia (48.1%), Ukraine (18.6%), Poland (7.8%), China (6.1%), Lithuania (6.6%) <...>. Foreign trade turnover of goods in 2020 amounted to \$1.7 billion,”<sup>156</sup> with a positive balance exceeding \$600 million. At the same time, more than 700 new jobs were opened in the FEZ in 2020, and the total number of people employed here today is almost thirty thousand people.

Residents of the Grodnoinvest FEZ also achieved a positive foreign trade balance of \$438 million in 2020, which today forms about 40 percent of

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<sup>154</sup> Zalesky, B. With an emphasis on cooperation. Chronicle of international interaction in the post-Soviet space / B. Zalesky. – Palmarium Academic Publishing , 2020. – C. 104 .

<sup>155</sup> Residents of free economic zones in 2020 formed almost 5% of the GDP of Belarus [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/rezidenty-svobodnyh-ekonomicheskikh-zon-v-2020-godu-sformirovali-pochti-5-vvp-belarusi-428975-2021>

<sup>156</sup> Residents of the FEZ “Gomel-Raton” increased their production volume by 13.1% in 2020 [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/rezidenty-sez-gomel-raton-uvlechili-objem-proizvodstva-produktsii-na-131-v-2020-godu-429328-2021/>

all exports of the Grodno region. This happens through the supply of wood and paper products, furniture, food, as well as machinery and equipment, computing, electronic and optical equipment, electrical equipment, vehicles, finished metal and textile products, chemical products and fertilizers. In total, in 2020, the products of FEZ residents were exported to 65 countries. Even in such rather exotic ones as Zimbabwe, Peru, Somalia. But the main markets remained Russia, Poland and Ukraine. However, “in 2020, supplies of Belarusian products to the United States of America (growth rate - 337%), the United Arab Emirates (229%), Estonia (210%), Egypt (209%), Canada (194%) increased significantly and the Netherlands (185%)”<sup>157</sup>. It is also characteristic that supplies to the countries of the European Union increased to almost \$200 million, accounting for a fifth of all exports of residents of the Grodnoinvest FEZ.

In the Minsk FEZ, the exports of residents in 2020 increased by 11 percent and amounted to almost one and a half billion dollars, and the flow of foreign direct investment on a net basis increased 3.7 times - to 68 million dollars. In addition, in 2020, “a little more than 1 thousand people were hired for additionally introduced jobs<sup>158</sup>” and in the future it is planned to implement projects in mechanical engineering, instrument making and green technologies in order to create about four thousand more high-performance jobs in the SEZ by 2025 .

FEZ “Vitebsk” is also one of the real tools for developing the economy of the Vitebsk region in an innovative direction. Today, 56 investment projects are being implemented here in 16 sectors with the participation of investors from 15 countries, including Germany, the Czech Republic, Russia, Poland, Great Britain, the United States of America, Israel, Cyprus, and Estonia. In 2020, they exported more than \$550 million of their products, which amounted to almost a third of the volume of supplies to foreign markets throughout the Vitebsk region. This made it possible to obtain a positive balance of foreign trade: more than 177 dollars in goods, over 13 million dollars in services. “At the same time, the Vitebsk FEZ is the only one among the free economic zones

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<sup>157</sup> Residents of the FEZ “Grodnoinvest” exported products to 65 countries in 2020 [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/rezidenty-sez-grodnoinvest-v-2020-godu-eksportirovali-produktsiju-v-65-stran-429156-2021>

<sup>158</sup> Exports of residents of the Minsk FEZ in 2020 amounted to almost \$1.5 billion [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/eksport-rezidentov-sez-minsk-v-2020-godu-sostavil-pochti-15-mlrd-429290-2021/>

that has worked for services with an excess of exports over imports. In total, services worth \$24.4 million were provided to foreign partners<sup>159</sup>. ”

These high indicators would not have been possible without relying on an active investment policy, which is typical for this SEZ. Suffice it to say that in 2020, the influx of foreign direct investment here increased by another 16 percent and exceeded \$30 million. Thanks to this, they managed to create 235 new jobs here, more than one and a half times higher than the level stated in the business plans. An important detail: in 2020, six new business entities were registered as residents in the FEZ with a total volume of declared investments of more than \$35 million, which will create at least a hundred more jobs here. Five of them are companies with foreign capital. “Businessmen from Russia, Canada, Ireland and Azerbaijan intend to implement projects to organize the production of food cans, protective equipment and special-purpose products, match straws, build photovoltaic stations to provide energy for the activities of residents, and also establish the production of plastic lubricants with a wide operating temperature range ”<sup>160</sup>.

Three more enterprises received FEZ resident status in less than two months of 2021. The first of these, in early January, was STS-Beton LLC with an investment project to develop the production of building materials. The new resident, specializing in the production of cement and concrete, plans, after acquiring new equipment, to expand the range and master the production of new products for the construction industry. “This will allow us to increase volume indicators, as well as enter new markets, including exporting products<sup>161</sup>. ”

In mid-January, Gidropress LLC was registered in the FEZ with a project to develop the production of special hydraulic press equipment. The company, operating in Polotsk and specializing in the development and production of special hydraulic presses for general engineering enterprises, railways, and the military-industrial complex, plans to update its machine park, replenish it with new machines, which will make it possible to master the

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<sup>159</sup> Residents of the FEZ “Vitebsk” increased production by 17% in 2020 [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/rezidenty-sez-vitebsk-v-2020-godu-uvlechili-objem-proizvodstva-produktsii-na-17-429730-2021>

<sup>160</sup> OJSC “Vityaz” was recognized as the best resident of the FEZ “Vitebsk” based on the results of 2020 [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/special/economics/view/oaovityaz-priznano-luchshim-rezidentom-sez-vitebsk-po-itogam-2020-goda-429541-2021/>

<sup>161</sup> The new resident of the FEZ “Vitebsk” will develop the production of construction materials [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/novyj-rezident-sez-vitebsk-budet-razvivat-proizvodstvo-stroitelnyh-materialov-422919-2021/>

production of new types of products of its own design. “Among the new products will be equipment for the production of pipeline fittings by molding for the oil and gas industry, as well as a large hydroforming press, which is in demand in the manufacture of casings for devices for the rocket and space industry. In addition, the production of equipment for field recycling of 200-liter barrels of fuels and lubricants will be further developed <sup>162</sup>. ” As is known, the environmental problem associated with 200-liter barrels is typical for the Arctic zone. That is why its decision will allow the new SEZ resident to almost completely export its products.

In mid-February, the private enterprise “New Age Spring” appeared in the SEZ with a project to modernize the import-substituting production of components for agricultural machinery. The new resident is an associated member of the Russian association “Rosspetsmash”, which unites manufacturers of agricultural, construction and road equipment, trailers and semi-trailers. The investment project, which will be implemented in the SEZ, will increase the total volume of product output by one and a half times, expand the range of produced spring teeth, tension and compression springs for mechanical engineering enterprises, as well as create additional opportunities for diversifying exports and increasing supply volumes to foreign markets. And this despite the fact that today this enterprise exports more than half of its products to partners from Russia.

In addition, “two more investment projects are being considered as promising for registration in the Vitebsk FEZ: creating a park of wood-processing plants and organizing an enterprise for the production of biochar, investors from China and Sweden are showing interest in their implementation <sup>163</sup>. ” In order for these and other promising projects to be successful, the SEZ is currently taking active measures to develop additional energy capacities, a water supply facility and the construction of railway access tracks on the territory of the Zhurzhevo sector on the outskirts of Vitebsk, where “the development of the engineering and transport infrastructure of the site will make it possible in the future to attract at least \$165 million in foreign investment and create about 1,000 jobs for projects that are already being

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<sup>162</sup> The new resident of the FEZ “Vitebsk” will develop the production of special hydraulic press equipment [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/novyj-rezident-sez-vitebsk-budet-razvivat-proizvodstvo-spetsialnogo-gidroressovogo-oborudovanija-424231-2021/>

<sup>163</sup> The new resident of the Vitebsk FEZ will develop the production of components for agricultural machinery [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/novyj-rezident-sez-vitebsk-budet-razvivat-proizvodstvo-komplektujuschih-dlja-selhozmashin-429288-2021/>

implemented or are being worked on for registration in the current [2021] year<sup>164</sup>. ” It must be assumed that the implementation of all these plans will mean that the Vitebsk FEZ will reach a qualitatively new level of innovative development.

Another important mechanism for implementing the strategy of innovative development in Belarus should be the implementation of investment projects to create 13 clusters and technology parks on unused and inefficiently used production areas of state enterprises. Let us recall that today a technology park is understood as a form of territorial integration of science, education and production in the form of an association of scientific organizations, design bureaus, educational institutions, manufacturing enterprises or their divisions. In other words, “the purpose of creating a technology park is to concentrate general specialists in one area. Scientists can conduct research there, teach in educational institutions and participate in the process of implementing the results of their research into practice<sup>165</sup>. ” Organizations that acquire the status of a technology park resident receive additional opportunities for development in the form of tax and rent benefits, the use of special equipment and production facilities of technology parks, legal and business consulting services.

In Belarus, the first project “to create a scientific and technological park was implemented in Mogilev. The founders of JSC “Mogilev Technological Park” were the city and regional executive committees, as well as the city’s universities<sup>166</sup>. ” Its registration took place in March 2011. Today, the network of innovation infrastructure in our country already covers all regional centers, as well as Novopolotsk, Pinsk, Gorki, Borisov and Lyakhovichi districts, and includes 17 technology parks, 7 technology transfer centers and the Belarusian Innovation Fund. An important detail: residents of Belarusian technology parks have increased their production output sixfold over the past five years - to almost 200 million Belarusian rubles in 2020. At the same time, “the number of technology park residents during this period increased by 2.2 times, and the total number of their employees increased by 2.7 times. In 2016-2020, 2,566

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<sup>164</sup> About Br 40 million is planned to be invested in the construction of infrastructure facilities of the FEZ “Vitebsk” [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/okolo-br40-mln-planiruetsja-investirovat-v-stroitelstvo-objektov-infrastruktury-sez-vitebsk-429858-2021>

<sup>165</sup> Xiaojuan, L. Formation of the Belarusian model for the development of technology parks / L. Xiaojuan // Economics and banks. – 2018. – No. 2. – P. 54.

<sup>166</sup> Pinyagin, Y. Technoparks as an element of the country's innovative infrastructure / Y. Pinyagin, L. Xiaojuan // Banking Bulletin. – 2016. – No. 12. – P. 52.

jobs were created in technology parks against a plan of 1,536<sup>167</sup>. ” The main areas of activity of residents of Belarusian technology parks today are such as instrumentation and mechanical engineering, electronics, information technology and software development, medicine, pharmaceuticals and the production of medical equipment, as well as “optics, laser technologies, energy, energy saving, bio- and nanotechnologies”<sup>168</sup>. And in a number of these areas, good results have already been achieved.

Thus, at the beginning of 2021, 61 residents were registered in the technology parks of Belarusian universities. The volume of products produced in them in 2020 exceeded 17 million Belarusian rubles, including innovative products - more than 10 million rubles. The peculiarity of these technology parks is that each of them is included in the educational process and each has its own specialization depending on the region of location and scientific focus. “In particular, the Unitechprom BSU technology park specializes in the production of veterinary and pharmacological drugs, and the BNTU Polytechnic scientific and technical park specializes in the creation and production of medical equipment products<sup>169</sup>. ” And the activities of the technology park of Vitebsk State Technological University are aimed at creating innovative production in light industry. In addition, in the Vitebsk region, “a medical and pharmaceutical cluster has been formed on the basis of 10 organizations, including two universities and a technology park. Its core is Vitebsk Medical University, where personnel for pharmacy are trained. And this is a model for the future<sup>170</sup>. ”

Another interesting example is the science and technology park of Grodno State University named after Yanka Kupala, the total income of residents of which “in 2020 increased 2.5 times - to more than Br 800 thousand.”<sup>171</sup>. But just in 2018, an unused building of one of the Grodno

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<sup>167</sup> Residents of Belarusian technology parks have increased production output 6 times over 5 years [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/rezidenty-belorusskih-tehnoparkov-za-5-let-uvelichili-vypusk-produktsii-v-6-raz-428037-2021/>

<sup>168</sup> Subjects of innovation infrastructure of the Republic of Belarus / ed. A.G. Shumilina. – Minsk: State Institution “BelISA”, 2018. – P. 3.

<sup>169</sup> Technoparks of Belarusian universities produced products worth Br 17 million in 2020 [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/tehnoparki-vuzov-belarusi-za-2020-god-proizveli-produktsii-na-br17-mln-425772-2021/>

<sup>170</sup> Report of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Belarus Roman Golovchenko at the VI All-Belarusian People's Assembly “On the Policy of Economic Growth” [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <http://www.government.by/ru/content/9740>

<sup>171</sup> Opinion: the creation of technology parks on unused areas is an example of advanced regional development [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/mnenie-sozdanie-tehnoparkov-na-neispolzuemyh-ploschadjah-primer-operezhajuschego-razvitiija-regionov-428389-2021>

enterprises on Gospodarcha Street was reconstructed for this technology park. Soon 14 companies became its residents, half of which were founded by university students and teachers. Now the construction work in the technology park is being completed on its second stage, for which the former workshop building of an industrial enterprise with an area of more than six thousand square meters has been repurposed, which will house office and production premises with all the infrastructure necessary for the operation of an innovative enterprise. It is noteworthy that some of these areas have already been reserved by companies working in the fields of electric transport, bioengineering, and energy efficiency. And this indicates good prospects for the development of not only the technology park itself, but also the region where it is located.

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## Vitebsk region: growth points - in the free economic zone

The Vitebsk region is one of those regions of Belarus where, according to the head of the Belarusian state, “technological and organizational measures must be taken to cope with the problems that exist there”<sup>172</sup> and direct the development of the region in an innovative direction. One of the real tools used in the region to solve this problem is the free economic zone (FEZ) “Vitebsk”, formed twenty years ago - in 1999. Until August 2018, it consisted of 13 sectors, including 7 in Vitebsk, 4 in Orsha, and one each in Vitebsk and Postavy districts.

In August 2018, in the Republic of Belarus, for the further development of free economic zones and to enhance the attraction of national and foreign investments, Decree No. 346 was adopted, which spoke of the need to expand the territory and optimize the existing SEZs in the country - “Minsk”, “Vitebsk”, “Grodnoinvest””, “Mogilev”, “Gomel-Raton”. It was assumed that the measures taken in the decree “will make it possible to accommodate residents, taking into account the prospects for their further growth, organize jobs, optimally use free land plots with the existing engineering and transport infrastructure, and will also help attract investment in the creation of export-oriented and import-substituting industries”<sup>173</sup>.

Note that only in the FEZ “Vitebsk” this decree identified 16 sectors located not only in the Vitebsk region, but also in other cities and towns of the region - Postavy, Orsha, Baran, Bolbasovo, Novopolotsk, Polotsk region, as well as near villages Kosachi and Kopti in the Vitebsk region, each of which can and should receive powerful impulses for development. And these plans have already begun to be implemented in practice. 48 enterprises began to operate on their territory with the participation of investors from 14 countries, including Germany, the Czech Republic, Russia, Poland, Great Britain, the USA, Israel, Cyprus, Estonia, including the German Vitella, the Polish Decora East, British “LINPAC Packaging East”, Estonian “Soyuz-Cable”, American “CHESS-Bel” and a number of others, which operate in 25 production areas,

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<sup>172</sup> Meeting on the development of the agro-industrial complex of the Vitebsk region [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : [http://president.gov.by/ru/news\\_ru/view/soveschanie-po-voprosam-razvitiya-agropromyshlennogo-kompleksa-vitebskoj-oblasti-22434/](http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/soveschanie-po-voprosam-razvitiya-agropromyshlennogo-kompleksa-vitebskoj-oblasti-22434/)

<sup>173</sup> Belarus will consider the possibility of attracting a loan for the construction of energy infrastructure in the SEZ [Electronic resource]. – 2018. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-rassmatrivaet-vozmozhnost-privlechenija-zajma-dlja-stroitelstva-energeticheskoy-infrastruktury-330424-2018/>

including mechanical engineering, electronics, veterinary medicine, chemical, fuel, food, light industry . And the total number of employees at resident enterprises was about 11 thousand people.

In December 2018, the first resident with Lithuanian capital appeared in the Vitebsk FEZ - VMG WoodArt LLC, whose production site was located in the first sector of the FEZ on the territory of a former military airfield on the outskirts of Vitebsk, which is called “Zhurzhevo”. The new resident is part of one of the largest manufacturers and exporters of furniture and particle boards in the Baltic countries - the international holding VMG, whose head office is located in Klaipeda and unites a number of enterprises in Lithuania, Ukraine and Belarus. The project proposed for the Vitebsk FEZ involves the creation of a sawmill and factories for the production of particle boards and furniture. Its implementation will take place in two stages. “Initially, until 2023, it is planned to invest more than 50 million euros in the development of production activities and create about 200 jobs. The total volume of wood processing at the holding's enterprises will be about 700 thousand cubic meters. m per year. In total, at least 500 jobs will be created <sup>174</sup>. ”

Among the states with which residents of the Vitebsk FEZ are successfully developing cooperation, Latvia should be mentioned. Over the three quarters of 2018, their trade turnover with Latvian business entities approached \$25 million, which amounted to more than a third of the volume of mutual trade between the entire Vitebsk region and this Baltic country. “The following companies participate in export-import operations with Latvia: BelGigaSint LLC, Energokomplekt LLC, Vityaz OJSC, Modern-Expo LLC, Allianceplast LLC, RUPTP Orsha Flax Mill <sup>175</sup>. ”

Even more significant results are typical for the interaction of resident enterprises of the Vitebsk FEZ with Russian partners, especially from Moscow and the Moscow region. Thus, in the first half of 2018 alone, trade turnover with them exceeded \$60 million, and the leaders in business cooperation with Muscovites include not only Vitebsk Carpets OJSC, but also the foreign

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<sup>174</sup> A resident with Lithuanian capital is registered in the FEZ “Vitebsk” [Electronic resource]. – 2018. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/rezident-s-litovskim-kapitalom-zaregistririvan-y-sez-vitebsk-330553-2018/>

<sup>175</sup> Participation of the administration of the FEZ “Vitebsk” in the Belarusian-Latvian business forum [Electronic resource]. – 2018. – URL : [http://www.feз-vitebsk.com/ru/news](http://www.feز-vitebsk.com/ru/news)

enterprise VIK-Animal Health, Prodexim LLC, JLLC “TransExpedition”, JSC “Pozhtekhnika”<sup>176</sup> and a number of others.

Other specific plans of the Vitebsk FEZ to expand the geography of international cooperation are also of interest. Thus, the Chinese company Blue Lotus planned to begin implementing a project here in 2019 with an investment volume of at least \$300 million. We are talking about the creation by a Chinese investor in the territory of the SEZ of “up to ten production enterprises for the production of wood products - from fuel biomaterials to furniture<sup>177</sup>.” Group of companies from the United Arab Emirates AL Maya Group, whose representatives visited Vitebsk in July 2018, saw pharmaceuticals as one of the promising areas of investment cooperation, “since our Middle Eastern partners have extensive experience in this area<sup>178</sup>.” Finally, in September 2018, the administration of the Vitebsk FEZ signed a cooperation agreement with the Indian company India Advisory, which, according to the parties, “will serve as an impetus for further fruitful cooperation and attracting Indian investments to the Vitebsk region<sup>179</sup>.”

Residents of the Vitebsk FEZ demonstrated high growth dynamics in attracting foreign direct investment in 2019 - three and a half times at once, reaching \$16.5 million. As a result, “the share of the Vitebsk FEZ in the investment portfolio of the Vitebsk region in 2019 amounted to almost 39% and increased by 10 percentage points compared to 2018.<sup>180</sup>” Among the SEZ residents who have shown the greatest investment activity are JLLC “Natrix”, LLC “Chess-Bell”, LLC “Akitama”, IUP “VIK-animal health”. In total, 50 residents began to implement their projects in the FEZ, almost half of them with foreign capital. Note that in 2019, eight organizations created with the participation of investors from Lithuania, Sweden, Spain, Russia and Belarus received resident status of the Vitebsk FEZ. The total volume of investments

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<sup>176</sup> Participation of the administration of the FEZ “Vitebsk” in a comprehensive presentation of the Vitebsk region in Moscow [Electronic resource]. – 2018. – URL : <http://www.fez-vitebsk.com/ru/news>

<sup>177</sup> An agreement of intent was signed between the administration of the FEZ “Vitebsk” and the Chinese company [Electronic resource]. – 2018. – URL : <http://www.fez-vitebsk.com/ru/news>

<sup>178</sup> Businessmen from the UAE visited the administration of the FEZ “Vitebsk” [Electronic resource]. – 2018. – URL : <http://www.fez-vitebsk.com/ru/news>

<sup>179</sup> Participation of the administration of the FEZ “Vitebsk” in the Belarusian-Indian business forum [Electronic resource]. – URL : <http://www.fez-vitebsk.com/ru/news>

<sup>180</sup> Residents of the FEZ “Vitebsk” increased the volume of foreign direct investment by 3.5 times [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/special/regions/view/rezidenty-sez-vitebsk-uvlechili-objem-prjamyh-inostrannyh-investitsij-v-35-raza-379775-2020/>

in new projects exceeds \$52 million, and it is planned to create at least 270 jobs<sup>181</sup>.” Apparently, these figures will only grow in the near future.

In November 2019, a new resident was added to them - Rubovsky Dolomite Quarry LLC with the participation of an investor from Lithuania and a project to create the production of dolomite-based building materials. In this case, we are talking about organizing the production of hyper-pressed bricks like “Lego” and other decorative building materials from environmentally friendly raw materials. The production will be located on the territory of a former airfield on the outskirts of Vitebsk. Apparently, the project is designed for the long term, since the total reserves of dolomite in the Vitebsk region “are estimated at more than 5 billion tons at a depth of 2.5 to 38 m, of which the volume of approved reserves is 878 million tons. Dolomite deposit “Ruba” is one of the largest among those explored on the territory of Belarus<sup>182</sup>. ” Actually, for this reason, the production of building materials based on natural raw materials is one of the priority areas for the development of the economy of the Vitebsk region.

Another very promising direction for the development of the Vitebsk FEZ is woodworking production. There are already five resident enterprises here specializing in this industry. In particular, VMG Wood Art LLC is creating a vertically integrated woodworking complex. Another LLC, Akitama, is building a plant for processing low-value wood and producing wood fuel pellets. And the company “Karelia Veneers” organizes the production of veneer. In addition, two more projects were at the stage of registration in the SEZ, including the organization of production of machine tools and equipment for the woodworking industry.

Considering the obvious growing interest of investors in wood processing projects, the Vitebsk FEZ took the initiative to create a wood processing cluster in the region, implying the association of manufacturers, research centers and educational institutions, which is expected to provide favorable conditions for the introduction of innovations. After all, “this form of cooperation will stimulate scientific developments and their practical application. Ultimately, this will allow us to increase the depth of processing

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<sup>181</sup> Investors from 4 countries plan to begin implementing projects in the Vitebsk FEZ this year [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/investory-iz-4-stran-planirujut-v-etom-godu-nachat-realizatsiju-proektov-v-sez-vitebsk-379788-2020/>

<sup>182</sup> The new resident of the FEZ “Vitebsk” will create the production of building materials from dolomite [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/novyj-rezident-sez-vitebsk-sozdast-proizvodstvo-stroitelnyh-materialov-iz-dolomita-371163-2019/>

of wood raw materials and create products with higher added value<sup>183</sup>. ” Participants in this cluster can include enterprises, institutions of further education, educational institutions that train specialists for this industry, including Vitebsk State Technical College. The agreement on the creation of a wood processing cluster was planned to be signed in the spring of 2020 as part of the International Economic Forum in Vitebsk. It must be assumed that this form of coordination, which implies a synergistic effect as a result, will really help the introduction of innovations not only in the free economic zone, but also beyond its borders.

Note that the emergence of this cluster in the Vitebsk region can continue and complement the innovative direction of development of the northern Belarusian region. Let us recall that in October 2017, the Novopolotsk innovative and industrial petrochemical cluster was already formed here, which included the Novopolotsk City Executive Committee, Polotsk State University, JSC Naftan, JSC Construction and Installation Center No. 16, Novopolotsk, LLC Interservice” and Novopolotsk Center for Entrepreneurship and Real Estate. Already in 2020, the number of its participants is expected to almost double, including at the expense of foreign participants. In particular, these could be Chinese partners from Weihai, in Shandong province, a sister city of Novopolotsk, who are showing interest in the innovative developments of Polotsk scientists to create new types of petrochemical products and improve the characteristics of produced fuel. Among the potential partners of the cluster, apparently, is a company from the Czech Republic that is interested in entering the Belarusian market.

The growing interest of foreign partners in the petrochemical cluster is pushing its organizers to optimize the mechanisms of interaction between its participants. For this reason, in 2020 it is planned to create an association here that will act as a coordinating center and begin to formulate proposals for improving the regulatory requirements governing the activities of subjects of this innovative infrastructure. In addition, “the association will also take upon itself the organization of events to develop effective interaction between participants, the formation of a portfolio of joint orders, promoting the image of the cluster and improving personnel support for its activities<sup>184</sup>. ” There is

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<sup>183</sup> FEZ “Vitebsk” proposes to create a woodworking cluster [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/sez-vitebsk-predlagaet-sozdat-derevoobrabatvujuschij-klaster-371147-2019/>

<sup>184</sup> The number of participants in the Novopolotsk petrochemical cluster is planned to almost double [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/chislo-uchastnikov->

every reason to believe that this format of cooperation can also have the most beneficial impact on the innovative development of the economy of the Vitebsk region.

And the first resident registered in the FEZ in 2020 was BelBank LLC, created with the participation of an investor from Russia. The investment project of this company involves the reconstruction and modernization of production facilities on the outskirts of Vitebsk and at the site of Vityaz OJSC, as well as the installation of two lines for the production of cans for industrial canning of food products. Production activities here are planned to begin in 2021. The supply of raw materials - tinsplate - will be carried out by the Miory Metal Rolling Plant, located in the Vitebsk region, the commissioning of which is scheduled for the second quarter of 2021. As a result, BelBanka LLC will first “be engaged in the production of seamless cans, in which the bottom and side surface are a single whole, only the lid is rolled. At the second stage, the company will produce prefabricated products consisting of three parts (bottom, body and lid)<sup>185</sup>. ” An important detail: with the new enterprise reaching full capacity, the volume of products produced here will double. And all of it will be shipped to foreign markets.

The investment picture for 2020 in the Vitebsk FEZ is significantly complemented by the fact that they are already planning to register as residents here at least six enterprises created with the participation of investors from Canada, China, Azerbaijan, and Russia. At the same time, the total volume of investments in these projects will exceed \$100 million, and the number of jobs created will be at least 300. In particular, in Polotsk, the resident of the FEZ - Belsun International High Technologies Corporation LLC - will create a high-tech production of low-tonnage chemical products, having no analogues in the post-Soviet space. The Azerbaijani investor will produce innovative products designed “to serve various types of equipment, including under harsh operating conditions. Production is expected to be launched before the end of 2020; all products will be shipped to foreign markets<sup>186</sup>. ”

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[novopolotskogo-neftehimicheskogo-klastera-planiruetsja-uvlechit-pochti-v-dva-raza-371161-2019/](https://www.belta.by/economics/view/v-sez-vitebsk-s-uchastiem-rossijskogo-investora-sozdadut-proizvodstvo-zhestjanyh-banok-377712-2020/)

<sup>185</sup> In the FEZ “Vitebsk”, with the participation of a Russian investor, a production of cans will be created [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/v-sez-vitebsk-s-uchastiem-rossijskogo-investora-sozdadut-proizvodstvo-zhestjanyh-banok-377712-2020/>

<sup>186</sup> An investor from Azerbaijan will create a high-tech production of small-scale chemicals in the Vitebsk FEZ [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/investor-iz-azerbajdzhana-sozdast-vysokotekhnologichnoe-proizvodstvo-malotonnazhnoj-himii-v-sez-vitebsk-381432-2020/>

In the same Polotsk, a Belarusian investor intends to create a production of stainless steel containers with the organization of about 20 jobs. The Belarusian-Russian JV Novopolotsk Plant of Technological Metal Structures is considering the possibility of implementing a project with an investment volume of about \$10 million in the production of hot-dip galvanizing in the village of Farinovo, Polotsk region. A Chinese company intends to invest about \$28 million in a wood processing complex on the outskirts of Vitebsk. And in Postavy, Belmatch LLC, created with the participation of an investor from Canada, will specialize in the production of match straws. In Orsha, a Belarusian company will try to establish the production of fuel pellets, and OJSC PAK Plant will initiate a project to organize the production of components for mining dump trucks.

In 2020, another significant investment event will take place in the Vitebsk FEZ, due to the fact that the Lithuanian holding VMG Group decided to expand the financing of the investment project already being implemented in the FEZ from 100 to 200 million euros. To achieve this, in addition to the vertically integrated woodworking complex being created, “the investor is ready to additionally organize the production of furniture made from solid wood. As a result, the number of jobs created under the holding’s projects will increase to 1 thousand <sup>187</sup>. ” This is being done in order to begin in 2021 at a new furniture production facility the production of new products - tables and chairs, the main buyer of which will be the IKEA concern , which is now assisting in financing this project.

Note that in total in 2019, more than one billion dollars of investment was attracted to the economy of the Vitebsk region. Thanks to an active investment policy, the first plant in Belarus for the production of seamless steel cylinders was put into operation here. New enterprises and production facilities for wood processing have opened in Rossony, Sharkovshchinsky, Beshenkovichsky, Gorodok, and Polotsk districts. “The grain drying complex of the Vitebsk broiler poultry farm in the urban village of Surazh, and the soybean processing workshop of the Ekomol-Agro enterprise were put into operation . ” <sup>188</sup>In addition, the Yubileiny agricultural complex is completing

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<sup>187</sup> The Lithuanian holding VMG Group will increase the volume of investments in projects in the Vitebsk FEZ to 200 million euros [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/litovskij-holding-vmg-grupp-uvelichit-objem-investitsij-po-proektam-v-sez-vitebsk-do-200-mln-euro-379950-2020/>

<sup>188</sup> Bogacheva, O. More than \$1 billion of investments were attracted to the economy of the Vitebsk region in 2019 / O. Bogacheva // [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/bolee-1-mlrd-investitsij-privlecheno-v-ekonomiku-vitebskoj-oblasti-za-2019-god-378810-2020/>

the construction of the largest dairy complex in Belarus, Kupalinka, with a capacity of more than two thousand heads. In the first half of 2020, two more innovative facilities of the Ustye agricultural enterprise will go into operation - a grain drying complex for the preparation of agricultural seeds for 10 thousand tons and a dairy complex with a “robotic carousel” milking system. And this is not a complete list. This is the pace today that attracted investments set for the development of only one of the Belarusian regions, stimulating the creation of new growth points on its territory.

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## There are incentives for investors

In December 2021, the Council of the Republic of the National Assembly of the Republic of Belarus approved amendments to the law “On Free Economic Zones” (FEZ), which provide for the transfer of powers to change the boundaries of these territories from the head of state to the government. “At the same time, the President of the country will continue to coordinate the inclusion of agricultural and forest areas within the boundaries of the SEZ<sup>189</sup>. ” It is expected that this innovation will reduce the time from the idea to the start of implementation of new investment projects in territories that are considered growth points in the regions, as it will encourage potential investors to invest resources in the SEZ. For them, “a clear rule remains unchanged: the boundaries of the SEZ can be expanded exclusively for specific investment projects<sup>190</sup>. ” Let us recall that the law “On Free Economic Zones” was adopted in December 1998. It defines one of the main goals of the SEZ as “attracting investment in the creation and development of export-oriented and import-substituting industries based on new and high technologies<sup>191</sup>. ” Note that there are only six SEZs in Belarus. As of October 1, 2021, 429 companies were registered here with about 137 thousand employees, where projects are being implemented attracting investments worth almost seven billion dollars from more than 30 countries. The fact that SEZs are territories where today you can build a successful business is confirmed by statistics from 2021. Over three quarters, the volume of exports here has increased by almost one and a half times, and the influx of foreign direct investment amounted to a fifth of the country as a whole.

**of the Grodnoinvest FEZ** are achieving good results in 2021, whose export volume in January-September exceeded one billion dollars. The geography of these supplies is very wide: Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Germany, Denmark, Egypt, Italy, Lithuania, Great Britain, Turkey. “Over 9 months, a positive balance of foreign trade was obtained in the amount of \$540 million. This is the best indicator among the SEZs of

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<sup>189</sup> The Council of the Republic approved the bill on free economic zones [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/sovet-respubliki-odobril-zakonoproekt-osvobodnyh-ekonomicheskikh-zonah-476194-2021/>

<sup>190</sup> Nikitina: attractive national jurisdiction activates the influx of investment [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/nikitina-privlekatelnaja-natsionalnaja-jurisdiksija-aktiviziruetsj-pritok-investitsij-475406-2021/>

<sup>191</sup> Zalesky, B.L. Free and special economic zones as growth points in the regions / B.L. Zalesky // Social and humanitarian studies. – 2020. – No. 3. – P. 64.

Belarus<sup>192</sup>. ” As a result, FEZ residents already account for over 43% of exports and more than 30% of industrial production of the entire Grodno region. The machine-building segment is developing especially dynamically in this SEZ. Suffice it to say that here “the export of computing, electronic and optical equipment has doubled in the nine months of the current [2021] year<sup>193</sup>. ” In total, nine companies in the field of mechanical engineering and another seven in metalworking are registered with Grodnoinvest. In total, 75 companies with investments from 40 countries are residents of the FEZ. They successfully implement investment projects in the field of woodworking and furniture production, mechanical engineering and metalworking, food, chemical and light industries, agriculture and export a wide range of products, and the largest share of foreign supplies falls on woodworking products and furniture, food and chemical products, machinery and equipment, textiles.

It is characteristic that new investment projects are being launched in the FEZ “Grodnoinvest” today, which in the near future will be able to have a very positive impact on the export component of both the FEZ itself and the entire Grodno region. In particular, at the FEZ site in Smorgon, Europlastex Invest LLC has already taken on the second project as a resident of Grodnoinvest. As part of the first, the construction of a vertically integrated complex for the production of cotton yarn and products from it is underway. The second project is the organization of metal processing production in Smorgon, the total cost of which will exceed five million euros. The first products are planned to be released here in 2022. For the most part, it “will be focused on export to the countries of Central Asia, Western Europe, the Near and Middle East<sup>194</sup>. ” For this purpose, new production facilities will be built and existing ones will be modernized, and modern technological equipment for the production of steel pipes and profiles will be purchased. As a result, the new investment project will create dozens of new jobs, bring unused premises into circulation and partially replace products imported from abroad.

Note that nine resident enterprises are already successfully operating at the industrial sites of the Grodnoinvest FEZ in the Smorgon region, including

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<sup>192</sup> Exports of residents of the Grodnoinvest FEZ in January-September exceeded \$1 billion [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/eksport-rezidentov-sez-grodnoinvest-v-janvare-sentjabre-prevysil-1-mlrd-472551-2021/>

<sup>193</sup> Residents of FEZ “Grodnoinvest” doubled the export of electronic and optical equipment [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/rezidenty-sez-grodnoinvest-udvoili-eksport-elektronnoj-i-opticheskoy-apparatury-473562-2021/>

<sup>194</sup> A foreign investor organizes the production of steel pipes in Smorgon [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/inostrannyj-investor-organizuet-v-smorgoni-proizvodstvo-stalnyh-trub-454884-2021/>

with investments from the Netherlands, Poland, Turkey, and other countries, which since 2015 “have invested over \$470 million in the creation of modern export- oriented enterprises”<sup>195</sup>. It was here that in 2020 almost half - 48 percent - of all industrial products of the Grodnoinvest FEZ were produced. As for other industrial sites of the FEZ, “29% of production occurs in the city of Grodno, 8% in the Lida district. The leaders in terms of growth rate for 2020 were Smorgon (136%), Grodno (123%) and Svisloch (123%) districts”<sup>196</sup>.

And there are good reasons to believe that new domestic and foreign investors will soon appear here. The fact is that in August 2021, the second launch complex of a large-scale infrastructure project for the reconstruction of the city’s main transport artery, Industrial Avenue, was put into operation in Smorgon, which connects residential buildings with the industrial park of the SEZ and includes a modern four-lane road, engineering infrastructure networks, landscaping and landscaping of the surrounding area, lighting. In 2021, the implementation of the third phase of the project began here, which involves the creation of a roundabout, as well as providing the industrial park with additional electrical energy. All this will make the operating conditions for both existing and potential residents of the FEZ even more attractive.

The industrial site of the FEZ in Grodno also continues to develop, where two new residents were registered in 2021. The first, the Unis Trade company, is creating the production of metal structures in Grandichi. The second one registered here in June 2021 was OV-PlastSnab LLC, which organizes an enterprise to produce a wide range of products from synthetic polymers. In addition to the export of finished products and import substitution, the investment project of the new resident will create additional prerequisites for the development of a chemical cluster in the SEZ on the industrial site in the Auls area, where residents such as PCC Consumer Products Navigator LLC, LLC “PCC Consumer Products Navigator” are already successfully implementing their projects Belagrofert”, OJSC “Grodnorayagroservis”, PT LLC “Typhoon”. And “the construction of a

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<sup>195</sup> The second part of the infrastructure project of the FEZ “Grodnoinvest” has been completed in Smorgon [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/vtoraja-ochered-infrastrukturnogo-proekta-sez-grodnoinvest-zavershena-v-smorgoni-455912-2021/>

<sup>196</sup> Industrial production of residents of the Grodnoinvest FEZ increased by 14% [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/promyshlennoe-proizvodstvo-rezidentov-sez-grodnoinvest-vyroslo-na-14-430320-2021/>

unique plant for the production of glass products has recently begun<sup>197</sup>. ” So the prospects for growth in the export component are the most serious here too.

**of the Vitebsk FEZ** increased export supplies by more than 60 percent in the three quarters of 2021 , bringing their volume to \$623 million and interacting with partners from 73 countries. As a result of work on diversification of exports, the participants of the FEZ managed to increase the shipment of their products to the markets of the “far arc” countries by almost half, and to the UK, the United Arab Emirates, India, Pakistan, Israel, and Brazil - three or more times. In addition, “for the first time, fiber-optic cables were supplied to Afghanistan, gas-smoke analyzers were shipped to Poland, fur pelts were shipped to China, linen was shipped to Chile, and insulated cables were shipped to France<sup>198</sup>. ” Apparently, to the more than 50 investment projects being implemented in this SEZ, a number of new ones will very soon be added, as foreign investors are showing interest in organizing production of composite materials here, in the field of machine tool building, woodworking and the creation of finished products from wood raw materials, as well as microfertilizers. In particular, “an investor from Sweden, in cooperation with a partner from China, is ready to invest about \$100 million in the construction of a plant for processing low-grade wood. Representatives of the Netherlands are looking for a site for organizing furniture production with an investment volume of about 100 million euros. <...> A German company plans to create a production of decking boards worth about \$9 million<sup>199</sup>. ” In addition, Chinese businessmen have already registered a legal entity in Vitebsk to implement a woodworking project with an expected investment volume of about \$26 million. In total, “there are about 8 more projects under development, the implementation of which will attract at least \$160 million into the economy of the Vitebsk region<sup>200</sup>. ”

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<sup>197</sup> The new resident of the FEZ “Grodnoinvest” will create an innovative production of products from synthetic polymers in Grodno [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://grodnoinvest.by/press-center/novyj-rezident-sez-grodnoinvest-sozdast-v-grodno-innovacionnoe-proizvodstvo-izdelij/>

<sup>198</sup> Residents of the Vitebsk FEZ increased exports of goods by almost 62% in January-September [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/rezidenty-sez-vitebsk-v-janvare-sentjabre-uvelicili-eksport-tovarov-pochti-na-62-471298-2021/>

<sup>199</sup> Investors from 4 countries are showing interest in implementing projects at the sites of the FEZ “Vitebsk” [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/investory-iz-4-stran-projavljajut-interes-k-realizatsii-proektov-na-ploschadkah-sez-vitebsk-472892-2021/>

<sup>200</sup> Residents of the FEZ “Vitebsk” increased production by more than 40% in 9 months [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/rezidenty-sez-vitebsk-za-9-mesjatsev-narastili-proizvodstvo-produktsii-bolee-chem-na-40-471323-2021/>

Let us remind you that now in this SEZ, in 16 sectors, 56 investment projects are being implemented with the participation of investors from 15 countries, including Germany, the Czech Republic, Russia, Poland, Lithuania, Great Britain, Israel, Cyprus, and Spain. In the first quarter of 2021, three new residents were registered here with projects to develop the production of special hydraulic pressing equipment, construction materials and modernize capacities for the production of import-substituting components for agricultural machinery and passenger cars. “\$12.2 million of foreign direct investment was attracted to the implementation of projects on a net basis, which amounted to more than 40% of the figure for the entire Vitebsk region 201 .”

More than half of the products produced in January-September 2021 were sent for export by residents **of the Gomel-Raton FEZ**. More than \$1.1 billion worth of goods were shipped to markets in 63 countries. The top five importers here are Russia, Ukraine, Poland, Lithuania and China. These are good indicators, considering that as of October 1, 2021, 69 business entities operated in the FEZ, of which 30 were companies with foreign capital from 16 countries. In 2021, three more new resident enterprises were registered here with a declared investment volume of about \$50 million. And in total, “\$76.3 million of foreign direct investment was attracted for the implementation of investment projects in the Gomel-Raton FEZ over 9 months .”<sup>202</sup>This is almost half of the total investment in the Gomel region.

By the end of 2021, the FEZ planned to increase production volumes by 18.5 percent through the modernization of existing production facilities and the registration of new residents with promising investment projects. Thus, “the Alkopak enterprise is building a new building in which it plans to produce new medical products. "Polycap" is working on a project to produce disposable tableware from cellulose<sup>203</sup>. ” Residents such as Veza-G and Multipack will also expand their production. More than half of the products produced are already supplied to foreign markets - to Russia, Kazakhstan, Armenia, and

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<sup>201</sup>Residents of the FEZ “Vitebsk” increased production by more than 40% in 9 months [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/rezidenty-sez-vitebsk-za-9-mesjatsev-narastili-proizvodstvo-produktsii-bolee-chem-na-40-471323-2021/>

<sup>202</sup> Residents of the FEZ “Gomel-Raton” increased the production of industrial products by more than 42% in 9 months [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/rezidenty-sez-gomel-raton-za-9-mesjatsev-uvlichili-proizvodstvo-promproduktsii-bolee-chem-na-42-471389-2021/>

<sup>203</sup> Residents of the Gomel-Raton FEZ intend to increase production volume by 18.5% in 2021 [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/rezidenty-sez-gomel-raton-namereny-uvlichit-objem-proizvodstva-na-185-v-2021-godu-434576-2021/>

European countries - by MIRTEK-engineering LLC, which produces energy metering devices. Recently, it has begun to work on outsourcing the production of surface-mount printed circuit boards (SMD ) and DIP components - a promising area that is relevant for all companies associated with the production of electronic modules and assemblies. Let us note that “in 2020, \$230 million was invested in the Gomel-Raton FEZ <sup>204</sup>. ”

As for **the Brest FEZ**, in January 2022, at the world exhibition EXPO 2020 in the United Arab Emirates, its potential was presented for the first time on the site of the Belarusian national exposition with a separate pavilion. Such FEZ resident enterprises as JV Santa Bremor LLC, the STiM group of companies, and Barkhim OJSC demonstrated their capabilities and exhibits to numerous visitors to the world forum. The very fact of the presence of FEZ “Brest” at “EKPO-2020” eloquently illustrates the growing role of this “multi-disciplinary economic territory where production, technological, and logistics activities can develop” <sup>205</sup> for the economy of the Brest region.

Let us remind you that residents of this FEZ in 2021 already provided a fifth of the total industrial production of this Belarusian region. “Goods worth \$936 million were supplied outside the country (growth rate – 123.9%). The share of the SEZ in the total export volume of the Brest region was 29%, with a positive balance of foreign trade of \$289 million <sup>206</sup>. ” And this despite the fact that in December 2021 there were 72 residents operating here, including 42 with foreign capital, and the number of employees was 21.5 thousand people. In 2021, an additional 700 jobs were created in the SEZ. At the end of December 2021, Green-Glass LLC became the 73rd resident of the Brest FEZ with an investment project to modernize the production of glass products to a full cycle. “The investor intends to invest more than 500 thousand euros in this business within three years. The range of products includes processed sheet glass, reinforced (tempered) and laminated flat glass, glass mirrors, single-chamber and double-glazed windows <sup>207</sup>. ”

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<sup>204</sup> SEZs are a driver for the development of territories - Aslyuk [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/sez-javlajutsja-drajverom-razvitija-teritorij-asljuk-434551-2021/>

<sup>205</sup> Zalessky, B.L. Free and special economic zones as growth points in the regions / B.L. Zalessky // Social and humanitarian studies. – 2020. – No. 3. – P. 67.

<sup>206</sup> The investment potential of the Brest FEZ will be presented at an exhibition in Dubai [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/investitsionnyj-potencial-sez-brest-predstavjat-na-vystavke-v-dubae-480588-2022/>

<sup>207</sup> A new resident was registered in the Brest FEZ [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/novogo-rezidenta-zaregistrovali-v-sez-brest-476969-2021/>

Prior to this, in October 2021, Kesar Industrial LLC, an enterprise with Belarusian-Israeli capital, which is located in Kobrin and specializes in working with lumber, became a resident of the FEZ. The new resident leased a plot of land and acquired ownership of the buildings located on it, where, after reconstruction, the production of “furniture panels made of laminated chipboard and products made of laminated veneer lumber, which have a wide range of applications, will be moved. A significant share of products is expected to be supplied to foreign markets <sup>208</sup>. ” The production of these products is planned to begin within three years. At the first stage of implementation of this investment project, Kesar Industrial LLC intends to invest more than half a million euros in it. It is also interesting that the new resident will be the fifth enterprise operating in the FEZ in the field of wood processing.

Let us note that today the Brest FEZ is characterized not only by the emergence of new residents, but also by the expansion of the activities of companies that have been operating here for a long time. The fact is that in 2016 its territory was expanded mainly due to enterprises that had free space. Over the course of five years, about 80 enterprises were located in the unused facilities of former industrial giants, including electric lamp, carpet, and electromechanical plants. In general, residents of the Brest FEZ are now located both in the regional center and Brest district, as well as in Baranovichi, Pinsk, Kobrin and Ivatsevichi.

Thus, in August 2021, Anrex LLC, which has been a resident of the FEZ for a quarter of a century, acquired production and administrative premises from the Brest OJSC Tsvetotron and established the production of furniture there. “It is planned to invest about Br 60 million in the project and create 500 jobs. The first launch complex has already been commissioned... <sup>209</sup>” As a result, the city got rid of the unprofitable buildings of the former plant and received a new production facility. Another example in this context is Arlight and K LLC, an enterprise with Russian-Chinese capital, registered in the Brest FEZ in November 2015 and located in the Airport industrial zone. Over the past six years, the company has created a high-tech production of LEDs here, on the basis of which LED strips and lighting devices are manufactured, which

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<sup>208</sup> The woodworking enterprise has replenished the number of residents of the Brest FEZ [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/derevoobrabatyvajuschee-predpriyatje-popolnilo-chislo-rezidentov-sez-brest-462782-2021/>

<sup>209</sup> An investor created a furniture production facility on the premises of the Brest “Tsvetotron” [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/investor-na-ploschadjah-brebstskogo-tsvetotрона-sozdal-mebelnoe-proizvodstvo-457323-2021/>

are in demand not only in Belarus, but also in Russia, as well as in Poland and Germany. Suffice it to say that in 2020 it shipped \$3.7 million worth of its products to foreign partners. In 2021, a new line was launched here, which “will allow doubling the plant’s capacity and producing up to 3 thousand linear lamps and up to 350 km of LED strip per month<sup>210</sup>. ” This will make it possible to increase the number of employees to 250 people.

The expansion of production is planned at a number of other operating enterprises-residents of the FEZ. Thus, Polipol Furniture Bel LLC, registered here in the summer of 2020, which became “the seventh company in the FEZ with German capital<sup>211</sup>,” is building a large plant for the production of upholstered furniture in Ivatsevichi with a planned investment volume of 26 million euros. “IP Inko-Food LLC intends to launch a new line for the production of raw smoked sausages. JV “Santa Bremor” LLC annually invests at least \$5 million in production development<sup>212</sup>. ” All these facts clearly show what serious investment and production potential the Brest FEZ has today in terms of long-term development. And which, after demonstration at the world exhibition EXPO 2020 in Dubai, can receive new powerful impulses in terms of further development.

In general, it remains to add that free economic zones in Belarus, as a model of economic relations in the regions, have already become an effective tool for the development of the national economy. And the adoption of amendments to the law “On Free Economic Zones” will, of course, only contribute to maintaining the positive dynamics of development that they have already been able to achieve over the past more than 20 years since the appearance of the FEZ in Belarus.

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<sup>210</sup> The manufacturer of LEDs in the Brest FEZ plans to double its production volume [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/proizvoditel-svetodiody-v-sez-brest-planiruet-udvoit-objem-proizvodstva-450766-2021/>

<sup>211</sup> Zalesky , B. L. FEZ “ Brest ”: prospects inspire optimism / B. L. Zalesky // Materials of the XVI International scientific and practical conference “Modern European science – 2020”, June 30 – July 7, 2020: Sheffield. Science and education LTD . – C. 7.

<sup>212</sup> Five new enterprises will be launched this year in the Brest FEZ [Electronic resource]. –2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/pjat-novyh-predpriyatij-zapustjat-v-etom-godu-v-sez-brest-433948-2021/>

## Optimization as an impetus for the development of growth points in the regions

The results of 2021 showed that residents of six free economic zones (FEZs) operating in the Republic of Belarus were able to generate up to 70 percent of investments, up to half of the export of goods and a third of the industrial production volumes of their regions. And this despite the fact that “at the beginning of 2022, 432 business entities were registered in the SEZ, projects are being implemented attracting investments from more than 30 countries for a total amount of declared investments of about \$7.5 billion. During 2021, the composition of the SEZ was replenished with 25 new residents with the total volume of declared investments is \$441 million, of which a third is with foreign capital (\$401 million)<sup>213</sup>. ” In December 2021, amendments to the law “On Free Economic Zones” (FEZ) were approved in the Republic of Belarus, which provided for the transfer of powers to change the boundaries of these preferential plots of land from the head of state to the government. The purpose of these innovations is “to reduce the time from the idea to the start of implementation of new investment projects in territories that are considered growth points in the regions<sup>214</sup>. ”

Based on this decision, the Belarusian government in April 2022 adjusted the territory of **the Grodnoinvest FEZ**, adding areas that are areas of high demand for investors, and excluding areas that are not promising. Let us remind you that in 2018 this SEZ already changed its contours. Then, for the first time, the territories of Svisloch were included in its borders, and industrial parks in Smorgon and the Grodno region were expanded. This has since made it possible to attract more than one billion dollars of foreign investment into the SEZ. This time, adjustments were made to sites located in the Grodno, Svisloch and Smorgon regions, as well as in the cities of Lida, Novogrudok, Smorgon, Slonim and Grodno, which should “improve the conditions for attracting investment to the regions, use new industrial sites with investment with a capacity of up to \$60 million, to ensure the possibility of

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<sup>213</sup> FEZ residents in 2021 formed a fifth of the main republican indicators [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/rezidenty-sez-v-2021-godu-sformirovali-piatuju-chast-osnovnyh-respublikanski-pokazatelej-485111-2022/>

<sup>214</sup> Zalesky, B. Time for specific decisions. Chronicle of international cooperation / B. Zalesky. – LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2022. – P. 141.

further effective implementation of investment projects of existing residents of the FEZ in the amount of more than \$120 million<sup>215</sup>. ”

Let us note that in 2021, residents of the Grodnoinvest FEZ have already seriously increased both industrial production and exports to near and far abroad countries, and also attracted a record volume of foreign direct investment. In numbers it looks like this: the foreign trade turnover of residents increased by more than 40 percent and exceeded two billion dollars. “The growth driver was the export of Belarusian products. Its volume amounted to \$1.4 billion with a growth rate of 146% compared to 2020. The positive balance of foreign trade turnover amounted to \$721 million, which is \$283 million more than in 2020.<sup>216</sup>” Geography of supplies: 63 countries. At the same time, exports to Denmark, Sweden, Austria, Italy, Great Britain, the Netherlands, Germany, and the USA increased significantly. But the key sales markets remained Russia, Poland and Ukraine. The lion's share of the volume of shipped products - more than 70 percent - fell on wood and paper products, furniture, food and agricultural products. In addition, manufacturers of optical equipment, chemical products and metal products also increased their exports. The basis of these successful results of activities of FEZ residents, of course, lies in their active investment policy. In 2021, they were able to attract \$160 million in foreign investment. Key investors were Austria, Cyprus, Poland and the Netherlands. In total, the investment vectors of SEZs already include 15 countries. The largest investments were made in production facilities located in industrial parks in Smorgon, Svisloch and Grodno.

It is also important that in 2021, four companies operating in the chemical, metalworking and logistics industries became new residents of the Grodnoinvest FEZ. Thus, the Portela company with Portuguese investments is implementing a project to build a transport and logistics center in the Grodno region. Another resident, Unis Trade, is busy organizing the production of metal structures in Grodno, where “a production and warehouse complex will be built, modern equipment for the production of various metal structures will be purchased. Production is planned to be launched by the end of 2022.<sup>217</sup>”

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<sup>215</sup> The government has adjusted the boundaries of the Grodnoinvest FEZ [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/pravitelstvo-skorrektirovalo-granitsy-sez-grodnoinvest-496079-2022/>

<sup>216</sup> Exports from the Grodnoinvest FEZ increased 1.5 times last year [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/eksport-sez-grodnoinvest-za-proshlyj-god-vyros-v-15-raza-494540-2022/>

<sup>217</sup> Logistics, chemistry and metalworking: FEZ “Grodnoinvest” was replenished with 4 new residents in 2021 [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL :

And the OV-PlastSnab enterprise at an industrial site in the Aulsa area plans to produce a wide range of products from synthetic polymers. Finally, in December 2021, ServicePromPack Group LLC was registered in the FEZ with an investment project to create a high-tech enterprise for the production of a wide range of types of polyolefin packaging for export to other residents of the FEZ, which will be implemented in the Grandici area. “The release of the first batch of products is planned for the second quarter of 2022. It is planned that 45 jobs will be created <sup>218</sup>. ”

The positive dynamics of exports and attracting foreign investment will continue here in 2022. In particular, in January-March of this year, “over 70% of sold products were exported from here, which is 4 percentage points more compared to the 1st quarter of 2021. The geography of exports exceeded 60 countries <sup>219</sup>. ” As for foreign investment, in the first quarter of 2022, almost \$135 million came to the SEZ from 12 countries, including the Netherlands, Cyprus, Austria, Great Britain, Poland, and the United Arab Emirates. “The main volume of investments fell on companies in the industrial park FEZ Grodnoinvest in the Smorgon region, where global manufacturers successfully operate. More than \$16 million was raised by FEZ residents located in Grodno <sup>220</sup>. ” Speaking about new residents, it should be said that in 2022, the Unionway company has already been registered here, which is implementing a project to build a container terminal in the area of the Svisloch railway freight station. This terminal will “specialize in the transshipment of containers from 1520 mm gauge to 1435 mm gauge and back, depending on the direction of transportation. Modern equipment will make it possible to additionally organize the reloading of containers onto road transport and the storage of containers both in the open air and inside warehouses <sup>221</sup>. ” Investments in the project will amount to more than \$23 million. It is planned to create 70 new jobs here. Construction of the first stage will begin in 2022, and in 2025 the

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<https://www.belta.by/regions/view/logistika-himija-i-metalloobrabotka-sez-grodnoinvest-v-2021-godu-popolnili-4-novyh-rezidenta-481367-2022/>

<sup>218</sup> High-tech chemical production will be created by a new resident of the FEZ “Grodnoinvest” [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/vysokotekhnologichnoe-himproizvodstvo-sozdast-novyj-rezident-sez-grodnoinvest-477539-2021/>

<sup>219</sup> Residents of FEZ “Grodnoinvest” paid over Br 61 million in taxes and other fees in January-March [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/rezidenty-sez-grodnoinvest-za-janvar-mart-uplatili-svyshe-br61-mln-nalogov-i-inyh-sborov-501549-2022/>

<sup>220</sup> The FEZ “Grodnoinvest” received more than \$134 million of foreign investments in January-March [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/v-sez-grodnoinvest-za-janvar-mart-postupilo-bolee-134-mln-inostrannyh-investitsij-501557-2022/>

<sup>221</sup> The new resident of the FEZ “Grodnoinvest” will build a container terminal in Svisloch [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/novyj-rezident-sez-grodnoinvest-postroit-v-svislochi-kontejnornyj-terminal-492911-2022/>

terminal should begin providing services. A memorandum of intent was also signed for the development of a transport and logistics terminal in the Grodno region worth about one hundred million dollars with the Arab company BRIKOIL TRANS - F . Z. E.

The Polish vector of interaction continues to remain relevant for the SEZ. This is evidenced by the fact that “in 2021, trade turnover between FEZ residents and Polish companies amounted to more than \$266 million, which is 147% more than in 2020. During the period of operation of the SEZ since 2002, \$140 million of investments have been attracted from Poland <sup>222</sup>. ” Enterprises with Polish capital operate successfully here in the construction materials industry, woodworking, and chemical production. And in April 2022, the administration of the FEZ signed a cooperation agreement with the Polish company i 4- Mobile Sp . z o . o . , which will facilitate effective interaction between the parties.

In April 2022, the optimization of sector boundaries also took place in **the Vitebsk FEZ** , as a result of which its area decreased by approximately 500 hectares due to the exclusion of ineffective and unclaimed areas - floodplains, swamps, inconveniences, and residential buildings. At the same time, this preferential territory included new promising plots of land for the implementation of significant investment projects, involving the creation of at least 470 jobs. In particular, 14 hectares were added in Vitebsk for the implementation of a project worth more than \$94 million - “Development of production of cable and wire products”, where at least 320 jobs will be created. Two more SEZ sites appeared in Orsha and Dokshitsy district. In the first case, a local investor plans to develop the production of concrete mixtures there, creating about 20 jobs. In the second, “it is planned to locate an enterprise for processing low-value wood and producing wood-fuel pellets. The cost of the project is estimated at approximately \$30 million, the investor calculated the possibility of creating about 50 jobs <sup>223</sup>. ”

Two more sites are included in the SEZ in the Polotsk region. One of them is for the location of wood pellet production, which will require about \$30 million. The second should house the innovative production of cross-glued

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<sup>222</sup> FEZ “Grodnoinvest” is expanding cooperation with Polish companies [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/sez-grodnoinvest-rasshirjaet-sotrudnichesvto-s-polskimi-kompanijami-497707-2022/>

<sup>223</sup> Optimizing the boundaries of sectors of the Vitebsk FEZ will attract more than \$200 million in investments [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/optimizatsija-granits-sektorov-sez-vitebsk-pozvolit-privlech-bolee-200-mln-investitsij-496811-2022/>

wooden wall slabs and floors for the construction of housing and buildings for various functional purposes, and will also organize the production of laminated veneer lumber and fuel pellets with an investment volume of \$60 million. To this end, in April 2022, KimaBel LLC became a new resident of the FEZ with a project to modernize wood processing production, which involves updating production sites and introducing new technological solutions for organizing the production of innovative export-oriented wood products. A new resident, operating since 2013 in the Polotsk region and specializing in the production of timber and boards, the sale of sawdust and chips, “the markets of the Middle East, East and South-East Asia are being explored as promising areas for exporting products<sup>224</sup>.”

Speaking about the new residents of the FEZ, it should be recalled that the first here in 2022 was BRR Arshie ECO Health LLC, an enterprise with Iranian capital for the production of biodegradable tableware and packaging. “Implementation of the project is aimed at gradually reducing the use of polymer packaging and replacing it with environmentally friendly packaging, which is identified as one of the priorities of the socio-economic development of Belarus<sup>225</sup>.” It is expected that by the end of 2022 the new resident will resolve all issues of designing a production site in the Zhurzhevo sector on the outskirts of Vitebsk, and in 2023 will begin construction of a facility where it is expected to create about 25 new jobs.

In total, at the end of April, 53 resident enterprises were already registered in the Vitebsk FEZ, which are implementing projects with the participation of investors from 14 countries. And they do it very successfully. For example, the Polotsk forestry enterprise managed to immediately increase production output threefold in 2021, and Production Association Energokomplekt LLC - more than one and a half times. Over the same period, JSC Vityaz increased its export supplies of its products by 2.7 times. The volume of exports of services from LLC “Raw Resources-Bel” increased almost 10 times. In this regard, we cannot help but recall the Polymerkonstruktsiya Unitary Enterprise, a well-known manufacturer of water treatment equipment and technologies, which ensured an almost double increase in production volume, the same amount in sales revenue, and net

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<sup>224</sup> The new resident of the FEZ “Vitebsk” will create the production of innovative wood products [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/novyj-rezident-sez-vitebsk-sozdast-proizvodstvo-innovatsionnyh-izdelij-iz-drevesiny-498382-2022/>

<sup>225</sup> The first resident with Iranian capital is registered in the FEZ “Vitebsk” [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/pervyj-rezident-s-iranskim-kapitalom-zaregistririvan-v-sez-vitebsk-484100-2022/>

profit increased almost sixfold. “The company actively worked in foreign markets, more than doubling supplies to foreign partners <sup>226</sup>,” and also demonstrated high innovative activity, shipping three million Belarusian rubles worth of innovative products to its consumers, which is 23 (!) times higher than the same indicator in 2020. All these facts indicate that the SEZ is very serious about achieving high levels in 2022. This is confirmed by the results of the activities of FEZ residents in the first quarter of this year. Suffice it to say that over these three months, industrial output here produced almost a quarter more than during the same period in 2021. In addition, “in January-March, residents attracted about 31 million foreign investments, of which more than \$16 million on a net basis <sup>227</sup>. ”

Active international activities of SEZs should contribute to maintaining competitive advantages and favorable conditions for doing business. An important step on this path is the signing in April 2022 by the administrations of the Vitebsk FEZ and the pilot zone of the China-SCO regional trade and economic cooperation of a memorandum of cooperation, in which the parties outlined promising areas of interaction. One of them is “promoting the investment opportunities of the Vitebsk FEZ and the China-SCO pilot zone as promising platforms for international cooperation within the framework of the One Belt – One Road initiative . ” <sup>228</sup>Note that the China-SCO pilot zone in Shandong province, with which the Vitebsk region is linked by a cooperation agreement, appeared in 2018. It is located 40 kilometers from the city of Qingdao in the coastal part of the city of Jiaozhou. Thanks to its connection to the land, sea and air communications of this Chinese region, it represents a new platform for the implementation of trade, economic and innovation cooperation projects between the states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and their partners, which include Belarus, which opens up very attractive prospects for the development of interaction.

In April 2022, adjustments also affected the territory of **the Minsk FEZ** , where “territories with a total area unclaimed for development were excluded from the boundaries of this free economic zone. 140.01 hectares, located in

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<sup>226</sup> Seven enterprises were recognized as the best residents of the FEZ “Vitebsk” based on the results of 2021 [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/luchshimi-rezidentami-sez-vitebsk-po-itogam-2021-goda-priznany-sem-predpriyatij-487020-2022/>

<sup>227</sup> Residents of the Vitebsk FEZ increased production by a quarter in the first quarter [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/rezidenty-sez-vitebsk-v-pervom-kvartale-narastili-na-chetvert-proizvodstvo-produktsii-496741-2022/>

<sup>228</sup> SEZ “Vitebsk” and the pilot zone “China-SCO” will develop trade and investment cooperation [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/sez-vitebsk-i-pilotnaja-zona-kitaj-shos-budut-razvivat-torgovo-investitsionnoe-sotrudnichestvo-499010-2022/>

Minsk and the Minsk region <sup>229</sup>. " In 2021, seven new enterprises appeared here with investments not only from Belarus, but also from Russia, Italy, Romania and Bulgaria. "Foreign direct investment on a net basis amounted to \$58.1 million. In 2021, more than a thousand jobs were created at the enterprises of the Minsk free economic zone <sup>230</sup>. " And exports of goods from FEZ residents to 85 countries increased by almost 40 percent and reached a record two billion dollars. It is characteristic that active work on registering new residents continues here in 2022. Thus, in January, the first resident registered in the Minsk FEZ in 2022 was 3D Paperko LLC, a company with Chinese investments that will implement a project here for the production of environmentally friendly cardboard packaging. The new resident will "produce all types of disposable cardboard packaging for fast food outlets. The project is focused both on supplying the Belarusian market and on export <sup>231</sup>. "

In the **Brest FEZ**, the first resident registered in 2022 was Soyuz Greenhouse Plant LLC, an enterprise with Belarusian-Polish capital, which was allocated a land plot of about 60 hectares in the area of Brest airport in January of this year. "Within three years, a high-tech greenhouse complex with a capacity of more than 30 thousand tons of vegetables per year should appear here, including 18 thousand tons of cucumbers and 13 thousand tons of tomatoes. The production volume will be about 33 million euros per year <sup>232</sup>. " The new resident plans to invest 75 million euros in the implementation of this project and create 450 new jobs. About 80 percent of the grown vegetable products are expected to be sent to the countries of the Eurasian Economic Union and other foreign markets. The second resident in this SEZ in 2022 was registered in March - Dalmio LLC, which will implement an investment project related to the production of technological equipment, lines and components for the food industry. In this regard, "the enterprise acquired unused production space in the territory of the FEZ. Within three years, the new resident intends to make at least Br 1.5 million in investments. The project

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<sup>229</sup> The boundaries of the Minsk FEZ have been adjusted [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/granitsy-sez-minsk-skorrektirovaniy-496357-2022/>

<sup>230</sup> The export of goods by residents of the Minsk FEZ last year reached a record \$2 billion [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/eksport-tovarov-rezidentov-sez-minsk-v-proshlom-godu-dostig-rekordnyh-2-mlrd-486329-2022/>

<sup>231</sup> The first resident in 2022 was registered in the Minsk FEZ [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/pervogo-v-2022-godu-rezidenta-zaregistirovali-v-sez-minsk-480078-2022/>

<sup>232</sup> The new resident of the FEZ "Brest" will be engaged in the production of vegetables [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/novyj-rezident-sez-brest-zajmetsja-proizvodstvom-ovoshej-480900-2022/>

provides for the expansion of production, an increase in the number of jobs<sup>233</sup>, as well as an increase in export volumes and solving the problems of import substitution.

**The Gomel-Raton FEZ** also shows good results in developing the export component in 2022, where 67 residents were registered as of April 1. In the first three months of this year, they increased their exports by almost 30 percent. To be absolutely precise, here “the share of supplies outside Belarus amounted to almost 70% of the total sales revenue<sup>234</sup>. ”

All these facts once again indicate that even in the current difficult conditions, SEZs continue to be an effective tool for the accelerated development of regions of Belarus, “where today you can build a successful business”<sup>235</sup> and effectively solve pressing issues of the Belarusian economy. To prevent a decrease in the efficiency of activities is now the task facing every SEZ. After all, “it is in the preferential zones that the country’s investment, innovation, production and export potential receives concentrated expression in the form of promising business projects<sup>236</sup>,” which, in turn, contribute to the sustainable and dynamic development of the Belarusian state.

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<sup>233</sup> A new resident was registered in the Brest FEZ [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/novogo-rezidenta-zaregistrovali-v-sez-brest-490538-2022/>

<sup>234</sup> Residents of the Gomel-Raton FEZ increased exports by almost a third in the first quarter [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/rezidenty-sez-gomel-ration-pochti-na-tret-uvelichili-eksport-vi-kvartale-495702-2022/>

<sup>235</sup> Zalessky, B.L. Amendments to the law as an incentive for investors / B.L. Zalessky // Materiały XVIII Międzynarodowej naukowo - praktycznej konferencji “ Kluczowe ” aspekty naukowej działalności – 2022”, Volume 1. Przemysł : Science i studio . – C. 7.

<sup>236</sup> Chervyakov: it is necessary to maintain competitive advantages and a favorable business climate in the SEZ [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/chervjakov-nuzhno-sohranit-konkurentnye-preimuschestva-i-blagoprijatnyj-biznes-klimat-v-sez-495990-2022/>

## An effective tool for accelerated development

In the current difficult conditions, free economic zones (FEZs) continue to be an effective tool for the accelerated development of regions of Belarus and effectively solve pressing issues of the Belarusian economy. To prevent a decrease in the efficiency of activities is now the task facing every SEZ. After all, it is in the preferential zones that the country's investment, innovation, production and export potential "receives concentrated expression in the form of promising business projects, which, in turn, contribute to the sustainable and dynamic development of the Belarusian state"<sup>237</sup>.

In the first half of 2022, the composition of the residents of the FEZ of Belarus was replenished with 15 new enterprises with a volume of declared investments of more than \$140 million and plans to create 760 new jobs. This is a record volume of declared investments in new projects over the past three years. "Among the largest projects is the organization of production in the Brest (creation of a greenhouse farm and construction of a complex for the production of extruded aluminum profiles), Svisloch (construction of a container terminal) and Polotsk (creation of a production of wood pellets and construction of a hot-dip galvanizing plant) regions"<sup>238</sup>.

The influx of residents is facilitated by the continuous work of the FEZ administrations to find new investors, regular presentations of their capabilities at international conferences and exhibitions, as well as the decisions taken by the government in April 2022 to expand the boundaries of these territories for the implementation of significant investment projects. "In the first half of 2022, the share of residents of free economic zones in republican indicators accounted for a quarter of foreign direct investment on a net basis and exports of goods, a fifth of industrial production"<sup>239</sup>. "Depending on the SEZ, residents generated up to 80 percent of investments, up to 54 percent of goods exports and up to 37 percent of regional industrial production volumes. Over three quarters, this figure increased 1.7 times – to more than \$415 million. In

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<sup>237</sup> Zalesky, B. Result-oriented. Realization of the possibilities of international economic relations / B. Zalesky. – LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2022. – P. 22.

<sup>238</sup> SEZs of Belarus mark a three-year record volume of declared investments in new projects [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/sez-belarusi-otmechajut-rekordnyj-za-tri-goda-objem-zajavlennyh-investitsij-po-novym-proektam-518444-2022>

<sup>239</sup> SEZs provided a quarter of foreign direct investment on a net basis in the first half of 2022 [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/sez-obespechili-chetvert-prjamyh-inostrannyh-investitsij-na-chistoj-osnove-vi-polugodii-2022-goda-519459-2022/>

addition, “22 new residents were registered this year with projects in woodworking, chemical industry, logistics, agriculture and metalworking. The total investment will be \$167 million. 1,080 new jobs will be created<sup>240</sup>.” This suggests that in 2022, the composition of the FEZ of Belarus has been replenished with interesting new residents. Let's get acquainted with some of them.

Let's start with **the Brest FEZ**. The first free economic zone in Belarus was created in 1996. Over a quarter of a century, the total investment amounted to about \$1.8 billion. The SEZ currently includes 16 sites, which are located in Brest and the Brest region, Kobrin and the Kobrin region, Ivatsevichi and the Ivatsevichi region, as well as Pinsk, Gantsevichi and Drogichin. “In 2021, FEZ business entities exported goods worth \$950 million to 80 countries. Compared to 2020, the volume of industrial production increased by 26.4% and reached Br3.2 billion. Investments in fixed capital amounted to Br135 million, foreign direct investment on a net basis - \$43.4 million<sup>241</sup>.” Positive trends in SEZs continue in 2022. In January–September, export volumes increased by almost nine percent with a positive balance of more than \$300 million. “For 9 months of 2022, foreign investments were attracted in the amount of \$ 133.6 million (growth rate - 105.7%). Foreign direct investment on a net basis amounted to \$ 59 million (growth rate - 135.9%)<sup>242</sup>.” In 2022, six organizations with a total investment volume of \$92 million have already been registered as residents of the Brest FEZ.

In particular, “the first resident registered in 2022 was LLC “Greenhouse plant “Soyuz” - an enterprise with Belarusian-Polish capital...”<sup>243</sup>. Then others followed. In July, the administration of the Brest FEZ registered the third new resident this year. Arlight PRO LLC intends to organize the production of extruded aluminum profiles. The project is aimed at solving the problems of import substitution: so far only one enterprise produces such products in Belarus. It is planned that the LLC's products will

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<sup>240</sup> Abramenko: FDI on a net basis in SEZs 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-vozrosli-v-17-raza-536597-2022>

<sup>241</sup> The manufacturer of sanitary and hygienic equipment became a resident of the Brest FEZ [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/proizvoditel-sanitarnogigienicheskogo-oborudovanija-stal-rezidentom-sez-brest-527300-2022/>

<sup>242</sup> Residents of the Brest FEZ continue to reorient export supplies [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://fezbrest.com/rezidentyi-sez-%C2%ABrest%C2%BB-prodolzhayut-pereorientacziyu-eksporniyix-postavok>

<sup>243</sup> Zalesky, B. Challenges of multi-velocity. The ideology of international cooperation in conditions of global turbulence / B. Zalesky. – LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2022. – C. 228.

be mainly used for the production of electrical household appliances. “To organize production, the new resident of the FEZ will be allocated an investment site in the area of Brest Airport. This year, construction of an administrative, production and warehouse complex with its own gas-fueled heat source will begin there. The start of production is planned for the end of 2023.<sup>244</sup>” The total investment will be about \$10 million. More than 100 jobs will be created at the enterprise. An important detail: from January to June 2022, residents of the Brest FEZ produced industrial products worth more than one and a half billion Belarusian rubles, 65 percent of which were supplied to foreign markets. The export growth rate for the first half of the year was 100.6 percent.

In September 2022, two new residents were registered in the FEZ. Firstly, this is PolesieCenter LLC, which will engage in microclonal propagation of coniferous and ornamental plant seedlings. To implement this investment project, the company plans to lease a plot of land near the airport with an area of about six hectares, where a greenhouse complex will be built for growing seedlings with a closed root system. It is planned to produce more than two and a half million coniferous tree seedlings per year, which will be used for reforestation. The complex is planned to be put into operation in 2023, and to reach its designed capacity in 2024. The investment project involves investments worth more than one million euros. It is planned to hire twelve workers for the additionally introduced jobs.

Secondly, the ranks of FEZ residents were also joined by Zubr Energy LLC, the Pinsk plant for the production of starter batteries. It is expected that the new status will allow the company with more than twenty years of history to increase product exports and improve production efficiency. The investment project in a short time “provides for modernization with the expansion of existing production facilities, production of new types of batteries”<sup>245</sup> and is aimed at solving the problems of import substitution. The facility is scheduled to be completed in 2023. Investments in the project will amount to about twelve million euros. It is planned to employ more than 100 people in the additionally created jobs.

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<sup>244</sup> The new resident of the Brest FEZ will be engaged in the production of aluminum profiles [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/novyj-rezident-sez-brest-zajmetsja-proizvodstvom-aljuminievogo-profilja-512121-2022/>

<sup>245</sup> Two new residents were registered in the Brest FEZ [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/dvuh-novyh-rezidentov-zaregistrovali-v-sez-brest-525763-2022/>

In October 2022, another new resident was registered in the FEZ - the limited liability company "AgroPischeProm", which was created in 2009. The company produces a wide range of specialized technological, transportation and container equipment for enterprises in the food, chemical and agro-industrial complexes. The range of products includes more than 300 items, including machines for washing containers, equipment for ensuring hygiene of enterprises, slaughter and primary processing of livestock, processing of offal, lifts, conveyors and other installations. Now the company employs more than 150 qualified specialists. Expanding the production base involves creating new jobs. The investment project will increase the production capacity of the enterprise and expand the range of products due to new areas. For this purpose, the production building on the territory of the FEZ will be reconstructed. The investor intends to invest about two and a half million Belarusian rubles in the implementation of the project. The launch of production at the new site is planned for 2024. By the end of the year, the Brest FEZ plans to consider the business plans of several more potential business entities.

Another FEZ resident plans to significantly expand its product line. OJSC Brestmash, a resident of the Brest FEZ since 2015, is a manufacturer of modern technological equipment for food industry enterprises, components for gas and electric household stoves. "The entry of Brestmash OJSC into the BelavtoMAZ holding has opened up new opportunities for the development of the enterprise <sup>246</sup>. " The production of components for the production of motor vehicles, large-scale assembly of trucks and passenger cars has become an important area of activity for the resident of the Brest FEZ. In September 2022, Brestmash OJSC presented prototypes of ambulances and social taxis manufactured on the chassis of the Minsk Automobile Plant. "The launch of a new line of minibuses, especially in the context of intensified work within the framework of the import substitution program, allows us to enter new market segments, as well as strengthen the position of the domestic brand abroad <sup>247</sup>. " An order for new vehicles has already been received from the Ministry of

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<sup>246</sup> A resident of the Brest FEZ takes part in the implementation of a project for the production of ambulances [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://fezbrest.com/rezident-sez-%C2%ABrest%C2%BB-prinimaet-uchastie-v-realizaczii-proekta-po-proizvodstvu-mashin-skoroj-pomoshhi>

<sup>247</sup> A resident of the Brest FEZ plans to expand the line of cars produced [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/rezident-sez-brest-planiruet-rasshirit-linejku-vypuskaemyh-avtomobilej-526001-2022/>

Health of Belarus. The first vehicles will enter the service of Belarusian doctors by the end of 2022.

The next example is **the Grodnoinvest FEZ**, where in the first half of 2022 they attracted foreign investment worth more than \$150 million. "Compared to last year, this amount is 2.5 times more. The geography of investments includes 12 countries. These include the UAE, Uzbekistan, Slovakia, Germany, Russia <...>. The main share of investments was attracted from the Netherlands, Cyprus, Austria, Great Britain and Poland. Their share in the total volume exceeded 95% <sup>248</sup>. " Two thirds of investments were attracted by residents who implement projects in the Smorgon region. FEZ firms located in Grodno have raised almost \$18 million.

In 2022, the administration of the FEZ "Grodnoinvest" continues to improve the investment climate in the Grodno region and increase the level of accessibility of modern engineering and transport infrastructure. More than 32 million Belarusian rubles will be allocated for these purposes within the boundaries of the SEZ. "The plans include the construction in the regional center of a road access to the industrial zone of the FEZ (Grandichi district) and a roundabout at the intersection of street No. 1 and Skidelskoe highway (Auls district), reconstruction of Industrial Avenue in Smorgon, construction of new power supply sources in the FEZ sections in Svisloch and Grodno with a total capacity of up to 100 MW <sup>249</sup>. " In particular, in the area of the village of Novaya Gozha, a new passage with a length of 1.2 kilometers was built, which made it possible to distinguish between the movements of heavy trucks and special equipment. In total, nine SEZ resident enterprises are located in the industrial zone of this area, which have collectively invested over \$30 million in the creation of modern production facilities in the woodworking, chemical, and textile industries. By 2025, residents plan to additionally invest more than \$8 million.

The results of the half-year for exports are no less significant: in six months, residents of the Grodnoinvest FEZ supplied products worth almost \$715 million. "The positive balance from foreign trade amounted to \$229 million. Residents of the free economic zone exported woodworking and

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<sup>248</sup> Residents of the FEZ "Grodnoinvest" this year attracted foreign investment worth \$151 million [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/rezidenty-sez-grodnoinvest-v-etom-godu-privlekli-inostrannyh-investitsij-na-151-mln-518233-2022/>

<sup>249</sup> FEZ "Grodnoinvest" invested over Br 1.5 million in the construction of a road in the Grodno region [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/sez-grodnoinvest-investirovala-svyshe-br15-mln-v-stroitelstvo-dorogi-v-grodnenskom-rajone-520208-2022/>

furniture production, chemical industry, mechanical engineering and metalworking, light industry, construction materials and agro-industrial complex products to 54 countries around the world<sup>250</sup>. ” The share of exports in the total volume of products of the Grodnoinvest FEZ in January–June 2022 increased to 69 percent. FEZ companies provided more than 46 percent of all exports of goods from the Grodno region.

In July 2022, Vimzovplast LLC became a resident in the Grodnoinvest FEZ, which will produce products from synthetic polymers and quartz agglomerate. The new resident involves the creation of a modern enterprise with high-tech equipment for injection molding, the formation of a wide range of products, as well as the launch of the production of import-substituting products - synthetic polymer granulate. Most of the products produced will be sold within the framework of the special legal regime of the SEZ through the development of cooperative ties with SEZ residents. The investor plans to begin production in the fourth quarter of 2022. “The total investment costs for the project will exceed 1 million euros. The total volume of investments within the framework of the project will exceed the total tax benefits by six times. It is planned to create 30 jobs over the entire period of project implementation<sup>251</sup>. ”

In November 2022, Kronos-Grodno LLC was registered in the FEZ Grodnoinvest with an investment project to create a multi-industry production of furniture and wood products. The new resident will build a new complex, including production, warehouse and administrative premises, and acquire modern technological equipment. “The implementation of the project will create about 30 new jobs, expand the range of products and increase export volumes, increase contributions to the budget and extra-budgetary funds<sup>252</sup>. ” All this will be carried out within the framework of the effectively operating furniture cluster of the FEZ “Grodnoinvest” in the Grodno region, in which more than 20 residents of the FEZ of various production areas take part. Cooperation will make it possible to create a product with high added value,

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<sup>250</sup> In the first half of the year, residents of the Grodnoinvest FEZ exported products worth \$714 million [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/za-pervoe-polugodie-rezidenty-sez-grodnoinvest-eksportirovali-produktsii-na-714-mln-520243-2022/>

<sup>251</sup> The new resident of the FEZ “Grodnoinvest” will produce products from synthetic polymers [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/novyj-rezident-sez-grodnoinvest-budet-proizvodit-izdelija-iz-sinteticheskikh-polimerov-511741-2022/>

<sup>252</sup> The new resident of the FEZ “Grodnoinvest” will create a multi-industry production of upholstered furniture in Grodno [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://grodnoinvest.by/press-center/novyj-rezident-sez-grodnoinvest-sozdast-v-grodno-mnogopprofilnoe-proizvodstvo-myagkoj-mebeli/>

concentrate resource potential within the region, and increase the profitability of manufactured products.

A little later, in November 2022, another resident was registered in the Grodnoinvest FEZ - Terminal West CJSC with an investment project to create a production and logistics enterprise. The company will be engaged in transshipment of liquefied hydrocarbon gases from broad gauge railway tank cars to narrow gauge ones, as well as from tank cars to road transport. In addition, services for the purification and compounding of liquefied hydrocarbon gases will be provided. “The project is being implemented in areas No. 4 (Grodno) and No. 12 (Svisloch district) of the Grodnoinvest SEZ. During the implementation, the enterprise will purchase new technological equipment, carry out technical modernization of gas filling stations, and improve the infrastructure <sup>253</sup>. ” Note that the company “Terminal West” became the fifth resident of the FEZ registered this year. Earlier in 2022, in the field of logistics, the company Unionway LLC was registered with Grodnoinvest, which is implementing a project to build a container terminal in the area of the Svisloch railway freight station. Construction of the first stage began this year, and “the company will begin providing services in 2025.” Total investment costs will be more than US\$23 million. During the project implementation period, it is planned to create 70 new jobs <sup>254</sup>. ” In addition, the SEZ is already successfully implementing projects in the field of logistics by such residents as: the Portela company, which is building a transport and logistics center in the Grodno region; the Vilaris company - with capital from the United Arab Emirates; Silva Logistic BWay company – with investments from the Netherlands.

In 2022, the capabilities of the Grodnoinvest FEZ were repeatedly demonstrated at international conferences and exhibitions. For example, in November this year, as part of the International Exhibition MUSIAD EXPO in Istanbul, proposals for free economic zones in the investment, trade, economic and tourism fields were announced at the site of the Turkish-Belarusian Investment Forum. The conversation was about the implementation of new investment projects in the Grodno region, “including the creation of the Grodno industrial park with the participation of Turkish companies, the

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<sup>253</sup> A new production and logistics enterprise will be created in the FEZ Grodnoinvest [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/v-sez-grodnoinvest-sozdadut-novoe-proizvodstvenno-logisticheskoe-predpriyatie-535377-2022/>

<sup>254</sup> The new resident of the FEZ “Grodnoinvest” will build a container terminal in Svisloch [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://grodnoinvest.by/press-center/novyj-rezident-sez-grodnoinvest-postroit-v-svislochi-kontejnornyj-terminal/>

expansion of trade and economic ties and the development of industrial cooperation in the chemical, woodworking, engineering and other fields<sup>255</sup>. ” One of the topics of discussion was a new ambitious project for the construction of the Grodno industrial park with ready-made infrastructure and developed logistics. The advantages of the special tourist and recreational park “Augustow Canal” were also presented. As a result of these negotiations, a Memorandum of Cooperation was signed between the administration of the FEZ Grodnoinvest and the Association of Independent Industrialists and Entrepreneurs MUSIAD, which involves expanding cooperation between Belarusian and Turkish companies in the production, investment, financial, trade and economic fields. For reference, we note that the SEZ is operated by a resident with Turkish capital - Europlastex Invest LLC, which is implementing two projects in the industrial park in Smorgon - organizing the production of cotton yarn and steel pipes.

In the same November, proposals for the SEZ were also considered in Dubai at the Eurasian business forum “Focus on Belarus”, where negotiations were also held with the Sharjah Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the prospects for “interaction in the field of trade and investment, organizing mutual supplies of products and joint work” were discussed in the markets of the Middle East and North Africa”<sup>256</sup>. The parties agreed to cooperate.

As for **the FEZ “Vitebsk”**, then the volume of attracted foreign investment in the six months of 2022 exceeded \$30 million, or almost half of the total investment in the Vitebsk region. During this period, five residents were registered, including for the first time with the participation of capital from Iran. The new enterprises intend to implement projects in the field of wood processing, as well as to create the production of biodegradable disposable tableware and environmentally friendly packaging. And in June Novopolotsk LLC "SM" was registered. The company plans to implement an investment project to expand the existing production of modern medical dressings, as well as electrical, thermal insulation and sealing textile tapes, which are components for various industries. This will increase the enterprise’s

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<sup>255</sup> Turkish business is presented with investment opportunities in the territory of the FEZ “Grodnoinvest” [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://grodnoinvest.by/press-center/tureczkie-kompanii-zainteresovany-v-rashshirenii-sotrudnichestva-v-ramkax-sez-grodnoinvest/>

<sup>256</sup> FEZ “Grodnoinvest” and the Sharjah Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the United Arab Emirates agreed on cooperation [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://grodnoinvest.by/press-center/sez-grodnoinvest-i-tpp-shardzha-obedinennyx-arabskix-emiratorv-dogovorilis-o-sotrudnichestve/>

capacity to produce import-substituting products and increase export potential. It is expected to create more than 20 jobs.

In September 2022, the 6th resident since the beginning of the year, CJSC BELTANK, was registered in the FEZ with a project to create the production of steel containers. Import-substituting production will be organized in the Polotsk region at one of the sites included in the SEZ in 2018. The initiator of the project is a domestic investor who, by creating an enterprise in the Vitebsk FEZ, plans to increase the production of in-demand products by more than 2 times. “The basis of the new resident’s production portfolio will be vertical and horizontal containers and tanks made of stainless steel and aluminum, including those with heating, cooling, insulation, and mixing. Within the framework of the project, it is also planned to produce metal tanks and reservoirs with a capacity of 1 thousand to 10 million liters according to individual orders of consumers <sup>257</sup>. ” The products can be used in the energy sector, petrochemical and construction complexes, organizations in the food, pharmaceutical, cosmetic industries, and public utilities. It is expected to create about 20 jobs. The main markets for BELTANK products are the countries of the Eurasian Economic Union.

In the FEZ "Vitebsk" there are two more projects in a high degree of readiness for registration, including those with the participation of foreign investors. “They involve organizing the production of fiberglass reinforcement, as well as creating a production facility for hot-dip galvanizing of metals, which is considered one of the most economical and widespread methods of protecting metal from corrosion <sup>258</sup>. ” In total, 56 resident enterprises are already registered in the SEZ today, which are implementing projects with the participation of investors from 15 countries. An important detail: in 2022, the Vitebsk FEZ passed a significant milestone in investment activity - since the establishment of the FEZ, the total volume of declared investments by residents has exceeded one billion Belarusian rubles.

As for exports, “residents of the Vitebsk FEZ exported goods worth \$425 million in January–June [2022], which is 4.4% more than in the same

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<sup>257</sup> A resident of the FEZ “Vitebsk” will create a production of import-substituting steel containers near Polotsk [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/rezident-sez-vitebsk-sozdast-proizvodstvo-importozameschajuschih-stalnyh-emkostej-pod-polotskom-526248-2022/>

<sup>258</sup> The new resident of the Vitebsk FEZ will develop the production of import-substituting textile components [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/novyj-rezident-sez-vitebsk-budet-razvivat-vypusk-importozameschajuschih-tekstilnyh-komplektujuschih-510424-2022/>

period in 2021.<sup>259</sup>” The geography of supplies includes 68 countries, including 10 partner states of Belarus in the Commonwealth of Independent States. Responding to the specific conditions of the current international situation, companies are restructuring supply chains and actively increasing supplies of products to distant countries, including Israel, Kuwait, Mongolia, Thailand, Turkey, and Uruguay.

As for the innovative component of the residents of the Vitebsk FEZ, there are interesting facts here too. In particular, the company "Polimerkonstruktsiya", which in 2011 was registered as a resident of the FEZ with a project to expand the production of innovative water treatment and iron removal systems, has developed an innovative technology to purify the leachate of solid municipal waste landfills. The company's specialists collected and examined samples of wastewater from most landfills from different regions of Belarus. Based on the research results, Polimerkonstruktsiya has developed technologies and equipment that can be used taking into account the terrain, the characteristics of the test site and other aspects. The method is based on chemical treatment using, among other things, membrane technologies, as well as biological treatment as an alternative. The advantages of the domestic solution are the use of energy-independent natural removal of contaminants, process automation and long-term equipment performance. “Today Polimerkonstruktsiya is implementing a project to purify filtrate at the Orsha solid waste landfill, which will also serve the Orsha, Dubrovensky and Tolochinsky districts<sup>260</sup>. ” In 2021, a unique installation was created for Vitebskdrev, which allows used chemical solutions to be returned back to production, thereby reducing the load on treatment facilities. Similar equipment is being developed for a number of wood processing and pulp and paper industry enterprises.

In 2022, active work continues to register new residents in **the Minsk FEZ**. Thus, in January, the first resident registered in the SEZ in 2022 was 3D Paperco LLC, a company with Chinese investments that will implement a project here for the production of environmentally friendly cardboard packaging. In June, another – the fifth – resident in 2022 was registered in the FEZ. This is a production and trading limited liability company "Agrostroy",

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<sup>259</sup> Residents of the Vitebsk FEZ exported goods worth \$425 million in the first half of the year [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/rezidenty-sez-vitebsk-v-1-m-polugodii-eksportirovali-tovarov-na-425-mln-521133-2022/>

<sup>260</sup> A resident of the FEZ “Vitebsk” proposes to purify wastewater from MSW landfills in an innovative way [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/rezident-sez-vitebsk-predlagaet-ochischat-stoki-poligonov-tko-innovatsionnym-sposobom-520105-2022/>

which plans to implement an investment project on the territory of the FEZ for the production of drilling tools for the mining industry. “The project provides for the construction of an engineering production and warehouse complex, the creation of more than 40 jobs, and the attraction of more than 1 million euros of investment <sup>261</sup>. ” The created production will be high-tech and export-oriented.

In terms of strengthening work with foreign investors, the administration of the Minsk FEZ in November 2022 presented the investment potential of the FEZ at the Turkish-Belarusian Investment Forum and signed a memorandum of cooperation with the Association of Independent Industrialists and Entrepreneurs MUSIAD , which “will serve as an impetus for the generation of new ideas and the implementation of joint projects <sup>262</sup>” It should be added that this association includes more than 60 thousand Turkish enterprises.

And further. In October 2022, the Council of Heads of Administration of the Free Economic Zones of Belarus appeared in Minsk, which is designed to coordinate work on developing the image of the Belarusian Free Economic Zones and provides for joint activities to improve the efficiency of the functioning of these structures, organizing educational programs, seminars, conferences to find effective ways to interact with international business circles and targeted promotion of national and regional branding. “This format of cooperation will help increase efficiency in the implementation of the assigned tasks of attracting investment into the country’s economy, use new opportunities and overcome negative trends in the current economic conditions <sup>263</sup>. ” It is clear that today it is necessary to intensify work with investors in order to actively strengthen areas of industrial cooperation, measures to stimulate investment activity and access to alternative export markets.

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<sup>261</sup> The new resident of the Minsk FEZ will be engaged in the production of drilling tools [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/novyj-rezident-sez-minsk-zajmetsja-proizvodstvom-burovogo-instrumenta-509471-2022>

<sup>262</sup> FEZ “Minsk” will present investment potential at the Turkish-Belarusian forum in Istanbul [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/sez-minsk-predstavit-investpotencial-na-turetsko-beloruskom-forume-v-stambule-533423-2022/>

<sup>263</sup> Buben: The Council of Heads of FEZ Administrations will help improve the efficiency of attracting investments into the economy [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/buben-sovet-glav-administratsij-sez-pomozhet-povysit-effektivnost-privlechenija-investitsij-v-ekonomiku-530261-2022/>

## Free economic zones as a tool for implementing business initiatives

In January 2023, at the conference in Vitebsk “Design and construction in the territories of free economic zones in modern economic conditions, allowing to shorten the investment cycle from the moment of a business idea to the start of production activities,” it was noted that in the conditions of Belarus the most important task is “to find optimal solutions, which will help the investor to start his activities as a resident of the FEZ as efficiently as possible <sup>264</sup>. ” In the context of this topic, we note that in 2022, in the free economic zones (FEZ) of the Republic of Belarus, the Great Stone industrial park and the Bremino-Orsha special economic zone, the number of residents increased by 10 percent and amounted to 53 new business entities. “The total volume of declared investments is \$260 million, it is planned to create 2.7 thousand jobs <sup>265</sup>. ” In addition, the SEZs of Belarus in 2022 provided almost a quarter of the volume of Belarusian exports of goods. And this despite the fact that as of January 1, 2023, 427 residents were registered in six SEZs. If we talk about the types of activities of FEZ participants, then last year “the most common was the manufacturing industry – 86.4%. 2.9% of residents are involved in the transport industry, trade - 2.4%, real estate transactions - 2.4%, agriculture, forestry and fisheries - 2.4%, construction - 1%, water supply, collection, waste treatment and disposal – 0.7%, professional, scientific and technical activities – 0.7% <sup>266</sup>. ” In particular, interesting investment and innovation experience can be seen in the FEZ “**Minsk**”, “**Vitebsk**”, “**Brest**” and “**Grodnoinvest**”.

FEZ “**Minsk**” is one of the most attractive investment sites in the Republic of Belarus. It is located on 21 land plots, which are located in the promising territories of the Minsk region - within the borders of Minsk, Molodechno, Fanipol, Zhodino and Borisov. In 2023, the FEZ celebrates its 25th anniversary. Over a quarter of a century, more than 100 enterprises with

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<sup>264</sup> Buben: our task is to help investors effectively start working as residents of the FEZ [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/buben-nasha-zadacha-pomoch-investoram-effektivno-nachat-rabotu-v-kachestve-rezidentov-sez-544306-2023/>

<sup>265</sup> The number of FEZ residents increased by 10% in 2022 [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/chislo-rezidentov-sez-v-2022-godu-uvelichilos-na-10-543104-2023/>

<sup>266</sup> Free economic zones last year provided 22.3% of goods exports [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/svobodnye-ekonomicheskie-zony-v-proshlom-godu-obespechili-223-eksporta-tovarov-550537-2023/>

foreign capital from 19 countries have come here, including Great Britain, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, the United States of America, Latvia, Lithuania, Sweden, the Czech Republic, Poland, China, and Estonia. During this time, more than two and a half billion dollars were attracted into fixed capital, more than 29 thousand new jobs were created. The export geography is 85 countries. “Over the entire period of operation of the Minsk FEZ, enterprises exported products worth more than \$15 billion <sup>267</sup>. ” The main industrial areas where SEZ companies operate are mechanical engineering, metalworking, automotive, woodworking, production of building materials, electronics, printing and packaging.

At the end of 2022, the production of industrial products by FEZ residents increased by more than 10 percent. The share of import-substituting products amounted to more than 50 percent, and “the share of export supplies of FEZ enterprises amounted to 75% <sup>268</sup>. ” Another interesting fact: FEZ residents more than doubled their supplies to China in 2022. Let us also recall that last year the zone was replenished with six new residents with a total volume of declared investments - more than four million dollars, of which the share of foreign investments was about 30 percent. At the same time, more than 490 additional jobs were created. In particular, Belbansvi LLC became the sixth resident of the FEZ in December 2022, which will organize the production of technical fabric based on recycled materials and textile waste. “It is planned that the company will begin work in the second quarter of 2023 in Fanipol, where about 50 jobs will be created. The declared investment volume for the project during 2023-2027 will amount to more than 1 million euros. The share of export supplies is more than 90% <sup>269</sup>. ” The products of Belbansvi LLC are in demand in the oil and gas industry, the furniture industry, automotive services, the medical field, as well as in other industries.

And further. In 2023, the main tasks that will be implemented in the Minsk FEZ are: 1) attracting new investors; 2) intensification of foreign economic activity; 3) use of new innovative technologies; 4) stimulation of

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<sup>267</sup> Buben, A. About the contribution of the Minsk FEZ to the country’s economy, import substitution, work under sanctions / A. Buben // [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/interview/view/buben-o-vklade-sez-minsk-v-ekonomiku-strany-importozameschenii-rabote-v-usloviyah-sanktsij-8539/>

<sup>268</sup> Residents of the Minsk FEZ attracted 1.7 times more foreign direct investment in 2022 [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/rezidenty-sez-minsk-v-2022-godu-privlekli-v-17-raza-bolshe-prjamyh-inostrannyh-investitsij-544008-2023/>

<sup>269</sup> A resident of the Minsk FEZ will produce technical fabric based on recycled materials [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/rezident-sez-minsk-budet-proizvodit-tehnicheskiju-tkan-na-osnove-vtorsyrjja-538832-2022/>

business activity; 5) efficient use of resources; 6) expansion of import-substituting production capacities.

As for the FEZ “Vitebsk”, as of mid-January 2023, 57 organizations were already registered here as residents, implementing projects with the participation of investors from 14 countries. The SEZ consists of 17 sectors located in Vitebsk, Orsha, Polotsk, Postavy, Miory and Dokshitsy districts, as well as in the regional center. In January, the first resident of 2023, Lesdrevconsult LLC, was already registered here. At the site in Polotsk, the company plans to organize import-substituting production of chainsaws, brush cutters, and brush cutters to meet the needs of forestry enterprises. The project will be implemented with the support of Chinese partners. “Prototypes of products are expected to be released in the first half of the year. In the future, investors intend to organize the production of components in Polotsk, gradually increasing the degree of localization of the production of gasoline-powered tools. The volume of investments will exceed Br1.5 million<sup>270</sup>. ” Half of the production volume is expected to be exported to the markets of the countries of the Eurasian Economic Union.

It should be noted that in 2022, seven new companies were registered in the SEZ. The sixth resident in September was BELTANK CJSC. The company will implement an investment project in the Polotsk region for the production of steel containers, which involves increasing the volume of production of import-substituting products and creating new jobs. “The products can be used in the energy sector, petrochemical and construction complexes, organizations in the food, pharmaceutical, cosmetics industries, and public utilities. It is expected to create about 20 jobs. The main markets for BELTANK products are the countries of the Eurasian Economic Union<sup>271</sup>. ” The seventh resident in November 2022 was Metal Rolling Company LLC with a project for the development of a tinplate production plant in the regional town of Miory, which “implies a significant increase in the volume of production of export-oriented products, involving more production workers in the economy of the Miory district<sup>272</sup>. ” So this SEZ has good investment and export prospects.

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<sup>270</sup> The new resident of the FEZ “Vitebsk” will create the production of gasoline-powered tools in Polotsk [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/novyj-rezident-sez-vitebsk-sozdast-proizvodstvo-benzoinstrumenta-v-polotske-542995-2023/>

<sup>271</sup> Zalessky, B. Success is in development. Free economic zones as growth points / B. Zalessky. – LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2022. – P. 57.

<sup>272</sup> Metal Rolling Company LLC is a new resident of the Vitebsk FEZ [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <http://fez-vitebsk.by/press-room/rezidenty/ooo-metalloprokatnaya-kompaniya--novyy-rezident-sez-vitebsk/>

If we talk about **the Brest FEZ**, then at the end of 2022, the volume of exports of residents of the zone for the first time exceeded one billion dollars. At the same time, a positive balance was ensured - \$460 million, which is 44 percent of the volume of products shipped outside Belarus. This means that FEZ residents exceeded the export target by almost three percent. More specifically, “exports of products from Battery Alliance LLC increased by 3.7 times, by Barkhim OJSC by almost 5.5 times, by more than 1.7 times by Vastega LLC, by 1.4 times.” - IP "Inko-Food", 2.5 - IOO "Condor". Santa Bremor JV and STiM LLC exported their products by 18% more than last year. Export supplies of the Brest Hosiery Factory increased by 16%<sup>273</sup>. In general, the share of FEZ residents in the total volume of exports of enterprises in the Brest region amounted to 28 percent. Apparently, the positive dynamics will continue into 2023. Moreover, Santa Bremor plans to increase physical production volumes by more than seven percent, Hephaestus-Technika by eight percent, Involux by almost 20 percent, and Polipol Mebel Bel by almost 10 percent. In addition, 42 residents of the FEZ continued investing in production in 2022.

The year 2023 started well in the FEZ. In January, the first resident of this year was registered here - SanSpectr OJSC, which will implement the investment project to create the West-East transport and logistics complex. This project will be organized on a section of railway tracks near the Brest-Severny station and is focused on providing a wide range of logistics services - warehousing and storage of goods, forwarding, customs and other services. The implementation period is five years. The company with Belarusian capital intends to invest more than seven and a half million Belarusian rubles and create about 20 new jobs. “The project has already begun. Repair of access roads has begun. It is planned to build supply lines, arrange additional container sites, and purchase expensive special equipment. In parallel, the company is working on a certificate for its own services. This will provide an opportunity to attract new operators and expand the market for services in the field of rail container transportation<sup>274</sup>. ” It is expected that new and reconstructed infrastructure facilities designed for storing containers and reloading them onto vehicles will provide additional opportunities in solving

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<sup>273</sup> The annual export volume of residents of the Brest FEZ exceeded \$1 billion [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/godovoj-objem-eksporta-rezidentov-sez-brest-prevysil-1-mlrd-547421-2023/>

<sup>274</sup> The first resident this year was registered in the Brest FEZ [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/pervogo-v-etom-godu-rezidenta-zaregistrovali-v-sez-brest-547274-2023/>

problems associated with the insufficient capacity of Polish railways and the need to switch to another gauge. Thus, the transport and logistics complex will help to clear up bottlenecks in the processing of container trains within the Brest railway hub running in the East-West-East directions.

Also in January 2023, a resident of the FEZ, OJSC Brestmash, presented a new line of social vehicles, including a school bus, a social service vehicle, and an ambulance. The new line of cars is of interest to the city's social services. In December 2022, the “territorial center for social services for the population of the Moskovsky district of Brest acquired a new car manufactured at Brestmash OJSC for use as a “social taxi”. The machine is equipped with a device for smoothly raising and lowering a wheelchair, which makes it easier to transport people with disabilities <sup>275</sup>. " In the future, about 500 units of special automotive equipment of 26 models will be assembled at the production facilities of the resident of the Brest FEZ. These are manufactured goods vans, vehicles for patrol and canine services, for transporting people with disabilities, and ambulances. The plant's production capacity allows it to assemble up to two thousand cars per year.

Another example. In 2011, Baranovichi Cotton Production Association OJSC became a resident of the FEZ. In 2023, the company will celebrate its 60th anniversary. In January of this year, at a meeting held with the participation of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Belarus, the implementation of the association's development strategy for the next five years was considered. Note that this is one of the largest manufacturers of textile products in Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States. The association includes spinning, weaving, finishing and clothing factories and employs about 1,200 people. In recent years, this SEZ resident has already completed several stages of modernization, which has made it possible to increase the level of automation of the production process, develop new types of products and achieve the application of high-quality prints of any complexity. In conditions of fierce competition in this industry, where Asian manufacturers traditionally have a strong position, “ the entire fabric manufacturing cycle will be preserved in Baranovichi. The company plans to expand the production of polycotton. By adding acrylic, the canvas will acquire

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<sup>275</sup> Resident of FEZ “Brest” OJSC “Brestmash” presents a new line of social cars [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://fezbrest.com/rezident-sez-%C2%ABrest%C2%BB-oao-%C2%ABrestmash%C2%BB-prezentuet-novuyu-linejku-soczialnyix-avtomobilej>

special antibacterial and non-flammable properties<sup>276</sup>. ” So the merger strategy will be implemented further - in line with powerful innovative modernization in order to take the JSC to a new level of development.

Let us remind you: today the FEZ “Brest” already “includes 16 sites, which are located in Brest and the Brest region, Kobrin and the Kobrin region, Ivatsevichi and the Ivatsevichi region, as well as Pinsk, Gantsevichi and Drogichin<sup>277</sup>. ” At the beginning of February 2023, 76 enterprises from 16 countries are already operating as residents. This means that the Brest FEZ continues to actively address issues of increasing the export and innovation component in order to contribute to the dynamic development of the entire Brest region.

In FEZ “**Grodnoinvest**” in 2022, such areas of activity of residents as woodworking, production of chemical products, mechanical engineering, and metalworking actively developed. Five companies were registered as residents of the FEZ last year. The total volume of declared investments for the implementation of projects amounted to about \$30 million. The implementation of the announced investment projects will create about 180 new jobs with decent wages. Firstly, in Grodno, on a site in the Grandichi area, the Krones-Grodno company organized a multi -industry production of furniture and wood products. As part of the project, a new complex will be built, including production, warehouse and administrative premises, and modern technological equipment will be purchased. Secondly, “another new resident - VIMZOVPLAST LLC - will create a modern plant in the regional center to produce a wide range of products from synthetic polymers and quartz agglomerate. The products are import-substituting and will be sold within the framework of the special legal regime of the SEZ through the development of cooperative ties with residents of the SEZ of Belarus...”<sup>278</sup>. Thirdly, in the Grodno region, on a site in the Novaya Gozha region, the Barinpak company is implementing a project to produce environmental packaging from high-density fiberboards. The finished products are intended for export to near and far abroad countries, but some of them will be sold in Belarus as part of the country’s gradual transition from plastic packaging of goods to

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<sup>276</sup> The development strategy of BPHO was discussed with the participation of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Belarus [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://fezbrest.com/strategiya-razvitiya-bpxo-obsuzhdalas-pri-uchastii-premer-ministra-respubliki-belarus>

<sup>277</sup> Zalesky, B. Bet on performance. Features of economic relations of Belarus with Asian partners / B. Zalesky. – LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing , 2023. – C. 48.

<sup>278</sup> 5 new residents are registered in the FEZ “Grodnoinvest” [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://grodnoinvest.by/press-center/5-novyx-rezidentov-zaregistrovano-v-sez-grodnoinvest-v-2022-godu/>

environmentally friendly ones. The first batch of products has already been released and received highly appreciated at the republican competition of innovative projects.

Another important area of activity for residents of the Grodnoinvest FEZ in 2022 is logistics. Suffice it to say that just last year, six residents worked in the FEZ in the field of logistics, which was the largest number among similar structures. In 2022, the creation of production and logistics enterprises, in particular, was announced by CJSC Terminal West and Unionway, which are implementing investment projects at industrial sites in Grodno and Svisloch. In addition, last year between the administration of the FEZ and the Arab company BRIKOIL TRANS - T . Z. E. a memorandum of intent was signed to develop the existing transport and logistics terminal in the Grodno region.

In February 2023, ZapadTransGranitsa LLC became the seventh resident in the Grodnoinvest FEZ in the field of logistics, which will build an international trade and logistics complex near Grodno Airport. The project, located in the area of the agricultural town of Obukhovo, is to complete the construction of an unmothballed airport terminal building with partial demolition. “The company plans to create a complex of administrative, utility and storage facilities, build access roads, parking and taxiways for aircraft, as well as a cargo apron. The unique complex will become multimodal and utilize the potential of road and air transport. The first phase of construction will be completed by the end of 2025. In total, more than \$35 million will be invested in the project, and about 100 jobs will be created<sup>279</sup>. ” This complex will make it possible to use the logistics potential of the Grodno region, attract investment in the creation of a multimodal center that has no analogues in the region, involve an unfinished airport terminal building into economic activity, attract tourists and foreign trading companies, thereby stimulating local business activity and trade turnover.

And a few more facts. In 2022, the administration of the FEZ Grodnoinvest built and put into operation seven new infrastructure facilities. New roads and communications were built in areas of the SEZ in the cities of Grodno and Smorgon, as well as in the Grodno region. On a site in Grodno, in the Auls district, street No. 7 was reconstructed and its landscaping was carried out. The construction of the roundabout at the intersection of street No. 1 and

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<sup>279</sup> Resident of FEZ “Grodnoinvest” will build an international trade and logistics complex [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/rezident-sez-grodnoinvest-postroit-mezhdunarodnyj-torgovo-logisticheskij-kompleks-550573-2023/>

Skidelskoe highway has been completed. “Here, 12 SEZ resident enterprises are successfully implementing projects for the production of building materials, chemicals and woodworking products. Next year [2023] the production of OJSC “Grodno Glass Factory”, unique for Belarus, will be launched<sup>280</sup>.” In the Grodno region, on the “Novaya Gozha” site, three parking areas with 30 parking spaces for passenger vehicles were built and put into operation. At the expense of the development fund of the FEZ “Grodnoinvest”, the reconstruction of Industrial Avenue on the site in Smorgon continued. The 3rd launch complex worth over two million Belarusian rubles was put into operation, a traffic circle and pedestrian connections, outdoor lighting, storm drainage, and domestic water supply were installed. The implemented set of works made it possible to significantly improve the throughput of cargo flows of FEZ residents, improve the quality of transport logistics and ensure the proper level of road safety in this area.

In 2023, it is planned to design and build engineering infrastructure in areas of the Grodnoinvest FEZ for a total amount of about seven and a half million Belarusian rubles. This will increase the investment attractiveness of the Grodno region for the implementation of new projects and improve conditions for existing SEZ resident enterprises.

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<sup>280</sup> 7 infrastructure projects were implemented in 2022 by the administration of the FEZ Grodnoinvest [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://grodnoinvest.by/press-center/7-infrastrukturnyx-proektov-realizovano-v-2022-godu-administraciej-sez-grodnoinvest/>

## The goal is the integrated development of regions

The Program of Activities of the Government of the Republic of Belarus for the period until 2025 plans to pay great attention to the implementation of the regional development strategy in order to reduce the number of lagging regions in the country by 18 by the end of the new five-year plan. For this purpose, it is planned to implement investment projects in cities and regions with a population of 80 thousand people and more on the preparation of industrial sites and the creation of infrastructure for the organization of two or three new enterprises that have no analogues in the republic, as well as on “the creation of 1-2 medium-sized industrial enterprises in each region<sup>281</sup>.” At the same time, lagging Belarusian regions will receive a certain set of benefits for the creation of new breakthrough industries, and efficiency will be at the forefront when launching a new investment cycle. In other words, “in each such area at least one new efficiently operating company should appear<sup>282</sup>.” And it must be said that concrete steps are already being taken in the Belarusian regions for the successful implementation of the plans.

Thus, for the first half of 2021, it is planned to complete an investment project for the production of special electronics for large-sized machines in the Braslav district of the Vitebsk region, the implementation of which is carried out by the unitary enterprise “Zaryad Special Electronics Plant” with Russian capital - a developer and manufacturer of electronic and electromechanical products, including including electronic, switching units, key switches and auto lighting equipment for working in difficult operating conditions, which already has one production workshop - in the agricultural town of Druisk, Braslav region. It is typical that the products of the new enterprise will be predominantly export-oriented and import-substituting. The main direction is Russia. More than Br 503 thousand<sup>283</sup> were invested in the implementation of this project.”. An important detail: this investment project with the participation of foreign capital is not the only one for the Braslav region. In

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<sup>281</sup> Program of activities of the Government of the Republic of Belarus for the period until 2025 [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <http://www.government.by/upload/docs/file2635c85fcdcb1ca5.PDF>

<sup>282</sup> Support for lagging regions will be based on their potential - Chebotar [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/podderzhka-otstajuschih-regionov-budet-bazirovatsja-na-ih-potentsiale-chebotar-421034-2020/>

<sup>283</sup> Pushnyakova, A. The plant for the production of special electronics in Braslav will begin work in 2021 / A. Pushnyakova // [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/zavod-po-proizvodstvu-spetsialnoj-elektroniki-v-braslave-nachnet-rabotu-v-2021-godu-422488-2020>

2020, a new enterprise for the production of building prefabricated metal structures appeared here, in which an investor from Latvia invested more than 370 thousand dollars. and whose products are already being sold not only on the Belarusian market, but also in neighboring countries.

Another new production with an investment volume of about two million Belarusian rubles in the same Vitebsk region opened at the end of 2020 in the urban village of Begoml, Dokshitsy district. This OJSC Plant Vetraz, a subsidiary of Mogilevliftmash, has organized an electrical installation shop here, which already employs more than 80 people, and which “will allow, together with an Italian company, to create new types of products and increase production volume in 2021 by 150%. It will also contribute to the opening of new industries <sup>284</sup>. ” In particular, a plastic injection site will soon be opened here, for which two machines have already been purchased.

In the Minsk region, a new production facility opened on the eve of 2021 in the city of Zhodino. It was the Minsk Automobile Plant that organized the assembly of electric vehicles here - trolleybuses of various modifications and the latest electric buses, where they intend to annually assemble at least three hundred vehicles that will be delivered both to Belarusian cities and to countries near and far abroad. This project, the result of a public-private partnership between the Minsk Automobile Plant and ETON LLC, has already created more than 130 jobs. It is also important that from the idea to the creation of assembly lines, and the assembly of electric vehicles in Zhodino is carried out through a full cycle, including welding, adjustment and painting work, adjustment of control systems, diagnostics of electronic systems, control and acceptance of products, only six months have passed. At the same time, the large-scale prospects of this project are obvious, since “the development of competencies in the field of electric transport construction will make it possible to create a full line of passenger transport and will allow us to be present in all market segments <sup>285</sup>. ”

In the Grodno region, on the eve of 2021, the State Experimental Forestry Institution “Smorgon Experimental Forestry Enterprise” was registered as a resident of the free economic zone “Grodnoinvest” with an

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<sup>284</sup> The new workshop of the Vetraz plant in Begoml will allow increasing production volume [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/novyj-tseh-zavoda-vetraz-v-begomle-pozvolit-narastit-objem-proizvodstva-422131-2020/>

<sup>285</sup> MAZ opened an assembly plant for electric vehicles in Zhodino [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/maz-otkryl-sborochnoe-proizvodstvo-elektrotransporta-v-zhodino-422142-2020/>

investment project to create a wood processing plant for the production of wood fuel - pellets. The idea of the project is to organize pellet production in Smorgon with the inclusion of low-quality wood and sawmill waste into economic circulation. The entire volume of product produced here is expected to be exported. The volume of investment in the new production will exceed two and a half million euros, and production is planned for the second half of 2021. As a result, “the implementation of the project will make it possible to expand the range of products, increase the scale of production and increase export volumes, increase profitability and efficiency of production, create additional jobs and increase contributions to the budget”<sup>286</sup>.

It is easy to see that all these examples indicate that the Belarusian regions intend to successfully solve the socio-economic development tasks assigned to them in the new five-year plan, relying on existing experience in investment activities, including in interaction with foreign partners. Those formats of international cooperation at the regional level that exist in our country and continue to operate are also intended to contribute to this.

Thus, with the advent of 2021, the period of implementation of the Cross-border Cooperation Program “Poland – Belarus – Ukraine” for 2014-2020, which is an important tool for developing interaction between the European Union and partner states in Eastern Europe, has ended in order to ensure integrated and sustainable regional ties. Let us recall that this program, and the first program period was implemented back in 2004-2006, “has been supporting development processes in the border regions of Poland, Belarus and Ukraine for 17 years through co-financing of various projects”<sup>287</sup>. Moreover, all projects are non-profit and contribute to improving the quality of life of residents of the eastern voivodeships of Poland, as well as a number of western regions of Belarus and Ukraine. To be more precise, this program covers the following territories in three countries: Poland – Krosno, Przemysl, Rzeszow, Tarnobrze, Chełm-Zamojski, Pulawski, Lubelski, Bialski, Ostroletski-Siedlski, Lomzynski, Białystok and Suwalski districts; Belarus - Grodno, Brest, Minsk, Gomel regions and the city of Minsk; Ukraine – Lviv, Volyn, Transcarpathian, Rivne, Ternopil and Ivano-Frankivsk regions. Within the framework of the four thematic goals of this program - “Heritage”, “Accessibility”, “Security” and “Borders” - three types of projects were

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<sup>286</sup> The Smorgon experimental forestry enterprise has become a new resident of the FEZ “Grodnoinvest” [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/smorgonskij-opytynj-leshoz-stal-novym-rezidentom-sez-grodnoinvest-422374-2020/>

<sup>287</sup> Program [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.pbu2020.eu/by/pages/135>

implemented in 2014-2020: large infrastructure, regular and micro-projects. In 2020 alone, 139 projects were under implementation, 12 of which were completed.

In particular, within the framework of the thematic goal “Accessibility”, 85 kilometers of local roads connecting cities and villages were built or reconstructed, and repair work was carried out in the Grodno and Brest regions, the Lublin, Masovian and Subcarpathian voivodships, as well as in the Lviv and Volyn regions. Literally in January 2021, two new roundabouts were opened in the Polish city of Biała Podlaska, built in accordance with the project “Improving transport accessibility in Brest and Biała Podlaska.” And the Brest Road Maintenance Enterprise, under the same project, “reconstructed seven intersections in Brest, equipping them with an adaptive traffic control system. Subsequently, the Intelligent Transport System ( ITS ) was developed, which reduces travel time by regulating traffic patterns<sup>288</sup>. ” To be absolutely precise, in this case we are talking about installing “smart traffic lights” and embedding sensors into the roadway that transmit information to special controllers at the intersections in Brest of Moskovskaya Street with Partizansky and Respubliki Avenues, Gavrilov and Pionerskaya Streets, as well as Warsaw highway with the streets of October Revolution, Krasnoznamenaya and Makhnovich.

As for the thematic goal “Borders”, the main result of the joint work was two additional control lanes and new pavilions for customs and passport control at the border crossing “Kuznica Bialystok - Bruzgi”. “These activities were among other parallel tasks that increase the efficiency of the border. As a result of the completion of these two projects, throughput has increased by almost 76%, significantly speeding up border control<sup>289</sup>. ” In addition, a number of other projects were implemented by the customs authorities of the countries participating in the program. Firstly, a large infrastructure project “Construction of an X-ray scanning system for monitoring vehicles at the Berestovitsa road point”, the implementation of which involved the construction of an inspection and inspection complex, “including an X-ray scanning system, a protective building for it and a building for personnel, engineering support systems, training experts for work, organizing expedited inspection of vehicles, sharing experience on the use of scanograms with Polish partners<sup>290</sup>. ” And several regular projects, including “Improving the

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<sup>288</sup> New roundabouts in Biała Podlaska [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.pbu2020.eu/by/news/1961>

<sup>289</sup> Results of 2020 [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.pbu2020.eu/by/news/1952>

<sup>290</sup> Cross-border cooperation program Poland – Belarus – Ukraine for 2014-2020. [Electronic resource]. – 2014. – URL : <https://www.customs.gov.by/ru/2014-2020-ru/>

efficiency of customs control at the Domachevo road checkpoint” and “Strengthening the capabilities of the canine service of the customs departments of the Republic of Belarus and the Republic of Poland.” The first of them, aimed at increasing the security of the Belarusian-Polish border and improving the quality of customs control operations, involved the installation of weighing equipment, which led to a reduction in the time for carrying out these operations and speeding up throughput at the border. The second project, aimed at preventing the illegal movement of illegal drugs, psychotropic substances, tobacco products and preventing illegal migration, involved the purchase of six vehicles equipped with cages for transporting service dogs for the Grodno and Brest customs offices, as well as the Minsk-2 customs "

All these facts show that the completed Cross-Border Cooperation Program “Poland – Belarus – Ukraine” for 2014-2020 helped its participants resolve many specific issues of interaction between border regions. Apparently, the same pragmatic approach will be incorporated into the new cross-border program for 2021-2027, which is already being actively discussed by stakeholders. In particular, the Belarusian Brest and the Polish Biała Podlaska are exploring the possibility of implementing joint projects in three areas at once: the possibility of converting public transport to electric, energy saving projects, energy and thermal rehabilitation of social facilities, as well as “purification and further use of rainwater wastewater”<sup>291</sup>.

Another important aspect of the topic under consideration is that in the Republic of Belarus today there is a significant intensification of work at the local level on sustainable energy development and adaptation to climate change. Suffice it to say that 53 Belarusian cities have already declared their readiness to join the Covenant of Mayors on Climate and Energy, a large-scale European initiative for cooperation in the climate sector, which appeared in 2008 and “as of 2020, more than 10,000 cities and communities have joined it , which are home to about 320 million inhabitants”<sup>292</sup>. “ Let us recall that by signing this agreement, “local authorities undertake voluntary commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 30% by 2030.”<sup>293</sup> It is clear that each city approaches its goal in its own way.

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<sup>291</sup> Brest and Biala Podlaska are working on joint projects in the green economy [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/brest-i-bjala-podljaska-prorabatyvajut-sovmestnye-proekty-v-zelenoj-ekonomike-424871-2021>

<sup>292</sup> Arikas, D. Initiatives of European cities on energy and climate / D. Arikas, M. Gratz, E. Ferrer, A. Chumakova, N. Andreenko. – Baltic Environmental Forum Germany, 2019. – P. 4.

<sup>293</sup> More than 50 Belarusian cities are ready to undertake obligations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/bolee-50->

Thus, in the Belarusian city of Kostyukovichi, Mogilev region, in August 2020, the project “Construction of a photovoltaic system” was implemented. Decentralized energy supply to the gymnasium from an environmental point of view.” It was initiated and financed by partners from the German sister city of Dietzenbach, with which the Kostyukovichs collaborate in various fields: education, healthcare, sports, culture, tourism, and ecology. As part of the already mentioned project, “135 photovoltaic panels with a total capacity of 35.8 kW were installed on the roof of the gymnasium. A monitoring system is also provided to track electricity production, collect and store data on the operation of the station for at least a year for each day, month<sup>294</sup>. ” There, in the Mogilev region, there is also a new solar power plant (SPP), which began operation in 2020 near the village of Asmolovichi, Mstislavsky district. Here, 4,752 solar panels were installed on an area of about four hectares. “The rated power of each panel is 335 W. As a result, the total installed capacity of the new solar power plant was 1.6 MW<sup>295</sup>. ” In addition, in the Asmolovichi region, the tallest wind power plant in Belarus with a height of 142 meters was erected in 2020.

Let us note that the presence of these environmentally oriented objects in the Mstislavsky district is not an accident. The city of Mstislavl itself signed the Covenant of Mayors on Climate and Energy in 2017. Since then, a wide variety of events have been held here that help to increase the culture of energy saving and the responsibility of the younger generation for the environment. In particular, in the summer of 2020, as part of the organized Energy Days, everyone could take part in the Internet marathon of the Sustainable Development Goals “EcoMy Mstislavl”. Its participants posted their materials on the global network related to energy saving, ecology, and sustainable development of the region. In preschool institutions and health camps of the district, interactive classes “How to live environmentally on Earth” were held, a competition “Share with us” was held, and film screenings “Energy Saving Schools” were organized - about modern ways and methods of saving and conserving energy at home, at school and in production. Environmental campaigns “We cleaned up here!” were held in schools in the district. Are you weak?” And near the gymnasium in Mstislavl itself, they planted an alley

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[belorusskih-gorodov-gotovy-vzjat-na-sebja-objazatelstva-po-snizheniju-vybrosov-parnikovyh-424013-2021/](http://belorusskih-gorodov-gotovy-vzjat-na-sebja-objazatelstva-po-snizheniju-vybrosov-parnikovyh-424013-2021/)

<sup>294</sup> A photovoltaic station will be built on the roof of the gymnasium in Kostyukovichi [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <http://climate.ecopartnership.by/ru/news/664>

<sup>295</sup> A new solar power plant began operation in Belarus [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <http://climate.ecopartnerstvo.by/ru/news/664>

“Education for a Sustainable Tomorrow” of young thujas, next to which they installed signs with information about each of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations. These Energy Days ended with the “Mstislav Ring” bike ride, which was held for the third time and brought together about a hundred participants of different ages from all over the region. These facts suggest that, by participating in all these events, residents of the Mstislavsky district could see for themselves that the main goal of the Covenant of Mayors Climate and Energy initiative is sustainable energy development at the local level and the adoption of specific mitigation and adaptation measures to climate change, and also that “residents play an important role in the district’s efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and through their personal behavior they can make a valuable contribution to the common good”<sup>296</sup>.

Another effective tool, which is also actively used in cities participating in the Covenant of Mayors, is the European Mobility Week - an international campaign that aims to green urban transport systems, change people's transport behavior, and make more intelligent use of public spaces, and which traditionally takes place annually from 16 through September 22, ending with “Car-Free Day.” As a rule, more than 50 countries around the world participate in this week’s events. The 2020 theme, “Zero Emissions for All,” focused on “reducing greenhouse gas emissions and making emission-free infrastructure and transport accessible to all citizens”<sup>297</sup>. The popularity of this topic in our country is evidenced by the fact that in 2020, a record number of cities in Belarus joined this campaign - more than 80. Thus, only in Minsk, as part of this week, they organized a bike ride, offered free travel for motorists on public transport, and They also opened the first eco-route for bicycle riders in Belarus, which connected three ecological trails of the Belarusian capital - “City of Birds”, “Silver Log” and “Chizhovka”. Its special feature was the “opportunity for cycling and bird watching”<sup>298</sup>,” as well as information boards along the route telling about local birds.

Summarizing these considerations, it should be noted that “the strategic goal of the Belarusian regional policy is the integrated development of each region and the reduction of existing regional differences, taking into account

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<sup>296</sup> Mstislavl for an eco-friendly lifestyle! And Energy Days confirm this [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <http://climate.ecopartnerstvo.by/ru/news/616>

<sup>297</sup> European Mobility Week [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://rosavtotransport.ru/ru/activities/european-mobility-week/>

<sup>298</sup> A new eco-route, a bike ride and free travel - what the European Mobility Week in Minsk will be like [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/novyj-ekomarshrut-veloprobeg-i-besplatnyj-proezd-kakoj-budet-evropejskaja-nedelja-mobilnosti-v-minske-406811-2020/>

the effective use of its resource potential and competitive advantages in the interests of ensuring high standards of living of the population, nature conservation and the positive contribution of the regions into national competitiveness and security<sup>299</sup>. " As we see, within the framework of the second stage of the National Strategy for Sustainable Socio-Economic Development of the Republic of Belarus for the period until 2030, which is currently being implemented in our country, Belarusian regions are already taking many concrete steps aimed at expanding local self-government in solving socio-economic, environmental and environmental problems, reducing subsidies and ensuring a high standard of living for the population.

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<sup>299</sup> Zalessky, B. The starting point is multi-vector. Part I/ B . Zalessky . – Palmarium Academic Publishing, 2020. – P. 24–25 .

## A comprehensive program paves the way to the future

In the Republic of Belarus, a draft state program for innovative development for 2021-2025 has been prepared, which provides for the implementation of about 80 innovative projects to create high-tech industries. Among the priorities should be the development of six “projects of the future”, which are focused on new production, technologies and products that correspond to global trends and take into account the development of sales markets. One of the most notable among them concerns national electric transport. The implementation of the prepared comprehensive program for the development of this industry in 2021-2025 will not only create a new mechanical engineering sector in Belarus - electric vehicles, but will also have a large-scale multiplier effect for the innovative development of other industries, for example, metallurgy, electrical engineering, robotics, information technology. In addition, “provision is made for the development of samples of new equipment, the creation of 14 production facilities for freight, passenger and special electric transport, including the assembly production of passenger electric vehicles at SJSC BELGIE, as well as basic components for it<sup>300</sup>. ”

Let us recall that back in March 2020, the Republic of Belarus adopted a decree “On stimulating the use of electric vehicles,” which included measures designed to stimulate the country’s demand for this environmentally friendly equipment, as well as the creation of appropriate charging and service infrastructure in the regions. The appearance of this document was caused by a number of circumstances. First, let us remember that “at the 24th United Nations World Conference on Climate Change, held in December 2018 in the Polish city of Katowice, the Belarusian side stated that it views the green economy and low-carbon sustainable development as a strategic vector<sup>301</sup>. ”

Secondly, existing expert forecasts show that “by 2030, every fifth car in the world will be electric. This process is being spurred on by government policies in a number of countries where they are planning to impose restrictions

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<sup>300</sup> Shumilin, A. How Belarus plans to develop the high-tech sector / A. Shumilin // [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/interview/view/kak-belarus-planiruet-razvivat-vysokotekhnologichnyj-sektor-7711/>

<sup>301</sup> Zalessky, B. Points of growth. Features of sustainable development in the context of global challenges / B. Zalessky. – Palmarium Academic Publishing , 2020. – P. 57 .

on cars with internal combustion engines<sup>302</sup>. ” Thirdly, the increase in the number of electric vehicles will help reduce air pollution in Belarus. Fourthly, “the use of electric transport is one of the directions for intelligently increasing electricity consumption<sup>303</sup>,” which becomes especially important in connection with the commissioning of the Belarusian nuclear power plant. Fifthly, the transition to electric vehicles is the appeal of wide circles of the population to new technologies that correspond to the best world practices, so that by 2025, about 40 percent of the internal combustion engine vehicles in Belarus can be replaced with electric vehicles.

Turning to the decree, we note some of the measures contained in it. Thus, this document exempted owners of electric vehicles from paying fees for issuing a permit to participate in road traffic. Individuals will not have to pay value added tax when importing electric vehicles into our country for personal use. In addition, “owners of electric vehicles are exempt from paying for parking in specially equipped places in municipal car parks until April 1, 2026.<sup>304</sup>”

The decree also contained measures for manufacturers of electric vehicles and electric charging stations, as well as for the organizations operating them. In particular, charging stations, if used on the territory of Belarus, are exempt from value added tax. And the Belorusneft production association began to lease land plots for the construction and maintenance of electric charging complexes without an auction. Perhaps for this reason, Belorusneft planned to open 180 fast charging stations in 2020.

At that time, the situation with electric charging stations (ECS) in Belarus was as follows. Since the beginning of 2020, “the EPS network has expanded to 251 such stations (plus 13 facilities)<sup>305</sup>. ” And it could already service up to nine thousand electric vehicles. The network of electric charging

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<sup>302</sup> The measures taken will contribute to the creation of electric vehicle production in Belarus - Ministry of Economy [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/prinimaemye-mery-budut-sposobstvovat-sozdaniyu-v-belarusi-proizvodstva-elektromobilej-minekonomiki-383056-2020/>

<sup>303</sup> Ecology and smart consumption of electricity - what is the benefit of the growth in the number of electric vehicles in Belarus [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/ekologija-i-gramotnoe-potreblenie-elektroenergii-chem-vygoden-rost-chisla-elektromobilej-v-belarusi-383046-2020>

<sup>304</sup> Lukashenko signed a decree on stimulating the purchase of electric vehicles [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/president/view/lukashenko-podpisal-ukaz-o-stimulirovanii-zakupok-elektromobilej-383041-2020>

<sup>305</sup> Belorusneft plans to open 180 electric charging stations this year [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belorusneft-planiruet-otkryt-180-elektrozarjadnyh-stantsij-v-etom-godu-383042-2020>

stations on Belarusian territory includes two types of stations: firstly, Mode 3, where an electric vehicle takes six to eight hours to charge; secondly, Mode 4, where the battery can be charged in less than an hour. An important detail: at the beginning of 2020, the Belorusneft electric filling station network acquired a new brand - Malanka, under which 639 charging stations should already operate by 2022. And by 2030 there should be enough of them to serve up to three hundred thousand electric vehicles.

Speaking about the production of our own electric vehicles in our country, let us recall that the first Belarusian example of such equipment based on Geely was presented back in August 2017. At the same time it was said that “after testing the first electric car, scientists will begin to develop an improved prototype. It may be ready as early as next year [2018] <sup>306</sup>.” However, as was noted at the meeting in March 2020 between the President of Belarus and the leadership of the Council of Ministers, the topic of producing our own electric vehicle has not yet received the necessary impetus, although electric transport has enormous potential. “This is an urgent need today. <...> Many states are already developing this promising direction. Countries like us, which are export-oriented and do not have huge reserves underground, have long focused on electric transport <sup>307</sup>.”

With the advent of the decree “On stimulating the use of electric vehicles,” it became clear that this matter would be taken up by SJSC “BELGIE”, which “is ready to consider the production of electric vehicles in Belarus, subject to the sale of 5-10 thousand cars per year <sup>308</sup>.” At the same time, the company received four Chinese electric cars of the Geely model. Geometry A, which had to be tested: one at the factory, three at dealerships. This version of the electric car was attractive because it has a power reserve of five hundred kilometers, adaptive cruise control and response systems for pedestrians and cyclists, as well as an intelligent automatic parking system. At the same time, hopes arose that with the adoption of the presidential decree,

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<sup>306</sup> Gavrilova, V. Eco-friendly, modern and maneuverable: scientists presented the first Belarusian electric car / V. Gavrilova // [Electronic resource]. – 2017. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/reportazh-ekologichnyj-sovremennyj-i-manevrennyj-uchenye-prezentovali-pervyj-belorusskij-elektromobil-262688-2017>

<sup>307</sup> Meeting with the leadership of the Council of Ministers [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : [http://president.gov.by/ru/news\\_ru/view/soveshanie-s-rukovodstvom-soveta-ministrov-23197/](http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/soveshanie-s-rukovodstvom-soveta-ministrov-23197/)

<sup>308</sup> “BELGEE” is ready to consider the production of electric vehicles when selling 5-10 thousand cars per year [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/beldzhi-gotov-rassmatrivat-vypusk-elektromobilej-pri-prodazhe-5-10-tys-avto-v-god-382660-2020/>

the development of production of the Geely model Geometry And they will go to SJSC “BELGEE” much faster.

In January 2021, the draft Comprehensive Program for the Development of Electric Transport for 2021-2025, developed by the National Academy of Sciences together with other stakeholders and which envisaged increasing the share of public electric transport in Belarus to 30 percent by 2025, was considered at a meeting of the Presidium of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus, where the government’s main requirements for the content of the document were announced: “The program must be truly comprehensive - from scientific research and development to incentive measures for the production, acquisition and operation of electric vehicles. That is, it must be “end-to-end” and affect virtually all areas related to electric transport in one way or another<sup>309</sup>. ” Perhaps for this reason, the development of electric transport in Belarus began to be discussed in other relevant high-level documents. In particular, in the State Program “Energy Saving” for 2021-2025, in order to achieve the set goals in the industrial sector, the development of the production of electric vehicles, components and charging infrastructure for it is provided, and in the field of transport it is envisaged “the development of the segment of electric vehicles, hybrid vehicles and charging networks, electrification urban passenger transport in order to replace the use of hydrocarbon fuels<sup>310</sup>. ”

As for the research component of this topic, the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus outlined its plans back in January 2021 to create an experimental production of Belarusian electric vehicles. The fact is that domestic scientists are working on middle-class models intended for a wide range of consumers. We are talking about the release of several models at once: a truck, a passenger car, a minivan, even a sports one. It is also characteristic that “this is not Geely, this is a fundamentally different electric car with completely Belarusian filling. <...> Several models of batteries are being developed for the Belarusian electric car - lithium-ion, graphene and graphene-lead”<sup>311</sup> with the expectation that they have a power reserve of 500 kilometers.

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<sup>309</sup> They want to increase the share of public electric transport in Belarus to 30% by 2025 [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <http://www.government.by/ru/content/9713>

<sup>310</sup> State program “Energy Saving” for 2021-2025. – Minsk, 2021. – P. 15.

<sup>311</sup> NAS expects to create an experimental production of Belarusian electric vehicles [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/nan-rasschityvaet-sozdat-eksperimentalnoe-proizvodstvo-belorusskih-elektromobilej-425463-2021/>

In this regard, we note that at the exhibition of achievements and the most significant results of scientific, technical and innovative activities “Days of Belarusian Science - 2021”, held in Minsk in January 2021, in the open area it was already possible to get acquainted with a prototype of the Academic electric car Electro of the United Institute of Mechanical Engineering, intended for transportation in closed areas, that is, without entering public roads, and designed for two passengers. “The maximum speed of an electric car is 50 km/h. The frame-panel type of body allows production in small batches according to customer requirements<sup>312</sup>. ” Another feature of this new product is that the power part of its cabin does not contain metal elements: it is made of fiberglass. In addition, the Joint Institute of Mechanical Engineering of the National Academy of Sciences is already implementing a number of joint projects with several Belarusian enterprises. Thus, “together with MAZ, an electric truck is being developed, which will be equipped with an electric power plant developed at the institute<sup>313</sup>. ” And the result of work with the Minsk Tractor Plant will be an electric combine for pouring ice on skating rinks, the first production batch of which is planned for 2021. As for the production of electric vehicles on the basis of SJSC BELGI, in 2021 it was planned to supply from five hundred to one thousand of these electric vehicles to Belarus, “to study the demand, understand the possibilities, and then carry out all the necessary work to prepare for production. We should expect electric cars closer to the second half of the year<sup>314</sup>. ” In short, the measures taken in Belarus to create their own electric vehicles promised to yield results in the near future.

Finally, in April 2021, the Comprehensive Electric Transport Development Program for 2021-2025 was finally approved in the Republic of Belarus, which is aimed at achieving such main goals as:

1) creation of a new branch of mechanical engineering - the production of electric vehicles;

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<sup>312</sup> New drone and electric car - NAS will present about 200 developments at the exhibition for Science Day [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/novyj-bespilotnik-i-elektromobil-nan-predstavit-okolo-200-razrabotok-na-vystavke-ko-dnju-nauki-425608-2021/>

<sup>313</sup> Electric trucks, electric combines and electric passenger cars – what Belarusian scientists are working on [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/elektrogruzoviki-elektrokombajny-i-legkovye-elektromobili-nad-chem-rabotajut-belorusskie-uchenye-426333-2021/>

<sup>314</sup> “BELGI” will study the demand for electric vehicles and will prepare for production - Parkhomchik [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/beldzhi-izuchit-spros-na-elektromobili-i-budet-gotovitsja-k-proizvodstvu-parhomchik-423890-2021/>

2) providing conditions for increasing the number of electric vehicles in use;

3) expansion of electric transport infrastructure; 4) minimizing negative impacts on the environment.

To achieve this, the comprehensive program involves solving seven problems:

1) creation of a scientific support system, including ensuring the scientific and technological security of the country in the field of mechanical engineering;

2) organization of production of electric transport, its basic components and infrastructure elements and their maximum localization;

3) formation of a set of institutional conditions for the development of electric transport based on system support for its standardization, conformity assessment and regulatory support;

4) creation of electric transport infrastructure, including electric power stations, with its optimal spatial placement and taking into account the specifics of consumers (public passenger and freight, personal electric transport);

5) coordination of the actions of government bodies on the development of electric transport and its infrastructure on a national and regional scale; optimization of investments in the creation of production facilities and the acquisition of electric vehicles;

6) formation and implementation of measures to stimulate the development of electric transport from scientific support, acquisition and operation to disposal and recycling, including to attract investments for the accelerated development of electric transport;

7) minimizing economic, environmental, social and other risks.

Within the framework of two subprograms – “Production and technological base of electric transport” and “Creation of charging infrastructure for electric transport” – it is planned to create scientific foundations and a production base to increase the number of electric vehicles in use, as well as a developed network of electric charging stations, which will ensure the unhindered movement of electric vehicles across territory of the whole Belarus. And among the activities planned by the comprehensive

program, we note the creation of an experimental experimental production of electric vehicles, as well as “the exemption of road users using electric vehicles from charging for the use of car parking lots that are in municipal ownership<sup>315</sup>. ” In addition, this type of transport is exempt from transport tax in the Republic of Belarus. To be more precise, “owners of vehicles of categories M1, M1 G (passenger electric cars and light cross-country electric cars) driven exclusively by an electric motor will not pay transport tax. This benefit is provided until December 31, 2025.<sup>316</sup>”

Of course, all these measures create good conditions for an increase in the number of electric vehicles, of which there were already more than two and a half thousand in our country as of mid-March 2021. At the same time, “the volume of electricity consumption by charging stations for electric vehicles in Belarus in 2020 almost doubled compared to 2019 – to 7.7 million kWh.”<sup>317</sup>. Up to two hundred new users are now registered in the EPS network every month. And “on average, 250 charging sessions are carried out at the stations every day, and over the last two months [January and February] their total number exceeded 15 thousand.”<sup>318</sup>. The comprehensive program contains serious measures to develop the EPS network. If now this network consists of 288 electric filling stations, then by the end of 2021 there should already be 471 of them. At the second stage (2022-2025), 466 will be added to them, and at the third (2026-2030) another 407.

Another important issue on this topic is that today budget Chinese electric cars continue to be especially popular among Belarusian consumers due to the fact that domestic models simply do not exist yet. The comprehensive program in this regard states that “it is planned to master the serial production of electric vehicles at SJSC BELGIE and produce 1000 electric vehicles based on the “Geometry” model in 2021 C “”<sup>319</sup>, as well as

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<sup>315</sup> On the Comprehensive Program for the Development of Electric Transport until 2025 [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <http://government.by/ru/content/9804>

<sup>316</sup> Ministry of Taxes and Taxes: electric vehicles are exempt from transport tax until the end of 2025 [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/mns-elektromobili-osvobozhdeny-ot-transportnogo-naloga-do-kontsa-2025-goda-434965-2021/>

<sup>317</sup> Electricity consumption by charging stations for electric vehicles in Belarus almost doubled in 2020 [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : [https://atom.belta.by/ru/news\\_ru/view/elektropotreblenie-zarjadnymi-stantsijami-dlja-elektrotransporta-v-belarusi-v-2020-godu-vyroslo-pochti-vdvoe-11190/](https://atom.belta.by/ru/news_ru/view/elektropotreblenie-zarjadnymi-stantsijami-dlja-elektrotransporta-v-belarusi-v-2020-godu-vyroslo-pochti-vdvoe-11190/)

<sup>318</sup> The number of electric vehicles in Belarus has exceeded 2.5 thousand [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/chislo-elektromobilej-v-belarusi-prevysilo-25-tys-431822-2021/>

<sup>319</sup> Comprehensive program for the development of electric transport for 2021-2025. – Minsk, 2021. – P. 20.

to create an experimental assembly production of single samples and small series of electric vehicles of various modifications at the State Scientific Institution “United Institute of Mechanical Engineering of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus” based on the maximum use of components and assemblies of Belarusian production.

As for other types of transport equipment with an electric motor, a very extensive development program is planned. In particular, by the end of 2023, the production of electric buses for transporting passengers at airports with power plant components of Belarusian production should be mastered. The United Institute of Mechanical Engineering, together with the Minsk Automobile Plant, will create a model of an electric truck with a carrying capacity of about four and a half tons, and with Belkommunmash - up to ten tons. A domestic electric garbage truck should also be added to the Belarusian electric transport fleet. Finally, the Belarusian Automobile Plant “as part of the program, intends to create a model of a mining dump truck powered by rechargeable batteries. The total weight of such a machine will be 176 tons, the load capacity will be 90 tons<sup>320</sup>.”

As we can see, the expansion of the use of electric vehicles in Belarus in the coming years should become one of the most promising areas of development, which will not only help reduce the use of imported energy resources, but also improve the environmental situation, and also ensure the use of the capacities of the Belarusian energy system.

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<sup>320</sup> An electric dump truck, an electric garbage truck and an electric car of Belarusian production are planned to be created before 2025 [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <http://doingbusiness.by/elektrosamosval-elektromusorovoz-i-elektromobil-belorusskogo-proizvodstva-planiruetsya-sozdat-do-2025-goda>

## From modernization to maximum localization of production and import substitution

Even in the Program of Action of the Government of the Republic of Belarus for 2018-2020, the task was outlined to create conditions for the implementation of a policy of rational import substitution and the development of import-substituting industries, including using the potential of small and medium-sized companies in order to improve the country's trade balance, in order to ultimately reach “ annual increase in the production of import-substituting products in the amount of at least 600 million US dollars <sup>321</sup>. ” Note that in Belarus the main task of import substitution, which is understood as government policy aimed at rationalizing the import of goods and services by stimulating domestic producers, including with the participation of foreign capital to organize the production of products that were previously imported, is formulated as “non-mechanical substitution imported goods, but the development of competitive national production <sup>322</sup>. ” According to the Belarusian Ministry of Economy, the share of import-substituting products in the country is already close to 40 percent, or in monetary terms – \$20 billion. At the same time, “the share of sales of import-substituting products for export increased to 50%. This suggests that it is not only competitive in the domestic market, but is also in demand abroad <sup>323</sup>. ”

Among the economic entities in Belarus that have been quite successfully addressing issues of import substitution in recent years are the enterprises of the Bellesbumprom concern. In 2019, they increased the production of such products by almost 10 percent and produced more than \$530 million. To be more precise, import-substituting products were produced by 26 enterprises in 38 product positions, including cellulose, wood fiber and particle boards, plywood, uncoated paper and cardboard, corrugated and non-corrugated cardboard, paper bags, newsprint and tissue paper. appointments. In particular, “in 2019, OJSC Svetlogorsk pulp and paper mill produced 145

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<sup>321</sup> Program of activities of the Government of the Republic of Belarus for 2018-2020 [Electronic resource]. – 2018. – URL : <http://www.government.by/upload/docs/file253cf6b5b538838e.PDF>

<sup>322</sup> Ideas for import substitution [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : [http://www.economy.gov.by/ru/idei\\_importozames-ru/](http://www.economy.gov.by/ru/idei_importozames-ru/)

<sup>323</sup> The share of import-substituting products in Belarusian industry is approaching 40% [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/dolja-importozameschajushej-produktsii-v-promyshlennosti-belarusi-priblizhaetsja-k-40-379006-2020/>

thousand tons of cellulose, which is 5.6 times more than in 2018.<sup>324</sup>” Another interesting example in this context is OJSC Rechitsadrev. Several years ago, a synthetic resin plant began operating in Rechitsa. One of the areas of use of this resin is the production of decorative film from ordinary paper, used in the manufacture of laminated wood boards. Result: if previously furniture makers had to buy synthetic resin abroad, now they themselves began to export its surplus. And in 2019 alone, this gave the company about three million euros. In general, “producing our own resin allowed us to save about 10 million euros over the entire period<sup>325</sup>. ”

The secret of the success of the concern's enterprises is the modernization of basic woodworking enterprises, which made it possible to significantly expand the range of products and ensure their high quality. Result: over the past five years, when new factories began operating, the volume of production of import-substituting products has more than doubled. Continuing to develop this current priority of activity, the Bellesbumprom concern sees such promising areas as expanding the range and increasing production volumes of various types of paper packaging as an alternative to polyethylene, as well as the production of high-quality coated cardboard, which is used in significant quantities in the printing, food, and pharmaceutical industries, cosmetic industries. As a result, “in 2020, the concern’s enterprises plan to increase the output of import-substituting products by \$30 million to \$560 million<sup>326</sup>. ”

Interesting experience in developing import substitution has also been accumulated in the Energokomplekt production association in Vitebsk, where in 2019 “86% of the total volume worth \$112 million was exported. At the same time, the Vitebsk enterprise accounts for 70% of all cable products produced in Belarus”<sup>327</sup>. It is appropriate to add that this association, founded in 1992 and today a resident of the Vitebsk free economic zone, employs 650

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<sup>324</sup> Bellesbumprom enterprises increased the production of import-substituting products by 9.3% in 2019 [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/predpriyatija-bellesbumproma-v-2019-godu-uvelichili-proizvodstvo-importozameshajuscej-produktsii-na-379049-2020/>

<sup>325</sup> Kapba, E. In the lens - “JSC Rechitsadrev”. Successful import substitution / E. Kapba // [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <http://dneprovec.by/companynews/2020/02/14/25898>

<sup>326</sup> Igor Lyashenko directs Bellesbumprom towards a more active production of import-substituting products [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <http://www.government.by/ru/content/9267>

<sup>327</sup> Bogacheva, O. More attention needs to be paid to issues of import substitution - Anfimov / O. Bogacheva // [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/voprosam-importozameschenija-neobhodimo-udeljat-bolshe-vnimanija-anfimov-378866-2020/>

people who provide innovative products to both domestic and foreign consumers.

A number of examples of the successful implementation of the import substitution policy can be observed at enterprises in the Gomel region. In particular, “one of them is the activity of the Turov Dairy Plant in the production of traditional Italian cheeses for sale on the national Belarusian market <sup>328</sup>. ” All these examples indicate that the import substitution policy in Belarus, although developing, still has enormous potential, which many market participants have to master, focusing on the best practices already available in the country.

That is why the Program of Socio-Economic Development of the Republic of Belarus for 2021-2025, adopted in mid-2021, provided for strengthening the policy of rational import substitution, taking into account the production of new high-tech and export-oriented goods, including within the framework of the Eurasian Economic Union. This document states that the production of import-substituting products by the end of the five-year plan in the country “will increase to 22.3 billion US dollars with a total increase in production of 4 billion US dollars <sup>329</sup>. ”

In December 2021, the Presidium of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus, while considering the problems of uninterrupted supply of necessary components and materials faced by domestic manufacturers, set the task of maximizing the localization of production of Belarusian products, including through cooperation with Russia and other countries of the Eurasian Economic Union, taking into account the positive trends observed in the work on import substitution. Indeed, over the five-year period - from 2016 to 2020 - the output of import-substituting products in Belarus increased by approximately a third - from 13.6 to 18 billion dollars. Over the same period, its share in total industrial production increased from 34.2 to 38 percent. And now “more than 53% of manufactured import-substituting products are not only used within the country, but also exported. The balance of foreign trade

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<sup>328</sup> Shumel, K.V. Development of import-substituting industries in the context of the concept of innovative development of the Republic of Belarus / K.V. Shumel // Women scientists of Belarus and Kazakhstan: collection. materials International scientific-practical conf., Minsk, March 1-2, 2018 / editorial board. : I.V. Kazakova [and others]. – Minsk: RIVSH, 2018. – P. 553.

<sup>329</sup> Program of socio-economic development of the Republic of Belarus for 2021-2025. – Mn., 2021. – P. 28.

in goods under the approved import substitution scheme has improved by \$412 million over the past five years<sup>330</sup>. ”

Among the measures to encourage enterprises to import substitution, at the meeting of the Presidium of the Council of Ministers the following were named: increased localization, development of technological chains, processing of local raw materials, attraction of small and medium-sized businesses. And “about 170 import-substituting projects have already been proposed for a total amount of almost Br 13 billion of investments<sup>331</sup>,” of which the Ministry of Economy has selected 47 of the most significant projects with an investment volume of about eight billion Belarusian rubles, the implementation of which will make it possible to produce import-substituting products worth more than nine billion Belarusian rubles.

An intense action plan for the development of import-substituting industries for 2022 was formed, again, in the Bellesbumprom concern, which “set a target for the production and sale of import-substituting products in the amount of \$876.1 million (which is 31% higher than the target of the republican target plan)<sup>332</sup>. ” The concern intends to solve this problem based on the development of new production facilities in the woodworking and pulp and paper industries. Today, such products in “Bellesbumprom” are produced by 26 enterprises for 50 product positions, “including cellulose, chipboard, fiberboard (MDF), plywood, uncoated paper and cardboard, corrugated cardboard and boxes made from it, paper bags, non-corrugated cardboard, newsprint and sanitary and hygienic purposes, products made from it. In 2021, the growth rate of the volume of import-substituting products across the concern amounted to 163% compared to 2020.<sup>333</sup>”

Interesting import substitution measures were carried out in 2021 at Krichevmentoshifer OJSC, one of the largest Belarusian enterprises producing construction materials. In particular, they began to actively use

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<sup>330</sup> Under the conditions of sanctions, it is necessary to increase the localization of production [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <http://www.government.by/ru/content/10092>

<sup>331</sup> Chervyakov: import substitution is gaining special importance as a tool to counter sanctions [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/chervyakov-importozameschenie-priobretaet-osoboe-znachenie-kak-instrument-protivodejstviya-sanktsijam-473567-2021/>

<sup>332</sup> Increasing import substitution and reducing costs: the chairman of “Bellesbumprom” about the tasks for the year [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/naraschivanie-importozameschenija-i-snizhenie-zatrat-predsedatel-bellesbumproma-o-zadachah-na-god-485290-2022/>

<sup>333</sup> Bellesbumprom enterprises increased exports by 48.2% in 2021 [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/predpriyatija-bellesbumproma-v-2021-godu-uvlichili-eksport-na-482-485259-2022/>

sandy cement for this purpose. And compared to 2020, its supplies for January-October 2021 immediately increased fourfold - to 270 thousand tons. Instead of foreign slag, local "river sand with a high silicon content" began to be added to this cement. The brand of cement, as well as its quality, remains at the same level, but the cost of the product is significantly reduced<sup>334</sup>. " In other words, with the same productivity, due to cheap domestic sand, the enterprise increased profitability on each ton of cement.

Another interesting example in this context is the opening at the end of December 2021 at the Gomel OJSC Medplast of a site for the production of vacuum tubes for collecting venous blood. These products "are import-substituting – they have not yet been produced in the country, and the needs of medical institutions were met through imported supplies. Modern equipment is installed on the site. In compliance with all sanitary standards, 121 subtypes of test tubes of different sizes and volumes will be produced here<sup>335</sup>. " Important detail: Belarus has become the fourth country in the world after the USA, China and Turkey, where there is full production of such medical products.

Enterprises of the Belarusian Ministry of Industry are now facing especially intense tasks in this matter. In 2022, they should produce import-substituting products worth four and a half billion dollars, which is almost 20 percent more than the level of 2021. "Solving this problem requires a significant increase in export volumes - up to 70% of the volume of goods output (\$3.19 billion). Organizations of the Ministry of Industry must master the production of almost 400 types of new products<sup>336</sup>. " Let us note that in the current economic situation, many enterprises not only recognize emerging problems, but also see in them current impulses for technological advancement towards the opening of new directions and the development of new development niches.

Thus, in March 2022, Mogilevliftmash OJSC produced the first batch of gearless winches at the electric motor production site. "Previously, the

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<sup>334</sup> Evmenkova, Yu. "Krichevcementnoshifer" exported almost 40% of its products in 10 months / Yu. Evmenkova // [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/krichevtsementnoshifer-eksportiroval-za-10-mesjatsev-pochti-40-produktsii-470044-2021/>

<sup>335</sup> The production of vacuum tubes for collecting venous blood was opened in Gomel [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/proizvodstvo-vakuumnyh-probirok-dlja-zabora-venoznoj-krovi-otkryli-v-gomele-477229-2021/>

<sup>336</sup> Parkhomchik, P. Belarusian industry under sanctions / P. Parkhomchik // [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/interview/view/beloruskaja-promyshlennost-v-uslovijah-sanktsij-ministr-o-borbe-s-novyimi-vyzovami-planah-po-proizvodstvu-i-8121/>

company purchased such winches in Spain, but due to sanctions restrictions, there are interruptions in the import of winches<sup>337</sup>. ” Now the JSC plans to increase the volume of production of these components and completely move away from import purchases, as well as begin selling them to other enterprises. Zenit OJSC is also actively engaged in import substitution, where they are working on the creation of high-tech electronic components and control stations, which will make it possible to create high-quality import-substituting components that will find their consumers not only in the Belarusian market, but also in other post-Soviet countries.

There are such enterprises in the Belneftekhim concern. In particular, the framework agreement on further modernization of the enterprise, signed in November 2021 as part of the “Mill of Success” investment forum held in Mogilev, is intended to update the work on import substitution at Mogilevkhimvolokno OJSC. The fact is that “a company with Turkish capital, BelEms, operates in Mogilev.” In its production, it uses spunlace, which is produced from Mogilevkhimvolokn threads, but in the Rostov region. Then these raw materials go back to Mogilev<sup>338</sup>. ” As a result of the agreement reached with BelEms, spunlace will now be moved from one end of Mogilev to the other.

Multifaceted work to replace import supplies is also typical for enterprises of the Belarusian energy complex, where great opportunities open up in peat industry organizations. Let us remind you that about two million tons of peat are mined in Belarus every year. Priority here is given to the production of peat fuel, which allows replacing the use of imported natural gas and coal. At the same time, “particular attention is paid to increasing the supply of these products to organizations in the cement industry and housing and communal services. Thus, over the past five years, the volume of consumption of milled peat in boiler houses of the housing and public utilities sector has increased 2.5 times: from 25.9 thousand tons in 2016 to 75.3 thousand tons in 2021.<sup>339</sup>” By the end of 2025, these volumes are expected to increase to 160

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<sup>337</sup> “Mogilevliftmash” has mastered the production of new components and intends to completely move away from import purchases [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/mogilevliftmash-osvoil-vypusk-novyh-komplektujuschih-i-ameren-polnostju-ujti-ot-importnyh-zakupok-494830-2022/>

<sup>338</sup> Thanks to new investment projects, about 600 jobs will appear in the Mogilev region [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/blagodarja-novym-investproektam-v-mogilevskoj-oblasti-pojavitsja-okolo-600-rabochih-mest-468164-2021/>

<sup>339</sup> Karankevich, V. Organizations of the Ministry of Energy have intensified their work on import substitution under sanctions / V. Karankevich // [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/interview/view/organizatsii-minenergo-usilili-rabotu-po-importozamescheniju-v-uslovijah-sanktsij-8135>

thousand tons. And the use of peat in the cement industry after the implementation of the project for burning dried peat made it possible to increase the volume of its consumption from 80 thousand tons in 2015 to 358 thousand tons in 2021. The production of peat products for non-fuel purposes is also growing. In particular, in the Brest region the issue of creating a production of a new type of mushroom production is currently being considered - covering material for growing mushrooms. “The total volume of the domestic market for these products in the country is estimated at approximately 50 thousand tons per year. Most of this volume was previously imported. Taking into account the presence of our own raw material base, there are opportunities to replace these imports <sup>340</sup>. ”

They are also working in the Brest region to develop other areas of replacing imported goods with domestic ones. In particular, an appeal was sent to the Academy of Sciences about the need to refine technologies for the enrichment of refractory clays for OJSC Berezastryomaterialy and quartz sands in the Stolin region. Another interesting example concerns small and medium-sized businesses that are ready to produce import-substituting products. Thus, a private investor plans to produce raw materials “from granitoids at RUPP Granit” in exchange for Ukrainian basalt raw materials for a Gomel enterprise that produces mineral wool. The domestic manufacturer of polymer products, Riona LLC, is ready to expand the production of polypropylene disposable tableware. For this purpose, meat and dairy industry enterprises are attracting 3 million euros of investment from the Development Bank <sup>341</sup>. ”

Note that turning to the private sector in this context is very relevant. Suffice it to say that in 2021, “637 small and medium-sized businesses [were] involved in the implementation of import substitution projects in the republic. They produced products worth \$2.5 billion, or almost 36% of the country’s total production of import-substituting products <sup>342</sup>. ” So there is very serious potential here. In 2022, this interaction between the public sector and small and medium-sized businesses will be significantly expanded so that entrepreneurs

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<sup>340</sup>Right there.

<sup>341</sup> Shuleiko told deputies of the Brest Regional Council about the main directions of import substitution [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/shulejkorasskazal-deputatam-brestkogo-oblsoveta-ob-osnovnyh-napravlenijah-importozameshenija-492478-2022/>

<sup>342</sup> Rusinovich, O. On the development of import substitution and production cooperation under sanctions / O. Rusinovich // [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/comments/view/o-razvitii-importozameshenija-i-proizvodstvennoj-kooperatsii-v-uslovijah-sanktsij-8115/>

can organically integrate into cooperative technological chains instead of foreign suppliers who have left the market. Work here is carried out in several directions at once.

In particular, in Belarus, an operational contact center has already begun to operate around the clock on the basis of the National Agency for Investment and Privatization. In addition, the Belarusian Fund for Financial Support of Entrepreneurs has created a nationwide contracting information resource in order to maximally facilitate the search for organizations interested in cooperative cooperation. Finally, another important element of all this work, according to the Belarusian Ministry of Economy, is bringing information “about this area of cooperation to every manufacturer, even the smallest one. <...> It is necessary to painstakingly “manually” promote this idea to every entrepreneur, explain the benefits and advantages of participation in cooperation chains <sup>343</sup>.” And such work is already underway in Belarus.

For example, in March 2022, the Minsk Automobile Plant, for which import substitution is an important factor of “strategic security contributing to the rhythmic operation of factories of the entire Belavtomaz holding and dozens of other enterprises in Belarus <sup>344</sup>,” held an exhibition-seminar for small and medium-sized businesses. More than one hundred representatives from 63 organizations that could be involved in cooperation with the flagship of the Belarusian automotive industry took part in this event. The company is confident that the development of new positions by entrepreneurs will, of course, require both time and investment, but the import-substituting products obtained as a result of this interaction will be in demand not only at the Minsk Automobile Plant, but also by other participants in the automotive market both in Belarus and in Russia, and in other countries of the Eurasian Economic Union.

All these examples suggest that in 2022, import substitution should become the most important task of every import-related enterprise in order to

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<sup>343</sup>Rusinovich, O. On the development of import substitution and production cooperation under sanctions / O. Rusinovich // [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/comments/view/o-razvitii-importozameschenija-i-proizvodstvennoj-kooperatsii-v-uslovijah-sanktsij-8115/>

<sup>344</sup>Kravchenko: sanctions restrictions will intensify work on import substitution of components for MAZ [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/kravchenko-sanktsionnye-ogranichenija-aktivizirujut-rabotu-po-importozamescheniju-komplektujuschih-492137-2022/>

be proactive. That is why all regions of Belarus have been given intense tasks in this regard today, which cannot be failed.

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## The goal is maximum realization of potential

2020 marked 15 years since the first trading on the Belarusian Universal Commodity Exchange (BUCE), when the Belarusian Unitary Enterprise Bellesexport and the Polish company International Paper Kwidzyn S. A. concluded the first exchange transaction for the sale of pulpwood in the amount of 189 thousand dollars. In total, over the past decade and a half, “3.2 million transactions worth a total of \$21 billion were made here, and the export volume amounted to \$5.8 billion<sup>345</sup>. ” These figures indicate that BUCE has already become one of the largest commodity exchanges in Eastern Europe, the main function of which is to assist Belarusian enterprises in exporting products and providing assistance to foreign companies to enter the Belarusian market.

This fact also says a lot. The market pricing mechanism and the high concentration of supply and demand on this exchange platform have allowed Belarusian trading participants to receive, starting in 2005, additional revenue and save nearly one and a half billion dollars. Let us remind you that companies accredited at BUCE participate in electronic trading for five product items: 1) metal products; 2) forest products; 3) agricultural products; 4) industrial and consumer goods; 5) promising exchange commodities. At the same time, round timber, ferrous metal products and oilseed meal are especially in demand on the domestic Belarusian market, and in foreign trade transactions their participants give preference to lumber and dairy products. These trends are characteristic of BUTB’s development in 2020.

At the beginning of December 2020, 24,815 companies were accredited here, including 4,904 from 63 countries. During the period from January to November, trade turnover increased by 12 percent and amounted to almost five billion Belarusian rubles. It is estimated that from one and a half to three thousand transactions are made here every day. In addition, the export of goods through the exchange demonstrates positive dynamics. “With a total amount of export transactions of Br 1 billion, last year’s result was exceeded by 5%. The leaders in sales on the foreign market were lumber, wood chips and agricultural products<sup>346</sup>. ” Interestingly, in October 2020, BUCE recorded a

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<sup>345</sup> Transactions worth \$21 billion were concluded at BUCE over 15 years [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/sdelki-na-21-mlrd-zakljucheny-na-butb-za-15-let-393174-2020>

<sup>346</sup> BUCE’s trade turnover in January–November increased by 12% [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/tovarooborot-butb-v-janvare-nojabre-vyros-na-12-420279-2020/>

record amount of export transactions for this year - \$46.5 million, more than half of which were wood processing products - lumber and chips. The largest buyers of lumber were companies from Germany, Latvia and Lithuania, and wood chips were mainly purchased by business entities from Lithuania, Poland and Estonia. Another characteristic detail is that “foreign buyers of cement also became noticeably more active in October. The amount of transactions with this product increased 4.3 times, to \$2.6 million. The main sales market was Russia<sup>347</sup>. ”

Note that cement is not the only position that attracts Russian business people to BUCE. In particular, their interest is high here in Belarusian dairy products, the export of which through the exchange in ten months of 2020 amounted to about thirty million dollars. At the same time, “about 80% of this amount came from transactions made with companies from Russia. Mostly milk powder, butter and whey powder were purchased. The sales structure was dominated by butter, the sales volume of which amounted to \$14.9 million<sup>348</sup>. ”

These facts quite eloquently indicate the potential of the Russian vector in the activities of BUCE, where as of December 1, 2020, 2,482 residents from Russia were accredited. And this indicator, apparently, is not final, since BUCE in 2020 took vigorous measures to develop new business contacts in the eastern direction of interaction, which are bringing results. Suffice it to say that since the beginning of 2020, 183 new Russian companies have been accredited on the exchange, most of which are active trading participants, which, of course, has a positive effect on the dynamics of exchange trade turnover. In particular, “supplies of ferrous rolled metal for the needs of Belarusian industrial enterprises increased by 68% over 11 months, and exports of milk powder to Russia increased by 53% <...>. Positive dynamics are also typical for rapeseed oil, flour, and construction materials<sup>349</sup>. ”

The Russian vector is characterized by the following detail: interest in BUCE is growing at a particularly rapid pace among business circles in those

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<sup>347</sup> Exports of goods through BUCE increased by 22% in October [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/eksport-tovarov-cherez-butb-v-oktjabre-vyros-na-22-415863-2020/>

<sup>348</sup> About 80% of dairy product exports through BUCE go to Russia [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/okolo-80-eksporta-molochnoj-produktsii-cherez-butb-prihoditsja-na-rossiju-414442-2020/>

<sup>349</sup> BUCE is counting on expanding cooperation with the Omsk region of Russia [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-rasschityvaet-na-rashshirenje-sotrudnichestva-s-omskoj-oblastju-rossii-420606-2020/>

regions of Russia that border on Belarus. Example - Smolensk region. Today, about four hundred Smolensk companies are accredited on the exchange - more than from any region of Russia. Moreover, many of them regularly participate in tenders for both import and export. But, as it turned out during a pilot webinar held in December 2020 by BUCE together with the Smolensk Export Support Center, even enterprises in this Russian region have not yet fully realized the potential of the exchange mechanism. But “among the promising areas are the sale of Russian wood raw materials, grain crops, feed additives, ferrous metal products, as well as the purchase of Belarusian meat and dairy products and construction materials. These product items can become the basis for long-term mutually beneficial cooperation<sup>350</sup>.” The “Digital Exchange of Contacts” held in the same December 2020 online conference showed that BUCE’s cooperation with more remote regions of Russia can develop in a similar mutually beneficial way. In particular, with enterprises of the Omsk region, for which the exchange can already in the short term become an effective tool for the sale and purchase of materials.

The fact that in the case of BUCE the distances between the seller and the buyer no longer play a decisive role is shown by the experience of developing contacts between the exchange and Egypt. Still in December 2020, BUCE reached an agreement with the Egyptian company Sama Al - Jazeera for Import and Export about organizing the export of lumber to this North African country through an exchange platform. The intrigue here is that until now “almost all imports of lumber products to Egypt are organized through intermediaries, and prices are sometimes very inflated<sup>351</sup>.” The use of the exchange platform will allow Egyptian companies to purchase wood products directly from manufacturers from Belarus in almost unlimited quantities and without intermediaries, and Belarusian exporters will be able to enter the very tempting Egyptian market, where the annual consumption of lumber is about five million cubic meters. The Egyptian side sees this as the optimal solution, since by participating in tenders, it gains access to a large number of specialized enterprises that are ready to supply the goods it needs on acceptable terms. The benefits of the Belarusian side are no less obvious. So the geography of mutually beneficial contacts at BUTB is developing today in a

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<sup>350</sup> . BUCE hopes to develop cooperation with the Smolensk region [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-rasschityvaet-na-razvitie-sotrudnichestva-so-smolenskoj-oblastju-421404-2020>

<sup>351</sup> It is planned to organize supplies of lumber to Egypt through BUCE [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/cherez-butb-planiruetsja-organizovat-postavki-pilomaterialov-v-egipet-419296-2020/>

very diverse and quite effective manner. And this is in the context of the coronavirus pandemic, which has had a negative impact on the economies of most countries on the planet and which requires all market participants to find new forms of working with business partners in order to ultimately achieve success.

BUTB is no exception in this regard. Back in May 2020, the first Belarusian-Canadian-British webinar or online seminar Timber : Doing was held here Business in Belarus , which included more than forty representatives of Canadian and British business circles. Note that 63 companies from the UK and 6 from Canada are already accredited to BUCE. A discussion of the specifics of exchange trading in forestry products and the key advantages of the Belarusian exchange platform, including control over the execution of transactions, transparent pricing, the absence of intermediaries, and the possibility of using trade finance instruments, took place in a video conference format, which led to the fact that “a number of British and Canadian companies expressed interest in accreditation at BUCE to participate in exchange trading in lumber and wood chips <sup>352</sup>. ”

Note that the online seminar format is also used by BUTB to train its promising business partners. To this end, in May 2020, the first training webinar was held here for specialists of the Uzbek Republican Commodity and Raw Materials Exchange, with which BUCE signed an agreement on strategic cooperation back in September 2018. Thanks to this modern format of interaction, Uzbek partners were able to become better acquainted not only with the structure and specifics of the Belarusian public procurement system, but also with the possibilities for the participation of foreign suppliers of goods, works, and services in procurement procedures. It must be assumed that the information received by the Uzbek side will not only contribute to intensifying interaction between Belarus and Uzbekistan in the field of electronic procurement, but will also “serve as a guide to action for Uzbek companies planning to operate in the Belarusian market <sup>353</sup>. ”

The topic of developing cooperation between BUCE and Chinese partners deserves a separate discussion in this context. The fact is that in

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<sup>352</sup> British and Canadian business are interested in purchasing Belarusian lumber at exchange auctions [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/britanskij-i-kanadskij-biznes-zainteresovan-v-zakupke-belorusskih-pilomaterialov-na-birzhevyyh-torgah-391809-2020>

<sup>353</sup> Belarus and Uzbekistan are developing cooperation in the field of electronic procurement [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-uzbekistan-razvivajut-vzaimodestvie-v-oblasti-elektronnyh-zakupok-390898-2020/>

December 2020, a meeting of the Belarusian-Chinese Intergovernmental Cooperation Committee was held, at which positive changes in trade interaction between the two countries were noted, associated with a change in the structure of Belarusian exports. Firstly, the product range of supplies from Belarus to China is expanding. Secondly, the dependence of bilateral trade on the export of Belarusian potash fertilizers to Chinese consumers is decreasing. And the main priorities for which it is planned to intensify joint actions to expand cooperation are now considered “the inclusion of Belarusian products in the state reserves of the PRC, the creation of joint production facilities in China for the processing of Belarusian raw materials, the simplification of trade procedures and the elimination of trade barriers, the optimization of financial settlements<sup>354</sup>. ” as well as the use of electronic trading platforms as a promising mechanism for bilateral trade, where the key role, apparently, will be given to BUCE, where at the beginning of December 2020 28 Chinese companies were already accredited, 13 of which came here this year.

Suffice it to say that over the three quarters of 2020, the amount of purchase transactions made by companies from China on the stock exchange increased more than ten (!) times and amounted to two million dollars. At the same time, wooden blanks and edged lumber prevailed in the commodity structure. Let us note that until recently, most of the Belarusian lumber products entered the Celestial Empire mainly through the Baltic countries, which contributed to its rise in price for the end consumer and reduced the foreign exchange earnings of Belarusian exporters. “Thanks to a joint project with Bellesexport and Beltamozhservice, dozens of Belarusian forestry enterprises were able to sell their products to the high-margin Chinese market without intermediaries<sup>355</sup>. ”

BUCE is confident that this sharp increase in interest in exchange trading on the part of Chinese business is due not only to the favorable price environment, but also to “convenient logistics that Belarusian exporters were able to offer. In particular, starting this year [2020], it became possible to buy lumber products on different delivery bases (multi-basis lots), which allowed Chinese companies to choose the most suitable goods acceptance point for them. In addition, delivery times have been significantly reduced due to the

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<sup>354</sup> Nikolai Snopkov: Belarus considers agricultural products as a new driver of exports to China [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <http://www.government.by/ru/content/9682>

<sup>355</sup> Belarusian lumber worth \$5.1 million has been sold to China through BUCE since the beginning of the year [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/beloruskie-pilomaterialy-na-51-mln-prodali-v-kitaj-cherez-butb-s-nachala-goda-400531-2020/>

use of rail transport as part of the Chinese government's "One Belt, One Road" initiative <sup>356</sup> . ”

After receiving such statistics, BUCE began to consider the possibility of introducing a separate trading session for the sale of forest products on the Chinese market, within the framework of which all lots put up for these auctions would be maximally adapted to Chinese consumers, and the necessary level of competition would be ensured through a dense concentration of buyers . Moreover, the increased activity of companies from China has become especially visible since October 2020, when they purchased more than one million dollars worth of lumber through the exchange. This was a consequence, among other things, of the simplification of the accreditation procedure at BUTB, in which it now takes no more than three days to complete all documents here. And “in January–November, woodworking products totaling over \$9 million were sold through the exchange platform in the Chinese direction <sup>357</sup> . ” A year earlier, this figure was only about two hundred thousand dollars. Based on this successful experience, BUCE held its first specialized trading session for the sale of lumber to China in mid-December 2020. Let's hope that this new form of work will open up new horizons for interaction with Chinese partners, since there is every reason to believe that in the near future the export range here will expand noticeably, especially due to agricultural products. After all, “in addition to the products of the timber industry, promising commodity products in demand on the Chinese market include rapeseed oil, beet pulp, meat, sugar and dairy products. The number of requests from Chinese companies interested in purchasing these products has recently increased significantly <sup>358</sup> . ”

In particular, interesting prospects in this “Chinese” context are opening up for rapeseed oil, the export of which through BUCE in the eight months of 2020 generally tripled in value terms. This is explained by the fact that rapeseed processing products are widely used both in the food industry and for the production of biodiesel fuel. Perhaps for this reason, the largest buyer of

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<sup>356</sup> The amount of transactions by companies from China at BUCE in January–September increased more than 10 times [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/bolee-chem-v-10-raz-vyrosla-summa-sdelok-kompanijam-iz-kitaja-na-butb-v-janvare-sentjabre-413129-2020/>

<sup>357</sup> BUCE will hold the first specialized export auction for the Chinese market on December 15 [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-provedet-pervye-spetsializirovannye-eksportnye-torgi-dlja-kitajskogo-rynka-15-dekabnja-420090-2020>

<sup>358</sup> In October, Chinese companies purchased lumber at BUCE for more than \$1 million [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/kitajskie-kompanii-v-oktjabre-zakupili-pilomaterialy-cherez-butb-na-summu-bolee-1-mln-417473-2020/>

these products at BUCE is Switzerland, with a volume of transactions from January to August 2020 amounting to almost six million dollars. “The top three key markets for Belarusian rapeseed oil also included Lithuania with a transaction amount of \$3.5 million and Estonia – \$3.3 million <sup>359</sup>. ”

As for China, where rapeseed oil is also in high demand, Canada has been its traditional partner for this import position. “However, due to the protracted trade conflict, supplies of these products have decreased significantly. The resulting shortage caused a record rise in prices. So now China is actively looking for alternative procurement channels, and Belarus could become one of them <sup>360</sup>. ” The Chinese trading company Shandong Liuqing decided to take advantage of this situation back in September 2020, declaring its intention to undergo the accreditation procedure and begin working at BUCE. At the same time, the company also expressed its readiness to invest in Belarusian forestry. She is also interested in the development of the Belarusian transport and logistics infrastructure. This is how we get a multi-purpose approach, which began with cooperation with BUTB.

Another important trend in the development of BUCE in 2020 is an increase in exports of metal products by a third - up to 27 million Belarusian rubles, where the bulk of transactions fell on ferrous and non-ferrous metals, as well as their scrap and waste. Suffice it to say that “in the first half of the year, companies from Germany, Canada, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia and Ukraine purchased Br 24 million worth of these products, exceeding the 2019 figure by 20% <sup>361</sup>. ” During the same period, a joint project with the Belarusian Metallurgical Plant was actively developed at BUCE, thanks to which reinforcing bars worth three million Belarusian rubles were sold to the Polish market. In the future, the exchange plans to expand the product range of exports of metal products by developing new promising markets in order to increase the share of this section in export transactions from five to twenty percent in the next five years.

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<sup>359</sup> The export of rapeseed oil through BUCE has increased 3 times, the largest buyer is Switzerland [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/eksport-rapsovogo-masla-cherez-butb-vyros-v-3-raza-krupnejshij-pokupatel-shvejtsarija-406915-2020/>

<sup>360</sup> . Belarusian pallet boards and rapeseed oil will be exported to China through BUCE [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belorussskuju-palletnuju-dosku-i-rapsovoe-maslo-budut-eksportirovat-v-kitaj-cherez-butb-408061-2020/>

<sup>361</sup> Exports of metal products through BUCE in the first half of the year increased by 33% [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/eksport-metalloproduksii-cherez-butb-vi-polugodii-vyros-na-33-399873-2020/>

In this regard, BUCE's plans to introduce other Belarusian enterprises to foreign markets are of great interest. In particular, it is planned to combine the efforts of the exchange to achieve this goal with the Miory Metal Rolling Plant, an innovative industrial enterprise in the Vitebsk region with a significant amount of foreign investment, which, after reaching its designed capacity, will be able to produce about 240 thousand tons of tinplate per year. Note that similar products in the post-Soviet space are produced only by the Magnitogorsk Iron and Steel Works in Russia and the ArcelorMittal Temirtau joint-stock company in Kazakhstan. For a Belarusian export-oriented enterprise, "Scandinavia is of greatest interest as a promising sales market <...>. Primarily due to the favorable price environment and consistently high demand for tinplate <sup>362</sup>. " Let us remind you that tinplate is widely used in the manufacture of containers for food and chemical products. At the same time, in Miory they plan to produce ultra-thin sheet metal with a thickness of 0.1 mm. With the help of BUCE, the company hopes to find not only new buyers and eventually establish regular supplies of tinplate to Europe, but also to decide on partners for raw materials, since the exchange trading mechanism is effective in both directions - both when exporting finished products and when purchasing raw materials.

All these facts indicate that the pace of development of BUCE today is such that it can and should soon become a driver of e-commerce in the Republic of Belarus, where they believe that in order to ensure sustainable development and competitiveness of the Belarusian state on the world stage, "it is necessary to create your own digital platforms in key sectors of the economy, so that foreign businesses, coming to the Belarusian market, do not impose their technological solutions, but integrate into the country's digital infrastructure <sup>363</sup>. " In this regard, we can say with confidence: the first fifteen years of activity of the Belarusian Universal Commodity Exchange are evidence that a solid foundation has been laid here for solving the assigned tasks.

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<sup>362</sup> BUTB and the Miory Metal Rolling Plant plan to jointly develop the export of tinplate [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-i-miorskij-metalloprokatnyj-zavod-planirujut-sovmestno-razvivat-eksport-beloj-zhesti-400676-2020/>

<sup>363</sup> BUCE should become a driver of e-commerce in the country - Koltovich [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-dolzha-stat-drajverom-elektronnoj-torgovi-v-strane-koltovich-401009-2020>

## Features of multi-vector partnership

Deepening integration with the Russian Federation in the next five years will remain the most important task of the Belarusian government in terms of developing foreign economic activity and international cooperation. For this purpose, it is envisaged to implement plans for joint activities in economic sectors, as well as “on trade, economic, scientific, technical and socio-cultural cooperation with the regions of the Russian Federation<sup>364</sup>. ” And today in our country many market participants are taking active measures to update activities in this direction. Among them is the Belarusian Universal Commodity Exchange (BUCE), for which the Russian vector of interaction has serious potential.

Let us recall that as of December 1, 2020, BUTB’s services were used by 2,482 residents from Russia. And this despite the fact that at the same time “24,815 companies were accredited here, including 4,904 from 63 countries<sup>365</sup>. ” But the experience of interaction with Russian partners in 2020 showed that even in the regions adjacent to Belarus - Smolensk, Bryansk, Pskov regions - they do not yet fully realize the opportunities that this e-commerce mechanism opens up. When this idea changes for the better, the result is not long in coming. A good example in this context is the record export sales of cement in January 2021 at BUTB, which immediately increased tenfold - to \$5.3 million. This growth was “due to increased attention to the exchange platform on the part of Russian trading and construction companies <...>. After Ukraine introduced an anti-dumping duty and essentially closed its market for Belarusian cement, Russia became a priority destination<sup>366</sup>. ” And now at least eight Russian companies regularly participate in these export trades for cement at BUCE.

Perhaps for this reason, with the advent of 2021, BUTB has seriously intensified its actions in the Russian direction. Thus, in February, an agreement was reached here with the Trade Representation of the Russian Federation in Belarus on joint actions to increase trade turnover between the Belarusian and

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<sup>364</sup> Program of activities of the Government of the Republic of Belarus for the period until 2025. – Minsk, 2020. – C . 44.

<sup>365</sup> Zalesky, B.L. A promising mechanism for electronic commerce on the way to maximum realization of potential / B.L. Zalesky // Social and humanitarian studies. – 2020. – No. 5. – P. 20.

<sup>366</sup> Cement exports through BUCE increased 10 times in January [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/eksport-tsementa-cherez-butb-v-janvare-vyros-v-10-raz-428027-2021/>

Russian regions. To achieve this, it is expected to fully utilize the business contacts of the trade mission in order to inform Russian business about the opportunities of BUCE as an effective platform for carrying out trade and procurement activities. In addition, the parties will join efforts to organize and conduct events aimed at enhancing interaction between business entities of Belarus and Russia, so that BUCE ultimately becomes the primary entry point to the Belarusian market for all representatives of Russian business. After all, registration on this trading platform “automatically opens access to 25 thousand companies from 64 countries, which, by the way, is actively used by foreign participants. A recent example is a company from the Kaliningrad region, which sold rapeseed oil worth over 1 million euros through our trading platform. The buyer was a Lithuanian company <sup>367</sup>. ” Indeed, this work to expand business contacts with Russian regions is already beginning to yield results. In just one week of February 2021, eight companies from Russia were accredited to BUTB. This indicates that strengthening cooperation with Russian regions has actually become one of BUCE’s priorities this year, in order to achieve which a wide variety of interaction tools are used.

Thus, in the first ten days of February 2021, the possibilities of increasing mutual trade turnover between Belarus and Udmurtia were discussed at an online conference with the participation of representatives of the government of this Russian region. Note that in 2020, “the trade turnover between Belarus and Udmurtia amounted to \$184.5 million, or 112.5% of the 2019 level <sup>368</sup>. ” During the discussion, the parties agreed that even these relatively good indicators can be significantly improved through the implementation of exchange trading, which can become an effective tool for increasing volumes and expanding the range of goods in demand in the Belarusian and Udmurt markets. If it is fate that over the past few years Udmurtia has become one of the most export-oriented regions of Russia and today ranks first in the neighboring country in terms of growth rates of non-energy exports, then we can be sure that in the near future representatives of Udmurt business will become regular participants in trading at BUCE.

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<sup>367</sup> BUCE and the Trade Representation of the Russian Federation intend to help increase trade turnover [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-i-torgovoe-predstavitelstvo-rf-namereny-sodejstvovat-uvlicheniju-tovarooborota-428409-2021/>

<sup>368</sup> Belarus and Udmurtia intend to increase trade turnover through more active use of exchange trading [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-udmurtija-namereny-uvlichit-tovarooborot-za-schet-bolee-aktivnogo-ispolzovanija-birzhevoj-427781-2021/>

In the second decade of February 2021, an online conference was held dedicated to expanding cooperation between BUCE and the business community of the Volgograd region. The participants in this discussion noted the steady trend observed since the end of 2020 towards an increase in exchange trading residents from Russia. And this is not only the export of Belarusian goods to the Russian market and the purchase of Russian products by Belarusian enterprises, but also the increasing frequency of transit transactions between companies from Russia and third countries. That is, the exchange is used as a tool for insuring foreign trade risks <sup>369</sup>. ” And this, of course, expands its capabilities in terms of attracting business partners, among which, presumably, many more business representatives from the Volgograd region will soon appear.

While developing partnerships with the regions of the Russian Federation, BUCE simultaneously plans to seriously expand cooperation with business circles of European countries in 2021 due to the huge and as yet unrealized potential in this partnership vector. This can be judged based on data on exchange trading in January 2021, according to the results of which the export of lumber through BUCE immediately increased by 27 percent and exceeded \$30 million. At the same time, “the main markets were Germany, Latvia and Lithuania. Companies from these countries purchased Belarusian lumber products for a total amount of \$24.4 million <sup>370</sup>. ” The largest buyers of this type of product also included representatives of such European countries as Great Britain, the Netherlands, Poland, Slovakia and Estonia, where wooden blanks for export were in greatest demand. Suffice it to say that during the first export exchange trading at BUCE in 2021, more than one and a half million wooden household stakes worth more than one million euros were sold to the UK alone, which immediately exceeded the figure for exports to this country in 2020. An important detail: previously, these products were supplied to the British market in much smaller volumes and mainly through intermediaries in the Baltic countries. The results of this January trading session clearly confirmed the high export potential of wood products produced in our country, as well as the trend observed last year, when “the amount of exchange transactions for the export of rounded and debarked wood products in 2020

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<sup>369</sup> BUCE is counting on expanding cooperation with the business community of the Volgograd region [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-rasschityvaet-na-rashshirenie-sotrudnichestva-s-delovymi-krugami-volgogradskoj-oblasti-429055-2021/>

<sup>370</sup> In January, lumber exports through BUCE increased by 27% [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/v-janvare-eksport-pilomaterialov-cherez-butb-vyrosh-na-27-429846-2021/>

amounted to 4.2 million euros . The main markets were Germany, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland <sup>371</sup> . "

Planning to expand the geography of sales of the same woodworking products in the European vector in 2021, BUCE is already exploring the possibility of exporting Belarusian lumber, for example, to France. Thus, in February 2021, they outlined prospects for using the mechanism of exchange trading with the French importer of wood - Bois Import S.A. The fact is that this company has been purchasing lumber, including Belarusian, from the Baltic countries for a long time. But the coronavirus pandemic has made adjustments to this situation, forcing us to look for alternative markets. This is how Belarus came to the attention of French buyers, where already about half of all lumber produced - about two million cubic meters - is sold for export through the mechanism of exchange trading. It is clear that considerable opportunities are opening up for importers from France in this regard. Moreover, the French company was also asked "not to limit itself to lumber, but to consider the possibility of purchasing other woodworking products, including wood pellets. In 2020, six new pellet plants were built and put into operation in Belarus. Six more are planned to be built this year [2021] <sup>372</sup>. As a result, the annual export volume from Belarus could reach about 250 thousand tons of pellets.

The fact that the possibilities of sales of Belarusian fuel granules or pellets through BUCE in 2021 to European countries can seriously increase can be judged by the interest that the Nordic online conference aroused among European businessmen Pellets Conference 2021, organized by the Swedish bioenergy association Svebio at the end of January 2021. The participants of this event were leading experts in the field of bioenergy and biofuel producers from the UK, Germany, Denmark, Lithuania, Poland, France and Sweden. What brought them to this conference was the fact that today in the countries of the European Union there is a steady increase in demand for pellets. This, in turn, contributes not only to an increase in the own production capacity of European manufacturers, but also to the import of such products from other countries, including from Belarus. At the same time, BUCE is confident that

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<sup>371</sup> A British company bought woodworking products through BUTB for more than 1 million euros [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/britanskaja-kompanija-kupila-cherez-butb-produktsiju-derevoobrabotki-bolee-chem-na-1-mln-evro-424714-2021/>

<sup>372</sup> BUCE is exploring the possibility of exporting Belarusian lumber to France [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-prorabatyvaet-vozmozhnost-eksporta-belorusskih-pilomaterialov-vo-frantsiju-430040-2021>

“given the low capacity of the domestic market, almost the entire volume of pellets produced in Belarus can be supplied abroad, which will make our country one of the largest exporters in the region <sup>373</sup>. ” After all, the use of the BUCE platform by European companies will allow them to buy any required volume of products directly from Belarusian manufacturers, both under one-time and annual contracts. The demand for this type of e-commerce is evidenced by statistics from 2020, when lumber alone was sold for \$260 million, and companies from 30 countries acted as buyers.

Another type of product that is in demand in European countries is vegetable oils and feed additives, the export of which over the 10 months of 2020 increased 2.3 times and reached \$26 million, providing more than 40 percent of agricultural exports through BUCE. “The growth of export supplies was facilitated by the increased demand for Belarusian vegetable oils in the Baltic countries: oilseed processing products were sold there for \$14.7 million. At the same time, Lithuania became the leader in purchases with a transaction amount of \$6.2 million <sup>374</sup>. ” Then, in just a month and a half, almost two million dollars worth of beet pulp and molasses were sold through BUCE, the main buyers of which were, again, the countries of the European Union. Finally, in January 2021, rapeseed oil exports through BUTB increased almost tenfold, “reaching \$8.4 million <sup>375</sup>. ” And here among the leaders in terms of the amount of transactions are Latvia, Estonia and Switzerland. And the very dynamics of sales growth in the European direction suggests that the possibilities for expanding Belarusian exports on this external track are far from exhausted.

Finally, another priority task for BUCE’s development in 2021 is to increase the share in the exchange trade turnover of companies from the “far arc” countries - Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America. This is explained by the significant potential that exists in interaction with these partners, and the successful implementation of which promises considerable benefits for both Belarusian exporters and foreign importers. Among the “far arc” countries, the development of business contacts with representatives of

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<sup>373</sup> BUCE is ready to promote the export of fuel pellets to Northern Europe [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-gotova-sodejstvovat-eksportu-toplivnyh-granul-v-severnuju-evropu-426052-2021/>

<sup>374</sup> Vegetable oils and feed additives provided more than 40% of agricultural exports through BUCE [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/rastitelnye-masla-i-kormovye-dobavki-obespechili-bolee-40-eksporta-selhozproduktov-415013-2020/>

<sup>375</sup> Exports of rapeseed oil through BUCE increased almost 10 times in January [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/eksport-rapsovogo-masla-cherez-butb-v-janvare-vyros-pochti-v-10-raz-426697-2021/>

which is particularly intensive today at BUCE, one should name, first of all, the People's Republic of China. Suffice it to say that "in terms of growth rates in the volume of exchange transactions, China, based on the results of the first two months [of 2021], has surpassed almost all the main markets with which Belarus currently conducts exchange trading <sup>376</sup>."

In this context, it is very significant that the 5,000th foreign company accredited to participate in trading at BUCE at the beginning of March 2021 was the Chinese trading and manufacturing enterprise Wenzhou Ruijun Steel Co. Ltd, which also became the 36th company from China on the stock exchange. The company intends to use this exchange platform to supply rolled metal and other ferrous metal products to Belarus. At the initial stage, this will be the sale of pipe products at auction, and then, depending on sales dynamics and market conditions, the product range will gradually expand. Perhaps, approximately the same as what happens at BUTB with woodworking products.

Let us remind you that special trading sessions for export sales of lumber with delivery in containers to the destination in the Chinese market have been held at BUCE since December 2020. "As a result, the volume of supplies of domestic lumber products to China increased significantly and, based on the results of January-February, amounted to almost \$5 million in monetary terms <sup>377</sup>." This is largely facilitated by the fact that almost every month two or three new Chinese companies are added to the forest products trades at BUCE. This has a positive effect on the formation of a highly competitive environment here and allows woodworkers from Belarus to sell lumber on more favorable terms. In particular, at the first export exchange trading in forest products for the Chinese market in January 2021, more than 11 thousand cubic meters of lumber were sold for almost two and a half million dollars. Due to rising prices during the trading session, exporters from Belarus received additional revenue exceeding \$90 thousand. And "the entire volume of lumber products put up for sale was purchased with delivery to Qingdao, the largest seaport in Shandong Province. This increases the attractiveness of Belarusian goods for buyers from

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<sup>376</sup> A 5,000-strong non-resident company was accredited to BUCE [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/na-butb-akkreditovalas-5-tysjachnaja-kompanija-nerezident-431246-2021/>

<sup>377</sup> Belarusian lumber worth \$2.6 million was sold to China through BUCE [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/beloruskie-pilomaterialy-na-26-mln-prodany-v-kitaj-cherez-butb-431434-2021/>

China, and domestic exporters have the opportunity to expand their sales geography and increase revenue<sup>378</sup>. ”

It is also important in terms of the development of the Chinese vector at BUCE that in 2021 export deals started here on items that are promising for Chinese buyers, such as rapeseed oil, milk powder and sugar. As for rapeseed oil, immediately after the start of its supply to the Chinese market through the exchange platform, based on the results of the first two trading sessions, transactions were completed for a total amount of about one and a half million dollars. This allowed China to take second place in terms of the amount of transactions with these products, displacing the leaders of the entire 2020 - Latvia, Estonia and Switzerland. At the same time, prerequisites appeared for a further significant increase in other export indicators. “First of all, this is an increase in the number of companies from China accredited on the exchange<sup>379</sup>,” which helps to increase the level of competition during trading.

In January 2021, the first batch of milk powder was sold to the Chinese market through BUCE. “Two lots with a volume of 300 and 100 tons were put up for exchange trading. The total amount of transactions completed at the end of the trading session amounted to \$940 thousand.”<sup>380</sup>. This happened after world food prices began to rise in the second half of 2020, which significantly increased the attractiveness of Belarusian dairy products not only in China, but also in other “far arc” countries. This, in particular, is evidenced by the return of one of the world’s largest agricultural traders, the Singaporean company Olam, to BUCE at the end of 2020 International . And it says that the prospects for the export of dairy products from Belarus to the Asian continent through the mechanism of exchange trading are opening up very significant today.

Another “far arc” country, whose representatives are beginning to actively work for BUTB, is Egypt. At the beginning of March 2021, the first deal to export Belarusian goods to this North African country was made by the Egyptian company Sama Al - Jazeera for Import and Export , which purchased a trial batch of Belarusian lumber. The company’s strategic goal is “to become

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<sup>378</sup> Belarusian lumber worth \$2.4 million was sold to China at exchange auctions [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/beloruskie-pilomaterialy-na-24-mln-prodany-v-kitaj-na-birzhevyh-torgah-425850-2021/>

<sup>379</sup> Exports of rapeseed oil through BUCE increased almost 10 times in January [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/eksport-rapsovogo-masla-cherez-butb-v-janvare-vyros-pochti-v-10-raz-426697-2021/>

<sup>380</sup> A batch of milk powder was sold to China for the first time through the exchange [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/partiju-suhogo-moloka-vpervye-prodali-v-kitaj-cherez-birzhu-424904-2021/>

the largest importer of Belarusian forest products to Egypt, and in the future, other countries of North Africa. The first step in this direction has already been taken<sup>381</sup>. " Her next step in cooperation with BUCE may be the role of a stock broker on this electronic trading platform. And then the market of almost the entire African continent can sparkle with, as they say, new colors for Belarusian manufacturers-exporters. With the help of such an export mechanism as the Belarusian Universal Commodity Exchange.

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<sup>381</sup> The first transaction with a company from Egypt was made at BUTB [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/pervuju-sdelku-s-kompaniej-iz-egipta-sovershili-na-butb-431073-2021>

## The main priority is multi-vector

The Belarusian Universal Commodity Exchange (BUCE) demonstrates high growth rates of export transactions in 2021, where in the first half of the year their volume increased by 80 percent and amounted to \$369 million. At the same time, “Belarusian goods were purchased through BUCE by companies from 29 countries. The top five largest sales markets included Lithuania, Germany, Latvia, Estonia and Russia<sup>382</sup>. ” For Lithuania, the main export items were lumber, wood chips and oilseed processing products. Just \$101 million. German firms purchased lumber worth \$64 million through BUTB and \$1 million worth of farm stakes, milk powder and technical casein. Latvia was characterized by the purchase of Belarusian lumber, wooden poles and stakes, rapeseed oil and scrap ferrous and non-ferrous metals – worth \$57 million. As for Russia, there has been a significant increase in exports for such product items as: cement - 6 times - up to 10.7 million dollars, butter - 61 (!) times - up to 10 million dollars, milk powder - 7 times – up to 6.6 million dollars. In total, as of July 1, 2021, 300 new foreign companies were accredited at BUCE in the first half of the year, and their total number was 5218.

There was an increase in transactions through the Belarusian exchange platform and in a number of other countries, among which Ukraine should be mentioned. The number of its representatives at BUCE in the first half of 2021 increased to 326. “Exchange trade turnover with Ukraine also increased significantly: following the results of six months, it reached \$24.6 million, which is 58% more than for the same period in 2020.<sup>383</sup>” And already in August 2021, the first transaction was made here to export milk powder to the Ukrainian market - a trial batch of 40 tons worth 108 thousand dollars. Previously, bidders from this country were more interested in scrap metals, building materials, flour, and plant seeds.

Another country that should be mentioned in this context is Poland, to whose market in the first half of 2021, almost four times more rebars produced by BMZ OJSC, the management company of the BMK holding, were shipped than in six months 2020 - almost four and a half million dollars. This result

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<sup>382</sup> Exports of goods through BUCE in the first half of the year increased by 80% [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/eksport-tovarov-cherez-butb-vi-polugodii-vyros-na-80-451881-2021/>

<sup>383</sup> BUCE conducted the first deal to export milk powder to Ukraine [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-provela-pervuju-sdelku-po-eksportu-suhogomoloka-v-ukrainu-453373-2021/>

was the result of very painstaking work with this market. After all, not every Polish company was ready to work on the terms of full advance payment and deferred delivery. But now, in each trading session at BUCE, “not two or three Polish importers participate, as was the case at the very beginning, but no less than ten. Thus, firstly, a high level of competition during bidding is ensured, and secondly, sales volumes of Belarusian valves to Poland are steadily growing<sup>384</sup>. ”

Energetic steps are being taken at BUCE to increase the volume of sales of Belarusian goods to China. Currently, 48 Chinese participants – small and medium-sized businesses – are accredited on this exchange platform. In July 2021, BUCE agreed on the development of cooperation with the BR-Consult Unitary Enterprise, a subsidiary of the Development Bank of the Republic of Belarus, which specializes in the implementation of export-oriented investment projects. The essence of the agreements reached is to attract to exchange trading one of the largest shareholders of the Chinese-Belarusian industrial park “Great Stone” - the Chinese corporation China Merchants Group, whose arrival at BUCE would significantly expand the “opportunities for supplying Belarusian products to China. Moreover, this applies not only to lumber, but to almost the entire export range, including rapeseed oil, dairy products, meat, and semi-finished leather products<sup>385</sup>. ”

Another interesting trend related to Chinese companies accredited at BUCE emerged in July 2021. Operating on the Belarusian exchange platform since May 2020, and in April 2021 receiving the status of a non-resident exchange broker here, Kangkai is a large importer of lumber from China. Zhiguan ( Heze ) Industrial Development announced its intention to invest in Belarusian woodworking and develop its business in our country in order to “not only increase the volume of purchases of lumber products, but also create its own production in Belarus<sup>386</sup>. ” At the same time, the company intends to purchase raw materials and sell the finished product exclusively through BUCE.

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<sup>384</sup> BUCE increased exports of BMZ products to Poland almost 4 times [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-pochti-v-4-raza-narastila-eksport-produktsii-bmz-v-polshu-449067-2021/>

<sup>385</sup> BUCE and the Development Bank intend to develop cooperation in the field of exports and investments [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-i-bank-razvitiya-namereny-razvivat-sotrudnichestvo-v-sfere-eksporta-i-investitsij-452308-2021/>

<sup>386</sup> A large Chinese importer of lumber plans to invest in Belarusian wood processing [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/krupnyj-kitajskij-importer-pilomaterialov-planiruet-investirovat-v-belorusskuju-derevoobrabotku-451402-2021/>

Regarding the Chinese vector, we note that the market of this country at BUCE is considered one of the most promising. Almost 50 Chinese companies are already accredited on the exchange, as noted above, more than half of which regularly participate in trading. “In addition, special trading sessions are held every two weeks for the sale of lumber in China <sup>387</sup>. ” All this together contributes to the fact that in the first half of 2021, BUCE’s trade turnover with Chinese partners exceeded \$25 million, which is almost twice as much as for the entire 2020. To further increase the attractiveness of the exchange platform for clients from China, BUCE decided to provide them with the opportunity to make all necessary payments in yuan. This will affect settlements under exchange contracts, payment of exchange fees and transfer of deposits. And in general, it will simplify the financial side of exchange activities for Chinese participants.

If we talk about the Asian vector of BUCE’s activities, let us recall this fact: in June 2021, the first company from the Republic of Korea, Nam , was accredited here to participate in bidding. Chang Co. Ltd. , which is a major supplier of forest products to the Korean market, and also has its own production facilities and an extensive warehouse network. At BUCE, she plans to purchase lumber and fuel pellets produced in Belarus. “Delivery of goods is planned to the port of Busan using rail and sea transport <sup>388</sup>. ” It is interesting that with the advent of this Korean participant, the geography of exchange trading at BUCE began to cover 65 countries.

A little earlier - in March 2021 - a large distributor of furniture and finishing materials - Global - became the first broker of BUCE in Israel Edge Sourcing Ltd , whose plans include “organizing direct supplies of Belarusian lumber to the Israeli market, where today there is an increased demand for these products <sup>389</sup>. ” And in the future we are talking about expanding the range of goods purchased through BUCE. In particular, this can happen due to rolled reinforcing bars produced by the Belarusian Metallurgical Plant. Note that at the end of March 2021, over 50 brokerage companies were already accredited

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<sup>387</sup> The ability to make payments in Chinese yuan will appear on BUTB [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/vozmozhnost-proizvodit-raschety-v-kitajskih-juanjah-pojavitsja-na-butb-449604-2021/>

<sup>388</sup> BUCE organizes supplies of Belarusian products to the Republic of Korea [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-organizuet-postavki-belorusskoj-lesoprodukcii-v-respubliku-koreja-444466-2021/>

<sup>389</sup> BUCE accredited the first broker in Israel [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-akkreditovala-pervogo-brokera-v-izraile-433901-2021/>

at BUCE, including from Germany, China, Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, Russia, and Estonia.

Along with China, one of the fastest growing export destinations for BUCE in 2021 is a European country like the UK. According to the results of the first half of the year, supplies of Belarusian lumber to the British market through the exchange platform increased immediately by 11(!) times, exceeding \$12 million, and wooden stakes by 16(!) times, to \$3.7 million. Back in April 2021, regular sales to this European country of the wet-blue tanned semi-finished product, which is produced by Belarusian tanneries, began here. And in just a couple of months, the amount of transactions for this product item exceeded 740 thousand dollars. Apparently, this is only the beginning of very dynamic and promising growth. And at the end of June 2021, a special trading session was organized at BUCE, which became “the first experience in selling forest products to the British market in the form of complex multi-basis lots<sup>390</sup>.” As a result of these auctions, almost five thousand cubic meters of lumber were sold to Great Britain for two and a half million dollars.

In the same June 2021, the first transaction for the sale of Belarusian leather products to Italy was registered at BUCE. At the export auction of leather raw materials, “an Italian company purchased a trial batch of wet-blue tanned semi-finished product worth \$35 thousand.”<sup>391</sup> And there is every reason to believe that this pilot deal will become the starting point for long-term cooperation.

In 2021, BUCE specialists also began a serious study of the African vector of activity. In particular, its Egyptian direction. And already in March, “the first deal to export Belarusian goods to this North African country was made by the Egyptian company Sama Al - Jazeera for Import and Export , which purchased a trial batch of Belarusian lumber<sup>392</sup>.” And the goods were safely delivered to the end consumer. And in June 2021, a delegation of Egyptian business circles visited BUCE in order to study the Belarusian experience of exchange trading and use it as the basis for the creation of the first Egyptian exchange. Business partners from this North African country

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<sup>390</sup> Belarusian lumber worth \$2.5 million was sold to the UK at exchange auctions [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/beloruskie-pilomaterialy-na-25-mln-prodali-v-velikobritaniju-na-birzhevyh-torgah-448128-2021/>

<sup>391</sup> Italy began to buy Belarusian leather products at BUTB [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/italija-nachala-pokupat-belorussskuju-kozhevennuju-produktsiju-na-butb-444946-2021/>

<sup>392</sup> Zalesky, B. To move forward. Collection articles / B. Zalesky . – LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2021. – P . 266.

especially carefully studied the features of exchange trading in agricultural products, “since pilot trading at the first commodity exchange in Egypt is planned to be carried out specifically for this group of goods<sup>393</sup>. ” In the future, the parties plan to cooperate in other areas, including supplies of Belarusian lumber, construction materials and industrial goods to the north African continent. In the meantime, information about the possibilities of the Belarusian exchange platform has already been included in the materials of events held by the Federation of Egyptian Chambers of Commerce.

Another trend, which very eloquently shows that the Belarusian exchange platform is gradually gaining popularity among representatives of foreign businesses, for whom minimizing risks is of paramount importance, is the rapid growth - three and a half times in the first half of 2021 - in the number of transit transactions made by foreign companies. The peculiarity of these transactions is that their participants are non-residents of Belarus - companies from Latvia, Lithuania, Russia, Poland, Estonia. An important detail: if in 2020 these transactions concerned only industrial and consumer goods, now they are registered in almost all areas available at BUCE. In particular, “Russian companies actively supplied softwood lumber to the Baltic countries and Poland. As a result, 77 transit transactions worth \$968 thousand were registered in the first half of the year.”<sup>394</sup>. And in the industrial and consumer goods section, the subjects of 76 transactions were fabrics, lighting equipment, furniture, motor oil - for a total of \$2.3 million. And there is every reason to believe that these figures will only increase in the future.

Speaking about the Russian vector, and as of June 1, 2021, 2,589 business entities from Russia were accredited at BUCE, it should be emphasized that intensifying work with companies from the regions has become one of the main trends in BUCE’s interaction with the Russian Federation in the first half of 2021. In total, the amount of exchange transactions between Russian and Belarusian business entities during this period increased 1.8 times and amounted to \$63 million. This is largely due to the fact that in 2021, 126 new participants from Russia came to BUTB. And the largest volume of transactions falls on representatives of the Leningrad,

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<sup>393</sup> Egyptian business sees significant potential in the development of exchange trade with Belarus [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/egipetskij-biznes-vidit-znachitelnyj-potentsial-v-razvicii-birzhevoj-torgovli-s-belarusju-444144-2021/>

<sup>394</sup> The amount of transit transactions at BUCE has increased 3.5 times since the beginning of the year [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/summa-tranzitnyh-sdelok-na-butb-s-nachala-goda-vyrosla-v-35-raza-452802-2021/>

Moscow and Smolensk regions. “The leadership of the Leningrad region is due, on the one hand, to significant volumes of purchases of Belarusian cement and dairy products, and on the other, to the supply of coal for the needs of Belarusian enterprises<sup>395</sup>. ” Joining the leaders are the Novosibirsk region, the largest buyer of Belarusian milk powder, and the Ivanovo region, the leader in exchange purchases of butter in Belarus.

It is quite possible that this list will include other regions of Russia in 2021. In particular, for the Voronezh region, BUCE plans to provide a single sales and procurement channel for agricultural producers, since it is the products of the agro-industrial complex that have every chance of becoming a driver of exchange trade with this Russian region. The fact is that “oilseed meal, feed additives, cereals and grains are always in demand on the Belarusian market, and the Voronezh region is one of the leaders in this segment<sup>396</sup>. ” On the other hand, according to the results of the first half of 2021, the trade turnover of agricultural products at BUCE has already increased by 70 percent, and Belarusian exports have increased almost fourfold, exceeding \$60 million.

As for the Yaroslavl region, it is planned to organize the export of Belarusian butter and milk powder there through the BUTB platform. This became known in July 2021, when “the management of one of the leading producers of fermented milk products and ice cream in the Yaroslavl region expressed interest in purchasing large volumes of butter and skimmed milk powder at exchange auctions to meet the company’s needs for high-quality raw materials<sup>397</sup>. ” At the same time, we are also talking about using the BUCE platform to sell Yaroslavl products to China using the mechanism of transit transactions.

The fact that the use of the exchange mechanism can give a powerful impetus to the development of trade and economic cooperation between Belarus and the Pskov region, the volume of which significantly decreased in 2020, was discussed at a business forum at the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of this Russian region in June 2021. The attention of its participants

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<sup>395</sup> Exchange trade turnover between Belarus and Russia in the first half of the year increased 2 times [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/birzhevoj-tovarooborot-belarusi-i-rossii-za-i-polugodie-vyros-v-2-raza-450765-2021/>

<sup>396</sup> BUCE will provide a single sales and procurement channel for agricultural producers in Belarus and the Voronezh region [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-obespechit-edinij-kanal-sbyta-i-zakupok-dlja-selhozproizvoditelej-belarusi-i-voronezhskoj-oblasti-450418-2021/>

<sup>397</sup> BUCE plans to develop exchange trade in dairy products with the Yaroslavl region [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-planiruet-razvivat-birzheviju-torgovlju-molochnoj-produktsiej-s-jaroslavskoj-oblastju-450278-2021/>

was focused not only on the supply of products from Pskov enterprises to the Belarusian market, but also to third countries through transit transactions. After all, this is now one of the most popular instruments among Russian exchange trading participants. And agreements have already been reached on the sale through BUCE of “a wide range of lumber, oil seeds and their processed products, feed additives, electrical equipment, BOPET films and polyester produced by Pskov companies<sup>398</sup>. ”

BUCE and the St. Petersburg Chamber of Commerce and Industry agreed to unite efforts to develop Belarusian-Russian trade in June 2021. Let us recall that in 2020, Belarus’ trade turnover with St. Petersburg and the Leningrad region “came very close to \$2 billion, and this despite the negative consequences of the pandemic<sup>399</sup>. ” The fact that interest in business interaction between the parties continues to grow is evidenced by the BUCE seminar for the business community of St. Petersburg, held in June 2021, which was attended by heads of 30 companies representing various sectors of the economy, including the production of rolled metal and electrical products, mechanical engineering, wholesale trade in agricultural products, supply of equipment for railways and agricultural enterprises.

The Oryol region also sees great potential for interaction with BUCE in 2021. This is evidenced by the agreements reached in June 2021 and related to the organization of “supplies of cable and wire products, lifting equipment and solid-state relays to Belarus<sup>400</sup>. ” Let us note that for this Russian region, Belarusian business entities, together with Latvian and Kazakh ones, are among the three main trade and economic partners. In 2020, Oryol region enterprises supplied almost \$41 million worth of products to the Belarusian market. BUCE will provide them with an additional sales channel and the opportunity to directly access the largest Belarusian consumers.

The intensification of exchange trade with the Kaliningrad region was discussed at a seminar held at the end of June 2021, which was attended by representatives of small and medium-sized businesses in this Russian region

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<sup>398</sup> BUCE will expand cooperation with the Pskov region [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-rasshirjaet-sotrudnichestvo-s-pskovskoj-oblastiju-445547-2021/>

<sup>399</sup> BUCE and the St. Petersburg Chamber of Commerce and Industry agreed on cooperation [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-i-sankt-peterburgskaja-torgovo-promyshlennaja-palata-dogovorilis-o-sotrudnicestve-445340-2021/>

<sup>400</sup> Enterprises of the Oryol region of Russia plan to sell metal products and equipment through BUTB [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/predprijatija-orlovskoj-oblasti-rossii-planirujut-prodavati-metalloproduksiju-i-oborudovanie-cherez-445119-2021/>

interested in expanding sales of their products. As a result, the participants of the business meeting agreed that the most promising area of exchange trading is agricultural products. In particular, oil and fat products, which traditionally occupy a significant share in the exports of the Kaliningrad region, and “the largest processor of oilseeds in the region regularly tops the rating of meal sellers at exchange trading. Moreover, the exchange platform can not only serve as an entry point to the Belarusian market, but also simplify the access of Kaliningrad companies to the markets of third countries<sup>401</sup>. ”

Exchange trading can become an important element of trade and economic interaction with other Russian regions. In particular, this was discussed in the same June 2021 at a meeting of the working group on cooperation between Belarus and Kalmykia, where BUCE demonstrated its readiness to provide Kalmyk exporters with direct access to more than 21 thousand Belarusian companies and also become an electronic window to the markets of other countries, opening experience of transit transactions “for the sale of Russian rapeseed oil to China, and lumber to the Baltic countries<sup>402</sup>. ”

Business circles of the Orenburg region intend to interact with BUTB in several directions at once, as discussed at the webinar of the parties, held in early July 2021. Firstly, we are talking about organizing the export of Orenburg cast iron and rolled sheets to the Belarusian market. Secondly, the supply of oilseed processing products to the markets of third countries through the mechanism of transit transactions is of interest to entrepreneurs in this Russian region. The fact is that the structure of exports of the Orenburg region is dominated by non-raw materials and non-energy goods. And for the Belarusian side, metal products - cast iron and rolled sheets - are of particular interest. As for transit transactions, BUCE is “ready to help oilseed processors from the Orenburg region enter the markets of China, Switzerland and the Baltic countries<sup>403</sup>. ”

Exchange trading is also considered in the Republic of Bashkortostan as an effective tool for enhancing trade and economic cooperation with Belarus.

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<sup>401</sup> BUCE and the Kaliningrad Chamber of Commerce and Industry agreed on cooperation [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-i-kaliningradskaja-torgovo-promyshlennaja-palata-dogovorilis-o-sotrudnichestve-448294-2021/>

<sup>402</sup> BUCE plans to develop exchange trading with Kalmykia [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-planiruet-razvivat-birzhevuju-torgovlju-s-kalmykiej-446923-2021/>

<sup>403</sup> The Orenburg region is interested in developing exchange trade with Belarus [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/orenburgskaja-oblast-zainteresovana-v-razvittii-birzhevoj-torgovli-s-belarusju-448484-2021/>

At a meeting of business circles of this Russian region in July 2021 with representatives of BUTB, “12 Bashkir enterprises engaged in the production and sale of compressor equipment, air purification systems, food products, biofertilizers, reagents for the oil industry” immediately showed interest in participating in electronic trading on the Belarusian exchange platform. industry and water circulation systems”<sup>404</sup>.

All these facts convincingly show that BUCE today is taking active measures to update interaction with the regions of Russia, since “deepening integration with the Russian Federation in the next five years will remain the most important task of the Belarusian government in terms of developing foreign economic activity and international cooperation<sup>405</sup>,” for which implementation of plans for joint activities is envisaged both in economic sectors and in Russian regions.

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<sup>404</sup> BUCE is ready to assist in restoring the volume of mutual trade between Belarus and Bashkortostan [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-gotova-sodejstvovat-vosstanovleniju-objemov-vzaimnoj-torgovli-belarusi-i-bashkortostana-452420-2021/>

<sup>405</sup> Zalesky, B. For the purpose of sustainable development. Collection articles / B. Zalesky . – LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2021. – P. 29.

## Every vector requires attention

One of the priority tasks for the development of the Belarusian Universal Commodity Exchange (BUCE) in 2021 was to increase the share in the exchange turnover of companies from the “far arc” countries - Asia, Africa, Latin America. “This is explained by the significant potential that exists in interaction with these partners, and the successful implementation of which promises considerable benefits for both Belarusian exporters and foreign importers <sup>406</sup>.” At the end of 2021, more than 27.5 thousand business entities from 69 countries were already registered with BUCE. Most of the companies currently operating on the exchange are from Russia, Lithuania, Latvia, Poland and Ukraine. As for the dynamics of growth in the number of new bidders, China occupied a confident leadership position here in 2021. At the same time, the geography of new participants in the trading sessions held here continued to steadily expand at BUCE.

So, back in mid-September 2021, one of the largest suppliers of forest products to **the Japanese** market - Shimizu Lumber, founded in 1950 and headquartered in Kobe on the island of Honshu, has completed its paperwork, becoming the first Japanese resident accredited by BUCE. “The company views entering the Belarusian market as an opportunity to diversify sources of supply of woodworking products, primarily edged softwood lumber, which is in great demand in Japan <sup>407</sup>.” Note that this company already purchases significant volumes of wood raw materials and lumber in the countries of Southeast Asia, North America and Europe. However, in Belarus too, she expects to establish long-term fruitful cooperation with local suppliers.

And at the end of December 2021, the first company from **Pakistan was accredited to BUCE** - Sakafat Forever, which intends to work here “in both directions – for the import of goods from Belarus and for the export of Pakistani products to the Belarusian market <sup>408</sup>,” without excluding trade through BUCE with companies from other countries through transit

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<sup>406</sup> Zalesky, B. The goal is a growth trajectory. Chronicle of international cooperation / B. Zalesky. – Palmarium Academic Publishing, 2021. – P. 272.

<sup>407</sup> Belarusian lumber will be supplied to Japan through BUCE [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/beloruskie-pilomaterialy-budut-postavljatsja-v-japoniju-cherез-butb-460335-2021/>

<sup>408</sup> BUCE accredited the first company from Pakistan [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-akkreditovala-pervuju-kompaniju-iz-pakistana-477387-2021/>

transactions. In the Belarusian market, the Pakistani company will begin with the purchase of lumber, since wood products are in high demand in this South Asian country. On the other hand, the study of possibilities for selling rice and other agricultural products in Belarus, which are key export destinations from Pakistan, has already begun.

At the beginning of December 2021, the first transaction for the purchase of lumber was made at BUCE by **an Israeli** company accredited here as a non-resident broker. “The volume of the trial batch was 150 cubic meters. cm with delivery to the port of Ashdod. It is expected that the pilot deal will become the starting point for regular exports of domestic [Belarusian] lumber products to the Israeli market <sup>409</sup>. ” An important detail: in parallel with the export of lumber, the issue of supplies to Israel is now being worked out metal products of the Belarusian Metallurgical Plant. Back in the first ten days of December 2021, a circle of potential Israeli buyers was formed. It is expected that after their accreditation, the first purchase applications will be placed at BUCE. “For this product category, the Israeli market is estimated at approximately \$4 billion. That is, almost any volume can potentially be sold through the exchange platform. In addition, now we [in Israel] have a real construction boom, and the demand for reinforcement and metal structures is very high <sup>410</sup>. ”

At the end of November 2021, **Indian** manufacturers of cladding materials, spare parts for agricultural machinery and industrial equipment expressed serious interest in trading their products at BUCE. In particular, the discussion was about putting up for exchange trading ceramic tiles, porcelain tiles and epoxy mortars produced in India, which are in significant demand among Belarusian construction organizations. Considering that in 2021, construction industry products have more than once become the subject of transit transactions at BUCE, most often between Russian and Baltic residents, then if Indian companies place applications for sale, there is a very high probability that buyers will be found for them quickly enough. “In addition to building materials, Indian enterprises have declared their readiness to put up for exchange auctions bearings, thrust rings, pipes and other spare parts for

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<sup>409</sup> BUCE broker in Israel made the first deal [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/broker-butb-v-izraile-sovershil-pervuju-sdelku-473363-2021/>

<sup>410</sup> BUCE is exploring the possibility of supplying Belarusian lumber and metal products to Israel [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-prorabatvyaet-vozmozhnost-postavok-belorusskih-pilomaterialov-i-metalloproduktov-v-izrail-466415-2021/>

tractors, cars and construction equipment. Also among the promising product items are LED lamps and equipment for the confectionery industry<sup>411</sup>. ”

Another interesting example of expanding the geography of BUTB’s business cooperation is in European countries. In December 2021, an agreement was reached on the development of cooperation in the field of exchange trading in agricultural products with **the Serbian** Novi Sad Commodity Exchange NSCOMEX . The parties agreed to work out the issue of mutual access to trading for Serbian and Belarusian companies, which will contribute to the growth of trade turnover between Belarus and Serbia as a whole. For this purpose, enterprises of the agro-industrial complex of both countries will be provided with an additional tool for carrying out export-import operations. BUCE sees great prospects in achieving such agreements, since “the most effective way to promote exchange services abroad is the accreditation of non-resident brokers, who take on the issues of attracting new companies, and also, as a rule, provide assistance with settlements and logistics<sup>412</sup>. ” We must assume that the results of this interaction between the two exchanges will not be long in coming in 2022.

In January 2022, the geography of electronic transactions at BUCE expanded to 70 countries. This happened after the first **Indian** company, Ark , was accredited here. Packaging Solutions . Note that for the entire 2021, bidders from five new countries appeared at BUCE - Brazil, Gibraltar, Pakistan, South Korea and Japan. Also, “at the end of 2021, the top ten largest markets for Belarusian goods included Lithuania, Germany, Latvia, Estonia, Russia, Poland, the Netherlands, Great Britain, Slovakia and China<sup>413</sup>. ” It is clear that various products from Belarus were supplied to different markets through BUCE: to European countries - lumber, fuel pellets, rapeseed oil, sugar beet processing products; British buyers - lumber, wooden posts, stakes and wet-blue semi-finished leather products; Russian consumers – milk powder, butter, cheeses and oilseed processing products. As for the People's Republic of China, “whose market at BUCE is considered one of the most

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<sup>411</sup> Indian manufacturers of construction materials and industrial equipment became interested in the B2B platform BUTB [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/indijskie-proizvoditeli-strojmaterialov-i-promoborudovaniya-zainteresovalis-b2b-ploschadkoj-butb-471997-2021/>

<sup>412</sup> BUCE and the Commodity Exchange of Serbia agreed on cooperation [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-i-tovarnaja-birzha-serbii-dogovorilis-osotrudnichestve-475901-2021/>

<sup>413</sup> BUCE expanded the geography of exchange trading to 70 countries [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-rasshirila-geografiju-birzhevoj-torgovli-do-70-stran-479981-2022>

promising<sup>414</sup>,” the leaders here so far are lumber, rapeseed oil and sugar. But, apparently, in 2022 this situation may change significantly.

The fact is that **China** is one of those countries whose presence at the BUCE site is now rapidly growing. Suffice it to say that in 2021, Belarusian-Chinese exchange trade turnover increased three and a half times. And there were several reasons for this. “Firstly, the number of Chinese companies accredited on the Belarusian exchange platform has almost doubled. At the same time, two of them have received the status of brokers and are promoting Belarusian products on the Chinese market<sup>415</sup>. ” As a reference, we note that as of December 1, 2021, 64 companies from the Middle Kingdom were accredited to BUCE. In January 2022, Zhejiang became the new BUCE broker in China Pinke Textile Co. , Ltd , which plans to attract buyers of agricultural products to auctions and considers rapeseed oil and meat and dairy products as the most promising products in this regard.

In this context, the intention of the China SAMC Engineering Corporation (CAMCE), announced in January 2022, also looks promising - to purchase meat and other agricultural products using the exchange mechanism. Let us remind you that CAMCE is the largest shareholder of the Chinese-Belarusian Industrial Park “Great Stone”. This, of course, opens up wide opportunities for BUCE to interact in the field of logistics. “Taking into account the existing infrastructure and location, the Great Stone could become an ideal logistics hub for consolidating container cargo with goods that are sold to China through the exchange. First of all, these are lumber, rapeseed oil, milk powder, meat and flax fiber<sup>416</sup>. ” An important detail: the CAMCE subsidiary purchased \$4 million worth of beef from Belarus in 2021. In 2022, its plans include further increasing the volume of purchases of not only meat, but also other agricultural products of Belarusian production. They hope to expand the circle of suppliers and conclude deals on more favorable terms with the help of BUCE.

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<sup>414</sup> Zalesky, B.L. The reference point for cooperation is the far abroad / B.L. Zalesky // Materialy XVIII Mezinarodni vedecko - prakticka conference “ Aplikovane ” vedecke novinky – 2021.” Volume 7: Praha . Publishing House “ Education and Science. ” – C. 16.

<sup>415</sup> The new BUCE broker in China will focus on the import of Belarusian agricultural products [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novyj-broker-butb-v-kitae-sosredotochitsja-na-importe-belorusskoj-selhozproduksii-479109-2022/>

<sup>416</sup> BUCE is ready to ensure uninterrupted supplies of Belarusian agricultural products to China [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-gotova-obespechit-besperebojnye-postavki-belorusskoj-selhozproduksii-v-kitaj-481488-2022/>

The next important trend is the expansion of the list of products involved in mutual trade. Previously, Chinese representatives were more interested in Belarusian lumber, but now sales of sugar and processed oilseed products through BUTB are growing. Another important point is the holding of special trading sessions focused on the Chinese market, with delivery to the final buyer. In addition, at the end of 2021, thanks to the implementation of a set of measures to develop exchange trade with China, it became possible to indicate the cost of goods and settle exchange transactions in Chinese yuan. And already in January 2022, the first such export transaction at BUCE took place. The seller was a woodworking company from China, and the buyer was a European trader supplying lumber products to the countries of the European Union, Asia and Africa. “As a result of the completed transaction, edged softwood lumber was sold for a total amount of 1.8 million Chinese yuan, or \$287 thousand in equivalent<sup>417</sup>. ” It must be assumed that this first successful experience of settlements in national currency will become a good example for all Chinese companies accredited at BUCE, since in this case the currency risks of the parties to the transaction are reduced, as well as the time period for receipt of funds to the seller’s account is reduced.

An interesting fact complements the picture of interaction between the Belarusian exchange platform and Chinese partners. In January 2022, the first transit transaction was completed at BUCE between residents of China, who decided to use this trading platform to minimize the risk of non-fulfillment of obligations by the counterparty. As a result, “a company from Hong Kong sold a batch of beef with a volume of 80 tons to a company from mainland China. The transaction amount was \$354 thousand. Previously, such transactions were concluded mainly to companies from Russia and the Baltic countries in order to insure foreign trade risks<sup>418</sup>. ” Of course, this fact very eloquently indicates the growing confidence in the Belarusian exchange platform on the part of representatives of Chinese business. And there is every reason to believe that the volume of transit trade involving Chinese residents at BUCE will only increase. As, indeed, in other areas of interaction.

Another result of 2021 is that the Russian vector of interaction continues to be a priority area of activity for BUCE, as **Russia** retained first place in

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<sup>417</sup> The first transaction in Chinese yuan was made at BUCE [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/pervuju-sdelku-v-kitajskih-juanjah-sovershili-na-butb-481365-2022/>

<sup>418</sup> The first transit transaction between residents of China was completed at BUCE [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/pervaja-tranzitnaja-sdelka-mezhdu-rezidentami-kitaja-sovershena-na-butb-474701-2021/>

terms of the amount of exchange trade turnover with Belarus. In addition, as of January 1, 2022, of the 5,539 foreign companies accredited on this exchange platform, almost half were Russian - 2,745. This also indicates that “exchange trading is gradually becoming one of the drivers of Belarusian-Russian integration and a very promising project being implemented within the framework of the Union State <sup>419</sup>. ” And, apparently, this positive trend will only steadily gain momentum in 2022.

Thus, in January 2022, in order to increase exchange trade turnover and increase the number of trading participants from Russia, BUCE accredited the third broker on the Russian market - the Alor Asset Management company, which has many years of experience in providing brokerage services. Among its partners are such large trading platforms as the Moscow Exchange and the St. Petersburg International Commodity and Raw Materials Exchange. With the help of the new broker, BUCE plans to significantly increase the influx of clients from the neighboring country, as well as expand the list of Belarusian products sold in Russia. And this despite the fact that in 2021, a fairly wide range of goods was supplied to the Russian market through BUCE. Including butter, milk powder, oilseed processing products and cement, which accounted for about 80 percent of export sales. Plus, “Russian participants regularly purchased wet-blue semi-finished leather products, scrap metal, building materials and food products through the exchange <sup>420</sup>. ” The emergence of a new broker should provide new impetus to the partnership relations of the Belarusian exchange platform in Russia.

In 2022, priority attention at BUCE will also be given to such a new and promising direction as the sale of Belarusian-made feed additives in the union state - L -lysine sulfate, wheat gluten and premixes. This will be facilitated by BUTB’s partnership with the Belarusian National Biotechnology Company (BNBC), which is now rapidly increasing the export of feed additives. In December 2021, BNBK’s cooperation with the exchange moved to a new level. Then the first deal was made to export L -lysine sulfate to Russia <sup>421</sup>. ”

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<sup>419</sup> Zalesky, B.L. Exchange trading as a promising integration project for interaction between regions / B.L. Zalesky // Materiały XVII Międzynarodowej naukowo - praktycznej konferencji “ Wykształcenie ” i nauka bez granic – 2021”, Volume 1. Przemysł : Science i studio . – C. 10.

<sup>420</sup> BUCE is expanding its network of brokers in Russia [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-rasshirjaet-set-brokerov-v-rossii-480545-2022/>

<sup>421</sup> BNBK is increasing the export of feed additives through the exchange [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/bnbk-naraschivaet-eksport-kormovyh-dobavok-cherez-birzhu-482306-2022/>

And in January 2022, the amount of BNBC export transactions has already doubled. So the prospects here are very encouraging.

A clear priority for BUCE in 2022 will remain attracting potential buyers of Belarusian goods from Russian regions, although in 2021 the volume of exchange trade with Russian regions has grown very significantly, for some of them by several times. For example, trade turnover with the Moscow region, where Belarusian enterprises supplied butter, flour, crushed stone and semi-finished leather products, doubled. A similar growth rate is observed in the Leningrad region. One of the reasons for this success, apparently, is that at the beginning of December 2021, BUCE “accredited 296 business entities in the Leningrad region, about a third of which regularly participate in tenders. Through the exchange platform, Portland cement and meat and dairy products are mainly supplied to this region, and mainly ferrous metal products and coal are purchased<sup>422</sup>. ” In 2022, this range of exchange trading will be significantly expanded to include confectionery, packaging materials and office furniture. The Chelyabinsk region also has good indicators in this regard, 64 of whose representatives are accredited to BUCE, and “the amount of transactions they completed reached \$76 million<sup>423</sup>. ”

There is every reason to believe that in 2022 entrepreneurs from Bashkortostan will begin to take an active part in bidding for BUCE. After all, about 70 Bashkir companies involved in ferrous metallurgy, petrochemicals, agriculture, and light industry took part in a business seminar held in December 2021, where they were able to see firsthand how the active use of the exchange mechanism in cross-border trade has a positive impact on export volumes, contributes to the diversification of its structure and creates a favorable environment for strengthening business contacts.

Another Russian region where they intend to significantly intensify interaction with BUCE in 2022 is Udmurtia. At the end of 2021, several Udmurt manufacturers of agricultural products, metal products, machinery and equipment expressed their readiness to be accredited on the Belarusian exchange platform. In particular, a specific agreement on the use of BUTB as an additional sales channel for lumber and wood-based panels in Belarus, the

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<sup>422</sup> Enterprises of the Leningrad region intend to sell confectionery and furniture at BUTB [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/predpriyatija-leningradskoj-oblasti-namereny-prodat-na-butb-konditerskie-izdelija-i-mebel-472442-2021/>

<sup>423</sup> The development of exchange trade between Belarus and Bashkortostan will contribute to the growth of commodity turnover [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/razvitie-birzhevoj-torgovli-mezhdu-belarusiju-i-bashkortostanom-posposobstvuet-rostu-vzaimnogo-473580-2021/>

European Union and Asian countries was reached with two leading Udmurt producers of forest products - Orion LLC and TPK Vostok-Resurs LLC. In addition, the sale of lumber and board products to third countries through transit transactions is being considered as another area of interaction between BUCE and enterprises of the timber industry complex of Udmurtia. “In this regard, the most promising markets seem to be the Baltic states and China, where, through the efforts of BUCE, a circle of regular buyers has already been formed <sup>424</sup>. ” There are about 120 such companies in the Baltic countries alone, and the total value of transactions in 2021 exceeded \$300 million.

The development of exchange trading as a factor contributing to the growth of trade turnover was discussed in February 2022 at a meeting of the working group on cooperation between Belarus and Karachay-Cherkessia. As part of the discussion, it was noted that the most promising area of exchange interaction is the segment of the agro-industrial complex, since “Belarusian enterprises involved in grain processing would certainly be interested in purchasing these products in Karachay-Cherkessia. First of all, these are wheat, oats, buckwheat, and corn. In addition, the production of vegetable oils is well developed in Belarus, so seeds of rapeseed, sunflower and other oilseeds are also extremely in demand at exchange trading <sup>425</sup>. ” Apparently, these proposals have found their place in the road map for the development of cooperation for 2022-2024 adopted by the parties. And exchange trading will become another tool with the help of which Belarus and Karachay-Cherkessia plan to increase the volume of trade turnover and expand the range of mutual supplies in the near future.

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<sup>424</sup> BUCE plans to trade lumber products from Udmurtia [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-planiruet-torgovat-piloproduksiej-iz-udmurtii-476203-2021/>

<sup>425</sup> BUCE proposes to develop exchange trade in agricultural products between Belarus and Karachay-Cherkessia [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-predlagaet-razvivat-birzhevuj-torgovlju-selhozproduksiej-mezhdu-belarusiju-i-karachaev-483814-2022/>

## The potential of the exchange platform in the field of foreign trade is enormous

The results of the activities of the Belarusian Universal Commodity Exchange (BUCE) in 2021 showed that the use of the exchange mechanism increasingly contributes to both the creation of equal and competitive conditions for doing business within the country, and the increase in effective procurement activities and the expansion of sales markets for Belarusian products. Let us remind you that “at the end of 2021, more than 27.5 thousand business entities from 69 countries were already registered with BUCE. <...> At the same time, the geography of new participants in the trading sessions held here continued to steadily expand at BUCE<sup>426</sup>. ” In this regard, one of the main tasks of the exchange in 2022 is to assist domestic enterprises in promoting their goods for export. To do this, “special attention must be paid to realizing the potential of the exchange platform in the field of foreign trade. First of all, this is the diversification of the export of Belarusian goods with an emphasis on the People's Republic of China and other Asian countries...<sup>427</sup>” And, it must be said, BUCE is already taking energetic measures to solve these tasks.

As for China, “in 2021, the Belarusian-Chinese exchange trade turnover increased three and a half times at once<sup>428</sup>,” and according to the results of the first quarter of 2022, this country became, for example, one of the three largest buyers of rapeseed oil at BUCE. “This was facilitated by the expansion of the pool of Chinese buyers, as well as the increase in the number of transactions they completed. As a result, compared to the same period in 2021, sales of rapeseed oil in China increased by 67% in value terms, to \$2.2 million<sup>429</sup>. ”

In the first half of 2022, Belarusian-Chinese exchange trade turnover exceeded more than \$40 million, which is one and a half times more than in

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<sup>426</sup> Zalessky, B.L. From expanding geography to deepening cooperation / B.L. Zalessky // Materials of the XVIII International Scientific and Practical Conference, Real Research and Development - 2022, January 17 - 25, 2022: Sofia. “Byal GRAD-BG”. – P. 6.

<sup>427</sup> MARCH outlined the priorities for the development of exchange trading [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/mart-oboznachil-prioritety-razvitiya-birzhevoj-torgovli-488282-2022/>

<sup>428</sup> Zalessky, B. From trust to cooperation. Collection articles / B. Zalessky . – LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2022. – P. 135.

<sup>429</sup> China is one of the three largest buyers of rapeseed oil at BUCE [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/kitaj-voshel-v-trojku-krupnejshih-pokupatelej-rapsovogo-masla-na-butb-493049-2022/>

the same period last year. Since the beginning of the year, 20 new residents have joined the exchange. Now there are almost 90 of them. About half regularly participate in trading, three have the status of brokers. “The most popular among the Chinese were edged softwood lumber and unrefined rapeseed oil. Metal products – rolled sheets and seamless steel pipes – were coming to Belarus from China <sup>430</sup>. ”

Another interesting fact: the first deal for the sale of skim milk powder to China was concluded at BUCE in July 2022. “ The volume of the pilot batch was 75 tons, and the amount was \$250 thousand. The purpose of the trial transaction is to practically work out the issues of mutual settlements and logistics, which will allow in the future not only to increase the volume of purchases of Belarusian milk powder, but also to organize supplies of other types of dairy products to the Chinese market, such as butter, cream, cheeses and whey <sup>431</sup>. ” Until now, Chinese companies have used the Belarusian exchange platform mainly to purchase lumber, which has not made it possible to fully realize the potential of exchange trading between the two countries. The expansion of the product range creates additional opportunities for increasing the volume of mutual trade, so the first successful experience of exporting milk powder to China through the exchange can subsequently be extrapolated to other dairy products presented on the exchange platform. The advantage is that Chinese consumers have already become convinced of the high quality of Belarusian dairy products, buying them on the over-the-counter market.

In June 2022, BUCE in China acquired another international partner - the Xinjiang Asia-Europe International Trade Center (AEEX), which is the operator of the Asia Europe Exchange electronic trading platform. The goal is to join forces and jointly promote an increase in trade turnover between the Belarusian and Chinese sides. The priority areas of cooperation include the promotion of Belarusian-made goods to the Chinese market, informing Chinese companies about the possibilities of finding business partners in Belarus through the BUCE platform, and the exchange of analytics and statistical data reflecting the current situation in the commodity markets of the two countries. As for commodity items that are promising for mutual trade,

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<sup>430</sup> Markina, T. Why Belarusian enterprises enter the Chinese market / T. Markina // [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/s-chem-beloruskie-predpriyatija-vyhodjat-na-rynok-kitaja-513455-2022>

<sup>431</sup> Belarusian dairy products were sold to China through BUCE [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/beloruskaja-molochnaja-produktsija-prodana-v-kitaj-cherez-butb-512556-2022/>

“the most liquid Belarusian product is lumber, which is in consistently high demand in China, especially in the construction sector. In this case, delivery of goods purchased at BUCE is possible by rail along the New Silk Road. In addition, to diversify export supplies of Belarusian forest products, it is planned to use the AEEEX network of business contacts in the countries of the Asia-Pacific region <sup>432</sup>. ” Special attention is paid to the prospects for the participation of suppliers from China in trading on the import substitution exchange platform. In particular, it is expected that the arrival of Chinese manufacturers of spare parts and technological equipment will increase the concentration of supply of these products and expand their range, which will have a positive impact on the price level for Belarusian consumers.

And one more fact. In April 2022, the Chinese company China Merchants CHN-BLR Commerce and Logistics Company (CMCB), part of the China Merchants Group corporation, signed a memorandum with BUCE, which provides for interaction between the parties in the field of transport and trade logistics. The parties proceed from the fact that an extensive logistics infrastructure and well-established transport links are the basic conditions for the functioning of the Belarusian-Chinese commodity exchange market. Therefore, only through the synergy of electronic exchange trading technologies and extensive logistics capabilities can the potential of bilateral cooperation be fully realized.

Since July 2022, the Chinese side has been providing assistance in attracting suppliers and customers from China to the electronic import substitution platform of the commodity exchange. In order to optimize logistics costs, CMCB together with BUCE will work on alternative routes for the delivery of Belarusian goods purchased on the exchange to China using various modes of transport. The prospects of this area are also evidenced by the results of the analysis of purchase applications placed on the BUCE import substitution platform. “This is especially true for product categories such as electrical equipment, communications equipment, and industrial components and materials. So far, only a few suppliers of import-substituting products from China operate on the exchange trading platform, but their number may increase in the near future. Primarily due to Chinese companies already accredited at BUCE, but participating in bidding in other product sections <sup>433</sup>. ” As for

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<sup>432</sup> BUCE and the Chinese platform AEEEX will cooperate in the field of e-commerce [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-i-kitajskaja-ploschadka-aeex-budut-sotrudnichat-v-sfere-elektronnoj-torgovli-510290-2022/>

<sup>433</sup> The Chinese company will help attract suppliers and customers to the import substitution site BUTB [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/kitajskaja->

logistics issues, the delivery of goods from Belarus to China and back is carried out as usual.

Speaking about the implementation of plans to diversify exchange exports by reaching end consumers in the Middle East, we note that until recently, residents of Israel, Lebanon and Egypt were most active on the Belarusian exchange platform. In February 2022, the United Arab Emirates was added to this list when the first deal to sell lumber to this Gulf country was completed at BUCE. During the export trading session, a company from the Emirate of Abu Dhabi purchased a trial batch of edged hardwood lumber from a Belarusian wood processing enterprise. The goods were delivered to the destination country by the buyer. Now at BUCE, the primary task is to gain a foothold in the Emirati market by increasing the number of accredited companies and supply volumes. After all, this Middle Eastern country is an international trade and logistics hub. “This means that by supplying their products to Abu Dhabi, Dubai or Sharjah, Belarusian enterprises automatically gain access to potential buyers from Africa, Southeast Asia and other regions<sup>434</sup>. ”

In March 2022, participating in the international exhibition of timber and woodworking equipment Dubai International Wood & Wood Machinery Show in the UAE, BUCE representatives held a number of productive meetings with companies interested in business partnerships. As a result, “a large importer and distributor of timber in the UAE, Beston Wood Industries LLC announced its readiness to enter the Belarusian market through the exchange platform, and the Egyptian manufacturer of furniture panels and door panels Good Wood LLC intends to be accredited at BUCE for the purchase of softwood edged boards and other products of Belarusian woodworking enterprises<sup>435</sup>. ” And now BUCE is focusing its main efforts both on developing new markets and expanding its presence in countries whose share in the import of wood products was previously insignificant. For this reason, in addition to China, where supplies of lumber have already tripled, such Asian countries as Azerbaijan, Georgia, Israel, Lebanon, Turkey, which are ready to increase the import of Belarusian lumber, seem to be very effective. Thus, “more than half of last

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[kompanija-pomozhet-privlech-postavschikov-i-zakazchikov-na-ploschadku-importozameschenija-514280-2022](https://www.belta.by/economics/view/kompanija-pomozhet-privlech-postavschikov-i-zakazchikov-na-ploschadku-importozameschenija-514280-2022)

<sup>434</sup> Belarusian lumber was sold to the UAE for the first time through BUCE [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/beloruskie-pilomaterialy-vpervye-prodany-v-uae-cherez-butb-485480-2022/>

<sup>435</sup> BUCE redirects lumber exports to the countries of the Middle East and North Africa [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-pereorientiruet-eksport-pilomaterialov-v-strany-blizhnego-vostoka-i-severnoj-afriki-491054-2022/>

year's total volume has already been sold to Azerbaijan alone in the first three months of 2022.<sup>436</sup> Let us recall that as of mid-May 2022, more than 28.5 thousand companies from 70 countries were already accredited to BUCE. Now "about 5 thousand types of goods are traded here, with more than 400 thousand transactions carried out per year<sup>437</sup>." And there is every reason to believe that these figures will only increase in 2022.

If we talk about promoting the interests of BUCE in Central Asia, it should be noted that in March 2022, the Belarusian exchange platform accredited a new broker in Kazakhstan - First - KO LLP, which became the 16th in the network of BUCE stock brokers, already representing 11 countries. It is expected that the arrival of this broker will increase the number of trading participants from Kazakhstan, of which 85 were already accredited as of March 1, 2022, and will also contribute to the growth of Belarusian-Kazakh trade turnover. For reference, we note that in 2021, "exchange trade turnover between Belarus and Kazakhstan amounted to about \$30 million. The Kazakh market was mainly supplied with meat and dairy products, leather goods and sugar, while the most popular goods among Belarusian buyers were coal and ferrous metal products<sup>438</sup>." The new broker is going to simplify the work of Kazakh enterprises on the Belarusian market as much as possible and focus on goods for which Belarus is a leader in the post-Soviet space - dairy products, potatoes, tires, spare parts for special equipment.

Another partner of BUCE in Central Asia is Uzbekistan. For reference, we note that as of April 1, 2022, 5,673 foreign organizations, including 40 Uzbek ones, were accredited to participate in trading on the Belarusian exchange platform. And in the same April, the first deal was made here to export chemical products to this Central Asian country. During the trading session, "the Uzbek company purchased 20 tons of polyacrylonitrile fiber on terms of shipment from the manufacturer's warehouse. Previously, only agricultural goods were supplied to the Uzbek market through the exchange

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<sup>436</sup> BUCE is expanding its export geography: the first transactions were carried out by the UAE and Switzerland [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-rasshirjaet-geografiju-eksporta-pervye-sdelki-proveli-oae-i-shvejtsarija-493578-2022/>

<sup>437</sup> More than 28.5 thousand companies from 70 countries are accredited to BUCE [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/na-butb-akkreditovano-bolee-285-tys-kompanij-iz-70-stran-502289-2022/>

<sup>438</sup> BUCE accredited a new broker in Kazakhstan [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-akkreditovala-novogo-brokera-v-kazahstane-490807-2022>

platform – primarily meat and meat by-products<sup>439</sup>. ” Considering the fact that synthetic fibers are in stable demand among enterprises of the textile industry of Uzbekistan, there is every reason to believe that the exchange transaction that took place will be the first step of Belarusian exporters to expand the potential of this area in the Uzbek market. The grounds for this conclusion are seen in the fairly high level of development of the Uzbek textile, clothing and knitting industry and the constantly growing need of local enterprises for high-quality raw materials.

Another interesting step towards expanding the potential of exchange trading with the countries of Asia and the Middle East was taken at BUCE in February 2022, when the Belarusian CJSC Meat and Dairy Company, which is the official exporter of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food of the Republic of Belarus, was registered as a new broker . This company represents the interests of all Belarusian exporters of meat and dairy products. Combining its efforts with BUCE can certainly ensure more efficient work of domestic agricultural organizations in the markets of non-CIS countries, as well as help expand the geography of sales. In this case, we are talking not only about intensive work in the Chinese market. Apparently, other Asian countries, as well as the Middle East region, will not be left without attention. These are areas with great export potential, which <...> together with the exchange will have to be revealed<sup>440</sup>. ” And there is every reason to believe that in the near future this interaction will demonstrate high effectiveness in terms of increasing Belarusian exports to the countries of the Asian continent.

And we will consider another relevant topic regarding BUTB in this context. The Belarusian side today is looking for new forms of industrial and business development. One of these decisions in 2022 is import substitution. This process has already involved not only large enterprises, but also private, medium and small businesses. “Import substitution has become the most important task for every import-related enterprise in order to be proactive<sup>441</sup>. ” And there are already interesting examples.

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<sup>439</sup> BUCE has expanded its product range of exports to Uzbekistan [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-rasshirila-tovarnuju-nomenklaturu-eksporta-v-uzbekistan-494941-2022/>

<sup>440</sup> The official exporter of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food became a broker of BUCE [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/ofitsialnyj-eksporter-minselhozproda-stal-brokerom-butb-482741-2022/>

<sup>441</sup> Zalessky, B.L. The most important task of each enterprise / B.L. Zalessky // Materialy XVII Miedzynarodowej naukowei - praktycznej conference “Nauka : theory” i praktyka – 2022”, Volume 1. Przemysl : Nauka i studio . – C. 15.

In particular, an import substitution platform has been operating in BUCE for more than three months, which is gaining momentum, proving its effectiveness and on which there are already about three hundred companies from the countries of Central Asia and the Far East, including from the People's Republic of China and the Commonwealth of Independent States. During this time, “since May 27, 2022, 6,387 transactions worth Br 46.6 million have been completed at the BUTB import substitution platform <sup>442</sup>. ” In June–August, the structure of sales of import-substituting goods was dominated by products for construction, components and materials for industry, electrical connections and electrical equipment, heating equipment and air conditioning systems, as well as measuring instruments and workwear . “ In particular, products made of plastic and rubber, adhesives, LED lamps, and paint and varnish products are in particular demand among customers. These groups of goods account for more than a quarter of the total amount of transactions made on the exchange platform since the day of its launch <sup>443</sup>. ” The vast majority of suppliers are domestic small and medium-sized businesses, which, thanks to the import substitution service, received an additional sales channel and were able to find new business partners, including among large public sector companies. Also, “the Belarusian Metallurgical Plant and Bellesbumprom enterprises are now successfully operating at the site <sup>444</sup>. ” In the second half of August, a new company from China was accredited specifically to participate in the auction at the import substitution site.

Through the import substitution platform, BUCE expects to establish exchange trade with Pakistan as well. It is planned to work on the issue of selling lumber, which is in high demand in the construction and furniture industries, to the Pakistani market, as well as to organize the export of petrochemical products, which are already actively purchased on the stock exchange by companies from India. Pakistan is a new market for BUCE, but it has great potential both in terms of sales of Belarusian goods and in terms of imports of Pakistani products. For this purpose, in July 2022, the first broker company from Pakistan was accredited with BUCE - AP Sakafat Forever ,

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<sup>442</sup> About 300 companies from Central Asia and the Far East work on the import substitution platform BUTB [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/okolo-300-kompanij-iz-stran-srednej-azii-i-dalnego-vostoka-rabotajut-na-ploschadke-importozameschenija-521269-2022/>

<sup>443</sup> The top sellers at the BUTB import substitution site are goods for construction and industry [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/v-liderah-prodazh-na-ploschadke-importozameschenija-butb-tovary-dlja-stroitelstva-i-promyshlennosti-520451-2022>

<sup>444</sup> Parkhomchik told us which enterprises operate at the BUTB import substitution site [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/parhomchik-rasskazal-kakie-predpriyatija-rabotajut-na-ploschadke-importozameschenija-butb-521262-2022/>

which since December 2021 has been participating in export exchange trading in lumber products as a trade visitor. “As a professional trading participant, she intends to attract buyers of lumber and agricultural goods to the exchange platform, as well as assist Pakistani producers of rice, non-ferrous metals and textiles in finding business partners in Belarus <sup>445</sup>. ” With the help of the new broker, it is also possible to arrange supplies of Belarusian synthetic fiber, polyethylene, ammonium sulfate and other chemical and petrochemical products to Pakistan. The brokerage company has planned “a turnover of about \$150 million and will try to use all exchange tools to achieve it <sup>446</sup>. ” One of the Pakistani companies that produces sports equipment has expressed a desire to enter the Belarusian market by placing its products in the electronic catalog of import-substituting goods. As for making transactions, at the initial stage the option of participating in trading through a broker is considered.

And the Iraqi company Al Seraj Al Mubeen Co. plans to work on the issue of organizing supplies of Belarusian milk powder and beef to Iraq. The company “specializes in the import and wholesale trade of food products, the demand for which has increased significantly against the backdrop of ongoing instability in the global food market <sup>447</sup>. ” In this regard, there was a need to expand the geography of procurement, and Belarus is considered one of the most promising markets.

Another country that is very actively working on product lines with Belarusian partners at BUCE is Switzerland. In particular, in the first half of 2022, agricultural products accounted for 95 percent of the exchange trade turnover between Belarus and Switzerland, “which is a net importer of Belarusian goods, since all 16 Swiss companies accredited at the Belarusian Universal Commodity Exchange act exclusively as buyers at the auction. In January – June of this year, the amount of transactions made by Swiss companies on the stock exchange platform amounted to about \$6 million. Of this, more than \$5 million came from the export of Belarusian rapeseed oil and

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<sup>445</sup> BUCE plans to establish trade between Belarus and Pakistan through an import substitution platform [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-planiruet-naladit-torgovlju-belarusi-i-pakistana-cherez-ploschadku-importozameshenija-515035-2022/>

<sup>446</sup> The first broker from Pakistan is accredited at BUCE [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/na-butb-akkreditovan-pervyj-broker-iz-pakistana-519087-2022/>

<sup>447</sup> The Iraqi company intends to purchase Belarusian milk powder and beef [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/irakskaja-kompanija-namerena-zakupat-belorusskoe-suhoe-moloko-i-govjadinu-515773-2022>

wet-blue leather <sup>448</sup>. ” This indicates the high demand for products of the Belarusian agro-industrial complex on the Swiss market and significant potential for deepening cooperation in this area. Moreover, not only rapeseed oil, but also other equally liquid items, such as milk powder and whey, cattle meat, and beet molasses. It remains to add that agricultural products are far from the only group of Belarusian goods that are in demand in Switzerland. There are other directions too.

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<sup>448</sup> BUCE: agricultural products accounted for 95% of the exchange trade turnover of Belarus and Switzerland [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-produktsija-selskogo-hozjajstva-sostavila-95-birzhevogo-tovarooborota-belarusi-i-shvejtsarii-515347-2022>

## Asian vector expands cooperation

Increasing the supply of Belarusian goods to the countries of Asia and the Middle East is one of the priorities of the Belarusian Universal Commodity Exchange (BUCE). Figures show that at the end of 10 months of 2022, the export of domestic products with the help of BUCE in a number of Asian countries increased significantly: to Singapore - 6.6 times, to Turkey - 21 times, to Uzbekistan - 30 times.

In this context, in 2022, **the Chinese** segment of electronic exchange trading at BUCE significantly intensified. However, even “in 2021, the Belarusian-Chinese exchange trade turnover increased three and a half times at once <sup>449</sup>. ” And in October 2022, 100 companies from China were already working at BUCE, three of which have the status of stock brokers. Over the nine months of 2022, the amount of transactions they completed amounted to \$27 million. At the same time, more than \$24 million was provided by lumber - mainly edged boards from softwood. China became the 100th Chinese company accredited to bid at BUCE Township Enterprise Co. , Ltd . ( CTEC ), which at the initial stage intends to use the exchange platform to purchase woodworking products. Indeed, since the end of October 2022, BUCE has resumed the practice of holding special trading sessions for the sale of lumber to China with delivery in containers to its destination. “Along with lumber, unrefined rapeseed oil and skimmed milk powder were supplied to China through the exchange this year. The total amount of transactions amounted to over \$3 million <sup>450</sup>. ” Considering that one of the activities of CTEC in China is trading in agricultural products, it is possible that in the future the Chinese company will develop this segment of the exchange commodity market.

Returning to the topic of exports of lumber products to China, we note that following the results of a special trading session, which took place in the first ten days of November 2022 at BUCE, more than 20 thousand cubic meters of Belarusian-made lumber were sold to the Chinese market. 11 Chinese residents took part in this session. “At the same time, for the convenience of buyers, several bases for the supply of goods were provided, namely the

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<sup>449</sup> Zalessky, B. Systemic partnerships. Specifics of economic interaction between the Belarusian side and the post-Soviet republics / B. Zalessky. – LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2022. – C. 45.

<sup>450</sup> The 100th company from China has been accredited to BUCE [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/na-butb-akkreditovalas-100-ja-kompanija-iz-kitaja-530408-2022/>

cities of Taicang, Tianjin, Shanghai and Changsha. The key feature of special trading sessions is that they are targeted at a specific market – in this case, China <sup>451</sup>. ” And in December 2022, on the Belarusian exchange platform, following the results of a special export trading session, these trades became a record both in terms of the amount of transactions completed and in the volume of resources sold to the Chinese market. This is more than 60 thousand cubic meters of lumber “with a total value of 85.5 million yuan, or \$12.3 million in equivalent <...>. As a result, residents of China and Singapore purchased 10 lots of lumber with a volume of 62.2 thousand cubic meters, that is, half of all lumber products put up for auction <sup>452</sup>. ” Note that special trading sessions for the sale of lumber to China have been held at BUCE since December 2020 with the support of the Ministry of Forestry of Belarus in order to diversify export supplies of products from domestic wood processing enterprises and increase export revenue through the use of a competitive exchange trading mechanism.

For reference, we note: as of November 1, 2022, 103 Chinese companies were already accredited at BUCE. Among the new participants in the Belarusian electronic platform was a company from China, which for the first time bought a tanned semi-finished product “wet-blue” at BUCE. Thus, the geography of sales of these products through this platform has expanded to eight countries. “The wet-blue semi-finished product is in stable demand among leather goods manufacturers around the world. At exchange trading, these products are regularly purchased by companies from Russia, Kazakhstan, Great Britain, Italy, Switzerland, Lithuania and Poland. During January-October of this year, the total amount of transactions amounted to \$6.5 million <sup>453</sup>. ” Such products have not yet been shipped to China from Belarus. Apparently, after the pilot deal, new supplies of tanned leather are just around the corner.

Another interesting fact. In November 2022, a large Chinese trading company with a head office in Chongqing, specializing in the supply of cattle

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<sup>451</sup> Lumber products worth more than \$4 million were purchased at BUTB by companies from China and Singapore [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/piloproduktsiju-na-bolee-chem-4-mln-priobreli-na-butb-kompanii-iz-kitaja-i-singapura-533965-2022/>

<sup>452</sup> Lumber worth \$12.3 million was sold to China through BUCE [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/pilomaterialy-na-123-mln-prodany-v-kitaj-cherez-butb-541419-2022/>

<sup>453</sup> Now China: the geography of exports of Belarusian leather products through BUCE has expanded [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/teper-i-kitaj-geografija-eksporta-belorusskoj-kozhevennoj-produktsii-cherez-butb-rasshirilas-533733-2022/>

meat, chicken and seafood to the southern provinces of China, expressed interest in participating in trading in agricultural products at BUCE. The company “has an extensive network of suppliers around the world, including in Belarus, but during the pandemic, all relationships were paused. Using the BUCE trading platform, which represents leading domestic suppliers of meat and meat products, the Chinese importer intends to establish new business contacts and resume purchases of frozen beef in Belarus <sup>454</sup>. ” Moreover, in recent years, Belarusian-made products have gained popularity in the Chinese market and are in high demand among Chinese consumers. Therefore, the company does not expect any problems with sales. At the same time, in addition to the office and wholesale sales points in Chongqing, the company has representative offices in other provinces of China, which will ensure the widest possible geography of sales of meat purchased on the exchange.

In order to promote the development of Belarusian-Chinese e-commerce, BUCE continues to expand the list of partners from the Middle Kingdom to further strengthen trade and economic relations between the Republic of Belarus and the People's Republic of China. In particular, in September 2022, BUCE signed a memorandum of cooperation with the Chinese branch of the BRICS Institute for the Study of Future Networks ( BIFNC ) to promote greater involvement in cross-border exchange trading of Belarusian and Chinese companies, including small and medium-sized businesses. “One of the promising areas of cooperation could be accreditation of BIFNC as a broker. This will allow not only to fully utilize BIFNC’s wide network of business contacts to attract sellers and buyers from China to exchange trading, but also to conclude transactions on their behalf, thereby ensuring the growth of exchange trade turnover between Belarus and China <sup>455</sup>. ” It is expected that at the initial stage the main emphasis will be on supplies of Belarusian lumber and fuel pellets to China as the most popular product items on the Chinese market.

Another new partner of BUCE in November 2022 was the Alliance of Economic and Commercial Advisors of China. The Chinese side is interested in such highly liquid commodity items as lumber, rapeseed oil and wet blue

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<sup>454</sup> A large Chinese importer of meat and seafood became interested in cooperation with BUCE [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/krupnyj-kitajskij-importer-mjasa-i-moreproduktov-zainteresovalsja-sotrudnichestvom-s-butb-536236-2022/>

<sup>455</sup> BUCE and the Chinese branch of the BRICS Institute will promote the development of electronic exchange trading [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-i-kitajskij-filial-instituta-briks-budut-sodejstvovat-razvitiju-elektronnoj-birzhevoj-torgovli-525751-2022/>

leather, since “in the near future the level of demand will increase, including for Belarusian-made goods that have proven themselves well in the Chinese market <sup>456</sup>. ” So the Belarusian-Chinese exchange trade, apparently, is reaching a new qualitative level.

BUCE also has big plans with other countries of the Asian continent, including **India, Pakistan, Turkey and Mongolia** .

For example, in September 2022, BUCE and the Inventivepreneur Chamber of Commerce and Industries (ICCI), headquartered in New Delhi ( **India** ), decided to join forces to attract Indian companies interested in entering the Belarusian market to the Belarusian exchange platform . After all, the use of the exchange mechanism will not only help strengthen trade relations between Belarus and India, but will also create favorable conditions for closer cooperation in related areas. Let us remember that ICCI has more than 10 thousand members throughout India. Mainly, these are small and medium-sized businesses operating in various sectors of industry and agriculture and receiving services from the Chamber of Commerce and Industry for effective business management, including market analytics, assistance in attracting investments, advanced training courses for employees, and search for business partners in India and abroad. The main task of ICCI is to provide assistance in scaling business, which, as a rule, involves entering the markets of other countries, including Belarus. Taking into account low risks, a wide product range and direct access to leading Belarusian enterprises, BUCE is the optimal solution for starting work in Belarus ICCI . In particular, “Belarusian acrylic fiber and other petrochemical products are in high demand in India, since transactions for this group of goods are regularly made <...>. No less promising positions are lumber, dairy products, and light industry products <sup>457</sup>. ”

Another interesting fact: in November 2022, a pharmaceutical company from India, Tosco , was accredited for the first time at BUCE for the purpose of purchasing petrochemical products. Pharmachem , which manufactures and markets specialty chemicals and reagents for the Indian pharmaceutical

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<sup>456</sup> BUCE and the Alliance of Economic and Commercial Advisors of China have identified areas of cooperation [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-i-aljjans-ekonomicheskij-i-kommercheskij-sovetnikov-kitaja-opredelili-napravlenija-sotrudnichestva-535514-2022/>

<sup>457</sup> BUCE and the Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry plan to cooperate in the field of 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/>

industry. “On the Belarusian exchange platform Tosco Pharmachem plans to purchase acetone cyanohydrin, and in the future other chemicals and drugs it needs<sup>458</sup>. ” This company’s interest in the BUTB platform is due to a number of reasons. Firstly, India is one of the three world leaders in terms of pharmaceutical production volumes. Secondly, the Indian enterprise, through exchange trading, will open up new export opportunities for Belarusian companies in the petrochemical industry. Thirdly, in addition to increasing the Belarusian-Indian exchange trade turnover, BUCE will allow one to gain experience in the Indian market, which can be useful in selling other popular commodity items to this South Asian country, including synthetic fibers. In December 2022, the first transaction was registered at BUCE: the Tosco enterprise Following the trading session, Pharmachem bought 23 tons of Belarusian acetone cyanohydrin. The small volume of purchases is due to the Indian company’s desire to work out the entire scheme for importing goods from Belarus. “The Indian side is interested in long-term cooperation with the exchange, which involves regular participation in exchange trading and an increase in purchase volumes. At the same time, due to the lack of practical experience in working on the Belarusian market through the exchange platform, the company preferred to first conclude a trial transaction for a small amount in order to minimize possible risks<sup>459</sup>. ” And in this regard, BUCE is counting on an increase in supplies of Belarusian petrochemical products to India. For reference: export exchange trading in chemical and petrochemical products has been held at BUCE since October 2021. The entire range of goods produced by petrochemical enterprises in Belarus is supplied abroad. In 2022, synthetic fibers, gasoline, oils and solvents were in particular demand among foreign buyers. The main sales markets are a number of countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States, as well as the countries of the “far arc” - China, Syria, Pakistan, the United Arab Emirates, Turkey.

In 2022, certain steps to intensify exchange trading were also made between Belarus and **Pakistan** . In particular, the first broker company from this country has already been accredited to BUCE, and, thanks to the efforts of the Pakistani Embassy in Belarus, the central office of the exchange was visited by 70 representatives of the Pakistani business community who are interested

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<sup>458</sup> BUCE plans to start exporting petrochemical products for the Indian pharmaceutical industry [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-planiruet-nachat-eksport-neftehimicheskoi-produktsii-dlja-indijskoj-farmotrasli-535977-2022/>

<sup>459</sup> An Indian company made a deal for the first time at BUCE [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/indijskaja-kompanija-vpervye-sovershila-sdelku-na-butb-537935-2022/>

in purchasing products from Belarus. And this is not only lumber, but also chemical and petrochemical products. For example, “Belarusian acrylic fiber is in high demand in Pakistan, which has recently been regularly supplied to this market through our trading platform. The volume of transactions is not very large yet, so expanding the circle of Pakistani buyers is a task of paramount importance”<sup>460</sup> in order to really increase trade turnover between Belarus and Pakistan.

Another country in Asia that is very promising in terms of selling Belarusian goods through BUCE is **Turkey**. Over the three quarters of 2022, 27 Turkish companies were accredited on the exchange. “This year they purchased domestic lumber, as well as scrap and non-ferrous metal waste at exchange auctions. When compared with January-September last year, the amount of transactions made by Turkish participants increased almost 1.5 times<sup>461</sup>. ” Not only traditional export-import operations with the participation of Belarusian enterprises, but also transit transactions between non-residents are considered as possible areas of cooperation.

In November 2022, BUCE agreed to develop exchange trading in agricultural and wood products with the Istanbul Commodity Exchange (ISTIB) in order to “join efforts to increase the volume of mutual trade between Belarus and Turkey, with the main emphasis planned on agricultural products and the wood processing industry, demand for which is consistently high in both countries<sup>462</sup>. ” In this regard, Belarusian partners hope for support and assistance from ISTIB, whose members are more than 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 of the two countries, which will allow organizing regular trade in such highly liquid commodity items as lumber and dairy products.

Starting from December 2022, in order to increase the attractiveness of the exchange mechanism for foreign companies, including potential buyers of

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<sup>460</sup> BUCE organizes supplies of Belarusian lumber for the industry of Pakistan [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-organizuet-postavki-belorusskih-pilomaterialov-dlja-promyshlennosti-pakistana-535371-2022/>

<sup>461</sup> BUCE will present the advantages 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/>

<sup>462</sup> BUCE and the Istanbul Commodity Exchange will develop trade in agricultural and wood processing 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/>

fuel pellets or pellets and other wood products, BUCE introduced a simplified accreditation procedure for residents of Turkey. Note that “a simplified accreditation procedure is already in effect for residents of 21 countries, which makes the exchange mechanism more accessible to foreign companies and contributes to the growth of supplies of Belarusian goods to these markets <sup>463</sup>. ” At the first export auction, aimed at the Turkish market and held in the first ten days of December 2022, more than 18 thousand cubic meters of light and gray pellets were offered. More than 20 Turkish companies have expressed interest in purchasing Belarusian biofuel. And, apparently, the clear logistics and significant capacity of the Turkish market makes it one of the most promising export destinations for Belarusian fuel products.

And further. In January 2023, the first company from **Mongolia was accredited to participate in the bidding at BUCE** . This means that the geography of Belarusian exchange trading has expanded in the new year and now covers 71 countries on four continents. Through BUCE, “the Mongolian enterprise plans to supply mining products to Belarus, including fluorspar and slags used in the metallurgical industry, as well as purchase Belarusian metal products and agricultural goods <sup>464</sup>. ” The interest of Mongolian business in the Belarusian exchange platform is not accidental. All metallurgical enterprises of Belarus are accredited at BUCE and participate in trading, and the amount of transactions in the metal products section for 2022 exceeded two billion Belarusian rubles. The exchange is home to the largest consumers and producers of goods that the Mongolian company intends to trade. In the segment of the agro-industrial complex, the situation is similar: BUCE presents the widest range of products from Belarusian agricultural enterprises, including exporters of milk, cream and butter, which are especially in demand in Mongolia. It is expected that the next step in the cooperation of the Belarusian exchange platform with the Mongolian enterprise will be to grant it the status of an exchange broker, which will allow it to act as the official representative of BUCE in Mongolia and attract new importers and exporters to the Belarusian market.

In general, speaking about BUCE’s cooperation with Asian countries, we note that this area of ties has enormous export potential. And “in the near

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<sup>463</sup> BUCE simplifies accreditation for Turkish companies [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-uproschaet-akkreditatsiju-dlja-turetskih-kompanij-537787-2022/>

<sup>464</sup> The first company from Mongolia is accredited to BUCE [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/na-butb-akkreditovana-pervaja-kompanija-iz-mongolii-545414-2023/>

future this interaction will demonstrate high effectiveness <sup>465</sup>.” And the first steps in this regard have been taken.

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<sup>465</sup> Zalessky, B. Potential of the exchange mechanism. Collection articles / B. Zalessky . – LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2022. – P. 52.

## Belarus – Asia: prospects for effective cooperation

In June 2021, the Belarusian-Asian Forum took place, in which representatives of the embassies of those Asian states in Russia and Belarus part-time that do not have their own diplomatic missions in Minsk and where there are no Belarusian foreign institutions took part. In particular, among the participants were heads of diplomatic missions and other diplomats from Indonesia, Yemen, Cambodia, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Nepal, Singapore, Thailand, Afghanistan, Laos, and the Philippines. The attention of the Belarusian side to the Asian region is understandable. After all, here “there are no political problems on the bilateral agenda and the approaches to major international issues are quite similar. This creates a good basis for the development of trade and economic cooperation as the main direction of bilateral interaction<sup>466</sup>.”

Suffice it to say that in 2020 the volume of Belarusian exports to the countries of this continent amounted to about two billion dollars. And this, of course, is not the limit. “It is obvious that the Asian market still remains insufficiently developed by exporters from Belarus in terms of promoting many types of their products there, including those produced by mechanical engineering, electronics and petrochemical industries<sup>467</sup>.” The experience of this interaction in recent years shows that there are still many opportunities for promoting Belarusian trade and economic interests in the Asian direction. To use them successfully, it is necessary to continue systematic and consistent work, developing mutual interest and initiating new forms of contacts, as is, in fact, what is happening in the development of partnerships with a number of Asian countries.

In particular, the Republic of Belarus has already achieved a strategic partnership with **the People's Republic of China**. In numerical terms it looks like this: In 2020, the volume of Belarusian-Chinese trade showed significant growth – by more than 10 percent. Even higher dynamics of development of this partnership is typical for 2021. “From January to April this year, the total volume of imports and exports of goods between the countries amounted to

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<sup>466</sup> Cooperation with the countries of the Asian region has been and remains one of the priorities of the foreign policy of Belarus - Borisevich [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/sotrudnichestvo-so-stranami-aziatskogo-regiona-bylo-i-ostaetsja-odnim-iz-prioritetov-vneshnej-politiki-445159-2021/>

<sup>467</sup> Zalesky, B. Belarus - Asia: vector of partnership. Chronicle of mutually beneficial cooperation / B. Zalesky. – LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2018. – P. 5.

\$1.25 billion, an increase of 58% compared to the same period last year. China has become Belarus' second largest trading partner <sup>468</sup>. "

A considerable number of projects that have already been successfully implemented and are still being implemented by the Belarusian side can be seen in a number of other Asian countries. So, at the beginning of June 2021, the Minsk Tractor Plant and the Indian company Erisha Agritech Private Limited signed a cooperation agreement, which determined that "the Indian partner will purchase at least 200 BELARUS tractors by the end of 2021 . In addition, the parties intend to organize the localization and assembly of tractors in **India under the joint brand DARSH BELARUS** » <sup>469</sup>in order to then supply them to other countries of the continent - Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal.

Another interesting Asian country in this context is **Mongolia** . In June 2021, it became known that the Belarusian Development Bank will finance the export supply of Belarus tractors and agricultural machinery produced at Minsk Tractor Plant JSC for four and a half million euros to the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Light Industry of Mongolia. And this will be the third individual credit line within the framework of the general Belarusian-Mongolian intergovernmental agreement on the provision of export credit concluded in April 2019, aimed at expanding the geography of Belarusian export supplies and strengthening foreign economic and trade relations between specific enterprises. Let us recall that, within the framework of this agreement, the Development Bank has already "financed the supply of fire fighting equipment produced by Pozhsnab LLC to the National Emergency Situations Agency of Mongolia, as well as equipment sold by MAZ OJSC, the management company of the BELAVTOMAZ holding, to the Road Safety Center -transport development under the Ministry of Roads and Transport Development of Mongolia <sup>470</sup>. " These facts indicate that Belarusian industrial enterprises today consider the Asian region as one of the key regions for increasing their export supplies. And they see huge potential in it, "since the

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<sup>468</sup> Political interaction between Belarus and China is continuously strengthening - Xie Xiaoyong [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/politicheskoe-zaimodoverie-belarusi-i-kitaja-nepriyerno-ukrepljaetsja-se-sjajun-446045-2021/>

<sup>469</sup> MTZ signed an agreement on the supply and assembly of tractors in India [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/mtz-podpisal-soglasenie-o-sotrudnicestve-s-indijskoj-kompaniej-444577-2021/>

<sup>470</sup> The Development Bank will provide an export loan for the supply of Belarusian agricultural machinery to Mongolia [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/bank-razvitija-predostavit-eksportnyj-kredit-na-postavku-beloruskoj-selhoztehniki-v-mongoliju-445880-2021/>

countries included in it show very good economic growth <sup>471</sup>,” which makes Belarusian products in demand in this market. And such exporters as BelAZ, BMZ, MAZ, MTZ, Amkodor, Integral have good opportunities here to expand supplies.

The Asian region looks even more promising today for Belarusian food exports, the volume of which has grown 13(!) times over the past five years. In 2020, it was \$356 million. Over the four months of 2021, food worth \$167 million has already been shipped to 37 Asian countries from Belarus, “which is 60% more than last year. A wide range of dairy and meat products, sugar, flax fiber, rapeseed oil are supplied...” <sup>472</sup>. It is obvious that both the geography and the range of these supplies will only expand, as evidenced by the interest of the participants of the Belarusian-Asian Forum in the proposals of Belarusian manufacturers voiced in their presentations at this event. In addition, in 2021, interaction between the Belarusian side and a number of other Asian countries – Iran, Pakistan, South Korea and Oman – has noticeably intensified.

As for **Iran** , in April 2021 it became known about the intention of the Belarusian Gomel region to resume and develop interaction with the Iranian province of Mazandaran, a document on trade, economic, scientific, technical and cultural cooperation with which was signed back in 2009, but to implement those planned in His plans never worked out. Then, when signing a memorandum of cooperation, the parties noted good prospects for organizing the export of agricultural products, metal, and agricultural machinery from the Belarusian region. And Iranian exporters planned to establish constant supplies of citrus and other southern fruits to the Gomel market. “In addition, in the province of Mazandaran there are large deposits of solid fuels, in the development of which economic entities of the Gomel region could take part <sup>473</sup> .”

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<sup>471</sup> Pivovar, E. The Ministry of Industry of Belarus considers the Asian region as one of the key regions for product supplies / E. Pivovar // [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/minprom-belarusi-rassmatrivaet-aziatskij-region-kak-odin-iz-ključevyh-dlja-postavok-produktsii-445212-2021/>

<sup>472</sup> Pivovar, E. Supplies of Belarusian food to Asian countries have increased 13 times over 5 years / E. Pivovar // [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/postavki-belorusskogo-prodovolstvija-v-strany-azii-za-5-let-vyrosli-v-13-raz-445207-2021/>

<sup>473</sup> Sidorchik, V. Gomel region and the Iranian province of Mazandaran will sign a memorandum of cooperation / V. Sidorchik // [Electronic resource]. – 2009. – URL : <http://cenadm.gov.by/ru/region/view/gomelskaja-oblast-i-iranskaja-provintsija-mazandaran-podpishut-memorandum-o-sotrudnicestve-1957/>

Among the projects to which the Belarusian region and the Iranian province intend to return now, the parties name “the production of copper wire rod in the Rechitsa district, the development of a chalk deposit in Vetkovsky, and the mining of rocks in the Lelechitsky district”<sup>474</sup>. ” In addition, proposals were made from the Belarusian side to supply machine tools, timber, cardboard, cellulose, confectionery, as well as gas-powered combines to the Iranian market. Noting the great existing potential in interaction between the two regions, the Iranian side supplemented the possible areas of partnership with such areas as oil production, the chemical industry, and industry. Specific steps to implement all of these proposals will be discussed in a webinar scheduled to take place in the near future.

The very fact of updating partnership ties between the Gomel region and the province of Mazandaran suggests that Belarus and Iran, having survived the coronavirus pandemic, are beginning to return bilateral mutually beneficial cooperation to a growth trajectory. Let us recall that the 14th meeting of the Joint Belarusian-Iranian Commission on Economic Cooperation took place in January 2018, following which a Roadmap for the development of cooperation between the Republic of Belarus and the Islamic Republic of Iran for 2018-2020 was signed. It talked about the development of bilateral interaction “in various areas of politics, investment, trade, industry, transport, agriculture, healthcare, education, science, technology and energy,”<sup>475</sup> and also contained an intention to increase Belarusian-Iranian trade turnover to \$500 million. But a serious obstacle to the development of economic cooperation between Belarus and Iran then became American sanctions, which blocked bilateral interaction between Minsk and Tehran in a number of important areas. But “despite the restrictions, trade turnover between Belarus and Iran in 2020 amounted to \$24.7 million”<sup>476</sup>. ” The basis of Belarusian exports to the Iranian market were tires, wood products, newsprint, and bearings.

Currently, the parties are preparing for the 15th meeting of the joint commission, at which they intend to develop a roadmap for trade and economic cooperation in order to give additional impetus to relations. How high the

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<sup>474</sup> The Gomel region and the Iranian province of Mazandaran will resume trade and economic cooperation [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/gomelskaja-oblast-i-iranskaja-provintsija-mazandaran-vozobnovjat-torgovo-ekonomicheskoe-sotrudnichestvo-439208-2021/>

<sup>475</sup> Belarus and Iran have developed a cooperation roadmap for 2018-2020 [Electronic resource]. – 2018. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-iran-razrabotali-dorozhnuju-kartu-sotrudnichestva-na-2018-2020-gody-285761-2018/>

<sup>476</sup> Trade and economic relations [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : [https://iran.mfa.gov.by/ru/bilateral\\_relations/economic/](https://iran.mfa.gov.by/ru/bilateral_relations/economic/)

interest of the parties in such development of partnerships is can be judged by the composition of the participants in the Belarusian-Iranian business forum, which was held in Minsk in July 2019 under the auspices of the Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mines and agriculture. Then, Iranian enterprises interested in cooperating “in the areas of banking, production of medical and pharmaceutical products, gas equipment, parts and equipment for refrigerators, agricultural machinery, building materials and construction equipment, petrochemical and oil refining industries, production and supplies of food and spices, textile industry (supply of Persian carpets)”<sup>477</sup>.

One of the promising areas of economic interaction between the two countries may also be cooperation between the Belarusian Universal Commodity Exchange (BUCE) and the Iranian Commodity Exchange (ITB). The parties agreed to update their partnership back in October 2019, since “the use of the exchange mechanism will reduce commercial risks and simplify the search for business partners for Belarusian and Iranian business entities”<sup>478</sup>. ” At the same time, Iranian businessmen are interested in using the BUCE platform to promote ferrous and non-ferrous metallurgy products, textiles, nuts and dried fruits to Belarus. And Belarusian enterprises are interested in the exchange platform for exporting lumber, wood boards, and petrochemical products to Iran.

Another promising resource in terms of expanding Belarusian-Iranian trade and economic interaction contains the Interim Agreement leading to the formation of a free trade zone between the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) and Iran, which entered into force in October 2019. This document established a list of goods for which exporters of the EAEU countries, including Belarus, received preferences on the Iranian market. It “includes meat and fat products, certain types of confectionery and chocolate, electronic and mechanical equipment, as well as metals and cosmetics”<sup>479</sup>. ” So, considerable opportunities are opening up for the parties to solve the tasks set to intensify trade and economic relations. We need to use them.

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<sup>477</sup> The Belarusian-Iranian business forum will be held on July 24 in Minsk [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belorusko-iranskij-biznes-forum-projdet-24-ijulja-v-minske-355013-2019/>

<sup>478</sup> BUCE and the Iranian Commodity Exchange intend to intensify cooperation [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-i-iranskaja-tovarnaja-birzha-namereny-aktivizirovat-sotrudnichestvo-364553-2019/>

<sup>479</sup> Zalesky, B. Multi-vector potential. Chronicle of international cooperation / B. Zalesky. – LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing , 2020. – P. 7.

**The Islamic Republic of Pakistan** is one of the states in South Asia, in relations with which the Republic of Belarus over the past five years has created the necessary legal and infrastructural framework to strengthen and develop bilateral interaction aimed at the full-scale implementation of the existing potential of partnerships. Let us recall that in 2015, the Islamabad Declaration of Belarusian-Pakistani cooperation was adopted at the highest level, “in which the parties established the basic principles of political dialogue<sup>480</sup>. ” At the same time, the Roadmap for Bilateral Cooperation for 2015-2020 was signed in order to implement a gradual transition from simple trade to more advanced forms of cooperation. Joint efforts to create a legal framework for Belarusian-Pakistani cooperation led to the fact that by the beginning of 2021, “the parties signed 77 memorandums of understanding and agreements. At the moment, many agreements are under development<sup>481</sup>. ” For example, an amended intergovernmental agreement on cooperation in the field of industrial, scientific and technical cooperation.

Also in 2015, Minsk and Islamabad created the basic institutional mechanism for bilateral trade and economic relations - the joint Belarusian-Pakistan Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation, having organized five of its meetings to date. Within the framework of the joint commission, working groups in various areas - industry, agriculture - focus their attention on specific issues of bilateral interaction. And in December 2020, the first meeting of the Belarusian-Pakistani working group on cooperation in the field of healthcare and pharmaceuticals was held, at which “possible areas of mutual cooperation in the field of export of medical and educational services were identified”<sup>482</sup> and prospects for further interaction were outlined.

As for the partnership between the business circles of the two countries, they are structured within the framework of the activities of the Joint Belarusian-Pakistani Business Council, the first three meetings of which were held in August 2015, March 2016 and 2017. In April 2021, the parties held the fourth meeting of this council, which included representatives of more than a hundred Belarusian and Pakistani campaigns. They discussed not only the

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<sup>480</sup> Zalessky, B. Belarus - Asia: vector of partnership. Chronicle of mutually beneficial cooperation / B. Zalessky. – LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2018. – P. 86.

<sup>481</sup> Sajjad, H.H. How the pandemic affected relations between Belarus and Pakistan / X, X. Sajjad // [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/interview/view/kak-pandemija-povlijala-na-otnoshenija-belarusi-i-pakistana-7589/>

<sup>482</sup> The international cooperation. Meeting of the Joint Belarusian-Pakistani Working Group on Cooperation in the Field of Healthcare and Pharmaceuticals [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://belmapo.by/mezhunarodnaya-sotrudnichestvo.-zasedanie-sovmestnoj-belorusko-pakistanskoj-rabochej-gruppyi-po-sotrudnichestvu-v-sfere-zdravooxraneniya-i-farmaczevtiki.html>

development of bilateral trade, but also the possibilities of increasing investment cooperation, industrial cooperation, creating joint companies and production facilities, noting industry, agriculture, pharmaceuticals, as well as education, information technology and logistics among the priority areas of interaction. In addition, “business opportunities for Pakistani enterprises within the Great Stone Industrial Park”, the main directions of the new automobile development policy in Pakistan and the preferences for foreign companies in connection with it, prospects for the development of urban electric transport in Pakistan, as well as the main directions of work of chambers of commerce and industry to promote business contacts<sup>483</sup>. ”

The figures indicate that there is considerable potential for expanding Belarusian-Pakistani relations. “In 2020, trade turnover between the countries amounted to \$52.2 million, which is 4% more than in 2019.<sup>484</sup>” At the same time, the positive balance for the Belarusian side exceeded \$20 million. This was facilitated by supplies from Belarus to Pakistan of such export items as “tractors and spare parts for them, trucks, potassium fertilizers, synthetic yarn tows and synthetic fibers, tires, machine tools, polycarboxylic acids (phthalic anhydride), newsprint, baby food ( dry mixes)”<sup>485</sup>.

In 2021, the Belarusian side plans to only increase its exports to the Pakistani market, using various tools to promote products from Belarus to Pakistan. One of them is participation in international exhibitions organized in this South Asian country. In particular, “in October [2021] it is planned that Belarusian enterprises will participate in an industrial exhibition in Karachi<sup>486</sup>. ” Note that a year and a half ago, in September 2019, the National Exposition of Belarus was organized at the largest exhibition event in the South Asian region - the international exhibition International Engineering & Machinery Asia Exhibition ( IEMA ) in the Pakistani city of Lahore, where “such leading enterprises of the country as BELAZ, MAZ, MTZ, Mogilev Metallurgical Plant,

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<sup>483</sup> Online meeting of the Belarusian-Pakistani Business Council [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <http://grotpp.by/onlayn-zasedanie-belorusko-pakista-2/>

<sup>484</sup> Belarus is interested in developing mutually beneficial cooperation with Pakistan - Karankevich [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-zainteresovana-v-razviti-vzaimovyygodnogo-sotrudnichestva-s-pakistanom-karankevich-436781-2021/>

<sup>485</sup> Trade and economic relations between the Republic of Belarus and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : [https://pakistan.mfa.gov.by/ru/trade\\_and\\_economic\\_bilateral\\_relations/](https://pakistan.mfa.gov.by/ru/trade_and_economic_bilateral_relations/)

<sup>486</sup> Ulakhovich: there are many opportunities to strengthen cooperation between Belarus and Pakistan [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/ulakhovich-dlja-ukrepleniya-sotrudnichestva-mezhdu-belarusju-i-pakistanom-est-mnogo-vozmozhnostej-429292-2021/>

organizations of the Belneftekhim concern (Belshina, Naftan, Polotsk-Steklovolokno) presented their products " <sup>487</sup>. Then numerous visitors to this business forum were also able to get acquainted with the best Belarusian higher educational institutions and advanced scientific developments of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus. The Belarusian State University alone demonstrated in Lahore "more than 20 scientific and technical developments in the field of instrument engineering, new materials, metal optics, tribofatigue", while signing a protocol of intent to develop academic, scientific and technological cooperation with the <sup>488</sup>Ali company Power from Islamabad. It was a good experience to participate.

Speaking about the development of cooperation with **South Korea**, let us recall that in July 2021, the Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Korean International Trade Association created a business cooperation council, putting into practice the agreements reached in December 2020, when the parties signed a cooperation agreement. It is expected that participants in this new platform for discussing business issues and strengthening economic, investment and scientific and technical cooperation will be Belarusian and Korean companies with successful experience of cooperation, which "contribute to the expansion of bilateral business and economic relations, as well as enterprises interested in implementation of joint projects in the most promising areas <sup>489</sup>. " These, judging by the composition of the participants in the inaugural session of the Belarusian-Korean Business Cooperation Council, include the Belarusian High Technology Park, the Chinese-Belarusian Industrial Park "Great Stone", as well as more than twenty leading companies in the field of electronics, machine tool manufacturing, automotive industry, pharmaceuticals, information technology.

Let us remind you that in 2022 it will be 30 years since the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries. And today, Minsk and Seoul strive to take concrete steps to intensify bilateral interaction, as well as to "practical content of cooperation within the framework of the "New Northern

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<sup>487</sup> The national exposition of Belarus opened at the IEMA exhibition in Pakistan [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/natsionalnaja-ekspozitsija-belarusi-otkrylas-na-vystavke-iema-v-pakistane-363543-2019/>

<sup>488</sup> Results of BSU's participation in the International Exhibition "International Engineering & Machinery Asia Exhibition (IEMA)" (Lahore, Islamic Republic of Pakistan) [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <http://research.bsu.by/2019/10/08/bzu-results-in-the-international-exhibition-international-engineering-machinery-asia-exhibition-iema/>

<sup>489</sup> Belarus and the Republic of Korea created a business cooperation council [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-respublika-koreja-sozdali-sovet-delovogo-sotrudnichestva-449731-2021/>

Policy”<sup>490</sup>, which means a set of measures to enhance economic cooperation between the Republic of Korea and the states and integration associations of the Eurasian region, including Eurasian Economic Union. Following this policy, the Korean side divides the entire northern space into three main regions: eastern - Siberia and the Far East, Mongolia, the three northeastern provinces of China; central – five countries of Central Asia; Western - the western part of Russia, Ukraine and Belarus. It is the western region in Seoul that is assessed as the most industrialized and receptive to innovation. For this reason, it is considered “a kind of center of innovative industry in the northern direction of economic cooperation, important, among other things, for the creation of new composite materials and the development of information technology”<sup>491</sup>.

The Belarusian side is also generally interested in relations with Korean partners, primarily in expanding production cooperation and creating joint ventures in a variety of areas. Not only in the machine tool industry, automotive industry, in the production of auto components, electronics and household appliances, but also in the production of tires, medical equipment and agricultural machinery, as well as “in the financing and implementation of infrastructure projects in the field of innovation, information and communication technologies, industry, scientific and technical sphere”<sup>492</sup>. In this regard, one of the current areas of interaction with Korean partners is as follows.

Since 2019, the Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Belarus has been implementing a series of international cooperation projects regarding the creation of infrastructure to support and develop the smart industry in our country. First, a set of works was carried out to assess the readiness of the digital transformation of the national economy, including its real sector. The result of the project was recommendations that provide for the development of a strategy aimed at cooperation between large manufacturing companies and small and medium-sized businesses. New instruments of state support for the digital transformation of organizations in the real sector of the economy have also been introduced. So, this work was carried out with the support of a

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<sup>490</sup> Belarus and the Republic of Korea discussed practical steps to intensify cooperation [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/belarus-i-respublika-koreja-obsudili-prakticheskie-shagi-po-aktivizatsii-sotrudnichestva-436200-2021/>

<sup>491</sup> Park, C.H. Program approach / Ch.Kh. Pak // [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : [https://export.by/programme\\_approach](https://export.by/programme_approach)

<sup>492</sup> Belarus is interested in expanding investment cooperation with the Republic of Korea [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-zainteresovana-v-rashshirenii-investitsionnogo-sotrudnichestva-s-respublikoj-koreja-436524-2021/>

knowledge exchange program with the Republic of Korea. More specifically, “since 2020, this program has provided consulting support for the implementation of a pilot project for the digital transformation of a machine-building enterprise. It is planned that the results and recommendations obtained will be used to organize the digital transformation of machine-building enterprises throughout our country <sup>493</sup>. ” The seriousness of this interaction with Korean partners is also evidenced by the fact that in March 2021, a republican seminar-meeting on the topic “Studying the experience of the Republic of Korea in the digital transformation of the industrial sector of the economy (mechanical engineering)” was held in Minsk, the participants of which were more than 160 representatives of government agencies and organizations, the business community of Belarus, free economic zones, science and technology parks, the scientific and educational sphere. It is important that, with the help of experts from the Republic of Korea, they reviewed the specific experience of systemically important Korean manufacturing companies - LG and Hyundai - in deploying the digital transformation process in the mechanical engineering sector of the industry. After this, the Belarusian Ministry of Economy expressed confidence that “the results of the discussion of the Korean experience will become a solid basis for the deployment of projects in the field of digital development of organizations of the country’s industrial complex, involving the SME sector engaged in the manufacturing sector in this process <sup>494</sup>. ” It must be assumed that the Belarusian-Korean Business Cooperation Council will now make its contribution to resolving all these issues. After all, his field of activity is very wide.

Another Asian state with which interaction has intensified in 2021 is **Oman** . In August 2021, the “Belarus – Oman” business forum was held online. The attention of the Belarusian side to intensifying business cooperation with this Middle Eastern country is explained by several reasons. Firstly, it exports oil, petroleum products and gas. And he always considers the possibility of purchasing food and engineering products from his foreign partners. Secondly, Oman is interesting to Belarus due to its geographical

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<sup>493</sup> The pilot demonstration center in the Brest Technopark is planned to be put into operation in 2022 [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/opytno-demonstratsionnyj-tsentr-v-brestdkom-tehnoparke-planiruetsja-vvesti-v-eksploatatsiju-v-2022-godu-448204-2021/>

<sup>494</sup> The Republic of Korea presented its experience in digital transformation of mechanical engineering in Minsk [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/respublika-koreja-predstavila-v-minske-svoj-opyt-tisifrovuj-transformatsii-mashinostroenija-432451-2021/>

location. Its port infrastructure makes it possible to seriously consider Belarusian exports to the entire region of the Arabian Peninsula. All this makes Oman one of the promising trade, economic and investment partners of Belarus in the Middle East.

True, in 2020, trade turnover between the countries amounted to only \$1.15 million, with the share of Belarusian exports amounting to \$850 thousand, the basis of which “was potash fertilizers and food products<sup>495</sup>.” This is significantly lower than the figures recorded in Belarusian-Omani trade almost ten years ago. Let us remind you that “the highest level of trade turnover between Belarus and Oman was recorded in 2012 – \$12 million<sup>496</sup>.” That is why the task of returning the volume of trade and economic cooperation to a growth trajectory was among the main ones for the participants of the business seminar, during which they discussed both the current state and prospects for the development of bilateral partnerships in the areas of industrial production, agriculture and food, the potential of investment interaction and implementation of joint projects on the territory of the two countries, “as well as the possibility of holding a meeting of the Belarusian-Omani business council<sup>497</sup>.”

The attention of the parties to the activities of the business council is explained by the fact that this is one of the most actively used tools for the development of trade and economic interaction between the two countries. Belarus and Oman signed an agreement on its creation back in 2010, but the first meeting of the business council took place only in August 2015 in Minsk. The Omani side saw its task of coming to the Belarusian capital as being to decide on the most promising areas for expanding trade and economic cooperation. “If we talk about Oman’s investments in Belarus, then prospects are seen primarily in such areas as heavy industry and the petrochemical complex<sup>498</sup>.” A few months later, partners from Oman became interested in

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<sup>495</sup> Cooperation in the trade and economic sphere [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : [https://egypt.mfa.gov.by/ru/blr\\_oman/economical/](https://egypt.mfa.gov.by/ru/blr_oman/economical/)

<sup>496</sup> Ogneva, Yu. Koltovich: the visit of a business delegation from Oman will help increase trade turnover / Yu. Ogneva // [Electronic resource]. – 2016. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/koltovich-vizit-biznes-delegatsii-iz-omana-posposobstvuet-velicheniju-tovarooborota-211012-2016/>

<sup>497</sup> There is significant potential for cooperation between Belarus and Oman in various fields - Ulakhovich [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/mezhdu-belarusiju-i-omanom-est-znachitelnyj-potencial-sotrudnichestva-v-razlichnyh-oblastjakh-ulakhovich-455263-2021/>

<sup>498</sup> Ogneva, Yu. Oman will study the possibilities of participation in the Chinese-Belarusian Industrial Park / Yu. Ogneva // [Electronic resource]. – 2015. – URL :

investing in the development of Belarusian agriculture, the real estate sector and eco-tourism, and also agreed with the Belarusian side on “the joint development of scientific innovation projects, the development of proposals and the creation of Belarusian assembly plants in Oman”<sup>499</sup>. ”

In September 2016, to participate in the second meeting of the Belarusian-Omani Business Council, a representative delegation arrived from Oman for the first time in Minsk, which included more than 40 major businessmen of this country, whose areas of activity and interests included “investments, banking, construction, food and agriculture.” economy, industrial production, mining, insurance, financial consulting, transport services, retail trade, hotel business and tourism<sup>500</sup>. ” One of the main topics of this forum was “investment in the production of agricultural products in Belarus in order to increase production volumes here and supply both to the markets of the Persian Gulf and the Eurasian Economic Union<sup>501</sup>. ” There was also a conversation about the possibility of creating a joint venture in Oman for sales, assembly production and after-sales service of Amkodor OJSC equipment.

In October 2017, Belarus took part for the first time in Oman’s largest food industry and hospitality exhibition Food and Hospitality . Interest in it was fueled by the fact that in this country, as in the entire Middle East, the problem of food production remains. Up to half of Oman's imports come from consumer goods and food products. “Currently, Oman is especially interested in the supply of poultry meat, chicken eggs and dairy products: skimmed and whole milk powder, animal oil, whey powder, and cheeses<sup>502</sup>. ” Finally, the third meeting of the Belarusian-Omani Business Council took place in Minsk in April 2019. At it, participants examined the possibilities of bilateral business interaction and prospects for the implementation of investment projects “in the

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<https://www.belta.by/economics/view/oman-izuchit-vozmozhnosti-uchastija-v-kitajsko-belorusskom-industrialnom-parke-160157-2015/>

<sup>499</sup> Omani business is showing interest in investing in the agro-industrial complex of Belarus, the real estate sector, and eco-tourism [Electronic resource]. – 2015. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/biznes-omana-projavljaet-interes-k-investirovaniju-v-apk-belarusi-sektor-nedvizhimosti-ekologicheskogo-166686-2015/>

<sup>500</sup> More than 40 major Omani businessmen will visit Belarus [Electronic resource]. – 2016. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/bolec-40-krupnyh-biznesmenov-omana-posetjat-belarus-210359-2016/>

<sup>501</sup> Omani businessmen plan to invest in agricultural production in Belarus [Electronic resource]. – 2016. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/omanskie-biznesmeny-planirujut-investirovat-v-proizvodstvo-selhozproduktov-v-belarusi-210859-2016/>

<sup>502</sup> Belarusian products will be presented at the international exhibition in Oman [Electronic resource]. – 2017. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belorusskie-produkty-budut-predstavleny-na-mezhdunarodnoj-vystavke-v-omane-266188-2017/>

areas of logistics, oil and gas industry, development of security and safety systems, tourism, organization of exhibitions, fairs, and business events...”<sup>503</sup>. In addition, the Omani delegation included “an enterprise that is interested in the development of innovative technologies and the I T-sphere<sup>504</sup>. ”

All this indicates that the parties have considerable potential for the development of business cooperation, which today needs to be capitalized into specific projects. Presumably, this is exactly what will be discussed at the fourth meeting of the business council, which the parties plan to hold in 2021.

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<sup>503</sup> A meeting of the Belarusian-Omani Business Cooperation Council will be held in Minsk on April 10 [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/zasedanie-belorussko-omanskogo-soveta-delovogo-sotrudnichestva-projdet-v-minske-10-aprelja-342835-2019/>

<sup>504</sup> Lisatovich, T. Belarus is interested in the entry of Omani business into the country - Koltovich / T. Lisatovich // [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-zainteresovana-v-prihode-v-stranu-biznesa-omana-koltovich-343395-2019/>

## Belarus - Asia: there are opportunities, we need to use them

Asia for the Republic of Belarus today is the most important direction for the development of trade and economic cooperation. Thus, in 2020 alone, the volume of Belarusian exports to the countries of this continent amounted to about two billion dollars. Nevertheless, there are still many opportunities in this direction for promoting Belarusian economic interests. “In order to use them successfully, it is necessary to continue systematic and consistent work, developing mutual interest and initiating new formats of contacts, as is, in fact, what is happening in the development of partnerships with a number of Asian countries <sup>505</sup>,” including **Pakistan and the United Arab Emirates , Saudi Arabia.**

**Pakistan** in this context , let us recall that in October 2021, the fifth meeting of the Belarusian-Pakistani Business Council was held, in which representatives of more than 60 companies from this South Asian country, representing such areas of the economy as the chemical industry, pharmaceuticals, textile industry, food production, construction, transport, logistics, tourism. From the Belarusian side, representatives of almost a hundred enterprises and companies took part in the meeting. This composition of the business council participants very eloquently demonstrated the fact that “relations between Belarus and Pakistan are currently at a high level, especially in the field of trade, investment and industry <sup>506</sup>.” This is largely facilitated by a very extensive legal framework, which already includes more than 80 agreements. Another "about 20 agreements/memorandums of understanding are in the final stages of negotiations" <sup>507</sup>. The established mechanisms for implementing partnerships in the form of commissions and working groups, as well as the existing system of interregional cooperation, are also active.

As for the business council, its fourth meeting was held online by the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry and the

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<sup>505</sup> Zalessky, B. The goal is stable growth. Collection articles / B. Zalessky . – LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2021. – P. 66.

<sup>506</sup> Pakistan is interested in strengthening economic cooperation with Belarus [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/pakistan-zainteresovan-v-ukrepleni-ekonomics-sotrudnichestva-s-belarusju-462939-2021/>

<sup>507</sup> Khan, S.H. About business plans, supplies of tractors and a master class on painting vans / S.Kh. Khan // [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/interview/view/posol-pakistan-0-biznes-planah-postavkah-tractorov-i-master-klasse-po-rospisi-furgonov-7887//>

Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry in April 2021. At it, the parties “discussed not only the development of bilateral trade, but also the possibilities of increasing investment cooperation, industrial cooperation, creating joint companies and production facilities, noting industry, agriculture, pharmaceuticals, as well as education, information technology and logistics among the priority areas of interaction<sup>508</sup>.” At the fifth meeting of the council, the Belarusian side largely specified the key areas of cooperation with Pakistani partners, noting among them “increasing the volume of mutual sales of traditional products, creating joint production of Belarusian equipment in Pakistan, as well as joint production of surgical instruments and leather products in Belarus. It is promising to create joint clusters for the production of popular medicines; this can happen both in Belarus and in Pakistan<sup>509</sup>.” In addition, the issues of attracting Pakistani capital for the implementation of projects to modernize Belarusian enterprises in the textile industry, the development of joint production of agricultural products, and the implementation of joint projects in the scientific and technical sphere with access to the production cycle are relevant now. The project to create a university of applied technologies in Pakistan is also relevant in order to reach a qualitatively new level of professional and technical training of Pakistani specialists using Belarusian educational technologies.

If we take into account such a priority of interaction as agriculture, we note that in 2020, about three hundred units of Belarusian agricultural equipment - tractors and combines - were sold to Pakistan. In 2021, Minsk and Islamabad intended to increase this figure to three thousand units. At the same time, at the fifth meeting of the business council, the idea of creating an assembly production of Belarusian tractors on Pakistani soil was discussed. “We are talking about assembling 10 thousand tractors a year in Pakistan, this project is in progress today and preliminary documents have been signed<sup>510</sup>.”

Another promising area of Belarusian-Pakistani business interaction is the development of exchange trading, which can give new impetus to the

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<sup>508</sup> Zalesky, B.L. The key task is to realize the potential of cooperation / B.L. Zalesky // Materials for the XVII International Scientific and Practical Conference, Novinata for Science - 2021, May 17 - 25, 2021: Sofia. “Byal GRAD-BG”. – P. 19.

<sup>509</sup> Borisevich: relations between Belarus and Pakistan are becoming strategic [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/borisevich-otnosheniya-belarusi-i-pakistan-priobretajut-strategicheskij-harakter-462932-2021/>

<sup>510</sup> Belarus and Pakistan are considering the possibility of creating an assembly plant for Belarusian tractors [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-pakistan-rassmatrivajut-vozmozhnost-sozdaniya-sborochnogo-proizvodstva-belorusskih-tractorov-462934-2021/>

development of bilateral trade and economic relations. In particular, the Pakistani side sees significant potential here “primarily in such areas as agriculture, woodworking, metallurgy and petrochemistry<sup>511</sup>.” The fact is that, according to both sides, the Belarusian-Pakistani trade turnover is still small - just over \$50 million in 2020. The significant potential for its growth through the exchange mechanism lies in the fact that “Pakistan is one of the world’s largest exporters of rice, wheat and other grains<sup>512</sup>.” The textile industry is also developed there. The Belarusian Universal Commodity Exchange (BUCE) is ready to relieve Pakistani companies from most of the problems associated with entering the Belarusian market and minimize their possible risks. In addition, with the help of the Belarusian exchange platform, exporters from Pakistan could supply their goods to the countries of the European Union, where BUCE has about four thousand participants accredited. In turn, Belarusian enterprises could successfully export chemical and petrochemical products to the Pakistani market, which are traditionally in high demand there.

Let us remind you that over the eight months of 2021, trade turnover between Belarus and Pakistan exceeded \$53 million. At the same time, “the export of Belarusian goods amounted to \$44.3 million...”<sup>513</sup>, and the positive trade balance for the Belarusian side amounted to more than \$35 million. The dynamics of these indicators indicate that the growth potential here is far from being exhausted. Opportunities for expanding trade and economic cooperation between the parties are very diverse, and plans for their implementation are specific and realistic.

As for **the United Arab Emirates** (UAE), trade and economic relations with this state, located in the Middle East and the Persian Gulf region, have been developing particularly intensively in the Republic of Belarus in recent years. “Belarus is steadily increasing the supply of goods and services to the UAE <...>. The main items of Belarusian export are petrochemical products, wood processing, food products and various types of equipment. In the service

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<sup>511</sup> Pakistan is ready to trade with Belarus through the BUCE platform [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/pakistan-gotov-torgovat-s-belarusju-cherez-ploschadku-butb-462927-2021/>

<sup>512</sup> BUCE opens up broad prospects for the development of mutual trade between Belarus and Pakistan - Ambassador [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-otkryvaet-shirokie-perspektivy-dlja-razvitiya-vzaimnoj-torgovli-belarusi-i-pakistana-posol-453692-2021/>

<sup>513</sup> Trade and economic relations between the Republic of Belarus and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : [https://pakistan.mfa.gov.by/ru/trade\\_and\\_economic\\_bilateral\\_relations/](https://pakistan.mfa.gov.by/ru/trade_and_economic_bilateral_relations/)

sector, computer and transport services are actively exported <sup>514</sup>. " The dynamics of the development of these bilateral ties is eloquently illustrated by the fact that "trade turnover has tripled over the past five years, investment has increased more than 10-fold since 2011. <sup>515</sup>"

A good example of the expansion of bilateral Belarusian-Emirati interaction in the investment field in recent years is "the largest project in the field of construction and real estate, which is being implemented in Minsk under the patronage of the founder of the world-famous company Emaar . " <sup>516</sup>Let us recall that the Minsk City Executive Committee concluded with the Emirati company Riverside Development Holdings Limited agreement on the construction of the "Experimental Multifunctional Complex "North Coast" facility, which will be located within the boundaries of the Minsk Ring Road - Pobediteley Avenue - Orlovskaya Street - Tsnianskoye Reservoir. The cost of the project is four billion dollars. In this complex, "residential buildings with all the necessary engineering and transport infrastructure, social facilities and public purposes with a total area of more than 6 million square meters will be built. m. The construction of the National Exhibition Center, the Institute of Artificial Intelligence and the Minsk International Trade Center is also envisaged <sup>517</sup>. "

Among other Belarusian regions that are successfully developing mutually beneficial ties with partners from the UAE, one can name the Brest region. "Over the past [2021] year, foreign trade turnover between the Brest region and the UAE increased 1.5 times and exceeded \$5 million. This is a small amount against the backdrop of \$3 billion in exports in the region as a whole. But the market is promising... <sup>518</sup>" The high interest of Brest region

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<sup>514</sup> Golovchenko: Belarus is interested in expanding cooperation with the UAE in the field of trade and investment [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/golovchenko-belarus-zainteresovana-v-rashshirenii-sotrudnichestva-s-oae-v-sfere-torgovli-i-investitsij-470873-2021/>

<sup>515</sup> Chervyakov: The National Day of Belarus at EXPO 2020 will make it possible to show the capabilities of enterprises [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/chervjakov-natsionalny-den-belarusi-na-ekspo-2020-pozvolit-pokazat-vozmozhnosti-predpriyatij-470830-2021/>

<sup>516</sup> Roman Golovchenko: At the EXPO we are working on cooperation with the countries of the Middle East and the Persian Gulf [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <http://www.government.by/ru/content/10068>

<sup>517</sup> Construction of the exhibition center in the "Northern Coast" complex in Minsk is planned to begin this year [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/stroitelstvo-vystavochnogo-tsentra-v-komplekse-severnijj-bereg-v-minske-planirujut-nachat-v-etom-godu-470841-2021/>

<sup>518</sup> Foreign trade turnover between the Brest region and the UAE increased 1.5 times [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/vneshnetorgovyj-oborot-mezhdu-brejskoj-oblastju-i-oae-vyros-v-15-raza-479871-2022/>

enterprises in the Emirati market is evidenced by the fact that managers and leading specialists of almost ten large companies in the region went to participate in the EXPO 2020 events in Dubai in January 2022. Among them are JV "Santa Bremor" LLC, JSC "Barhim", 1AK-GROUP, group of companies "STiM", Kobrin Butter and Cheese Plant, Brest Meat Processing Plant, Concern "Brestmyasomolprom", Brest Science and Technology Park and National Park "Belovezhskaya" Pushcha". As a result, they signed contracts worth 18 million dollars at the world exhibition. Including four contracts with residents from the UAE - for eight million dollars. "In particular, contracts have been concluded for the supply of milk powder and ice cream powder to the Arab market <...>. Sales of Santa Bremor products and the STiM group of companies will increase their sales volumes. "Barhim" signed an agreement with a Dubai company to promote its products on the UAE market <sup>519</sup> .”

The topic of attracting foreign investment in innovative projects in the Brest region was not left aside at the exhibition in Dubai. Thus, about two dozen Arab companies - logistics, investment, food distributors, trade in raw materials, working in the petrochemical industry - were able to familiarize themselves in detail with the proposals of the Brest free economic zone, including the production of chargers for electric vehicles and ultrasonic devices. And the Brest Science and Technology Park, the largest innovation center and the main incubator of small businesses in the region, demonstrated at EXPO 2020 the SmartBrest smart city project , showing in it not only modern technologies and solutions that already exist and work in Brest, but also something that may be of interest to large investors. In particular, they talked about the territory of innovative development, into which "the current factory quarter, bounded by Moskovskaya, Pionerskaya and Ya. Kupala streets, could turn into. The area of the site is about 120 hectares. The production buildings there remain unused <sup>520</sup> .” Potential investors are invited to create enterprises here with clean production in such areas as IT , artificial intelligence, robotics, automation, electronics, and quantum computing. The attention with which this smart city project was received by

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<sup>519</sup> Contracts worth \$18 million were concluded by enterprises of the Brest region at an exhibition in Dubai [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/kontrakty-na-18-mln-zakljuchili-predpriyatija-breestskoj-oblasti-na-vystavke-v-dubae-481397-2022/>

<sup>520</sup> Brest Technopark presents a smart city project at an exhibition in Dubai [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/breestskij-tehnopark-prezentuet-proekt-umnogo-goroda-na-vystavke-v-dubae-480835-2022/>

the presentation participants allows us to hope that SmartBrest will be able to find interested investors not only in the UAE, but also in other countries.

If we talk about relations between the Republic of Belarus and **the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**, then we must remember that in 2022 it will be a quarter of a century since the establishment of diplomatic relations between them. True, their level, of course, is still far from what it could be. But the fact is that in January 2022 the parties expressed a mutual desire to deepen and develop contacts and intensify dialogue. Minsk proceeds from the fact that “the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is a recognized leader in the Arab world, and Belarus is interested in developing relations in all areas<sup>521</sup>.” The parties today consider several vectors of joint work as the top priorities for interaction: firstly, it is necessary to significantly expand the contractual and legal basis of relations; secondly, partnerships in the economic sphere require significant intensification, since the parties “have serious potential in trade and economic cooperation<sup>522</sup>.”

As for the legal framework of Belarusian-Saudi relations, today it consists of the General Agreement, intergovernmental agreements on the avoidance of double taxation and on mutual protection of investments, on cooperation in the field of science and technology, interdepartmental memorandums in the field of sports, education, cooperation between the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus and the Scientific and Technological City named after King Abdulaziz, as well as “a cooperation agreement between the BelCCI and the Council of the KSA Chamber of Commerce and Industry, a Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation between the Ministry of Justice of Belarus and the Ministry of Justice of Saudi Arabia<sup>523</sup>.”

Speaking about the need to intensify Belarusian-Saudi trade and economic cooperation, we note that back in December 2020, the parties agreed to “work on the next meeting of the joint intergovernmental committee<sup>524</sup>.”

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<sup>521</sup> Andreichenko: Belarus is interested in deepening and developing contacts with Saudi Arabia [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/andreichenko-belarus-zainteresovana-uglubljat-i-razvivat-kontakty-s-saudovskoj-araviej-480335-2022/>

<sup>522</sup> Kochanova: Belarus attaches great importance to friendly relations with Saudi Arabia [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/kochanova-belarus-pridaet-bolshoe-znachenie-druzheskim-otnoshenijam-s-saudovskoj-araviej-480404-2022>

<sup>523</sup> Political cooperation [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : [https://uae.mfa.gov.by/ru/bilateral\\_relations/KSA/politics/](https://uae.mfa.gov.by/ru/bilateral_relations/KSA/politics/)

<sup>524</sup> Belarus and Saudi Arabia will work on holding a meeting of the joint intergovernmental committee [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/belarus-i-saudovskaja-aravija-prorabotajut-provedenie-zasedanija-sovmestnogo-mezhpravkomiteta-420253-2020/>

The fact is that the first two meetings of this committee took place in 2015 and 2016 in Riyadh and Minsk, respectively. At the first stage, the parties agreed to create a Belarusian-Saudi business council so that it would become a platform for fruitful interaction between representatives of the business communities of the two countries. At the same time, “a contract was concluded for the supply of soil mixtures from the Belarusian enterprise AridGrow Production . ”<sup>525</sup> During the second meeting of the intergovernmental committee, a wide range of issues of cooperation in the field of economics, trade, investment, industry, agriculture, pharmaceuticals, water resources, higher education, science and technology, among the business circles of the two countries, were considered. And at the site of the Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Belarusian-Saudi business forum and contact and cooperation exchange took place, in which 18 Saudi and more than 70 Belarusian companies and organizations took part. At that time, “Belarus supplied 37 commodity items to Saudi Arabia, including machinery and complex technical equipment<sup>526</sup>. ” At the forum, Saudi partners were offered a much wider range of mechanical engineering products, including special ones, as well as high-tech products in the field of instrument engineering. The Saudi side, in turn, expressed “interest in cooperation with Belarusian enterprises in the fields of information and communication technologies, real estate, security, agriculture and engineering<sup>527</sup>. ”

One of the most promising areas for intensifying trade and economic cooperation is increasing food supplies from Belarus to the Saudi market. Suffice it to say that “the export of Belarusian food products and agricultural raw materials to Saudi Arabia in 2020 increased 3.1 times compared to 2019 and amounted to \$6.2 million. Belarus supplied skim milk powder, whey, and jams to Saudi Arabia , fruit purees, eggs. During January – March 2021, products worth \$1.7 million were exported (an increase of 24.3%)<sup>528</sup>. ” Now the plans of Belarusian manufacturers include continued interaction with the

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<sup>525</sup> Belarus and Saudi Arabia agreed to create a joint business council [Electronic resource]. – 2015. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-saudovskaja-aravija-dogovorilis-o-sozdani-sovmestnogo-delovogo-soveta-2523-2015>

<sup>526</sup> Kiseleva, O. Belarus intends to seriously expand the range of products on the Saudi Arabian market / O. Kiseleva // [Electronic resource]. – 2016. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-namerena-serjezno-rasshirit-assortiment-produktsii-na-rynke-saudovskoj-aravii-193602-2016/>

<sup>527</sup> Business forum “Belarus – Saudi Arabia” [Electronic resource]. – 2016. – URL : <https://www.cci.by/o-palate/novosti/biznes-forum-belarus-saudovskaya-araviya/#>

<sup>528</sup> Belarus is interested in increasing food supplies to Saudi Arabia - Krupko [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-zainteresovana-v-naraschivanii-postavok-prodovolstvija-v-saudovskuju-araviju-krupko-441447-2021/>

Saudi Food and Medicine Agency on issues of accreditation for the right of their supplies. First of all, we are talking about dairy products such as butter, cheeses, skim milk powder and whole milk powder, and in the future – meat products – beef and poultry produced in accordance with Halal requirements.

Let us note that the market of this Persian Gulf country is already being successfully developed by a number of Belarusian exporters. Thus, in July 2021, the first batch of concentrated milk was sent to Saudi Arabia by the Rogachevsky milk canning plant. “This happened thanks to a contract concluded with one of the leaders in this country in distribution, which covers retail chains, shops, restaurants, cafes<sup>529</sup>.” Another interesting example in this series is the Polotsk Dairy Plant, which in 2021 more than doubled its export volumes, the geography of which is already 22 countries. “It is also planned to ship milk powder to Saudi Arabia in the near future<sup>530</sup>.”

All these facts indicate that the parties have a certain groundwork for the successful development of mutually beneficial relations in the post-Covid period, the starting point for which may well be 2022. There are a lot of proposals, directions and initiatives here from both sides.

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<sup>529</sup> Zalesky, B.L. Export of food and agricultural products: growth in supplies and expansion of geography / B.L. Zalesky // Materials for the XVII International Scientific and Practical Conference, Scientific potential for the world - 2021, 17 - 25 September 2021: Sofia. “Byal GRAD-BG”. – P. 5.

<sup>530</sup> The Polotsk Dairy Plant more than doubled its exports in 2021 [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/bolee-chem-v-dva-raza-uvelichil-eksport-v-2021-godu-polotskij-molochnyj-kombinat-479923-2022>

## Belarus – Asia: growth points give results

Asian countries in 2021 retained their role as points of growth in Belarus' foreign policy and foreign trade activity. The implementation of the policy of reorienting trade and economic cooperation of our republic towards the far arc states “made it possible to increase Belarusian exports to this region to 2.4 billion US dollars in 2021 (114.3 percent compared to 2.1 billion in 2020.<sup>531</sup>” At the same time, active interaction with many countries of the Asian continent is observed in 2022. Among them are Vietnam, India and Syria.

2022 marks 30 years since the establishment of diplomatic relations between Belarus and **Vietnam**. This Southeast Asian country is one of those with which the Belarusian side is developing large-scale cooperation in all areas of bilateral cooperation, and “diversification of trade and deepening economic cooperation with which are an important prerequisite for the growth of the export-oriented Belarusian economy<sup>532</sup>. ” This is evidenced, in particular, by the fact that in 2021, in order to expand the diplomatic presence in the financial and industrial centers of the Asian continent, the Belarusian government decided to open a consulate general in the Vietnamese city of Ho Chi Minh City.

Let us also recall that in 2021 the trade turnover between the two countries exceeded \$200 million. “Belarus exported potash fertilizers, livestock products, instrument-making products, medicines and cosmetics<sup>533</sup>. ” And in terms of developing industrial cooperation in Hung Yen province, “key Belarusian-Vietnamese projects are being implemented, including the assembly production of MAZ trucks (JV Maz-Asia LLC) and the production of dairy products from Belarusian raw materials (“Au Viet Milk”)<sup>534</sup>. ” And important in this regard was the entry into force in 2021 of “an additional protocol to the agreement on industrial assembly with Vietnam, which creates

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<sup>531</sup> Review of the results of the foreign policy of the Republic of Belarus and the activities of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2021 [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://mfa.gov.by/publication/reports/c0b615e3c82db7a8.html>

<sup>532</sup> Zalesky, B. Journalism of regional communities. Theory And practice / B. Zalesky . – LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing GmbH & Co. KG , 2013. – pp. 99-100.

<sup>533</sup> The Ambassador of Vietnam sees the potential for doubling trade turnover with Belarus [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/posol-vjetnama-vidit-potentsial-dlja-udvoenija-tovarooborota-s-belarusiju-493021-2022/>

<sup>534</sup> Belarus and Vietnam discussed prospects for the development of joint ventures [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/belarus-i-vjetnam-obsudili-perspektivy-razvitija-sovmestnyh-predpriyatij-478965-2022/>

favorable conditions for the localization and development of assembly production of MAZ OJSC<sup>535</sup>.” And the issues of supplying Belarusian tractors for work in Vietnamese rice fields and quarry equipment of the Belarusian Automobile Plant are currently being worked out. In addition, there is interest from Vietnam in organizing the production of fire fighting equipment and sewing protective clothing for fire services using Belarusian technologies. In particular, in April 2022, the parties already discussed “practical steps of cooperation to organize joint production of Belarusian special-purpose equipment in Vietnam, as well as to produce equipment for the Vietnamese fire services<sup>536</sup>.”

Another area of Belarusian-Vietnamese interaction, which, apparently, will be significantly intensified in 2022, is food supplies from Belarus. Back in 2020, after passing through all stages of approval and certification, full-fledged work began on supplying Belarusian dairy products to Vietnam. Now similar work is being carried out on certification on the Vietnamese market of meat products from Belarus - pork and beef. And there is every reason to believe that 2022 will become a kind of “growth point” in the development of this type of Belarusian supplies.

What exports from Belarus to this country in Southeast Asia will soon be like from manufacturers of the confectionery, alcohol, brewing, sugar, canning and food concentrate industries can be judged by the collective stand of the Belgospisheprom concern at the 31st international exhibition Vietnam Expo is one of the largest in this region of the Asian continent, held in April 2022 and attended by more than 350 companies from 16 countries, including Russia, China, the USA, Japan, India, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, and Cuba. 13 enterprises of the concern presented their products in Hanoi: “Krinitsa”, “Belsolod”, “Spartak”, “Minsk Kristall”, Minsk Sparkling Wine Factory, “Slodych”, “Kommunarka”, “Krasny Pishevik”, “Mashpischeprod”, “Lidapischeconcentrates””, Malorita canning and vegetable drying plant, Minsk margarine plant and Pinsk winery<sup>537</sup>. ” And they didn’t just introduce

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<sup>535</sup> Review of the results of the foreign policy of the Republic of Belarus and the activities of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2021 [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://mfa.gov.by/publication/reports/c0b615e3c82db7a8.html>

<sup>536</sup> Belarus and Vietnam are exploring the possibility of joint production of equipment for fire services [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/belarus-i-vjetnam-prorabatyvajut-vozmozhnost-sovmestnogo-proizvodstva-ekipirovki-dlja-pozharnyh-sluzhb-494398-2022/>

<sup>537</sup> Belgospisheprom enterprises presented their products at an exhibition in Vietnam [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/predpriyatija-belgospisheproma-predstavili-produktsiju-na-vystavke-vo-vjetname-495887-2022/>

it. For example, Belsolod OJSC even signed a contract for the supply of light malt with Trust & Future Viet Nam Joint Stock Company .

An important detail: at this exhibition, the Belarusian national exposition received the status of “Special Guest”, which “involves central placement in the exhibition pavilion, active advertising and information support and holding large-scale congress events, including the Belarusian-Vietnamese business forum”<sup>538</sup>, the purpose of which is to search for business-partners and conclusion of export contracts. And this status turned out to be very useful for the scientific and technical section of the Belarusian exposition, where more than a hundred innovative developments in the field of high-tech equipment were presented. About 30 of them came from the Belarusian State University - food additives, pharmaceuticals, technological equipment. Among them are “antitumor drugs “Cisplacel”, “Prospidelong”, “Temodex”, aimed at counteracting malignant tumors of the head, neck, stomach cancer, and a medical unit for general hyperthermia “Ptich-M” for the treatment of oncological diseases of internal organs<sup>539</sup>. ” The innovative series of biological products for the treatment and prevention of diseases of farm animals also attracted the attention of exhibition visitors. Finally, another exhibition novelty from BSU specialists is “Smart Windows”. This invention, which has no analogues in the post-Soviet space, protects the room from sunlight, ultraviolet radiation and partially blocks infrared, which makes it possible to avoid curtains and blinds. So, in the field of scientific, technical and innovative developments, the Belarusian side has something to offer its Vietnamese partners, which, of course, will be reflected in new contracts.

Speaking about **India** , we should first of all recall that April 2022 also marks 30 years since the establishment of diplomatic relations between Belarus and this South Asian country. In Minsk, the development of cooperation with it is considered “as one of the priorities of Belarus’ foreign policy in Asia. Today India is a powerful modern state with a developed economy, a large market, and serious scientific and industrial potential<sup>540</sup>. ” And the existing

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<sup>538</sup> The national exposition of Belarus will be presented at Vietnam Expo in April [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/natsionalnaja-ekspozitsija-belarusi-budet-predstavlena-na-vietnam-expo-v-aprele-485336-2022/>

<sup>539</sup> About 30 scientific and technical developments will be presented by BSU at the International Exhibition VietnamExpo -2022 [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/okolo-30-nauchno-tehnicheskikh-razrabotok-predstavit-bgu-na-mezhdunarodnoj-vystavke-vietnamexpo-2022-495450-2022/>

<sup>540</sup> Andreichenko: relations between Belarus and India are developing on the principles of equality, trust and respect [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/andreichenko-otnoshenija-belarusi-i-indii-razvivajutsja-na-printsipah-ravenstva-doverija-i-uvazhenija-479047-2022/>

experience of diplomatic relations in both multilateral and bilateral formats shows that “India is one of those partner countries of Belarus in Asia with which large-scale interaction is developing in all areas of cooperation<sup>541</sup>. ”

By developing interaction on the principles of equality, trust and respect, the parties in 2019-2021 were able to achieve an annual trade turnover that consistently exceeded half a billion dollars. But “as in any relationship, there are areas that are not fully developed. This is especially true for trade and economic relations<sup>542</sup>. ” That is why 2022 in cooperation between Belarus and India can be called the time to identify new areas of development. And Belarusian regions are now showing great activity in this process.

For example, **the Grodno** region plans to significantly strengthen cooperation with India in pharmaceuticals, high technology and education. In this regard, the project for the construction of a pharmaceutical plant in Skidel with Indian capital has great potential. The enterprise has been built. Now c <...> it is important to jointly bring it to sustainable operation, ensure the expansion of the range of products, and realize its export potential<sup>543</sup>. ” As for interaction in the field of education, 150 Indian citizens are studying at the Grodno State Medical University alone in the current academic year. They also exist at the Yanka Kupala State University of Grodno. And their number, apparently, will continue to increase there. In the near future, new joint projects in the fields of pharmaceuticals, chemical industry, production of agricultural machinery and food products, including dairy products, will not go unnoticed.

In **the Gomel** region, the main growth points in cooperation with India should be innovative technologies, IT and medicine. Experience shows that interaction between the Belarusian southeastern region and Indian partners has been, as they say, growing in recent years. “Since 2018, the growth rate of trade turnover has more than doubled. In 2021, this figure was 508.4%. In India, such products from the industrial sector of the Gomel region as cellulose, timber, equipment for controlling electric current, and stone products are in

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<sup>541</sup> Zalesky, B. International relations and media. A view from Belarus / B. Zalesky. – Palmarium Academic Publishing , 2014. – P. 452.

<sup>542</sup> Kochanova: India is an old friend and reliable partner for Belarus in Asia [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/kochanova-indija-dlja-belarusi-davnij-drug-i-nadezhnyj-partner-v-azii-482540-2022/>

<sup>543</sup> Pharmaceuticals, IT and education: Grodno region is increasing cooperation with India [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/farmatsevtika-it-sfera-i-obrazovanie-grodnenskaja-oblast-naraschivaet-sotrudnichestvo-s-indiej-485022-2022/>

demand<sup>544</sup>. ” In 2022, the parties put into practice the issue of resuming the production of Gomel combines for Indian agriculture. A separate topic is partnership in the educational sector, which already has its own history. The fact is that the first Indian graduate graduated from Gomel State Medical University (GSMU) back in 2005. Since then, only 178 representatives of India have received a diploma from this university. In 2022, another 51 graduates will be added. In total, 290 students from this South Asian country are currently studying at GSMU. And in the near future there is a more active involvement of Gomel State University named after Francis Skorina in this cooperation.

**The Mogilev region** also plans to expand the areas of interaction with India in the near future . Among the promising areas here are agriculture, education, textile industry and innovative technologies. In 2021, trade turnover between the parties amounted to almost six million dollars. The main supplies from the Belarusian region were carbon black, newsprint and timber, and from India - complex synthetic threads, medicines, shoe parts, parts for internal combustion engines. And there is every reason to believe that this list of mutual supplies will only expand. In particular, it successfully cooperates with the Indian market of private enterprise “Technolit”, which specializes in the production of components and spare parts for various equipment. It receives blanks from India, which are processed here using high-precision equipment and then sent to other countries. Export has been established to more than 30 countries <...>. In addition, discussions have already begun on the supply of finished Technolit products to the Indian market<sup>545</sup>. ” Another interesting example of cooperation in the field of innovative technologies is Energytechgreen LLC, operating in Mogilev with Indian capital, registered in August 2021. “The main area of activity is environmentally friendly innovation. Here they are engaged in the restoration (regeneration) of all types of batteries used in automobile, railway and river transport, special equipment, industry and communications, wind turbines and solar panels<sup>546</sup>. ” Significantly intensifies cooperation with the Indian side and the Mogilev FEZ, which in March 2022, at the EXPO 2020 World Exhibition in Dubai, signed

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<sup>544</sup> Innovative technologies, IT and medicine: India and the Gomel region are ready to develop new areas [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/innovatsionnye-tehnologii-it-i-meditsina-indija-i-gomelskaja-oblast-gotovy-razvivat-novye-sfery-492016-2022>

<sup>545</sup> Strakhar: Mogilev “Technolit” shows its effectiveness in difficult conditions [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/strahar-mogilevskij-tehnolit-v-neprostyh-uslovijah-pokazyvaet-svoju-effektivnost-493160-2022>

<sup>546</sup> Agriculture, textile industry: Indian Ambassador on the need to expand cooperation [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/amp/regions/view/selskoe-hozjajstvo-tekstilnaja-promyshlennost-posol-indii-o-neobhodimosti-rashirnija-sotrudnichestva-492918-2022>

agreements with two companies from this country on the implementation of investment projects on the basis of the FEZ.

All these facts indicate that the Indian direction of cooperation is becoming increasingly in demand for the Belarusian regions. And there, significant prospects for foreign economic activity open up for them.

As for **Syria**, 30 years have passed since the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Republic of Belarus and it in August 2023. All this time, political interaction with this country is characterized by a high level and regularity of interstate contacts, the coincidence of the approaches of Minsk and Damascus to solving most international problems, and mutual support in international organizations. In the economic sphere, cooperation between the two states developed along its stable trajectory and was expressed by the supply of hundreds of Belarusian trucks to the Syrian market, and the thorough development of a project for the assembly production of Belarusian vehicles. Due to the deterioration of the internal situation in Syria in 2011, the implementation of these plans had to be slowed down. But even in the most difficult time for Damascus, the Belarusian side expressed confidence in Syria's successful recovery from the crisis and interest in the further development and strengthening of bilateral relations in all areas .

The highest level of Belarusian-Syrian interaction was noted in 2008, when the volume of bilateral trade amounted to \$85.5 million. Five years later, due to well-known events in this country, this figure decreased almost tenfold - to 8.9 million dollars. But already 2014 showed the dynamics of the beginning of overcoming the crisis on Syrian soil, which aroused hopes in Minsk for restoring the previously existing level of bilateral cooperation. And this was immediately reflected in the rapid growth of Belarusian exports to Syria to \$32.2 million, with a total trade turnover of \$33.8 million. Belarusian semi-finished products made of unalloyed steel, control and measuring instruments, medicines, and liquid crystal devices began to find their niches in the Syrian market. Against this background of the obvious revival of trade and economic relations in 2015, Minsk and Damascus began an active search for new areas of interaction in order to “not only restore the previous level of trade turnover in the best years, but also exceed it many times over<sup>547</sup>. ” At the same time, the parties decided to adhere to the principle of mutual complementarity,

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<sup>547</sup> Materials of the press conference following the visit of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belarus Vladimir Makei to Syria (February 9, 2015, Damascus) [Electronic resource]. – 2015. URL : [http://mfa.gov.by/press/news\\_mfa/b49e0d253459ccba.html](http://mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/b49e0d253459ccba.html)

under which products in which Syrians are interested are produced in Belarus, and in Syria there are a number of goods in which Belarusians are interested.

Let us recall that when in the central regions of Syria and around Damascus in 2014-2015 there was a tendency towards stabilization in the security sphere, the government of this country immediately expressed interest “in the development of trade and investment cooperation, in the resumption and expansion of cooperative ties with countries that the most difficult moments of testing <...> did not stop political, economic and other support<sup>548</sup>. ” Among these states was Belarus, which even then saw significant opportunities in intensifying interaction with Syrian partners across the entire spectrum of bilateral relations, which were based on a legal framework consisting of one and a half dozen documents. These include agreements: on trade, economic and technical cooperation; on promoting the implementation and mutual protection of investments; on the avoidance of double taxation; on military-technical cooperation; on cooperation in the field of education, science and culture; about air traffic; on scientific and technical cooperation; on international road transport of passengers and cargo. There are also agreements on bank payments in the field of agriculture, veterinary medicine, quarantine and plant protection.

Today, Minsk is well aware of the tasks facing the Syrian government in restoring the country’s infrastructure and economy, finding resources that would finance the most important projects for the state, and in this regard, they see two directions for the further development of bilateral Belarusian-Syrian interaction. It is necessary “firstly, to organize framework or umbrella agreements at the government level, to determine the basic schemes for organizing joint work. The second level is the level of business, which, on the basis of these agreements, must build mutually beneficial and safe schemes for their implementation<sup>549</sup>. ”

Note that over the 11 months of 2021, Belarusian-Syrian trade turnover increased by more than 40 percent, and exports from Belarus by almost 45 percent. The basis of Belarusian supplies were medicines, condensed and dry cream, and whey. At the same time, the Belarusian side expressed confidence

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<sup>548</sup> Development of a project to create an assembly plant for Belarusian vehicles in Syria has been resumed [Electronic resource]. – 2015. – URL : <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/vozobnovlenn-prorabotka-proekta-sozdaniya-v-sirii-sborchnogo-proizvodstva-belorusskoj-avtotehniki-155561-2015/>

<sup>549</sup> Roman Golovchenko: Belarus can provide most of Syria’s needs for mechanical engineering products [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <http://www.government.by/ru/content/10143>

that it could provide most of Syria's needs not only in these commodity items, but also in mechanical engineering products, passenger, agricultural, cargo, construction equipment, as well as "in the construction of high-quality and comfortable housing <sup>550</sup>." The fact is that today in this country work is underway to restore industry, agriculture, construction, and the service sector. Suffice it to say that "115 projects are being implemented here to recreate water and electricity supply systems, transport infrastructure, the oil and gas industry, and telecommunications. The total cost of the work is estimated at \$540 billion. In this regard, the country needs a wide range of materials, services and technologies <sup>551</sup>."

Rebuild was organized in September 2021 in Damascus Syria, which brought together 190 companies from 25 countries, including Russia, China, India, and Cuba. It included ten thematic sections: "Construction technologies and building materials"; "Finishing and decorative products"; "Kitchens, bathrooms, plumbing, water supply technologies"; "Air conditioning, heating, lighting, power generation and electrical engineering"; "Oil and gas"; "Ecology and infrastructure management"; "Insurance and Banking"; "Communication Systems"; "Information technologies and software"; "Food and drinks."

For the first time at this exhibition, held since 2015, an exposition of Belarusian manufacturers Made was also organized in Belarus, within which a number of domestic enterprises presented their products. Thus, the Minsk Tractor Plant, more than two thousand of whose machines are now working in the fields of Syria, demonstrated new tractor models adapted for work in hot climates. The Minsk Motor Plant showed a line of modern diesel engines and spare parts for them, and the Minsk Automobile Plant showed the capabilities of its products. The Brest Electrotechnical Plant presented equipment for railway automation, telemechanics and communications, which, as it turned out, fully complies with the requirements of the Syrian market, since "Syria's railway infrastructure was designed according to Soviet standards. Today,

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<sup>550</sup> Belarus and Syria are interested in cooperation in the construction sector [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/belarus-i-sirija-zainteresovany-sotrudnichat-v-stroitelnoj-sfere-481516-2022/>

<sup>551</sup> Belarusian companies will take part in the largest industrial exhibition in Syria [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/beloruskie-kompanii-primut-uchastie-v-krupnejshej-promyshlennoj-vystavke-v-sirii-458048-2021/>

Syria's railway system is 80% destroyed, so its restoration has become an important task for the government<sup>552</sup>. "

Another participant in the Belarusian exposition, the European Agricultural Agency Spetsstroy, aroused considerable interest from the Syrian side due to the fact that it specializes in the construction of buildings and structures, including multi-storey ones, carries out their dismantling and demolition, is engaged in sorting and processing construction waste, and also builds dairy farms. And a group of companies supplying agricultural complexes from various manufacturers - Belagro Bel - took part in this business forum in a remote format, which did not prevent it from conducting business negotiations with potential partners.

In general, representatives of the Belarusian side, within the framework of this international exhibition forum, were able to discuss with representatives of the Syrian business circles a wide range of issues on cooperation "in the field of water treatment plants, construction work in Syria, the supply of agricultural equipment"<sup>553</sup>, in the field of selection in livestock farming and the creation of dairy products farms, as well as promising directions for promoting the export of Belarusian goods and services to the Syrian market. All these facts indicate that the participation of Belarusian business entities in the industrial exhibition Rebuild Syria was another concrete step forward towards developing the Syrian market both in the field of mechanical engineering and tractor manufacturing, and in the field of housing, industrial and road construction.

Another important aspect in the context of this topic is relations in the information sphere between Belarus and Syria, which are based on the provisions of the relevant agreement of March 11, 1998, as well as the Cooperation Agreement between the National State Television and Radio Company of the Republic of Belarus and the General Organization for Television and Radio Broadcasting of Syria dated November 12, 2007 and the Memorandum of Understanding between the Belarusian Telegraph Agency and the Syrian Arab News Agency (SANA) dated November 27, 2008. These documents note "the importance of objective information support for interstate

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<sup>552</sup> Sluka: Syria today needs modern achievements of the Belarusian economy [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/sluka-sirija-segodnja-nuzhdaetsja-v-sovremennyh-dostizhenijah-beloruskoj-ekonomiki-462466-2021/>

<sup>553</sup> Syria will study the experience of building dairy farms in Belarus [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/sirija-izuchit-opyt-stroitelstva-molochno-tovarnyh-ferm-v-belarusi-462158-2021/>

cooperation. At the same time, the role of the media in strengthening mutual understanding between countries and peoples is especially emphasized <sup>554</sup>. ” After all, the thematic spectrum of Belarusian-Syrian interaction should be actively expanding today. This is cooperation in the field of electricity; resumption of supplies of Belarusian vehicles to the Syrian market; the creation of an assembly plant for equipment at the Minsk Automobile Plant in Syria; expanding regional cooperation; supply of Belarusian construction equipment for the needs of public works related to the reconstruction of Syria. Finally, cooperation in the field of science and technology, within the framework of which “Belarusian and Syrian scientific institutes signed 7 “pilot” contracts for joint research work <sup>555</sup>. ” In this regard, the task of journalists is to comprehensively reflect these trends in the media sphere.

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<sup>554</sup> Cooperation between Belarus and Syria in the information sphere [Electronic resource]. – 2015. – URL : <http://mininform.gov.by/special/ru/news-ru/view/sotrudnichestvo-belarusi-i-sirii-v-informatsionnoj-sfere-275/>

<sup>555</sup> Cooperation in the field of science, education, culture [Electronic resource]. – 2015. – URL : [http://syria.mfa.gov.by/ru/bilateral\\_relations/cooperation/ec5318cc4fb8b9c5.html](http://syria.mfa.gov.by/ru/bilateral_relations/cooperation/ec5318cc4fb8b9c5.html)

## Belarus – China: the engine of development is cooperation between regions

In 2019, Belarusian-Chinese relations of trusting comprehensive strategic partnership and mutually beneficial cooperation continued to develop intensively, demonstrating impressive dynamics. Suffice it to say that “in January-June of this [2019] year, the volume of trade between China and Belarus reached \$2.053 billion, an increase of 22.3% compared to the same period last year; exports of Belarusian goods to China increased by 81.9%.”

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Among the Belarusian regions that made a significant contribution to the achievement of such indicators, one should name **the Minsk region**, whose exports “to China over the 9 months of the current [2019] more than doubled - from \$178 million to \$367 million (growth rate - 206%”<sup>557</sup>. The basis of these supplies were potassium fertilizers, as well as meat and dairy products of such enterprises of the capital region as OJSC Agrokombinat Dzerzhinsky, LLC Veles-Mit, OJSC Smolevichi Broiler, KUP Minoblmyasomolprom, OJSC Minsk Dairy Plant No. 1”, OJSC “Slutsk Cheese-Making Plant”. More than \$17 million worth of meat and dairy products were shipped to China and, apparently, the scale of these supplies will only increase.

The volume of direct Chinese investment in the economy of the Minsk region continues to increase in 2019. Their increase over the nine months of this year has already amounted to almost ten percent, reaching a value of 115 million dollars. Their main volume - more than 90 million dollars - was raised through the development of production for the assembly of passenger cars at SJSC BELGIE. But there are other interesting examples. In particular, in November 2019, the first stage of the Belkali-Migao LLC plant opened in the Soligorsk district of the Minsk region. This is not only the first joint project of OJSC Belaruskali and the Chinese company Migao Corporation Limited, but also the first potassium nitrate production plant on Belarusian soil, the products of which are expected to be sold to the countries of the European Union,

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<sup>556</sup> Grishkevich, A. The development of China cannot do without the support and assistance of Belarus - Cui Qiming // A. Grishkevich [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/razvitie-kitaja-ne-mozhet-obojsis-bez-podderzhki-i-pomoschi-belarusi-tsuj-tsimin-367736-2019/>

<sup>557</sup> The Minsk region more than doubled its exports to China in January-September [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/minskaja-oblast-uvlechila-eksport-produktsii-v-kitaj-za-janvar-sentjabr-bolee-chem-v-dva-raza-369062-2019/>

Turkey, Russia, China, as well as to enter the markets of North Africa and Latin America. Today, this enterprise with a total staff of 150 people is already working around the clock. It is also important that “30 graduates of the Soligorsk Mining and Chemical College were employed in new jobs. The annual capacity of the first stage of the new plant is 80 thousand tons of potassium nitrate and 62 thousand tons of granular nitrogen-potassium fertilizers<sup>558</sup>. ” Within the next year, the second stage of the Belkali-Migao plant should be completed and put into operation, allowing the annual capacity of the enterprise to be increased to 160 thousand tons of potassium nitrate, which, in addition to agriculture, is also successfully used in the metallurgical industry, glass production, pyrotechnics and explosives.

A significant event for the development of the Chinese vector of international cooperation in the Minsk region was the participation of five enterprises of the capital Belarusian region in the second international exhibition of imported goods and services China International Import Expo in **Shanghai**, held in November 2019. One of the exhibition participants, OJSC Slutsk Cheese-Making Plant, even managed to conclude a “product supply agreement for \$2 million with the Greenland Group corporation. Another document was signed with Shanhai Pujia Food Technology Co.”<sup>559</sup>. And the Chinese-Belarusian industrial park “Great Stone”, located in the Minsk region, within the framework of the same exhibition in Shanghai, registered two new residents at once - “NTOOO “Satellite Communications of Eurasia” (PRC), which will create a research center in the park for the development of satellite communication and control systems, as well as Flex-n-Roll Pro LLC (Belarus, USA) with a project in the field of industrial printing<sup>560</sup>. ”

Another important factor that contributes to the successful promotion of enterprises in the Minsk region to the Chinese market is the development of effective interregional interaction with partners in China, among which, first of all, **Guangdong province should be mentioned**, with which the Belarusian capital region signed a road map in November 2019 cooperation for 2020-2021. This document, according to the parties, will allow the formation of a

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<sup>558</sup> “Belaruskali” and the Chinese Migao launched an enterprise for the production of potassium nitrate [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belaruskali-j-kitajskij-migao-zapustili-predprijatje-po-proizvodstvu-nitrata-kalija-368329-2019/>

<sup>559</sup> Minsk region and Chinese Guangdong province signed a cooperation roadmap [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/minskaja-oblast-i-kitajskaja-provintsija-guandun-podpisali-dorozhnyu-kartu-sotrudnichestva-368717-2019/>

<sup>560</sup> A research center for satellite communication systems will be created in “Great Stone” [Electronic resource]. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/nauchno-issledovatel'skij-tsentr-sputnikovyh-sistem-kommunikatsii-sozdatut-v-velikom-kamne-368325-2019/>

common market on the principles of transparency and mutual benefit, and will also strengthen trade and economic ties. Among the main goals here is direct cooperation between regions. In particular, we are already talking about creating a joint milk processing enterprise in a Chinese province. And in the Chinese-Belarusian industrial park “Great Stone” a project related to medical equipment can be implemented. The point is that a Chinese enterprise from Guangdong province, interested in this project, “has already passed certification for the European market and is interested in locating production in the Great Stone.” <...> This will be a large-scale and significant project not only for the Minsk region, but also for the country <sup>561</sup>. ”

Among other Chinese regions that have noticeably intensified their interaction with Belarusian partners recently, one should also mention the province of **Sichuan** . In November 2019, in the international railway port of its administrative center - a city with a population of 20 million Chengdu - the registration of the Belarusian National E-Commerce Pavilion took place, the completion of construction and installation work on which is scheduled for early 2020. Here, in seven zones on an area of almost one and a half thousand square meters, Belarusian companies of various directions will be able to present their export potential, including food and drinks, agricultural products and ancillary products, for which premises for negotiations and business organization will also be equipped -forums. The very location of this pavilion is very promising - in a free trade zone with good logistics, since there is a railway port and two large wholesale markets nearby, each of which employs more than seven thousand Chinese wholesale operators. It is also interesting that the pavilion will be presented in the form of the Mir Castle and decorated using Belarusian national symbols. It is also important that “on the basis of the Belarusian National Pavilion, China and Belarus are ready to create a comprehensive bilateral platform of relations, which will include such areas as economy, culture, education, tourism, investment, and services <sup>562</sup>. ”

**from the Gomel region** are going to actively use the potential of the Belarusian National Pavilion in Chengdu . These will mainly be producers of food products - “meat and dairy <...>, alcohol, as well as confectionery, which

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<sup>561</sup> The Minsk region more than doubled its exports to China in January-September [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/minskaja-oblast-uvulichila-ekSPORT-produktsii-v-kitaj-za-janvar-sentjabr-bolee-chem-v-dva-raza-369062-2019/>

<sup>562</sup> A ceremony to present the plaque of the Belarusian National Pavilion took place in Chengdu, China [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/v-kitajskom-chendu-sostojalas-tseremonija-vruchenija-tablichki-belorusskogo-natsionalnogo-paviljona-368575-2019/>

has already proven itself well in foreign markets<sup>563</sup>. ” This is explained by a number of reasons. Thus, back in May 2015, the Gomel region and the Sichuan province signed a cooperation agreement, which provided for the organization of interaction on the principles of partnership, equality, trust and mutual benefit in such areas as the economy, agriculture, healthcare and culture, education, sports and tourism . In addition, “to develop cooperation in the above areas, direct contacts and twinning relations will be established between the cities of the two regions<sup>564</sup>. ”

And, indeed, three years later - in August 2018 - the agreement on the establishment of sister city relations was signed by the administrative centers of the region and province - Gomel and Chengdu, declaring their intention to develop interaction in trade, education, culture, tourism, especially focusing on large prospects for fruitful cooperation in the economic sphere. The fact is that Chengdu is called a window that opens the way for international cooperation between the western part of China and European countries. The “Chengdu – Europe” freight train of international importance, connecting China, Kazakhstan, Russia, Belarus, has already become a kind of calling card of this Chinese city<sup>565</sup>. In addition to the economy, the parties see education and healthcare among the promising areas for the development of partnerships, as evidenced by the documents signed at the same time, in August 2018 - the Memorandum of Strategic Partnership between the Chengdu Health Investment Corporation and the Gomel Regional Clinical Hospital for Disabled Persons of the Patriotic War and the Agreement on establishing cooperation between Wuhou Higher Secondary School and Gymnasium No. 71 of Gomel.

Among the Gomel enterprises whose products will be presented at the Belarusian National Pavilion in Chengdu, one should name, first of all, Milkavita OJSC, which in seven months of 2019 shipped seven times (!) more of its products to the Chinese market than in the same period 2018. “Every month, the company supplies about 500 tons of products to China - dry dairy products and liquid ones with a long shelf life. The main volume of exports to

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<sup>563</sup> Gomel manufacturers will present their products in the Belarusian pavilion in Chengdu [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : [https://www.belta.by/regions/view/gomelskie-proizvoditeli-predstavjat-pishevuj-roduktsiju-v-belorusskom-paviljone-v-chendu-358191-2019](https://www.belta.by/regions/view/gomelskie-proizvoditeli-predstavjat-pishevuj--produktsiju-v-belorusskom-paviljone-v-chendu-358191-2019)

<sup>564</sup> Sidorchik, V. Gomel region and the Chinese province of Sichuan will cooperate / V. Sidorchik // [Electronic resource]. – 2015. – URL : <https://news.tut.by/society/447548.html>

<sup>565</sup> Gomel and Chinese Chengdu became sister cities [Electronic resource]. – 2018. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/gomel-i-kitajskij-chendu-stali-gorodami-pobratimami-315608-2018/>

China is whey powder – about 80%<sup>566</sup>. ” By exhibiting their products at the Belarusian National Pavilion in Chengdu, Gomel exporters hope to significantly expand their presence in Sichuan province. This would allow the same Milkavita OJSC to increase supplies of its products to China at the end of 2019 to the planned three million dollars.

Let us note that the Gomel region is developing partnerships and sister-city relations with other Chinese regions. Thus, in June 2019, “Gomel region and the Chinese Autonomous Region of **Inner Mongolia** signed a cooperation program for 2020.<sup>567</sup>” Gomel has established partnership and sister-city relations with several Chinese cities. In particular, in 2015, an Agreement on Friendship and Cooperation was signed with Harbin, the administrative center of **Heilongjiang Province**. At the same time, the parties agreed that “the creation of joint ventures in such areas as mechanical engineering, electronics, and processing of agricultural products <...> over time should become a priority for economic cooperation between Gomel and Harbin<sup>568</sup>. ” But the longest relationship connects Gomel with the city of Huai’an, in **Jiangsu province**, since 1997. Thanks to these connections, the above-mentioned Mlekovita OJSC took part in the International Food Industry Exhibition in this Chinese city in May 2019, and in June 2019, at a meeting between the management of Gomel and Huai’an, it was stated that the parties have “great potential for further development cooperation in various fields <...> that food products produced in Gomel are of particular interest<sup>569</sup>. ” All this variety of connections with Chinese partners allowed Gomel to exceed the volume of mutual trade with China at the end of 2018 at the level of forty million dollars, and in four months of 2019 to come close to a trade turnover of 17 million dollars.

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<sup>566</sup> The Gomel enterprise “Milkavita” increased exports to China 7 times [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/gomelskoe-predpriyatje-milkavita-narastilo-eksport-v-kitaj-v-7-raz-358197-2019/>

<sup>567</sup> Grishkevich, A. Gomel region and the Chinese Autonomous Region of Inner Mongolia signed a cooperation program / A. Grishkevich // [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/gomelskaja-oblast-i-kitajskij-avtonomnyj-rajon-vnutrennjaja-mongolija-podpisali-programmu-sotrudnichestva-4-2019/>

<sup>568</sup> Sidorchik, V. The creation of a joint venture may become a priority for economic cooperation between Gomel and Harbin / V. Sidorchik // [Electronic resource]. – 2015. – URL : <http://mozyrisp.gov.by/special/ru/obl-news-ru/view/sozdanje-sp-mozhet-stat-prioritetom-ekonomicheskogo-sotrudnichestva-mezhdu-gomelem-i-xarbinomnn-2135/>

<sup>569</sup> Chinese partners are interested in supplies of Gomel food products [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/kitajskie-partnery-zainteresovany-v-postavkah-gomelskoj-pischevoj-produktsii-354606-2019/>

**the Vitebsk region** in 2019 , as evidenced by the figures. Suffice it to say that over the eight months of this year, the trade turnover of this Belarusian region “with the provinces of China amounted to \$69.6 million, exports – \$13.5 million, which is 2.1 times higher than the figure for the same period in 2018.<sup>570</sup>” One of the effective partners of the Vitebsk region in China is the province **of Shandong** , one of the three leading Chinese regions. Let us recall that the parties signed the first Memorandum of Cooperation back in 2006. Within the framework of the agreements reached then, cities located in these regions began to interact: Vitebsk and Jinan, Novopolotsk and Weihai, Orsha and Qingdao.

In particular, Vitebsk and Jinan established sister city relations in April 2009. Heavy and light industry, machine tool manufacturing, logistics, information technology, as well as the production of medical equipment and pharmaceuticals were then named as promising areas of cooperation between the two cities. The fact is that more than seven million people live in this Chinese city. And there is a steady demand for quality goods there, which certainly opens up interesting opportunities for Vitebsk manufacturers. In September 2017, the parties specified their cooperation intentions in the protocol for the implementation of the agreement on the development of sister city cooperation for 2017-2020. In particular, in the field of education, the Chinese side proposed two projects: “scholarships for students allocated annually for the sister cities of Jinan, as well as summer schools for high school students, where children get acquainted with Chinese culture and way of life<sup>571</sup>. ” And in terms of more fully using the tourism potential of the two cities, it was proposed to create a joint tourism product that would be in demand and popular, first of all, among Chinese citizens.

As for the cities of Novopolotsk and Weihai, twinning relations between them were established in 2006, “but they have not yet had much activity<sup>572</sup>. ” However, already in October 2019, on the sidelines of the Forum of Sister Regions, held in the Chinese province of Shandong, representatives of the two

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<sup>570</sup> Bogacheva, O. Peat products will be produced in the Vitebsk region together with China / O. Bogacheva // [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/v-vitebskoj-oblasti-sovmestno-s-kitaem-budut-vypuskat-torfoproduksiju-366630-2019/>

<sup>571</sup> Antonov, S. Vitebsk and Jinan identified the main directions of cooperation for the period until 2020 / S. Antonov // [Electronic resource]. – 2017. – URL : <http://vitvesti.by/politics/vitebsk-i-tczinan.html>

<sup>572</sup> Demidov, D. Shandong - Novopolotsk: horizons of cooperation. What mutual interests have been identified by the forum of sister regions in China? / D. Demidov // [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <http://www.novaya.by/2019/10/22/shandun-novopolock-gorizonty-sotrudnichestva-kakie-vzaimnye-interesy-opredelil-forum-regionov-pobratimov-v-kitae/>

cities were able to note for themselves those areas in which sister city ties could successfully develop. First of all, they talked about ecology and logistics within the framework of the “One Belt - One Road” project. Secondly, taking into account the fact that the city of Weihai is famous for its production of medical equipment of the most modern level, Novopolotsk sees considerable prospects for cooperation in this area. In turn, in Weihai the issue of cooperation with the Belarusian city in the field of higher and secondary specialized education is of great interest. Therefore, we can hope that the emergence of specific twinning projects here is not far off.

Finally, the Chinese city of Qingdao and the Orsha district of the Vitebsk region signed an Agreement on the establishment of friendly relations in September 2018. At the same time, “representatives of Chinese business expressed interest in opening a trading facility for Belarusian meat, dairy and bakery products in Qingdao <sup>573</sup>,” as well as in cooperation within the framework of the construction of the Bremino-Orsha multimodal industrial and logistics complex. In addition, in July 2019, it became known about the intention of the Qingdao Municipal Education Department to take part in the construction of a school in Orsha for 1020 places: “Such a school can become an experimental platform for testing jointly developed programs of elective classes in Chinese language, literature, theater and art in general <sup>574</sup>. ”

Returning to the interregional interaction of the Vitebsk region and Shandong province as a whole, it should be noted that in October 2019 these regions already signed an Agreement on Friendship and Comprehensive Cooperation, in which they identified as priorities for the development of partnerships “the development of an effective mechanism for interaction in the field of trade and investments, development of cooperation ties in industry, transport logistics, creation of joint companies in petrochemicals, water treatment, electronics <sup>575</sup>. ” All these areas will be concretely embodied in the

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<sup>573</sup> Visit of the Qingdao (PRC) delegation to the Orsha district of the Vitebsk region [Electronic resource]. – 2018. – URL : <https://cci-vitebsk.by/ru/content/%D0%B2%D0%B8%D0%B7%D0%B8%D1%82-%D0%B4%D0%B5%D0%BB%D0%B5%D0%B3%D0%B0%D1%86%D0%B8%D0%B8-%D1%86%D0%B8%D0%BD%D0%B4%D0%B0%D0%BE-%D0%BA%D0%BD%D1%80-%D0%B2-%D0%BE%D1%80%D1%88%D0%B0%D0%BD%D1%81%D0%BA%D0%B8%D0%B9-%D1%80%D0%B0%D0%B9%D0%BE%D0%BD-%D0%B2%D0%B8%D1%82%D0%B5%D0%B1%D1%81%D0%BA%D0%BE%D0%B9-%D0%BE%D0%B1%D0%BB%D0%B0%D1%81%D1%82%D0%B8>

<sup>574</sup> They are planning to build a new school in Orsha. Yes, not a simple one, but with Chinese investments [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://gorod216.by/new/2723>

<sup>575</sup> Bogacheva, O. Vitebsk region and Shandong province signed an agreement on friendship and cooperation / O. Bogacheva // [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL :

“road map” of cooperation, which will be developed in the near future. One of the real projects, which, apparently, will be included in this program of interaction between the Belarusian and Chinese regions, will be a joint venture for the production of peat products, which is planned to be created in the Vitebsk region. Its participants will be “a Chinese agricultural company interested in the supply of peat products in large volumes, and the Vitebskoblغاز Unitary Enterprise, which includes a branch for the extraction and processing of peat in the Dokshitsy region<sup>576</sup>. ”

To summarize what has been said, we note that “in 2020, it is planned to hold the Year of the Regions of Belarus in China<sup>577</sup>. ” These plans mean that in the near future both countries intend to even more actively develop interregional cooperation and strengthen trade, economic, scientific, technological, production, cooperation, cultural and tourism ties, expanding in every possible way the number of participants in this interaction.

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<https://www.belta.by/regions/view/vitebskaja-oblast-i-provintsija-shandun-podpisali-soglashenie-o-druzhbe-i-sotrudnichestve-366479-2019/>

<sup>576</sup> Bogacheva, O. Peat products will be produced in the Vitebsk region together with China / O. Bogacheva // [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/v-vitebskoj-oblasti-sovmestno-s-kitaem-budut-vypuskat-torfoproduktsiju-366630-2019/>

<sup>577</sup> Belarus and China are interested in intensifying interregional cooperation [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-kitaj-zainteresovany-v-aktivizatsii-mezhregionalnogo-sotrudnichestva-369121-2019/>

## Belarus – China: to develop the existing potential for interaction

In 2021, the People's Republic of China began the implementation of the 14th five-year plan for the country's socio-economic development until 2025, within the framework of which new steps will be taken in the reform policy and the formation of a new architecture of mutually beneficial international cooperation in order to “comprehensively increase the level of the country’s openness to the outside world , promote the liberalization and facilitation of trade and investment, promote innovation and trade development, promote high-quality development of the joint construction of the Belt and Road Project<sup>578</sup>. ” At the same time, the Chinese side will be aimed at creating new advantages in international cooperation and competition, as it believes that “international economic interaction and exchanges are still objective requirements for global economic development. Openness to the outside world is the main state policy of the country<sup>579</sup>. ” As for Belarus, the Chinese side expresses confidence that both states should continue to mutually use the advantages of their economies, which largely complement each other, and develop the existing potential for interaction, including within the framework of the “One Belt, One Road” project” and the Chinese-Belarusian industrial park “Great Stone”, as well as expand cooperation “in areas such as combating the epidemic, trade and economics, education, science and technology, culture, interregional ties<sup>580</sup>. ”

Let us recall that the Republic of Belarus has to date built quite strong and open relations with the People's Republic of China, which are now characteristic of only three countries - Russia, Pakistan and Great Britain. These numbers confirm this. “The PRC is the second foreign trade partner of Belarus after Russia with an annual turnover of \$5 billion. <...> About 500 Belarusian exporters have already gained a foothold in this competitive market. More than 100 agricultural enterprises are accredited. At the expense of

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<sup>578</sup> Communiqué of the Fifth Plenum of the 19th CPC Central Committee [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <http://ru.china-embassy.org/rus/ggl/t1832267.htm>

<sup>579</sup> Qiming, Ts. China intends to implement a new development plan in 2021-2025 / Ts. Tsiming // [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/comments/view/kitaj-v-2021-2025-godah-nameren-realizovat-novyj-plan-razvitija-7479/>

<sup>580</sup> Xiaoyong, S. Take the Bull by the horns / S. Xiaoyong // [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/interview/view/vzjat-byka-za-roga-sovety-posla-knr-kak-pravilno-vstretit-kitajskij-novyj-god-7657//>

Chinese resources, 24 projects worth almost \$4.5 billion have already been implemented in Belarus<sup>581</sup>. ”

Of course, the flagship project in this context is the Chinese-Belarusian industrial park “Great Stone”, in less than six years of its existence, \$650 million has already been invested in it, where 68 residents from 14 countries have already been registered with declared investments in the amount of \$1.2 billion, of which about half have begun activities. As a result, “a supercapacitor, truck cranes, laser equipment, drones, Euro 6 engines and heavy-duty gearboxes, a pilot 5G communications zone and a multimodal container terminal are just a few examples of projects currently implemented in the park<sup>582</sup>. ” In 2021, they plan to attract another 17 new residents. In this regard, great hopes are placed on the project to create a multimodal railway terminal with the participation of Germany, China and Switzerland, which will begin construction in the near future, as well as on the arrival of the American company Ivy Global, which is considering the possibility of opening a “pharmaceutical plant for the production of a wide range of medicines, including those for the fight against COVID-19” in “Great Stone”<sup>583</sup>. In the same year, “when the second stage of development of the park begins, there are also plans to build a second residential complex with 173 apartments and a second substation<sup>584</sup>. ”

Continuing the theme of construction, we note that in 2021, the construction of a national football stadium and an international standard swimming pool in Belarus through free technical and economic assistance from China will also come to the fore with the completion of these projects in 2023, as well as the start in the first half of 2021 the third stage of construction of social housing on Belarusian soil, again using Chinese gratuitous assistance. Let us recall that in the first two stages of the implementation of this project,

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<sup>581</sup> Yaroshenko: Belarus has built strong and open relations with China [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/jaroshenko-belarus-vystroila-prochnye-i-otkrytye-otnosheniya-s-kitaem-428410-2021>

<sup>582</sup> Investments in the “Great Stone” during the implementation of the project amounted to \$650 million – Yaroshenko [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/investitsii-v-velikij-kamen-za-vremja-realizatsii-proekta-sostavili-650-mln-jaroshenko-428432-2021/>

<sup>583</sup> American company Ivy Global is considering the possibility of opening a pharmaceutical plant in “Great Stone” [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/amerikanskaja-kompanija-ivy-global-rassmatrivaet-vozmozhnost-otkrytija-v-velikom-kamne-farmzavoda-426540-2021/>

<sup>584</sup> The Great Stone Industrial Park expects to attract about 17 residents in 2021 [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/industrialnyj-park-velikij-kamen-rasschityvaet-v-2021-godu-privlech-okolo-17-rezidentov-423412-2021/>

38 houses with 3,286 apartments were built in six regions and Minsk, which made it possible to improve the living conditions of more than ten thousand people. As part of the third stage, “it is planned to build 1,166 social housing apartments in 20 buildings. The total construction area will be approximately 66 thousand square meters. m. Apartments will be received by citizens who are registered as needing improved housing conditions and who have the right to receive social housing <sup>585</sup>. ”

Finally, with regard to the coronavirus pandemic, the two countries have joined forces from the very beginning in the fight against it, providing each other with assistance and support. As a result, “40 tons of humanitarian supplies for medical purposes were sent from Belarus to China. From China - two shipments of emergency medical supplies worth about 32.6 million yuan provided by the Chinese government, as well as 110 tons from sister regions and partner companies <sup>586</sup>. ” Taking into account the current situation with repeated outbreaks of the epidemic, the parties intend to continue to actively cooperate jointly in confronting this global challenge, confirming with concrete actions the existing level of trusting comprehensive strategic partnership and mutually beneficial cooperation.

As for the interaction between the regions of the two countries, back in January 2021, the parties “in order to develop interregional cooperation, proposed to declare the Year of the Regions of Belarus and China and hold it for three years, from 2021 to 2023. <sup>587</sup>” And a number of Belarusian and Chinese regions are already taking active steps to update these partnerships. Thus, back in 2020, the Belarusian **Grodno region** and the Chinese province of **Hainan** signed an agreement on establishing sister-city relations, which provides for a significant expansion of interaction between the regions in the economic, trade and cultural spheres. For the Grodno region, this is not the first partner in the Middle Kingdom.

Back in 2007, twinning relations were established between the residents of Grodno and the province **of Gansu** . In 2014, “the parties signed a

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<sup>585</sup> China is going to build 20 more social houses in Belarus [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/kitaj-sobiraetsja-postroit-v-belarusi-esche-20-sotsialnyh-domov-426882-2021/>

<sup>586</sup> Qiuyan, Ch. Covid is not a hindrance - trade between Belarus and China turned out to be stress-resistant / Ch. Qiuyan // [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/comments/view/kovid-ne-pomeha-torgovlja-belarusi-i-kr-okazalas-stressoustojchivoj-7641/>

<sup>587</sup> Telephone conversation with the Chairman of the People's Republic of China Xi Jinping [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://president.gov.by/ru/events/telefonnyy-razgovor-s-predsedatelem-kitayskoy-narodnoy-respubliki-si-czinpinom>

memorandum of cooperation to strengthen economic and trade interaction and developed a Cooperation Program between the Grodno region and Gansu Province for 2014-2020, in which they systematically tried to take into account the most important aspects of the development of bilateral partnerships and twinning relations <sup>588</sup>. ”

One of the active participants in this interregional interaction was the Yanka Kupala State University of Grodno, which established multifaceted cooperation with 10 Chinese universities. Today, Chinese students study in Grodno “at all levels – from preparatory school to graduate school. Several joint scientific projects in the field of biochemistry are also being developed. Previously, a project was implemented in the field of mechanical engineering, now we are also counting on a project in the field of logistics <sup>589</sup>. ” In August 2018, an internship center for workers in Gansu Province was opened in the building of the Yanka Kupala State University. And already in 2019, four investment projects were implemented on Grodno soil, based on Chinese investments. In particular, the reconstruction of the former Grodno Hotel was carried out. A resident from China registered in the free economic zone “Grodnoinvest”, planning to implement a project here in the field of logistics. In addition, “a center for traditional Chinese medicine and a trade and exhibition center have also been opened in Grodno, where the products of the region’s partners from China are presented <sup>590</sup>. ”

In 2018, the Grodno region signed a Protocol of Intent to establish friendly relations with the province of **Fujian**. Speaking in official language, “the document identifies important areas of interregional complementary cooperation - trade, investment, logistics, culture <sup>591</sup>. ” To this we can add that the rapprochement of the regions was facilitated by the fact that the industrial sector is well developed in the Chinese province - electronics, mechanical engineering, and in the Belarusian region - agriculture. And this is “only one of the areas of complementary cooperation that can be established in the trade

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<sup>588</sup> Zalesky, B. Vector of partnership – China. Collection articles / B. Zalesky . – Palmarium Academic Publishing, 2019. – P. 105 .

<sup>589</sup> GrSU named after Yanka Kupala develops joint scientific projects with Chinese universities [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/grgu-im-janki-kupaly-razvivaet-s-kitajskimi-vuzami-sovmestnye-nauchnye-proekty-344391-2019/>

<sup>590</sup> 4 investment projects with Chinese capital are being implemented in the Grodno region [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/v-grodnenskoj-oblasti-realizujutsja-4-investproekta-s-kitajskim-kapitalom-344505-2019/>

<sup>591</sup> On the establishment of regional relations between the Grodno region and the Chinese province of Fujian [Electronic resource]. – 2018. – URL : [http://shanghai.mfa.gov.by/ru/o\\_generalnom\\_consulstv/news/b1e61ad9861a3f9c.html](http://shanghai.mfa.gov.by/ru/o_generalnom_consulstv/news/b1e61ad9861a3f9c.html)

and economic sphere <sup>592</sup>. ” In addition, Belarusian flax and woodworking products are in demand on the Chinese market, and the Chinese side has declared its readiness to increase investments in the Grodno region in a wide range of areas: from nuclear power plants to high technologies. And now the parties are working to implement the agreements reached.

In a word, the People's Republic of China has become a strategic partner for the Belarusian western region, as evidenced by the figures. Over the 10 months of 2020, enterprises in the Grodno region exported goods worth more than \$160 million to the Chinese market. These are mainly food products and oil refining products. The emergence of new Chinese partners, namely the province of Hainan, means for the Grodno side the actualization of cooperation in other areas - in the field of high technology, electrical engineering production, as well as the implementation of more global and ambitious projects. These include “the construction of a logistics center on the basis of the Grodno airport, the opening of direct flights between Grodno and Hainan province. This will allow, firstly, to more actively develop tourism and interaction in the humanitarian sphere, and secondly, it will contribute to the mutual supply of products <sup>593</sup>. ” At the same time, the logistics center in the future can become a transport hub and gateway for the promotion of Chinese goods not only to Belarus, but also to nearby European countries. In addition, we can say with confidence that the establishment of sister city ties between the Grodno region and Hainan province will contribute to the development of cooperation between the cities of the Belarusian and Chinese regions. Thus, agreements are already under development between cities such as **Lida** and **Sanya** , **Ostrovets** and **Qionghai** . The administrative centers of **Grodno** and **Haikou** will not remain aloof from this process .

Another interesting example in this series is **the Gomel region** , which in April 2021 signed an agreement with the Chinese province of **Sichuan** to establish sister city relations, which provides for expanded cooperation in the economic, social and cultural spheres. Let us recall that the Belarusian and Chinese regions established friendly relations six years ago, when in May 2015 they signed a cooperation agreement, which provided for “organization of

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<sup>592</sup>The Grodno region and the Fujian province of China will more actively develop cooperation [Electronic resource]. – 2018. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/grodnenskaja-oblast-i-provintsija-kr-futszjan-budut-aktivnee-razvivat-sotrudnichestvo-313085-2018/>

<sup>593</sup> The Grodno region and the Chinese province of Hainan signed an agreement on sister city relations [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/grodnenskaja-oblast-i-kitajskaja-provintsija-hajnan-podpisali-soglashenie-o-pobratimskih-svjazjah-421086-2020/>

interaction on the principles of partnership, equality, trust and mutual benefit in such areas as economics, agriculture, healthcare and culture, education, sports and tourism”<sup>594</sup>, and also agreed to establish direct contacts and twinning relations between the cities of the region and the province. And just three years later - in August 2018 - the agreement on establishing sister city relations was accepted by the administrative centers of the regions - the cities **of Gomel and Chengdu** .

By this time, interregional cooperation of the Gomel region on the Chinese vector was developing in three more directions - with the autonomous regions **of Inner Mongolia** (2011) and **Xinjiang-Uygur** (2016), as well as **Jiangsu Province** (2016). This allowed regional enterprises to increase exports of goods to China by almost three and a half times at the end of 2018 - from 3.9 to 13.5 million dollars. The main export items then were dairy products, flax, wool, and lumber. And the list of accredited enterprises for the supply of dairy products to the Chinese market even then “included five Gomel producers: Milkavita, Rogachevsky Dairy Canning Plant, Turov and Kalinkovich Dairy Plants, Mozyr Dairy Products<sup>595</sup>. ”

The next two years showed an even more impressive growth in exports from the Gomel region to China, convincingly demonstrating how in demand these products are on the Chinese market. In particular, “in 2020, with an increase of 32%, goods worth \$91 million were sent to this country<sup>596</sup>. ” The basis of these supplies was wood pulp, timber, meat and dairy products, and confectionery products. And we must assume that the current level of interaction with Chinese regions is still far from exhausting its potential, since “Gomel producers are ready to meet the needs of the Chinese side in flax, confectionery, chocolate, alcoholic beverages, carbon fibers, non-woven carbon felt, lumber, furniture<sup>597</sup>. ” In addition, there is considerable interest in expanding the supply of Gomselmash corn and forage harvesters to the Celestial Empire.

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<sup>594</sup>Zalessky, B. Multi-vector potential. Chronicle of international cooperation / B. Zalessky. – LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2020. – P. 63.

<sup>595</sup>Enterprises of the Gomel region increased exports of goods to China by almost 3.5 times in 2018 [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/predpriyatija-gomelskoj-oblasti-v-2018-godu-uvelicihili-eksport-tovarov-v-kitaj-pochti-v-35-raza-338253-2019/>

<sup>596</sup>Enterprises of the Gomel region increased exports of products to China by a third [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/predpriyatija-gomelskoj-oblasti-natret-uvelicihili-eksport-produktsii-v-knr-434841-2021/>

<sup>597</sup>The Gomel region and the Chinese province of Sichuan signed agreements on sister city relations [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/gomelskaja-oblast-i-kitajskaja-provintsija-syčuan-podpisali-soglashenie-o-pobratimskih-svjazjah-436511-2021/>

Let us note that large development reserves exist for the Gomel region in interaction with almost every Chinese region - partner or sister city, previously reached agreements with which today need to be updated. Thus, in the same province of Sichuan, where more than 90 million people live, in its administrative center - Chengdu, back in November 2019, the Belarusian National Pavilion was opened, divided into seven zones, where Belarusian goods, including food and drinks, began to be sold, agricultural products and auxiliary craft products. At the same time, the Belarusian and Chinese sides declared their readiness, on the basis of the pavilion, "to create a comprehensive bilateral platform of relations that will cover such areas as economy, culture, education, tourism, investment and services"<sup>598</sup>. Let's hope that the agreement on establishing sister city ties between the Gomel region and Sichuan province, signed in April 2021, will become another real tool with which the task will be accomplished.

Interesting opportunities may open up in 2021 in the interaction of the Gomel region and the Chinese Autonomous Region of **Inner Mongolia**. After all, in 2019, the regions already adopted a cooperation program for 2020. And they supported this document at the same time with an Agreement of Intent regarding the establishment of sister city relations between the administrative centers of the region and the autonomous region - the cities of **Gomel** and **Hohhot**, which provided for the development of cooperation in the field of economics, trade, science, technology, ecology, culture, education, sports, tourism, healthcare. Additional opportunities for expanding this interaction are opened by the fact that Inner Mongolia is an area with rich "natural resources: forests in the east, iron ore in the west, cattle breeding is developed in the north, grain is grown in the south"<sup>599</sup>. On the Hohhot side, "mechanical engineering, in particular the production of agricultural machinery"<sup>600</sup>, as well as the food industry and construction were then named among the priority areas of cooperation. The seriousness of the intentions of Gomel enterprises to enter the Inner Mongolia market with their products is evidenced by the fact of their participation in the Belarusian-Chinese regional forum held in Hohhot in June

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<sup>598</sup>Mozgov, E. The Belarusian National Pavilion opened in Chengdu, China / E. Mozgov // [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.sb.by/articles/v-kitayskom-chendu-otkrylsya-belorusskiy-natsionalnyy-pavilon.html>

<sup>599</sup> An agreement of intent was signed [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : [http://gomel.gov.by/ru/news/podpisano-soglashenie-otnamereniyakh/?NEWS\\_FILTER\\_TYPE=sotrudnichestvo](http://gomel.gov.by/ru/news/podpisano-soglashenie-otnamereniyakh/?NEWS_FILTER_TYPE=sotrudnichestvo)

<sup>600</sup> The authorities of the Chinese city of Hohhot intend to develop relations with Gomel in industry [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/vlasti-kitajskogo-gorodahuh-hoto-namereny-razvivat-otnosheniya-s-gomelem-v-promyshlennosti-366222-2019/>

2019, where “the investment potential of the Gomel region was presented in separate presentations, <...> Gomel meat and dairy company, OJSC “Spartak”<sup>601</sup>. It must be assumed that all these intentions of the parties to cooperate today are already entering the phase of implementing specific joint projects.

And in the end, we emphasize that all the above facts once again confirm the correctness of the course chosen in Belarus towards the establishment and development of various twinning and partnership ties between Belarusian regions and colleagues from other countries, the existing experience in the implementation of which shows that this is “an important and effective sector of international cooperation, the features of which are openness, mutual trust, tolerance and kindness”<sup>602</sup>, with the consistent and steady development of which partners move on to encouraging mutual investments, expanding industrial cooperation in the creation of highly efficient industries.

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<sup>601</sup> Grishkevich, A. The Belarusian-Chinese regional forum was held in the city of Hohhot / A. Grishkevich // [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belarus.by/ru/business/business-news/belorusско-kitajskij-regionalnyj-forum-proshel-v-gorode-xux-xoto-i-99900.html>

<sup>602</sup> Batura, B. Twin Cities Movement - small links of great friendship / B. Batura // [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/interview/view/pobratimskoe-dvizhenie-malenkie-zvenjja-bolshoj-druzhby-7603>

## **Belarus – China: regions as a factor in comprehensive strategic partnership**

In January 2021, the Republic of Belarus and the People's Republic of China reached an agreement at the highest level to hold the Year of the Regions of the two countries over the next three years - from 2021 to 2023. This decision once again emphasizes the enormous role played in the development of bilateral Belarusian-Chinese relations by the intensification of interaction at the level of autonomous regions, regions, provinces, cities of the two countries, and the potential of which is only just beginning to be fully explored by the parties. Evidence of this is the results of 2020, when trade turnover between Belarus and China exceeded \$4.5 billion, and exports of Belarusian products increased by almost 10 percent. At the same time, “the driver of Belarusian exports to China was agricultural and woodworking products, the supply of which has doubled<sup>603</sup>. ” It is also important that over a hundred Belarusian producers of agricultural products have already been accredited in the Celestial Empire, the overwhelming majority of which are located in the regions of our country.

Facts indicate that the parties are now taking a wide variety of measures to unlock the full potential of bilateral Belarusian-Chinese interaction. In this regard, special attention is paid to resolving issues related to ensuring access of Belarusian goods to the Chinese market. In particular, at the meeting of the Belarusian-Chinese Intergovernmental Cooperation Committee held in December 2020, a practical platform was created to work out all issues of access to the Chinese market, as well as veterinary, quarantine supervision and supply chains, in the form of the Commission on Customs and Quarantine Cooperation. A working group formed at the end of 2020, which included specialists from the Chinese Ministry of Commerce and the Belarusian Ministry of Economy, will also be involved in simplifying trade procedures and creating a basis for active trade. With its help, an agreement on trade in services and investment should be developed, “the implementation of which will change the essence and depth of joint development and simplify the provision of mutual investments without restrictions and prohibitory lists. Simplification of trade in services at the present stage is the basis for active

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<sup>603</sup> On the results of bilateral trade with China in 2020 [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://china.mfa.gov.by/ru/embassy/news/c603710a55ba783e.html>

trade, since modern goods consist of 80% services<sup>604</sup>.” At the same December (2020) meeting of the intergovernmental cooperation committee, the need was also noted for the speedy involvement in economic turnover in the Belarusian regions of the remaining Chinese credit resources in the amount of about \$4 billion for specific projects for the development of social and transport infrastructure.

As we see, the tasks set at the interstate level are distinguished by their scale and specificity. Of course, it will be hardly possible to solve them without the most interested participation of the regions themselves. And here the regional media should have their say in promoting the ideas of the Belarusian-Chinese comprehensive strategic partnership and mutually beneficial cooperation in the next three years. Moreover, they are now faced with no less ambitious tasks to update both the form itself and its content.

Let us recall that at the board meeting of the Ministry of Information of the Republic of Belarus held in February 2021, regional print media, which constitute a significant segment of the Belarusian media sphere and cover almost the entire territory, were named among the most important issues in the development of the information field of our country, which must be worked out and resolved as a matter of priority. The priority direction of their activity should be the creation of a high-quality media product. At the same time, they “must respond to the challenges of the time, be able to quickly adapt to the needs of the reader<sup>605</sup>,” and also contribute to the formation of a positive image of Belarus. In this regard, the most active participation of the Belarusian regional press in covering the implementation of the “three-year plan” of the regions of Belarus and China can and should become a very important step in the formation and development of its international segment. Moreover, the thematic focus of publications devoted to cooperation between the regions of the two countries can and should already be very diverse.

In particular, such a form of cooperation between the regions of the two countries as twinning and partnership relations should receive particularly powerful development impulses in the next three years. Their current level is very eloquently evidenced by the following fact: each Belarusian region and

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<sup>604</sup> Belarus and China have created a platform to work out issues of access to the Chinese market [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-knr-sozdali-ploschadku-dlja-otrabotki-voprosov-dostupa-na-kitajskij-rynok-420487-2020/>

<sup>605</sup> Igor Petrishenko: Today a journalist must be a universal media worker, able to work on different platforms - in a newspaper, on a website, in social networks and messengers [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <http://www.government.by/ru/content/9758>

Minsk have already become twin cities or partners of two or more Chinese regions, which ensures coverage of almost all provinces in the Middle Kingdom. Thus, in the Brest region these are the provinces of Hubei (since 1994), Qinghai (2015), Anhui (2016), Shanxi (2019); in Vitebsk - the provinces of Shandong (2004), Heilongjiang (2005), Guizhou (2015), Jiangxi (2018); Gomel has the autonomous regions of Inner Mongolia (2011) and Xinjiang-Uyghur (2016), Sichuan (2011) and Jiangsu (2016) provinces; in Grodno - the provinces of Gansu (2007), Fujian (2018), Hainan (2019); for Minsk - the city of Chongqing (2002), the provinces of Guangdong (2012) and Zhejiang (2015); in Mogilev - the provinces of Jiangsu (1997), Henan (2008), Hunan (2016), Shaanxi (2018), Tianjin city (2019); near the Belarusian capital - the cities of Changchun (1992), Beijing (1997), Shenzhen (2013), Shenyang (2016), Shanghai (2018). In addition, “more than 20 agreements have been concluded on the establishment and development of cooperation at the city-city level between regional centers and cities of Belarus and administrative centers and cities of central subordination of China<sup>606</sup>”

It is characteristic that the process of expanding and updating twinning and partnership ties continues today. Thus, in terms of developing sister city relations between **the Grodno region and Hainan province**, “agreements between cities such as Lida and Sanya, Ostrovets and Qionghai are already in the development stage<sup>607</sup>.” In April 2021, **the Gomel region and the province of Sichuan decided to significantly expand sister city ties in the economic, social and cultural spheres**. At the end of March 2021, the entire range of interaction was discussed by **the Brest region and Hubei province**. As a result, “the parties agreed to agree on a roadmap for the development of cooperation in the near future<sup>608</sup>.”

As for **the Mogilev region**, in June 2021 it signed a roadmap for cooperation with the Chinese province **of Henan** to continue cooperation in trade and increase it in the investment sphere. In addition, according to the parties, “among the important issues that need to be worked on is improving

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<sup>606</sup> Belarusian-Chinese interregional cooperation and twin-city ties [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://china.mfa.gov.by/ru/bilateral/regional/info/>

<sup>607</sup> Zalessky, B.L. Grodno region: Chinese vector of interregional cooperation / B.L. Zalessky // Materiały XVII Międzynarodowej naukowej - praktycznej conference “ Kluczowe ” aspekty naukowej działalności – 2021”, Volume 4. Przemysł : Science i studio . – C . 8.

<sup>608</sup> Chinese Hubei and Brest region intensify cooperation [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/kitajskij-hubej-i-brestskaja-oblast-aktivizirujut-sotrudnichestvo-434998-2021/>

transport links and logistics between our countries<sup>609</sup>. ” Let us recall that the Mogilev region signed an agreement on establishing friendly relations with the Henan province back in 2004. Ten years later, “in July 2014, the administrative center of this province, the city of Zhengzhou, became Mogilev’s sister city<sup>610</sup>. ” Perhaps for this reason, the development of interaction with Chinese partners for this Belarusian region has since become increasingly widespread, as evidenced by the figures. In particular, since 2015, trade turnover between the Mogilev region and the People’s Republic of China has increased 13 times, amounting to almost \$95 million in 2020.

Note that the Mogilev region, in addition to Henan province, has four more partners among Chinese regions. These are the provinces of Jiangsu, Hunan, Shaanxi and the city of Tianjin. In addition, friendly relations have been established between the partner cities: Mogilev - Nanjing, Bobruisk - Wuxi, Osipovichy - Yangzhou, Krichev - Lianyungang. In September 2019, as part of the first Regional Belarusian-Chinese Cooperation Week in Mogilev, it was noted that “with each of these partners, relations are developing in several directions: the parties are interested in cooperation in the medical and educational spheres, industrial and tourism sectors, as well as in interregional exchange”<sup>611</sup>. Back in July 2017, the possibility of implementing investment projects in the Mogilev free economic zone (FEZ) and the southeastern region, where there are serious preferences for business, was discussed with the same Henan province. In particular, in the south-east of the Mogilev region there are vast free lands for “creating a joint venture for the production of beef, taking into account the culinary requests and needs of the Chinese side with the subsequent supply of products to the Celestial Empire<sup>612</sup>. ”

As for the province of **Shaanxi**, its Department of Commerce in April 2019 signed an agreement of intent to promote economic development and friendly cooperation with the Economics Committee of the Mogilev Regional

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<sup>609</sup> A roadmap for the development of cooperation was signed by the Mogilev region and the Chinese province of Henan [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/dorozhnuju-kartu-po-razvitiyu-sotrudnichestva-podpisali-mogilevskaja-oblast-i-kitajskaja-provintsija-444325-2021/>

<sup>610</sup> Zalesky, B. Real multi-vector. Belarus in the system of external relations / B. Zalesky. – LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2015. – C. 26.

<sup>611</sup> Over the past year, the Mogilev region has increased beef exports to China by 9 times [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/za-poslednij-god-mogilevskaja-oblast-v-9-raz-velichila-eksport-govjadiny-v-kr-360961-2019/>

<sup>612</sup> Kulyagin, S. The Mogilev region and the Chinese province of Henan intend to more actively develop investment cooperation / S. Kulyagin // [Electronic resource]. – 2017 – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/mogilevskaja-oblast-i-kitajskaja-provintsija-henan-namereny-aktivnee-razvivat-investsotrudnichestvo-257928-2017/>

Executive Committee, in which the parties agreed to “provide active support and information assistance to enterprises interested in investing and establishing import- export relations”<sup>613</sup>. And in December 2020, at the site of the Mogilev Regional Development Agency, an online meeting was held with more than 30 representatives of the parties’ enterprises, including FEZ “Mogilev”, OJSC “Krasny Pishvik”, Bobruisk Meat Processing Plant, JLLC “Oasis Group”, OJSC “Babushkina Krynka”, Mogilev Ice Cream Factory, SJSC “Servolux”, Belarusian State Agricultural Academy (BSAHA). One of the concrete results of this meeting was an established partnership “between the BSAA and the Northwestern University of Agriculture and Forestry. There are already certain developments in testing Chinese varieties of wheat and other grains<sup>614</sup>. ”

a concrete result of cooperation with the city of **Tianjin** back in June 2017, when a social house was put into operation in the regional center, the general contractor of which was the Tianjin Electrical Construction Company. “A new building of 10 floors with 120 apartments is located in the Kazimirovka microdistrict under construction on Grunvaldskaya Street. This is one of three houses that were built in the Mogilev region, thanks to the implementation of the first stage of the “Construction of Social Housing” project with the involvement of technical and economic assistance from the People’s Republic of China. Similar objects appeared in Bobruisk and Osipovichy<sup>615</sup>. ” In May 2019, the parties signed a Memorandum on establishing twinning relations. And in November 2020, companies from a Chinese city such as Tianjin became thoroughly acquainted with the investment projects of the Belarusian region in the fields of tourism, livestock farming, and housing construction. Constant Towards International Trade Co. , Bonyum International Trading Co. , Tianjin Mengdong International Trade Co. , Zhonggong Huamu ( Tianjin ) Food Co.

The Chinese province of **Jiangsu** , which signed an agreement on establishing sister city relations with the Mogilev region in 2015, became the

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<sup>613</sup> The Mogilev region and the Chinese province of Shaanxi intend to develop economic cooperation [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/mogilevskaja-oblast-i-kitajskaja-provintsija-shensi-namereny-razvivat-ekonomicheskoe-sotrudnichestvo-342757-2019/>

<sup>614</sup> Emelyanova, O. Issues of trade and economic cooperation and education were discussed during an online meeting by representatives of the Mogilev region and Shaanxi province / O. Emelyanova [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://mogilev-region.gov.by/news/voprosy-torgovo-ekonomicheskogo-sotrudnichestva-i-obrazovaniya-obsudili-vo-vremya-onlayn>

<sup>615</sup> Emelyanova, O. A social house built with technical assistance from China was put into operation in Mogilev / O. Emelyanova // [Electronic resource]. – 2017. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/poststroennyj-s-tehpomoschjju-kitaja-sotsialnyj-dom-sdali-v-ekspluatatsiju-v-mogileve-254650-2017/>

first of the regions of China with which Mogilev residents held a contact and cooperation exchange via videoconference in July 2020, in which more than 20 companies working on the Chinese side became participants in the meat and dairy industries, flax processing, alcohol and beverage production. Their interest in this event is understandable, because only based on previously implemented projects, entrepreneurs in Jiangsu province in 2020 “additionally allocated more than \$2 million to the further development of their enterprises. Today, Chinese investors are implementing and planning to implement projects for the cultivation and processing of flax, the production of mushrooms and various medical products <sup>616</sup>. ” Finally, **Hunan province** is interesting in this context because in January 2018 it donated two new electric buses to Mogilev. And the company Zoomlion is implementing a project here to produce special equipment.

Speaking in this context about **the Minsk** region, it should be noted that in July 2021, the Minsk Regional Executive Committee and JSC Chinese Engineering Corporation SAMSE signed a memorandum according to which large healthcare facilities will be built in the Belarusian capital region with the help of the Chinese side. In particular, the adopted document provides for “the construction of an infectious diseases hospital in Borisov and a surgical building in the regional hospital, export-import trade in agricultural products, the creation of a plant for the production of baby food and solving problems with waste processing <sup>617</sup>. ” Let us recall that in our country, CAMSE, a subsidiary of the Chinese National Machine-Building Corporation Sinomach from Beijing, owns shares in the Industrial Park Development Corporation, and acted as the general contractor for the construction of a plant for the production of bleached kraft pulp on the basis of the Svetlogorsk pulp and paper mill and at such facilities in the Great Stone industrial park, such as engineering and transport infrastructure, the administrative building of the department, the factories of Zumlion Bel-Rus LLC and MAZ-Weichai LLC.

Let us note that the Chinese vector of trade and economic cooperation today plays an increasingly significant role in the foreign economic activity of the Minsk region. At the end of 2020, the People's Republic of China became

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<sup>616</sup> Business circles of the Mogilev region and the Chinese province of Jiangsu are discussing the prospects for cooperation at the contact and cooperation exchange [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://mogilev-region.gov.by/news/delovye-krugi-mogilevskoy-oblasti-i-kitayskoy-provincii-czyansu-obsuzhdayut-perspektivy>

<sup>617</sup> Healthcare facilities will be built in the Minsk region with the participation of a Chinese corporation [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/v-minskoj-oblasti-pri-uchastii-kitajskoj-korporatsii-postrojat-objekty-zdravoohranenija-449374-2021/>

the second largest trading partner of the Belarusian capital region in terms of trade turnover, accounting for 14.3 percent of total foreign trade. And there is every reason to believe that in the coming years this figure will only increase, since in the Minsk region “special attention is paid to the Chinese market, which is promising for the supply of food products<sup>618</sup>. ” In particular, all milk processing enterprises of the Myasomolprom holding have already received permission to export butter, cheese, whey, skimmed milk powder and sterilized milk to this country. As for meat processing enterprises and poultry factories in the Minsk region, they are actively working on accreditation to supply their products to China. And already Veles-Mit LLC, Slutsk Meat Processing Plant OJSC and Stolbtsy Meat Canning Plant OJSC have received permission to export frozen beef, and Dzerzhinsky Agricultural Plant OJSC and Smolevichi Broiler OJSC have received permission to ship poultry products. Nesvizh Baby Food Plant LLC also received permission to supply pasteurized milk, cream and milkshakes to the Celestial Empire.

And here, great potential for intensifying cooperation with Chinese partners lies in the already existing twin-city ties. In particular, back in June 2002, an Agreement on cooperation in trade, economic, scientific, technical and cultural fields was signed between the Minsk Regional Executive Committee and the People's Government of the city of **Chongqing**, where more than 30 million people live today. In 2016, at the initiative of the Belarusian capital region, this interaction was resumed. At the same time, a memorandum was signed on the development of sister city relations between the Kopyl district of Minsk region and the Wanzhou district of Chongqing. A year later, things came to the adoption of an Agreement on the establishment of sister city ties between the Belarusian region and the Chinese city.

In March 2019, the Days of the Minsk Region were held in Chongqing, during which, at a business forum with the participation of more than 225 representatives of business circles from both sides, a Cooperation Roadmap for 2019-2020, cooperation agreements between the Chongqing International Chamber of Commerce and UP were signed. Minsk branch of the Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry”, the Education Committee of Chongqing and the Main Education Department of the Minsk Regional Executive Committee, as well as a number of “agreements for the supply of products between business representatives for a total amount of 24 million US dollars

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<sup>618</sup> Foreign economic activity [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <http://www.minsk-region.gov.by/ekonomika-i-finansy/vneshneekonomicheskaya-deyatelnost5898/>

619. ” At the same time, a representative office of Veles-Meet LLC opened in Chongqing. Just two months later, a representative office of the capital region itself appeared here to assist in the search for “potential partners for promoting the products of Minsk region enterprises to the Chongqing market”<sup>620</sup>. ” And in August of the same 2019, the parties signed two agreements on investment cooperation within the framework of the projects “Village with Chongqing Flavor in Belarus” and “Village with Belarusian Flavor in Chongqing”, where the prototypes of the development will be, respectively, “rural dwellings of the Bayuyi culture of Chongqing and architectural features of eastern Sichuan”<sup>621</sup>, ” and in China, one of the dominant features of the future village will be an exact copy of Nesvizh Castle.

True, the advent of the pandemic somewhat slowed down the implementation of the plan. And in 2020, the interaction of the parties was expressed in the provision of humanitarian assistance to each other at the most crucial moments. In particular, in February last year, when this whole story with COVID -19 was just beginning, a batch of medical masks was sent from the Minsk region in response to an appeal from the Chinese side to Chongqing. Now opportunities are opening up to return to projects of the “pre-coronavirus” era.

And this is typical for the interaction of the Minsk region with another Chinese sister region - the province of **Guangdong**, the roadmap for cooperation with which for 2020-2021 was signed in November 2019 and included “issues of supplying Belarusian agricultural products to China, creating a joint milk processing enterprise”<sup>622</sup>. Let's hope that here, too, the effective implementation of cooperation plans between the Minsk region and this Chinese region is just around the corner.

The Belarusian capital also has interesting developments in interaction with Chinese partners. In November 2019, an Agreement on the establishment

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<sup>619</sup> A delegation from the Minsk region is visiting Chongqing [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <http://minsk-region.gov.by/novosti/glavnye-novosti/vg-chuntsin-prohodit-vizit-delegatsii-minskoy-oblasti/>

<sup>620</sup> On the opening of a representative office of the Minsk region in Chongqing [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://china.mfa.gov.by/ru/embassy/news/a7ecb1467556d183.html>

<sup>621</sup> A village with a Chinese flavor will be built near Minsk [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <http://www.belmir.by/2019/08/01/%D0%BF%D0%BE%D0%B4-%D0%BC%D0%B8%D0%BD%D1%81%D0%BA%D0%BE%D0%BC-%D0%BF%D0%BE%D1%81%D1%82%D1%80%D0%BE%D1%8F%D1%82-%D0%BF%D0%BE%D1%81%D0%B5%D0%BB%D0%BE%D0%BA-%D1%81-%D0%BA%D0%B8%D1%82%D0%B0%D0%B9%D1%81/>

<sup>622</sup> Minsk region and Chinese Guangdong province signed a cooperation roadmap [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <http://belaruschina.by/ru/news/2019/November/12November-2087.html>

of sister city relations was signed by **Minsk** and **Shanghai**. It is interesting that before the appearance of this document, the Belarusian capital had already “signed 22 cooperation agreements with Chinese cities, including 3 on twinning (Beijing, Changchun, Shenzhen) <sup>623</sup>. ” Perhaps for this reason, Chinese companies have already invested about \$30 million in direct investments in Minsk. By signing a new document on twinning, the parties “identified priority areas of cooperation - increasing mutual trade, infrastructure construction, tourism <sup>624</sup>. ” Minsk residents are of increased interest in Shanghai's experience in a number of areas. In particular, on organizing the work process in educational institutions, at medical infrastructure facilities, in centers for social services and rehabilitation of people with disabilities. The attention of the administrative and business circles of Minsk is also attracted by the Shanghai Free Trade Zone, which is used in the People's Republic of China for economic and social reforms.

One of the very effective forms of coordination of trade and economic interaction between Minsk and Shanghai has already become the annual business forum of business circles of the Belarusian and Chinese cities. Thus, a similar forum organized in September 2018 in Minsk brought together “more than 130 domestic and Chinese companies interested in cooperation in the fields of mechanical engineering, construction, information technology, chemical industry, food, and jewelry production <sup>625</sup>. ” At the same time, Chinese manufacturers of electronics and household appliances, clothing and fabrics, packaging for medical equipment, cosmetics, toys, jewelry, as well as importers of cars, electrical and welding equipment, and computer equipment, interested in finding business partners in Minsk, visited the Belarusian capital.

The composition of the participants in the Shanghai-Minsk business forum, which was held in November 2019 and brought together over one hundred Chinese and more than thirty Belarusian enterprises and companies, became equally broad. The forum program included discussion of current issues of cooperation “in three specialized sections: 1) Food products, food

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<sup>623</sup> The Days of Minsk in Shanghai will be held on November 7-9 [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/dni-minska-v-shanhae-projduť-7-9-nojabrja-368252-2019/>

<sup>624</sup> Grishkevich, A. Minsk and Shanghai established twin-city ties / A. Grishkevich // [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/minsk-i-shanhaj-ustanovili-pobratimskie-svjazi-368815-2019/>

<sup>625</sup> Zalesky, B. Vector of partnership – China. Collection articles / B. Zalesky . – Palmarium Academic Publishing, 2019. – P. 149.

industry; 2) Tourism and hospitality of Minsk and Shanghai; 3) Industry" <sup>626</sup>. The high practical impact of this event is evidenced by the documents adopted as a result of it. In particular, the Minsk City Executive Committee signed a Memorandum of Intent to establish cooperation with the Lotusland Shanghai corporation on the introduction of heat pump technologies and equipment during the construction of industrial and civil structures in the Belarusian capital. The fact is that "the use of heat pump installations for satellite cities of Minsk would make it possible to abandon the laying of many kilometers of heating networks <sup>627</sup>."

A memorandum of strategic partnership in the field of tourist exchanges was the result of negotiations between representatives of the Belarusian Republican Unitary Enterprise "Tsentrkurort" and the Chinese group travel company Shanghai Airlines Tours International ( Group ) Co. , Ltd. An agreement on cooperation in the field of holding international exhibitions was signed by Minskexpo CJSC and Shanghai industry and commerce exhibition Co. In addition, the Minsk free economic zone and the Shanghai company have formalized their intentions to actively interact in the near future. Allynav Technology Co. , Ltd. , as well as OJSC "Confectionery Factory "Slodych" and the Shanghai company Teemo Foods . Kommunarka SOJSC is also planning to increase the supply of its confectionery products to the Shanghai market, having signed a corresponding memorandum with the Chinese Misier Trade and Economic Company LLC.

The fact that the market of this Chinese city is attracting serious attention from manufacturers in the Belarusian capital is also evidenced by the fact that nine Minsk enterprises took part in the second China International Exhibition of Imported Goods and Services, held in Shanghai in November 2019. Among them were SOAO Kommunarka, CJSC Minsk Grape Wine Factory, OJSC Krinitza, OJSC Slodych, OJSC Kristall, OJSC Minsk Bread Plant, KUP Minskhleprom, TPKUP Minsk Cold Storage Plant No. 2 "

And further. The memorandum signed in November 2019 on establishing friendly ties between the Moscow district of the Belarusian capital and the Jiading district of Shanghai also opens up interesting prospects for interregional cooperation. Literally a month later - in December - a delegation

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<sup>626</sup> Business forum "Shanghai-Minsk", November 8, 2019 [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : [https://www.tppm.by/announcement/index.php?ELEMENT\\_ID=23213](https://www.tppm.by/announcement/index.php?ELEMENT_ID=23213)

<sup>627</sup> Beluga, V. The Minsk – Shanghai Business Cooperation Forum was held in China / V. Beluga // [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://minsknews.by/forum-delovogo-sotrudnichestva-minsk-shanhaj-prohodit-v-kitae/>

from the Jiading district visited Minsk, where they discussed with the leadership of the Moskovsky district of the Belarusian capital ways to implement the memorandum in the context of “intensifying bilateral trade and economic cooperation, as well as cooperation in the field of student exchanges between the two districts”<sup>628</sup>. ” One of the specific results of this visit was an invitation from the Chinese side to students from the Moskovsky district of Minsk to attend a summer camp in Shanghai. Apparently, friendly ties between the Sovetsky district of Minsk and another Shanghai district, Changning, will also be intensified in the near future.

All these facts indicate that the topic of Belarusian-Chinese interregional cooperation should be firmly and permanently “entrenched in the Belarusian regional press and reflect as fully as possible the experience already accumulated in this regard”<sup>629</sup>. ” To do this, in the near future, creative strategies specific to international regional issues will be required, the development of which today should be developed by representatives of this segment of Belarusian journalism.

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<sup>628</sup> About the visit of the delegation of the Jiading district of Shanghai to Minsk [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : [http://shanghai.mfa.gov.by/ru/o\\_generalnom\\_consulstv/news/b8beff0b9304c615.html](http://shanghai.mfa.gov.by/ru/o_generalnom_consulstv/news/b8beff0b9304c615.html)

<sup>629</sup> Zalessky, B.L. Information sovereignty and international journalism / B.L. Zalessky // Reg i yanalnyya SM I Republic i to i Belarus in the l i chbavoy era: hell lakalnaya problemmatyk i yes i inpharmatsyynai byspek i dzyarzhavy: materiyala Resp. science-practical Canf., Moscow , May 5, 2020 / Belarus. dzyarzh. University; redkal.: V.M. Samusev i h (adk. ed.) [ i i nsh.]. – M i nsk: BDU, 2020. – P. 114.

## **Industrial Park “Great Stone”: a project that will determine the future**

In May 2020, it was five years since the leaders of the two countries, A. Lukashenko and S. Jinping, visited the China-Belarus Industrial Park “Great Stone”. This event became a kind of starting point in the history of the park for its rapid development. And, indeed, in such a short period of time, roads were laid here, water supply, electricity, heating and gas were installed, more than 60 thousand square meters of standard production buildings were erected, the first office building, a residential building and a research center were built, about 60 investment projects were attracted, the declared volume of investments exceeded one billion dollars. All this allows us to agree with the conclusion that “over five years, the China-Belarus Industrial Park has become a good testing ground for bilateral cooperation, contributed to the development of mutual understanding between China and Belarus and ties between their enterprises, and promoted cultural exchange. That is why the “Great Stone”, as a comprehensive strategic platform for trade and economic cooperation between China and Belarus, attracted the attention of potential partners both from our two countries and from other countries, and became a model of cooperation on the Belt and Road <sup>630</sup>. ”

Note that such a high assessment of the “Great Stone” is no longer voiced only in Belarus or China. In November 2019, the World Federation of Free and Special Economic Zones (FEMOZA) held a summit in Monaco, the main theme of which was strengthening cooperation and transforming the successful experience of free economic zones (FEZs) into working tools. More than 400 representatives of the SEZs of Great Britain, Switzerland, Belgium, the Netherlands, Finland, Latvia, Poland, Italy, Spain, Greece, Turkey, Asian and African countries, as well as chambers of commerce and industry, government bodies, potential foreign countries took part in this large-scale event. investors. Let us recall that FEMOSA is a non-governmental and non-profit organization supported by the United Nations, which was founded in 1999 in Geneva with the aim of supporting and promoting free and special economic zones around the world and in particular in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, providing assistance in the entry of

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<sup>630</sup> Zheng, H. “The Great Stone” symbolizes the strong friendship of Belarus and the PRC / H. Zheng // [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/comments/view/velikij-kamen-simvoliziruet-tverduju-druzhu-belarusi-i-kr-hu-chzhen-7289/>

projects of FEZ residents into the international market and attracting foreign investment. The functions of FEMOZA include developing norms, rules and directions for the development of SEZs, providing them with technical, legal and economic assistance, and training specialists. Statistics claim that “today there are 3,500 free zones in 130 countries, accounting for more than 70 million jobs<sup>631</sup>. ” But, “despite the benefits and preferences that are provided to them in all countries, <...> only 300-400 are effective. All this is due to the technological lag, which does not allow the SEZ to become part of the global economy<sup>632</sup>. ”

The Republic of Belarus has been very actively participating in the activities of FEMOZA for several years now. The summit in Monaco became truly significant for the Belarusian side, since it was there that the Chinese-Belarusian Industrial Park “Great Stone” was awarded the FEMOZA Prize Awards 2019, winning the “Fastest Growing Industrial Park” category. The peculiarity of this nomination is that “the key factors in determining the winner were the prospects of the Great Stone for global investment and the rapid pace of its development<sup>633</sup>. ” Indeed, today in the “Great Stone” the Belarusian side has created substantial benefits for residents – both tax and in terms of acquiring land ownership, as well as a favorable regime in which the registration of enterprises takes place in the shortest possible time according to the “one window” principle. As a result, “today this park is showing amazing growth, investors are coming to us from all over the world<sup>634</sup>. ”

Facts indicate that the “Great Stone” has already turned into an international platform for the creation of high-tech enterprises. At the beginning of November 2019, 57 residents were registered here. And there is

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<sup>631</sup> Barcelona will become the capital of free zones in 2019 [Electronic resource]. – 2017. – URL : [https://ru.wikinews.org/wiki/%D0%91%D0%B0%D1%80%D1%81%D0%B5%D0%BB%D0%BE%D0%BD%D0%B0\\_%D1%81%D1%82%D0%B0%D0%BD%D0%B5%D1%82\\_%D1%81%D1%82%D0%BE%D0%BB%D0%B8%D1%86%D0%B5%D0%B9\\_%D1%81%D0%B2%D0%BE%D0%B1%D0%BE%D0%B4%D0%BD%D1%8B%D1%85\\_%D0%B7%D0%BE%D0%BD\\_%D0%B2\\_2019\\_%D0%B3%D0%BE%D0%B4%D1%83](https://ru.wikinews.org/wiki/%D0%91%D0%B0%D1%80%D1%81%D0%B5%D0%BB%D0%BE%D0%BD%D0%B0_%D1%81%D1%82%D0%B0%D0%BD%D0%B5%D1%82_%D1%81%D1%82%D0%BE%D0%BB%D0%B8%D1%86%D0%B5%D0%B9_%D1%81%D0%B2%D0%BE%D0%B1%D0%BE%D0%B4%D0%BD%D1%8B%D1%85_%D0%B7%D0%BE%D0%BD_%D0%B2_2019_%D0%B3%D0%BE%D0%B4%D1%83)

<sup>632</sup> Grigorieva, V. President of the World Federation of Free and Special Economic Zones ( Femoza ) Juan Torrents Tolosa visited Gomel [Electronic resource]. – 2015. – URL : <https://www.sb.by/articles/vse-sezy-v-gosti-k-nam.html>

<sup>633</sup> “Great Stone” is recognized as the fastest growing industrial park in the world [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/velikij-kamen-priznan-samym-bystrorastuschim-industrialnym-parkom-v-mire-369159-2019/>

<sup>634</sup> Megalgoths in the “Great Stone” and IT records - Rumas spoke about the opportunities to invest in Belarus [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/megalgoty-velikom-kamne-i-rekordy-it-rumas-rasskazal-o-vozmozhnostjah-investirovat-v-belarus-370269-2019/>

every reason to believe that their number “could grow to 80 by the end of 2020.<sup>635</sup>” A project to create the production of solar panels is already being implemented here. In July 2019, construction of a Belarusian-Chinese plant for the production of manual transmissions began in the industrial park with an investment volume of \$17 million. In October 2019, a plant for the production of engines of MAZ-Weichai LLC opened here, where they produce “small-unit assembly of engines of Euro-5 and Euro-6 standards for trucks, special vehicles and buses. The production capacity under single-shift operation will be 10 thousand engines per year<sup>636</sup>.” But even more impressive plans are being implemented here for the near future.

At the end of October 2019, the 12th meeting of the Working Group on the issues of the China-Belarus Industrial Park “Great Stone” was held in Beijing, within the framework of which its participants focused their attention on such areas of development of this special economic zone as: improving the legal environment of the park; establishing additional comfortable conditions to attract investment in the creation of competitive industries; creation of sustainable engineering and transport infrastructure; digital construction; development of the park as a smart city; implementation of projects through technical and economic assistance. Among the tasks for the development of the industrial park in 2020, “the priority of export orientation, attracting anchor investors with high-tech projects, and expanding international activities” were highlighted<sup>637</sup>. At the same time, they intend to continue to be guided by four basic principles of development: “First, this is globalization, since the industrial park is not Chinese or Belarusian, but international. Secondly, industrialization. The main task is to attract international industry clusters. Thirdly, this is digitalization, which should provide great benefits to the development of the park. <...> Fourthly, greening. Environmental protection and compliance with environmental requirements are the key to sustainable development<sup>638</sup>.”

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<sup>635</sup> The number of residents of “Great Stone” may increase to 80 by the end of 2020 [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/kolichestvo-rezidentov-velikogokamnja-k-kontsu-2020-goda-mozhet-uvlechitsja-do-80-365696-2019/>

<sup>636</sup> Opening of the engine production plant of Maz-Weichai LLC in the Chinese-Belarusian industrial park “Great Stone” [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <http://www.government.by/ru/content/9051>

<sup>637</sup> The Great Stone Industrial Park will be presented at the Chinese International Import Exhibition in November [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/industrialnyj-park-velikij-kamen-v-nojabre-predstavjat-na-kitajskoj-mezhdunarodnoj-vystavke-importa-367476-2019/>

<sup>638</sup> Zheng, H. “The Great Stone” is becoming a strategic platform for Belarusian-Chinese cooperation / H. Zheng // [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/interview/view/>

Let us recall that at the beginning of 2020, 60 residents from 15 countries were already registered with the Great Stone, including: 33 from the People's Republic of China; 15 – with the participation of companies from Austria, Germany, Israel, Canada, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Russia, the United States of America, Switzerland and Estonia; 12 – created by Belarusian business entities. By this time, in less than five years, 32 kilometers of roads had been built here, about 400 kilometers of water and gas pipelines, electrical lines, and sewerage outlets had been laid, and the construction of 25 buildings with a total area of about 300 thousand square meters had been completed. And the total volume of concluded agreements and investments exceeded one billion dollars from 11 countries.

Speaking about the trends observed today in the industrial park, we can highlight several main ones. One of them is the development of the “Great Stone” as a smart city with an innovative industry and a high quality of life. To achieve this goal, in February 2020, an agreement on the development of 5 G technology in the industrial park was signed by the Ministry of Communications and Information of the Republic of Belarus, the Industrial Park Development Company and the Great Stone administration. It was noted that one of the most promising areas for the development of 5 G technology here is unmanned vehicles. As a result, the China-Belarus Industrial Park should become “the first exemplary base in Belarus for the implementation of 5 G technologies .”<sup>639</sup>

Let us note that the priority areas for the development of the Great Stone remain mechanical engineering, electronics and telecommunications, biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, new materials, and logistics. At the same time, the emphasis is on the innovative activity of residents. And about 20 projects are already producing results. Among them is the commercial and logistics company China Merchants, which received a certificate to operate the only public bonded customs warehouse in Belarus. In November 2019, the opening of the production building of a subsidiary of the Swiss company Garrosserie took place in “Great Stone” Hess AG - Hess Great Stone LLC - for the production of electric passenger transport. “This type of transport will be characterized by the absence of carbon dioxide emissions and quiet

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[velikij - kamen - stanovitsja - strategicheskoi - platformoj - dlja - belorussko - kitajskogo - sotrudnichestva -7152/](#)

<sup>639</sup> Nemankova, Yu. A pilot project for the development of 5 G is being implemented in the “Great Stone” / Yu. Nemankova // [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/pilotnyj-proekt-po-razvitiu-5g-realizujut-v-velikom-kamne-381000-2020/>

operation. The batteries on the roof will be charged at the final stop in a few minutes <sup>640</sup>. " This resident of the industrial park plans to enter the full production cycle in 2021, when up to fifty bus bodies will be produced here.

The following fact speaks volumes about the innovative activity of park residents: in March 2020, the manufacturer of a wide range of medical products, Assomedika LLC, registered in the Great Stone as a resident in 2017, "mastered a new production of breathing masks and bacterial-viral disposable filters for adults, children and newborns" <sup>641</sup>- products that provide maximum respiratory protection against germs and viruses, which can be used within 12-24 hours.

The industrial park also thinks about the future. This is evidenced by the fact that in March 2020, the Chinese company Sinomach registered as a resident of the "Great Stone" with a project to create a zone of scientific and technical cooperation and innovative developments, within the framework of which it is planned to build a complex of administrative buildings for scientific research and auxiliary infrastructure. At the first stage, they intend to "implement four research projects related to such developments as optical devices, automotive sensors, semiconductor devices and new materials. The company also plans to implement the second stage of the project <sup>642</sup>. "

In terms of expanding the international activities of the Great Stone industrial park, one of the very effective tools can be such a form of attracting new residents as the creation of subparks, which means "the arrival of not one investor, but a pool of iconic companies under the leadership of a separate management company. This opens up broad prospects specifically for large corporations <sup>643</sup>. " Let us add that the park administration addresses this proposal not only to the Chinese provinces, "but also to investors from Europe, in particular Switzerland, and also Japan <sup>644</sup>. " The main condition for future

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<sup>640</sup> Alexander Turchin: Belarusian-Swiss cooperation has serious potential [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <http://www.government.by/ru/content/9136>

<sup>641</sup> The production of breathing masks has been opened in the Great Stone industrial park [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/proizvodstvo-dyhatelnyh-masok-otkryto-v-industrialnom-parke-velikij-kamen-383799-2020/>

<sup>642</sup> A new resident with Chinese capital is registered in "Great Stone" [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novyj-rezident-s-kitajskim-kapitalom-zaregistrirovan-v-velikom-kamne-384192-2020>

<sup>643</sup> Konoga, P. Alexander Yaroshenko spoke about the new residents of the Great Stone industrial park, the satellite city and plans for 2019 / P. Konoga // [Electronic resource]. – 2018. – URL : <https://www.sb.by/articles/vysech-pribyl-iz-kamnya.html>

<sup>644</sup> "Great Stone" invites foreign partners to create subparks [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/velikij-kamen-predlagaet-zarubezhnym-partneram-sozdavat-subparki-365694-2019/>

residents, which must be met, is the creation of high-tech enterprises in the industrial park. And there is enough space and opportunity for everyone to build technology clusters and subparks based on nationality.

Note that the subpark format is already used in practice by the Great Stone. Back in May 2017, the first stage of a trade and logistics subpark was opened here, located on 29 hectares. This is one hundred thousand square meters of real estate, half of which is occupied by warehouses, and almost a quarter by an exhibition center. “About \$120 million has been invested in the construction of the subpark. It is planned to begin construction of the second stage in the near future. In total, the territory of the subpark will cover an area of more than 90 hectares, the investment volume is \$500 million <sup>645</sup>. ”

At the 11th meeting of the Working Group on the China-Belarus Industrial Park, held in November 2018 in Beijing, it was noted that in the near future the necessary support will be provided for the practical implementation of subparks in the “Great Stone” of the city of Harbin, in Heilongjiang Province, and Guangdong Province. It was also planned “by the end of 2019, to substantively study the issue of creating subparks in an industrial park with the provinces of Sichuan and Shaanxi, as well as the city of Hangzhou <sup>646</sup>. ” As for the province of Guangdong, back in January 2017, in its administrative center - the city of Guangzhou - “a ceremony was held to sign the agreement on the creation of the Chinese (Guangdong) subpark of LED products in the Great Stone Industrial Park” <sup>647</sup>, as well as five more documents of intent to join to this sub-fleet of specific companies.

Another landmark document in the context of this topic was signed in November 2018 at the first Chinese exhibition of imported goods and services in Shanghai. This is an agreement on the creation of the Chengdu-European Industrial Subpark on the territory of the “Great Stone”. The fact is that Chengdu, the administrative center of Sichuan province, has significant industrial potential, including developed automotive and aerospace industries, which corresponds to the priorities of the Chinese-Belarusian industrial park.

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<sup>645</sup> Anatoly Kalinin took part in the opening of the first stage of the trade and logistics subpark in the Chinese-Belarusian industrial park “Great Stone” [Electronic resource]. – 2017. – URL : <http://www.government.by/ru/content/7228>

<sup>646</sup> Minutes of the 11th meeting of the Working Group on the issues of the Chinese-Belarusian Industrial Park [Electronic resource]. – 2018. – URL : [http://belaruschina.by/data/fck/file/minekonomiki/protocol\\_11.pdf](http://belaruschina.by/data/fck/file/minekonomiki/protocol_11.pdf)

<sup>647</sup> A subpark of LED products will be created in the Great Stone Industrial Park [Electronic resource]. – 2017. – URL : <https://industrialpark.by/novosti/2017/v-industrialnom-parke-velikij-kamen-budet-sozdan-subpark-svetodiodnoj-produkcii.html>

In addition, “Chengdu is the city in China that is economically closest to Europe<sup>648</sup>.”

Let us note an important detail: recently a number of important meetings and negotiations have taken place, at which the issues of creating national subparks of European countries in the “Great Stone” were discussed. In particular, in August 2019, this topic was discussed in the government of the Republic of Belarus with representatives of the Swiss business community, including the management of Ceres Group Holding AG and the Swiss industrial park BUSS, which positively assessed the Belarusian proposal not only to create a Swiss sub-park in the “Great Stone”, but also “to act as a developer in it and both engage in construction and attract Swiss business to cooperation with Belarus<sup>649</sup>.” It is noteworthy that already in December 2019, the 60th resident was registered in the industrial park - the already mentioned “Swiss company Hess Great Stone for the production of electric passenger transport<sup>650</sup>.” And in January 2020, the issue of “the possible creation in the future of an Italian-Belarusian sub-park in the “Great Stone””<sup>651</sup> was considered on a practical level at a meeting in Rome with the owners and managers of Italian companies interested in investing in industrial park projects.

Of course, all these facts emphasize the very high dynamics of development of the Great Stone industrial park, a project whose role in the Belarusian economy will very soon become significant both in terms of innovation, investment, and technology.

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<sup>648</sup> Chinese Chengdu is considering the possibility of creating high-tech production facilities in the “Great Stone” [Electronic resource]. – 2018. – URL : [https://interfax.by/news/policy/ekonomicheskaya\\_politika/1251824/](https://interfax.by/news/policy/ekonomicheskaya_politika/1251824/)

<sup>649</sup> Kryzhevich, I. A Swiss subpark can be created on the territory of the “Great Stone” / I. Kryzhevich // [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.sb.by/articles/na-territorii-velikogo-kamnya-mogut-sozdat-shveytsarskiy-subpark-.html>

<sup>650</sup> The 60th resident appeared in the Chinese-Belarusian Industrial Park “Great Stone” [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://interfax.by/news/biznes/businesses/1268182/>

<sup>651</sup> Belarus and Italy will consider the issue of creating a joint subpark in the “Great Stone” [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-italija-rassmotrjat-vopros-sozdaniya-sovmestnogo-subparka-v-velikom-kamne-376060-2020/>

## **Industrial Park “Great Stone”: the goal is to introduce innovations**

Among the main directions of trust-based comprehensive strategic partnership and mutually beneficial cooperation of the Republic of Belarus and the People's Republic of China, the scientific and innovation vector occupies an important place. At the same time, three priority components can be identified in this segment of bilateral interaction. “The first is in the field of scientific research, where the parties participate in the implementation of large joint projects. The second is in the field of innovation, where a network of joint innovation centers and scientific laboratories is being formed and developed. The third is in the field of education, where joint training is conducted and mutual internships of specialists, teachers and students take place <sup>652</sup>. ” The focus on innovation is especially felt today in the development of the Chinese-Belarusian industrial park “Great Stone”, which makes it possible to create here competitive production, sustainable engineering and transport infrastructure, and conduct digital construction with the aim of turning the park into a “smart city”. At the same time, the pace of innovative progress has noticeably accelerated in 2020. Here are just a few examples that support this observation.

In May 2020, the first stone was laid in the “Great Stone” at the site of the future construction of a scientific and technical cooperation and development zone or the “Torch” project by the Chinese corporation Sinomach . Let us recall that in June 2014, the Belarusian government signed a Strategic Partnership Agreement with this corporation, on the basis of which large-scale investment projects are now being implemented in Belarus. As for the Torch project, this zone will be “aimed at creating conditions for attracting Chinese and European technologies, introducing and testing them in the park and further exporting them to Europe and China <sup>653</sup>. ” It is planned to build office buildings and premises for scientific development, where “they plan to implement four research and development projects - in the field of optical technologies, mechanics, electronics and new materials. It is also planned to build a laboratory, office-type co-working spaces, comprehensive construction

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<sup>652</sup> Zalessky, B. On terms of reciprocity. Chronicle of international cooperation / B. Zalessky. – LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing , 2017. – P. 63.

<sup>653</sup> On the development of the SINOMACH scientific and technical cooperation and development zone in the Great Stone Park [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <http://china.mfa.gov.by/ru/embassy/news/cf39e9ad1f75824a.html>

of educational institutions and high-tech experimental commercial facilities<sup>654</sup>. ” Participation in the implementation of this project will be taken not only by research institutes and enterprises of the Sinomach Corporation , but also by enterprises of the Chinese Zhongguancun Technopark and the structures of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus.

The mention in this context of the Zhongguancun technology park indicates a very serious attitude of the Chinese side to the Torch project in the Great Stone. The fact is that this technology park, founded in 1988 in the northwestern part of Beijing, is considered the Chinese analogue of Silicon Valley, is the first in China, one of the largest in the capital and consists of 16 scientific zones. It was here that at one time “the first Chinese vacuum cylinder, the first computer, the first commutator, etc. appeared. In total, more than 5,000 types of products were developed, which filled the void in the history of Chinese high technology<sup>655</sup>. ” Nowadays, scientific research and development bureaus of many transnational corporations are concentrated here. There are high hopes for this technology park in China in terms of “implementing the ambitious Made in China 2025, which will make the country technologically independent and make it a leader in many areas. The Chinese authorities will spend about \$300 billion on the implementation of the program<sup>656</sup>. ” Speaking about this technology park, one cannot help but mention the following figure: for the period from January to November 2019, income growth was recorded here by almost 14 percent. At the same time, “the income of the leading high-tech enterprises in the technology park reached 5.43 trillion yuan (about 779 billion US dollars) during this period<sup>657</sup>. ”

Returning to innovation in the Great Stone, we note that in May 2020 another significant event took place here, showing that one of the promising facets of the development of the Chinese-Belarusian industrial park is digitalization. Here, for the first time, an unmanned electric bus, developed using the technology of Singaporean scientists, was tested. “The maximum

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<sup>654</sup> The Sinomach “Torch ” park will be built in the “Great Stone ” [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/v-velikom-kamne-postrojat-park-sinomach-fakel-390613-2020/>

<sup>655</sup> Wei, W. Silicon Valley of China / W. Wei // Models, systems, networks in economics, technology, nature and society. – 2013. – P. 19.

<sup>656</sup> Krasilnikova, Yu. Beijing is launching a program to attract foreign IT specialists / Yu. Krasilnikova // [Electronic resource]. – 2018. – URL : [https://hightech.fm/2018/02/28/beijing\\_lures\\_talent](https://hightech.fm/2018/02/28/beijing_lures_talent)

<sup>657</sup> In the first 11 months of 2019, the Beijing Zhongguancun Technology Park registered a 13.8 percent increase in revenue [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : [http://russian.news.cn/2020-01/07/c\\_138685700.htm?utm\\_source=yxnews&utm\\_medium=desktop&utm\\_referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fyandex.by%2Fnews](http://russian.news.cn/2020-01/07/c_138685700.htm?utm_source=yxnews&utm_medium=desktop&utm_referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fyandex.by%2Fnews)

speed that the prototype can reach is 40 km/h. <...> Power reserve is about 180 km. A full charge will take no more than 4 hours<sup>658</sup>. " On the territory of the "Great Stone" they plan to develop the technology for operating the new product, after which, apparently, commercial operation of this unmanned vehicle will become possible in the near future.

In the same May 2020, a new resident was registered in the Chinese-Belarusian industrial park - Scientific and Technical Company for Wooden Structures "Crownhomes" LLC, which will create in "Great Stone" a "center for the production of production lines for the woodworking industry based on the principles of industry 4.0"<sup>659</sup>. This production, which is based on innovative technologies, is expected to be put into operation in 2022.

In addition, in 2020, the Chinese-Belarusian industrial park "Great Stone", despite the alarming epidemic situation, continued to demonstrate fairly high rates of development, remaining a landmark project of the Chinese "One Belt, One Road" initiative in Eastern Europe. Suffice it to say that "at the end of October, its residents included 66 enterprises from 14 countries, the volume of agreed investments was about \$1.2 billion<sup>660</sup>." This fact also speaks volumes: over the nine months of 2020, the revenue of residents of the industrial park increased by almost three and a half times compared to the same period in 2019. "At the same time, revenue from the sale of goods, products, works, and services outside Belarus amounted to Br 36.8 million (an increase of 8.7 times)<sup>661</sup>." And the number of workers employed at "Great Stone" is close to one thousand – 970 people. And, apparently, the industrial park is not going to stop there, as evidenced by a number of facts from the second half of 2020, showing that in this special economic zone today there is an active search for new ways of development in many areas, including optimization of logistics and implementation of innovations.

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<sup>658</sup> The first unmanned electric bus was tested in "Great Stone" [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/pervyj-bespilotnyj-elektrobus-protestirovali-v-velikom-kamne-390612-2020>

<sup>659</sup> The new resident of "Great Stone" will produce products for woodworking [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novyj-rezident-velikogo-kamnja-budet-vypuskat-produktsiju-dlja-derevoobrabotki-390684-2020>

<sup>660</sup> Xiaoyong, S. China opposes outside interference in the internal affairs of Belarus / S. Xiaoyong // [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/interview/view/kitaj-vystupaet-protiv-vmeshatelstva-izvne-vo-vnutrennie-dela-belarusi-7572/>

<sup>661</sup> The revenue of "Great Stone" residents in January–September increased 3.4 times to Br 126.2 million [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/vyruchka-rezidentov-velikogo-kamnja-v-janvare-sentjabre-vyrosla-v-34-raza-do-br1262-mln-416031-2020/>

Thus, in September 2020, Eurasian Railway Gateway CJSC was registered as a resident of the Great Stone, a company that “will implement an investment project for the construction of a bimodal railway terminal in the park <sup>662</sup>. ” The list of participants in this project, construction work on which will begin in 2021, is very substantial. This is the world's largest inland port of JSC Duisburger Hafen from Germany, and the leading network operator of intermodal transport in Europe Hupak Intermodal SA from Switzerland, and the Republican Unitary Enterprise Brest Branch of the Belarusian Railway, and a resident of the park of China Merchants CNN -BELAR Commercial and Logistics Company.” It is expected that when the terminal reaches its design capacity, it will take Great Stone residents to a qualitatively new level of realization of their logistics capabilities.

Speaking about the innovative prospects for the development of the industrial park, it should be remembered that again in September 2020, the Chinese-Belarusian Innovation Center for Industrial Technologies, created by the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, the Academy of Sciences of Guangdong Province, and the Foshan Scientific and Research Center, became a new resident of the “Great Stone”. Research Institute of Industrial Technologies. The creators of this center see it as a platform for “the implementation of scientific and technological achievements between the two countries. The task of this particular platform is to develop scientific ideas and bring them to industrial implementation <sup>663</sup>. ” It is expected that the scientific research and development started here today in such areas as new materials, modern industrial technologies, digitalization in production, bio- and environmental technologies will develop into specific technologies and production in two to three years. In addition to being a link for scientific and technological cooperation between the institutes of the Guangdong Provincial Academy of Sciences and the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, this center will provide business consulting and other support services to selected incubated enterprises, including business plan consulting, training . Certain hopes for the successful development of this structure are also associated with the fact that “to ensure the commercialization of the results of research and development work of the industrial technology center, it is planned to create a

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<sup>662</sup> The new resident of “Great Stone” will build a railway terminal [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novyj-rezident-velikogo-kamnja-postroit-zhd-terminal-407959-2020/>

<sup>663</sup> The Chinese-Belarusian innovative center for industrial technologies appeared in the “Great Stone” [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/kitajsko-belorusskij-innovatsionnyj-tsentr-promyshlennyh-tehnologij-pojavilsja-v-velikom-kamne-408221-2020/>

special fund for the Belt and Road Initiative in the amount of \$1.5 million<sup>664</sup>,” the funds of which will be used to support the commercialization of selected scientific projects and incubated enterprises.

Another innovation center for the commercialization of scientific and technical achievements was planned to open in “Great Stone” before the end of 2020. It was in this spirit that this issue was discussed in September 2020 at a meeting of the Belarusian part of the commission on scientific and technical cooperation of the Belarusian-Chinese intergovernmental cooperation committee, where the implementation of the program of scientific and technical cooperation between Belarus and China for 2019-2020 was considered. This center should become a comprehensive platform for nurturing startups.

Finally, in November 2020, another event occurred that could seriously contribute to the introduction of innovation in this special economic zone. We are talking about an agreement signed by the National Center for Intellectual Property and the administration of the Chinese-Belarusian Industrial Park “Great Stone” on the creation of a Technology and Innovation Support Center on the territory of the park. This new structure is expected to “make it easier for researchers to find information about existing scientific advances and boost the scientific work of young scientists and start-up organizations<sup>665</sup>.” In particular, in this center, all interested employees of park residents will have free access to patent and non-patent databases of the World Intellectual Property Organization. So there are considerable opportunities for innovation here.

Let us note that “Great Stone” today is also trying to make maximum use of the experience of other innovative structures operating in different parts of the planet. This is evidenced by the fact that the Chinese-Belarusian industrial park entered the innovative alliance of special special economic free trade zones, created in the fall of 2020 in the Chinese city of Shenzhen. This initiative, which also includes 47 counties and regions of the People's Republic of China Free Trade Zone Innovation Alliance, intends to “actively respond to global and regional plans such as the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable

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<sup>664</sup> The innovation center in “Great Stone” is planned to open before the end of the year [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/innovatsionnyj-tsentr-v-velikom-kamne-planirujut-otkryt-do-kontsa-goda-408059-2020/>

<sup>665</sup> A technology and innovation support center was created in “Great Stone” [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/tsentr-podderzhki-tehnologij-i-innovatsij-sozdali-v-velikom-kamne-415194-2020/>

Development, the Belt and Road Initiative ", EU Investment Plan, Africa Agenda 2063" <sup>666</sup>. The new alliance, in addition to the "Great Stone", includes many other foreign participants, interaction with which in the future can give interesting results, since each of them is an innovative platform with its own unique creative experience. These include the Lekki Free Trade Zone in Nigeria, the Sihanoukville Special Economic Zone in Cambodia, the Djibouti International Free Trade Zone in East Africa, the Hambantota Industrial Park in Sri Lanka, the Eastern Industrial Park of Ethiopia, the Thailand-China Industrial Park in Rayong, an economic zone Suez Canal. Let's get to know them better.

Thus, **the Lekki Free Trade Zone** , located in the Nigerian state of Lagos, is one of the most promising in this African country. Her project is a universal complex, "divided into separate sectors for the oil and gas industry, industrial production, financial and commercial sectors, tourism, recreation and private housing <sup>667</sup>. " The FTZ accounts for five kilometers of coastline. Fifty kilometers away is the port of Apapa, the largest in West Africa, and 70 kilometers away is Murtala Mohammad International Airport.

**The Sihanoukville Special Economic Zone** is an overseas economic and trade cooperation area in Cambodia that was established by Chinese companies jointly with the Cambodia International Investment and Development Group to promote favorable market conditions, where a major industrial center was built in 2010 in addition to a port. By the beginning of 2019, "153 enterprises from China, Europe, America, Southeast Asia and other countries and regions were registered here. Among them are 139 industrial enterprises, mainly engaged in such industries as the textile and clothing industry, the manufacture of suitcases, bags and other leather goods, machinery and mechanisms, electronics, and woodworking <sup>668</sup>. " In five years, they managed to create more than 22 thousand jobs here.

As for **the Djibouti International Free Trade Zone** in East Africa, it was opened in July 2018 with the active participation of the Chinese company China State Construction . Once all phases of construction are completed, it is

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<sup>666</sup> "Great Stone" entered the innovative alliance of special economic free trade zones [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/velikij-kamen-voshel-v-innovatsionnyj-aljjans-osobyh-economiceskikh-zon-svobodnoj-torgovli-405052-2020/>

<sup>667</sup> Rendeavour expands Lekki Free Trade Zone development project [Electronic resource]. – 2016. – URL : <https://www.prnewswire.com/ru/press-releases/ru-584836431.html>

<sup>668</sup> Yifeng, H. A new industrial area is being built in the province of Sihanoukville / H. Yifeng, S. Mengzhou // [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <http://www.mofcom.gov.cn/article/beltandroad/khm/ruindex.shtml>

expected to “become the largest free trade zone in Africa and [...] a new engine for Djibouti’s economic development, helping Djibouti build a financial, shipping and trade hub in Northeast Africa<sup>669</sup>. ” The creators of this FTZ see it as a testing ground for the so-called “Silk Road Station” in order to reproduce here the successful Chinese experience in developing global enterprises.

To create a transit maritime hub for the entire South Asian region - this is the goal set for the Chinese-Lankan project to **reconstruct the port of Hambantota in Sri Lanka**, which is located very close to the main routes of international maritime transport. “Previously, ships practically never came to this small fishing town. But everything changed after the start of a joint Chinese-Lankan project to revive the sea harbor<sup>670</sup>. ” Now thousands of new jobs have already been created here during the implementation of the Chinese “port-industrial park-city” model, the essence of which is that after the development of the port, an industrial park will be created, which will help the development of the city. This, in turn, will make Hambantota Port one of the key elements of the 21st century Maritime Silk Road.

**The Eastern Industrial Park of Ethiopia** is another “Chinese overseas trade and economic cooperation zone at the national level, it already hosts more than 80 enterprises, most of them Chinese,”<sup>671</sup> engaged in pharmaceutical, textile, metallurgy and a number of other industries. Note that this is not the only project being implemented by the Chinese side in this African country. “Based on China's experience of economic growth, 15 industrial parks using Chinese technology will be built in Ethiopia in the coming years<sup>672</sup>,” which Addis Ababa believes will allow this East African country to join the group of middle-income countries in the next ten years .

**The Thailand-China Industrial Park in Rayong Province** was built back in 2005. This cluster has become the only one in Thailand certified by the Chinese government as an overseas trade and economic cooperation area. By

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<sup>669</sup> The heads of state of five countries took part in the opening ceremony of the International Free Trade Zone in Djibouti [Electronic resource]. – 2018. – URL : [https://ru.csccec.com/xwzx\\_ru/gsxw\\_ru/201810/2891561.html](https://ru.csccec.com/xwzx_ru/gsxw_ru/201810/2891561.html)

<sup>670</sup> A Chinese-Lankan cooperation project is being implemented in the port of Hambantota in Sri Lanka [Electronic resource]. – 2018. – URL : <https://newsru.cgtm.com/news/3d3d414e6646444d77597a6333566d54/p.html>

<sup>671</sup> Ethiopian-Chinese cooperation is a classic example of cooperation between China and Africa - President of Ethiopia [Electronic resource]. – 2018. – URL : [http://russian.news.cn/2018-08/14/c\\_137387915.htm](http://russian.news.cn/2018-08/14/c_137387915.htm)

<sup>672</sup> The belt of cooperation is stronger, the path out of the “trap of backwardness” is shorter [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://finance.rambler.ru/markets/43964485-zhenmin-zhibao-kitay-obedinennye-obschey-tselyu-chast-2/>

2017, more than 90 enterprises were already operating here, which “brought investments worth more than \$2.5 billion to Thailand, solved the problem of employment for more than 20 thousand local residents, and became an industrial center and export base for the priority sectors of traditional Chinese industry in Thailand”<sup>673</sup>. An interesting detail: based on the experience of an industrial park in the Thai province of Rayong, the Chinese corporation Huali opened the Beimei Huafushan industrial cluster in Mexico in October 2015 to help other Chinese companies enter and develop the American market.

**The Suez Canal Economic Zone** in Egypt was created in 2015, when a new channel of the canal, 72 kilometers long, was put into operation to attract foreign investment to implement the project of an international industrial and logistics hub. It is assumed that “with the development of the Suez Canal, production and service enterprises located there will form up to a third of the country’s total economy<sup>674</sup>. ” In the spring of 2019, 77 residents were already operating in the Chinese-Egyptian part of this seven-square-kilometer zone. In May 2018, an agreement was signed to create a Russian industrial zone in this region. In February 2020, the Belarusian side also announced its desire to take part in the creation of a special economic zone of the Suez Canal.

Of course, the innovative experience in the development of all these special special economic free trade zones will be very useful for the Chinese-Belarusian industrial park “Great Stone”, which, in turn, has something to share with its partners in the new alliance.

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<sup>673</sup> Huali Corporation: let's create an “industrial Chinatown” on the “One Belt, One Road” [Electronic resource]. – 2017. – URL : [http://russian.china.org.cn/exclusive/txt/2017-04/13/content\\_40612178.htm](http://russian.china.org.cn/exclusive/txt/2017-04/13/content_40612178.htm)

<sup>674</sup> The President of Egypt issued a decree on the creation of a special economic zone of the Suez Canal [Electronic resource]. – 2015. – URL : <https://tass.ru/ekonomika/2181686>

## **Belarus – China: development of an industrial park and regional cooperation**

Directive No. 9 “On the development of bilateral relations of the Republic of Belarus with the People’s Republic of China”, adopted in December 2021, lists among the priority tasks until 2025 the increase in trade, economic, financial, investment interaction and the expansion of interregional ties. As part of the announced course to raise the status of Belarusian-Chinese relations to the level of iron brotherhood, exemplary comprehensive strategic cooperation and all-weather partnership, an important component is the activities of the Chinese-Belarusian Industrial Park “Great Stone”, one of the main tasks of which is to ensure the effective activities of its residents, attract new ones, active development of innovation activities, startups, cluster cooperation, as well as attracting Belarusian enterprises to participate in “Great Stone” projects. At the same time, a specific goal is outlined: “Ensuring that by 2025 the number of residents of the park is at least 170 companies...”<sup>675</sup>.

Let us note that a number of specific measures to accomplish this task were taken at the Great Stone back in 2021. In particular, over the three quarters of this year, residents of the industrial park increased investments in fixed assets by more than a third. At the same time, “the volume of industrial production increased by more than 2.5 times to Br 222.6 million. <...> Exports of products and services of residents increased by more than 16% and are carried out to 20 countries of the world<sup>676</sup>.” An important detail: if “at the end of 2020, 68 companies from 14 countries were registered [in the park]<sup>677</sup>,” then by mid-November 2021, 81 companies from 15 countries were already registered as residents here. Work on expanding the “Great Stone” continues further.

Thus, in October, the Belarusian-Latvian LLC “SMD Bai” was registered here, which “plans to create a high-tech production of electronic

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<sup>675</sup> Directive of the President of the Republic of Belarus No. 9 “On the development of bilateral relations of the Republic of Belarus with the People’s Republic of China.” – Mn., 2021. – P. 6.

<sup>676</sup> In “Great Stone”, investments in fixed assets increased by more than a third over 9 months [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/v-velikom-kamne-za-9-mesjatsev-bolee-chem-na-tret-uvelichilis-investitsii-v-osnovnoj-kapital-470611-2021/>

<sup>677</sup> Zalesky, B. For the purpose of sustainable development. Collection articles / B. Zalesky . – LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2021. – P . 13.

products (boards) of small and medium series”<sup>678</sup>, widely used in telecommunications, medicine, the automotive industry, instrument making, for supplying them to the countries of the Eurasian economic union. In November, the list of residents of the industrial park was replenished with several more business entities. One of them is Rufays LLC. The investment project of the new resident is related to the production and use of the latest polymer materials in construction. The innovative approach here is that “the composite material is the company’s own development and differs from analogues in its higher performance properties. It has a wide range of applications, including for the production of roofing and other elements of buildings and structures<sup>679</sup>,” which gives good reason to hope for the sale of these products not only on the domestic market, but also in Russia, as well as the countries of the European Union.

Among the new residents is the Belarusian LLC “InKata”, which was previously registered in “Great Stone” as an investor in order to build facilities here to support subjects of innovative activities of the industrial park. “The project will provide design, prototyping, and development of technical documentation services, as well as the provision of workspaces and equipment<sup>680</sup>. ” Another November resident of the “Great Stone” is the Chinese-Belarusian Center for Innovative Bioengineering Technologies LLC, which intends to closely cooperate with the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus. “The company will produce reagents for diagnosing coronavirus and some other diseases, as well as for diagnosing food safety,”<sup>681</sup> which are expected to be exported to the countries of the Eurasian Economic Union and the European Union, as well as to China.

In the first half of December, a new subject of innovative activity was registered in the industrial park - Needle Med LLC, which is going to implement a project in the Great Stone to create an ideal simulator for practicing practical manual skills by workers of various specialties - surgeons,

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<sup>678</sup> The new resident of “Great Stone” will produce electronic boards [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novyj-rezident-velikogo-kamnja-budet-proizvodit-elektronnye-platy-465743-2021/>

<sup>679</sup> The new resident of “Great Stone” will produce composite materials [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novyj-rezident-velikogo-kamnja-budet-proizvodit-kompozitnye-materialy-469205-2021/>

<sup>680</sup> LLC “InKata” became a resident of “Great Stone” [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/ooo-inkata-stalo-rezidentom-velikogo-kamnja-471320-2021/>

<sup>681</sup> The new resident of the “Great Stone” will produce reagents for the diagnosis of diseases [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novyj-rezident-velikogo-kamnja-budet-proizvodit-reagenty-dlja-dagnostiki-zabolevanij-471849-2021/>

tattoo artists, medical students . Interestingly, this project was created in 2019 by a group of students. “His idea is to create a simulator that is as close as possible to real human tissues to train specialists for practical activities <sup>682</sup>. ” Thanks to the opportunities that the industrial park provides to innovators, the development of young specialists will hopefully find wide application in real life. In the second half of December, another resident was registered in the “Great Stone” - Tianyu Changying UAV Science and Technology Company LLC (MSK), the founder of which is one of the leading enterprises in China in the field of development and production of intelligent unmanned systems - Beijing Science and Technology Tianyu Changying UAV Technology Company.” The goal of this investment project in the industrial park is “to create a high-tech production of universal logistics systems for unmanned aerial vehicles and equipment for them <sup>683</sup>. ”

Speaking about the development of cluster cooperation in the “Great Stone”, it should be remembered that back in June 2021, the Republic of Belarus adopted a decree that improves legal regulation aimed at improving the investment climate in the Chinese-Belarusian industrial park “Great Stone”. In particular, this document provides for: 1) giving greater independence to the park administration by transferring additional powers from local authorities in terms of implementing administrative procedures; 2) expanding the types of activities of the industrial park; 3) support for start-ups; 4) creation of preferential conditions for large investment projects with an investment volume of more than \$50 million.

Among the new areas of activity of “Great Stone” we should mention, first of all, the creation and development of production in the fields of biopharmaceuticals, medical products and medical services. A very attractive innovation in this regard is the special conditions for the development of medical activities in the park, where it will be possible to provide medical services using medicines, medical equipment and products, and treatment methods from foreign countries without mandatory registration in Belarus and without the need to obtain a license for medical services. For manufacturers, the time frame will be significantly reduced and the procedure for conducting registration and re-registration of medicines and medical devices, and

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<sup>682</sup> The new Great Stone company will create simulators for practicing manual skills in surgery [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/tech/view/novaja-kompanija-velikogo-kamnja-budet-sozdavat-trenazhery-dlja-otrabotki-manualnyh-navykov-v-hirurgii-474239-2021/>

<sup>683</sup> The new resident of “Great Stone” will begin to produce unmanned aerial vehicles [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novyj-rezident-velikogo-kamnja-nachnet-proizvodit-bespilotnye-letatelnye-apparaty-476043-2021/>

conducting clinical trials will be simplified. In other words, all these changes “open up broad opportunities for the development of the medical and pharmaceutical cluster in the park, and primarily in the field of traditional Chinese medicine <sup>684</sup>. ”

Focusing attention on the development of Belarusian-Chinese cooperation in the field of medicine in the context of the fight against the coronavirus epidemic is very timely. After all, Chinese traditional medicine “has unique advantages in the prevention, treatment of diseases and rehabilitation after them. <...> It not only has a good therapeutic effect on the mild form of COVID -19, but also has obvious advantages in the treatment of seriously ill patients, due to which the mortality rate in severe cases has decreased from 21% to 5% <sup>685</sup>. ” Using the “Great Stone” platform to realize the existing potential of Belarusian-Chinese interaction in the field of healthcare can give a serious positive result in terms of preventing new “waves” of the coronavirus epidemic.

Let us remind you that in the Great Stone industrial park there are 12 residents operating within the medical field. “These are companies from Belarus, China, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Russia, and the USA <sup>686</sup>. ” An important component of the medical cluster being created here will be the Novoera Biotech company, which became a resident of the industrial park in March 2021. Among its founders are the Jingtai Institute of Culture and Economics, Xishanqingxue Chinese Medicine Clinic LLC (Beijing) and Xishanqingxue Pharmaceutical Technology Company LLC (Beijing). The new resident will implement a project related to Chinese traditional medicine. “The medicines and supplements that are planned to be produced are based on environmentally friendly natural materials. They will be in demand not only to help treat coronavirus, but also to treat colds, flu, and asthma <sup>687</sup>. ” In particular,

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<sup>684</sup> Koroteev, K. Support for startups, preferences for investors, simplification of land relations - on the innovations of the decree on the development of the Great Stone Park / K. Koroteev // [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/comments/view/podderzhka-startapov-vzaimodejstvie-investoram-uproschenie-zemelnyh-otnoshenij-koroteev-o-novatsijah-ukaza-po-7805/>

<sup>685</sup> Xiaoyong, S. Belarus and China: growth of business cooperation and interaction in the production of drugs for the treatment of coronavirus / S. Xiaoyong // [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/interview/view/belarus-i-kitaj-rost-delovogo-sotrudnichestva-i-vzaimodejstvie-v-vypuske-lekarstv-pri-lechenii-koronavirusa-7873/>

<sup>686</sup> The Center for Expertise and Testing in Healthcare and the Great Stone Park agreed to cooperate [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/tsentr-ekspertiz-i-ispytanij-v-zdravoohranenii-i-park-velikij-kamen-dogovorilis-o-sotrudnichestve-441421-2021/>

<sup>687</sup> A new resident of the “Great Stone” begins a project in the field of Chinese medicine [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novyj-rezident-velikogo-kamnjachinaet-proekt-v-sfere-kitajskoj-medsitsiny-433283-2021/>

the production of the drug “Linglan Yiqing” will be organized, aimed at the effective treatment of coronavirus infection. It was assumed that at the first stage, the produced medicines, the production of which was planned to begin in 2021, would be exported to Ukraine, Russia, Azerbaijan, Turkey, and India.

In March 2021, plans were also announced to create a Eurasian Center for Traditional Chinese Medicine at the Great Stone, which will provide medical services to residents of the industrial park, its Chinese and foreign employees, and will also interact with research institutions, healthcare institutions in Belarus and neighboring countries to exchange experiences in the field of traditional Chinese medicine. In May 2021, a memorandum of cooperation was signed by the CJSC Industrial Park Development Company and the Republican Unitary Enterprise Center for Expertise and Testing in Healthcare. And in July, an agreement was concluded at the Great Stone on the creation of a Chinese-Belarusian zone of in-depth cooperation and an international park of traditional Chinese medicine and healthcare, which imply a new model of interaction between Belarus and China in this area.

All these facts indicate active steps to deploy in the industrial park “an extensive cluster that will bring together developments in the field of Chinese medicine. <...> It is expected that a medical center for diagnostic services will appear in the future. This direction is already underway<sup>688</sup>. ” In addition, the development of the field of medical tourism is also envisaged here, for which a kind of medical village will be built near the Volmyansky reservoir - clinics and various medical institutions in the field of rehabilitation. Let us also recall that in the set of measures for the development of the national innovation system in Belarus for 2021-2025, the Chinese-Belarusian Industrial Park “Great Stone” is defined “as a platform for organizing innovative production<sup>689</sup>. ” Judging by the above facts, this site is developing quite successfully, confidently and dynamically in the current five-year period.

Turning to the task of expanding interregional ties, which is one of the priorities in the development of Belarusian-Chinese relations, we can note the successful experience of solving it in such Belarusian regions as Minsk and Gomel region. Speaking about the Belarusian capital, it is enough to say that

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<sup>688</sup> Kryzhevich, I. Two new residents of the “Great Stone” will be engaged in the development of artificial intelligence and the development of equipment for processing and storing data / I. Kryzhevich // [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.sb.by/articles/zvanyy-biznes.html>

<sup>689</sup> Measures have been identified for the development of the national innovation system until 2025 [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/opredeleny-meroprijatija-po-razvittiju-natsionalnoj-innovatsionnoj-sistemy-do-2025-goda-475735-2021>

“in January–May of the current [2021] year, trade turnover between Minsk and China amounted to \$730.6 million, and last year for the same period – \$613.8 million <sup>690</sup>. ” The main exporters were RUE “Bellesexport”, LLC “Best Meat Company”, CJSC “Meat and Dairy Company”, CJSC “Mobiora”, OJSC “Integral” - UKH “Integral”. And the basis of Minsk supplies to the Celestial Empire consisted of timber, meat and food by-products of poultry, milk and condensed cream, rapeseed oil, electronic integrated circuits and microassemblies, tanned or dressed fur skins, measuring or control instruments, collections and collectibles in zoology, equipment for measurement or control of electrical quantities, ready-made media for recording sound. Important in terms of consolidating this trend in the future is the intensification of ties between the Belarusian capital and Chinese sister cities, of which Minsk has four - Changchun (1992), Shenzhen (2014), Beijing (2016), Shanghai (2019).

A special place in this list of sister cities is occupied by the administrative center of Jilin Province - Changchun, located in northeast China, where science, automotive industry, optical instrumentation are developed and where about eight million people live. In May 2022, it will be 30 years since the signing of the Agreement on the establishment of sister city relations between it and the Belarusian capital. In 2010, a Belarusian-Chinese technology park opened in the high-tech production zone of this Chinese city to become a platform for working on joint projects and further promoting products not only to the Chinese market, but also to neighboring countries. It was based on about 15 enterprises that were part of the zone and had long-standing stable ties with Belarusian scientific and innovative enterprises. Then, among the joint projects in the technology park, it was planned to “create an enterprise for the production of medical laser equipment, an agreement to create a joint venture for the production of a high-precision electric motor. At the first stage, about 30 hectares of land were allocated for the project for the construction of office and industrial premises, in the future it is possible to allocate another 30 hectares <sup>691</sup>. ” More specifically, the technology park is divided into six functional zones: a research and development center, a project incubator, a museum, as well as three complexes - international cooperation,

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<sup>690</sup> Kuharev and the Chinese Ambassador discussed cooperation between Minsk and the cities of the PRC [Electronic resource] - 2021. - URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/kuharev-i-posol-kitaja-obsudili-sotrudnichestvo-minska-s-gorodami-knr-453612-2021/>

<sup>691</sup> Polezhay, T. The Belarusian-Chinese technopark opened in the city of Changchun / T. Polezhay // [Electronic resource]. – 2010. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/president/view/belorusko-kitajskij-tehnopark-otkrylsja-v-gorode-chanchun-134192-2010>

regional interaction and service. In addition, it is planned to create an art gallery, bookstore, exhibition and concert halls on its territory. But the main thing is that here “the development is based, among other things, on a fund of 80 Belarusian projects <sup>692</sup>. ”

Today, “a complex of technology park buildings has already been built there, and currently one of the pressing issues is filling it with joint high-tech projects <sup>693</sup>. ” And the first three residents have already been accepted into it: the Chinese-Belarusian Center for Research and Development of Precision Medical Equipment of the BNTU Polytechnic Technopark and the Belarusian-Chinese Technopark in Changchun; Belarusian-Chinese center for joint development and application of carbon-carbon composite materials between SvetlogorskKhimvolokno OJSC and Jilin Lenke company; Belarusian-Chinese center for the development of functional berry crops between the Central Botanical Garden of the National Academy of Sciences, Polesie Zhuraviny LLC and the Northeast Institute of Geography and Agricultural Ecology of the Chinese Academy of Sciences. To support this growing dynamics of bilateral interaction, the Belarusian and Chinese sides set the task of “concentrating on improving the conditions for mutually beneficial cooperation, expanding and deepening contacts, including among young people <sup>694</sup>. ” And today the main thematic areas of the technology park already include such as “photo-electronics, laser technology, new materials, construction and energy, agricultural technologies and biotechnology, computer science <sup>695</sup>. ”

The Belarusian-Chinese technology park in Changchun is not the only area of interaction between Minsk and this sister city. Back in June 2014, the parties agreed to develop business cooperation, for which they planned to hold business forums. “During such events, businessmen will have the opportunity to agree on the implementation of specific projects. In addition, the forums will

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<sup>692</sup> The China-Belarus Technopark is being built in Changchun [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://primgazeta.ru/news/v-chanchune-stroyat-kitajsko-belorusskij-tehnopark-08-07-2019-05-00-12>

<sup>693</sup> The technology park in Changchun will make a significant contribution to the development of relations between Belarus and China - Shumilin [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/tehnopark-v-chanchune-vneset-suschestvennyj-vklad-v-razvitiye-otnoshenij-belarusi-i-kitaja-shumilin-405335-2020/>

<sup>694</sup> About 300 applications were submitted to the Chinese-Belarusian youth competition of innovative projects [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/okolo-300-zajavok-podano-na-kitajsko-belorusskij-molodezhnyj-konkurs-innovatsionnyh-proektov-442132-2021/>

<sup>695</sup> Belarusian-Chinese Science and Technology Park in Changchun [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <http://changchun.park.bntu.by/about-technology-park/>

contribute to further strengthening the economic basis of our cooperation <sup>696</sup>. ” In June 2017, in order to expand sister city ties, the Minsk City Executive Committee and the People's Government of Changchun adopted an agreement to establish cooperation in the field of tourism and the development of cultural ties. And within the framework of a bilateral business forum held at the same time in the Chinese city, “memorandums of cooperation with Chinese partners were signed by SOAO Kommunararka, KUP Minskhlëbprom, KUP Small Wholesale Base on Zapadnaya, OJSC Belryba, OJSC Minotel <sup>697</sup>. ” So the opportunities for expanding cooperation between the two sister cities are undoubtedly opening up very extensive. You just need to use them without wasting time, and for mutual benefit.

As for the Gomel region, it has already signed documents on bilateral cooperation with four Chinese regions - the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region (2011) and the Xinjiang Uygur Region (2016), the provinces of Sichuan (2015) and Jiangsu (2016). When naming the province of Sichuan in this list, we note that in April 2021 the parties increased the level of their friendly relations by signing “an agreement on the establishment of sister city ties, which provides for the expansion of cooperation in the economic, social and cultural spheres <sup>698</sup>. ”

Such a variety of partnerships and twinning relations could not but affect the overall interaction of the Gomel region with China. Suffice it to say that over the past three years, supplies from this Belarusian region to the Chinese market have increased 20(!) times. And “exports of Gomel enterprises to China in January-November last [2021] exceeded \$100 million. The main export items to China are wood pulp, timber, wool, meat, dairy and confectionery products <sup>699</sup>. ” And this level is not considered the maximum in the region, as they see serious potential in increasing supplies to this East Asian country of beef, meat and poultry by-products, whole milk products, milk, condensed and dry cream, and whey powder. For this purpose, 16 regional enterprises have

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<sup>696</sup> Minsk and Chinese Changchun plan to develop business cooperation [Electronic resource]. – 2014. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/minsk-i-kitajskij-chanchun-planirujut-razvivat-biznes-sotrudnichestvo-47498-2014/>

<sup>697</sup> Minsk and Chinese Changchun signed an agreement on cooperation in the field of tourism and culture [Electronic resource]. – 2017. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/minsk-i-kitajskij-chanchun-podpisali-soglashenie-o-sotrudnichestve-v-sfere-turizma-i-kulturny-250871-2017/>

<sup>698</sup> Zalesky, B.L. Gomel region: Chinese vector of partnership / B.L. Zalesky // Materialy XVIII Mezinarodni vedecko - prakticka conference “ Efektivni” nastroje modernich ved – 2021.” Volume 5: Praha . Publishing House “ Education and Science .” – C. 16.

<sup>699</sup> The Gomel region has increased exports to China 20 times over three years [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/gomelskaja-oblast-za-tri-goda-uvlechila-eksport-v-kitaj-v-20-raz-481090-2022/>

already been accredited in the Celestial Empire: 6 meat processing, 7 dairy processing, 2 alcohol and one confectionery. And in the Belarusian region itself, three enterprises with Chinese capital have already been registered - producing electricity from hydroelectric power stations, concrete and engaged in restaurant activities.

An important detail: the Gomel region continues to actively expand ties with Chinese regions in 2022. Thus, in January, a round table was held here on multifunctional cooperation with Hebei Province, whose business entities have been interacting with Gomel partners in terms of production cooperation for quite some time. In particular, back in September 2015, the Chongqing Zongshen-Gomel Agricultural Machinery Enterprise LLC was created in Hebei province, which began assembling cob harvesters, forage harvesters and grain harvesters. The investor on the Belarusian side was Gomselmash OJSC, and on the Chinese side, Zongshen Industrial Corporation LLC. This cooperation project provided an opportunity for the Belarusian manufacturer to strengthen and expand its presence in the Chinese market. “In 2016, the amount of supplies of vehicle kits to China amounted to about 2.6 million US dollars, in 2017 – 10 million US dollars, in 2018 – 7 million US dollars<sup>700</sup>. ”

In development of this project, in March 2017, in Weixian County, Handan City District, Hebei Province, the construction of a new plant for the production of combines for harvesting corn, grain and rapeseed by the Belarusian-Chinese joint venture “Chongqing Zongshen-Gomel Agricultural Machinery Enterprise” began. And then “the first contracts were signed with agricultural companies in the provinces of Hebei and Heilongjiang for the purchase of Belarusian-Chinese combine harvesters<sup>701</sup>. ” And in June 2019, a new contract was signed for the supply of the next batch of forage harvester machine kits to China for more than one and a half million dollars. And by mid-2019, “the company produced 500 combines<sup>702</sup>. ”

A logical continuation of these partnerships was the adoption in October 2019 by the cities of Gomel and Handan of a memorandum of intent regarding

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<sup>700</sup> Interregional relations between Belarus and China: state, problems and development prospects / T.S. Vertinskaya [and others]. – Minsk: Belarusian Science, 2020. – C . 221-222.

<sup>701</sup> Grishkevich, A. A new Belarusian-Chinese plant for the production of combine harvesters began to be built in Hebei province / A. Grishkevich // [Electronic resource]. – 2017. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novj-belorusko-kitajskij-zavod-po-proizvodstvu-kombajnov-nachali-stroit-v-provintsii-hebej-237889-2017>

<sup>702</sup> Gomselmash will supply machine kits for forage harvesters to China worth more than \$1.5 million [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://export.by/news/gomselmash-postavit-v-kitay-mashinokomplekti-kormoubo-rochnih-kombaynov-na-summu-bolee-15-mln-doll>

the establishment of sister city relations in order to promote the development of mutually beneficial cooperation. In particular, for the Gomel side in this context, the topic of increasing the export of food products, such as beef, was very relevant. It was also said that “on a partnership basis, the parties should develop industrial cooperation, in particular between Gomselmash and the Hebei agricultural machinery enterprise Zongshen-Gomel.” There are prospects for the implementation of joint ideas in the field of tourism, culture, and education <sup>703</sup>. ”

In this regard, it must be said that the sister city ties of the cities of the Gomel region with Chinese partners very organically complement the entire complex of interregional interaction between this Belarusian region and China. At the beginning of 2022, seven bilateral documents were concluded between the administrative-territorial units of the Gomel region and China. The eighth was the agreement signed in January 2022 to establish sister city relations between the Svetlogorsk district and the city of Baoding, located in Hebei province and with more than ten million inhabitants. This document “involves the development of mutually beneficial cooperation in various fields – economics, trade and humanitarian <sup>704</sup>. ” The parties certainly have the necessary potential for developing effective interaction. And let’s hope that the next step in the development of the Chinese vector of foreign economic relations in the Gomel region will be the establishment of sister city ties with the entire Hebei province.

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<sup>703</sup> Gomel and Chinese Handan intend to develop sister city ties [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/gomel-i-kitajskij-handan-namereny-razvivat-pobratimskie-svjazi-366580-2019/>

<sup>704</sup> Svetlogorsk district and Chinese Baoding signed an agreement on sister city relations [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/svetlogorskij-rajon-i-kitajskij-baodin-podpisali-soglashenie-o-pobratimskih-otnoshenijah-481071-2022/>

## **Belarus – China: prospects for cooperation have been defined**

In May 2022, the sixth meeting of the Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation of the Belarusian-Chinese Intergovernmental Cooperation Committee was held, at which its participants discussed the state and prospects of bilateral trade and investment interaction, transport and logistics partnership, as well as the implementation of a joint project - the Chinese-Belarusian Industrial Great Stone Park. Let us recall that at the end of 2021, the volume of mutual trade in goods and services between the two countries came close to six billion dollars, and the share of Belarusian supplies to the Celestial Empire more than doubled. At the same time, “the capabilities of Belarusian manufacturers allow us to ship almost \$2 billion worth of Belarusian-made goods to the Chinese market by the end of this year [2022]. This requires the consolidation of the efforts of the parties to maximally accelerate the opening of the Chinese market for new Belarusian manufacturers, the creation of joint trading companies, the development of the largest China's electronic trading platforms”<sup>705</sup>.

During the commission meeting, the Belarusian side proposed deepening trade cooperation in five promising areas. The first is the expansion of direct contacts between the business circles of the two countries. The second is an increase in the range of products supplied to China from Belarus. Third, promoting new mechanisms for expanding bilateral trade with an emphasis on creating joint export-import companies and positioning Belarusian goods on Chinese electronic trading platforms. Fourth, the development of logistics through prompt delivery of goods by rail. Fifth, increasing investment cooperation within the framework of existing bilateral projects and joint work on the creation of new import-substituting enterprises “through the prism of the development of the Great Stone industrial park and deepening interregional cooperation”<sup>706</sup>.

The results of the first quarter of 2022 indicate that work in these areas is being carried out quite actively. In particular, Belarusian-Chinese trade

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<sup>705</sup> Chervyakov: friendly and partnership relations with China are especially significant for Belarus [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/chervjakov-druzhestvennye-i-partnerskie-otnoshenija-s-kitaem-osobo-znachimy-dlja-belarusi-504062-2022>

<sup>706</sup> Trade turnover between Belarus and China in the first quarter amounted to \$1.2 billion [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/tovarooborot-belarusi-i-kitaja-vi-kvartale-sostavil-12-mlrd-504056-2022/>

turnover during this period amounted to \$1.2 billion. This fact also speaks volumes: Belarus is among the ten largest suppliers of potash fertilizers, whey, meat products and rapeseed oil to China. The agreements reached during the work of the commission should contribute to the successful implementation of the planned areas of cooperation. Thus, the Ministry of Industry of Belarus intends to closely cooperate with the Chinese Chamber of Commerce on the import and export of engineering and electronic products. The memorandum signed by the parties “is aimed at strengthening the Belarusian-Chinese partnership in industry”<sup>707</sup>. A memorandum of cooperation in the field of import and export of woodworking products was also adopted by the Bellesbumprom concern and the Chinese Association for the Trade of Timber and Forest Products. The document is aimed at increasing the effectiveness of partnerships, “analyzing the problems of mutual trade and finding mutually acceptable ways to solve them”<sup>708</sup> by holding joint exhibitions, fairs, business meetings, and exchanging economic, legal, scientific and technical information in all areas of interaction.

In the set of measures for the development of the national innovation system in Belarus for 2021-2025, the Chinese-Belarusian industrial park “Great Stone” has been identified as a platform for organizing innovative production. One of the main tasks set for it for the next five years is “to ensure the effective activities of its residents, attract new ones, actively develop innovative activities, start-ups, cluster cooperation...”<sup>709</sup>. How this problem is being solved here is evidenced by the record increase in residents in 2021 - 21. To be more precise, at the end of 2021 there were 85 residents registered here. By the beginning of 2022, “more than \$718 million has already been invested in the park, 37 companies produce products, conduct research and development, and also provide services. Great Stone enterprises have created more than 1,700 jobs <...>. The volume of exports also increased – by almost 17% compared to 2020. Deliveries are made to 20 countries around the world

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<sup>707</sup> Belarus and China are strengthening their partnership in industry [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-kitaj-ukreplajajut-partnerstvo-v-promyshlennosti-504071-2022/>

<sup>708</sup> “Bellesbumprom” will cooperate with the Chinese Association for the Export of Woodworking Products [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/bellesbumprom-budet-sotrudnichat-s-kitajskoj-assotsiatsiej-po-eksportu-produktsii-derevoobrabotki-504024-2022>

<sup>709</sup> Zalessky, B.L. Industrial park “Great Stone”: new projects bring the future closer / B.L. Zalessky // Materiały XVIII Międzynarodowej naukowej - praktycznej conference “ Kluczowe ” aspekty naukowej działalności – 2022”, Volume 1. Przemysł : Science i studio . – C. 3.

<sup>710</sup>. " In the last days of 2021, the Belarusian LLC SinRubEnergo became the 85th resident with a research project in the field of creating digital energy facilities and a smart city. "The company will develop integrated automation and dispatch systems <sup>711</sup>. "

With the advent of 2022, active work continued in the industrial park both to expand the number of residents and to increase the volume of their economic activities. Thus, as of mid-April 2022, "89 residents from 15 countries were already registered here. The volume of declared investments is \$1.24 billion. Of this, more than \$750 million has already been invested in the development of the park. Residents created more than 1.8 thousand new jobs. In addition, almost half of the companies have begun economic activities in the park <sup>712</sup>. "

The 86th resident of the industrial park in March 2022 was Scientific and Technical Company Bel Samoyed Cloud LLC, which "will develop digital financial technologies and mobile payment systems. It is also planned to create an e-commerce center in Belarus and provide Belarusian and Chinese companies with services in this area <sup>713</sup>. " Important detail: the initiator of this project is one of the largest providers of cloud solutions in China - Samoyed holding Cloud Technology Group Holdings Limited .

April 2022 was especially fruitful for "Great Stone" in terms of registering new residents. Thus, at the beginning of this month, Yujiu Science and Technology Company LLC from Hong Kong became the 87th resident, the founder of which works in the field of targeting and branding of products and has branches in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Chongqing, Hangzhou and Wuhan. The new resident "plans to create a center for the digital promotion of

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<sup>710</sup> Yaroshenko: Great Stone enterprises supply products to 20 countries of the world [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/yaroshenko-predpriyatija-velikogo-kamnja-postavljat-produktsiju-v-20-stran-mira-479114-2022/>

<sup>711</sup> The new resident of "Great Stone" will create digital energy facilities [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novyi-rezident-velikogo-kamnja-zajmetsja-sozdaniem-tsifrovyyh-energoobjektov-477402-2021/>

<sup>712</sup> Yakimov, P. "The Great Stone" opens up wide opportunities for strengthening cooperation between Belarus and China / P. Yakimov // [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/comments/view/velikij-kamen-otkryvaet-shirokie-vozmozhnosti-dlja-ukrepleniya-sotrudnichestva-belarusi-i-kitaja-8150/>

<sup>713</sup> The new resident of "Great Stone" will work on digital technologies and mobile payment systems [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novyi-rezident-velikogo-kamnja-zajmetsja-tsifrovymi-tehnologijami-i-sistemami-mobilnyh-platezhej-490657-2022/>

goods for organizing e-commerce using Internet marketing technologies<sup>714</sup>,” will cooperate with Belarusian manufacturers to promote their goods in China and intends to provide training on organizing e-commerce.

A little later, the 88th resident, the Belarusian LLC KUBI RND, was registered in the industrial park with an investment project for the production of equipment and components for the modular construction of smart homes. “The production is based on innovative Cuby technology, which is the company’s own development. It allows us to produce high-tech designs with high environmental performance<sup>715</sup>. ” It is expected that 90 percent of the products produced at Great Stone by the new resident will be exported.

The 89th resident was another Belarusian enterprise - HomeLand Group LLC, which plans to produce in the industrial park multifunctional soundproof cabins "Aerocapsule" with an automated control system based on the Internet of Things - the concept of data transmission. Interestingly, this project took second place in the national competition for innovative developments in 2021. Aerocapsules, created using smart technologies and equipped with innovative built-in facilities, “can be widely used in open offices, airports, shopping centers, manufacturing plants and create optimal conditions for rest and work<sup>716</sup>.”

By mid-May 2022, the number of residents had increased to 90 with a reported investment of \$1.24 billion. In May 2022, the Chinese enterprise Transport Complex - AF LLC became a new resident of the industrial park, which will create a center for monitoring transport transportation using Internet of Things technology. At the same time, an agreement of intent was signed for Hongju Corporation JSC to join the park, which “plans to engage in biotechnology activities in the Great Stone<sup>717</sup>.” According to the results of the first quarter of 2022, the industrial park managed to ensure “an increase in the volume of revenue from the sale of goods - 1.8 times compared to the first

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<sup>714</sup> The new resident of “Great Stone” will be engaged in digital promotion of goods [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novyj-rezident-velikogo-kamnja-zajmetsja-tsifrovym-prodvizheniem-tovarov-493650-2022/>

<sup>715</sup> The new resident of “Great Stone” will begin producing equipment for smart homes [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novyj-rezident-velikogo-kamnja-nachnet-vypuskat-oborudovanie-dlja-umnyh-domov-495324-2022/>

<sup>716</sup> The new resident of “Great Stone” will produce innovative aerocapsules [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novyj-rezident-velikogo-kamnja-budet-proizvodit-innovatsionnye-aerokapsuly-495913-2022/>

<sup>717</sup> The new resident of “Great Stone” will create a center for monitoring cross-border transport [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novyj-rezident-velikogo-kamnja-sozdast-tsentr-monitoringa-transgranichnyh-perevozok-501098-2022/>

quarter of last year ( Br 123.4 million), production of industrial products of residents - 1.7 times ( Br 95.4 million), exports of goods – 1.4 times (\$22.6 million), investments in fixed capital – 1.1 times ( Br 30.4 million) <sup>718</sup>. ”

An important area of activity for “Great Stone” is the creation of subparks, which mean the arrival of not just one investor, but a pool of iconic companies under the leadership of a separate management company, which opens up broad prospects for large corporations. Cooperation with the Chinese province of Guangdong is developing particularly well in this regard. Let us recall that “back in January 2017, in its administrative center - the city of Guangzhou - a ceremony was held to sign the agreement on the creation of the Chinese (Guangdong) subpark of LED products in the Great Stone Industrial Park, as well as five more documents on the intention to enter this subpark of specific companies” <sup>719</sup>. Today, there are already 15 residents in this subpark, specializing in areas such as the production of LED products, integrated logistics, electric transport, unmanned systems and research and development. They will soon be complemented by a joint innovation center created by the Academy of Sciences of Guangdong Province and the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, which will engage in research and development in the field of industrial and digital technologies, as well as new materials, biotechnologies and pharmaceuticals. So in this direction too, we see the successful implementation of plans outlined several years ago.

The emerging interaction of the Chinese-Belarusian industrial park with similar preferential economic zones in other countries should also contribute to further unlocking the potential of the Great Stone’s innovative areas. In particular, in Cuba and Uzbekistan. Thus, back in January 2021, a memorandum of understanding was signed with the Cuban special development zone (ZOD) “Mariel”, which provides for cooperation “in the field of attracting investments, strengthening ties between the business circles of Belarus and Cuba, and also provides for information interaction <sup>720</sup>. ” The

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<sup>718</sup> The number of residents of “Great Stone” has increased to 90 with a declared investment volume of \$1.24 billion [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/chislo-rezidentov-velikogo-kamnja-vozslo-do-90-s-zajavlennym-objemom-investitsij-v-124-mlrd-502265-2022/>

<sup>719</sup> Zalessky , B. L. “ Great stone ”: perspective development - subparks / B. L. Zalessky // Materials of the XVI International scientific and practical conference “Science and civilization – 2020”, January 30 – February 07, 2020. Economic sciences . : Sheffield . Science and education LTD . – C. 21.

<sup>720</sup> “Great Stone” and the Cuban special development zone “Mariel” will cooperate in attracting investments [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/velikij-kamen-i-kubinskaja-zona-osobogo-razvitija-mariel-budut-sotrudnicat-v-privlechenii-investitsij-426316-2021/>

priority areas of activity of the Cuban ZOR, created in November 2013, located 45 kilometers from Havana, where at the end of 2021 there were more than 60 residents from 21 countries, are electronics, logistics, pharmaceuticals, energy, as well as the financial and banking industries. In January 2022, the parties had already begun discussing specific areas of cooperation, “in particular, in the area of attracting residents and developing interaction with Cuban pharmaceutical companies <sup>721</sup>. ” If we consider that the pharmaceutical sector in the “Great Stone” is now, as they say, on the rise, then it is not difficult to assume that the appearance of concrete results from this interaction will not be long in coming.

Another interesting example in this context is the Uzbek free economic zones (FEZ) Jizzakh and Syrdarya. At the beginning of April 2022, the administration of “Great Stone” discussed with their representatives areas of possible cooperation, including “establishing interaction between residents of the park, free economic zones and enterprises in the field of import and export of component materials and finished products <sup>722</sup>. ” The parties agreed to sign a memorandum of cooperation, which will enshrine their desire to implement joint projects. The fact that there may well be such is evidenced by the specialization of Uzbek SEZs.

In particular, the Jizzakh FEZ was created in March 2013 in the Jizzakh region to attract direct investment in the creation of high-tech and innovative industries. And today there are already several interesting examples in this regard. Thus, in March 2020, an agreement was signed here to create, on the basis of Jizzakh Automobile Plant LLC, the production of Volkswagen light commercial vehicles . The implementation of this project is divided into two stages. In 2020-2021, German cars were delivered here in finished form for market research and marketing analysis. From 2022, “a full production cycle begins, which includes welding, painting and assembly processes <...>. The dealer and service networks in each region of Uzbekistan will also be expanded <sup>723</sup>. ”

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<sup>721</sup> “Great Stone” intends to develop cooperation with Cuban pharmaceutical enterprises [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/velikij-kamen-nameren-razvivat-sotrudnichestvo-s-kubinskimi-farmpredpriyatjami-487548-2022/>

<sup>722</sup> “Great Stone” and the SEZ of Uzbekistan intend to develop cooperation [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/velikij-kamen-i-sez-uzbekistana-namereny-razvivat-sotrudnichestvo-493658-2022/>

<sup>723</sup> The production of Volkswagen cars in Uzbekistan will begin in 2022 [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.gazeta.uz/ru/2020/06/26/volkswagen/>

Another interesting example is the Uzbek enterprise ADM Jizzakh , located in the Jizzakh FEZ and producing KIA and Lada models there . In October 2021, it announced that at the beginning of 2023 it would master small-unit assembly of these vehicles. In total, “it is planned to organize the production of 314 parts and components, as well as to launch a welding and painting shop <sup>724</sup>. ” This will allow us to produce 100 thousand of these models per year, create three thousand new jobs and increase the localization of production to 30 percent. It seems that such an experience could be very interesting for the Belarusian side.

As for the Syrdarya FEZ, it was created on the basis of the Jizzakh FEZ branch in the Syrdarya region in April 2018. One of its main tasks is to ensure the comprehensive and effective use of the production and resource potential of this Uzbek region “based on deep processing of mineral resources, expanding the production of products in demand in foreign markets, as well as import-substituting products with high added value <sup>725</sup>. ” The main production areas for attracting investments and advanced technologies are identified here as deep processing, storage and packaging of fruits and vegetables and other agricultural products, textiles, footwear, leather goods, chemical, food, electrical industries, agricultural engineering, building materials industry. With the help of the SEZ, they intend to significantly strengthen the export component of the region, where there are already “more than 80 exporting enterprises that supply more than 50 types of products abroad <sup>726</sup>. ” So here, too, the range of joint interests with the “Great Stone” can be very extensive. All this indicates that the Chinese-Belarusian industrial park retains its strategic importance as a country-scale growth point for Belarus.

As for interregional cooperation, in the Joint Declaration on the establishment of all-weather and comprehensive strategic partnership relations, adopted in September 2022, the Republic of Belarus and the People's Republic of China positively assessed the expansion of in-depth trade and economic interaction between the Belarusian regions and the 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

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<sup>724</sup> A plant in Uzbekistan for the production of KIA and Lada will increase localization to 30% in 2023 [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://uz.sputniknews.ru/20211022/zavod-v-uzbekistane-po-vypusku-kia-i-lada-v-2023-godu-povysit-lokalizatsiyu-do-30-21019614.html>

<sup>725</sup> A new free economic zone is being created in Syrdarya [Electronic resource]. – 2018. – URL : <https://kun.uz/ru/94899784?q=%2Fru%2F94899784>

<sup>726</sup> Mirzaev, G. Syrdarya opens its doors to investors / G. Mirzaev // [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://rg.ru/amp/2019/08/29/syrdarinskoj-oblasti-uzbekistana-gotovy-k-milijonnyim-investiciyam.html>

Belarusian-Chinese relations <sup>727</sup>,” we can note the successful experience of its solution in 2022 by such Belarusian regions as the Vitebsk, Grodno and Brest regions.

Thus, in October 2022, **the Vitebsk region** and the Chinese **province of Jiangxi** signed an agreement on cooperation in the fields of economics, education, healthcare, sports and will establish contacts in trade, science, and technology. The parties will interact comprehensively. For example, it is planned to organize meetings via video conferencing, at which leading enterprises of the Vitebsk region, their developments and technologies that may be useful and interesting to companies from Jiangxi will be presented to Chinese partners. In particular, we are talking about joint projects on the development of agriculture, mechanical engineering, as well as on the topics of science parks and university developments. Let us note that two regions – Belarusian and Chinese – have already held events before: a conference on vocational education and training of engineering and technical specialists, as well as on the fight against COVID -19. In addition, “container trains run regularly to Nanchang, the urban district where the Jiangxi authorities are located, which are formed, among other things, by a logistics company from Orsha. Nanchang and Orsha have established partnerships, and another city in the province, Funzhou, has established partnerships with Polotsk <sup>728</sup>.” The signed agreement will apparently help the northern region of Belarus and the Chinese province located in southeast China to reach a new level of relations. In the context of this topic, it is interesting that in September 2022, within the framework of the Year of Regions of Belarus and China, the Days of the Vitebsk Region were held in another Chinese province - **Heilongjiang**, where the “potential for cooperation between sister regions in trade, economic, production, tourism and investment spheres” was presented <sup>729</sup>. By the way, more than 30 million people live in this region of China.

And in October 2022, an agreement on the establishment of friendly exchanges and cooperation was also signed by the cities **of Grodno and Lanzhou**, the administrative center of the Chinese province of Gansu, where

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<sup>727</sup> Zalesky, B. Time for specific decisions. Chronicle of international cooperation / B. Zalesky. – LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2022. – P. 100.

<sup>728</sup> Pushnyakova, A. Trade, science, sports: Vitebsk region signed a cooperation agreement with Chinese Jiangxi / A. Pushnyakova // [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/torgovlja-nauka-sport-vitebskaja-oblast-podpisala-soglashenie-o-sotrudnichestve-s-kitajskoj-tszjansi-532401-2022>

<sup>729</sup> Days of the Vitebsk region are held in the Chinese province of Heilongjiang [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/dni-vitebskoj-oblasti-prohodjat-v-kitajskoj-provintsii-hejluntszjan-525147-2022/>

the parties envisaged “deepening bilateral interaction, expanding exchanges and cooperation between regions in trade, economic, scientific, technical, cultural, tourism and other areas. The document is also aimed at strengthening friendly ties between residents of the two cities <sup>730</sup>. ” Let us recall that a memorandum on the establishment of sister city relations between **the province of Gansu** and **the Grodno region** was signed in 2007. Over 15 years, more than 10 different agreements have been concluded between the regions, and trade and economic cooperation is developing especially dynamically. In April 2022, Gansu and the Grodno region signed a Cooperation Program for 2022-2023, which is filled with specific joint projects. It “additionally explored those areas where cooperation is not yet developing so actively <...>. These are agriculture, tourism, technology exchange, traditional Chinese medicine <sup>731</sup>. ” And the Novogrudok region and the Chinese city of Dunhuang from Gansu province agreed to “conclude an agreement to establish cooperation <sup>732</sup>. ” For reference, we note that the Grodno region also signed an agreement on sister city relations with **the province of Hainan** .

And one more interesting example: **Brest region and Hubei province** . In May 2022, the parties signed an Action Plan for the development of trade, economic, scientific, technical and cultural cooperation for 2022-2024, which outlines the development of international interregional cooperation in four main areas: mutual trade, investment, medicine, education. In particular, food and wood products from Brest region producers have been supplied to the Chinese province for several years now. But the plans are to significantly expand this interaction, including by establishing direct business ties between business entities. For example, we are talking about establishing investment cooperation between the Brest free economic zone and enterprises of the automotive industry in Hubei province, as well as between the Berezovsky Engine Repair Plant and diesel engine manufacturers in this region of China. Also, “the possibility of participation of Chinese investors in the implementation of projects in the Brest region will be explored for organizing the production of installations for charging electric vehicles, the production of

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<sup>730</sup> Grodno and Chinese Lanzhou signed an agreement to establish friendly exchanges [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/grodno-i-kitajskij-lanchzhou-podpisali-soglashenie-ob-ustanovlenii-druzhestvennyh-obmenov-532444-2022/>

<sup>731</sup> The Grodno region intends to expand cooperation with the Chinese province of Gansu [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/grodnenskaja-oblast-namerena-rasshirjat-sotrudnichestvo-s-kitajskoj-provintsiej-gansu-498323-2022/>

<sup>732</sup> The Novogrudok region and the Chinese city of Dunhuang intend to conclude an agreement on establishing cooperation [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/novogrudskij-rajon-i-kitajskij-gorod-dunhuan-namereny-zakljuchit-soglashenie-ob-ustanovlenii-495725-2022/>

powder and liquid detergents on the basis of OJSC Barkhim, the technical re-equipment of the Baranovichy Cotton Production Association, the production of clinker products on the basis of the Goryn Construction Materials Plant , development of the Gorodnoye glass sand deposit <sup>733</sup>. " As for the medical sphere, the prospects for interaction between the Brest region and Hubei province are associated with the joint production of ultrasound diagnostic devices and the organization of the production of disposable systems for blood transfusion and medical solutions. It is also planned to create a center for traditional Chinese medicine on the basis of the Brest Regional Clinical Hospital, for which a physiotherapy building can be reconstructed here.

All these facts are a good illustration of how multifaceted Belarusian-Chinese interaction today reaches the level of comprehensive strategic cooperation and all-weather partnership, as written in Directive No. 9 “On the development of bilateral relations of the Republic of Belarus with the People’s Republic of China,” signed in December 2021 .

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<sup>733</sup> Brest region and Hubei province signed a cooperation roadmap 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/>

## **Belarus – China: priorities for the new stage of partnership**

In September 2022, the Republic of Belarus and the People's Republic of China adopted a Joint Declaration on the establishment of an all-weather and comprehensive strategic partnership, which contains Belarusian-Chinese agreements to intensify scientific and technological cooperation, expand practical interaction between research institutes, higher education institutions and enterprises, encourage creation of platforms as joint centers for applied scientific research and laboratories. It is noted that 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 innovation is continuously strengthening. The spheres of scientific and technical cooperation are constantly expanding, mechanisms are being improved and methods of scientific and technical cooperation are being enriched<sup>734</sup>.” In this regard, three priority components can be identified. “The first is in the field of scientific research, where the parties participate in the implementation of large joint projects. The second is in the field of innovation, where a network of joint innovation centers and scientific laboratories is being formed and developed. The third is in the field of education, where joint training is conducted and mutual internships of specialists, teachers and students take place<sup>735</sup>.”

In particular, the National Academy of Sciences [NAS] of Belarus alone has already created more than 20 international research centers and laboratories jointly with Chinese partners, which are engaged in the development and adaptation of advanced technologies, as well as their promotion to the markets of Belarus, China and third countries. “Contractual documents of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus have already been signed with the leading scientific organizations of China - the Chinese Academy of Sciences, academies of sciences of a number of provinces of the PRC, large manufacturing corporations of China - Huawei, AVIC...”<sup>736</sup>. In

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<sup>734</sup> Xie Xiaoyong: cooperation between Belarus and China in the field of science and technology is continuously strengthening [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/se-sjaojun-sotrudnichestvo-belarusi-i-kitaja-v-sfere-nauki-i-tehnologij-nepriyvno-ukrepljaetsja-534171-2022>

<sup>735</sup> Zalesky, B. Facets of multi-vectority. Collection of articles / B. Zalesky. – LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2022. – C. 471.

<sup>736</sup> The National Academy of Sciences has created more than 20 joint centers and laboratories with partners from China [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/>

particular, in April 2022, the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus signed an agreement on scientific and technical cooperation with the Chinese company CAMSE. Environmental Technologies”, which specializes in environmental protection issues. The signed agreement, which is designed 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 restoration technologies, which are of particular interest to Chinese partners. The fact is that the Chinese company, uniting designers, scientists, equipment manufacturers, investors, environmental operators, today concentrates its efforts on expanding activities in the field of municipal water supply and sanitation, industrial wastewater treatment, solid waste disposal, energy saving and cyclic use management waste as a resource. At the same time, JSC China Engineering Corporation SAMS was established, which also signed a cooperation agreement with the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus. This document defines the priority areas of interaction as “energy saving and environmental protection, new energy sources, new materials, optics, precision instruments, semiconductors and biomedicine, as well as expanding the commercial application of the results of joint scientific activities”<sup>737</sup>.

If we talk about interaction between higher educational institutions of the two countries, the parties will develop cooperation “based on the development of joint educational programs with the subsequent creation of joint educational structures (faculties, institutes) between leading institutions of higher education, including using distance learning technologies...”<sup>738</sup>. Suffice it to say that Belarusian and Chinese partners have already signed more than 540 direct cooperation agreements. “Today, almost 500 citizens of the Republic of Belarus are studying in China, the number of Chinese students in Belarusian universities has reached 8,000 people. The parties have developed more than 30 joint educational programs...”<sup>739</sup>” Among the Belarusian universities that are actively developing cooperation with the Chinese side in

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<sup>737</sup> Biomedicine and new energy sources. The National Academy of Sciences of Belarus signed an agreement with the 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/>

<sup>738</sup> China and Belarus published a Joint Declaration on the Establishment of an All-Weather and Comprehensive Strategic Partnership [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://rg.ru/2022/09/16/kitaj-i-belarus-opublikovali-sovmestnuiu-deklaraciiu-ob-ustanovlenii-otnoshenij-vsepodobnogo-i-vsestoronnego-strategicheskogo-partnerstva.html>

<sup>739</sup> Belarus and China held a video conference on cooperation in the field of education [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-kitaj-proveli-videokonferentsiju-po-sotrudnichestvu-v-sfere-obrazovanija-526453-2022/>

the field of science and education are the Belarusian State University, the Belarusian National Technical University, the Belarusian State Technological University, the Brest State Technical University, and the Polesie State University.

For example, the first agreement between the Belarusian State University (BSU) and Chinese partners was signed in 1990 - with Chengdu University of Science and Technology. Today BSU already has more than 80 agreements with more than 50 Chinese institutions. Partners include Harbin University of Science and Technology, Henan University, East China Normal University and Foshan University. "In 2019, bilateral partnership documents were signed with Peking University and Shanghai Transport University <sup>740</sup>. " BSU received the honorable right to host the Confucius Institute within its walls. The Chinese partner in this matter is also the Dalian Polytechnic University (DPU), cooperation with which has been developing since 2007. A significant result of cooperation was the opening of two joint institutes at BSU and DPU. There are currently 244 Chinese students enrolled in the Chinese-Belarusian Institute. There have already been two releases. "In 2021, 78 Chinese graduates and five Belarusians received diplomas from BSU and DPU; in 2022, 74 Chinese and two Belarusian citizens received diplomas. There are 142 Belarusian students studying at the Belarusian-Chinese joint institute. The first release will take place in 2023. <sup>741</sup>"

In May 2021, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between BSU and Tsinghua University, which is ranked 17th among the best universities in the world. The memorandum "provides for the exchange of students, invitation of teachers and scientists, implementation of joint research and educational projects, exchange of publications, information, educational materials, organization of scientific, educational and cultural events <sup>742</sup>. " This university was founded in 1911. Located in the northwest of Beijing in the student district of Haidian. Today, about 53 thousand students are studying in Tsinghua, of which more than 3,200 are foreigners. The educational process is

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<sup>740</sup> Kreinina, O. BSU on the development of cooperation with leading universities in China / O. Kreinina // [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/comments/view/bgu-orazvitii-sotrudnichestva-s-veduschimi-universitetami-kitaja-8187/>

<sup>741</sup> The cooperation of BSU and Dalian Polytechnic University was captured in the bronze tetrapod Dine [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/sotrudnichestvo-bgu-i-daljanskogo-politehnicheskogo-universiteta-zapechatleli-v-bronzovom-tetrapode-514967-2022/>

<sup>742</sup> BSU and Tsinghua University signed a memorandum of understanding [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/bgu-i-universitet-tsinhua-podpisali-memorandum-o-vzaimoponimanii-441298-2021/>

provided by more than 3,600 teachers. The structure of the university includes 21 institutes and 59 faculties.

And in September 2022, another BSU partner appeared in China - Huzhou University, Zhejiang Province. The memorandum of understanding between the two universities “provides for the implementation of joint research projects, educational programs, student exchanges and other areas of cooperation<sup>743</sup>.” Huzhou University has a history of more than 100 years. The university now specializes in a wide range of academic disciplines and has achieved internationally recognized results in research and teaching in mathematics, clinical medicine and engineering. In 2017, the university created an Intercultural Research Center engaged in international projects, including with the Belarusian side.

As for the Belarusian National Technical University (BNTU), in February 2022, the Belarusian university signed an agreement on scientific and technical cooperation with the Shenyang University of Technology (SHTU) to create a China-Belarus innovative training, research and production center for hardening, restoration and corrosion protection of machine parts, within the framework of which new technologies and equipment will be concentrated in one place, prototypes of parts for testing at Chinese enterprises and pilot batches of parts for orders from Chinese enterprises will be quickly produced, students and Chinese specialists will be trained in new technologies for hardening and restoration, corrosion protection of machine parts, and contracts will be concluded with Chinese enterprises for the supply of technologies and equipment. “The center will focus on all new methods of strengthening, restoring and protecting machine parts from corrosion. There is no such center in China in this form<sup>744</sup>.” At the request of ShTU, the center includes such Belarusian technologies as: gas-flame spraying of thermoplastic polymer powders; hypersonic metallization; deformation cladding with a flexible tool; flame spraying of metal, ceramic, polymer and composite powders; laser cleaning of material surfaces from organic and inorganic contaminants, rust, scale and paint coatings; applying plasma coatings with metal, ceramic and composite powders; restoration of working

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<sup>743</sup> BSU and Chinese Huzhou University signed a memorandum of understanding [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/bgu-i-kitajskij-universitet-huchzhou-podpisali-memorandum-o-vzaimoponimanii-524518-2022/>

<sup>744</sup> Kravchuk, M.A. Opening of the Chinese-Belarusian innovative training, research and production center for strengthening, 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>

surfaces of machine parts by laser surfacing; surface laser hardening and laser alloying. And already in October 2022, this center was opened at Shenyang University of Technology.

In addition, in October 2022, a conference on scientific exchange between BNTU and the Institute of Applied Chemistry of the Chinese Academy of Sciences was held in Changchun. Let us recall that in December 2019 the parties signed an agreement on the creation of a joint Chinese-Belarusian laboratory for advanced materials and production “One Belt - One Road”, which began its activities in February 2020. This structure “is engaged in the development of high-performance sodium-ion and potassium-ion batteries, catalysts for water electrolysis, hydrogen production, and research in the field of solid oxide electrolysis for the efficient production of green hydrogen and green ammonia <sup>745</sup>. ” During the conference, Belarusian specialists drew attention to the experience of BNTU in the field of modifying the surfaces of machine parts using high-energy exposure methods and studying their structure and properties, which in the future will expand the scope of scientific research and the application of their results in Chinese industry.

Speaking about the Belarusian State Technological University (BSTU), it has currently concluded 17 cooperation agreements with universities and organizations in China, which are located in many regions of the country, including in Guangdong province. “In collaboration with Chinese partners, joint educational programs have been created and are successfully operating in such areas as “Machines and apparatus for chemical production and construction materials enterprises”, “Automation of technological processes and production”, “Mechatronics” <sup>746</sup>. In addition, in March 2022, BSTU signed memorandums: with the NGO “Guangzhou City of Knowledge” - Technological 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 Guangzhou Hengyun Group of Companies JSC - in the field of hydrogen technologies for the joint construction of a hydrogen energy industrial park.

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<sup>745</sup>Sheleg, V.K. Conference on scientific exchange between BNTU and the Institute of Applied Chemistry of the 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>

<sup>746</sup> 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>

Another example in this context is the Brest State Technical University (BrSTU), where in 2022 the implementation of a joint Belarusian-Chinese project in the field of information technology began, which is funded by the Belarusian Republican Foundation for Basic Research and the National Natural Science Foundation of China. And in April 2022, it became known about the start of the implementation of a joint educational program between BrSTU and Xinxiang University, which concerns the training of students in the specialty “Mechanical Engineering Technology”. “The training will take place in a full-time format on the territory of the PRC using materials presented by the Brest university. A large block of the program will be presented to Chinese students directly by BrSTU teachers <sup>747</sup>. ” In October 2022, the university from Brest also established cooperation with the Guangdong Construction Vocational College to create long-term conditions for the training of qualified personnel in Belarus in the interests of the Chinese construction sector and to cooperate in organizing a joint educational program for training specialists in the field of 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 over 43 years has graduated more than 200 thousand highly qualified personnel <sup>748</sup>. ”

As for the interaction of Polesie State University with colleagues from China, in September 2022 the Belarusian university held the first international scientific conference, which was called the “Pin Readings”. Pinsk residents, together with Belarusian and foreign partners, discussed current issues for the economy, banking sector, development of biotechnology, engineering, healthy lifestyle, and preservation of historical and cultural heritage. At the conference, Poles State University signed a cooperation agreement with the Shanxi Institute of Science and Technology, which “specializes in environmental management, engineering, and biotechnology. We aim to build serious partnerships <sup>749</sup>. ” In addition to joint research projects, universities see prospects for cooperation in academic mobility.

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<sup>747</sup> BrSTU and Xinyang University began implementing a joint program [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/brgtu-i-sinsjanskij-universitet-nachali-realizatsiju-sovmestnoj-programmy-496937-2022/>

<sup>748</sup> BrSTU and Guangdong Construction Vocational College agreed to establish cooperation [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/brgtu-i-guandunskij-stroitelnyj-proftehkolledzh-dogovorilis-naladit-sotrudnichestvo-530263-2022/>

<sup>749</sup> PolesSU will cooperate with the Institute of Science and Technology from China [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/polesgu-budet-sotrudnicchat-s-institutom-nauki-i-tehnologij-iz-kitaja-524605-2022/>

Evidence of the high scientific, technical and innovative cooperation between Belarus and China is also the fact that at the China International Import Exhibition ( CIIE ) in Shanghai - the largest exhibition event in the Celestial Empire, where almost three thousand companies from 127 countries took part in 2021, in November 2022, the Belarusian country pavilion “High-Tech Equipment and Information Technologies” presented 126 scientific and technical developments by scientists from 32 organizations of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus and institutions of the Ministry of Education of Belarus. In particular, the exposition of the section of the Ministry of Education included such areas of cooperation as “digital information, communication and interdisciplinary technologies, production based on them; biological, medical, pharmaceutical and chemical technologies and production; energy, construction, ecology and environmental management; mechanical engineering, mechanical engineering technologies, instrument engineering and innovative materials; agro-industrial and food technologies; ensuring the safety of individuals and society”<sup>750</sup>.

Among the new products presented are ultra-small orbital spacecraft created by the Belarusian State University (BSU). The first nanosatellite was launched into orbit four years ago. Under the state program “Knowledge-Intensive Technologies and Engineering,” a second nanosatellite has already been created, “the design of which implements an innovative modular layout of onboard subsystems of a small spacecraft. BSU also represents antitumor drugs “Temodex”, “Prospidelong”, “Cisplacel”<sup>751</sup>. Another interesting new product is an electric scooter produced by Optron Instrument-Making Plant OJSC of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus. The maximum speed is 60 kilometers per hour, and the load capacity is 200 kilograms. In addition, such advanced developments as the Burevestnik unmanned aerial vehicle (Research and Production Center for Multifunctional Unmanned Systems of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus), an automated system for recording welding processes (Belarus-Russian University), heat-resistant impact-resistant coatings (Gomel State University) were presented in Shanghai

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<sup>750</sup> Universities of Belarus at the V Chinese International Import Expo [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://times.bntu.by/news/11970-vuzy-belarusi-na-v-china-international-import-expo>

<sup>751</sup> More than 120 Belarusian developments were presented at the Chinese International Import Exhibition [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/tech/view/bolee-120-belorusskih-razrabotok-predstavleny-na-kitajskoj-mezhdunarodnoj-vystavke-importa-533702-2022/>

named after F. Skaryna), bread of high nutritional value (Belarusian State University of Food and Chemical Technologies) ... " <sup>752</sup>.

And further. In November 2022, at the IX Belarusian-Chinese Youth Innovation Forum “New Horizons - 2022”, which took place in Minsk, it was noted that this year the State Committee for Science and Technology of Belarus together with the Ministry of Science and Technology of China held a competition of Belarusian-Chinese scientific and technical projects. “As a result, 35 projects will receive government support from the two countries <sup>753</sup>. ” All these facts show that multifaceted scientific, technical and innovative cooperation between the two countries, with the systematic and focused work of partners to develop ties, produces fruitful results.

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<sup>752</sup> New products in the food industry and spacecraft: what Belarus will present at the import exhibition in China [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novinki-pisheproma-i-kosmicheskie-apparaty-cto-predstavit-belarus-na-vystavke-importa-v-kitae-533240-2022/>

<sup>753</sup> Young scientists from Belarus and China are developing cooperation in the field of innovation [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/tech/view/molodye-uchenye-belarusi-i-kitaja-razvivajut-sotrudnichestvo-v-sfere-innovatsij-534160-2022/>

## **Belarus – China: strategic partnership enters a new era**

In March 2023, the leaders of the Republic of Belarus and the People's Republic of China adopted a **joint statement** on the basic principles for the development of exemplary relations of all-weather and comprehensive strategic partnership between the two countries in the new era, which include mutual support for the state course and on issues affecting each other's core interests. In addition to this joint statement, “Belarus and China during the state visit concluded 27 intergovernmental, interdepartmental and interregional agreements, more than 10 commercial agreements in various fields <sup>754</sup>,” and the total economic effect of this visit is estimated at more than three and a half billion dollars.

Among the documents signed, one can note **the Belarusian-Chinese Scientific and Technical Cooperation Program for 2023-2024**, which aims the two countries at creating joint innovative production facilities. After all, “a developed engineering base, a modern system for training highly qualified personnel, many years of advanced experience of leading Belarusian design bureaus - all this forms the basis of future high-tech industries <sup>755</sup>.” In this regard, we emphasize that in 2022, Chinese investors invested over \$100 million in projects in Belarus. In addition, more than forty projects were implemented with the participation of companies from China, and about twenty more promising initiatives are being developed this year. In this context, it is worth noting the Great Stone Industrial Park, where in 2022 “Belarusian resident enterprises launched the production of glass for all types of land transport, innovative photographic printed products, automated control systems for technological processes in industry and energy. The scientific and technological park “InKata” has been put into operation, where companies engaged in scientific research and experimental development are located <sup>756</sup>.”

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<sup>754</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs: the state visit of the President of Belarus to Beijing became a significant event in relations with the PRC [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/mid-gosvizit-prezidenta-belarusi-v-pekini-stal-znachimym-sobytiem-v-otnoshenijah-s-ksnr-557851-2023/>

<sup>755</sup> Belarus and China are aimed at creating joint innovative production [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-kitaj-natseleny-na-sozdanie-sovmestnyh-innovatsionnyh-proizvodstv-556688-2023/>

<sup>756</sup> Abramenko: “The Great Stone” is a tremendous opportunity for doing business on the “Belt and Road” platform [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL :

Let us remind you that in the last days of 2022, the number of residents in the Chinese-Belarusian Industrial Park “Great Stone” reached 100. For reference, we note that “at the end of 2021, 85 residents were registered here <sup>757</sup>. ” In particular, the 99th resident was Yunchenbel LLC, the founder of which is the large Chinese company SUMEC International Technology Trading. "The new resident will create an e-commerce platform allowing the import and export of mechanical and electrical equipment" <sup>758</sup>. And the Belarusian company Human Craft will produce medical products - individual bone tissue prostheses based on 3D printing technologies , which will be used in surgery, traumatology, dentistry and in the treatment of oncological diseases. Also, at the end of December 2022, agreements of intent were signed to enter the industrial park as residents of Foryu Information Technologies LLC and Tontun Information Technologies LLC (People's Republic of China).

In addition, at the end of 2022, in the industrial park, the resident company IP Group LLC signed a lease agreement for a universal production building with an area of 5.5 thousand square meters. This transaction became one of the largest in 2022 on the industrial real estate market of Belarus. “A project for the development and serial production of high-tech data processing and storage devices will be implemented in these areas. In particular, the company will produce computer equipment, server equipment, monitors, and interactive smart panels. In the future, the resident plans to expand the range of import-substituting products <sup>759</sup>. ” In general, at the end of 2022, 19 residents were registered in “Great Stone”. And further. Last year, residents of the park exported their products worth more than \$100 million to 20 countries.

In 2023, “Great Stone” is expected to attract at least 20 residents. Several investors from Belarus have already been registered in January alone. In particular, “very interesting projects in the field of production of products for veterinary medicine. And the second project is in the field of science, <...> in

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<https://www.belta.by/economics/view/abramenko-velikij-kamen-eto-kolossalnye-vozmozhnosti-dlja-vedenija-biznesa-na-platfome-pojas-i-put-556679-2023/>

<sup>757</sup> Zalesky, B. Partnership of flexible forms. Features of the Eurasian cooperative dialogue in the context of global threats / B. Zalesky. – LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing , 2022. – P. 5.

<sup>758</sup> The number of residents of “Great Stone” has reached 100 [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/kolichestvo-rezidentov-velikogo-kamnja-dostiglo-100-542481-2022/>

<sup>759</sup> “Great Stone” ended the year with the largest deal [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/v-velikom-kamne-zavershili-god-krupnjshej-sdelkoj-542635-2022/>

the field of nuclear energy <sup>760</sup>. ” At the end of January, a new resident was registered in “Great Stone” - BaikalgGroup LLC. “A company with Chinese capital will create a transport and logistics center in the park <...>. The park resident plans to provide warehousing and logistics services, including storage, packaging, tracking, labeling... <sup>761</sup>” Deliveries of goods will be carried out to the countries of the Eurasian Economic Union.

In February 2023, three more new residents were registered in the industrial park: two with capital from Belarus, one from China. Heprotrade LLC will produce environmentally friendly thermal paper, products from which will be widely used in sales and services. “The production capacity will be up to 300 tons per month. The implementation of the project will make it possible to provide the domestic market with similar products and reduce imports, as well as supply them for export <sup>762</sup>. ” The second February resident, Rivex LLC, will produce innovative dressings and sterilization materials, which are intended both for the domestic market and for the countries of the Eurasian Economic Union. Bel-Nord Logistics LLC, whose founder is a Chinese company in the field of international logistics, one of the largest in the Inner Mongolia region, intends to “develop the logistics infrastructure by building warehouses and introduce a wide range of services in this area. In addition, road transportation of goods along the route China – Europe will be organized <sup>763</sup>. ” This initiative will also help in solving the most important strategic task - expanding the presence of Belarusian products in the Chinese market.

In just a month and a half of 2023, Great Stone has already managed to register seven new residents. But in general, already during the operation of the industrial park, “the total number is 107 residents with a planned investment volume of \$1.3 billion <sup>764</sup>. ” It is expected that in order to create

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<sup>760</sup> “Great Stone” plans to attract at least 20 residents this year [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/velikij-kamen-v-etom-godu-planiruet-privlech-ne-mence-20-rezidentov-547180-2023/>

<sup>761</sup> The new resident of “Great Stone” will create a transport and logistics center [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novyj-rezident-velikogo-kamnjasozdast-transportno-logisticheskij-tsentr-547574-2023/>

<sup>762</sup> Two more residents with Belarusian capital are registered in “Great Stone” [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/esche-dva-rezidenta-s-belorusskim-kapitalom-zaregistrovany-v-velikom-kamne-549664-2023/>

<sup>763</sup> The new resident of “Great Stone” will develop international logistics [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novyj-rezident-velikogo-kamnja-budet-razvivat-mezhdunarodnuju-logistiku-551642-2023/>

<sup>764</sup> This year “Great Stone” registered 7 new residents [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/v-etom-godu-velikij-kamen-zaregistroval-7-novyh-rezidentov-551821-2023/>

additional conditions for attracting new investors, work will continue in 2023 to further improve the special legal regime of the park, with an emphasis on the implementation of new high-tech projects, including in the field of traditional and innovative Chinese medicine. Promising projects are also planned to be implemented in logistics, e-commerce, fine chemistry, biotechnology, instrument engineering, research and development. In February 2023, at a meeting of the working group on the issues of the China-Belarus Industrial Park, it was noted that at the Great Stone sites “it is possible to quickly increase the level of localization in the production of medical and technological equipment, transport and other areas, and quickly replace lost imports with these products. In order to fully utilize the existing potential, it is necessary to continue to actively develop the park, build infrastructure and announce the project on a global scale <sup>765</sup>. ” In short, current challenges dictate a window of opportunity for residents of the industrial park in particular, and also create additional competitive advantages for the future development of the Belarusian economy in general.

Another important document adopted in March 2023 is **the Comprehensive Strategy for Joint Industrial Development**, implemented by the Ministry of Industry of Belarus and the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology of China and providing for the creation of mechanisms to stimulate Belarusian and Chinese enterprises to activate and strengthen technological interaction. To implement this strategy, a roadmap with specific projects and initiatives has been prepared. “It is planned to create joint ventures in China, use Chinese technologies and competencies to modernize Belarusian production and attract Chinese investments to implement projects in Belarus” <sup>766</sup> in such main areas as mechanical engineering, electronics, woodworking, optical-mechanical, pulp and paper and chemical production .

In particular, **the Minsk Tractor Plant is ready to intensify cooperation with the Chinese side** . Currently, a project to organize the assembly of BELARUS tractors with a capacity of 350 horsepower is ongoing in the Celestial Empire. The first prototype was tested in 2020-2021. Last year,

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<sup>765</sup> Chervyakov: current economic challenges - a window of opportunity for residents of the “Great Stone” [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/chervjakov-tekuschie-vyzovy-ekonomiki-okno-vozmozhnostej-dlja-rezidentov-velikogo-kamnja-550498-2023/>

<sup>766</sup> Abramenko, A. About the features of doing business in KNO, joint projects and prospects for cooperation / A. Abramenko // [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/interview/view/ob-osobennostjakh-vedenija-biznesa-v-knr-sovmestnyh-proektah-i-perspektivah-sotrudnichestva-8633/>

two more BELARUS 3523 tractors were delivered to China for certification, after which a decision will be made on localizing the assembly of Belarusian tractors. And in Minsk, testing of the BELARUS 3523 model with a diesel engine from the Chinese Weichai corporation continues. It is expected that 100 of these engines will arrive at the plant in the near future. “Another direction is related to the supply of components from China. Last year, imports from China amounted to \$1.8 million, based on the results of two months of the current [2023] year – \$400 thousand.”<sup>767</sup>. So the parties are interested in joint investment projects.

As part of the state visit of the Belarusian delegation to China, several documents were signed concerning the development of production in **the agricultural sector**. In particular, on the territory of our country, “the largest pig-breeding complex in Belarus for 300 thousand heads will be built in the Minsk region. <...> And we will modify our beef cattle breeding on the basis of the Mogilev region. First of all, the construction of a separate slaughterhouse. About a thousand lightweight sheds will be built to house Aberdeen Angus or Limousine cattle”<sup>768</sup>.

Belarus also plans to almost double the volume of food supplies to China in 2023. Last year, this export exceeded more than \$500 million. At the same time, Belarusian supplies “increased in poultry meat (3 times), rapeseed oil (3.1 times), milk and cream (1.4 times) <...>. Currently, 148 Belarusian manufacturers in 171 categories of goods are accredited for supplies to China”<sup>769</sup>. And by the beginning of 2024, the goal has been set to reach the product export mark of \$900 million. In general, in trade and economic cooperation with partners from China, the Belarusian side this year has every chance to increase the volume of exports of goods to \$2.2 billion.

Two more interesting documents, signed in Beijing at the beginning of March 2023, relate to the topic of **regional cooperation**. First: this is **the plan for the Year of Regions of Belarus and China for 2023**, which “contains

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<sup>767</sup> The general director of MTZ spoke about the intensification of cooperation with China [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/ob-aktivizatsii-sotrudnichestva-s-kitaem-rasskazal-gendirektor-mtz-553348-2023/>

<sup>768</sup> Belarus expects to almost double the volume of food supplies to China [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-rasschityvaet-pochti-v-dva-razanarastit-objemy-postavok-prodovolstvija-v-kitaj-553023-2023/>

<sup>769</sup> In 2022, the export of Belarusian goods to China almost doubled [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/za-2022-god-eksport-belorusskih-tovarov-v-kitaj-prakticheski-udvoilsja-556681-2023/>

more than 80 bilateral agreements and initiatives”<sup>770</sup> to attract at least \$150 million in direct Chinese investment by each Belarusian region and Minsk by 2026. Second: this is **an Agreement between the Ministry of Economy of Belarus and the Ministry of Commerce of China on deepening trade and economic cooperation between the regions of the two countries**, in which the parties focus on three Chinese regions. Firstly, **Tianjin** is a city of central subordination, where production and logistics are predominant. Secondly, the city of **Qingdao**, located in **Shandong province**, where industrial and medical enterprises are especially developing and where the free trade zone of **the Shanghai Cooperation Organization is actively used**. Third, **Chongqing** is another city of central subordination. “This is the heart of logistics and transit. Here there is mainly e-commerce, with an emphasis on transport and logistics, including green corridors. This is when the train is not checked at the border, but is controlled at its destination, which gives a big advantage in terms of cost and time”<sup>771</sup>.

Also at the beginning of March 2023, Belarus and China signed **a plan for the development of cooperation in the field of healthcare for 2023-2025**, which noted that “the parties will develop cooperation in the field of healthcare, science and education, based on the principles of the national legislation of the countries, as well as principles of mutual benefit and mutual assistance”<sup>772</sup>. “The two countries will give priority to cooperation in such areas as: organizing joint scientific research in the field of medicine, exchanging experience in the field of diagnosis and treatment of diseases; organizing seminars and master classes for experts; cooperation in the field of epidemiology and microbiology and exchange of data on the spread of epidemic diseases; interaction in the field of surgery, transplantation and hematology; participation in international medical exhibitions held in the People's Republic of China and the Republic of Belarus. It is important to note that in the Joint Declaration on the establishment of an all-weather and comprehensive strategic partnership, published in September 2022, Belarus and China agreed to develop cooperation in the field of high-tech medicine,

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<sup>770</sup> Abramenko: Belarus and China strive to deepen bilateral cooperation in all areas [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/abramenko-belarus-i-kitaj-stremjatsja-k-uglubleniju-dvustoronnego-vzaimodejstvia-vo-vseh-oblastjah-556675-2023/>

<sup>771</sup> . Nikolai Snopkov: The total economic effect from the Belarusian-Chinese agreements is estimated at more than \$3.5 billion [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <http://www.government.by/ru/content/10547>

<sup>772</sup> A plan for the development of cooperation in the field of healthcare for 2023-2025 was signed between Belarus and China [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://minzdrav.gov.by/ru/sobytiya/podpisan-plan-po-razvitiyu-sotrudnichestva-v-oblasti-zdravookhraneniya-na-2023-2025-gody-mezhdu-bela/>

vaccines and drugs and “identified the priority of the formation of a joint pharmaceutical cluster, the commercialization of new pharmaceutical products and technologies, as well as the creation of a high-quality center of traditional Chinese medicine in Belarus”<sup>773</sup>. ”

For reference: the two countries have long-standing ties in the field of medicine. The first agreement on cooperation in the field of healthcare and medical science between the Belarusian and Chinese ministries of health was signed back in 1994. In 2021, the Belarusian government adopted a decree “On state registration of strategically important drugs,” which allows for their accelerated registration to combat the pandemic. And at the same time, the Ministry of Health for the first time carried out state registration of a Chinese traditional medicine (TCM) drug - QINGYI soft capsules. And today, “810 types of medical equipment, 502 medical products and 480 pharmaceuticals produced in China are registered in Belarus. From April 2020 to the present, China has provided free assistance in the amount equivalent to \$30 million. Personal protective equipment, medical and diagnostic equipment, and a vaccine against COVID-19 have been transferred to Belarus”<sup>774</sup>. ”

Our country has already created TCM centers and the necessary conditions for doing business to create pharmaceutical production. In particular, for residents of the Great Stone Park, the Ministry of Health of Belarus has developed a collection of “Main aspects of admission to circulation of medical devices and medicines” in Russian and Chinese in order to inform them about opportunities and preferences. In addition, work has already been completed on the architectural project “Construction of a polyclinic on the territory of the Great Stone Park, taking into account the creation of a regional center for the promotion of traditional and innovative Chinese medicine,” work is being completed to include the specialty “doctor of traditional Chinese medicine” in the nomenclature of positions, which will give additional impetus to promote this topic in Belarus.

At the end of February 2023, the Ministry of Health of Belarus and the State Administration for Traditional Chinese Medicine of China announced that they were preparing a memorandum on TCM issues, which should reflect

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<sup>773</sup> China and Belarus adopted a Joint Declaration [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://zviazda.by/ru/news/20220916/1663330543-kitay-i-belarus-prinyali-sovmestnuyu-deklaraciyu>

<sup>774</sup> The Ministry of Health of Belarus and the Weigao company signed a cooperation agreement [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/minzdrav-belarusi-i-kompanija-weigao-podpisali-soglashenie-o-sotrudnichestve-552445-2023/>

the issues of creating a TCM center in Belarus, a pharmaceutical cluster and the development of traditional Chinese medicine in the China-Belarus Industrial Park "Great Stone" It should be noted that “in Belarus, reflexology methods, diagnostic methods, therapeutic exercises, classical acupuncture, Chinese massage, as well as treatment methods based on modern technologies are used - electroacupuncture, laser acupuncture, ultrasound acupuncture <...>. Traditional Chinese medicine centers have been established in the regional centers of Belarus. Cooperation has been established with a number of universities - Tianjin, Changchun, Zhejiang University of Traditional Chinese Medicine...<sup>775</sup>” In addition, the educational process in this specialty is carried out at the Belarusian Medical Academy of Postgraduate Education at the Department of Reflexology. On average, more than 200 doctors are trained annually. Employees of the department have repeatedly trained in Beijing, Taiyuan and Tianjin. These methods have shown their effectiveness, including in the treatment of post-Covid syndrome. Every year in Belarus, reflexotherapists perform about 900 thousand reflexology procedures.

In 2023, the parties continue to actively interact in this context. In February, the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Belarus signed a number of cooperation agreements with Chinese partners. Firstly, in the city of Weihai, in Shandong province, with the Weigao International Medical Trading Company, which supplies medical products and spare parts made in China. Secondly, in the city of Shijiazhuang, in Hebei province, with the pharmaceutical company North China Pharmaceutical Company Limited (NCPC). “This company has been selected as a strategic partner that will represent the interests of the Belpharmprom holding in the field of procurement of pharmaceutical substances in the People’s Republic of China, as well as carry out the functions of studying market conditions, submitting proposals to the holding’s management company for the supply of substances and raw materials in accordance with applications”<sup>776</sup>.

Regarding the development of cooperation between Belarus and China in a new era in **the field of education, the International Educational Exhibition** China was held in Beijing in February 2023 Education Expo,

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<sup>775</sup> Belarus and China are preparing a memorandum on traditional Chinese medicine [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-krn-gotovjat-memorandum-po-voprosam-traditsionnoj-kitajskoj-meditsiny-552902-2023/>

<sup>776</sup> A cooperation agreement was signed by the Ministry of Health of Belarus and a Chinese pharmaceutical company [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/soglashenie-o-sotrudnicestve-podpisali-minzdrav-belarusi-i-kitajskaja-farmkompanija-552543-2023>

within the framework of which the thematic exposition “Education in Belarus” was organized, where leading Belarusian universities made presentations of educational programs: Belarusian State Economic University, Belarusian State University of Informatics and Radioelectronics, Minsk State Linguistic University, Belarusian State University of Culture and Arts, Gomel State Technical University named after P.O. Sukhoi, Belarusian National Technical University, Polotsk State University named after Euphrosyne of Polotsk and Mogilev State University named after A.A Kuleshov. Note that the Belarusian exposition was the only foreign one presented at this educational forum, which was visited by more than two thousand boys and girls from China interested in studying in Belarus.

In addition, during the negotiations held in the Chinese capital at the Beijing University of Civil Engineering and Architecture, the possibility of higher education institutions of Belarus joining the International Engineering and Architectural Consortium of Educational Institutions was discussed. But in general, “as a result of meetings between representatives of Belarusian universities in Chinese universities and consulting companies, 17 agreements on cooperation in the field of educational services were signed, 16 agreements were worked out for signing<sup>777</sup>. ” For reference, we note that “more than 540 direct cooperation agreements have already been signed by Belarusian and Chinese partners. Today, almost 500 citizens of the Republic of Belarus are studying in China, the number of Chinese students in Belarusian universities has reached 8,000 people<sup>778</sup>. ” In addition, the creation of joint educational structures is being actively promoted in Belarus and China. For example, seven joint projects are already operating: three laboratories, two centers and two institutes. 40 joint educational programs of the first and second levels of higher education are being implemented, 10 of which have been developed over the past two years.

In this context, an important participant in international cooperation with the People's Republic of China in the field of education is **the Belarusian State University** (BSU), which already interacts with more than 50 Chinese universities, and over three thousand Chinese citizens are currently studying in its classrooms. In March 2023, BSU identified new vectors and forms of

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<sup>777</sup> Belarus – China: 17 new agreements in the field of education were signed [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-kitaj-podpisano-17-novyh-soglashenij-v-oblasti-obrazovanija-553144-2023/>

<sup>778</sup> Zalessky, B. Interaction route – Asia. Intensification of multifaceted ties between Belarus and the main economic partners on the continent / B. Zalessky. – LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing , 2023. – C. 19.

cooperation with leading universities in China in order to strengthen, intensify and expand areas of partnership.

In particular, BSU is reaching a new level of cooperation with Peking University, which is the oldest university in China and was founded in 1898, where the local library has more than eight million books and where over 46 thousand students study, including more than four thousand foreigners. Let us remind you that the two universities signed a memorandum of understanding in 2019. In March 2023, the parties initiated cooperation in the field of mathematical sciences. “The development of joint scientific projects, academic exchange for lecturing on modern achievements in the field of probability theory, mathematical statistics and data analysis seem promising <sup>779</sup>. ” In addition, interaction in the field of joint training of undergraduates and graduate students will be expanded. To do this, in the near future this topic will be analyzed in detail to determine the specialties and scientific fields of knowledge in which they plan to cooperate.

Another partner of BSU in China is Beijing Foreign Studies University, one of the country's leading universities in the field of training linguists. In development of the agreements with it since 2017, BSU signed an agreement on the exchange of students in March 2023 in order to develop the academic mobility of students and undergraduates studying Chinese, Belarusian and Russian languages. The parties will also develop joint innovative pedagogical methods.

And following the meetings held in March 2023, the new partner of BSU became the Chinese University of Political Science and Law. The universities signed a memorandum of understanding that will allow cooperation in the field of jurisprudence in numerous vectors. “This is the exchange of students, the opening of joint educational programs, the implementation of joint research and educational projects, the exchange of information, educational materials and scientific reports, the organization of conferences, seminars, workshops and courses and the preparation of joint publications <sup>780</sup>. ”

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<sup>779</sup> BSU reaches a new level of cooperation with Peking University [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/bgu-vyhodit-na-novyj-uroven-sotrudnichestva-s-pekingskim-universitetom-557082-2023/>

<sup>780</sup> Student exchange, joint programs: BSU and leading universities in China have identified new vectors of cooperation [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/obmen-studentami-sovmestnye-programmy-bgu-i-veduschie-vuzy-kitaja-opredelili-novye-vektory-557224-2023/>

**Brest State Technical University** (BrSTU) is also among the active Belarusian universities developing cooperation with Chinese partners. In January 2023, BrSTU signed an agreement on cooperation in the field of education, science and culture with the Guangdong Construction Vocational Institute in order to combine the efforts of the two educational institutions to jointly train qualified specialists in the interests of the economies of the two countries. The parties plan to create a joint educational program to train Chinese students. We are talking about recruiting study groups where the children will study in China for the first two years, and then in Belarus. The specialty "architecture" was of particular interest to the Chinese side. "These joint degree programs are very popular because they allow students to earn two degrees in one cycle of study <sup>781</sup>."

Note that the Guangdong Construction Vocational Institute is the largest and only state higher vocational educational institution that trains builders and architects and is located in the industrial center of southern China. It has 22 thousand students. With the support of the National Development and Reform Commission of the People's Republic of China, a production and educational integration base was built at the institute, where students study various innovative and traditional construction technologies, design methods, water supply systems, BIM technologies, and real estate management. As for BrSTU, more than 200 Chinese citizens are studying in Brest today. The most popular among them are specialties in economics, construction and mechanical engineering.

Finally, another set of documents signed in early March 2023 in Beijing concerned interaction in **the media sphere**. This includes **a cooperation agreement between the news agencies of Belarus and China - BELTA and Xinhua**. In this regard, we note that the cooperation agreement between BELTA and Xinhua was first signed back in January 1993, then re-signed in June 2018. The new document – already the third – “implies the exchange of text news, photos and videos, mutual support and promotion on the Internet and social networks <sup>782</sup>.” The agencies agreed to exchange experiences and train journalists, editors and technical staff to improve their professional skills.

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<sup>781</sup> Brest University and Guangdong Institute will jointly train architects and builders [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/brestskij-universitet-i-guandunskij-institut-budut-sovmestno-gotovit-arhitektorov-i-stroitelej-543128-2023/>

<sup>782</sup> BELTA and Xinhua signed an agreement to strengthen cooperation and intensify the exchange of news [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belta-i-sinhua-podpisali-soglashenie-ob-ukreplenii-sotrudnichestva-i-aktivizatsii-obmena-novostjami-553192-2023/>

All these initiatives and projects, adopted in the spring of this year in relevant documents, indicate that cooperation between Belarus and China as a whole tends to strengthen in all areas, but there is still a large unrealized potential that will be realized in the new era - exemplary relations of all-weather and comprehensive strategic partnership between the two states.

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## **Belarus – China: on the foundation of new ideas**

In July 2023, the fifth meeting of the Belarusian-Chinese Intergovernmental Cooperation Committee (IPC) was held, within the framework of which a new model of strategic partnership between the Republic of Belarus and the People's Republic of China was formed and unique opportunities and mechanisms were created to deepen practical interaction across the entire spectrum of areas. The meeting participants agreed that “our common goal should be a new point of growth in trade turnover of at least 120% compared to the last year [2022] <sup>783</sup>. ” If we talk more specifically about the most important areas of Belarusian-Chinese economic cooperation, then four key issues should be highlighted in this regard.

Firstly, increasing and diversifying trade, systematic accreditation of Belarusian food producers, launching procurement channels for important goods through Chinese operators. Secondly, increasing railway container transportation for the delivery of Belarusian goods to China and Chinese equipment to Belarus, ensuring the operation of green railway corridors, organizing subsidized reverse trains from Belarus to large logistics centers in China and back. Thirdly, “deepening investment cooperation, joint industrial development, technological cooperation in the licensed automotive industry, in the assembly of electric vehicles, machine tool manufacturing, joint production of medical equipment, and the development of bio- and digital technologies <sup>784</sup>. ” Fourth, financing of strategic investment projects within the framework of preferential credit lines from China, their effective implementation, increasing credit, financial and technical and economic cooperation, including the purchase of necessary equipment. Let us remind you that “at the end of 2022, the turnover of goods in the countries [Belarus and China] reached a record volume of \$5.8 billion. Five months of this year were marked by a 1.5-fold increase in trade turnover. The export of Belarusian

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<sup>783</sup> Snopkov: a new model of strategic partnership between Belarus and China has been formed [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/snopkov-sformirovana-novaja-model-strategicheskogo-partnerstva-belarusi-i-kitaja-576417-2023/>

<sup>784</sup> Chervyakov highlighted important areas of cooperation to strengthen relations between Belarus and China [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/chervyakov-vydilil-vazhnye-napravlenija-sotrudnichestva-dlja-ukreplenija-otnoshenij-belarusi-i-kitaja-576438-2023/>

goods to China is growing at a record pace: in 2022 – 1.8 times, for 5 months of 2023 – 1.6 times<sup>785</sup>. ”

At the fifth meeting of the IGC, the parties agreed to concentrate efforts on the implementation of major projects in the field of development and cooperation, including the provision of free assistance from the Chinese government. In this context, it should be emphasized that 15 important socially oriented projects have already been implemented in Belarus, totaling more than one and a half billion Chinese yuan. “About a dozen new strategic projects are in the works, including the infrastructure development of the Great Stone industrial park, the supply of necessary technological equipment with a total financing amount of over 900 million Chinese yuan<sup>786</sup>. ” At the same time, the parties plan to accelerate the implementation of these projects, including two international-class sports facilities - a stadium and a swimming pool - by September 2024.

As for other production and cooperation projects, in July 2023 the Ministry of Industry of Belarus and the Chinese corporation China National Machinery Industry Corporation ( Sinomach ) signed an action plan to develop interaction “in priority areas of cooperation in the production of agricultural, municipal equipment, machine tool manufacturing, as well as the implementation of investment projects at Belarusian enterprises”<sup>787</sup> and even discussed the creation of individual models of agricultural equipment, the possibility of organizing the production of various equipment , participation of subsidiaries of the Sinomach corporation in the modernization of industrial enterprises from Belarus, supply of components for Belarusian manufacturers of agricultural machinery.

Also in July 2023, the Chinese company Baimen and OJSC Slutsk Cheese-Making Plant signed a strategic commercial agreement on the creation of a joint venture for the production of dairy products this year in the administrative center of Liaoning province - in the city of Shenyang. Let us

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<sup>785</sup> Snopkov: Belarus and China show the world an exemplary example of cooperation [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/snopkov-belarus-i-kitaj-demonstrirujut-vsemu-miru-obraztsovyj-primer-sotrudnichestva-576412-2023/>

<sup>786</sup> Belarus and China agreed to implement major projects in the field of development and cooperation [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-kitaj-dogovorilis-o-realizatsii-krupnyh-proektov-v-oblasti-razvitija-i-sotrudnichestva-576096-2023/>

<sup>787</sup> The Ministry of Industry of Belarus and the Chinese company Sinomach signed an action plan to develop cooperation [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/minprom-belarusi-i-kitajskaja-kompanija-sinomach-podpisali-plan-meroprijatij-po-razvitiju-576228-2023/>

note that this Chinese company is a major exporter of “Belarusian dairy products (products worth about \$50 million were exported in 2022. It is implementing a project for processing colostrum and producing whey protein at the site of the Great Stone Industrial Park <sup>788</sup>.” By creating a joint venture in Shenyang, the Baimen company and the Slutsk cheese-making plant intend to further scale the project, systematically increasing the line of dairy products produced for the Chinese buyer.

And one more interesting fact. Also in July 2023, OJSC Management Company of the Bobruiskagromash Holding held negotiations with the YTO company Group Corporation , a Chinese manufacturer of agricultural and construction equipment, part of the complex machine-building conglomerate Sinomach , “to organize joint production of self-propelled mowers and utility vehicles, and also discussed the supply of components for Bobruiskagromash equipment from China <sup>789</sup>. ” In the near future, the parties will prepare the necessary documents for this project.

A separate conversation in this context is about the Chinese-Belarusian industrial park “Great Stone”. Let us recall that 2023 marks ten years since the President of the People's Republic of China (PRC) Xi Jinping announced the “One Belt, One Road” initiative, which marked a new era in the economic relations of states and united more than a hundred countries throughout planet. Among the first participants in this mega-project was the Republic of Belarus, where the Great Stone Park is actively developing, which plays the role of a key platform for this initiative and already unites more than a hundred residents from 15 countries. Suffice it to say that “the volume of actual investments of the park has already exceeded \$830 million, and the volume of declared investments is \$1.34 billion <sup>790</sup>. ” And in the first quarter of 2023 alone, 11 new companies with investment projects in the field of logistics, e-commerce, medicine, biotechnology, instrument engineering, research and development have already been registered here. To be more precise, “now the number of residents of the Great Stone industrial park has reached 108 <...>. Production

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<sup>788</sup> A Belarusian-Chinese enterprise for the production of dairy products will be created in China this year [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belorusssko-kitajskoe-predpriyatje-po-proizvodstvu-molochnoj-produktsii-sozdadut-v-knr-v-etom-godu-576098-2023/>

<sup>789</sup> “Bobruiskagromash” and the Chinese company YTO Group Corporation discussed prospects for cooperation [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/bobrujskagromash-i-kitajskaja-kompanija-yto-group-corporation-obsudili-perspektivy-sotrudnichestva-575895-2023/>

<sup>790</sup> The declared investments of “Great Stone” residents are estimated at more than \$1.3 billion [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/zajavlennye-investitsii-rezidentov-velikogo-kamnja-otsenivajutsja-bolee-chem-v-13-mlrd-568784-2023/>

volume [for three months of 2023] increased by 1.3 times, revenue from sales of goods - by 1.8 times, export of goods - by 1.2 times, foreign direct investment on a net basis - by 2 times, tax payments - 3.5 times<sup>791</sup>. "

One of the priority areas of the "Great Stone" today is mechanical engineering. Let us remind you that the cluster of enterprises operating in this area is the largest in the park and has more than 20 projects. In particular, joint Belarusian-Chinese enterprises operate here, producing internal combustion engines and gearboxes for passenger and freight transport. Some of the Chinese residents produce construction equipment based on the chassis of the Minsk Automobile Plant, and the Belarusian resident produces glass for all types of ground transport, which is in great demand in the countries of the Eurasian Economic Union. Another current direction of "Great Stone" is high-tech and competitive production - companies carrying out research and development. Currently, more than 25 such companies are registered in the park.

Speaking about new residents, it can be noted that in March 2023, another company was registered in the Great Stone industrial park - IRBI LLC, the investment project of which is of an innovative import-substituting nature. "A resident of the park will produce all-in-one computers, mini-computers for offices and industrial computers, as well as components for computer equipment. In addition to production, the company will introduce its own application software systems<sup>792</sup>." These products will be intended for the domestic market of Belarus, and will also be exported to the countries of the Eurasian Economic Union.

In April 2023, another resident was registered in the industrial park - SinoBelMedica LLC, initiated by the Chinese company Shanghai Electric Medical Group, part of the largest manufacturer of energy and industrial equipment Shanghai Electric Group Company Limited. The new resident "will implement a project to create a modern high-tech production of X-ray tubes on

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<sup>791</sup> Ministry of Economy: 11 new companies were registered in the Great Stone in the first quarter [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/minekonomiki-za-i-kvartal-v-velikom-kamne-zaregistrovano-11-novyh-kompanij-567541-2023/>

<sup>792</sup> The new resident of "Great Stone" will produce computers and components [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novyj-rezident-velikogo-kamnja-budet-proizvodit-kompjutyery-i-komplektujuschie-558151-2023/>

the territory of the industrial park. Sales of products on the Belarusian market will contribute to import substitution <sup>793</sup>. ”

In May 2023, at negotiations between the management of the park and the delegation of Gansu Province, issues of the development of traditional Chinese medicine in Belarus were discussed, and “the possibility of creating a center for traditional Chinese medicine and the development of pharmaceutical production in the park was discussed <sup>794</sup>. ” And in June 2023, an agreement was reached on cooperation between the Belarusian Ministry of Health and the Chinese pharmaceutical company Jifei to study “the issue of creating a biotechnological cluster in the Great Stone Industrial Park for the production of medicines, vaccines, insulin, CAR - T technologies <...>. Work is underway to determine the prospects for localizing the range of medicines from the Jifei company <sup>795</sup>. ”

And in the same June 2023, the Belarusian and Chinese sides announced that they would continue to attract investors with large projects to the Great Stone industrial park, with special attention being paid to the development of traditional Chinese medicine at the park site. And also “the ministries of economy of the two countries and the largest shareholder companies of the Industrial Park Development Company agreed to continue active work to attract anchor investors with large projects to the Great Stone, organize new in-demand production, in particular in the field of mechanical engineering and auto components, medical equipment, and increase localization of existing production facilities of residents <sup>796</sup>. ” The parties will systematically improve the investment environment, consistently eliminate emerging development risks and bring the park to a new qualitative level of development, strengthening its position as a central Belarusian-Chinese project and an

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<sup>793</sup> The new resident of “Great Stone” plans to produce X-ray tubes [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novyj-rezident-velikogo-kamnja-planiruet-proizvodstvo-rentgenovskih-trubok-560903-2023/>

<sup>794</sup> The delegation of the Chinese province of Gansu will study the possibility of developing pharmaceutical production in the “Great Stone” [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/delegatsija-kitajskoj-provintsii-gansu-izuchit-vozmozhnost-razvitija-farmproizvodstv-v-velikom-kamne-567520-2023/>

<sup>795</sup> The Ministry of Health and the Chinese pharmaceutical company Jifei intend to sign a cooperation agreement [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/minzdrav-i-kitajskaja-farmkompanija-dzhifej-namereny-podpisat-soglashenie-o-sotrudnichestve-569796-2023/>

<sup>796</sup> Belarus and China will continue to attract anchor investors with large projects to the Great Stone [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-kitaj-prodolzhat-privlekat-v-velikij-kamen-jakomyh-investorov-s-krupnymi-proektami-569986-2023/>

international industrial cluster with an eye on the market of the Eurasian Economic Union.

At the already mentioned fifth meeting of the Belarusian-Chinese Intergovernmental Cooperation Committee, which took place in July 2023, the parties discussed, among other things, the dynamics of mutual contacts in the field of education in order to strengthen direct inter-university ties and implement a number of large-scale joint educational and scientific projects. Among the promising areas of interaction, the meeting participants noted the following: training and expanding the practice of implementing joint educational programs in innovative specialties by leading universities of Belarus and China; interaction on the creation of digital platforms that provide public access to educational resources; joining efforts to develop norms and standards for the digitalization of education; exploring the possibility of creating an Association of Higher Education Institutions of the two countries.

It should be noted that to date, more than 560 direct cooperation agreements have been signed between educational institutions of Belarus and China, which is about 10 percent of the total number of existing inter-university agreements between Belarusian higher education institutions. “On the basis of educational institutions of the two countries, 9 joint educational and scientific structures also operate (3 laboratories, 4 centers and 2 institutes), 40 joint educational programs are being implemented, 10 of which were developed in the last two years, the implementation of 6 of them began in 2022/2023 academic year. The possibility of implementing another 20 joint educational programs and organizing joint training of personnel of the highest scientific qualifications is being explored <sup>797</sup>. ” This fall, the educational departments of the two countries plan to approve a plan for the development of academic and scientific exchanges for 2023-2025, within the framework of which new concrete steps will be taken for constructive interaction between Belarusian universities and Chinese partners.

Among the active participants in this cooperation is the Belarusian State Technological University (BSTU). Back in April 2023, the Belarusian university discussed promising areas of partnership with members of the Guangdong Union for Scientific and Technical Cooperation with the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States. In particular, BSTU signed an

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<sup>797</sup> Bakhanovich: education ensures intellectual, cultural and linguistic rapprochement between Belarus and China [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/bahanovich-obrazovanie-obespechivaet-intellektualnoe-kulturnoe-i-jazykovoe-sblizhenie-belarusi-i-kitaja-576391-2023/>

agreement on interaction and creation of a joint laboratory of applied technologies with the Guangdong Vocational and Technical College of Light Industry. “The parties agreed to organize academic exchanges, summer schools, and discussed the prospects for contacts in the field of polymers, functional coatings, paper production technology and other areas <sup>798</sup>. ” Documents were also signed on the implementation of joint educational programs with the Guangdong Nanhua Vocational College of Industry and Commerce and the Guangdong Vocational and Technical College of Communications. And a bilateral agreement on scientific and technical cooperation was concluded with the Ningbos International Science and Innovation Center to jointly develop modern polymer composite materials, elastomers and plastics, and additive technologies.

In May 2023, BSTU entered into a cooperation agreement with the Kunshan Institute of Industrial Technology to create joint Belarusian-Chinese transfer centers in the field of high technology and 3D modeling . The point is that “every year the Belarusian side will select at least 10 projects that will be financed by the PRC in order to develop cooperation in the field of high technologies <sup>799</sup>. ” In addition, the parties agreed to create a joint university “Kunshan-Minsk” on the basis of BSTU so that students could study part of the time in China, part in Belarus, and ultimately receive two diplomas. And one more interesting idea: together with Chinese companies, a biomedicine center will be created in the Minsk City Technopark, where they will develop testing technologies and drugs aimed at treating diseases of humans and various animals. In short, the agro-industrial complex related to vaccines will develop.

Another Belarusian university that continues close cooperation with Chinese partners in 2023 is the Belarusian State University of Informatics and Radioelectronics (BSUIR). In July of this year, in Minsk, together with the North China Research Institute of Electromagnetic Protection, BSUIR opened a Belarusian-Chinese research laboratory of external electromagnetic influences. One of the key tasks of the new laboratory is the development of a finished product that is of practical interest and in demand on the global

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<sup>798</sup>The educational and scientific potential of BSTU was presented in the Chinese province of Guangdong [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/obrazovatelnyj-i-nauchnyj-potentsial-bgtu-prezentovan-v-kitajskoj-provintsii-guandun-563887-2023/>

<sup>799</sup> Investments, creation of a joint university and biomedicine center. The Kunshan delegation visited BSTU [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/investitsii-sozdanie-sovmestnogo-universiteta-i-tsentra-biomeditsiny-delegatsija-kunshanja-posetila-569539-2023/>

technology market, “conducting fundamental and applied research, implementing their results, facilitating training and advanced training, conducting internships for engineering personnel and researchers of BSUIR and the institute- partner”<sup>800</sup>, as well as strengthening international cooperation of scientists and specialists for joint scientific research as part of the implementation of China’s “One Belt and One Road” initiative.

As for Chinese universities, there is a high interest in cooperation with Belarusian partners at Liaoning University, which in July 2023 became a partner of Brest State University named after A.S. Pushkin, as well as Brest State Technical University (BrSTU). In particular, the agreement between BrSTU and Liaoning University “provides for academic exchanges, joint educational programs, implementation of scientific projects and socio-cultural interaction. We plan to fill the agreement with real events and, in the future, to develop a road map<sup>801</sup>.” For example, to train Chinese students in the specialty “Smart Transport” on the basis of the faculties of mechanical engineering and information technology.

Returning to the fifth meeting of the Belarusian-Chinese Intergovernmental Cooperation Committee, we note that the participants in this discussion proposed taking scientific and technical cooperation to a new level and considered the possibilities of creating joint high-tech production facilities in a number of areas. “Such areas <...> could be robotics, electric transport, medical equipment and pharmaceuticals, laser technology<sup>802</sup>.” By creating a full innovation cycle - from the idea to the release of high-tech products, the parties will expand promising areas of partnership, interacting on the educational foundation of new ideas, which ensures the intellectual rapprochement of Belarus and China. In addition, all these facts indicate that the new model of strategic, including trade, economic, scientific, technical and educational partnership between the two countries, formed within the framework of the fifth meeting of the IPC on cooperation, is beginning to take on concrete innovative outlines for the benefit of the two peoples.

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<sup>800</sup> The Belarusian-Chinese research laboratory opened at BSUIR [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belorusko-kitajskaja-nauchno-issledovatel'skaja-laboratorija-otkrylas-v-bguir-576810-2023/>

<sup>801</sup> Brest universities signed cooperation agreements with Liaoning University [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/vuzy-bresta-podpisali-soglashenija-osotrudnichestve-s-ljaoninskim-universitetom-576902-2023/>

<sup>802</sup> Shlychkov: the implementation of joint projects with China will allow us to create new high-tech industries [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/shlychkov-realizatsija-sovmestnyh-proektov-s-kitaem-pozvolit-vyiti-na-sozdanie-novyh-576315-2023/>

## **Belarus – China: interaction between regions reaches a new level**

In March 2023, in Beijing, the Republic of Belarus and the People's Republic of China adopted at the highest level a joint statement on the basic principles for developing exemplary relations of all-weather and comprehensive strategic partnership between the two countries in the new era. At the same time, the parties signed a plan for the Year of Regions of Belarus and China for 2023. This document “contains more than 80 bilateral agreements and initiatives to attract at least \$150 million in direct Chinese investment by each Belarusian region and Minsk by 2026.”<sup>803</sup> In September 2023, the third meeting of the working group on interregional trade and economic cooperation of the Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation of the Belarusian-Chinese Intergovernmental Cooperation Committee was held at the Chinese-Belarusian Industrial Park “Great Stone”, at which topical issues of interaction between the regions of the two countries and prospects for its development. The parties noted that certain economic indicators of cooperation between Belarus and China have reached a fairly high level. “In the first half of 2023, mutual trade turnover exceeded \$4 billion, with Belarusian exports approaching the landmark mark of \$1 billion”<sup>804</sup>.

One of the active participants in deepening trade, economic, scientific, technical and socio-cultural cooperation between the regions of the two countries is **the Minsk region**. In 2022, the trade turnover of the Belarusian capital region with the Chinese side exceeded two billion dollars, while the exports of the Minsk region amounted to almost one billion. At the beginning of 2023, the list of products supplied to the Celestial Empire from the Minsk region has already exceeded the mark of more than one hundred. “Products from dairy processing enterprises and other municipal enterprises in the region are especially in demand. All milk processing enterprises of the Minoblmyasomolprom holding, as well as the Slutsk and Stolbtsovsky meat

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<sup>803</sup> Zalesky, B. New realities for partnership. Chronicle of international cooperation in the conditions of economic mobilization / B. Zalesky. – LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2023. – C. 13.

<sup>804</sup> Chebotar: Belarus aims to expand trade and economic cooperation with the regions of the PRC [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/chebotar-belarus-natselena-na-rashshirenje-torgovo-ekonomicheskogo-sotrudnichestva-s-regionami-kr-590444-2023/>

processing plants have an export license <sup>805</sup>. And in the five months of this year, the capital region has already provided export supplies to China worth more than five hundred million dollars.

Among the interesting partners of the Minsk region among the Chinese regions, we should note **the province of Guangdong**, which is home to more than 127 million people and which is attractive not only as part of the product sales market, but also as a supplier of technologies in the field of mechanical engineering and agriculture. After all, this province is one of the most developed in China, where powerful engineering and processing companies operate. In 2022, the parties celebrated the tenth anniversary of the signing of the cooperation agreement. In May 2023, the Belarusian region and the Chinese province agreed on the prospects for interaction. And currently, the roadmap for the development of bilateral relations is already being supplemented and updated. Note that “in the first half of 2023, trade turnover between the regions increased by 20%. Exports reached Br 646.2 million. Poultry meat, beef, and flax fiber are supplied to China from the Minsk region. The main imports are machines for automatic information processing, textile products, and auto parts <sup>806</sup>. ” In addition, the parties are discussing the issue of attracting investment from Guangdong province to the economy of the Minsk region, as well as options for cooperation between the largest companies producing household appliances and cars, including electric vehicles, at production sites located in preferential zones of the Minsk region, such as the Chinese-Belarusian industrial park “Great Stone”, where in the nine months of 2023 “12 new residents were added <sup>807</sup>. ”

As for another partner of the Minsk region in China - **the province of Zhejiang**, the parties intend to expand cooperation in the field of traditional Chinese medicine. As you know, a corresponding center has been created on the basis of the Minsk Regional Clinical Hospital. In June 2023, at negotiations between the delegations of the Committee for Health Affairs of Zhejiang Province and the General Directorate of Health of the Minsk Regional

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<sup>805</sup> What products of the Minsk region may appear on the Chinese market in the near future [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://mlyn.by/01032023/kakaya-produkcziya-minskoj-oblasti-v-blizhajshee-vremya-mozhet-poyavitsya-na-rynke-kitaya/>

<sup>806</sup> The Minsk Regional Executive Committee discussed a roadmap for cooperation with the Chinese province of Guangdong [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/v-minsk-oblispolkome-obsudili-dorozhnuju-kartu-sotrudnichestva-s-kitajskoj-provintsiej-guandun-583608-2023/>

<sup>807</sup> The Minsk Regional Executive Committee explained why the Chinese province of Guangdong is interesting for the regional economy [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/v-minoblispolkome-rasskazali-chem-dlja-ekonomiki-oblasti-interesna-kitajskaja-provintsija-guandun-593552-2023/>

Executive Committee, the directions for the development of this center, “the supply of medicines from China, the possibility of training doctors in the capital region in new techniques” were discussed. The Belarusian side also proposed to consider the issue of organizing joint production of biologically active additives and herbal medicines<sup>808</sup>. ” In addition, the task is to expand the capabilities of the mentioned Center for Traditional Chinese Medicine, where procedures such as acupuncture, manual therapy, and massage are already performed at its base.

Finally, one of the promising partners of the Minsk region among the Chinese regions should be noted **the city of Chongqing** - the only municipality of central subordination of China, which is also the economic center of the upper reaches of the Yangtze River, where more than 32 million people live. This city is a stronghold of the Chinese development strategy in the western part of the Celestial Empire and a nodal point of the Belt and Road project. Logistics hubs, ports and customs infrastructure are being built here to participate in the development of China-Europe Express logistics. Chongqing is a modern manufacturing base in China, where the complete chain of electronic information industry and automobile manufacturing is represented. Suffice it to say that in 2022, car production here amounted to more than two million cars, and 284 thousand units were exported.

As for interregional ties, Chongqing and Minsk region established sister city relations in 2017. With the launch of the regular service of the Chinese Railway Express “Chongqing - Minsk”, the trade turnover between the parties is growing every year. “In 2022, imports and exports between Chongqing and Belarus exceeded 500 million yuan, an annual increase of 54.8%. Belarus is an important supplier of meat products and butter to Chongqing. Belarusian dairy products and confectionery products are very popular among city residents<sup>809</sup>. ” In 2023, the parties are taking new concrete steps to further deepen trade and economic cooperation and establish humanitarian and cultural contacts. In particular, within the framework of the Exhibition of Chinese Goods and Services - 2023, which took place at the end of June - beginning of July of this year in the Great Stone Industrial Park, where about 180 Chinese companies

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<sup>808</sup> Minsk region and Zhejiang province intend to develop cooperation in the field of traditional medicine [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/minskaja-oblast-i-provintsija-chzhetszjan-namereny-razvivat-sotrudnichestvo-v-sfere-traditsionnoj-574675-2023/>

<sup>809</sup> More than 20 enterprises from Chongqing will take part in the Exhibition of Chinese Goods and Services in the “Great Stone” [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/bolee-20-predpriyatij-iz-chuntsina-primut-uchastie-v-vystavke-kitajskih-tovarov-i-uslug-v-velikom-kamne-573747-2023/>

presented their products, a thematic exposition of the Exhibition Pavilion of Export Goods of the city was shown Chongqing. More than 20 city enterprises placed mechanical engineering products, including cars, motorcycles and components, on an area of about 300 square meters. In addition, official representatives of the Minsk region and Chongqing “discussed cooperation in the field of mechanical engineering, the supply of food products to the Chinese region, and logistics”<sup>810</sup>.

Among the active participants in Belarusian-Chinese interregional cooperation is also **Vitebsk region**, which in 2022 exceeded the volume of supplies to China almost twice, amounting to more than \$55 million. But back in 2006, the bulk of the Belarusian region’s exports to the Celestial Empire were represented by only 12 consolidated items, of which 97 percent were synthetic thread bundles. “And at the end of 2021, the export basket of the Vitebsk region expanded to 28 items, and its basis began to be formed by the supply of agricultural products (meat, milk and dairy products) - about 70 percent”<sup>811</sup>. And today these supplies also include dry confectionery, rapeseed oil, polyethylene, acrylic tow, fiberglass, flax and wood products, peat, and alcoholic beverages.

But recently, the interaction of the Vitebsk region with China goes beyond the scope of purchase and sale, as the parties move “to the next level - exchange of technologies, assistance in their refinement, in their research, development of new types of products”<sup>812</sup>; in order to enter the plane of attracting investors, invest Vitebsk funds on Chinese territory and master new technologies. In addition, the emphasis in development is on the educational, scientific and cultural segments. Let us remind you that the Vitebsk region has signed eight bilateral documents - agreements, protocols, programs - on cooperation; regular contacts have been established and maintained at the level of executive authorities, organizations and companies with four provinces and one city of China. In addition, 19 bilateral documents have been concluded on

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<sup>810</sup> Mechanical engineering, medicine, tourism: Minsk region and Chongqing discussed areas of cooperation [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/mashinostroenie-meditsina-turizm-minskaja-oblast-i-chuntsin-obsudili-napравlenija-sotrudnichestva-574541-2023/>

<sup>811</sup> Mishin, A. What are the prospects for cooperation between the Vitebsk region and the provinces of China? / A. Mishin // [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : [https://vitbichi.by/news/ekonomika/analitik\\_obyasnit\\_kakovy\\_perspektivy\\_sotrudnichestva\\_vitebskoy\\_oblasti\\_i\\_provintsij\\_kitaya/](https://vitbichi.by/news/ekonomika/analitik_obyasnit_kakovy_perspektivy_sotrudnichestva_vitebskoy_oblasti_i_provintsij_kitaya/)

<sup>812</sup> Subbotin: cooperation with China goes beyond the scope of purchase and sale, into the plane of investment projects [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/subbotin-sotrudnichestvo-s-kitaem-vyhodit-za-ramki-kupli-prodazhi-v-ploskost-investproektov-598640-2023/>

cooperation between cities and districts of the Vitebsk region with Chinese partners.

The most intensive interaction in the Belarusian northern region is observed with **the province Heilongjiang**, which is located in northern China, where rice is grown and agriculture in general is very developed. Over the past 18 years, the parties have created a good contractual and legal framework for relations: 1) Agreement on cooperation in trade, economic, scientific, technical, humanitarian, cultural and other areas (2005); 2) Agreement on the establishment of sister city relations (2011); 3) Cooperation Development Program for 2016-2020. “Sister city agreements with the cities of this region of the Celestial Empire were once concluded by Polotsk, Novopolotsk and Vitebsk <sup>813</sup>. ” In May 2023, at the XI International Economic Forum “Innovation. Investments. Prospects” in Vitebsk, enterprises from Heilongjiang province expressed interest in partnerships with Vitebsk producers of meat products, and also “expect to establish mutually beneficial cooperation with Orsha and Dubroven flax processors in the near future, share their experience and discuss the possibility of supplying modern equipment <sup>814</sup>. ” And in June of this year, at the international trade and economic exhibition in Harbin, the administrative center of Heilongjiang, a memorandum of intent was already signed to establish friendly ties between the Vitebsk concern “Meat and Dairy Products” and an enterprise from the city of Suihua from the same province. In addition, the Belarusian side became interested in cooperation in the production of electrical equipment and instrumentation, since the Chinese partners have very great competencies in this area. So, new promising projects in this regional cooperation may appear in the near future.

Another – new – partner of the Vitebsk region in China is **the province Jiangxi**, with which the Belarusian region signed a cooperation agreement in the fields of trade, logistics, investment, economics, education, healthcare, sports and tourism in October 2022. “As the next practical step, it was decided to establish direct interaction between the Vitebsk SEZ and the special economic zones of Jiangxi Province and their residents in order to work on the issue of creating joint productions in Belarus and the use of cross-border trade

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<sup>813</sup> Pushnyakova, A. Food products, MDF boards: Vitebsk region will present the potential of the region in June in Harbin / A. Pushnyakova // [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/prodovolstvennyye-tovary-mdf-plity-vitebskaja-oblast-predstavit-v-ijune-v-harbine-potencial-regiona-567209-2023/>

<sup>814</sup> Pushnyakova, A. Chinese industrialists intend to establish cooperation with enterprises of the Vitebsk region / A. Pushnyakova // [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/kitajskie-promyshlenniki-namereny-naladit-sotrudnichestvo-s-predpriyatijami-vitebskoj-oblasti-567149-2023/>

mechanisms by Belarusian exporters to the PRC <sup>815</sup>. ” They also discussed expanding the supply of Belarusian products to China using the Orsha-Nanchang reverse container train and exchanging practical experience in the investment field. After all, the city of Orsha has established interaction with the administrative center of this province - Nanchang - in the field of innovative and traditional medicine at the level of individual medical institutions. In December 2022, a document of intent for cooperation was signed by city hospital No. 2 of the Orsha Central Clinic and the Hongdu Hospital of Traditional Chinese Medicine, which “provides for the exchange of practical and scientific experience, medical technologies, mutual internships and advanced training of medical workers, as well as implementation on the basis of Orsha central clinic projects in the field of traditional Chinese medicine, including physiotherapy, reflexology, electroacupuncture, acupuncture, qigong <sup>816</sup>. ”

As for the third Chinese partner of the Vitebsk region - **the province Shandong** , then back in 2005 the parties signed a memorandum of cooperation, and in October 2019 they adopted an Agreement on the Establishment of Friendship and Cooperation Relations, in which they “identified as priorities for the development of partnerships the development of an effective mechanism for interaction in the field of trade and investment, the development of cooperative ties... ” <sup>817</sup>. In February 2023, an Agreement was signed to establish friendly relations between Novopolotsk and the city of Liaocheng, Shandong Province. At the same time, the parties noted the importance of developing interregional ties as one of the key links in bilateral cooperation. They also discussed the implementation of a number of joint projects. It should be noted that in order to strengthen Belarusian-Chinese ties, the Vitebsk region and Shandong province regularly hold joint events and also conclude bilateral documents. “Previously, agreements were signed to establish friendly relations at the municipal level between the cities of Vitebsk and Jinan, Novopolotsk and Weihai, Orsha and Qingdao, Polotsk and Dezhou,

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<sup>815</sup> FEZ “Vitebsk” and special economic zones of Jiangxi province will establish direct interaction [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/sez-vitebsk-i-osobyie-ekonomicheskie-zony-provintsii-tszjansi-naladjat-prjamoe-vzaimodejstvie-566987-2023/>

<sup>816</sup> Orsha and Chinese Nanchang agreed to exchange medical experience [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/orsha-i-kitajskij-nanchan-dogovorilis-ob-obmene-meditsinskim-opytom-540364-2022/>

<sup>817</sup> Zalesky, B. From regions to innovation. Features of the Belarusian-Chinese strategic partnership / B. Zalesky. – LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing , 2021. – C. eleven.

Glubokoe and Jining<sup>818</sup>. ” And in September 2023, three more memorandums of cooperation were signed: in innovation, in the field of education and youth policy. “Based on them and based on the results of the negotiations, roadmaps for interaction on specific projects and areas of activity will be developed<sup>819</sup>. ”

Finally, in November 2023, as part of the 6th China International Import Exhibition in Shanghai, where more than 10 enterprises from the Belarusian northern region took part, including the Vitebsk concern “Meat and Dairy Products”, the Polotsk Dairy Plant, the Verkhnedvinsk Creamery, a branch of “Lepelsky MKK” of the Vitebsk meat processing plant, the confectionery factory “Vitba”, the plant “Naftan”, the enterprise “Polotsk-Steklovolokno” and the textile manufacturer “Orsha Flax Mill”, the Vitebsk Regional Executive Committee signed a memorandum of cooperation with the Zonghai company Business Management ( Jinan ) to create the China Industry Park in Vitebsk, as well as the Belarus Industry Park in Shandong province at the Qingdao site, where enterprises will be able to present their products and work out issues of their sales in various regions of China. This will be one of the leading platforms from which Vitebsk goods will be distributed. This will be a point of export growth for the Vitebsk region, which they want to “utilize as much as possible, and not only for the sale of goods. <...> This is probably one of the most recent and promising projects<sup>820</sup>. ” All this generally suggests that the Vitebsk region intends to even more actively develop cooperation with Chinese regions in a wide range of areas in 2024, including economics, trade, science, engineering, technology, as well as in the fields of education, healthcare, sports .

Now let's look again at the 6th China International Import Expo ( China International Import Expo 2023) in Shanghai, where **the Brest Region Day** was held in November of this year , where the economic, cultural, tourism, educational, and medical potential of the Belarusian region was presented, with

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<sup>818</sup> Novopolotsk and Chinese Liaocheng established friendly relations [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/novopolotsk-i-kitajskij-ljaochen-ustanovili-druzhestvennye-svjazi-550863-2023/>

<sup>819</sup> Kochetov, S. Vitebsk region and the Chinese province of Shandong intend to develop and expand partnership in innovation, in the field of education and youth policy / S. Kochetov // [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : [https://www.vitbichi.by/news/ekonomika/vitebskaya\\_oblast\\_i\\_kitajskaya\\_provintsiya\\_shandun\\_n\\_amereny\\_razvivat\\_i\\_rasshiryat\\_partnerstvo\\_v\\_inno/](https://www.vitbichi.by/news/ekonomika/vitebskaya_oblast_i_kitajskaya_provintsiya_shandun_n_amereny_razvivat_i_rasshiryat_partnerstvo_v_inno/)

<sup>820</sup> Subbotin: an import exhibition in Shanghai helps enterprises express themselves and find partners in China [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/subbotin-vystavka-importa-v-shanhae-pomogaet-predpriyatijam-zajavit-o-sebe-i-najti-partnerov-v-kitae-598641-2023/>

an emphasis on exporting goods and services to China. Note that this exhibition forum was attended by “more than 150 countries representing the regions of Asia, Africa and Europe”<sup>821</sup> and where various thematic sections were presented, including the automotive industry, high-tech equipment and information technology, medical equipment and medicines, consumer goods, trade in services, food and agricultural products. In this regard, the participation of Belarusian companies at the import exhibition in Shanghai is of strategic importance. After all, China is one of the largest and most dynamically developing markets in the world and “provides an opportunity for Belarusian companies to expand their horizons and establish business connections with potential partners and buyers, including Chinese state corporations”<sup>822</sup>. ” Important detail: if at the 5th China Forum International Import Expo 2022 in Shanghai, 27 organizations from the food industry, logistics, science and education participated in the Belarusian exposition, but this time more than 70 representatives from Belarus took part in this exhibition.

As for **the Brest region**, it is among the leaders among Belarusian regions in terms of trade and economic relations with the PRC. Suffice it to say that “over the eight months of the current [2023] year, the volume of trade turnover [with China] amounted to almost \$280 million and increased almost one and a half times. Thanks to contacts with business, Chinese foreign direct investment is already growing by 40%”<sup>823</sup>. At the import exhibition in Shanghai, the Brest region demonstrated a wide range of goods and services that attracted the interest of consumers not only from China, but also from other countries. In particular, at the collective stand of the Brestmyasomolprom concern, the Brest Meat Processing Plant, the Berezovsky Meat Canning Plant, the Kobrin Butter and Cheese Factory and the Luninets Dairy Plant, and the Pruzhany Dairy Plant presented their products with tasting. The educational potential of the region was presented by the Brest State Technical University, and the medical potential was presented by the Brest Regional Clinical Hospital.

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<sup>821</sup> What will be the national exposition of Belarus at the international import exhibition in Shanghai [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/kakoj-budet-natsionalnaja-ekspozitsija-belarusi-na-mezhdunarodnoj-vystavke-importa-v-shanhae-582374-2023/>

<sup>822</sup> The International Import Exhibition opened in Shanghai [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/mezhdunarodnaja-vystavka-importa-otkrylas-v-shanhae-597935-2023/>

<sup>823</sup> Chinese partners are interested in creating production facilities and logistics companies in the Brest region [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/kitajskim-partneram-interesno-sozdanie-proizvodstv-i-logisticheskikh-kompanij-v-brestskoj-oblasti-598059-2023/>

As a result, representatives of the Belarusian region “signed 18 bilateral documents at the exhibition: seven agreements, four memorandums, six commercial contracts, one action plan. They relate to various areas, including trade and economic cooperation, cooperation in the field of education, healthcare, and tourism <sup>824</sup>. ” For example, agreements were signed by: the Brest Regional Executive Committee with two corporations involved in the creation of transport and forwarding centers and the development of e-commerce; Brest State Technical University with the Hubei Institute of International Business and Economics. As for the memorandums on the development of cooperation, they were concluded by: the free economic zone “Brest” and the Brest branch of the Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry with the administration for the management of the Coastal Park of the Integrated Bonded Zone in the city of Shenyang, which is the administrative center of Liaoning Province; Department of Sports and Tourism of the Brest Regional Executive Committee with the Belarusian-Chinese Center for Culture and Development of the People's Republic of China. Speaking of commercial contracts, they, first of all, relate to the supply of Brest food, mainly meat and dairy products, and are estimated at more than twenty million dollars.

A separate conversation concerns the sister city ties between the Brest region and Chinese partners. The Brest region has four sister cities in China - the provinces of Liaoning, Shanxi, Anhui and Hubei. In November 2023, representatives of the Belarusian region, in addition to the import exhibition in Shanghai, held active negotiations in **Anhui province** . An agreement to establish friendly relations with her was signed back in September 2017. This time, the parties adopted an action plan for the development of trade, economic, scientific, technical and cultural cooperation for 2023-2025. In addition, agreements were concluded to establish sister city relations between the cities of Brest and Hefei, the Berzovsky district and the city of Bengbu, and the Brest Regional Clinical Hospital agreed to interact with Anhui Medical University. Let us add that Brest and Hefei already intend to draw up a road map for cooperation. The main points to find common ground are “the production sector, transport and logistics, educational, medical, cultural...” <sup>825</sup>.

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<sup>824</sup> Gorodetsky, D. Commercial contracts and new cooperation agreements were concluded in China / D. Gorodetsky // [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/interview/view/v-kitae-zakljuchili-kommercheskie-kontrakty-i-novye-soglashenija-o-sotrudnichestve-8970/>

<sup>825</sup> Brest and Chinese Hefei intend to draw up a roadmap for cooperation [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/brest-i-kitajskij-hefej-namereny-sostavit-dorozhnyu-kartu-dlja-sotrudnichestva-599168-2023/>

Speaking about the economic aspect of interaction between sister cities, Chinese partners are especially interested in creating production and logistics companies in the Belarusian region. In turn, the Belarusian side “is ready to offer services for the transfer of cars from narrow European to broad gauge, as well as the implementation of a project to create a transport and logistics hub in the Brest region <sup>826</sup>. ” The fact is that Brest is a nodal point of the Chinese “Silk Road” and an important element of the cross-border corridor for promoting the “Freight trains from China to Europe” project. In addition, the Brest region is ready to provide the Chinese side with a site for the implementation of a project to build an educational center. And this is just the beginning of the implementation of new joint mutually beneficial projects.

All these facts indicate that Belarusian-Chinese interregional cooperation is gradually reaching a new level of cooperation in the conditions of an all-weather and comprehensive strategic partnership. So, in the near future, the parties will demonstrate even more innovative approaches to make it much simpler and easier for the regions to work on joint projects and programs.

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<sup>826</sup> Brest and Bereza acquired twin cities in the Chinese province of Anhui [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/brest-i-bereza-obzavelis-pobratimami-v-kitajskoj-provintsii-anhoj-598126-2023/>

## **Belarus – Indonesia: action plan aims for maximum results**

In April 2022, the seventh meeting of the Belarusian-Indonesian Joint Commission on Trade, Economic and Technical Cooperation was held. Within its framework, the parties discussed current issues of bilateral partnership “with an emphasis on the development of interaction in the fields of industry, agriculture, pharmaceuticals, education, tourism, digital economy and creative industry<sup>827</sup>. ” Let us recall that the sixth meeting of this commission was held in October 2017 in Jakarta. And even then, an agreement was reached “to intensify trade, economic and investment interaction between the countries, including the prospects for increasing supplies of products to Indonesia from JSC MAZ, BelAZ and MTZ<sup>828</sup>. ”

Many facts indicate that the Indonesian market is very promising for the Belarusian side. Firstly, more than 270 million people now live here. Secondly, “Indonesia is an industrial-agrarian country where more than half of the gross domestic product is created in industry, agriculture and fisheries, where the main industries are oil and gas refining, metallurgy, mechanical engineering, chemical, food, and textile industries<sup>829</sup>. ” And which is very interested in significantly increasing economic cooperation with Belarus, in increasing the supply of potassium chloride, automobile and tractor equipment, and dairy products from our country. In November 2019, at the Belarusian-Indonesian forum held in Minsk, in which more than 30 enterprises and organizations of the two countries took part, it was noted that “the task set by the government to achieve \$1 billion in mutual trade turnover between Belarus and Indonesia is quite realistic for the near future<sup>830</sup>. ”

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<sup>827</sup> On the seventh meeting of the Belarusian-Indonesian joint commission on trade, economic and technical cooperation [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : [https://mfa.gov.by/press/news\\_mfa/ee2bb4e24073dbac.html](https://mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/ee2bb4e24073dbac.html)

<sup>828</sup> Belarus and Indonesia agreed to intensify trade and investment cooperation [Electronic resource]. – 2017. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-indonezija-dogovorilis-aktivizirovat-torgovoe-i-investitsionnoe-vzaimodejstvie-271768-2017/>

<sup>829</sup> Zalessky, B. Partnership journalism. Theory and practice / B. Zalessky. – LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing GmbH & Co. KG , 2013. – P. 69.

<sup>830</sup> BelCCI: increasing trade turnover with Indonesia to \$1 billion is a real task for the near future [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belpp-uvelichenie-tovarooborota-s-indoneziej-do-1-mlrd-realnaja-zadacha-na-blizhajshuju-perspektivu-368953-2019/>

True, in 2020, the volume of mutual trade between the countries amounted to only \$181 million, which, according to the parties, did not correspond to the existing potential of the partnership. But even then, 25 new items were supplied to the Indonesian market. And in 2021, trade turnover has already amounted to 232.3 million dollars, with the share of Belarusian exports being more than two hundred million dollars. At the same time, there was “an increase in non-resource exports to Indonesia by more than 2 times, including dairy products by more than 4 times<sup>831</sup>.” So, the further increase in Belarusian-Indonesian trade turnover continues to be a priority area of bilateral cooperation today, which needs to be filled with new content. Actually, this was what was discussed at the seventh meeting of the joint commission, the concrete results of which were: the adoption of a Practical Action Plan for the development of key areas of cooperation for 2022-2023; the decision to create a working group in the field of agriculture, the first meeting of which will be held within the framework of the international agricultural exhibition “Belagro-2022”; reaching an agreement to hold a large-scale business forum “Belarus – Indonesia” in 2023, when the 30th anniversary of the establishment of Belarusian-Indonesian diplomatic relations will be celebrated; signing memorandums of understanding in the field of standardization, conformity assessment, metrology, accreditation and quality assurance of halal products.

Let us note that the signed memorandums supplemented the legal framework of bilateral relations, which already includes more than 30 documents, in an area that is extremely relevant for the Belarusian side today. The first of the memorandums signed by the State Committee for Standardization of the Republic of Belarus (Gosstandart) and the National Agency for Standardization of Indonesia provides not only for the exchange of information and experience, but also for the implementation of joint activities and projects. In particular, the Belarusian side is interested in the official dissemination of national Indonesian standards. The second document, signed by the Belarusian State Standard and the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs, concerns cooperation in the field of ensuring the quality of halal products and the readiness of Belarusian partners to “demonstrate to their Indonesian colleagues the infrastructure for the quality of halal products created in the country, confirm the possibility of implementing Indonesia’s requirements for halal products and carrying out the necessary procedures for

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<sup>831</sup> Trade and economic relations with the Republic of Indonesia [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : [http://indonesia.mfa.gov.by/be/bilateral\\_relations/trade\\_economic/](http://indonesia.mfa.gov.by/be/bilateral_relations/trade_economic/)

assessing its conformity in Belarus<sup>832</sup>. " An important detail: the only body in our country for the certification of halal products - BelHalal LLC - has already posted the necessary documents for registration in the Indonesian national system for certification of halal products. And the signed memorandum should officially launch the process of its accreditation in this country in Southeast Asia.

If we talk about other areas of the food sector, a number of enterprises from Belarus are already accredited as suppliers of dairy products to Indonesia. In particular, "the products of JSC Savushkin Product, JSC Babushkina Krynka, and JSC Verkhnedvinsk Creamery have received the necessary certificates and have already entered the capacious Indonesian food market<sup>833</sup>. " And this immediately affected the results of mutual Belarusian-Indonesian trade in 2021. They intend to join Bellakt OJSC, which is ready to "work on the issues of supplying products to Indonesia, as well as expand the product range and work out the supply of baby food<sup>834</sup>," as well as Milkavita OJSC, Glubokoe Milk Canning Plant OJSC and a number of other enterprises that received participation in the third Belarusian-Indonesian video conference on business and trade issues, held in December 2020 and dedicated to promoting exports of dairy products from Belarus to Indonesia. Now exporters of halal products from Belarus should also become growth points in this regard, complementing such traditional positions as potassium chloride and mining dump trucks.

Speaking about other areas of Belarusian-Indonesian cooperation, we recall that in February 2021, the National Marketing Center of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Belarus and the Indonesia Association Trade , Tourism and Investment Club signed a memorandum of cooperation and mutual support in the development of trade and economic relations. The Belarusian side sees its goals in the context of this document as "to intensify contracts on a legal basis, exchange information on bilateral export-import supplies and deepen

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<sup>832</sup> Belarus and Indonesia signed memorandums in the field of standardization and ensuring product quality [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-indonezija-podpisali-memorandumy-v-oblasti-standartizatsii-i-obespechenija-kachestva-497060-2022>

<sup>833</sup> Kolesnik, V. Indonesia and Belarus: from potassium chloride and BELAZ to the revival of the tourism market / V. Kolesnik // [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/indonezija-i-belarus-ot-hloristogo-kalija-i-belazov-dozhivlenija-turisticheskogo-rynka-473916-2021>

<sup>834</sup> The third Belarusian-Indonesian videoconference on business and trade issues is dedicated to the dairy industry [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://ncmps.by/news/tretya-belorussko-indoneziyskaya-videokonferentsiya-po-voprosam-biznesa-i-torgovli-posvyashchena-mol/>

cooperation between our countries<sup>835</sup>. ” The development of partnerships between the regions of the two countries has considerable potential in this regard. Moreover, “interaction has already been established between the Brest region and the province of West Sumatra, the Mogilev region and the province of South Sumatra, the Minsk region and the provinces of East Kalimantan and East Java, as well as the cities of Minsk and Jakarta<sup>836</sup>. ” With the help of regional branches of chambers of commerce and industry, interaction has also been established with such provinces as Central Java, North Sumatra, West Nusa Tenggara, and the special district of Yogyakarta, where they see considerable potential for the development of trade and economic cooperation, educational and tourist exchanges with Belarusian partners.

For example, the Brest region and the province of West Sumatra announced their intention to establish close contacts back in November 2015. Then, such areas as “fish farming, processing industry, tourism, healthcare, pharmacy” were named promising in terms of mutually beneficial cooperation<sup>837</sup>. Some other Indonesian provinces have long been familiar with the products of the Belarusian Automobile Plant. Thus, since 2012, a batch of nine Belarusian mining dump trucks with a carrying capacity of 45 tons has been successfully operating in the Indonesian province of East Kalimantan. In 2016-2017, 40 mining dump trucks with a carrying capacity of 110 tons were delivered to the province of South Sumatra for the needs of the largest state-owned coal mining company PT Bukit Asam . In 2018-2019, seven more mining dump trucks with a carrying capacity of 130 tons were shipped to the private coal mining company PT Tambang Raya USAHA Tama . And in 2020, “eight more 130-tonne BELAZ-75131 dump trucks started working at a coal mine on the island of Kalimantan<sup>838</sup>,” where before them, vehicles from Belarus with a carrying capacity of 45 to 130 tons had already worked, the equipment and characteristics of which were most suitable for working

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<sup>835</sup> Belarus and Indonesia signed a memorandum on trade and economic cooperation [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-indonezija-podpisali-memorandum-o-torgovo-ekonomicheskom-sotrudnicestve-426979-2021/>

<sup>836</sup> Kolesnik, V. Indonesia and Belarus: from potassium chloride and BELAZ to the revival of the tourism market / V. Kolesnik // [Electronic resource]. – 2021. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/indonezija-i-belarus-ot-hloristogo-kalija-i-belazov-do-ozhivlenija-turisticheskogo-rynka-473916-2021>

<sup>837</sup> Vechorko, S. Brest region is establishing cooperation with the Indonesian province of West Sumatra / S. Vechorko // [Electronic resource]. – 2015. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/brestskaja-oblast-nalazhivaet-sotrudnicestvo-s-indonezijskoj-provintsiej-zapadnaja-sumatra-59706-2014/>

<sup>838</sup> Eight BELAZ mining dump trucks started working in Indonesia [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/vosem-karjernih-samosvalov-belaz-pristupili-k-rabote-v-indonezii-387074-2020/>

conditions in this country. The plans of the parties include active continuation of this interaction.

A logical continuation of cooperation between the Belarusian and Indonesian regions is the development of partnerships in the educational sphere, where interaction is carried out on the basis of signed agreements: on cooperation - between the Brest State Technical University and the Sepuluh Nopember Institute of Technology; on mutual understanding between the Belarusian State Agricultural Academy and the Agricultural Institute of the city of Bogor; on student exchange - between Minsk State Linguistic University and the University of Indonesia; on cooperation between the Belarusian State Academy of Music and the Jakarta Institute of Arts. Over the past few years, the Belarusian State University (BSU), the Belarusian State University of Informatics and Radioelectronics, and the Grodno State Medical University have also found partners in this Southeast Asian country.

In particular, in November 2020, a memorandum of understanding was signed by BSU and Airlangga University. The parties agreed to organize academic exchanges, implement joint educational and research projects, and exchange research materials. The first step to implement the agreements reached was “the participation of BSU teachers in the DECOTA educational program . It is focused on attracting famous scientists to give online lectures to students at Airlangga University<sup>839</sup> . ” And BSU students were offered free training in the Sura - Bali online program Community Immersion Program 2020, which involved studying Indonesian culture and tourism activities in the provinces of East Java and Bali. Note that this university is one of the oldest in Indonesia. It was founded in 1954 in the city of Surabaya. Its structure includes 14 faculties: from medicine and law to marine and fisheries, nursing and veterinary medicine. Almost forty thousand students receive higher education here. In passing, we note that BSU already had experience interacting with Indonesian partners. In particular, since 2016, NTP “Unitekhprom BGU” has been fulfilling a contract for the supply of medical equipment products - spirometers - for the company Global systech medika from Jakarta.

In 2022, a number of Belarusian universities signed documents on interaction with Indonesian partners, which indicates a further expansion of

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<sup>839</sup> A memorandum of understanding was signed between BSU and Airlangga University [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/memorandum-o-vzaimoponimaniipodpisan-mezhdu-bgu-i-universitetom-airlangga-414083-2020/>

these ties. Thus, a cooperation agreement was signed in January 2022 by the Minsk State Linguistic University (MSLU) and the Veteran University of National Development in Yogyakarta, outlining in this document the main directions for the development of interaction: “the opening of the Center for Indonesian Language and Culture on the basis of the MSLU; opening of the Center for Belarusian Culture and Russian Language on the basis of the UPR “Veteran”; teaching the Indonesian language at MSLU on an optional basis; teaching the Russian language and giving lectures about the culture of Belarus at the UPR “Veteran”; holding cultural events at the Center for Indonesian Language and Culture at Moscow State Linguistic University <sup>840</sup>. ” It is appropriate to add here that UPR “Veteran” is one of the state universities in Indonesia. This is a university with a patriotic orientation, actively developing its educational base. The university has the Faculty of Mineral Technology, Industrial Engineering, Agriculture, Economics and Business and the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences. The educational institution conducts active scientific work and broadcasts its civic position.

In the same January 2022, a memorandum of cooperation was also signed by the Belarusian State Agricultural Academy (BSAA) and the Indonesian University of Tidar. And already in March, the first lectures on sustainable agriculture were given to Indonesian and Belarusian students - a topic that is especially relevant in modern conditions, since “progress in the development of agricultural production inevitably leads to such global problems as climate change, the development of soil degradation processes, salinization soils <...> and therefore requires close attention from the entire academic and scientific community” <sup>841</sup>[14]. In this regard, both sides expressed a desire to make cooperation between the Belarusian State Agricultural Academy and Tidar University as useful as possible for solving both local and global problems related to finding ways to mitigate climate change and providing the residents of Belarus and Indonesia with sufficient food.

The competition for joint Belarusian-Indonesian projects for 2021-2022, announced by the State Committee for Science and Technology of the Republic of Belarus and the Ministry of Research and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia together with the National Agency for Research and

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<sup>840</sup> Cooperation with the Veteran University in Yogyakarta (Republic of Indonesia) [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.mslu.by/news/sotrudnichestvo-s-universitetom-veteran-v-dzhok-yakarta-respublika-indoneziya>

<sup>841</sup> Noskova, S.A. Indonesia – Belarus: mutual interest / S.A. Noskova // [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : [http://baa.by/news/?ELEMENT\\_ID=5208](http://baa.by/news/?ELEMENT_ID=5208)

Innovation of the Republic of Indonesia, should also play a role in intensifying scientific and technological ties between the two countries. countries. The priority areas of the competition are: “health care and medicine (raw materials, including natural ones, for pharmaceuticals; medical equipment, stem cells); emergency management and environmental management; machine technologies for industry (optimization of energy consumption, food industry, computer modeling in engineering)”<sup>842</sup>.

Additional opportunities for expanding cooperation between Belarus and Indonesia are opened by the fact that an active process is underway between the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) and this Southeast Asian country towards concluding a free trade agreement. The parties signed a memorandum of cooperation in October 2029, thereby cementing the agreement that “this document will contribute to building an effective infrastructure for the development of trade and economic cooperation”<sup>843</sup>. ” On its basis, a working group was created, which focused its attention on issues such as trade facilitation, customs and technical regulation, and the development of financial markets. In mid-April 2022, the Council of the Eurasian Economic Commission approved a draft decision on concluding a free trade agreement with Indonesia. It is expected that the agreement itself will be signed in May 2022 at a meeting of the Supreme Eurasian Economic Council. In this regard, there are significant prospects for Belarus to supply cargo, agricultural and special equipment, X-ray equipment, bleached cellulose, and plywood to Indonesia at reduced customs duties. For reference, we note that traditional import items into this country are oil and oil products, telephones, wheat, computers and their components, sugar and chemically pure sucrose. Today, new ones are being added to their number, in keeping with the spirit of the times. For this reason, “manufacturers of urban electric transport can achieve certain success, since a program to update the public transport fleet is being implemented in large cities in Indonesia, and Belarusian enterprises have the opportunity to offer a competitive and environmentally friendly product”<sup>844</sup>.

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<sup>842</sup>Competition of joint Belarusian-Indonesian scientific and technical projects for 2021-2022. [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://science.bsuir.by/ru/konkursy-i-granty/konkurs-belorussko-indoneziyskikh-proektov>

<sup>843</sup> Zalessky, B. Integration as a development factor. Features of regional cooperation in the post-Soviet space / B. Zalessky. – LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2021. – P. 62.

<sup>844</sup> National Marketing Center on the prospects for promoting Belarusian goods to Indonesia [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/comments/view/natsionalnyj-tsentr-marketinga-o-perspektivah-prodvizhenija-belorusskih-tovarov-v-indoneziju-8163/>

All these facts indicate that in the near future Indonesia can become the most important partner of Belarus not only in Southeast Asia, but throughout the Asia-Pacific region. At least, all the necessary prerequisites for this have already been created.

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## **Belarus – Iran: new energy – into positive dynamics of cooperation**

Iran is one of the most important partners of Belarus in Western Asia and the Islamic world. The countries established diplomatic relations in 1993. And today, Belarusian-Iranian contacts are developing very intensively. “In 2021, bilateral trade turnover between the two countries amounted to \$33.3 million, exceeding last year’s figure by 34.7%, including Belarusian exports – \$14 million, growth rate – 10.2%. <...> Exports of services from Belarus to Iran last year reached \$3.35 million. The balance of trade in services for Belarus is positive in the amount of \$2.8 million <sup>845</sup>. ” The key items of Belarusian exports to Iran were equipment for the production of products from paper pulp, specific goods, longitudinally sawn timber, newsprint paper in rolls or sheets, equipment for heat treatment of materials, internal combustion piston engines, bearings.

In July 2022, **the 15th meeting of the mixed Belarusian-Iranian commission on economic cooperation was held**, where the parties discussed successful bilateral projects and reached certain agreements on the implementation of joint promising activities. Minsk and Tehran are interested in increasing the volume of trade turnover between the two countries. In the best years, the parties reached \$250-300 million. “Therefore, we intend to achieve a trade turnover of \$500 million in a short period of time. And there are all the prerequisites for this <sup>846</sup>. ” And Iranian Minister of Industry, Mines and Trade S. Amin even predicted even higher indicators in the medium term and expressed confidence that “we plan to increase cooperation in various fields. All this will allow us to reach a trade turnover volume of \$1 billion in the near future <sup>847</sup>. ”

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<sup>845</sup> NCM on the peculiarities of doing business in the Iranian market and promoting the export of Belarusian goods and services [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/comments/view/ntsm-ob-osobennostjeh-vedenija-biznesa-na-rynke-irana-i-prodvizhenii-eksporta-belorusskih-tovarov-i-uslug-8226/>

<sup>846</sup> Parkhomchik: Belarus and Iran are interested in increasing cooperation in industry [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/parhomchik-belarus-i-iran-zainteresovany-v-naraschivanii-sotrudnichestva-v-promyshlennosti-516021-2022/>

<sup>847</sup> Iranian 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-promyshlennosti-irana-tovarooborot-s-belarusju-v-blizhajshee-vremja-mozhet-dostich-1-mlrd-516242-2022/>

Iran is showing increased interest in Belarusian industrial goods, agricultural machinery, machine tools, passenger transport, electric transport, and household appliances. There are great opportunities to expand the supply of Belarusian equipment to the Iranian **mining industry**. Moreover, this area is developing very quickly in Iran. In particular, Iran is interested in large supplies of mining equipment from the Belarusian Automobile Plant (BELAZ). After all, the country has huge reserves of copper, which today is a strategic raw material for the production of electric vehicles. “For the last ten years, BELAZ equipment has been in great demand on the Iranian market. She is reliable and has shown herself only from the good side<sup>848</sup>. ” Since the Iranian side plans to increase production volumes specifically in the mining industry, Iran would like to receive about 800 more mining dump trucks. First of all, Iranian partners are interested in mining dump trucks with a carrying capacity of 90-130 tons.

**investment projects** are attracting interest in Belarus. In particular, in the free economic zone (FEZ) Vitebsk, the first resident in 2022 “was BRR Arshie ECO Health LLC, an enterprise with Iranian capital for the production of biodegradable tableware and packaging<sup>849</sup>. ” And in July 2022, the Belarusian-Iranian Orië Galvmetal-LLC became another resident of the Vitebsk FEZ. The enterprise was created for the construction of a hot-dip galvanizing plant near the village of Farinovo, Polotsk region. The site has good infrastructure, and the founders are now starting pre-project preparation and design of the facility. It is planned to purchase Iranian equipment for production. The construction and commissioning of the plant will take about 2-3 years. The enterprise will be built near the Novopolotsk plant of technological metal structures, the products of which are also planned to be processed. “We are talking about cable-supporting structures, road barriers and other products used in road construction and used in aggressive environments<sup>850</sup>. ” It is also planned to process welded grating flooring, the production of which the technological metal structures plant began in the first quarter of 2021.

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<sup>848</sup> Iran is interested in large supplies of BELAZ mining equipment [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/iran-zainteresovan-v-krupnyh-postavkah-karjernoj-tehniki-belaz-516134-2022/>

<sup>849</sup> Zalessky, B.L. SEZ “Vitebsk”: optimization with an eye to results / B.L. Zalessky // Materialy XVIII Mezinárodní vědecko - praktická konference “Vědecký pokrok na prelomu Tysyačolyty – 2022.” Volume 5: Praha . Publishing House “ Education and Science. ” – C. 22.

<sup>850</sup> The Belarusian-Iranian tandem of investors will build a hot-dip galvanizing plant in the Vitebsk FEZ [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/belorusko-iranskij-tandem-investorov-postroit-zavod-gorjacheho-tsinkovanija-v-sez-vitebsk-513958-2022/>

One of the important areas for the development of trade and economic cooperation in the coming years will be the interaction between Belarus and Iran in the field of **agriculture and food**. The Belarusian side believes that Iran can be considered as a promising destination for increasing domestic exports of dairy and meat products - beef, butter, chicken meat, chicken and quail eggs, as well as vegetable oil, animal feed and premixes, complex technical products, innovative developments in the food industry and agriculture. “In 2021, the mutual trade turnover of agricultural products and food products amounted to \$10.9 million, which is 22% more than in 2020.<sup>851</sup>” The parties’ plans include the need to further increase trade and economic cooperation in the field of agriculture and food, including organizing supplies of Belarusian crop, meat and dairy products, as well as animal feed and premixes to Iran, and counter supplies of vegetables, fruits, fish and seafood - from Iran to Belarus.

In November 2022, the Belarusian government delegation visited Iran, where various meetings and negotiations took place at the interstate level, during which it was noted that interaction between the two countries today is characterized by high development dynamics in almost all areas. In particular, this year Minsk and Tehran “significantly increased the volume of cooperation in many areas, from trade turnover to commodity flows and cargo turnover<sup>852</sup>.” But, apparently, the parties still need to take a number of steps, conclude important documents, carry out many new events so that they can realize the full potential that Belarus and Iran have in the field of industry, science and technology, and agree on the approaches laid down into the draft roadmap for comprehensive cooperation for 2023-2026. Note that over the three quarters of 2022, trade turnover between the two countries “increased to \$63.6 million (an increase of 2.9 times compared to the same period in 2021), exports - to \$48.6 million (4.4 times), imports - to \$15 million (an increase of 41.8%). The balance is positive – \$33.6 million<sup>853</sup>.”

An important event in relations between the two countries was **the Iran-Belarus Business Forum**, held in November 2022 in the Iranian capital,

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<sup>851</sup> Belarus plans to supply crop, meat and dairy products to Iran [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-planiruet-postavljat-v-iran-rastenievodcheskiju-mjasnuju-i-molochnuju-produksiju-492495-2022/>

<sup>852</sup> 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>

<sup>853</sup> Golovchenko: the positions of Belarus and Iran coincide on the entire 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/>

organized by the Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BelCCI) and the Iranian Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture, “which is the main partner of the BelCCI in Iran for 20 years<sup>854</sup>. ” More than 120 executives and representatives of Belarusian and Iranian companies took part in this forum. Exporters from the fields of industrial production and mechanical engineering, woodworking, light and food industries were represented from Belarus. The Iranian side proposed a number of measures to stimulate mutual trade. Including: empowering small and medium-sized enterprises of the two countries, strengthening banking and insurance cooperation, identifying new joint projects, developing and simplifying the issuance of visas for businessmen and tourists, creating the necessary infrastructure for the development of economic relations, especially in commercial, industrial and technical sectors. In addition, it was announced “the opening of a credit line in the amount of \$100 million for Belarusian traders interested in purchasing Iranian products<sup>855</sup>. ” Following the business forum, the parties signed a number of joint documents. In particular, the cooperation agreement was adopted by the BelCCI and the Iranian Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture, which “will give new impetus to the development of relations between the two countries<sup>856</sup>. ”

As for cooperation between Minsk and Tehran in **the scientific field** , a number of treaties, agreements and memorandums have already been signed between the institutes of the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) of Belarus and scientific organizations and universities of Iran. For example, “according to the agreement on scientific and technical cooperation between the National Academy of Sciences and the Islamic Azad University , 16 Iranian scientists graduated from graduate schools of scientific organizations of the Academy of Sciences and defended their Ph.D. theses<sup>857</sup>. ” But the parties 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

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<sup>854</sup> Iranian-Belarusian business forum [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.cci.by/о-palate/novosti/iransko-belorusskiy-biznes-forum/#>

<sup>855</sup> The Iranian-Belarusian business forum is taking place in Tehran [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : [https://iran.ru/news/analytics/121826/V\\_Tegerane\\_prohodit\\_irano\\_belorusskiy\\_biznes\\_forum](https://iran.ru/news/analytics/121826/V_Tegerane_prohodit_irano_belorusskiy_biznes_forum)

<sup>856</sup> The Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Belarus and Iran signed a cooperation agreement [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/torgovo-promyshlennyye-palaty-belarusi-i-irana-podpisali-soglashenie-o-sotrudnichestve-536244-2022/>

<sup>857</sup> The National Academy of Sciences of Belarus will develop a draft roadmap for cooperation with scientific organizations 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/>

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 complex drinking water purification, mineral processing technologies, unmanned aerial vehicles, training and exchange of students, internships for scientists and teachers. It is planned that, at the initiative of the National Academy of Sciences, a draft roadmap for cooperation with scientific organizations in Iran will be developed, which will include promising areas of mutual interest.

In March 2023, the two countries celebrated a landmark date - the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations. And in the same month in Tehran, the presidents of Belarus and Iran signed a **roadmap for comprehensive cooperation** between the countries for 2023–2026, which provides for interaction between Minsk and Tehran on a wide range of issues - in the political, economic, consular, scientific and technical spheres, as well as in the fields of education, culture, arts, media and tourism. This document has become one of the most important elements of the legal framework for cooperation between Belarus and Iran. For reference, we note that “the Belarusian-Iranian legal register includes more than 30 international treaties and more than 70 other documents<sup>858</sup>. ” In March, eight more were added to their number, including: an intergovernmental agreement on cooperation in the field of quarantine and plant protection, as well as an agreement on the transfer of persons sentenced to imprisonment for further serving their sentences; memorandums of understanding between the Ministry of Culture of Belarus and the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance of Iran, as well as between the State Committee for Standardization of Belarus and the Iranian National Organization for Standardization.

Speaking about the memorandum on **standardization issues** , we emphasize that this document provides for the interaction of the parties in the field of conformity assessment procedures, standards and technical regulations for the issuance of halal certificates and their mutual recognition for products produced and mutually supplied by countries. “At the same time, mutual recognition of halal certification results applies only to certificates issued by the relevant authorities of the parties: the Iranian National Organization for Standardization (INSO) and BelHalal LLC. The parties also plan to exchange

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<sup>858</sup> Koltsov: the Belarusian-Iranian legal register includes more than 30 international treaties and 70 other documents [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/koltsov-belorusko-iranskij-pravovoj-reestr-vkljuchaet-bolee-30-mezhdunarodnyh-dogovorov-i-70-drugih-554851-2023/>

experience and knowledge in the field of technologies, competencies, infrastructure, as well as research and development related to halal products<sup>859</sup>. " In addition, the parties reached promising agreements in the fields of industry, trade, transport, and agriculture. This suggests that for Belarus Iran is the most important partner in the Middle East. And the parties are interested in mutually beneficial long-term cooperation in a number of areas.

Let us emphasize once again that over the past two years, relations between Belarus and Iran have demonstrated a great breakthrough. "In 2021, trade turnover between the countries exceeded \$33 million, increasing by more than a third compared to 2020. But over the past year, the level of trade has increased even more significantly: in 2022, Belarus and Iran traded by \$100 million, and this is a three-fold increase<sup>860</sup>. " **Economic cooperation** remains a key area of Belarusian-Iranian interaction . And there is confidence that the potential of bilateral interaction will significantly increase trade turnover in the coming years. In particular, "new supplies of quarry equipment, cargo and passenger equipment to Iran are currently being actively discussed. Work continues on the details of the licensing agreement to organize the joint assembly of tractors in Iran<sup>861</sup>. " Another interesting fact: enterprises of the Bellesbumprom concern increased exports to this Middle Eastern country by 2.3 times in 2022. "Positive dynamics are also observed in January of this year. The growth rate was 134% by January 2022. Cellulose, paper and cardboard, and lumber are actively supplied to Iran<sup>862</sup>. "

Belarus and Iran are developing cooperation in **the transport sector** . In March 2023, the two countries agreed on a permit-free system for the transportation of goods by road. Apparently, "already in 2023, road carriers will be able to transport goods without permits <...>. Iranian airline Mahan Air, starting March 26 of this year, will launch regular flights 2 times a week

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<sup>859</sup> Belarus and Iran will mutually recognize the results of certification of halal products [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-iran-budut-vzaimno-priznavat-rezultaty-sertifikatsii-haljalnoj-produktsii-555113-2023/>

<sup>860</sup> Raisi: relations between Iran and Belarus have demonstrated a breakthrough [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/raisi-otnoshenija-mezhdu-iranom-i-belarusiju-prodemonstrirovali-proryv-555018-2023/>

<sup>861</sup> Rogozhnik: the potential of Belarus and Iran will significantly increase mutual trade turnover [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/rogozhnik-potentsialy-belarusi-i-irana-pozvoljajut-znachitelno-uvelichit-vzaimnyj-tovarooborot-554952-2023/>

<sup>862</sup> Bellesbumprom enterprises increased exports to Iran by 2.3 times last year [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/predpriyatija-bellesbumproma-v-proshlomu-godu-uvelichili-eksport-v-iran-v-23-raza-555029-2023/>

on the Tehran-Minsk-Tehran route <sup>863</sup>. ” The transport theme is continued by the fact that Belarus, together with Iran, will take part in the development of the international North-South transport corridor. After all, “the Iranian side today needs to build about 180 kilometers of railway. And the Iranian side has actively begun this work to complete the North-South railway corridor in the direction of the port of Bandar Abbas <sup>864</sup>. ” For Belarus, this project is very important, since in this regard the Belarusian transit through Iran to distant countries is being updated.

Another important topic in the context of Belarusian-Iranian interaction is the development of active **interregional dialogue** . In this regard, we recall that “relations are developing between the Gomel region and the province of Mazandaran, the Mogilev region and East Azerbaijan, the Minsk region and the capital region of Iran. Connections have been established between Minsk and Tehran, as well as between Mogilev and Tabriz <sup>865</sup>. ” More specifically, for example, the Gomel region already intends to resume and develop interaction with the Iranian province of Mazandaran, “a document on trade, economic, scientific, technical and cultural cooperation with which was signed back in 2009. <sup>866</sup>” The Mogilev region intends to expand trade and economic interaction and intensify ties in the field of tourism, education and culture with the province of East Azerbaijan, where the Aras free economic zone is located. In May 2022, constructive negotiations took place on the prospects for cooperation and development of ties between the Grodno region and the province of Khomozgan. “The parties confirmed their mutual interest in implementing joint projects in various fields. Priority activities have been identified aimed at forming long-term sustainable relationships <sup>867</sup>. ”

Among the Belarusian regions that actively cooperated with Iranian partners in 2022, one should also note **the Minsk region** , whose trade turnover

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<sup>863</sup> Belarus and Iran agreed on a permit-free system for the transportation of goods by road [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-iran-dogovorilis-o-bezrazreshitelnoj-sisteme-avtoperevozok-gruzov-555173-2023/>

<sup>864</sup> Belarus will take part in the development of the North-South transport corridor through Iran [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-primet-uchastie-v-razviti-i-transportnogo-koridora-sever-jug-cherez-iran-555159-2023/>

<sup>865</sup> Koltsov, D. Trade, cooperation and removal of barriers. How Belarus and Iran will celebrate the 30th anniversary of diplomatic relations during Lukashenko’s visit to Tehran / D. Koltsov // [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/interview/view/torgovlja-kooperatsija-i-snjatie-barjerov-chem-belarus-i-iran-otmetjat-30-letie-dipnotshenij-v-vo-vremja-8621/>

<sup>866</sup> Zalessky, B.L. Priority – restoration of partnerships / B.L. Zalessky // *Materialy XVII Miedzynarodowej naukowi – praktycznej conference “ Europejska ” nauka XXI powieka – 2021*”, Volume 4, Przemysl : Nauka i studio . – C. 23.

<sup>867</sup> About the trip of the Ambassador of Belarus to Iran to the province of Hormozgan [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://iran.mfa.gov.by/ru/embassy/news/bdd91d54c2ef1c14.html>

with Iran increased 10.5 times compared to 2021. Statistics state that “in January-December 2022, trade turnover between the Minsk region and the Islamic Republic of Iran amounted to \$51,190.5 thousand (growth rate of 114.1%). Including exports - \$44,309.8 thousand (120%), imports - \$6,880.7 thousand (113.5%). There was a positive foreign trade balance of \$37,429.1 thousand.”<sup>868</sup>. The basis of Minsk region's export supplies last year was dominated by lumber, plywood, veneered wood panels, other engines and power plants, electric engines and generators. In turn, the Minsk region imports dates, figs, pineapples, avocados, guava, mangoes, mangosteen, lettuce, fresh and chilled chicory, and other vegetables, fruits, and nuts from Iran. In addition, “several successful Iranian projects are being implemented in the capital region. We can note such projects as "AFTAB", the paint production project "Bel Peka Paint" and the sheep breeding project "Eastern Ship”<sup>869</sup>. In the future, apparently, the parties have great prospects for development in a number of areas.

The Belarusian side is also attentive to other incoming proposals for cooperation between regions. In 2022 alone, direct interaction was established with the governors of the Iranian provinces of Hormozgan, Mazandaran, Isfahan, Gilan, as well as with the mayors of the cities of Bandar Abbas, Isfahan, Rasht and Astara. This suggests that new connections between the regions and cities of the two countries, as they say, are already on the way.

In general, in recent years, Belarus and Iran have found the most effective and efficient ways to ensure positive dynamics for the long term in order to jointly breathe new energy into bilateral cooperation, preserving and increasing everything positive for the implementation of a multifaceted mutually beneficial partnership.

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<sup>868</sup> Narkevich, G. “We welcome Iranian investment in our economy.” Turchin met with the country’s ambassador / G. Narkevich // [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://mlyn.by/15022023/my-privetstvuem-iranskie-investiczii-v-nashu-ekonomiku-turchin-vstretilsya-s-poslom-strany/>

<sup>869</sup> Trade turnover between the Minsk region and Iran in 2022 increased more than tenfold [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/tovarooborot-minskoj-oblasti-i-irana-v-2022-godu-vyros-bolee-chem-v-desjat-raz-550380-2023/>

## Belarus – Turkey: partnerships focused on the future

In 2023, the Republic of Turkey will turn one hundred years old. Today it is a dynamic, future-focused state, with achievements in a number of specific areas, with major projects in the field of logistics and energy that connect Asia and Europe. Belarus traditionally views Türkiye as an important and promising partner and reliable friend. Let us recall that it was this country that “became the first foreign state to recognize the state independence of the Republic of Belarus”<sup>870</sup>. ” In March 2022, Minsk and Ankara celebrated the 30th anniversary of diplomatic relations. In 1996, during the first visit of the head of the Belarusian state to Turkey, **a Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation was signed** between the two states.

In November 2016, the first visit in the history of bilateral relations by Turkish President R.T. Erdogan’s visit to Belarus also became a milestone in Belarusian-Turkish relations. Firstly, within its framework the task was set to achieve the volume of mutual trade turnover at the level of one billion dollars. Secondly, the parties decided to focus on maximizing the potential of trade and economic interaction with an emphasis on the creation in the regions of Belarus and Turkey of “joint production of complex technical products, including for the purpose of promoting them to the markets of third countries”<sup>871</sup> and the organization of joint industrial zones. And in April 2019, the President of the Republic of Belarus A. Lukashenko made an official visit to Turkey, within the framework of which the priority areas of Belarusian-Turkish cooperation in the field of trade and investment, the implementation of joint projects in mechanical engineering, agriculture, construction, finance, chemical and light industry were identified, and specific steps are outlined to increase contacts in the areas of technology, innovation, education, and intensify interaction “in the field of joint scientific developments, academic programs, exchange of students and teachers of higher educational institutions”<sup>872</sup>. ”

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<sup>870</sup> Political relations [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : [https://turkey.mfa.gov.by/ru/bilateral\\_relations/political/relations/](https://turkey.mfa.gov.by/ru/bilateral_relations/political/relations/)

<sup>871</sup> Official visit of the President of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdogan [Electronic resource]. – 2016. – URL : [http://president.gov.by/ru/news\\_ru/view/ofitsialnyj-vizit-prezidenta-turtsii-redzhepa-tajipa-erdogana-14820/](http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/ofitsialnyj-vizit-prezidenta-turtsii-redzhepa-tajipa-erdogana-14820/)

<sup>872</sup> Official visit to Turkey [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : [http://president.gov.by/ru/news\\_ru/view/ofitsialnyj-vizit-v-turtsiju-20884/](http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/ofitsialnyj-vizit-v-turtsiju-20884/)

The seriousness of the parties' intentions to actively develop cooperation in **scientific, technical and humanitarian areas** is evidenced by the signing of a number of documents following the April (2019) negotiations between the leaders of Belarus and Turkey - an intergovernmental agreement on cooperation in the field of education, a road map for the development of cooperation between the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus (NAS) ) and the Scientific Research Council of Turkey for 2019-2021, a memorandum on scientific and technical cooperation in Antarctica between the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus and the Ministry of Industry and Development of Turkey.

In particular, **the intergovernmental agreement on cooperation in the field of education** is aimed at establishing and developing direct contacts between higher educational institutions and scientific organizations of the two countries, so that students and specialists from Belarus and Turkey have the opportunity to participate in events aimed at demonstrating educational, scientific, technical and innovative potential of their countries. The parties intend to provide a place for higher and postgraduate education in relevant institutions, inform each other about the mutual recognition of documents on training, education and academic degrees, as well as create all the necessary conditions "for expanding and deepening contacts between countries across the entire range of areas of educational activity , attracting Turkish citizens to study in Belarus <sup>873</sup>. "

If we talk about the interaction between the scientific communities of the two countries, its basis was laid by cooperation agreements signed by the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus: in 2002 - with the Turkish Research Council for Science and Technology; in 2009 – with the Turkish Academy of Sciences. In 2016, the governments of Belarus and Turkey signed **an Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Science and Technology** . A year later, memorandums of understanding appeared: between the National Center for Intellectual Property of the Republic of Belarus and the Turkish Patent and Trademark Agency; on cooperation - between the Belarusian Innovation Fund and the Scientific and Technical Research Council of Turkey. And in November 2018, **the first meeting of the joint Belarusian-Turkish commission for cooperation in the field of science and technology was held**

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<sup>873</sup>Belarus and Türkiye are interested in developing contacts between universities and scientific organizations [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-turtsija-zainterosovany-v-razvitii-kontaktov-mezhdu-vuzami-i-nauchnymi-organizatsijami-344261-2019/>

, within the framework of which the parties agreed to “intensify bilateral cooperation among the subjects of the innovation structure, in particular between technology parks of Belarus and Turkish science parks<sup>874</sup>.” At the same meeting of the commission, it was stated that “scientists of Belarus and Turkey intend to develop cooperation in the field of polar research<sup>875</sup>.”

**The road map for the development of cooperation** for 2019-2021, adopted in April 2019, is intended to intensify the joint activities of Belarusian and Turkish scientists in the most promising areas of scientific and technical cooperation. “This includes optics for space observation of the Earth’s surface, unmanned aerial vehicles, batteries for electric vehicles and other vehicles, composite organomineral materials, mineral processing, and the use of information technology to predict hazardous natural phenomena<sup>876</sup>.”

In addition, the adopted roadmap provides for the organization of a joint competition of projects in priority areas of science and technology development in the areas that were identified during joint seminars: in 2018 - in Gebze; in 2019 - in Minsk. In particular, in March 2019, the State Committee on Science and Technology of Belarus, with the support of the Belarusian Innovation Fund and the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey, announced a **competition for joint innovative scientific and technical projects for 2019-2020** with the aim of providing them with “direct financial support at an early stage of development”<sup>877</sup>; in such priority areas of Belarusian-Turkish cooperation as information and communication technologies, optoelectronics, nanomaterials, unmanned aerial vehicles for various purposes. As for the road map, this document also contained measures to develop, improve the organization and increase the efficiency of joint scientific and technical activities and joint work of the Belarusian Republican Foundation for Basic Research and the Scientific Research Council of Turkey.

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<sup>874</sup>Belarus and Türkiye will hold a competition of joint innovative projects [Electronic resource]. – 2018. – URL : [http://www.gknt.gov.by/news/2018/belarus\\_i\\_turtsiya\\_provenut\\_konkurs\\_sovmestnykh\\_innovatsionnykh\\_proektov/](http://www.gknt.gov.by/news/2018/belarus_i_turtsiya_provenut_konkurs_sovmestnykh_innovatsionnykh_proektov/)

<sup>875</sup>Belarus and Türkiye intend to develop cooperation in the field of polar research [Electronic resource]. – 2018. – URL : <https://belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-turtsija-namereny-razvivat-sotrudnichestvo-v-oblasti-poljarnyh-issledovanij-324445-2018/>

<sup>876</sup>Belarus and Türkiye signed a roadmap for scientific cooperation until 2021 [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-turtsija-podpisali-dorozhnuju-kartu-nauchnogo-sotrudnichestva-do-2021-goda-344282-2019/>

<sup>877</sup>Belarus and Türkiye announced a competition for joint scientific and technical projects [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-turtsija-objavili-konkurs-sovmestnyh-nauchno-tehnicheskikh-proektov-338588-2019/>

At the beginning of December 2020, **the second meeting of the joint Belarusian-Turkish commission on cooperation in the field of science and technology was held**, within the framework of which the parties confirmed their mutual desire to develop scientific and technical cooperation in the fields of energy, information and communication technologies, medicine, chemical technologies, and new materials. Note that these partnerships intensified after the signing of the already mentioned intergovernmental agreement on cooperation in the field of science and technology in November 2016. In this document, the parties agreed to provide comprehensive assistance to cooperation between organizations of both countries in such priority areas as “energy; agro-industrial technologies; industrial and construction technologies and production; medicine and medical technologies, pharmacy; chemical technologies; nano- and biotechnologies; information and communication technologies (electronic service, cybersecurity); aerospace technology; new materials; rational environmental management; prevention and elimination of the consequences of natural disasters; water use technologies; environmental protection; oceanic research; laser technologies and photonics”<sup>878</sup>

At the same second meeting of the joint commission on cooperation in the field of science and technology, it became known that a joint project of the Joint Institute for Informatics Problems of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus and the Turkish company Novosim Engineering Services on the development of a warehouse autonomous multi-robotic system, which “will be designed to automatically move goods inside both designed and existing warehouses and logistics centers, taking into account information about their configuration”<sup>879</sup>. ” In addition, two more innovative projects of Belarusian scientists were under consideration by the Turkish side, which also received a positive expert assessment.

Another current area of Belarusian-Turkish scientific and technical cooperation, which was discussed at the second meeting of the joint commission on cooperation in the field of science and technology, is **the interaction of Turkish and Belarusian technology parks**. For the Belarusian side, this topic is relevant because “there are 25 innovation infrastructure entities in Belarus: 16 technology parks (including 3 private

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<sup>878</sup> Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Belarus and the Government of the Turkish Republic on cooperation in the field of science and technology [Electronic resource]. – 2016. – URL : <https://pravo.by/document/?guid=12551&p0=f01600046&p1=1>

<sup>879</sup> Belarus and Türkiye plan to develop cooperation in the fields of energy, ICT and medicine [Electronic resource]. – 202-. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-turtsija-planirujut-razvivat-sotrudnichestvo-v-sferah-energetiki-ikt-i-medsiny-418159-2020/>

ones), 8 technology transfer centers and the Belarusian Innovation Fund. The network of technology parks covers all regional centers<sup>880</sup>. " Technoparks also operated in Pinsk, Novopolotsk, Gorki, and Lyakhovich district. Plans for 2020 included their opening in Baranovich, Bobruisk, Borisov, Orsha and Molodechno. All this indicated that Belarus is introducing systematic measures to develop technology parks as regional innovation platforms for organizing high-tech production. That is why the development of advanced foreign experience in this area was especially important for the Belarusian side. And Türkiye, it must be said, had such experience.

Technoparks or technopolises began to be created in this country in 2001. By mid-2019, their number here had increased to 84, of which 63 were operational, and infrastructure work was underway in another 21. "Now there are technology parks in 54 provinces of the country, over 5 thousand companies operate in the territories of technological development zones<sup>881</sup>. " Istanbul had the most technology parks - 11. They are followed by: Ankara - 9, Kocaeli - 5, Izmir - 4. Their goal is to contribute to the development of high-tech production and the service sector, to ensure cooperation between entrepreneurs, researchers and scientists. Such figures spoke very eloquently about the scale of activity of Turkish technology parks. As of mid-2019, almost 33 thousand projects had been implemented in them, and about ten thousand more were under development. And the number of jobs there exceeded 55 thousand. Finally, the export of technology park resident companies as of July 2019 amounted to more than four billion dollars. And all this in less than twenty years. Needless to say, their Belarusian colleagues have a lot to learn from their Turkish partners.

Now let's turn to the most current events on the Belarusian-Turkish agenda of the current year. In November 2023, **the 11th meeting of the Belarusian-Turkish joint intergovernmental commission (IPC) on economic cooperation was held in Ankara**, within which the main focus was on systematizing the entire volume of bilateral trade and enhancing mechanisms in the field of logistics, transport, partnerships in the field of industrial cooperation and agriculture, and also examined in detail the state of the legal framework and outlined priority areas and specific steps to expand it.

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<sup>880</sup> Shumilin, A. Forecast until 2040 - about the prospects for the development of science and international cooperation / A. Shumilin // [Electronic resource]. – 2020. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/interview/view/prognoz-do-2040-goda-o-perspektivah-razvitiya-nauki-i-mezhdunarodnom-sotrudnichestve-7168/>

<sup>881</sup> 84 technology parks have been created in Turkey [Electronic resource]. – 2019. – URL : <https://restproperty.ru/news/v-turtsii-sozdano-84-tekhnoparka/>

Let us note that today “interaction with Turkey is carried out in a wide range of areas and is supported by political contacts and dialogue at the highest level, at the level of intergovernmental communication, interparliamentary communication and serious interdepartmental cooperation<sup>882</sup>.” As a result, the parties noted that trade and economic cooperation between Minsk and Ankara is developing very effectively. And there have already been significant successes in achieving the strategic goal of increasing mutual trade turnover to one and a half billion dollars and reducing the imbalance in mutual trade. “In the last two years, our trade turnover exceeded \$1 billion, but this year [2023] we expect to reach a historical maximum. According to Turkish statistics, over the 10 months of this year, trade turnover has already amounted to \$1.6 billion<sup>883</sup>. ”

A separate conversation is about the participation of the Belarusian side in the work to **restore the Turkish areas** affected in February 2023. Belarus paid “attention to the restoration of infrastructure that was destroyed as a result of a devastating earthquake in 11 provinces of Turkey<sup>884</sup>. ” During these nine months since the natural disaster, Belarus has tripled the volume of supplies of construction materials, which are used to restore primarily social infrastructure. Within the framework of the commission, the readiness to further expand the volumes of Belarusian supplies in demand in this country was confirmed. The Turkish side was given a product catalog, additionally prepared by ministries, departments and business entities of Belarus, which will be carefully reviewed by partners from Turkey. In addition, a project for the design and construction of a reinforced concrete structures plant in the Turkish city of Kilis is at the initial stage of development, which “will also be a good contribution to the restoration of regions of Turkey affected by earthquakes<sup>885</sup>. ”

Among the main tasks for the development of bilateral interaction is strengthening cooperation in the field of **agriculture** . In 2023, progress began

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<sup>882</sup> On holding a meeting of the Belarusian-Turkish joint Intergovernmental Commission on Economic Cooperation [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : [https://mfa.gov.by/press/news\\_mfa/fd86a4d2dbb3f651.html](https://mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/fd86a4d2dbb3f651.html)

<sup>883</sup> By the end of the year, Belarus and Türkiye will reach a historical maximum in trade turnover [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-turtsija-po-itogam-goda-vyjdut-na-istoricheskij-maksimum-v-tovarooborote-599138-2023>

<sup>884</sup> Aleynik announced serious prospects for increasing the supply of dairy products to Turkey [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/alejnik-zajavil-o-serjeznych-perspektivah-dlja-uvelichenija-postavok-molochnoj-produktsii-v-turtsiju-599135-2023>

<sup>885</sup> The Turkish corporation is interested in cooperation with Belarus in the food sector [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/turetskaja-korporatsija-zainteresovana-v-sotrudnichestve-s-belarusju-v-prodovolstvennom-sektore-587699-2023/>

in Belarusian supplies of dairy products to the Turkish market. And there are serious prospects for increasing the export of meat products and beef from Belarus. This year, a number of Turkish companies have already announced their readiness to cooperate with the Belarusian side in the food sector. For example, " Zirhlioglu Corporation Corporate Group expressed interest in establishing direct contacts with Belarusian enterprises regarding the supply of specific types of products and further cooperation with the National Marketing Center <sup>886</sup>. " It is noteworthy that more than 30 Belarusian enterprises - manufacturers and processors of food products - took part in a video conference in September 2023 on this topic. Returning to the meeting of the intergovernmental commission, we note that the parties also reached an agreement - "by the end of 2024, to complete the procedures on the veterinary questionnaire sent by the Belarusian side, as well as the intention to hold the second meeting of the Working Group on Agriculture, without delay, at the beginning of next year [2024] of the year" <sup>887</sup>.

In the field of **logistics and transport**, within the framework of the 11th meeting of the IPC, discussing the implementation of current new tasks, the parties in the format of the Mixed Commission on Road Transport determined a quota of permits for Belarusian carriers for 2024. In addition, "the possibility of creating an alternative certification center for digital tachograph cards in Turkey was considered, as well as extending the pilot project for permit-free bilateral and transit transportation through Belarus and Turkey until 2024. <sup>888</sup>" After all, from January 1, 2023, Belarusian carriers do not require permits for freight transportation between the two countries, as well as for transit through Turkey. This simplified regime is currently operating as an experiment until the end of 2023.

the Committee on Foreign **Economic** Relations of Turkey, the Association of Independent Industrialists and Entrepreneurs, as well as with other Turkish business associations, including including exhibition companies. In this regard, the parties "signed a Memorandum of Understanding between the National Center for Marketing and Price Research and the Turkish

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<sup>886</sup> Aleynik: Belarus is interested in supplying goods through Turkey to the countries of the Global South [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/alejnik-belarus-zainteresovana-postavljat-tovary-cherez-turtsiju-v-strany-globalnogo-juga-598312-2023/>

<sup>887</sup> Speech by Minister of Foreign Affairs S. Aleinik at the plenary meeting of the Belarusian-Turkish joint intergovernmental commission on economic cooperation (November 8, 2023, Ankara) [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : [https://mfa.gov.by/press/news\\_mfa/d72f4b731323cb1d.html](https://mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/d72f4b731323cb1d.html)

<sup>888</sup> Belarus and Türkiye are discussing the extension of the simplified transport regime [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-turtsija-obsuzhdajut-prodlenie-uproschennogo-rezhima-transportnogo-soobschenija-598317-2023/>

Businessmen's Association ( ASRIAD ), their representatives plan to take part in a joint business forum in Belarus in the first quarter of 2024. <sup>889</sup>” And in February next year the International Yarn and Fiber Exhibition Istanbul will be organized in Istanbul Yarn Fair , which will be of interest to Belarusian enterprises in the light industry, chemical and petrochemical sectors.

Let us remind you that the high level of Belarusian products could be judged by the participation of exporters from Belarus at this exhibition forum - International Istanbul Yarn Fair , which took place at the beginning of June 2023 in Istanbul and where 650 companies from different countries were represented, including China, India, Uzbekistan, Germany, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, and the Republic of Korea. In the exhibition Made in Belarus was attended by Belarusian petrochemical enterprises, which demonstrated “a wide range of products manufactured using the best global technologies, including various types of fibers, threads and materials used in the textile, knitting and clothing industries <sup>890</sup> .”

Thus, OJSC Naftan demonstrated at the exhibition acrylic fibers used in the production of yarn and artificial fur, and OJSC Polotsk-Steklovolokno demonstrated fiberglass and products based on it. The Belarusian chemical company Mogilevkhimvolokno offered a wide range of polyester fibers and threads used in the production of yarn, fillers and artificial fur, and also presented polyester fabrics, indispensable in the production of roofing materials and carpets. The Khimvolokno Plant branch of Grodno Azot OJSC demonstrated at the exhibition cord fabrics for reinforcing pneumatic tires, polyamide threads for the production of ropes and fishing tackle, and polyamide-6. Also on display at the company's stand were polymer composite materials, which are widely used in the automotive, aviation, and oil industries. OJSC SvetlogorskKhimvolokno showed special fabrics, threads and fibers intended for use in the automotive industry. As a result, Belarusian exporters held very productive negotiations not only with Turkish partners and contractors, but also with representatives of companies from other countries. So let's hope that the exhibition in Istanbul in February 2024 will be a continuation of new interesting joint projects.

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<sup>889</sup> Belarus and Türkiye intend to hold a joint business forum in the first quarter of 2024 [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-turtsija-namereny-provesti-sovmestnyj-biznes-forum-v-pervom-kvartale-2024-goda-598314-2023/>

<sup>890</sup> Belarusian enterprises presented their products at the international exhibition in Turkey [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/beloruskie-predprijatija-predstavili-produktsiju-na-mezhdunarodnoj-vystavke-v-turtsii-569846-2023/>

Another important aspect of the partnership between Belarus and Turkey, which was noted at the 11th meeting of the IGC, is the further expansion of the legal framework. Statistics claim that today this database already includes more than 40 intergovernmental and interdepartmental agreements. A new document in this regard was the protocol of the 11th meeting of the commission, which contains a list of eight agreements on which the parties agreed to speed up joint work. In fact, this final protocol is “a new program of action, a kind of road map for the development of bilateral economic relations in the short and medium term and will allow Belarus and Turkey to more fully utilize existing opportunities for cooperation”<sup>891</sup>.

And already in November 2023, as part of this program, the Belarusian-Turkish Research Center opened in Minsk on the basis of the Institute of Philosophy of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, which became another step towards the development of relations between the two countries. “Its main tasks are the coordination and implementation of joint research work, individual projects in the field of historical, cultural and philosophical heritage of Belarus and Turkey, improving the qualifications of scientific personnel by studying the Turkish language, as well as translating the works of Turkish and Belarusian philosophers and scientists into Belarusian and Turkish languages”<sup>892</sup>. At the moment, the new center is focused on the topic “Philosophical and spiritual-cultural heritage of Belarus and Turkey: history and modernity.” Turkish researchers are preparing a “Review of the main achievements of Turkish philosophy,” and their Belarusian colleagues are studying “The influence of the Belarusian-Muslim tradition on the formation of cultural and national identity.” In addition, the center intends to perform educational and popularization functions, since on its basis scientists of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus will study the Turkish language, and it is also planned to conduct a variety of lectures and master classes.

Let's summarize. Over the past three decades of diplomatic relations, Minsk and Ankara have not only identified priority areas of Belarusian-Turkish cooperation, but also clearly built a multi-level system of interstate, intergovernmental and interdepartmental interaction, which together is moving towards the implementation of new strategic tasks. And in this regard, the

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<sup>891</sup> Belarus is working on new investment projects with Turkey [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-prorabatyvaet-s-turtsiej-novye-investitsionnye-proekty-598324-2023/>

<sup>892</sup> The Belarusian-Turkish research center opened at the National Academy of Sciences [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belorusko-turetskij-issledovatel'skij-tsentr-otkrylja-v-nan-597558-2023/>

decisions of the 11th meeting of the Belarusian-Turkish joint intergovernmental commission on economic cooperation are another significant confirmation of partnerships that are focused on the future.

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## **Belarus – Latin America: the most specific trade and economic interaction**

Latin America is one of the political and economic centers of the emerging multipolar world, home to more than 650 million people. “Many countries in this region are aimed at pursuing an independent foreign policy and seek, through accelerated innovative development, to move away from the historically developed raw material nature of their economies <sup>893</sup>. ” And the Republic of Belarus can provide effective assistance to these states by developing the most specific trade and economic interaction.

In June 2022, the Belarusian-Latin American Forum took place, which was organized in Moscow at the Business and Cultural Complex of the Belarusian Embassy in Russia. The forum brought together representatives of Latin American embassies in Belarus and Russia from 15 countries. The event was attended by ambassadors, heads of diplomatic missions and diplomats from Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Venezuela, Guatemala, Honduras, Dominican Republic, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Chile, Ecuador and El Salvador.

The region of Latin America and the Caribbean is of interest to Belarus as an important platform for integration into global trade and economic relations. In 2021, the total volume of imports from Belarus to the countries of the region amounted to \$715.5 million, an increase of 3.5% compared to 2020. The product range of Belarusian exports to this region includes potash fertilizers, land transport, ferrous metal products, chemical and petrochemical products, instruments and optical devices, and dairy products <sup>894</sup>. " At the end of 2021, trade turnover between Belarus and the Latin American region amounted to about \$1.5 billion.

Belarus already has positive experience in the region. “This includes the participation of Belarusian companies in geological and seismic exploration, mining in Venezuela and Ecuador, construction projects in Venezuela, Ecuador and Peru, supplies of Belarusian agricultural, automotive and

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<sup>893</sup> Aleynik told why Belarus is interested in cooperation with Latin American countries [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/alejnik-rasskazal-chem-belarusi-interesno-sotrudnichestvo-so-stranami-latinskoj-ameriki-567456-2023/>

<sup>894</sup> NCM on the prospects for promoting Belarusian goods and services in Latin America [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/comments/view/ntsm-o-perspektivah-prodvizhenija-belorusskih-tovarov-i-uslug-v-latinskoj-ameriki-8247//>

passenger equipment to Venezuela, Cuba, Argentina, Colombia, Nicaragua and Bolivia, export of quarry equipment to Venezuela and Chile<sup>895</sup>. " Work in these areas is being carried out quite actively. It is planned to further increase the volume of trade and investment, first of all, through the implementation of joint cooperation projects. In cooperation with Latin America, Belarus aims to transition from simple trade to the creation of joint ventures and assembly plants.

For example, the dynamically developing agricultural sector of Latin American countries needs appropriate technology. Reliable and price-competitive tractors, combines and other Belarusian equipment can take a worthy place here. "The range of modern products produced in Belarus, and this is primarily agricultural machinery, mining dump trucks, trucks, road construction equipment, public electric transport, tire products and much more, may be of direct interest in meeting the needs of Latin American agricultural producers, the mining industry and the transport sector "<sup>896</sup>.

Belarus is interested not only in trade in goods, but also in the export of services, the basis of which is transport, computer, construction services, as well as services in the field of mining. "At the end of 2021, the volume of trade in services with Latin American countries increased to \$200 million (58.3% by 2020). Belarusian exports reached \$178.9 million (97.9%)<sup>897</sup>. " However, the dynamics in mutual trade in goods and services, as well as the existing level of trade and economic relations between Belarus and many Latin American countries, do not fully correspond to the real capabilities of the parties. Of course, exporters are maximally interested in promoting Belarusian "complex technical products - products of mechanical engineering, the scientific sector, ranging from tomographs to spare parts and engines for existing automotive and tractor equipment<sup>898</sup>. " A promising area of cooperation is expanding

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<sup>895</sup> Shestakov: Belarus is ready to strengthen cooperation with Latin American countries in all areas [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/shestakov-belarus-gotova-k-ukrepleniju-sotrudnichestva-so-stranami-latinskoj-ameriki-po-vsem-510548-2022/>

<sup>896</sup> Pivovar, E. Belarus, in cooperation with Latin America, aims to transition to the creation of joint ventures and assembly plants / E. Pivovar // [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-v-sotrudnichestve-s-latinskoj-amerikoj-natslenana-perehod-k-sozdaniju-sp-i-sborochnyh-510550-2022/>

<sup>897</sup> Pivovar, E. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Belarus: trade with Latin America is showing steady growth / E. Pivovar // [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/mid-belarusi-torgovlja-s-latinskoj-amerikoj-demonstriruet-ustojchivij-rost-510549-2022/>

<sup>898</sup> Pivovar, E. Shestakov: Belarus can sell a wide range of products to Latin America / E. Pivovar // [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/shestakov-belarus-mozhet-prodat-v-latinskiju-ameriku-shirokij-spektr-produktsii-510577-2022/>

contacts in the field of education. Belarusian universities are ready to accept applicants for training in various specialties that are in demand in Latin American countries, including training specialists in industry, agriculture, and healthcare.

In recent years, Latin American countries have maintained their role as points of growth and foreign trade activity for Belarus. These include Brazil, Argentina, Colombia, Venezuela, Cuba and Nicaragua.

**The Brazilian** market is of great interest to the Belarusian engineering and chemical industries. This is due to the constantly growing needs of Brazil for agricultural and other machinery, fertilizers, tires and other goods produced by Belarusian enterprises. In 2021, bilateral trade amounted to about \$800 million, with exports amounting to \$585 million. Product items such as cord materials - threads and fabrics - for the production of car tires, beer malt and electric vehicles have significant potential in the context of increasing supplies to the Brazilian market.

**Argentina** is an important trade and economic partner for Belarus. In 2021, trade turnover between the countries amounted to \$136 million. Promising areas of trade and economic cooperation with this country include the organization of supplies of Belarusian complex technical products: agricultural and forestry equipment, forage and grain harvesters, mining dump trucks, passenger cars and electric vehicles.

In 2021, trade turnover between Belarus and **Colombia** amounted to \$90 million, Belarusian exports amounted to \$80 million. New product items that may be in demand on the Colombian market include agricultural machinery, buses, food products, and may also become the IT sector.

Belarus and **Venezuela also have points of interaction for intensifying trade and economic relations** . In 2021, almost \$2 million worth of Belarusian goods were supplied to Venezuela, an increase of 82 percent. Among the most promising commodity items of Belarusian exports for supplies to Venezuela are condensed and dry milk and cream, printed books, brochures, pipes, tubes, plastic hoses and fittings, and whey.

Belarus and **Cuba** are also working on new joint projects in the trade and economic sphere. The basis of Belarusian supplies to Cuba are tractors and truck tractors, condensed and dry milk and cream, parts for receiving and transmitting equipment, parts and accessories for cars, tractors, instruments and devices used in medicine, piston internal combustion engines. A promising

direction for Belarusian exports may also be the supply of medicines and medical equipment.

In September 2022, the Belarusian-Cuban business forum was held, the participants of which considered promising areas of trade and economic interaction between the two countries and current issues of doing business. More than 90 representatives from 65 enterprises in areas of interest to Belarus for promotion to the Cuban market, and 18 representatives of Cuban business held negotiations on the development of “mutually beneficial cooperation and implementation of joint projects in the field of molecular immunology, scientific and technological developments, education, metallurgy, agricultural engineering, trade, production of coffee, rum and other areas”<sup>899</sup>.

Note that this is the first meeting of business representatives of the two countries in a long time. In addition, for Belarus, Cuba is a partner in export-import operations, an independent and independent country, and is also considered as a platform for entering the large market of Latin America - Venezuela, Bolivia and other large countries in this region. “The trade turnover between Belarus and Cuba in 2021 amounted to \$22.9 million, more than \$20 million of which accounted for Belarusian exports”<sup>900</sup>. Participants in the business forum showed that the potential of the two countries has not yet been exhausted. Moreover, the establishment of business contacts between representatives of the business community of Belarus and Cuba will spur the further development of trade and economic relations.

The Cuban side is ready to interact with partners from Belarus, in particular in mechanical engineering. For reference, we note: there are now more than 20 thousand Belarusian-made tractors working in the fields of Cuba. At the same time, cooperation can be “not only in the acquisition of new models, but also in the purchase of spare parts for the restoration of equipment that is already in Cuba. We are interested in the supply of spare parts for the repair and restoration of tractors, MAZ and AMKODOR trucks, and buses. We can do assembly and also create projects to supply this equipment to the Latin

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<sup>899</sup> Belarus and Cuba will discuss the prospects for trade and economic cooperation at a business forum on September 27 [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-kuba-obsudjat-perspektivy-torgovo-ekonomicheskogo-sotrudnichestva-na-biznes-forume-27-525866-2022>

<sup>900</sup> Businesses of Belarus and Cuba intend to develop cooperation in medicine, mechanical engineering and logistics [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/biznes-belarusi-i-kuby-nameren-razvivat-sotrudnichestvo-v-medsine-mashinostroenii-i-logistike-525975-2022/>

American market. Belarus and Cuba also have great potential in the digital economy and tourism<sup>901</sup>. ”

But the area of medicine is of greatest interest to Cuban partners. In particular, in November 2022, the first Belarusian medicines were registered in this Latin American country. “This step became possible thanks to long-term joint work between the Belarusian (Center for Expertise and Testing in Healthcare, Management Company of the Belfarmprom holding) and Cuban (Center for State Control of Medicines, Equipment and Medical Devices (CECMED) parties. We are talking about medicines produced by UP "Minskintercaps"”<sup>902</sup>. In addition, the Center for Expertise and Testing in Healthcare and CECMED signed an agreement to conduct inter-laboratory comparisons, which will help increase the level of trust between testing laboratories of Belarus and Cuba, the qualifications of specialists in the field of laboratory research, and promote the harmonization of requirements for drug quality control. and, as a result, will increase the effectiveness and safety of medicines for patients in the two countries.

The Belarusian Medical Academy of Postgraduate Education (BelMAPO) and the Medical University of Havana also signed a cooperation agreement in November 2022. At the Center for Immunological Research of Cuba, Belarusian specialists agreed on cooperation in the field of prenatal diagnostics, neonatal screening, oncology and diabetology, as well as the possibility of using Cuban reagents as an adequate replacement for those currently used in various types of screening studies. “At the Cuban Center for Molecular Immunology, representatives of BelMAPO agreed to open joint scientific projects in the field of therapy of neurological diseases and in the field of ophthalmology, as well as combustiology using technologies using stem cells<sup>903</sup>. ”

In the same November 2022, the legal framework of Belarusian-Cuban relations was supplemented by an intergovernmental agreement on the mutual recognition of educational documents, where the following are considered

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<sup>901</sup> Medicine, mechanical engineering, tourism. The Ambassador of Cuba spoke about the areas of cooperation with Belarus [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/meditsina-mashinostroenie-turizm-posol-kuby-rasskazal-o-napravlenijah-sotrudnichestva-s-belarusju-525993-2022/>

<sup>902</sup> Belarusian medicines are registered in Cuba [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/beloruskie-lekarstva-zaregistrovany-na-kube-536206-2022/>

<sup>903</sup> BelMAPO and the Medical University of Havana signed a cooperation agreement [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belmapo-i-meduniversitet-gavany-podpisali-dogovor-o-sotrudnichestve-536529-2022/>

promising areas of cooperation: “carrying out joint research on the creation of medicines and pharmaceutical substances; development and production of medical products and devices for the diagnosis and treatment of diseases in the field of cardiac surgery, traumatology and orthopedics, oncology, dentistry; development and production of computer-oriented measuring systems and measuring instruments; study of the problems of electromagnetic safety of the population and electromagnetic ecology of the living environment in conditions of intensive development of new generation mobile communication systems and services <sup>904</sup>. ” The parties will cooperate both within the framework of scientific and technological parks, which are actively developing in Belarus and Cuba, and will consider the possibility of creating joint ventures, including in Cuba. In addition, other proposals are being discussed: the possibility of participation of higher education institutions of the two countries in competitions of Belarusian-Cuban scientific and technical projects in priority areas of cooperation; implementation of joint educational programs for the preparation of bachelors and masters in a number of areas - pharmaceuticals, information technology, engineering and technical specialties. There are currently 10 direct agreements between universities in our countries. So a good foundation for the further development of Belarusian-Cuban bilateral relations has already been laid.

**Nicaragua** should also be named among the important political and economic partners of Belarus in Latin America . Moreover, in May 2024 the two countries will celebrate the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations. And in May 2023, Minsk and Managua announced that they aimed at seriously intensifying trade, economic and humanitarian ties in order to constantly support and promote the bilateral agenda, filling it with new projects and cooperation programs. Let us note that trade relations between Belarus and Nicaragua are still relatively small. They are based on supplies of Belarusian products. And the legal framework is still in the process of being formed.

In May 2023, a government delegation from this Latin American country visited Minsk. This visit showed that Belarus and Nicaragua intend to actively develop the legal foundation of bilateral relations. In particular, several important documents were signed in the Belarusian capital. Firstly, the General Agreement between the governments of the two countries on the

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<sup>904</sup> Belarus and Cuba signed an agreement on the recognition of educational documents [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-kuba-podpisali-soglashenie-o-priznanii-dokumentov-ob-obrazovanii-535587-2022/>

provision of export credits, which will strengthen the position of exporters from Belarus. “The buyers of Belarusian equipment will be the Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure of Nicaragua, the Municipal Institute for Transport Regulation of Managua, and the Nicaraguan Institute of Municipal Development. Lending will be carried out using credit funds from OJSC Development Bank of the Republic of Belarus”<sup>905</sup>.

Secondly, a basic agreement that opens up opportunities for industrial cooperation and will allow “in the future to significantly increase the supply of Belarusian equipment in demand in Nicaragua. This will undoubtedly have a positive impact on increasing joint trade”<sup>906</sup>. Thirdly, an agreement on cooperation in the field of education, which will provide a legal basis for the interaction of the parties and the establishment of working contacts between educational institutions of the two countries, the implementation of “training of specialists in the most popular specialties for Nicaragua”<sup>907</sup>, and will also facilitate the exchange of specialized information and develop scientific - technical cooperation that is part of this work. In addition, Minsk and Managua are working on draft agreements on trade and economic cooperation, promotion and mutual protection of investments, the creation of a joint committee on trade and economic cooperation, as well as the abolition of the visa regime.

Belarus and Nicaragua also decided to take a comprehensive approach to issues of trade and economic interaction with an emphasis on industrial cooperation and investment cooperation. At the same time, the parties focused on the implementation of joint projects in agriculture and in the field of supplies of Belarusian passenger, road construction and agricultural equipment to the Nicaraguan market. In particular, “in economic terms, first of all, we are talking about the development of industrial cooperation, the use of Belarusian agricultural technologies in the development of agriculture in Nicaragua...”<sup>908</sup>.

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<sup>905</sup> Ministry of Industry: an agreement with Nicaragua on the provision of export loans will strengthen the position of Belarusian exporters [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/minprom-soglashenie-s-nikaragua-o-predostavlenii-eksportnyh-kreditov-ukrepit-pozitsii-belorusskih-567470-2023/>

<sup>906</sup> Transcript of the approach to the press by the Minister of Foreign Affairs S. Aleynik following negotiations with the head of the Foreign Ministry of Nicaragua (May 19, 2023, Minsk) [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://mfa.gov.by/press/smi/b1045153bb04077c.html>

<sup>907</sup> Belarus signed an agreement with Nicaragua on the provision of export credits [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-podpisala-s-nikaragua-soglashenie-o-predostavlenii-eksportnyh-kreditov-567453-2023/>

<sup>908</sup> Aleynik: Belarus and Nicaragua are aimed at seriously intensifying trade and economic cooperation [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/alejnik->

Back in June 2022, at negotiations in Minsk between the Ministries of Agriculture and Food of Belarus and Agriculture and Livestock of Nicaragua, the parties considered the prospects for cooperation in the field of agriculture. We agreed on cooperation in the field of livestock farming, veterinary medicine, agricultural education, and exchange of experience in the field of crop production. In addition, “Belarus is interested in supplies from Nicaragua of raw cane sugar, coffee, cocoa beans and semi-finished fruit products for the production of baby food<sup>909</sup>. ”

Another interesting topic that may become promising in the Belarusian-Nicaraguan economic agenda is the possibility of Belarus’ participation in the construction of the Nicaraguan Canal. The fact is that back in 2012, the National Assembly of Nicaragua approved the construction project of the “Great Transoceanic Canal of Nicaragua,” which “if completed, will connect the waters of the Pacific and Atlantic oceans. Supposed. that the new interoceanic canal will be a longer, wider and deeper alternative to the Panama Canal (opened in 1920) and will seriously relieve maritime traffic<sup>910</sup>. ” So, despite the geographical distance, distance is not an obstacle to establishing cooperation when the partners have respect, trust and friendship.

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[belarus-i-nikaragua-natseleny-na-serjeznuju-aktivizatsiju-torgovo-ekonomicheskogo-567428-2023/](https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-nikaragua-natseleny-na-serjeznuju-aktivizatsiju-torgovo-ekonomicheskogo-567428-2023/)

<sup>909</sup> Belarus and Nicaragua intend to cooperate in livestock farming and agricultural education [Electronic resource]. – 2022. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-nikaragua-namereny-sotrudnichat-v-zhivotnovodstve-i-agrarnom-obrazovanii-506979-2022/>

<sup>910</sup> The head of the Nicaraguan Foreign Ministry does not exclude the possibility of Belarus' participation in the construction of the Nicaraguan Canal [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/glava-mid-nikaragua-ne-iskljuchaet-vozmozhnosti-uchastija-belarusi-v-stroitelstve-nikaraguanskogo-567406-2023/>

## Belarus – Latin America: an important integration platform

The Republic of Belarus today maintains diplomatic relations with all 33 states of Latin America and the Caribbean. This region of the globe is of interest to our country as an important platform for integration into world trade and economic relations. And this contributes to the rapprochement of the Belarusian side with a number of Latin American states. For example, “with some countries in the region, relations have already reached the level of strategic partnership, while with others, the expansion of interaction in political, trade, economic, educational, scientific, technical and other spheres is becoming more and more progressive <sup>911</sup>. ” Let us remind you that Belarusian embassies operate in Argentina, Brazil, Venezuela, Colombia and Cuba. In 2023, many interesting and significant events took place in the relations of our republic with a number of countries in the region.

Let's start with **the Republic of Nicaragua**. In October 2023, the third meeting of the Belarusian-Nicaraguan Joint Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation was held in Minsk, during which the current state of interaction between Minsk and Managua was discussed and further steps were outlined to expand bilateral partnerships. In particular, opportunities and prospects were considered “in the field of housing and industrial construction, increasing bilateral trade, cooperation in the areas of investment, food, light industry, pharmaceuticals, culture, strengthening business contacts between the two countries, establishing ties between the capital authorities of Belarus and Nicaragua <sup>912</sup>. ”

Let us recall that the first two meetings of the commission took place: in September 2014 - in Minsk; in September 2015 - in Managua. During this time, Belarusian exports were mainly agricultural machinery and components, “horticulture and forestry equipment, parts for internal combustion engines, bearings. In the commodity structure of imports, the largest share was occupied by supplies of bananas, coffee and strong alcoholic beverages <sup>913</sup>. ” And in

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<sup>911</sup> Belarus and Latin American countries [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : [https://www.mfa.gov.by/bilateral/america/latin\\_america/](https://www.mfa.gov.by/bilateral/america/latin_america/)

<sup>912</sup> On the meeting of the Belarusian-Nicaraguan joint commission on trade and economic cooperation [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : [https://www.mfa.gov.by/press/news\\_mfa/b2665dfb1e8ad9b4.html](https://www.mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/b2665dfb1e8ad9b4.html)

<sup>913</sup> Trade and economic relations between the Republic of Belarus and the Republic of Nicaragua [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : [https://cuba.mfa.gov.by/ru/bilateral\\_relations/N/trade/](https://cuba.mfa.gov.by/ru/bilateral_relations/N/trade/)

May 2023, the parties announced that they were aimed at seriously intensifying trade, economic and humanitarian ties in order to constantly fill them with new projects and cooperation programs. At the same time, a number of important bilateral documents were signed in Minsk: the General Agreement between the governments of Belarus and Nicaragua on the provision of export credits; basic agreement on the supply of Belarusian equipment to the Nicaraguan market; “an agreement on cooperation in the field of education, which will provide a legal basis for interaction between the parties and the establishment of working contacts between educational institutions of the two countries”<sup>914</sup>. ” In June 2023, the parties discussed the possibilities of interaction in agriculture and agreed to work out the prospects for organizing cooperation in such areas as “exchange of genetic material of crops, livestock breeding, internships for scientists and specialists, training of Nicaraguan specialists in master’s and postgraduate programs of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus”<sup>915</sup>. ”

And in July 2023, a visit of the Belarusian delegation led by Foreign Minister S. Aleinik to Nicaragua already took place, where “investment projects, contracts for the supply of Belarusian equipment, prospects for Belarus’ participation in major infrastructure projects in Nicaragua, cooperation” were discussed at the highest and highest levels in the field of agriculture, logistics and the possibility of using port infrastructure, the credit and financial sector and options for joint work in the markets of Latin American countries”<sup>916</sup>. ” As a result of this visit, Belarus and Nicaragua adopted another package of bilateral agreements and contracts. In particular, intergovernmental agreements were signed on the mutual abolition of visas and on the resumption of the work of the joint Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation, and a Roadmap for cooperation in the field of agriculture was approved. In addition, OJSC MTZ signed a framework contract for the supply of products from a Belarusian plant in Nicaragua for a two-year period. <...> MAZ OJSC and the mayor's office of the capital Managua also signed a contract for the supply of Belarusian equipment. An agreement was reached on the supply of 236 units of equipment from AMKODOR OJSC for the

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<sup>914</sup> Zalesky, B.L. When partners have respect, trust and friendship / B.L. Zalesky // *Materiały z XX Międzynarodowej naukowej - praktycznej konferencji*, “Aktualne problemy nowoczesnych nauk – 2023.” Volume 1. *Przemysł i Studio*. – P. 41.

<sup>915</sup> Belarus and Nicaragua discussed areas of cooperation in agriculture [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-nikaragua-obsudili-naprawlenija-sotrudnichestva-v-selskom-hozjajstwie-573073-2023/>

<sup>916</sup> The Belarusian delegation held extended negotiations with the economic bloc of the Nicaraguan government [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/beloruskaja-delegatsija-provela-rashirnyye-peregovory-s-ekonomicheskim-blokom-pravitelstva-nikaragua-577785-2023/>

construction industry and public utilities of Nicaragua<sup>917</sup>. ” And in the field of culture, the Bolshoi Theater of Belarus, the National Theater named after Ruben Dario and the Nicaraguan cultural foundation “Incanto” signed a memorandum of cooperation.

At the 3rd meeting of the joint commission, the Belarusian side emphasized that it considers Nicaragua as an important political, trade and economic partner in the Latin American region, a reliable ally in the international arena. As for the supply of Belarusian equipment to the Nicaraguan market, further steps have already been planned. The products of the Minsk Automobile Plant, Amkodor, Minsk Tractor Plant and other giants of domestic industry will be in demand in the Latin American country “with the implementation of ambitious infrastructure projects planned by the current government. There are serious developments in the field of agriculture, in particular regarding the use of Belarusian agricultural technologies in Nicaragua<sup>918</sup>. ”

Note that Nicaraguan soil is very fertile. But only less than half of it is processed. “That is, 50% of fertile land is not cultivated because there is not enough equipment and not enough people. The government of the country <...> is moving in the right direction. We built 4 thousand km of roads<sup>919</sup>. ” In this regard, the Nicaraguan side expressed interest in organizing the supply of a large batch of equipment from enterprises of the Ministry of Industry of Belarus for various purposes - road construction, agricultural, passenger - “for municipal needs, as well as for the implementation of large infrastructure, transport and logistics projects<sup>920</sup>. ” As a result of the negotiations, the parties agreed to formulate a list of necessary types of equipment for the preparation of commercial proposals and delivery dates. In general, the successful implementation of the agreements will bring relations between Belarus and Nicaragua to a new, higher level of development.

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<sup>917</sup> . About the visit of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belarus S. Aleynik to Nicaragua [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : [https://mfa.gov.by/press/news\\_mfa/a423b01505b9ac36.html](https://mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/a423b01505b9ac36.html)

<sup>918</sup> Transcript of the approach to the press by Deputy Minister E. Shestakov following the meeting of the Belarusian-Nicaraguan joint commission (October 4, 2023, Minsk) [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : [https://www.mfa.gov.by/press/news\\_mfa/ab8c63a09ebb1fec.html](https://www.mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/ab8c63a09ebb1fec.html)

<sup>919</sup> Powdered milk to Cuba and equipment to Nicaragua. The Ambassador spoke about the directions of Belarusian exports [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/suhoe-moloko-na-kubu-i-tehnika-v-nikaragua-posol-rasskazal-o-napravlenijah-belorusskogo-eksporta-579482-2023/>

<sup>920</sup> Rogozhnik discussed with the delegation of Nicaragua the issues of intensifying the supply of Belarusian equipment [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/rogozhnik-s-delegatsiej-nikaragua-obsudil-voprosy-intensifikatsii-postavok-belorusskoj-tehniki-591732-2023/>

Another strategic and very important partner of Belarus in Latin America is **the Bolivarian Republic Venezuela** . Let us recall that the two countries established diplomatic relations back in February 1997. Six years ago, in October 2017, official negotiations between the presidents of Belarus and Venezuela were held in Minsk, during which the parties stated their desire to increase cooperation in all areas in the coming years, despite the fact that this country has recently experienced a rather difficult period . As for interaction with the Belarusian side, “due to the difficult situation in the world, the pace of implementation of joint projects has decreased <sup>921</sup>. ”

Let us note that the parties established long-term trade, economic and cooperation ties back in 2007. Since then, Belarus has built four factories in Venezuela - for the production of ceramic blocks, tractors, municipal and road construction equipment. And in this country there were the “MAZVEN” JV for the assembly of MAZ trucks, the “VeneMinsk Tractors” JV for the assembly of “Belarus” tractors, and the “Maquinarnas Barinas” plant for the assembly of heavy road-building equipment <sup>922</sup>. ” Since 2007, a joint venture for oil and gas production, Petrolera BeloVenesolana, has been operating in Venezuela, focusing on seven oil and six gas fields, four of which are located in the west of the country - on Lake Maracaibo, the rest - in the Venezuelan east. During the operation of this joint venture, the financial effect for the Belarusian side amounted to about \$70 million. “In 2008-2016, more than 8.4 million tons of oil and 6.4 billion cubic meters were produced. m of gas <sup>923</sup>. ”

As for the construction sector, in addition to opening the largest brick factory in Latin America here, the Belarusian JSC Belzarubezhstroy has participated since 2007 in the construction of housing on Venezuelan soil, where three contracts for the construction of 19,968 apartments were implemented at once. Finally, in the field of agriculture, during the construction of the first agro-industrial town in Venezuela, Belarusian specialists “built 176 residential buildings and a mineral fertilizer warehouse, laid more than 20 km of roads and cleared 2.5 thousand hectares of bush

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<sup>921</sup>Negotiations with the President of Venezuela Nicolas Maduro [Electronic resource]. – 2017. – URL : [http://president.gov.by/ru/news\\_ru/view/peregovory-c-prezidentom-bolivarijskoj-respubliki-venezuela-nikolasom-maduro-17221/](http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/peregovory-c-prezidentom-bolivarijskoj-respubliki-venezuela-nikolasom-maduro-17221/)

<sup>922</sup>Matveev, V. Belarus and Venezuela agree to intensify the work of assembly plants through the supply of raw materials / V. Matveev // [Electronic resource]. – 2017. – URL : <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-venezuela-dogovarijavajutsja-ob-aktivizatsii-raboty-sborochnyh-proizvodstv-za-schet-postavok-269845-2017/>

<sup>923</sup>Matveev, V. Additional investments are needed for the development of the Petrolera BeloVenesolana joint venture - General Director of Belorusneft / V. Matveev // [Electronic resource]. – 2017. – URL : <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/dlja-razvitiija-sp-petrolera-belovenesolana-nuzhny-dopolnitelnye-investitsii-gendirektor-belorusnefti-269858-2017/>

territory. More than 400 units of specialized equipment were supplied from Belarus, and 1.2 thousand hectares of territory were sown<sup>924</sup>. ” It was believed that all this would amount to only a fifth of what the representatives of the Belarusian side still needed to do in the agriculture of Venezuela.

As we see, the two countries, indeed, did not have to start from scratch, renewing agreements already reached both in the field of industry and construction, and in the field of agriculture and hydrocarbon production. Moreover, Venezuela then adopted a national program for the Bolivarian economic development of the post-oil period, which included 15 areas, ranging from food production to the most modern technology, “including projects in industry and agriculture. Belarus can provide assistance in their implementation<sup>925</sup>. ” That is why, at the meeting of the two presidents in Minsk, it was decided to significantly intensify the activities of the joint intergovernmental commission and hold its 7th meeting in the very near future in order to outline a specific action plan for the implementation of both promising and currently implemented joint projects.

In the field of industrial cooperation, the discussion was about bringing existing joint ventures to full capacity in such a way that at least half of the products produced by them would be sold on the domestic market of Venezuela, and the other half would be exported. As for the oil and gas industry, “Belarus is interested in increasing oil production in Venezuela to 2-3 million tons per year<sup>926</sup>. ” To do this, it would be necessary to significantly intensify the cooperation of the Petrolera BeloVenesolana JV with the Belarusian industry research and design institute BelNIPIneft, whose strategic goal in this Latin American country was “increasing the efficiency of the development of oil and gas deposits through the introduction of new production technologies and rational selection of geological and technical measures”<sup>927</sup>. In agriculture, and Venezuela imports \$10 billion worth of food annually, it was planned to build dairy complexes, poultry farms, a

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<sup>924</sup>Venezuela asks to build five more agricultural towns according to the Belarusian model [Electronic resource]. – 2017. – URL : <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/venezuela-prosit-poitroit-esche-pjat-agrogorodkov-po-belorusskoj-modeli-269901-2017/>

<sup>925</sup>Belarus plans to build new factories in Venezuela and increase production volumes of existing ones [Electronic resource]. – 2017. – URL : <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-planiruet-poitroit-v-venesuele-novye-zavody-i-uvelichit-objemy-proizvodstva-dejstvujuschih-270308-2017/>

<sup>926</sup>Belarus is interested in increasing oil production in Venezuela to 2-3 million tons per year [Electronic resource]. – 2017. – URL : <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-zainteresovana-v-uvelichenii-dobychi-nefti-v-venesuele-do-2-3-mlnt-v-god-270309-2017/>

<sup>927</sup>Venezuela plans to expand cooperation with Belarus in the oil sector [Electronic resource]. – 2017. – URL : <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/venezuela-planiruet-rasshirit-sotrudnichestvo-s-belarusjuu-v-neftjanoj-sfere-269908-2017/>

slaughterhouse, a meat processing plant, and dairy processing plants with the help of Belarusian specialists. Finally, in the field of construction, “agreements were reached on the allocation of new microdistricts for the construction of housing in Venezuela by Belarusian specialists”<sup>928</sup>. ” All these facts indicated that Minsk and Caracas, both then and now, intend to focus in the development of partnership, first of all, on the most important issues in order to fully realize the existing potential of cooperation.

Now let's go back to today. In November 2023, the 8th meeting of the Belarusian-Venezuelan Joint Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation was held in Minsk, at which the parties discussed the most important aspects of the development of promising areas of interaction, found compromise solutions to existing problematic issues and outlined specific steps for the further implementation of projects in in the field of industry, construction, agriculture, food, transport, petrochemicals, healthcare, pharmaceuticals, science and technology, education and tourism. Let us clarify that in November 2017, at the 7th meeting of the joint commission, the parties adopted a road map of bilateral cooperation for the medium and long term, which, unfortunately, was not implemented due to global events. However, as of mid-October 2023, 32 interstate, intergovernmental and interdepartmental agreements were signed between Belarus and Venezuela. And at the 8th meeting of the joint commission, the parties outlined the task of the current moment, “to jointly return to the main highway of strategic interaction between our fraternal states, despite all the obstacles and difficulties, and to realize the enormous potential that exists in relations between the Republic of Belarus and Venezuela”<sup>929</sup>. And for this reason, 13 more documents were signed in Minsk on the implementation of projects in various areas.

In particular, the parties adopted an important document on the creation of a high-level group for strategic planning of the activities of the joint commission in order to monitor the implementation of “new structural mechanisms in bilateral relations that will increase trade turnover between our

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<sup>928</sup>Matveev, V. Cherny: there are agreements on the allocation of new microdistricts for housing construction in Venezuela / V. Matveev // [Electronic resource]. – 2017. – URL : <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/chernyj-est-dogovorennosti-po-otvodu-novyh-mikrorajonov-dlja-stroitelstva-zhilija-v-venesuele-269871-2017/>

<sup>929</sup>Parkhomchik: Belarus and Venezuela are political and economic partners, as well as close friends and allies [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/parhomchik-belarus-i-venezuela-politicheskie-i-ekonomicheskie-partnery-a-takzhe-blizkie-druzija-i-602138-2023/>

countries and organize effective logistics and production chains<sup>930</sup>. ” In addition, an agreement was signed in the scientific field, which provides for the exchange of experience between the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus and the Venezuelan Institute of Geography in the field of geography, sealants, geodata, as well as documents in the field of tourism and healthcare, in the industrial field.

All these facts indicate that the 8th meeting of the joint commission can become a new starting point for preparing an updated draft roadmap for the short, medium and long term. Moreover, the parties have already identified eight of the most pressing issues that must be resolved as quickly as possible: 1) resumption of work at assembly plants of Belarusian equipment in Venezuela; 2) activation of projects in the construction sector; 3) discussion of options for cooperation in the field of forestry and wood processing industry; 4) consideration of possibilities for implementing joint projects in the mining industry; 5) interaction between the parties in the area of agriculture and food supplies; 6) cooperation in the field of petrochemicals and fertilizer supplies; 7) interaction in the field of air transportation and cargo transportation by sea; 8) strengthening cooperation in the fields of education, healthcare, science and technology, as well as interaction in the field of tourism.

Of course, one of the most important topics on this list is the resumption of work in Venezuela at factories assembling tractors and trucks. Let us note that over the past years, the Venezuelan side has purchased more than 1,300 vehicle sets in Belarus, “which were assembled in Venezuela and are used in the national economy. More than 3 thousand Belarusian tractors work in the fields of our country [in Venezuela], and trucks drive on the roads<sup>931</sup>. ” The urgent task of these plants is to reach their designed capacity of 10 thousand tractors and 5 thousand trucks, and also to sell them in the markets of neighboring Latin American countries. On the basis of these enterprises, a multi-brand center will be created to support the equipment that will be produced there. And “specialists from MTZ and MAZ will work in this center. They will perform tasks related to training, preparation, support, and service. On the basis of this center, warehouses of spare parts for the production and

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<sup>930</sup>Vice President of Venezuela: our countries are bound by bonds of friendship, we need to continue to stick to each other [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/vitse-prezident-venesuely-nashi-strany-svjazyvajut-uzy-druzhy-nam-i-dalshe-nuzhno-derzhatsja-drug-602296-2023/>

<sup>931</sup>Vice-resident of Venezuela: the participation of Belarus in the life of our country is of great importance and weight [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/vitse-prezident-venesuely-uchastie-belarusi-v-zhizni-nashej-strany-imeet-bolshoe-znachenie-i-ves-602178-2023/>

repair of manufactured equipment will also be formed<sup>932</sup>. ” In addition, a very important issue is in the field of the mining industry, since Belarus is interested in supplying quarry equipment to Venezuela, especially since this equipment has already been supplied to this country. For this reason, the parties agreed to “additionally create a narrow working group that would develop a plan for interaction in this direction<sup>933</sup>. ”

Regarding the topic of the agro-industrial complex, the first meeting of the Belarusian-Venezuelan working group on agriculture and food was held within the framework of a joint commission in Minsk, at which prospects for cooperation in the field of crop production, livestock farming, veterinary medicine and agricultural education were discussed. For reference, we note that “over 9 months of this year, trade turnover between Belarus and Venezuela increased by 27.9% compared to the level of the same period last year [2022]. The main export item is whey powder, and the main suppliers are Slutsk Cheese Factory OJSC and Molochny Mir OJSC. The main import item is ethyl alcohol<sup>934</sup>. ” As a result, the parties agreed to exchange experience in the field of agricultural education, exchange visits of technical specialists for the purpose of internships, advanced training and retraining in the field of agriculture, livestock and fish farming.

Speaking about the intention to expand cooperation in the field of education and science, the Venezuelan side outlined the main directions in this interaction. “These include artificial intelligence, bio- and information technologies, as well as the field of social sciences<sup>935</sup>. ” On the Belarusian side, the Belarusian State University is already actively participating in these partnerships, which back in 2007 signed a cooperation agreement with the Simon Rodriguez National Experimental University.

During the plenary meeting of the joint Belarusian-Venezuelan commission in November 2023, the parties emphasized that the organization

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<sup>932</sup>It is planned to create a multi-brand center on the basis of Belarusian-Venezuelan enterprises [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/na-baze-beloruskko-venesuelskijh-predpriyatijh-planiruetsja-sozdat-multibrendovyyj-tsentr-602259-2023/>

<sup>933</sup>Belarus is interested in supplying quarry equipment to Venezuela [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-zainteresovana-v-postavkah-karjernoj-tehniki-v-venesuelu-602262-2023/>

<sup>934</sup>Belarus is interested in supplying a wide range of food products to Venezuela [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-zainteresovana-v-postavkah-shirokogo-assortimenta-prodovolstvennoj-produktsii-v-venesuelu-602273-2023/>

<sup>935</sup>Belarus and Venezuela intend to expand cooperation in the field of education and science [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-venezuela-namereny-rasshirit-sotrudnichestvo-v-oblasti-obrazovanija-i-nauki-594268-2023/>

of effective transport links is also of paramount importance for the two countries. In this regard, a proposal was made about “the possibility of direct air communication between our countries and joint steps to organize the transportation of goods by sea<sup>936</sup>. ” But in general, the two countries see great opportunities for developing cooperation in other areas - in construction, forestry, woodworking, healthcare, pharmaceuticals, tourism. And this gives Belarus and Venezuela a reason to plan cooperation not only for the next three to five years, but also for the long term.

**The Federative Republic of Brazil** is the main partner of the Republic of Belarus in foreign trade with Latin American countries and is one of the top ten partners of the Belarusian state in the world. Again, let’s take a short excursion into the past, when the first meeting of the Belarusian-Brazilian Joint Commission on Economic Cooperation took place in November 2017. This fact very eloquently illustrated the state of relations between the two countries, the essence of which was that, “despite the geographical distance, Brazil has been and remains the most important trade and economic partner in Latin America for Belarus<sup>937</sup>,” therefore the Belarusian side was very interested in significant intensification contacts with Brazilian partners in the economic, political, scientific, technical and cultural spheres. After all, Belarus, on the one hand, is a major importer of Brazilian sugar, iron, tobacco, leather and fruit, and, on the other hand, it exports a lot of fertilizers, textiles and equipment to this Latin American country. Suffice it to say that in 2016, Belarusian-Brazilian trade turnover exceeded half a billion dollars. But, according to the parties, “the economic potential of our countries indicates that we can significantly increase mutually beneficial cooperation in trade, science, technology, education and other areas<sup>938</sup>. ” That is why in July 2017, the foreign ministries of the two states signed a memorandum on the creation of the Joint Belarusian-Brazilian Commission on Economic Cooperation, which was to become one of the most important tools for the implementation of mutually beneficial economic projects, aimed at enhancing and further expanding trade and economic interaction, more full implementation of the

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<sup>936</sup>Belarus proposes to establish direct flights with Venezuela [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-predlagaet-naladit-prjamoe-aviasoobschenie-s-venesueloj-602159-2023/>

<sup>937</sup>Congratulations to the President of the Federative Republic of Brazil Michel Temer [Electronic resource]. – 2017. – URL : [http://president.gov.by/ru/news\\_ru/view/pozdravlenie-prezidentu-federativnoj-respubliki-brazilija-mishelu-temeru-17019/](http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/pozdravlenie-prezidentu-federativnoj-respubliki-brazilija-mishelu-temeru-17019/)

<sup>938</sup>Interview with Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus E. Shestakov to the publication “ Brasilia ” in Foco ” (July 8, 2017, Brazil) [Electronic resource]. – 2017. – URL : [http://mfa.gov.by/press/smi/c\\_98\\_f377693514952.html](http://mfa.gov.by/press/smi/c_98_f377693514952.html)

existing potential in bilateral relations, which would allow increasing and diversifying the mutual trade turnover of goods and services.

Three main directions can be identified that then looked most promising in Belarusian-Brazilian interaction: first, increasing mutual trade turnover in goods and services; secondly, the use of more complex forms of cooperation between Belarusian and Brazilian business entities; thirdly, the transition to the creation of joint ventures in sectors of mutual interest - mechanical engineering and agriculture, oil and gas sectors, as well as in the high-tech sector. In this regard, the first meeting of the Belarusian-Brazilian Joint Commission on Economic Cooperation can be considered quite effective.

Firstly, the parties agreed to locate the assembly production of Belarusian tractors at one of the sites in the agro-industrial region of Anapolis, Goiás state. To this end, the Minsk Tractor Plant, the Ministry of Industry of Belarus and the Secretariat for Economic Development of the State of Goiás signed a corresponding memorandum of intent. Secondly, “a number of commercial contracts worth more than \$40 million were concluded<sup>939</sup>. ” In particular, the Orsha Flax Mill and the Baranovichi Cotton Association alone will supply fabrics worth almost one and a half million dollars to Brazil. In addition, the interaction between Belarusian exporters and Brazilian partners in such areas as “supplies to the Brazilian market of mixed fabrics with viscose insertion” was expected to be interesting and mutually beneficial; resumption of cooperation with Belarusian manufacturers in the production and supply of men's shirts; expansion of the range of linen fabrics supplied to Brazil. It is also planned to supply blackout fabrics, bed linen and towels to the Brazilian market<sup>940</sup>. ” In particular, a trial batch of their product from the Brazilian company Viner Brazil Technology Ltd was to be supplied by Mogilevkhimvolokno OJSC. And from Brazil it was planned to arrange supplies of wet-blue semi-finished leather products to Belarus to ensure the capacity utilization of Belarusian tanneries.

As for other promising areas of cooperation, the following looked very promising: firstly, the desire of one of the world's largest Brazilian aircraft manufacturing companies, Embraer, to open its service center in Belarus; secondly, a signed agreement on technical cooperation between PA

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<sup>939</sup>Anatoly Kalinin made a working visit to the Federative Republic of Brazil [Electronic resource]. – 2017. – URL : <http://www.government.by/ru/content/7680>

<sup>940</sup>Orsha Flax Mill and BPHO will supply fabrics worth \$1.4 million to Brazil [Electronic resource]. – 2017. – URL : <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/orshanskij-lnokombinat-i-bpho-postavjat-v-braziliju-tkanej-na-14-mln-279290-2017/>

Belorusneft and the Viner company Brazil Technology Ltd ; thirdly, the accepted contract for the supply of potash fertilizers between the Belarusian Potash Company and the company Camporico ; fourthly, a “tripartite memorandum of understanding” was concluded between MTZ, the Bobruiskagromash and Geoterra companies regarding the development of the issue of Belarusian tractor equipment, mounted and trailed equipment entering the Brazilian market <sup>941</sup>; fifthly, an agreed memorandum of cooperation between the Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Belarus-Brazil Chamber of Commerce and Industry. All these concrete steps to strengthen Belarusian-Brazilian cooperation should have yielded positive results in the near future.

Now let's look at today. Note that “in 2021, the volume of bilateral trade amounted to \$782.9 million (a growth rate of 108.9%). Exports amounted to \$585.1 million (108.3%) <sup>942</sup>. ” The basis of Belarusian supplies at that time were goods from the petrochemical complex and products of the Belarusian Metallurgical Plant. In 2022, due to a number of limiting factors, the figures for Belarusian-Brazilian trade turnover decreased slightly. But on January 1, 2023, significant changes took place in Brazil: the country’s new president began work and a new government is already functioning. These changes to some extent affected the relations between Belarus and Brazil, which were established more than 30 years ago - in February 1992. We can say that today the two states, separated by 14 thousand kilometers, “have every reason for the progressive development of bilateral cooperation in both the political and economic spheres <sup>943</sup>. ” The dynamics of 2022-2023 demonstrate a recovery in foreign trade volumes. In particular, “trade turnover for the nine months of the current [2023] year amounted to almost \$700 million. This is twice as much as last year <sup>944</sup>. ” Judging by the available facts, two areas of cooperation stand

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<sup>941</sup>Contracts worth more than \$40 million were concluded during the visit of the Belarusian delegation to Brazil [Electronic resource]. – 2017. – URL : <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/kontrakty-na-summu-bolee-40-mln-zakljucheny-vo-vremja-vizita-beloruskoj-delegatsii-v-braziliju-278631-2017/>

<sup>942</sup>Trade and economic relations [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://brazil.mfa.gov.by/ru/exportby/tev/>

<sup>943</sup>Lukashevich: the volume of trade between Belarus and Brazil is hundreds of times higher than with some neighboring countries [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/lukashevich-objem-torgovli-belarusi-s-braziliej-v-sotni-raz-yyshe-chem-s-nekotorymi-sosednimi-stranami-555506-2023/>

<sup>944</sup>Trade turnover between Belarus and Brazil for nine months amounted to almost \$700 million [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/tovarooborot-belarusi-i-brazilii-za-devjat-mesjatsev-sostavil-pochti-700-mln-600698-2023/>

out in the interaction between the two countries today - agriculture and education.

As for the first direction, let us recall that “in Brazil there are about 5 million agricultural enterprises, of which 70% are small businesses. They need equipment, tractors <...>. For example, models BELARUS -152 and BELARUS -622, which are just suitable for such farms <sup>945</sup>. ” The Brazilian side believes that the machines of the Minsk Tractor Plant (MTZ) are of high quality, easy to operate, and help increase productivity. This can be judged, for example, by the results of the International Agricultural Exhibition and Fair AgriShow , which took place in May 2023 in the Brazilian city of Ribeirão Preto. This business forum is “the largest event in the field of agriculture in South America, which is attended by all representatives of agribusiness from the countries of the continent without exception. In terms of its characteristics, the exhibition is more reminiscent of a district or even regional center: the number of participants and visitors exceeds 200 thousand people, and exhibition areas and pavilions occupy an area of 520 thousand square meters. m” <sup>946</sup>.

In 2023, AgriShow recorded a record number of participants - from more than 90 countries. And at this agro-industrial summit, for the first time, Belarus presented MTZ tractors: not only small and maneuverable models for individual farmers, but also large multifunctional machines for large farms. Specialists from the Minsk Tractor and Smorgon Aggregate Plants, the Bobruisk Tractor Parts and Assemblies Plant, and the Borisov Metalist Plant worked at the exhibition. And then “a niche for Belarusian agricultural machinery was identified: low-power basic tractors with a capacity of up to 20-25 horsepower, which can become an indispensable assistant specifically for family farming, which is the basis of Brazilian agriculture <sup>947</sup>. ”

Back in March 2023, Belarus and Brazil agreed to build two factories for the production of MTZ tractors in this country. Consent has already been received from the governors of two Brazilian states – Ceara and Goiás, “project

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<sup>945</sup> Ambassador: in Brazil there is a high interest in Belarusian technology [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/posol-brazilii-v-nashej-strane-est-vysokij-interes-k-belorusskoj-tehnike-582274-2023/>

<sup>946</sup> Belarus presented its tractors at the largest agricultural exhibition in South America [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-predstavila-svoi-traktory-na-krupnejšej-agrovystavke-v-juzhnoj-amerike-564485-2023/>

<sup>947</sup> Belarus plans to help Brazil create its new tractor [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-planiruet-pomoch-brazilii-sozdat-svojj-narodnyj-traktor-564487-2023/>

activities are underway. <...> experts have already begun discussing these nuances; there are positive signals<sup>948</sup>. ” And in July of this year, a roadmap for a project to create joint Belarusian-Brazilian assembly plants, including small tractor equipment, aimed at family farms, was already signed. And this interesting initiative in the field of industrial cooperation can achieve impressive results.

Speaking about the development of interaction between Belarus and Brazil in the field of education, we recall that the Cooperation Agreement in this area was signed in August 2015. But even earlier, Belarusian universities began to develop ties with Brazilian partners. For example, the Belarusian State University (BSU) adopted relevant documents on interaction with the universities of Brasilia (2012) and Uberlandia (2014). In 2015, the Belarusian State Agricultural Academy signed a Cooperation Agreement with the same University of Uberlandia. And in 2020, the Memorandum of Cooperation was adopted by Vitebsk State University named after P.M. Masherov and the Federal University of Parana.

In 2023, the Federal University of Minas Gerais (FUUM), which was founded in 1927 and today ranks 10th in the ranking of the best universities in Latin America, also joined partnerships with Belarusian universities. More than 40 thousand students study there and over three thousand teachers work there. The structure of the university includes 20 academic departments and 25 libraries. In September of this year, BSU and FUM signed a memorandum that envisages educational and scientific interaction, the development of academic mobility, and “the parties plan to cooperate in the preparation of joint educational programs, publications, implementation of research projects, holding conferences, seminars, workshops, < ...> exchange students and teachers, educational and scientific materials<sup>949</sup>. ”

In September 2023, the partners of the Brazilian university also included the Belarusian State Economic University (BSEU) and the Belarusian State University of Informatics and Radioelectronics (BSUIR), which adopted relevant memorandums with the FUM, which became the first step towards fruitful Belarusian-Brazilian cooperation in this area. In particular, BSEU and

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<sup>948</sup> Belarus and Brazil agreed to build two factories for the assembly of MTZ tractors [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-brazilija-dogovorilis-o-stroitelstve-dvuh-zavodov-po-sborke-tractorov-mtz-555498-2023/>

<sup>949</sup> A memorandum of understanding was signed between BSU and the Federal University of Minas Gerais in Brazil [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/memorandum-o-vzaimoponimanii-podpisan-mezhdu-bgu-i-federalnym-universitetom-minas-zherajs-v-brazilii-588360-2023/>

FUMZh have already identified specific areas of partnership. Firstly, “the focus is on teaching Portuguese for Belarusian students and Russian for Brazilian ones<sup>950</sup>. ” Secondly, this is the creation of joint programs in English in the specialty “World Economy”. In addition, at the Faculty of International Business Communications of BSEU, the Center for Latin American Studies has already been created and is successfully functioning, where joint projects are carried out by scientists from both universities. A center for studying the Portuguese language will also be developed<sup>951</sup>. ” All these joint projects, which are of interest to both sides and are already being implemented in the near future, will, of course, serve to bring the two peoples closer together - Belarusian and Brazilian. A rapprochement that will only deepen.

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<sup>950</sup> A memorandum of understanding was signed between BSEU and the Brazilian Federal University of Minas Gerais [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/memorandum-o-vzaimoponimanii-podpisan-mezhdu-bgeu-i-brazilskim-federalnym-universitetom-minas-zherajs-588101-2023/>

<sup>951</sup> Rector of a Brazilian university: cooperation in education will serve to bring our countries closer together [Electronic resource]. – 2023. – URL : <https://www.belta.by/society/view/rektor-brazilskogo-universiteta-sotrudnichestvo-v-obrazovanii-posluzhit-sblizheniju-nashih-stran-588136-2023/>

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