

## Priority - specific projects

The presidency of the Republic of Belarus in the Commonwealth of Independent States, which was based on the principles of continuity and aimed to implement the long-term elements of the development strategy of this integration association in the post-Soviet space in various areas, ended with the onset of 2022. The measures taken in 2021 under the auspices of the Belarusian presidency, combined with the efforts of the states at the national level, made it possible to ensure the growth of the most important macroeconomic indicators in the Commonwealth. The achievement of positive dynamics is largely due to the CIS free trade zone, which provides favorable conditions for the development of the economies of the CIS member states. In 2021, thanks to the chairmanship of Belarus, we continued to work actively with other States on a draft agreement on free trade in services, which is designed to provide additional opportunities for sustainable economic development in the post-Soviet space. The result of this work should be the signing of this document in May 2022. These and other issues of CIS integration are discussed in this study.



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Boris Zalessky



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## Priority - specific projects

*Chronicle of Integration Interaction in the  
Post-Soviet space*

**Boris Zalessky**

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# **Priority - specific projects**

**Chronicle of Integration Interaction in the Post-Soviet space**

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## Contents

CHAPTER 1 .....	2
CHAPTER 2 .....	15
CHAPTER 3 .....	24
CHAPTER 4 .....	33
CHAPTER 5 .....	45
CHAPTER 6 .....	61
CHAPTER 7 .....	64
CHAPTER 8 .....	75
CHAPTER 9 .....	78
CHAPTER 10 .....	81
CHAPTER 11 .....	91
Literature .....	95

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## CHAPTER 1

### **Commonwealth of Independent States: free trade in services, innovation, science, education**

The presidency of the Republic of Belarus in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), which is based on the principles of continuity and aims to implement the long-term elements of the development strategy of this integration association in the post-Soviet space in various areas, will end in 2022. The measures taken in 2021 under the auspices of the Belarusian chairmanship combined with the efforts of the states at the national level have made it possible to raise the main macroeconomic indicators in the CIS in January-August. "Thus, industrial output grew by 4.3%, cargo transportation (excluding pipeline transport) by 5.2%, retail trade turnover by 8.5%"<sup>1</sup>. The CIS free trade zone, which provides favourable conditions for the development of the economies of its members, has contributed greatly to these positive trends.

In 2021, thanks to Belarus' chairmanship of the CIS, active work continued with other states on a draft **agreement on free trade in services**, which is designed to provide additional opportunities for sustainable economic development in the post-Soviet space. An important detail here is that "work on the preparation of this agreement has been going on for nine years, since 2012"<sup>2</sup>. The result of this work should be the signing of this document in May 2022. Its particular relevance lies in the fact that trade in services now accounts for about half of the CIS countries' gross product. Lifting barriers in this area will further boost economic cooperation in the post-Soviet space where integration links have been steadily restored. "Thus, in the first half of this [2021] year, mutual trade grew by almost 27%, foreign trade turnover by more than a quarter, the gross

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<sup>1</sup> Roman Golovchenko: Belarus has always advocated the development of the CIS and aims to promote regional integration [Electronic resource ]:  
<http://www.government.by/ru/content/10051>

<sup>2</sup> Lebedev: CIS free trade in services agreement may be signed in May 2022 [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/lebedev-soglashenie-o-svobodnoj-torgovle-uslugami-v-sng-mozhet-byt-podpisano-v-mae-2022-godasvobodnoj-torgovle-uslugami-v-sng-mozhet-byt-podpisano-v-mae-2022-goda-469260-2021>

domestic product volume in the whole Commonwealth increased by almost 4.5%, cargo transportation and industrial production are growing"<sup>3 4 5 6</sup> .

Another very important document developed during the presidency of Belarus in this international organization is **the Complex Action Plan for 2021-2025** to implement the CIS Interstate Innovation Cooperation Program until 2030, which was approved by the CIS Council of Heads of Government in November 2021. Here it is appropriate to recall that the October (2021) meeting of the CIS Council of Heads of Government adopted a Statement on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the Commonwealth, in which, while considering trade and economic cooperation as a key factor in further deepening economic integration and sustainable development of the CIS member states, the leaders of the said states declared the need "to direct efforts towards stable economic growth through the development of green economy, digitalisation, industrial co-operation, wide application of innovation..."<sup>4</sup> .

As a reminder, the year 2020 saw the completion of **the Interstate Programme for Innovation Cooperation of CIS countries**, which was approved in October 2011 and in which the main task was to "create an interstate space uniting the capabilities of national innovation systems, giving a sustainable systemic character to innovation development, promoting the effective use of scientific and technological developments and inventions"<sup>7</sup> . During its implementation, certain results have been achieved. These include the formulation of a functioning mechanism for implementing inter-state projects, the creation of a legal framework for successful interaction between the participants, and the

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<sup>3</sup> Mishustin: a free trade agreement on services will stimulate economic cooperation in the CIS [Electronic resource]. 2021. - URL:

<https://www.belta.by/economics/view/mishustin-soglashenie-o-svobodnoj-torgovle-uslugami-prostimuliruet-ekonomicheskoe-vzaimodejstvie-v-sng-469224-2021/>

<sup>4</sup> CIS Heads of State adopted a Statement on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the Commonwealth [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/glavy-gosudarstv-sng-priniali-zaiavleme-v-svizi-s-30-letiem-sodruzhestva-464684-2021/>

<sup>7</sup> Interstate Programme for Innovation Cooperation of CIS Member States for the period until 2020 [Electronic resource]. - 2011. - URL: <https://cis.minsk.by/page/19142cis.minsk.by/page/19142>



formation of an innovation infrastructure.

With respect to the participation of the Republic of Belarus in the implementation of the provisions of the completed programme, Belarusian organizations have become executing agencies in nine out of ten inter-State projects. Among the most significant of them is the development and implementation of an integrated information system for aerospace forecast monitoring of natural emergencies, which makes it possible to reduce damage from such situations and the cost of dealing with their consequences by up to 20 per cent through timely measures. Another interesting example in this context is the development of a highly sensitive test system for the detection of hepatitis E in humans, wild and domestic pigs, rabbits and deer, on the basis of which Belarus has developed a system of anti-epidemic measures for the population.

A continuation of systematic work in this area was the adoption in November 2020 at a meeting of the Council of CIS Heads of Government of a decision on **the Interstate Programme of Innovation Cooperation of CIS Member States for the period until 2030**. This document is a "system of measures interconnected in terms of objectives, resources and timeframe, which takes into account the accumulated experience. In particular, much attention is paid to attracting extra-budgetary sources of financing for inter-state innovation projects."<sup>8</sup> . The main task of the new program is organization of large-scale production of knowledge-intensive competitive goods and perspective developments in the common Eurasian innovative space. One of the innovations that distinguish the new document from the previous one is that the new program has become more flexible in its implementation. Whereas previously there was a strict condition that at least three Commonwealth countries participate in an innovation project, now it "envisages the possibility of launching projects involving two CIS member states, and other interested

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<sup>8</sup> On the outcome of the meeting of the Council of Heads of Government of the Commonwealth of Independent States [Electronic resource]. - 2020. - URL: <https://e-cis.info/page/3758/89205/e-cis.info/page/3758/89205/>

countries can join later"<sup>9</sup>. The focus on measures to increase the efficiency of innovative activity is dictated by the fact that, in the period until 2030, world economic processes will be characterized by increased uncertainty and instability, even possible radical changes under the influence of geopolitical factors. But the most important trends, which in the next decade can really affect the development of world processes, will remain new technologies, innovative solutions in the economy, creation of a large number of own high-tech industries.<sup>10</sup> And in this respect, the Commonwealth still has a lot to do in order to get rid of those obstacles in the field of innovations, which even today the CIS member states continue to face, where there is still "a certain inertness, the time factor is not taken into account, the level of strategic planning in the spheres of innovative development and international scientific and technical cooperation is low, the measures to support small and medium, including youth, science and technology and innovative entrepreneurship are not effective enough". Successful implementation of the provisions of the new programme would help to achieve the anticipated effect in 14 directions at once, including: increasing the number of breakthrough technologies, discoveries and promising developments by providing promotion of research results in the market; building capacities within the CIS to increase the number of companies - world technology leaders; expanding scientific, technological and innovation cooperation as a basis for creating joint competitive products, including in third countries' markets.

As for the approved Comprehensive Action Plan 2021-2025, which contains specific activities, initiatives and projects with responsible executors and deadlines, they are structured into five main areas concerning normative-legal, organizational, informational, financial and personnel support for the

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<sup>9</sup> The CIS innovation cooperation programme has become more flexible and adaptive - Shumilin [Electronic resource]. - 2020. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/programmahttps://www.belta.by/society/view/programma-innovatsionnogo-sotrudnichestva-stran-sng-stala-bolee-gibkoj-i-innovatsionnogo-sotrudnichestva-stran-sng-stala-bolee-gibkoj-i-adaptivnoj-shumilin-421456-2020/>

<sup>10</sup> Interstate Programme for Innovation Cooperation of CIS Member States until 2030. - M., 2020. - C.8.

programme implementation. Successful implementation of this plan is expected to strengthen the CIS position in the new architecture of the global economic system as well as create conditions for achieving such results as "development of interstate innovation cooperation, creation of scientific-technical and technological reserves for organizing large-scale production of knowledge-intensive competitive goods and services within the common innovation space of the Commonwealth"<sup>11</sup> . Complementing these provisions, this integration association is also expected to develop a programme for the development of industrial complexes until 2025, which will be another step in the development of the CIS.

Another priority objective of Belarus' presidency of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) in 2021 was to achieve a synergetic effect from the cooperation of its member states in various areas in the post-Soviet space in order to involve the widest possible range of participants in the deepening of integration, while respecting the principle of multi-level and multi-speed integration. In the area of **science and technology**, the aim has been to "create effective mechanisms to coordinate the efforts of CIS member states in science, technology and innovation, to strengthen the innovation component of economic growth through the creation of national innovation systems and the implementation of inter-state innovation projects."<sup>12</sup> . One of the practical steps was the organization in Minsk during the last decade of November 2021 of several important events aimed at strengthening links and expanding contacts between the community of scientists and scientific organizations of the CIS countries, including the 3rd Forum of Scientists, the 9th Meeting of the Council

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<sup>11</sup> A five-year action plan for innovative cooperation has been approved in the CIS [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/v-sng-utverzhdzen-planhttps://www.belta.by/society/view/v-sng-utverzhdzen-plan-meroprijatij-na-pjatiletku-po-innovatsionnomu-sotrudnichestvumeroprijatij-na-pjatiletku-po-innovatsionnomu-sotrudnichestvu-469337-2021/>.

<sup>12</sup> Concept of the Presidency of the Republic of Belarus in the Commonwealth of Independent States in 2021 [Electronic resource]. - 2020. - URL: <https://cis.minsk.by/page/19314cis.minsk.by/page/19314>

for Cooperation in Fundamental Science and the 29th session of the Interstate Council for Cooperation in Science, Technology and Innovation.

**The 3rd CIS Scientists Forum** brought together over 150 participants - heads and leading scientists from academies of sciences, major scientific and research centres, educational organizations of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. Its main objectives were to: 1) intensify scientific and technical cooperation among Commonwealth states; 2) stimulate new collaborative research; 3) propose ways of developing innovation policy in the post-Soviet space; and 4) form an "international mobility system for scientists and young specialists in the professional community"<sup>13</sup>. At three round tables - "Status and Prospects of Basic Science", "Improvement of Scientific Cooperation in the Digital Age", "Innovative Scientific Research" - it was noted that in the context of transition to digital economy model of Commonwealth countries the importance of science increases dramatically, where interaction is based on strategy of mutually beneficial and equal cooperation and where the following principles are basic 1) preservation and further development of historical and cultural ties of the peoples of the CIS countries; 2) joining efforts to implement national interests in the implementation of scientific programs and projects; 3) formation of mutually beneficial partnerships of scientific organizations of the Commonwealth countries; 4) flexibility of collective cooperation formats and decision-making mechanisms in the implementation of joint scientific research. The Declaration "Science in the Context of Global Challenges", adopted at the end of the 3rd Forum, notes that "the scientific and technical policy pursued by the Commonwealth countries is aimed at uniting the efforts of scientists of the CIS countries in the search for new forms of interaction in the field of scientific research to solve problems in modernizing national socio-economic systems and

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<sup>13</sup> CIS scientists to adopt a declaration on cooperation in science [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/uchenye-stran-sng-primut-deklaratsiiu-o-sotrudnichestve-vhttps://www.belta.by/society/view/uchenye-stran-sng-primut-deklaratsiiu-o-sotrudnichestve-v-nauchnoj-sferenauchnoj-sfere-471428-2021/>

increasing the level of well-being and quality of life of people"<sup>14</sup> .

The **9th meeting of the CIS Council for Cooperation in Fundamental Science** noted the increasing role of fundamental science in the development of society as the basis of prosperity and well-being of future generations of our countries and proposed to develop a two-year cooperation plan in this area, focusing on areas of particular interest to the CIS scientific community - ecology, space exploration, biotechnology, digitalization, and aimed at addressing existing problems of interaction in the scientific sphere at the n "One of them is the lack of centralized funding for scientific development"<sup>15</sup> . In December 2021, a draft list of promising research projects corresponding to the priority areas of basic research of the CIS countries was finalised and sent to the Commonwealth states for completion of the intra-state agreement. "Six states take part in the work on the draft list: Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan"<sup>16</sup> . The agreed draft includes research in such areas as physical, mathematical and chemical sciences, information and communication technologies, new substances and materials, biological, agricultural and medical sciences, biotechnology and genetic engineering, environmental management and protection, nuclear, alternative and renewable energy, mechanical engineering and instrumentation, socioeconomic and human sciences, and space exploration.

At the **29th meeting of the Interstate Council for Cooperation in Science**,

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<sup>14</sup> Representatives of the CIS scientific community adopted a declaration in the context of global challenges [Electronic resource]. - 20231. - URL:

<https://www.belta.by/society/view/predstavitelihttps://www.belta.by/society/view/predstaviteli-nauchnogo-soobschestva-stran-sng-prinjali-deklaratsiju-v-kontekste-globalnyh-vyzovovnauchnogo-soobschestva-stran-sng-prinjali-deklaratsiju-v-kontekste-globalnyh-vyzovov-471791-2021/>.

<sup>15</sup> The CIS intends to develop a plan for cooperation in the basic sciences [Electronic resource] :

<https://www.belta.by/society/view/v-sng-namereny-razrabotat-plan-https://www.belta.by/society/view/v-sng-namereny-razrabotat-plan-sotrudnichestva-v-oblasti-fundamentalnyh-nauk-471803-2021/>

<sup>16</sup> CIS experts have finalised the list of projects in priority areas of basic research [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/eksperty-sng-dorabotali-perechen-proektov-po-prioritetnym-napravlenijam-fundamentalnyh-issledovanij-473644-2021>

**Technology and Innovation**, a draft concept of scientific, technical and technological cooperation of CIS countries was announced, which provides for such tasks as "development and implementation of new breakthrough technologies in priority directions of scientific and technological activities, as well as creation of new high-tech industrial enterprises to produce high-tech and innovative products"<sup>17</sup>. The system for training highly qualified scientific and engineering personnel will also undergo significant changes in the near future.

The concept of Belarus' presidency in the CIS in 2021 also envisaged that one of the priorities of the presidency in this international organization would be further strengthening of humanitarian ties and expansion of contacts in the field of education and science. The matter in question is the continuation of work to develop the legal framework aimed at the formation of a **common educational space** of the Commonwealth, promotion of "partnership relations between educational organizations of the CIS member states, and implementation of joint educational projects and programs"<sup>18</sup>.

It should be recalled that **the Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Education** between the Commonwealth Member States was signed in May 1992 in Tashkent. In this document, the parties agreed to support joint scientific research, "to contribute in every way to the maintenance and development of direct educational partnerships between the territories and educational institutions of the member states"<sup>19</sup>. Five years later, in January 1997, the legal basis of cooperation in this field was supplemented by **the Agreement on Cooperation for the Creation of a Common (Common) Educational Space**

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<sup>17</sup> The CIS has drafted a concept for scientific and technical cooperation [Electronic resource]. -2021 .  
- URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/v-sng-podgotovili-proekt-kontseptsii-nauchno-www.belta.by/society/view/v-sng-podgotovili-proekt-kontseptsii-nauchno-tehnicheskogo-sotrudnichestva-471701-2021/>

<sup>18</sup> Presidency of the Republic of Belarus in the Commonwealth of Independent States in 2021 [Electronic resource]. 2020. - URL:

<https://www.mfa.gov.by/mulateral/belaruscischairmanship2021/www.mfa.gov.by/mulateral/belaruscischairmanship2021/>

<sup>19</sup> Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Education [Electronic resource]. - 1992. - URL: <https://cis.minsk.by/page/7570>

**of the CIS**, in which the parties, pursuing the task set by this document, declared the intention to create "a mechanism of coordination of integration processes in the field of education, training and attestation of scientific and pedagogical personnel"<sup>20</sup>, and created **the Council for Cooperation in the Education** of the CIS Member States. Since then, at the initiative of this coordinating body about forty documents have been adopted in the CIS. Among them: the decisions on the concepts of development of adult education (2006) and distance learning (2007); agreements on coordination of work in the field of informatization of educational systems (2007), on professional development of teachers of educational organizations (2007), on mutual recognition of documents on higher/higher professional education (2013); regulations on the Congress of teachers and education employees (2018). In addition, within the Commonwealth 17 institutions of higher education have been given the status of basic organizations in various areas of educational activities, including Belarusian universities: Sakharov International State Environmental Institute of the Belarusian State University - basic in the CIS in environmental education; the Republican Institute of Professional Education - basic in training, retraining and professional development in vocational and secondary education and training of personnel.

Another interesting project in the Commonwealth's educational sphere is **the CIS Network University**, which was created in 2009 by a consortium agreement signed by the rectors of 11 leading universities of the Commonwealth to train highly qualified personnel and develop a common CIS educational space. Initially, it was planned to train personnel in the humanities and social disciplines. However, in 2010, the technical vector began to develop, and such areas as oil and gas engineering and construction began to appear. The essence of training specialists here is that "when students from Commonwealth countries study at a network university, they have an opportunity to obtain a bilateral

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<sup>20</sup> Agreement on Cooperation to Form a Common (Common) Educational Space of the Commonwealth of Independent States [Electronic resource]. - 1997. - URL: <https://cis.minsk.by/page/7552cis.minsk.by/page/7552>

education document, and this automatically improves their competitiveness in the labour market"<sup>21</sup> . We note that from 2010 to 2019, 1,100 Master's students have studied here. And today 38 universities from 9 CIS member states "participate in this project"<sup>22</sup> , including two domestic universities - Belarusian State University and Belarusian National Technical University. In particular, undergraduates of Belarusian State University study international law in the fields of "Management", "Economics", "Philology" and "International relations". And "upon successful passing the state examination and defending a master's thesis a graduate receives two diplomas: Russian and Belarusian"<sup>23</sup> .

In May 2020, during the meeting of the CIS Council of Heads of Government, the Agreement on the Establishment and Operation of the CIS Network University was signed, which effectively legalised at the governmental level the interuniversity project that had existed for more than ten years. In December 2020 the House of Representatives of the National Assembly of the Republic of Belarus ratified this document, which should give a new impetus to the development of educational interaction in the Commonwealth. The entry into force of this agreement, signed to improve the quality of training in higher education institutions, the implementation of joint scientific and scientific-technical projects of priority importance to the member states, support the learning of languages, culture and traditions of the peoples of the CIS countries, "will create the necessary conditions to expand and deepen contacts between the countries in the humanitarian and educational sphere"<sup>24</sup> , will strengthen

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<sup>21</sup> . More than 800 people were trained at the CIS Networking University [Electronic resource]. - 2019. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/boleee-800-chelovek-proshli-obuchenie-v-setevom-universitete-snghttps://www.belta.by/society/view/boleee-800-chelovek-proshli-obuchenie-v-setevom-universitete-sng-337497-2019/>.

<sup>22</sup> Information on the activities of the Council for Cooperation in the Field of Education of the Commonwealth of Independent States to Form a Common Educational Space in the CIS [Electronic resource]. - 2020. - URL: <https://e-cis.info/cooperation/3063/79383/e-cis.info/cooperation/3063/79383/>

<sup>23</sup> CIS Network University [Electronic resource]. - 2020. - URL: <https://ums.bsu.by/ru/am/cis-nethttps://ums.bsu.by/ru/am/cis-net- university>

<sup>24</sup> Deputies ratified the agreement on the establishment and functioning of the CIS Network University [Electronic resource]. - 2020. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/deputaty-ratifikatsirovalihttps://www.belta.by/society/view/deputaty-ratifikatsirovali- soglashenie-ob-uchrezhdenii->



cooperation and inter-university relations in the field of higher education in Eurasia. As a result, it will facilitate the implementation of the task of creating a common CIS educational space.

Among the concrete steps that have been taken in 2021 to promote the formation of a common Commonwealth educational space is the **6th Congress of CIS Teachers and Education Workers**, which was held in late October in Dushanbe and brought together representatives of the education system from Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, with its main theme being 'The Commonwealth of Independent States Education Space - a Strategic Resource for Sustainable Development'. We should say at once that holding such an event is a unique phenomenon in world practice, as 'in no other region of the world is there inter-state cooperation in the field of education, covering the entire spectrum of educational services, from childhood to vocational guidance for young people, higher vocational education and adult education'<sup>25</sup>.

The Fifth Congress was held in Bishkek in October 2018. The three years that have passed since then have shown that the national education systems of the Commonwealth countries have been successfully developing in a number of areas: from improving management and updating the content of education, introducing innovative information technologies to forming a modern educational environment, increasing the professional competence of teaching staff, and developing an inclusive approach in education. One of the positive trends of this period is the "activation of interaction between the CIS countries on the basis of bilateral and multilateral agreements on education"<sup>26</sup>. In

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[i-funktsionirovanii-setevogo-universiteta-sngsoglashenie-ob-uchrezhdenii-i-funktsionirovanii-setevogo-universiteta-sng-420406-2020/](https://www.belsta.by/society/view/strany-sng-namereny-aktivizirovat-vzaimodejstvie-v-obrazovatelnoj-sfere-467074-2021)

<sup>25</sup> Congress of Teachers and Education Workers of the CIS Member States [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://cis.minsk.by/page/show?id=7774>

<sup>26</sup> CIS countries intend to intensify cooperation in the field of education [Electronic resource] : <https://www.belsta.by/society/view/strany-sng-namereny-aktivizirovat-vzaimodejstvie-v-obrazovatelnoj-sfere-467074-2021>

particular, over the past period, the Belarusian education authorities have concluded 10 cooperation agreements and treaties, including an agreement with the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Tajikistan on cooperation in secondary vocational education.

Among other projects implemented by the Belarusian side during the period between the Congresses, we should mention a few more. In terms of the implementation of modern approaches in the field of education in Belarus, a series of manuals "Competence-based approach" for grades 1-9 in all curricula has been published. In 2019, a scientific study "Development of scientific and methodological support for the formation of supraprofessional competencies of specialists for innovative industries in the process of continuous professional education" was carried out. Speaking about formation of common approaches to assessment of results of competence-based education and development of state and independent systems of education quality assessment, it should be noted that the World Bank project "Modernization of Higher Education in the Republic of Belarus" planned to create a new national agency for education quality assurance and to join the European Association of Quality Assurance Agencies. And at the beginning of December 2021, "the government agreed on the establishment of a National Agency for Quality Assurance in Education by the Ministry of Education"<sup>27</sup>.

Developing the digital infrastructure and technologies in education management, Belarus has been developing a Unified Information and Educational Resource for Software and Methodological Support of the Educational Process, and, as of September 1, 2020, the "Profile Learning" resource for educational and methodological support for studying academic disciplines at an advanced level in the tenth grade has started to function. In pre-school education, tools are

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<sup>27</sup> The National Agency for Quality Assurance in Education will be created in Belarus [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/natsionalnoe-agentstvo-po-obespechenijuhttps://www.belta.by/society/view/natsionalnoe-agentstvo-po-obespecheniju-kachestva-obrazovanija-sozhdadut-v-belarusikachestva-obrazovanija-sozhdadut-v-belarusi-473393-2021>

being developed for the evaluation of its quality in the context of the competence-based approach, as well as scientific and methodological support for the development of a national system for the evaluation of the quality of education at the pre-school, general secondary and special education levels. It is expected that, on the basis of the results obtained, a national system for the evaluation of the quality of preschool education will be created by 2030.

In Belarus, additional education programmes for children and young people are supported in the following areas: technical, sports and technical, tourism and local history, ecology and biology, physical education and sports, art, socio-economic, socio-pedagogy, culture and leisure, military patriotism, natural science and mathematics, and social and humanitarian issues. A special type of educational institution, the National Children's Technology Park, is being established in the country in order to work with gifted children and young people on a systematic basis. The integration of education and science in the CIS has been actively pursued over the past three years, including through cooperation between academic institutions and universities. For example, Belarusian participants have interacted particularly effectively and will continue to expand these partnerships with institutions and organizations in Azerbaijan, Russia and Uzbekistan in the framework of agreements on scientific, scientific-technical and innovative cooperation.

The resolution adopted by the 6th Congress outlines a detailed programme of action for the development of the Commonwealth's common educational space, where much attention is paid to international cooperation. In particular, it provides for 'expanding the range of educational programmes, including joint programmes, to develop the import and export of educational services in the CIS Member States'<sup>28</sup>. All this will make it possible to form a common educational space here at all levels: preschool, school, secondary and higher professional, postgraduate and academic.

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<sup>28</sup> Resolution of the VI Congress of Teachers and Education Workers of the Commonwealth of Independent States (28-29 October 2021, Dushanbe) [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://e-cis.info/cooperation/3173/96167/>

## CHAPTER 2

### **Commonwealth of Independent States: Towards the First Forum of Regions**

In December 2021, the tenth meeting of the Council for Interregional and Border Cooperation of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) was held to discuss preparations for the first CIS Forum of Regions. Due to the unfavourable epidemiological situation, the forum will be held in 2022. The draft programme of the forum envisages four panel sessions, an exhibition of agricultural products and achievements of CIS regions. The sessions will focus on the development of regional cooperation in industry, transport and transit, agriculture and entrepreneurship. The focus of the Council on this topic is explained by the fact that "it is inter-regional cooperation which is the basis for further development of mutual trade and entails cooperation in the market of production, investment and labour resources"<sup>29</sup>. The following figures show how relevant this issue is for the Republic of Belarus. More than 800 documents on trade, economic, scientific, technical and humanitarian cooperation with partners in the CIS countries are in force in Belarusian regions. In January-October 2021 the foreign trade turnover with these countries increased by 36 per cent and came close to 40 billion dollars. This interaction is particularly active with the regions of Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. In particular, **Russia accounts for** about 80 per cent of all inter-regional cooperation documents, and one of the most successful forms of developing these partnerships has been the holding of bilateral regional forums. The eighth such forum took place in 2021, during which contracts in the real sector worth \$800 million were signed, facilitated by the fact that "there are about 80 regions involved in this interregional cooperation on the Russian side"<sup>30</sup>. One of the

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<sup>29</sup> Strahar: Interregional cooperation is the basis for the development of mutual CIS trade [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/strahar-mezhregionalnoe-sotrudnichestvo-javljaetsja-bazisom-dlja-razvitiya-vzaimnoj-torgovli-v-sng-474946-2021/>.

<sup>30</sup> Zalesky, B.L. From forum of regions - to the expansion of cooperation / B.L. Zalesky // Materials of the XVII International scientific and practical conference "Proceedings of academic science - 2021", August 30 - September 7, 2021: Sheffield. Science and education LTD. - C. 16.

leaders on the Russian side is **Moscow**. Over ten months of 2021 trade turnover between the Republic of Belarus and Russia increased by 27 per cent at once and exceeded \$3.7 billion, with a surplus of over \$1.2 billion for the Belarusian side. This was due to deliveries from Belarus of cars, footwear with natural leather uppers, non-alloy steel bars, railway and tram cars, cheese and cottage cheese, hosiery, dried, salted and smoked fish, butter, furniture and parts thereof. It is also a fact that "some 20 per cent of the Russian capital's food imports come from Belarus, especially dairy products. <...> A lot of Belarusian-made vehicles are used by the city's public utilities and services, and modern eco-friendly electric transport is particularly valued by the population..."<sup>31</sup> . It should be assumed that all these positive trends will be preserved and continued in the new cooperation programme of the parties for 2023-2025, which will be developed in 2022.

As for **Kazakhstan**, its regions interact with Belarusian partners under some 20 documents on interregional cooperation. A good example in this regard is demonstrated by the **Kostanay** and **Grodno** regions, which signed a cooperation roadmap for 2022-2023 at the end of September 2021. For the Belarusian region, this Central Asian country is generally one of the five largest foreign economic partners, with trade turnover having increased by half over the last five years. At the same time, "now Grodno Region supplies its products to 13 regions of Kazakhstan. The main commodity positions include meat and dairy products, woodworking and mechanical engineering products. In the first six months of 2021, exports to Kostanay Region totaled \$3.1 million."<sup>32</sup> . It is believed that the adoption of the road map, which deals with activation of cooperation in investment and trade and economic spheres, as well as in agriculture, tourism, culture, healthcare and education, will give new impetus to

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<sup>31</sup> Industry, transport, humanitarian sector: Minsk discussed areas for cooperation between Belarus and Moscow [Electronic resource]. -2021 .-URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/promyshlennost-transport-gumanitarnaya-sfera-v-minske-obsudili-napravlenij-a-sotrudnichestva-belarusi-s-474907-2021/>

<sup>32</sup> Grodno and Kostanay regions have signed a road map for cooperation development [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/dorozhnyu-kartu-po-razvitiyu-sotrudnichestva-podpisali-grodnenskaj-a-i-kostanaj-skaj-a-oblasti-462339-2021/>

this interaction and lead to new deliveries of products of Grodno Region enterprises and possible organization of joint assembly production in Kostanay Region.

The capitals of **Minsk** and **Bishkek** remain the flagships in the development of cooperation between the regions of Belarus and **Kyrgyzstan**. In November 2021, the twin cities reached new practical arrangements in the implementation of the partnership. The fact is that the Kyrgyz capital needs about 1,200 units of urban public transport today. Both CNG buses and electric buses are needed. A number of Minsk enterprises have already expressed their willingness to provide necessary assistance to their partners from Bishkek. All the more so because "several watering cars manufactured in Belarus" have recently appeared there<sup>33</sup>, which the capital's residents liked. As a result, Minsk discussed not only supplies of certain vehicles from the Belarusian capital, but also establishment of joint ventures in Bishkek to service and assemble them. In this regard, we would like to remind you that "an assembly facility for BELARUS tractors has already been set up in Bishkek. Machines for the needs of the municipal sphere can also be assembled there. The site is ready, there are qualified specialists, a service centre. To start production, we need to solve the issues related to the supply of components"<sup>34</sup>.

The partnership ties between the regions of Belarus and **Uzbekistan** developed in an interesting way in 2021. Specifically, in May, the Belarusian **Gomel Region** and the Uzbek **Navoi Region** outlined the main areas for the development of bilateral cooperation in trade and economic and investment, education, tourism, and agriculture, as well as in the operation of technology parks and the creation of favorable conditions for the development of the IT

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<sup>33</sup> Mayor of Bishkek: we are interested in buying Belarusian machinery [Electronic resource]. - 2021. URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/mer-bishkeka-my-zainteresovany-v-zakupke-belorusskojj-tehniki-469870-2021/>

<sup>34</sup> Bishkek plans to purchase machinery from MTZ for street cleaning [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/bishkek-planirujut-zakupit-u-mtz-tehniku-dlja-uborki-ulitshttps://www.belta.by/economics/view/bishkek-planirujut-zakupit-u-mtz-tehniku-dlja-uborki-ulits-470601-2021/>.

industry. These agreements were a logical continuation of the agreement on cooperation in trade, economic, scientific, technical and humanitarian spheres, which the two regions signed in 2019 at the First Forum of Regions of Belarus and Uzbekistan. Now, the Gomel and Navoi regions have expressed their intention to significantly intensify their partnership.

Gomel residents are developing cooperation with other Uzbek partners, cooperation agreements with which were signed at the First Forum of Regions of the two countries. Back in July 2020, an online forum of representatives of business circles of the Gomel and **Fergana regions** was held, with Belarusian business entities such as Gomel Meat and Milk Holding Management Company OJSC, Gomeloblprom state enterprise, and Sozh Trading House OJSC among its participants. The participants of the online forum constructively considered "the issues of bilateral cooperation in terms of trade in fruits and vegetables, textile, meat and dairy products , construction materials, agricultural machinery and equipment. The parties also discussed the possibility of opening a trading house of Fergana region in Gomel"<sup>35</sup> . In particular, one of the major exporters of fruit and vegetable products in Ferghana Region, Uz-Segang JV LLC, suggested cooperation with partners in Gomel Region in the form of establishing a single distribution centre for Uzbek vitamin products. Gomeloblprom applied to textile company A. Akbarali Ltd. Akbarali to establish supplies of cotton yarn to the Belarusian region.

**Khorezm** Region is Gomel Region's third Uzbek partner. The cooperation agreement signed by the parties in July 2019 named "trade and economic, scientific and cultural spheres, tourism, and healthcare" among promising areas for cooperation<sup>36</sup> . At the same time, Gomselmash entered into a cooperation

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<sup>35</sup> Uzbek companies are interested in cooperation with partners from the Gomel region [Electronic resource]. - 2020. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/uzbekskie-kompaniihttps://www.belta.by/regions/view/uzbekskie-kompanii- zainterisovany-v-sotrudnichestve-s-partnerami-iz-gomelskoj-oblastizainterisovany-v-sotrudnichestve-s-partnerami-iz-gomelskoj-oblasti-398194-2020/>

<sup>36</sup> Gomel region will sign three agreements with Uzbekistan at the First Forum of Regions [Electronic resource]. - 2019. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/gomelskaja-oblast-podpishet-tri-soglashenija-shttps://www.belta.by/regions/view/gomelskaja-oblast-podpishet-tri-soglashenija-s-.-na->

agreement with Urgenchkormmash, a joint-stock company from Khorezm Region, a forage harvester plant. All in all, in preparation for the First Forum of Regions of Belarus and Uzbekistan, Gomel Oblast companies signed contracts with their Uzbek partners worth nearly 1.5 million dollars.

All of these facts suggest that the Uzbek market is very promising for enterprises in the Gomel region. In 2020, the trade turnover of the Belarusian region with this Central Asian country grew by almost 65 percent and exceeded 17 million dollars. "Polymers, dairy products, wallpaper, screws, hardware, timber are exported to Uzbekistan. Among the exporters are KolorMaster JLLC (polyvinyl chloride), Svetlogorsk Welding Electrode Plant LLC (mechanical devices, machine tools), Milkavita OJSC, Kalinkovichi Dairy Plant UE (milk powder), Svetlogorsk Khimvolokno OJSC (chemical threads)"<sup>37</sup>.

Obviously, the aforementioned First Belarus-Uzbekistan Regions Forum, which took place in Minsk in July 2019 and opened "new horizons of cooperation in such areas as industrial cooperation, agro-industrial complex, food industry, as well as in cultural, humanitarian, information and communication and scientific spheres," contributed to a significant increase in cooperation between specific regions of the two countries<sup>38</sup>. The forum was attended by over two hundred participants from Uzbek regions such as Andijan, Bukhara, Djizak, Namangan, Samarkand, Khorezm, Fergana and Tashkent. The forum's impact is borne out by the fact that 26 direct agreements between the regions were adopted at the forum. In addition to the three documents of Gomel Oblast, agreements on cooperation in trade, economic, scientific, technological and humanitarian spheres were signed by the regions of Grodno with Samarkand and Andijan,

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<sup>37</sup> Gomel Region and Navoi Region of Uzbekistan intend to develop cooperation in the IT-industry [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: [https://www.bel.by/society/view/gomelskaja-oblast-i-navoijskij-region-uzbekistana-namereny-razvivat-sotrudnichestvo-v-it-otraslinavoijskij-region-uzbekistan-namereny-razvivat-sotrudnichestvo-v-it-otrasli-440395-2021/](https://www.bel.by/society/view/gomelskaja-oblast-ihttps://www.bel.by/society/view/gomelskaja-oblast-i-navoijskij-region-uzbekistana-namereny-razvivat-sotrudnichestvo-v-it-otraslinavoijskij-region-uzbekistan-namereny-razvivat-sotrudnichestvo-v-it-otrasli-440395-2021/)

<sup>38</sup> Forum of Regions opens new horizons for Belarus and Uzbekistan in many areas - Safaev [Electronic resource]. - 2019. - URL: <https://www.bel.by/economics/view/forum-regionovhttps://www.bel.by/economics/view/forum-regionov-.-novye-gorizonty-dlja-belarusi-i-uzbekistana-vo-mnogih-oblastjah-safaevotkryl-novye-gorizonty-dlja-belarusi-i-uzbekistan-vo-mnogih-oblastjah-safaev-356612-2019/>



Vitebsk with Namangan, Brest with Bukhara and Syrdarya. Similar documents have been signed between the Mogilev, Andijan, and Dzhizak regions. Minsk Oblast Executive Committee has agreed on cooperation in the social sphere with Tashkent Oblast. An action plan has been signed for 2019-2020 to implement the agreement between the Tashkent Khokimiyat and the Minsk City Executive Committee on trade, economic, scientific, technical, and cultural cooperation"<sup>39</sup>. The growing importance of Uzbek partners for the Belarusian regions as a whole is evidenced by these figures already for 2021. According to the results of the first quarter, the volume of mutual trade between Belarus and Uzbekistan increased by another quarter to \$67.5 million. An important detail: "The export of Belarusian goods during this period rose by 37.4% to \$58.7 million <...>. The balance of Belarus' foreign trade in goods was positive and totaled \$49.8 million"<sup>40</sup>. This happened due to the increase of supplies of chilled and frozen beef, medicines and polymers, tractors and trucks to the Uzbek market. Without the most committed involvement of Belarusian regions, it would have been extremely difficult to achieve such results.

Tajikistan is also among those countries in Central Asia whose trade and economic relations with the regions of the Republic of Belarus have been developing particularly intensively over the past year and a half. Thus, while in 2020 the volume of mutual trade between them increased "almost threefold and exceeded \$111 million"<sup>41</sup>, in January-August 2021 alone the trade turnover

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<sup>39</sup> A package of interregional cooperation agreements signed at the First Forum of Regions of Belarus and Uzbekistan [Electronic resource]. - 2019. - URL:

<https://www.belta.by/economics/view/pakethttps://www.belta.by/economics/view/paket-mezhregionalnyh-soglashenij-o-sotrudnichestve-podpisan-na-i-forume-regionov-belarusi-imezhregionalnyh-soglashenij-o-sotrudnichestve-podpisan-na-i-forume-regionov-belarusi-i-356632-2019/>

<sup>40</sup> Belarus-Uzbekistan trade turnover in the first quarter increased by 25.3% to 67.5 million [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/tovarooborot-mezhduhttps://www.belta.by/economics/view/tovarooborot-mezhdu-.i-uzbekistanom-za-i-kvartal-uvlichilsja-na-253-do-675-mlnbelarusiju-i-uzbekistanom-za-i-kvartal-uvlichilsja-na-253-do-675-mln-440482-2021/>

<sup>41</sup> Ambassador: Belarusian projects in Tajikistan are not justified, they have an economic impact. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/posol-belorusskie-proekty-v-tadzhikistane-ne-prosto-obosnovany-a-tadzhikistane-ne-prosto-obosnovany-a-daj-ut-ut-ekonomicheskij-efekt-459969-2021-efekt-459969-2021/>

came close to \$110 million, "including Belarusian exports - \$107.5 million"<sup>42</sup> . Supplies from Belarus such as tractors and tractor trucks, sugar, motor vehicles designed to carry ten or more people, oil products, insulated wires, cables, paper and cardboard stationery and tyres played a major role in achieving those figures. The fact that there are already "about 20 dealers of Belarusian manufacturers - in Tajikistan - speaks volumes. We are talking about assembly of tractors, Bobruiskagromash and Gomselmash machinery. Joint projects in the dairy industry are also being prepared,"<sup>43</sup> , in each of which cooperation between specific regions of the two countries should play a decisive role.

It should be reminded that the theme of intensifying interregional cooperation was discussed back in April 2021 at the 14th meeting of the Tajik-Belarusian intergovernmental commission on trade and economic cooperation, where "topical issues of cooperation in industry and production cooperation, agriculture and transport, health and education, investment and information technology" were considered<sup>44</sup> . An important detail: today such regions of Tajikistan and Belarus are developing trade and economic, scientific, technical and cultural ties within the framework of the signed agreements on cooperation: Sughd region - with Vitebsk, Minsk and Mogilev regions, Khatlon and Gomel regions, the cities of Minsk and Dushanbe, Khujand and Mogilev, Yavan and Uzden districts.

**Minsk Region is one of** the most active participants in Belarus-Tajikistan interregional cooperation, whose foreign trade turnover with Tajikistan more than tripled and exceeded USD 22 million in the first eight months of 2021. Implementation of the cooperation agreement with **Sughd Region**, signed in 2014, played a key role in achieving such indicators. At the same time, the

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<sup>42</sup> Trade and economic cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2021 . - URL: [https://taiikistan.mfa.gov.by/ru/bilateral relations/belarus tajikistan/trade economic/](https://taiikistan.mfa.gov.by/ru/bilateral%20relations/belarus%20tajikistan/trade%20economic/)

<sup>43</sup> Denisenko: the friendship of the leaders of Belarus and Tajikistan is a good basis for comprehensive cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: [https://www.belta.by/politics/view/denisenko-druzhiba-liderov-belarusi-i-tadzhikistana-horoshaia-osnova-dlja-vsestoronnego-sotrudnichestva-460655- 2021/](https://www.belta.by/politics/view/denisenko-druzhiba-liderov-belarusi-i-tadzhikistana-horoshaia-osnova-dlja-vsestoronnego-sotrudnichestva-460655-2021/).

<sup>44</sup> Zalesky, B.L. In the Course of Positive Dynamics of Cooperation / B.L. Zalesky // Materialy XVIII Mezinarodni vedecko-prakticka conference "Efektivni nastroje modernich ved - 2021". Volume 5: Prague. Publishing House "Education and Science". - C. 13.

parties do not intend to rest on their laurels, outlining new plans for mutually beneficial partnerships. In particular, at a meeting between regional leaders A. Turchin and R. Ahmadzoda in early November 2021, they discussed a number of new promising areas of cooperation. One of the obvious priorities is the Belarusian light industry, which can use Tajik cotton as its raw material. Belarus also expressed its interest in establishing joint ventures to process cotton in Tajikistan. As for the Tajik partners of the Belarusian capital region, they are interested "in supplying vegetables and fruits to Belarus, as well as receiving high-quality Belarusian potato seeds. Within 3-4 years, the region plans to increase its potato output to 1 million tonnes"<sup>45</sup>. On the whole, the two sides plan to seriously expand their bilateral ties in the near future. This is evidenced by the fact that at a business meeting in November 2021, "representatives of over 30 Tajik and Belarusian companies held talks on possible cooperation in mechanical engineering, healthcare, woodworking, food and processing industries"<sup>46</sup>. A memorandum of cooperation between the cities of Zhodino and Gulistan, signed in November 2021, should also help expand cooperation between the two regions.

**Mogilev Region** also intends to actively develop partnerships with Sughd Region. The parties signed a cooperation agreement in 2017. And in the three quarters of 2021, trade turnover between them increased by almost a third more. And in this case we are talking about an active search for new opportunities for cooperation. One of the priorities is to set up joint production facilities. Given that Mogilev is home to Mogotex, the largest Belarusian textile producer, Mogotex is seriously interested in supplying cotton from Tajikistan. And the Tajik partners, who annually increase the cultivation area of this crop, have their own interest: to set up a joint venture with the Belarusian side to process cotton.

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<sup>45</sup> Cotton, fruit, potato seeds: Minsk region plans to increase cooperation with Tajikistan [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/hlopok-frukty-semena-kartofelja-minskaj-a-oblast-planiruet-naraschivat-sotrudnichestvo-s-tadzshikistanom-467756-2021/>.

<sup>46</sup> Enterprises of Minsk and Sughd oblasts are interested in cooperation in the sphere of industry [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/predpriyatija-minskaj-i-sogdijskoj-oblastej-zainteresovany-v-sotrudnichestve-v-sfere-promyshlennosti-468050-2021/>.

"This will make it possible to create several thousand new jobs here [in Sughd Oblast].<sup>47</sup> . Mogilevliftmash is also planning to set up joint production of lifts in the Tajik region. This is just a part of the proposals voiced in November 2021 at a business meeting in Mogilev, during which the cooperation agreement was signed by the Mogilev branch of the Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Sughd Oblast Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Besides, "Mogilev plant Strommashina OJSC and Nord Asia Metal CJSC have agreed to sign a letter of intent for the implementation of the project on production and supply of technological equipment for the production of asbestos-cement sheets"<sup>48</sup> . And representatives of other Mogilev enterprises from a number of industries have established contacts for trade in finished products and raw materials. And this is encouraging.

As we can see, the links between the regions of the post-Soviet space are gradually being filled with concrete projects, stimulating integration processes in the Commonwealth today and demonstrating the relevance of holding the First CIS Forum of Regions in 2022.

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<sup>47</sup> Zayats: Mogilev Region and Sughd Region of Tajikistan are interested in close cooperation and implementation of projects [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL:

<https://www.belta.by/regions/view/zajats-mogilevskij-region-i-sogdijskaja-oblast-tadzhikistanahhttps://www.belta.by/regions/view/zajats-mogilevskij-region-i-sogdijskaja-oblast-tadzhikistana-.v-tesnom-sotrudnichestve-izainteresovany-v-tesnom-sotrudnichestve-i-467893-2021/>

<sup>48</sup> The Mogilev branch of the Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Sughd Oblast Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Tajikistan signed a cooperation agreement [Electronic resource]:

<https://www.belta.by/economics/view/mogilevskoe-otdelenie-beltp-i-tpp-sogdijskoj-oblasti-tadzhikistana-podpisali-soglashenie-o-468065-2021/>

**Eurasian Economic Union:  
to build on  
cooperation mechanisms  
already in place**

The Strategic Framework for Eurasian Economic Integration until 2025, approved in December 2020, lists among the main objectives the further formation of the Eurasian Economic Union's (EAEU) contractual and legal framework with third countries and their integration associations to create preferential trade regimes for the development and all-round deepening of trade and economic cooperation. In fact, the intensification of economic cooperation with foreign countries and international organisations over the next five years should become one of the most important areas of the EAEU, which "will allow coordinated work on the integration processes in the Eurasian space"<sup>49</sup>.

In December 2021, a meeting of the Supreme Eurasian Economic Council approved the main directions of the EAEU's international activities for 2022, which deal with the development of already established cooperation mechanisms with third countries, regional integration associations and international organisations, as well as identify potentially promising partners. In particular, "cooperation with the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the European Union (EU), the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum... will be a priority for the EAEU in 2022"<sup>50</sup>. At the same time, the international activities of this association will be focused on solving such urgent tasks of Eurasian economic integration as export development, transport and energy infrastructure, industrial cooperation, introduction of new technologies, as well as creating conditions for joint entry of

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<sup>49</sup> Zalessky, B.L. Eurasian integration in the context of the great partnership on the continent / B.L. Zalessky // Materiały XVII Międzynarodowej naukowo-praktycznej konferencji "Naukowa myśl informacyjnej powieki - 2021", Volume 1. Przemysł: Nauka i studia. - C.24.

<sup>50</sup> The EEU approved the main directions of international activities for 2022 [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://eec.eaeunion.org/news/v-caes-utverdili-osnovnye-napravleniyahttps://eec.eaeunion.org/news/v-caes-utverdili-osnovnye-napravleniya-mezhdunarodnoj-deyatelnosti-na-2022-godmezhdunarodnoj-deyatelnosti-na-2022-god/>.

member states' enterprises into third countries' markets, including states of South-East Asia, the Middle East, the Indo-Pacific region, North Africa, the Latin American continent.

In 2022, the presidency of the EAEU passed to Kyrgyzstan, which intends to focus primarily on achieving the goals laid down in the strategic directions of Eurasian economic integration until 2025.<sup>51</sup> An indisputable priority in this regard is international cooperation, which is "important to develop both the dialogue format of cooperation and trade and economic relations with third countries by signing trade agreements in order to enter new promising markets..."<sup>52</sup>, so that producers from the countries that are part of this integration formation, including Belarus, "receive the most favorable conditions when exporting their products to foreign markets and consumers receive safe, high-quality and inexpensive goods" xml-ph-

As a reminder, by early 2022, the EAEU had already concluded preferential agreements on free trade zones (FTAs) with Vietnam, Serbia, Singapore, and an interim agreement with Iran. An agreement on trade and economic cooperation with the People's Republic of China has also entered into force. Regarding the search for potential partners, "negotiations for a FTA with Egypt and Israel are at an active stage, work is underway to prepare the first round of negotiations with India, and negotiations have started to prepare for a full free trade agreement with Mongolia and Indonesia."<sup>53</sup> And intensive work continues on identifying and negotiating new partners.

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<sup>51</sup> Zalessky, B.L. Vectors of Eurasian integration - Indonesia, Chile, Egypt / B.L. Zalessky // Materialy XV Mezinarodni vedecko-prakticka konference "Vedecky prumysl evropskeho kontinentu - 2019". Volume 6: Praha. Publishing House "Education and Science". - C. 11.

<sup>52</sup> Address by President Sadyr Japarov to the Heads of the EEU Member States on the occasion of Kyrgyzstan's Presidency of the Union in 2022 [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://eec.eaeuion.org/news/obrashhenie-prezidenta-sadyra-zhaparova-k-glavam-gosudarstvhttps://eec.eaeuion.org/news/obrashhenie-prezidenta-sadyra-zhaparova-k-glavam-gosudarstv-E2%80%93chlenov-caes-po-sluchayu-predsdatelstvovaniya-kyrgyzstana-v-organakh-soyuzav-2022-godugodu/>.

<sup>53</sup> Gorelik, Y. Without industrial lockdowns and reduction of export activity / Y. Gorelik // [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/bez-promyshlennyh-lokdaunov-i-snizhenija-eksportnoj-aktivnosti-predstavitel-mid-o-vneshnetorgovojlokdaunov-i-snizhenija-eksportnoj-aktivnosti-predstavitel-mid-o-vneshnetorgovoj-477276-2021/>.

Thus, in December 2021, following the Second Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU)-Latin America and the Caribbean (LACB) Forum: Removing Barriers and Building Bridges for Business Cooperation", the Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC) signed a joint statement with the Permanent Secretariat of the Latin American Economic System, in which the parties reaffirmed their commitment to developing and strengthening all-round cooperation, noting the strategic importance of relations between the two regions. Note that for the EAEU, the Latin America and Caribbean region is strategically important. This is evidenced by the fact that the dynamics of trade between the parties "reached a peak in 2018 of \$17.6 billion. USD 17.6 BILLION. Agricultural products, fruits and nuts, oilseeds and fruits, meat and fish remain the main imports. The EAEU countries in turn export to LACB fertilizers, ferrous metals, mineral fuels, cereals and other goods"<sup>54</sup> . Recently, cooperation in such areas as pharmaceuticals, mechanical engineering, and information and communication services has started to grow. Bioengineering, green technology and services such as tourism and education could be new areas of cooperation. Among the main reasons for the still insufficient level of trade and economic cooperation in the joint statement were "low level of awareness of the subjects of economic relations about the needs and opportunities of business in the EAEU and the LEC, <...> lack of modern trade and economic agreements between the countries and the integration associations of the EAEU and the LECB"<sup>55</sup> . As a result, an agreement was reached to move from agreeing on general areas of cooperation to substantive negotiations involving interested business

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<sup>54</sup> The EAEU and Latin American countries aim to reach pre-crisis trade performance in 2021 [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://eec.eaeunion.org/news/eaes-i-stranyhttps://eec.eaeunion.org/news/eaes-i-strany-latinskoj-ameriki-namereny-vyjti-na-dokrizisnye-pokazateli-torgovli-po-itogam-2021-godalatinskoj-ameriki-namereny-vyjti-na-dokrizisnye-pokazateli-torgovli-po-itogam-2021-goda/>

<sup>55</sup> ECE and the Permanent Secretariat of the Latin American Economic System declare the move to substantive negotiations on trade and economic cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://eec.eaeunion.org/news/cek-i-postoyannyj-sekretariat-latinoamerikanskoj-ekonomicheskijhttps://eec.eaeunion.org/news/cek-i-postoyannyj-sekretariat-latinoamerikanskoj-ekonomicheskij-sistemy-zayavili-o-perehode-k-predmetnym-peregovoram-o-torgovo-ekonomicheskom-sotrudnichestvesistemy-zayavili-o-perehode-k-predmetnym-peregovoram-o-torgovo-ekonomicheskom-sotrudnichestve/>

representatives. Possible areas of cooperation included post-commodity and green economy, economic methods of combating climate change, ensuring sustainable and inclusive growth, and expanding the participation of small and medium-sized businesses in foreign trade.

The EAEU's 2025 Joint Action Plan with Cuba, signed in December 2021, which covers 34 areas of cooperation, appears to be a kind of complement to the development of relations with the LACB. For Cuba, the document is important in the context of implementing the country's National Economic and Social Development Plan until 2030 and the Economic and Social Strategy to stimulate the economy and overcome the global crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. At the same time, "the Cuban side has shown a particular interest in strengthening the sectoral dialogue, in particular in the areas of technical regulation and the regulation of the circulation of medicines in the EAEU"<sup>56</sup>.

Other international organisations with which the EEU plans to intensify mutually beneficial cooperation in the near future include the International Sugar Organisation (ISO), which now brings together 87 states and promotes international cooperation in terms of sugar production, consumption and circulation. In December 2021, the EEC and the ISO signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) which sets out the main directions and activities for cooperation to take the two organisations to "the horizon of practical cooperation <...> to develop effective measures to develop a common market for sugar and sugar-containing products"<sup>57</sup>.

When it comes to the development of EAEU cooperation with partners on different continents, at the end of 2021 its structures were particularly active in interacting with such Asian countries as China, Iran, Mongolia and Bangladesh.

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<sup>56</sup> The EEU and Cuba signed a plan of joint actions until 2025 [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://eec.eaeunion.org/news/eaes-i-kuba-podpisali-plan-sovmestnyh-dejstvij-do-2025-goda-/>

<sup>57</sup> ECE and the International Sugar Organisation signed a Memorandum of Understanding [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://eec.eaeunion.org/news/cek-i-mezhdunarodnaya-organizatsiya-po-saharu-podpisali-memorandum-o-vzaimoponimaniioorganizatsiya-po-saharu-podpisali-memorandum-o-vzaimoponimanii/>.



Thus, in December 2021, at the 2nd meeting of the Joint Commission for the Implementation of the Agreement on Trade and Economic Cooperation between the EAEU and the PRC it was noted that the volume of mutual trade in 2021 would exceed the pre-pandemic level and reach a record \$165 billion, demonstrating high intensity and mutual complementarity of trade relations. Discussing the progress of the roadmap for the implementation of the EAEU-China agreement, which entered into force in 2019, the parties highlighted the development of digital transport corridors as the main section of this document, as "the digitalisation of railway transportation can have a cumulative effect"<sup>58</sup>. Green trade and green investment were not left out, with the Chinese side suggesting that interaction between the PRC and the EAEU on the global climate agenda should be strengthened, as well as prospects for cooperation in three areas that "relate to smart customs, smart customs borders and smart interconnectivity"<sup>59</sup>. At the same time, the Chinese side expressed its willingness to share its experience in implementing the concept of the "three smart spheres", which is based on modern technology with the application of new methods, systems and equipment, for the purpose of intelligent customs control and management.

As for Iran, a temporary free trade agreement with it entered into force in October 2019. Thanks to this document, "the list of goods for which exporters of EEU countries, including Belarus, received preferences includes meat and oil products, certain types of confectionery and chocolate, electronic and mechanical equipment, as well as metals and cosmetics"<sup>60</sup>. In December 2021,

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<sup>58</sup> Andrey Slepnev: "EAEC-PRC cooperation is gaining momentum, it organically complements the bilateral relations of our states". [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://eec.eaeunion.org/news/andrey-slepnev-sotrudnichestvo-caes-knr-nabiraet-oboroty-ono-organichnohttps://eec.eaeunion.org/news/andrey-slepnev-sotrudnichestvo-caes-knr-nabiraet-oboroty-ono-organichno-.dvestoronnie-otnosheniya-nashih-gosudarstvopolnyaet-dvestoronnie-otnosheniya-nashih-gosudarstv/>

<sup>59</sup> Single Window and Smart Customs discussed by EEC and China [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://eec.eaeunion.org/news/formirovanie-%C2%ABedinogohttps://eec.eaeunion.org/news/formirovanie-%C2%ABedinogo-okna%C2%BB-i-intellektualnuyu-tamozhnyu-obsudili-predstaviteli-cek-i-kitayaokna%C2%BB-i-intellektualnuyu-tamozhnyu-obsudili-predstaviteli-cek-i-kitaya/>

<sup>60</sup> Zalessky, B.L. Vectors of Eurasian integration - Serbia, Iran, China / B.L. Zalessky // Materialy XV

this temporary agreement was extended until 2025. The past two years have shown that the cooperation between the parties is developing at an exceptional pace. For instance, in the first half of 2021 "exports of the union's member states increased by almost 47% to \$1.35 billion and imports by 34% to \$825 million"<sup>61</sup>, which shows great prospects for this cooperation.

Another promising EAEU partner in Asia is Mongolia, with which a memorandum of cooperation was signed back in 2015. In December 2021, the 4th meeting of the joint working group on cooperation between the EEC and the Mongolian government was held, at which it was noted that in 2020 the volume of mutual trade between the parties was one and a half billion dollars. And "in the first nine months of this year [2021] the trade turnover between the EAEU countries and Mongolia increased by 23%, while the potential of mutual trade is clearly not fully exploited"<sup>62</sup>. To maintain this positive trend, it was decided to update the plan of joint activities to implement the aforementioned Memorandum until 2025. As a key reserve for the development of trade and economic ties, the parties identified the intensification of contacts between the business community and business associations. And to this end, a business forum will be held in Ulaanbaatar in 2022, as proposed by the Mongolian side.

Also in December 2021, the first meeting of the joint ECE-Bangladesh Government Working Group on the Implementation of the Memorandum of Cooperation, signed in May 2019, took place. It was noted that the volume of trade between the two sides has increased sixfold in the last ten years. In 2020, it continued to grow by another 11 per cent to more than two and a half billion

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Miedzynarodowej naukowo-praktycznej konferencji "Perspektywiczne opracowania sa nauka i technikami - 2019", Volume 6. Przemysl: Nauka i studia. - C. 20.

<sup>61</sup> Pivovarov, E. Validity of temporary free trade agreement between EEU and Iran extended until 2025 / E. Pivovarov // [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/dejstvie-vremennogo-soglasheniya-o-svobodnoj-torgovle-mezhdu-eaes-i-iranom-prodleno-doiranom-prodleno-do-2025-goda-47goda-474217-2021>

<sup>62</sup> EEC and the Government of Mongolia discuss plans for cooperation until 2025 [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://eec.eaeunion.org/news/cek-i-pravitelstvo-mongolii-obsuzhdayut-plany-vzaimodeystviya-stviya-do-2025-godagoda/>.

dollars. And "in January-September this year [2021], trade turnover between the EAEU and Bangladesh increased one and a half times to \$2.2 billion. USD 2.2 BILLION"<sup>63</sup> . The parties are now considering increasing this figure to three billion dollars as a realistic goal. There are reserves for this: agricultural products, machinery, equipment, vehicles, pharmaceuticals, as well as other types of products with a relatively high share of added value.

Among the international organisations with which the EAEU plans to actively develop cooperation in 2022 - the European Union (EU) should also be mentioned. In particular, we are talking about the development of dialogue between the Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC) and the European Commission (EC), including interaction with specialised EU bodies, "in the areas of technical regulation, application of sanitary and veterinary measures, circulation of medicines and medical devices, competition, some aspects of trade policy, as well as in other areas of the Union's activity"<sup>64</sup> .

The relevance of the European vector of EAEU international cooperation is already explained by the fact that 'the European Union continues to be the key trade and economic partner of the Eurasian Economic Union, accounting for 35.5% of EAEU imports'<sup>65</sup> . EU member states are the main buyers of goods exported from Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Armenia. In 2021, trade between them increased by another 40 percent or so, and "is expected to reach about \$330 billion. US\$330 BILLION."<sup>66</sup> . And this is far from being a limit if a number of pressing issues in trade between the parties are resolved.

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<sup>63</sup> EEU countries and Bangladesh have the potential to increase trade turnover [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://eec.eaeunion.org/news/strany-caes-i-bangladesh-imeyut-potentsial-dlyahttps://eec.eaeunion.org/news/strany-caes-i-bangladesh-imeyut-potentsial-dlya-dostizheniya-tovarooborota-v-3-mlrd-dollarov-sshadostizheniya-tovarooborota-v-3-mlrd-dollars-ssha/>

<sup>64</sup> . Strategic directions for the development of Eurasian economic integration until 2025. - M., 2020. - C. 53-54.

<sup>65</sup> Sergey Glazyev: "Strategy-2025 meets the interests of both Eurasian and European business". [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://eec.eaeunion.org/news/sergei-glazev-C2%ABstrategiya-2025-otvechaet-interesam-kak-evraziiskogo-tak-i-evropeiskogo-biznesa%C2%BB%C2%ABstrategiya-2025-otvechaet-interesam-kak-evraziiskogo-tak-i-evropeiskogo-biznesa%C2%BB/>

<sup>66</sup> The management of the Eurasian Economic Commission's trade bloc met with the Association of European Businesses [Electronic resource ]. -2021 .-URL: <https://eec.eaeunion.org/news/sostoyalas-vstrecha-rukovodstva-torgovogo-bloka-evraziyskoy-ekonomicheskoy-komissii-s-associaciey-evropeyskogo-biznesa/>

Many of these were discussed in December 2021 during the 8th round of technical dialogue between the EEC and the EC, where the parties addressed the difficulties businesses face in their operations. In particular, they talked about the registration of medicines and medical devices in the EEU countries, as well as the operation of the technical regulation "On the safety of alcohol products". Topics of technical regulation in the field of railway transport in the EU countries, e-commerce, development of the "single window" mechanism as a tool to simplify trade procedures were discussed. An important detail: having been convinced of the usefulness of the technical dialogue, "both sides plan <...> to continue interaction in this format in 2022, as well as to consider the possibility of holding specialised webinars on topical topics"<sup>67</sup>.

The same December 2021 meeting with the Association of European Businesses discussed in practical terms issues related to free trade agreements, responses to climate change, labelling, e-commerce, rules for the import of certain types of goods, and determination of customs values.<sup>68</sup> A meeting was also held at the EEC with executives and representatives of the Russian-German Chamber of Commerce, the Franco-Russian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Association of Italian Industrialists in Russia, the Working Group on the Common Economic Space from Lisbon to Vladivostok to discuss a wide range of issues relevant to European business communities, including "intellectual property, taxation, labour migration, regulation of pharmaceuticals circulation". Among the individual EU member states with which the EAEU intends to seriously intensify interaction in the near future is Portugal. In November 2021, the 4th Russian-Portuguese Innovation Forum "New Opportunities and

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<sup>67</sup> The EEC and the European Commission hold consultations on topical issues of business operations [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://eec.eacunion.org/news/cek-i-evrokomissiya-provelihttps://eec.eacunion.org/news/cek-i-evrokomissiya-proveli-.po-aktualnym-voprosam-raboty-biznesakonsultacii-po-aktualnym-voprosam-raboty-biznesa/>

<sup>68</sup> Ruslan Beketaev: "Direct dialogue is an effective tool of interaction between EEC and European entrepreneurs and investors". [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://eec.eacunion.org/news/ruslan-beketaev-%C2%ABpryamoj-dialog-%E2%80%93-effektivnyj-cek.eacunion.org/news/ruslan-beketaev-%C2%ABpryamoj-dialog-%E2%80%93-effektivnyj-mstrument-%20vzaimodejstviya-cek-s-evropejskimi-predprimatelyami-i-mvestorami%C2%BB/>

Challenges in Innovation" addressed the promotion of high-tech products, as well as the promotion of diversification of trade and economic relations between the EAEU and Portuguese-speaking countries. It was stressed that "the business community of Portugal and Portuguese-speaking countries is building its commercial strategies, taking into account the factor of Eurasian economic integration and opportunities associated with them."<sup>69</sup> . As a result, the forum participants were able to consider promising cooperation projects in such areas as information and communication technologies, bioenergy, agriculture, healthcare, transport infrastructure and interregional cooperation. In the same line of promising partners of the EAEU in the European direction, German business, whose representatives in September 2021 became participants of the seminar held by the EEC, can also be mentioned. The exchange of views focused on such areas of cooperation as "digital agenda, green economy, customs cooperation"<sup>70</sup> . One of the outcomes of this event was the consolidated opinion of its participants on the importance of continuing the dialogue between the EAEU and German business in various formats in order to promote mutual trade and facilitate the foreign economic activities of business entities, as well as to create a dialogue mechanism for resolving disputed issues.

It is clear that all these measures aimed at expanding foreign markets and diversifying exports of the EAEU member countries are extremely important for Belarus, which is taking a very active part in all the systemic work to create free trade zones with third countries and interact with international organizations.

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<sup>69</sup> Gohar Barseghian: "Portuguese business captures new opportunities in the EEU market". [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://eec.eaeunion.org/news/goar-barsegyan-%C2%ABportugalskij-biznes-fiksiruet-novye-vozmozhnosti-na-rynke-caes%C2%BB/>.

<sup>70</sup> The EEC held a seminar for German businesses on the regulation of foreign economic activity in the EEU [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://eec.eaeunion.org/news/cek-provela-seminar-dlya-germanskogo-biznesa-po-voprosam-regulirovaniya-vneshneekonomicheskoy-deyatelnosti-v-caes-/>.

### **Belarus - Russia: regional forum as a generator of new ideas**

The Eighth Forum of Regions of Belarus and Russia, held in late June - early July 2021, focused on the topical issues of the Union State development in five thematic sections, such as: 1) Russian-Belarusian cooperation in science and education in the era of "big challenges" and digital technologies; 2) the role of digitalization in formation of the Union State common scientific and technological space; 3) interaction of Belarus and Russia on implementation of Union programmes and S&T projects within the framework of international agreements; 4) law and digitalization in the Union State: prospects and directions; 5) young people online: digital environment of the future. The Forum participants' attention to the topic of interaction of the parties in science, technology and innovation spheres is explained by the fact that large-scale cooperation in these fields is implemented via the Union State programmes, the use of which "allows increasing the integration level of our economies, developing co-operation between enterprises, increasing the competitiveness of jointly manufactured products"<sup>71</sup> and which today should be aimed not only at maintaining individual enterprises and industries, but rather at creating and developing the Union State programmes. The following industries were mentioned as such at the VIIIth Forum of Belarusian Regions and Russia: 1) intellectual systems of information analysis; 2) supercomputers, neuron networks, artificial intelligence; 3) space instrument engineering and technology; 4) new laser materials; 5) microelectronics; 6) electric transport; 7) multifunctional unmanned systems; 8) nuclear power; 9) information security.

<sup>72</sup>The formation of a common scientific and technological space of Belarus and

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<sup>71</sup> Igor Petrishenko: Interaction between Belarus and Russia in science, technology and innovations is aimed at creating a common scientific and technological space [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <http://http://www.government.by/ru/content/9897.government.by/ru/content/9897>

<sup>72</sup> Belarus and Russia have achieved a lot in science and technology - Karasin [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belarusi-i-rossii-udalos-mnogogo-dobitsja-vhttps://www.belta.by/society/view/belarusi-i-rossii-udalos-mnogogo-dobitsja-v-nauchno-tehnicheskoy-sfere-karasinnauchno-tehnicheskoy-sfere-karasin-448170-2021/>.

Russia, which provides for harmonisation of national legislation in the scientific and technological field, is necessary to create equal opportunities for Belarusian and Russian scientists to work in the Union State and carry out joint research and development in priority areas for both countries, among which "new materials and chemical procedures, ecology and environmental management, technology for living

Let us recall that during the existence of the Union State "more than 60 Union programmes have already been implemented in the economy, space, security, agriculture, with 41 billion Russian rubles spent on these purposes"<sup>73</sup>. In particular, scientific and technical programmes on the development of remote sensing of the Earth, fodder production and genetic research have been implemented. In 2020, such a landmark S&T programme of the Union State as Auto Electronics was completed, which envisaged "the development of a new generation of electronic components for control and safety systems of special and dual-purpose motor vehicles. The results of the programme were used in the development of robotic unmanned mine dump trucks BELAZ, which are already operating in the quarries of the Siberian Coal Energy Company"<sup>74</sup>.

But today the task is to be even more actively involved in the preparation of proposals for new programmes not only to the federal and republican executive authorities, but also to the representatives of the regions of the two countries. Note that "eight S&T programmes are currently being implemented in the Union State, and three more are being prepared"<sup>75</sup>. Another six new draft programme

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<sup>73</sup> Mezentsev at the Forum of Regions called for more active involvement in the preparation of proposals for Union programmes [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/mezentsevhttps://www.belta.by/society/view/mezentsev-na-forume-regionovna-forume-regionov-prizval-aktivnee-vkljuchitsja-v-podgotovka-predlozhenij-dlja-sojuznyh-448530-2021/>.

<sup>74</sup> Belarus and Russia plan to create a single registry of Union State Technoparks [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-rossija-planirujuthttps://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-rossija-planirujut-.edinyj-reestr-tehnoparkov-sojuznogo-gosudarstvasozdat-edinyj-reestr-tehnoparkov-sojuznogo-gosudarstva-448127-2021/>

<sup>75</sup> Pivovarov, E. In the Union State 8 scientific and technical programs are being implemented, three more are being prepared - Deputy Prime Minister of the Russian Federation / E. Pivovarov // [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/v-sojuznom-gosudarstve-realizujutsja-8-nauchno-tehnicheskikhhttps://www.belta.by/economics/view/v-sojuznom-gosudarstve-realizujutsja-8-nauchno-tehnicheskikh-programm-gotovjatsja-esche-3-vitse-premjerprograms->

concepts are in a high degree of readiness:

- 1) "Overcoming" - developing state-of-the-art technologies for detecting and overcoming drug resistance in micro-organisms;
- 2) "Soyuzbiomembranes - new medical cellular products;
- 3) "Additivity" - creating technologies, materials and equipment for 3D printing;
- 4) "Accelerator-SPR" - development of a complex based on superconducting resonators;
- 5) "Component F" - creating innovative technologies for the development of the Union State's photonic component base; 6) "Complex-SG" - a new programme in the field of space.

In addition, a project is being prepared to expand the research computer network to connect leading centres and universities not only in Belarus and Russia, but also in the entire Eurasian Economic Union, which will allow scientific and educational organizations of the participating countries to interact effectively, including through remote access to research infrastructure. And the State Committee for Science and Technology of Belarus, the Association of Clusters and Technoparks of Russia, and the Standing Committee of the Union State are creating an IT platform for a unified register of technoparks of the two countries with subsequent development of a system for data storage, systematisation, analysis and graphical visualisation. The Union State has also recently started preparing a common basic research programme and a roadmap for cooperation, which defines objectives and priorities such as "capacity building in space research, expansion of nuclear research topics, informatics and robotics, development of quantum research, research on the creation of advanced nanomaterials"<sup>76</sup>. All of this, of course, is yet to come.

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[gotovjatsja-esche-3-vitse-premjer-448523-2021/](https://www.belta.by/society/view/gusakov-predlozhit-uskorit-sozdanie-edinogo-nauchno-tehnologicheskogo-prostranstva-sgsozdanie-edinogo-nauchno-tehnologicheskogo-prostranstva-sg-448546-2021/).

<sup>76</sup> Gusakov proposed to accelerate the creation of a unified science and technology space in the SG [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/gusakov-predlozhit-uskorit-sozdanie-edinogo-nauchno-tehnologicheskogo-prostranstva-sgsozdanie-edinogo-nauchno-tehnologicheskogo-prostranstva-sg-448546-2021/>.



The eighth forum also demonstrated the very extensive potential for further development of interaction between the specific regions of the two countries that make up the Union State. When it comes to the contracts signed during the forum, "in the real sector of the economy, it is about \$800 million."<sup>77</sup> . Undoubtedly, such high results of the Belarusian-Russian partnership are facilitated by the fact that about 80 regions are involved in this interregional cooperation on the Russian side. "The Republic of Bashkortostan, the Samara Region, the Stavropol Territory, the Kursk Region, the Komi Republic, the Republic of Kabardino-Balkaria, the Nenets Autonomous District are actively developing cooperation"<sup>78</sup> . The Moscow region, among whose foreign trade partners Belarus ranks second only to China, can also be mentioned. There are already "120 Belarusian companies operating successfully in this Russian region, and representative offices of Belarusian companies supplying food and engineering products have been opened"<sup>79</sup> . While 23 companies from the Moscow Region concluded export contracts with Belarusian partners in the entire year 2020, 28 companies already did so in the first half of 2021. The role of Russian partners is high for the Belarusian metropolitan area as well. First, over the five months of 2021 trade turnover with Russia increased by 30 percent at once, amounting to more than \$2.2 billion. In this case, exports from the Belarusian capital region increased by more than a third, and "the foreign trade balance with goods has turned positive at \$624.3 million"<sup>80</sup> . Secondly, the

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<sup>77</sup> Kochanova: the Forum of Regions has a solid baggage of signed agreements and contracts [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: [https://www.belta.by/society/view/kochanova-u-forumov-regionov-solidnyi-bagazh-iz-podpisannyh-soglashenij-i-kontraktovsolidnyi-bagazh-iz-podpisannyh-soglashenij-i-kontraktov-448569-2021/](https://www.belta.by/society/view/kochanova-u-forumov-regionovhttps://www.belta.by/society/view/kochanova-u-forumov-regionov-solidnyi-bagazh-iz-podpisannyh-soglashenij-i-kontraktovsolidnyi-bagazh-iz-podpisannyh-soglashenij-i-kontraktov-448569-2021/).

<sup>78</sup> About 80 Russian regions participate in interregional cooperation with Belarus - Vorobyov [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/okolo-80-rossiiskihhttps://www.belta.by/society/view/okolo-80-rossiiskih-regionov-uchastvujut-v-mezhregionalnom-sotrudnichestve-s-belarusiju-vorobjevregionov-uchastvujut-v-mezhregionalnom-sotrudnichestve-s-belarusiju-vorobjev-448283-2021>

<sup>79</sup> Pivovarov, E. Belarus is second only to China in terms of trade with Moscow Region - Governor / E. Pivovarov // [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-pohttps://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-po-objemu-torgovli-s-podmoskovjem-ustupaet-tolko-kitaju-gubematorobjemu-torgovli-s-podmoskovjem-ustupaet-tolko-kitaju-gubemator-448521-2021/>.

<sup>80</sup> Minsk Region and Russia plan to implement a unique business project in agriculture [Electronic

volume of foreign direct investments from Russia in 2021 increased as well. In the first quarter alone, they amounted to almost \$95 million. And, judging by the available investment cooperation plans, this value is far from being the limit. Speaking about the Brest region in this context, we note that it "has concluded and is implementing 26 agreements on cooperation with Russian regions, including the Penza, Astrakhan, Belgorod, Bryansk, Irkutsk regions, Kaliningrad, Kaluga, Kostroma, Lipetsk, Novosibirsk, Pskov, Saratov, Smolensk, Tyumen Regions, Stavropol Territory, Karachay-Cherkessia, Buryatia, Udmurtia, Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous District"<sup>81</sup>. Besides, there are more than 40 agreements on cooperation between Brest region's cities and districts and Russian municipal entities. This may be the reason why, in the course of preparations for the VIII Forum of Belarusian-Russian Regions, the region's enterprises signed commercial contracts worth over \$120 million with Russian partners. Note that the share of the Russian market in the total volume of supplies from the Belarusian region exceeds 60 percent. The main export commodities include meat and dairy products, cattle meat, ready-made and tinned fish, gas cookers, and children's toys. More than 330 enterprises with Russian capital are registered in the Brest region. The most famous of them are JV Brestgazoapparat OJSC, Vastega FLLC, ANREX FLLC, BelINEKO LLC, STiM FLLC, RusBelGaz FLLC, Frost & Co LLC.

The Russian vector of interaction remains a key foreign trade area for the Grodno Region as well, as it accounts for more than half of foreign supplies from here. Grodno Region works with 74 regions of Russia and signed agreements on trade, economic, scientific, technical and cultural cooperation with 27 regions. The Republic of Bashkortostan and Tomsk Oblast added to this

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resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/minskaja-oblast-ihhttps://www.belta.by/economics/view/minskaja-oblast-i-rossija-planirujut-realizovat-unikalnyj-biznes-proekt-v-sfere-selskogo-hozjajstva-rossija-planirujut-realizovat-unikalnyj-biznes-proekt-v-sfere-selskogo-hozjajstva-451727-2021/>.

<sup>81</sup> Brest Region enterprises signed contracts worth \$120 million for the Forum of Regions [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/predprijatija-brejskojhttps://www.belta.by/economics/view/predprijatija-brejskoj--podpisali-k-forumu-regionov-kontrakty-na-120-mlnoblasi-podpisali-k-forum-regionov-kontrakty-na-120-mln-447664-2021/>.

list of partners at the VIII Forum of Belarusian-Russian Regions. With the intensification of interregional ties in Russia, the enterprises of Grodno Oblast are able to increase the range of goods and expand the geography of supplies. "The total amount of contracts of the region's producers, primarily in the meat and dairy industries, as well as industrial enterprises, with Russian counterparties is 12 billion Russian rubles"<sup>82</sup>.

Russia's foreign economic relations are successfully developing in the Gomel Oblast as well. The trade turnover between the Oblast and Russia increased by nearly 20 percent over the first five months of 2021 and totaled nearly USD 2.5 billion. The top five recipients of Gomel Oblast enterprises are Moscow Oblast, Moscow, St. Petersburg, Bryansk Oblast and Smolensk Oblast. The most popular products are rods and wire made of iron and non-alloy steel, dairy products, agricultural machinery and spare parts, synthetic fibers, nonwoven materials, metalware. An equally important area of cooperation is investment. "In January-March 2021, foreign investments from the Russian Federation amounted to \$154.3 million"<sup>83</sup>. This is largely due to the fact that 361 companies with Russian capital are already operating in the Gomel region, 12 of which are residents of the Gomel-Raton free zone. Moreover, the Gomel Oblast Executive Committee has signed 22 bilateral agreements on cooperation with Russian regions. Another 78 similar documents were signed at the level of towns and districts of the Gomel region and their partners in the neighboring country.

Among the Russian regions actively developing cooperation with Belarusian partners in 2021 is the Vladimir Region. In May this year, a meeting of the working group on cooperation between the Republic of Belarus and this Russian

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<sup>82</sup> Grodno region signs agreements with the Republic of Bashkortostan and Tomsk region [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: [https://www.belta.by/regions/view/grodnenskaja-oblast- podpisyvaet-soglashenija-s-respublikoj-bashkortostan-i-tomskoj-oblastjupodpisyvaet-soglashenija-s-respublikoj-bashkortostan-i-tomskoj-oblastju-448192-2021/](https://www.belta.by/regions/view/grodnenskaja-oblasthttps://www.belta.by/regions/view/grodnenskaja-oblast- podpisyvaet-soglashenija-s-respublikoj-bashkortostan-i-tomskoj-oblastjupodpisyvaet-soglashenija-s-respublikoj-bashkortostan-i-tomskoj-oblastju-448192-2021/)

<sup>83</sup> Belarus and Russia need to develop cooperation in IT - Lukyanov [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belarusi-i-rossii-neobhodimo-razvivathttps://www.belta.by/society/view/belarusi-i-rossii-neobhodimo-razvivat- sotrudnichestvo-v-sfere-it-lukjanovsotrudnichestvo-v-sfere-it-lukjanov-452331-2021/>

region was held, at which the parties considered the whole range of trade and economic cooperation - in industry, agriculture, construction, housing and utilities sector, exhibition and fair activities, as well as at the level of districts and cities. The tone of the discussion was set by the fact that in 2020 the trade turnover between the republic and the region "amounted to \$244 million and fell by 6.7% compared to 2019"<sup>84</sup>. In this regard, the working group outlined ways to rectify the situation in mutual trade. To this end, new points of growth in the development of partnerships with this region of Russia were identified. These include cooperation in light industry, mechanical engineering, construction, and the agro-industrial complex.

The two countries signed an agreement on trade, economic, scientific, technical, and socio-cultural cooperation in September 2015 as part of the Second Forum of Regions of Belarus and Russia, which was held in Sochi. This document contained agreements "to create the necessary organisational, financial, economic and legal conditions for the operation of joint ventures, development and implementation of joint projects and programmes of mutual interest"<sup>85</sup>. In December 2017, it was supplemented by an action plan for the implementation of this agreement for 2018-2020, which played a positive role in boosting interaction between the parties. In particular, it was already noted at that time that "products from Belarusian companies are of great interest to the Vladimir Region. Among the imported products are binders for the production of foundry molds and cores, fiberglass and fiberglass products, cheeses and cottage cheese, tableware and kitchenware"<sup>86</sup>. At that time 34 enterprises, in which Belarusian investors fully or partially participated in the founding capital, were already

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<sup>84</sup> Cherviaikov: New points of growth identified in trade with the Vladimir region of Russia [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: [https://www.belta.by/economics/view/cherviaikov-opredelenyhttps://www.belta.by/economics/view/cherviaikov-opredeleny-novye-tochki-rosta-v-torgovle-s-vladimirskoj-oblastiju-rossii-443237-2021/](https://www.belta.by/economics/view/cherviaikov-opredelenyhttps://www.belta.by/economics/view/cherviaikov-opredeleny-novye-tochki-rosta-v-torgovle-s-vladimirskoj-oblastiju-rossii-novye-tochki-rosta-v-torgovle-s-vladimirskoj-oblastiju-rossii-443237-2021/).

<sup>85</sup> Zalesky, B. Belarus-Russia: formula for integration. Chronicle of union building. / B. Zalesky. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2018. - C. 45.

<sup>86</sup> Konyshhev, A. Belarusian goods are sold in a considerable part of the regional trade objects / A. Konyshhev // Priority directions of regional cooperation as a key factor of the Union construction: inform.-integration project / compiled, interviewed by: K. Gusev, B. Zaleski. Gusev, B. Zalesky. - Minsk: Biznesofset, 2018. - C. 118.

operating on the territory of this Russian region. And the search for new areas of cooperation continued all the time.

In May 2018, the Belarusian side offered its partners from the Vladimir Region to implement joint cooperation projects in mechanical engineering, energy, construction of social facilities and apartment buildings. Specifically, they talked about the possible construction of the "Belarusian Quarter" in Vladimir, as well as "the possibility and readiness of Belarusian companies to meet the region's needs for lift equipment for new buildings and housing under reconstruction, to increase supplies of construction products, materials, equipment and machinery, as well as to participate in the construction and repair of the region's highways, organization of supplies of road construction and utility equipment required for this purpose"<sup>87</sup>. In June 2019, a Belarusian proposal was made to expand the volume of mutual trade to include industrial cooperation in food production, as well as to "supply the region with modern domestic electric vehicles"<sup>88</sup>. In the construction sector, Belarusian design and manufacturing organizations could participate in housing construction programs implemented in the region, based on the principle of integrated development with the construction of social facilities, construction and repair of public roads, and supply of necessary road construction and utility equipment.

The two sides had a thorough conversation on ways to expand cooperation in October 2020, when a representative Belarusian delegation visited Vladimir. A number of joint projects in terms of cooperation between industrial enterprises of the republic and the region were outlined then. "These are Kovrov Electromechanical Plant and Minsk Engine Plant regarding the production of forklifts using the internal combustion engine that will be manufactured in

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<sup>87</sup> Pivovar, E. Belarus is interested in joint projects with Vladimir region in mechanical engineering and construction / E. Pivovar // [Electronic resource]. - 2018. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-zainteresovana-v-sovmestnyh-s-vladimirskoj-oblastjjuhttps://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-zainteresovana-v-sovmestnyh-s-vladimirskoj-oblastjju-proektah-v-mashinostroenii-i-stroitelstveproektah-v-mashinostroenii-i-stroitelstve-304088-2018>

<sup>88</sup> Valagin, A. Belarus proposed to build up the Vladimir region / A. Valagin // [Electronic resource]. - 2019. - URL: <https://rg.ru/2019/06/06/reg-cfo/belarus-predlozhila-zastroit-vladimirskuiihttps://rg.ru/2019/06/06/reg-cfo/belarus-predlozhila-zastroit-vladimirskuii-oblast.html>

Belarus. Samples are now being tested"<sup>89</sup>. In addition, other business entities from both sides also proposed interesting projects. Among them are the Betal company from Vladimir, which produces water tanks, as well as Minsk Tractor Works, Mogilevliftmash, and Novy Resource from Kovrov.

In December 2020, at the Vladimirskiy Investment Congress, a new action plan was approved - for 2021-2023 - to implement the cooperation agreement aimed to "expand direct links between business entities of both sides"<sup>90</sup> and to increase commodity turnover between Belarus and the Vladimirskiy region. It is believed that the agreement will reflect the theme of further development and expansion of the movement of twinning between the cities and regions of the parties, which has already had its considerable history. The treaty on twinning between the cities of Vladimir and Bobruisk was signed back in 1998. For the passed time "they have developed mutually advantageous partnership relations in economy and business, science, culture, education, sports..."<sup>91</sup>. Since 2006, Kovrov and Brest have been twinned. And in 2016 an Agreement on cooperation in trade and economic, scientific and technical, humanitarian and cultural spheres was signed between the Vladimir Region Administration and the Gomel Regional Executive Committee. All these facts show that the parties have a good foundation for further movement forward in terms of implementation of the set objectives to increase mutual trade turnover.

Another Russian region to focus on in this context is the Novosibirsk Region. In June 2021, the fifth meeting of the Business Cooperation Council of the

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<sup>89</sup> Vladimir region / Belarus - expanding cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2020. - URL: <http://export33.ru/news/vladimirskaya-oblast-belarus-rasshiryaem-sotrudnichestvo/33.ru/news/vladimirskaya-oblast-belarus-rasshiryaem-sotrudnichestvo/>

<sup>90</sup> Belarus and the Vladimir region have approved an action plan to implement the cooperation agreement [Electronic resource]. - 2020. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-ihhttps://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-vladimirskaja-oblast-utverdili-plan-meroprijatij-po-realizatsii-soglashenija-ovladimirskaja-oblast-utverdili-plan-meroprijatij-po-realizatsii-soglashenija-o-420545-2020>

<sup>91</sup> The Vladimir Region takes part in the Forum of Regions of Russia and Belarus [Electronic resource]. - 2017. - URL: <https://www.zsvo.ru/press/view/3058/www.zsvo.ru/press/view/3058/>

Republic of Belarus and the Novosibirsk Region was held to discuss the results of the Programme for the Development of Interaction between the sides for 2019-2021. As a reminder, the Government of Belarus and the Novosibirsk Region Administration signed an agreement on trade, economic, scientific, technological, and cultural cooperation back in 1998. In 2020 the trade turnover between the parties exceeded 150 million dollars. This has made the Novosibirsk Region third in terms of bilateral trade with Belarus among the constituent entities of the Siberian Federal District after Krasnoyarsk and Altai Krai. The wide range of trade and economic interaction between the sides is evidenced by Belarusian supplies to this Russian region, the main part of which are tractors and truck tractors, trucks, spare parts for cars and tractors, trailers and semi-trailers, ferrous metal structures, aluminum rods and profiles, furniture, TV sets, monitors and projectors, meat, cheese and cottage cheese, sugar, fresh and canned fruit vegetables, hosiery, footwear. It is also important that more than 40 companies with the participation of Belarusian legal entities and individuals are registered in Novosibirsk Oblast today. In general, the region cooperates with the Belarusian side not only under the aforementioned agreement of 1998, but also under a number of other agreements with Mogilev, Grodno and Brest regions, which gives a concrete yield in industry, agriculture and transport. In particular, cooperation in the transport sector has been recently stepped up. For instance, in 2020 Novosibirsk bought from its Belarusian partners "15 gas-engine buses of large class; this year [2021] plans to buy another 50 city buses, 20 trolleybuses with large autonomous running, and 10 low-floor trams. It has also been decided in principle to purchase a large batch of 150 buses under leasing programmes"<sup>92</sup>.

But perhaps even more promising is the intention of the parties to develop cooperation in science, technology, innovation, and education. An interesting fact: during more than 20 years of the cooperation agreement between

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<sup>92</sup> The Novosibirsk Region and the Republic of Belarus are stepping up the pace and scope of cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.nso.ru/news/47415>[www.nso.ru/news/47415](https://www.nso.ru/news/47415)

Belarusian and Novosibirsk universities 28 direct agreements on the development of partnerships have been signed, within which scientific projects are implemented, experience is exchanged and joint events are held. Another 11 contracts and agreements were signed during the fifth meeting of the Business Cooperation Council. For example, "the development of a joint programme between the Department of Digital Economy of the Belarusian State Economic University and the Department of Information Technology of Novosibirsk State University seems promising.

The BNTU Polytechnic Science and Technology Park is ready for further cooperation with the Novosibirsk colleagues in implementation of the Belarusian-Russian project on production of medical products for cardio-surgery"<sup>93</sup> . The Belarusian side also suggested continuing the practice of exchanging undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate students and intensifying the invitation of leading scientists under the "Visiting Professor" programme. And a number of Belarusian universities are included in the implementation of the "University 3.0" project - trinity of science, education and technological innovations, with technoparks, interdisciplinary laboratories and technology transfer centres as a platform for its implementation.

Among the active participants of the Belarusian-Russian cooperation in education is the Novosibirsk State Technical University (NSTU), which develops partnerships with Belarusian universities on the basis of the Agreement on cooperation in science, technology, culture, sports, student and academic mobility NSTU in 2016-2021, which was signed with the Belarusian State University in 2017-2022 - with the Belarusian-Russian University, cooperation agreements for 2018-2023 - with the Brest State University, with the Belarusian State University of Technology. Another promising project in this regard is the International Russian-Belarusian Centre for Interregional Cooperation in

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<sup>93</sup> Belarus and Russia interested in strengthening direct contacts between educational institutions - Karpenko [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-rossijahttps://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-rossija-zainteresovany-ukrepljat-prjamye-kontakty-mezhdu-uchrezhdenijami-obrazovanijazainteresovany-ukrepljat-prjamye-kontakty-mezhdu-uchrezhdenijami-obrazovanija-446424-2021/>



Education, Science, and Culture, whose founders are Novosibirsk State Technical University, the Belarusian-Russian University, the Novosibirsk Centre of Belarusian Culture, and the social and cultural public association Heritage. "Among the main objectives of the centre are to establish and develop effective mutually beneficial partnerships between scientific, educational, social, cultural, youth and sports organizations of the Mogilev and Novosibirsk regions; to organize participation in international scientific, educational, sports, cultural events held on the basis of the centre founders; to acquaint citizens of Belarus and Russia with the history, culture, traditions of the peoples, their achievements in economy, science, culture and sports"<sup>94</sup> . In 2020 it helped to organize an interethnic cultural online dialogue "Russia and Belarus - 2020", which has become an important educational and cultural platform aimed at supporting and strengthening the Union State. The Business Cooperation Council set the task to intensify the work of the centre to promote the ideas of the Union State, patriotic education, and involvement of young people in the development of civic initiatives aimed at supporting and strengthening the statehood. All these facts show that the reserves for cooperation between the two countries' regions are indeed enormous. And there is good reason to believe that they will definitely be used in the very near future.

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<sup>94</sup> Belarus and the Novosibirsk Region interested in developing cooperation in education [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-novosibirskaja-oblasthttps://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-novosibirskaja-oblast- zainteresovany-razvivat-sotrudnichestvo-v-sfere-obrazovanijazainteresovany-razvivat-sotrudnichestvo-v-sfere-obrazovanija-446260-2021/>

## CHAPTER 5

### **Belarus-Russia: direct regional partnerships as a factor to enhance economic cooperation**

In September 2021 the Council of Ministers of the Union State of Belarus and Russia approved the guidelines for the implementation of the provisions of the Union State Treaty for 2021-2023 and 28 Union Programmes aimed at carrying out ambitious tasks to enhance Belarus-Russia integration. At the same time, the sides emphasized that "direct partnership between the regions is becoming an increasingly important factor for strengthening mutual trust and economic cooperation"<sup>95</sup>. This is confirmed by the specific practice of Belarusian-Russian interregional cooperation in 2021, which is being implemented in a variety of formats. Let us consider some of them.

One of the important trade and economic partners of the Republic of Belarus in the Central Federal District of the Russian Federation is the **Voronezh Region**. The parties signed an agreement on trade, economic, scientific, technical, humanitarian and cultural cooperation within the framework of the Fifth Forum of Regions of Belarus and Russia, held in October 2018. The trade turnover between them in the first half of 2021 increased by almost 15 percent and amounted to almost 160 million dollars with a share of supplies from Belarus amounting to almost 102 million dollars. "The bulk of Belarusian exports consisted of ferrous metal structures and other metal products; parts and accessories for cars and tractors; cheese and cottage cheese; frozen beef; soybean oil products; and butter."<sup>96</sup>.

In addition to trade in goods, other areas of cooperation are also actively developing here, in particular construction services. The fact is that Voronezh Oblast, along with Kaluga, Pskov and Leningrad Oblasts, is among those

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<sup>95</sup> Joint statement by Roman Golovchenko and Mikhail Mishustin on current developments and further steps to deepen integration processes within the Union State [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <http://http://www.government.by/ru/content/9960.government.by/ru/content/9960>

<sup>96</sup> Pivovarov, E. Belarusian delegation headed by Semashko will visit Voronezh // E. Pivovarov [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/beloruskaia-delegatsiia-vohttps://www.belta.by/society/view/beloruskaia-delegatsiia-vo-glave-s-semashko-posetiti-voronezhglave-s-semashko-posetiti-voronezh-457530-2021/>

Russian regions where today "a scheme for the construction of social facilities that is acceptable to both Belarusian builders and customers has been worked out"<sup>97</sup>.<sup>98</sup> In February 2021 a delegation of the Ministry of Architecture and Construction of Belarus visited Voronezh region and discussed with the Voronezh partners opportunities of "implementation of a joint pilot project in urban village Strelitsa of Semiluki district to build a school for 520 pupils, participation of Belarusian companies BelenginiringstroyInvest LLC and Building Trust №12 OJSC in construction of pre-school and educational institutions in Semiluki district, as well as prospects for the use of Belarusian prefabricated construction sets when working on new buildings and facilities. On the eve of the new school year - at the end of August 2021 - an opening ceremony of a secondary school was held in Strelitsa. The school had become a pilot project for cooperation in the construction sphere between Belarus and Voronezh region on the investment-construction principle with the use of export credit of the Development Bank of the Republic of Belarus and such Belarusian manufacturers of construction materials and equipment as "Mogilevliftmash", "Gomelstroyaterialy", "Keramin". The general contractor for construction of the school in quite a short time, less than a year, was Stroitelny Trest #12 of Mogilev, which has already gained a good image outside Belarus. In the Voronezh region "even at the stage of construction the customers are more than satisfied with the quality and progress of works and invite Mogilev residents to participate in the tender for the construction of several more facilities"<sup>99</sup>. The experience gained in Strelitsa on the investment-construction principle

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<sup>97</sup> Belarus' exports of construction goods and services in January-June amounted to \$637 million [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/eksport-stroitelnyh-tovarov-i-uslug-belarusihttps://www.belta.by/economics/view/eksport-stroitelnyh-tovarov-i-uslug-belarusi-v-v-j-anvare-anvare-ij-unc-sostavil-637-mlnunc-sostavil-637-mln-45-2543-2021/>.

<sup>98</sup> Zalessky, B.L. Russian vector of export of construction services / B.L. Zalessky // Materialy XVII Miedzynarodowej naukowi-praktycznej konferencji "Aktualne problemy nowoczesnych nauk - 2021", Volume 3. Przemysl: Nauka i studia. - C. 7.

<sup>99</sup> Rusiy: Sustainable Workforce Performance at the Basis of the Country's Economic Well-being [Electronic Resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/rusyi-ustojchivaia-rabota-trudovyh-kollektivov-v-osnove-ekonomicheskogo-blagopoluchiiia-stranytrudovyh-kollektivov-v-osnove-ekonomicheskogo-blagopoluchiiia-strany-450830-2021/>.

showed that it was beneficial for all parties involved. The Russian side has received stable financing and a two-year deferral of payments, as well as high quality work at an acceptable cost. The Belarusian side sees the benefit in the fact that the loan is subject to a number of conditions - from the obligatory participation of Belarusian companies in the construction, which receive their profits, to the delivery of construction materials and equipment from Belarus. An important detail: a similar scheme will now be applied to the construction of other social facilities with Belarusian participation in Voronezh Oblast.

One of such new facilities will be a megashool in Voronezh with 2,560 seats. In August 2021, OOO Stroyengineering, established with the participation of the Belarusian side, received the right to build it. The facility, a two- to four-storey building with an estimated construction cost of three and a half billion Russian rubles, will be one of the largest educational institutions in Russia. "The megashop will have 110 classes, studying in one shift, with 220 teachers to teach the children. <...> The project envisages segregated learning units, the creation of a barrier-free environment, conditions for the development of children's creative potential and sports"<sup>100</sup>. In addition, the Belarusian specialists are expected to reconstruct the region's main sports ground. At the same time, "the reconstruction of the Fakel football stadium is estimated at 812 million Russian rubles"<sup>101</sup>. Another school and a kindergarten are to be built with Belarusian participation in the village of Semiluki.

Note that Belarus and Voronezh Region have a number of other areas for cooperation: supplies of machinery, food, waste recycling, and industrial cooperation. In particular, the Belarusian Universal Commodity Exchange "plans to provide a single channel for sales and purchases for agricultural

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<sup>100</sup> Pivovar, E. Belarusian specialists will build one of the largest schools in Russia / E. Pivovar // [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belorusskie-spetsialistyhttps://www.belta.by/society/view/belorusskie-spetsialisty-posttojat-odnu-iz-krupnejshih-shkol-v-rossiiposttojat-odnu-iz-krupnejshih-shkol-v-rossii-456043-2021/>.

<sup>101</sup> Pivovar, E. Belarus reconstructs stadium in Voronezh region and builds educational institutions / E. Pivovar // [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-rekonstruiruet-v-voronezhskoj-oblasti-stadion-i-postroithttps://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-rekonstruiruet-v-voronezhskoj-oblasti-stadion-i-postroit-obrazovatelnye-obrazovatelnye-uchrezhdenija-457654-2021/>.

producers, because it is the products of the agro-industrial complex that have all chances to become the driver of exchange trade with this Russian region"<sup>102</sup>. This is because oilseed meal, fodder supplements, cereals and grains are traditionally in demand in the Belarusian market, and Voronezh Region, as we know, is one of the leaders in this segment. In 2022 the Republic of Belarus and the Voronezh Region "plan to increase the volume of trade turnover by 7-9% by the level of 2021 on the basis of bilateral projects"<sup>103</sup>. The outlined concrete plans show that the parties have everything they need to achieve this objective. In the North Caucasian Federal District (NCFD) of the Russian Federation, cooperation between the Republic of Belarus and **the Kabardino-Balkarian Republic (KBR)** is developing in an interesting way. In October 2021, a meeting of the joint working group for interaction between the parties was held, at which an action plan was signed to implement the Agreement on cooperation in trade and economic, scientific and technical and socio-cultural spheres, adopted at the VII Forum of Regions of Belarus and Russia, which was held in September 2020. It will be recalled that in 2020, trade turnover between the two countries decreased by more than a quarter to \$8.6 million. At the same time, "the balance is positive for the Republic of Belarus - "plus" 3.1 million dollars"<sup>104</sup>. As a matter of fact, these trends have determined the desire of both sides to return engagement in the economic sector to a growth trajectory. The more so since "Belarus and Kabardino-Balkaria are united not only by longstanding traditions of friendship and mutual assistance, but also by multilateral economic partnership"<sup>105</sup>, which the two sides plan to further

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<sup>102</sup> Zalessky, B.L. Regional orientation as a condition for successful partnership / B.L. Zalessky // Materials of the XVII International scientific and practical conference "Prospects of world science - 2021", July 30 - August 7, 2021: Sheffield. Science and education LTD. - C. 3.

<sup>103</sup> Belarus and Voronezh region signed an agreement to increase trade turnover [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://tass.ru/ekonomika/12260267>[tass.ru/ekonomika/12260267](https://tass.ru/ekonomika/12260267)

<sup>104</sup> Topical issues of cooperation between the Republic of Belarus and the Kabardino-Balkarian Republic discussed in remote format [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://russia.mfa.gov.by/ru/embassy/regions/rostov/news/bdc349beac26.html>[russia.mfa.gov.by/ru/embassy/regions/rostov/news/bdc349beac26.html](https://russia.mfa.gov.by/ru/embassy/regions/rostov/news/bdc349beac26.html)

<sup>105</sup> Belarus and Kabardino-Balkaria intensify economic cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-kabardmo-balkariia-aktiviziruut><https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-kabardmo-balkariia-aktiviziruut>

develop. This trend is characteristic of the entire North Caucasus Federal District, one of the key factors in its development being its integration into the Eurasian economic space. "In doing so, the Republic of Belarus can be one of the effective partners of the entities of the North Caucasus Federal District"<sup>106</sup>.

As far as the partnership between Belarus and the CBD is concerned, it is based on a variety of economic ties between specific enterprises on both sides. Thus, the products of the diamond tools manufacturer, Terekalmaz JSC, are well known both at the Minsk plants - tractor, automobile and motor works, and at the Baranovichi Auto Aggregate Plant, Borisov Auto Aggregate Plant, as well as at the enterprises Avtogydrousilitel, Belcard, Machine-Tool Plant Krasny Borets, Belgran and Belgeo. The Belarusian market has been actively developing the presence of JSC Kavkazkabel cable plant and JSC Nalchik plant of high-voltage apparatus. Another interesting example in this regard: "Prokhladnensky plant of semiconductor devices JSC (production of integrated voltage regulators) has been a partner of JSC "Integral" for more than 20 years, buying transistor and microchip crystals"<sup>107</sup>. In order to actively develop partnerships in the agricultural sector, the first international "Prohladnaya Fair" was held back in 2014 in Prohladny, which included an exhibition of Belarusian agricultural machinery for crop production, horticulture and animal husbandry and a demonstration of energy-saturated machines from the Minsk Tractor Plant. Since then, measures have also been taken to grow original seeds of Belarus zoned hybrids of various ripeness groups, which will make it possible to "supply up to 15 thousand tons of maize seeds to the Belarusian market"<sup>108</sup>.

Among the Belarusian regions that are planning to intensify their cooperation

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[ekonomicheskoe-sotrudnichestvoekonomicheskoe-sotrudnichestvo-466948-2021/](http://ekonomicheskoe-sotrudnichestvoekonomicheskoe-sotrudnichestvo-466948-2021/).

<sup>106</sup> Zalesky B.L. SKFO - Belarus: topical media topics of cooperation / B.L. Zalesky // Mediachteniya SKFU: Materials of the Third International Scientific and Practical Conference (Stavropol, 23-25 May 2019) / ed. by O.I. Lepilkina, A.M. Gorbachev, N.N. Borisenko, D.A. Shevtsova. - Stavropol: Servyshkola, 2019. - C. 174.

<sup>107</sup> Rahaev, B. Mutual economic interests are based on historically established economic ties and are successfully developing / B. Rahaev // Interaction of Regions: Union State - the locomotive of Eurasian integration: inform.-integration project / coauthors, interviewing: B. Zaleski, M. Valkouski, A. Greshnikov. - Minsk: Biznesofset, 2016. - C. 25.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid. C. 27.

with the CBD is the Brest region, which is "working on the successful development of business initiatives, implementation of projects aimed at producing competitive products, introduction of innovations, expansion of markets, as well as establishment of joint ventures"<sup>109</sup>. To effectively develop partnerships with this Russian region, the Brest branch of the Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry signed a cooperation agreement with the union "Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Kabardino-Balkarian Republic" in April 2018. This structure is one of the centres of business activity in the Russian region, "created to support and assist entrepreneurs and to develop business contacts both in the republic and with other regions, as well as with the CIS and non-CIS countries"<sup>110</sup>. We must assume that with the appearance of the action plan, the results will not be long in coming.

An important area of partnership with the Kabardino-Balkaria is the socio-cultural one. After all, it is in this Russian region that the only Belarusian centre in the North Caucasus Federal District - the Kabardino-Balkarian public movement "For Unity - Syabry" - operates, which annually holds a number of events to strengthen cultural ties between the sides. For example, in February 2021, this centre organised a meeting at the Kabardino-Balkarian Cultural Foundation entitled 'Syabry Gathering Friends' with the participation of other national cultural centres at which "the young winners of the 'Shores of Friendship' international youth poetry and poetic translation competition, paintings and works of arts and crafts were presented, poems and songs were heard"<sup>111</sup>.

<sup>109</sup> Investment agreements worth over Br20 million signed at business contacts forum and exhibition in Brest [Electronic resource]. - 2018. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/investsoglasheniya-nahttps://www.belta.by/regions/view/investsoglasheniya-na-summu-svyshe-br20-mln-podpisany-na-forume-vystavke-delovyh-kontaktov-v-brestesummu-svyshe-br20-mln-podpisany-na-forume-vystavke-delovyh-kontaktov-v-breste-300386-2018/>.

<sup>110</sup> Mission, areas of activity [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://kbr.tpprf.ru/en/mission/>.

<sup>111</sup> The Fund of Culture of the Kabardino-Balkarian Republic hosted a traditional evening "Syabry

Gathering Friends " [Electronic resource ] :

<https://russia.mfa.gov.by/ru/embassy/regions/rostov/news/c0da3dd2bc7b.html>

Speaking of other priorities in the socio-cultural sphere, we should also recall such an interesting format as the annual international summer school at the local state university "The roots of friendship between our peoples are in our history", involving students, postgraduate students and young scientists from Belarus, Russia and Kazakhstan. In August 2019, as part of the fourth such summer school, the master class "Patriotic Education of Youth through the Prism of the Projects of the Union State of Belarus and Russia", which was "conducted by Tatiana Senkevich, PhD, Dean of the Faculty of Philology at Pushkin Brest University, and Alla Senkevich, Deputy Head of Educational Work of the Main Department for Education of Brest Regional Executive Committee", was of particular interest to the students"<sup>112</sup> . All these facts show that the necessary prerequisites for successful cooperation are in place.

Diverse opportunities for cooperation between the Republic of Belarus and the regions of the Far Eastern Federal District are opening up. This is confirmed by the fact that the first "Days of the Republic of Belarus in **Primorsky Krai**" were held in the first decade of October 2021 in Vladivostok, where 160 representatives of different fields - trade and economic, investment, cultural - took part from the Belarusian side. The most important events within the framework of the Days were: 1) meeting of the working group on cooperation of the Republic of Belarus with the Primorsky Territory; 2) trade fair and sale of Belarusian goods and equipment exhibition with participation of 18 largest Belarusian enterprises; 3) business forum of Belarusian and Primorsky business circles on expansion of cooperation with already existing partners and search of new ones.

A good backdrop for all these events was the fact that in 2021 Belarusian

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<sup>112</sup> Representatives of A.S. Pushkin Brest University participated in a summer school in Kabardino-Balkaria [Electronic resource].-2019:  
<https://russia.mfa.gov.by/ru/embassy/regions/rostov/news/652289590c9c.html>



companies' exports to this Russian region increased by 43 percent to \$13 million. However, judging by how keenly and concretely the working group discussed in Vladivostok the prospects of further interaction between the parties, this value is just a starting point in terms of the implementation of new joint projects. Let us name some of them. In particular, a full-fledged exhibition and service centre is to be set up in Primorye Territory to sell and support Belarusian equipment. This will make it possible not only to sell the equipment, but also to service it and present it to a wide circle of Primorye consumers. A project to promote Mogilevliftmash products is expected to be implemented in the industrial sector. "It concerns both lifts and lift equipment, as well as rotary and carousel-type car parks, a new direction mastered by the enterprise"<sup>113</sup>. In agriculture, the promotion, testing and introduction of Belarusian potato varieties in Primorsky Krai, expert support and scientific assistance in the cultivation of orchards, as well as the conversion of agricultural machinery to caterpillars are planned.

As for the exhibition of products of Belarusian enterprises, the main square of Vladivostok displayed municipal, agricultural and construction machinery of machine-building factories of Belarus. Another number of enterprises - Babushkina krynka Holding, Kobrin Butter and Cheese Plant, Domochay Company, Krasny Pischevik OJSC, Kommunarka OJSC, Brest, Bobruisk, Mogilev and Pinsk meat packing plants - presented Belarusian confectionery, dairy and meat products, which are well known here and are traditionally in high demand. Suffice it to say that in 2020, "\$2.1 million worth of Belarusian food was supplied to Primorye. Compared to 2019, this was an increase of 63%. This year, in the first eight months alone, supplies have increased by 34%, we have already traded for \$2 million."<sup>114</sup>.

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<sup>113</sup> Mogilev Oblast exports to Primorsky Krai increased by 84% [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/eksport-mogilevskoj-oblasti-v-primorskij-kra-ij-uvlichilsijahttps://www.belta.by/regions/view/eksport-mogilevskoj-oblasti-v-primorskij-kra-ij-uvlichilsija-.na-84-463897-2021/>

<sup>114</sup> Belarus counts on a multiple increase in food supplies to Russia's Primorye Territory [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-rasschityvaet->

The business forum held as part of the Days of the Republic of Belarus in the Primorye Territory demonstrated high interest of the local trading networks in increasing supplies of Belarusian foodstuffs. Negotiations held by representatives of business circles to increase the assortment of products supplied make it possible to count on a multiple growth in their volume in the near future. The Belarusian holding AMKODOR, which incorporates 30 legal entities, including 21 factories in Belarus, Russia, Uzbekistan and Lithuania, should be mentioned among the companies that have worked very fruitfully in Vladivostok. In particular, "a contract has been signed to supply another 15 AMKODOR machines to one of the enterprises. In addition, another dealer's contract was signed, the needs of Primorsky Territory in special AMKODOR machines for 2022 and the scope of their delivery were specified"<sup>115</sup>. A few weeks later - at the end of October 2021 - a presentation of a wide range of AMKODOR machines was held in Vladivostok. It allows "to provide comprehensive support for the forestry industry, which, in turn, increases productivity and efficiency of the equipment purchased by the customer at each stage of the production process"<sup>116</sup>. It appears that new contracts are just around the corner.

The fact that Primorsky Krai is seriously interested in Belarusian machinery is also confirmed by the fact that Bobruiskagromash Holding Management Company OJSC signed a dealer agreement with Utyos LLC with the right to sell machines for application of pulverized chemical ameliorants in Primorsky Krai. An important detail: "For 22 years, OOO "Utes" has been developing the "Gora Glubinnaya" quarry and has proved to be a reliable producer of mineral fertilizers: limestone dolomite meal, limestone grit and mineral powder for

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<https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-rasschityvaet-na-kratnyj-rost-postavok--rost-postavok-prodovolstvija-v-a-v-primorskij-kraj-rossii-rossii-463698-2021/>

<sup>115</sup> "AMKODOR will deliver another batch of machinery to Primorsky Krai [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/amkodor-postavit-ocherednuiu-partiiu-tehniki-v-www.belta.by/economics/view/amkodor-postavit-ocherednuiu-partiiu-tehniki-v-primorskij-kraj-463805-2021/>

<sup>116</sup> Presentation of Belarusian timber industry machinery was held in Vladivostok [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://russia.mfa.gov.by/ru/vladivostok/news/e6bb6d0efeca1757.html>

asphalt-concrete plants"<sup>117</sup> . Now this Russian company is using Western European machinery as its main machines for applying mineral fertilizers, which is seven times more expensive than the Belarusian machinery. So, there are good prospects for Bobruiskagromash machines in the seaside market. We remind that the VIII Forum of Regions of Belarus and Russia held in the summer of 2021 showed "extensive potential in terms of further development of interaction between the specific regions of the two countries that are members of the Union State"<sup>118</sup> , which should be fully used in the near future. This is exactly the approach we see today in the cooperation between the Republic of Belarus and Primorsky Krai.

The twinning movement is also a very effective tool for the development of Belarusian-Russian interregional relations. In October 2021, the Belarusian city of Zhodino hosted their 10th meeting, which was attended by representatives of 52 cities of the two countries - Moscow, Kaluga, Grozny, Novorossiysk, Zaslavl, Mogilev, Vileika, Kolomna, Smolensk and many others. It should be recalled that the previous nine meetings were held since 1998, in Gomel, Mytishchi, Vitebsk, Bryansk, Novopolotsk, Smolensk, Minsk, Podolsk and Mogilev. And almost all of them "have become an eloquent illustration of the conclusion that Belarusian-Russian town twinning creates a unique environment for productive trade and economic interaction as well as for spiritual component of the brotherhood of the two peoples and development of national diplomacy"<sup>119</sup> . In particular, the 9th meeting held in March 2017 in Mogilev brought together representatives of 24 Belarusian and 35 Russian cities, including from Moscow, Vologda, Tula, Smolensk, Volgograd, Penza, Pskov

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<sup>117</sup> Primorsky Krai is interested in Belarusian agricultural machinery [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/primorskij-kraj-zainteresovan-v-belorusskoj-selhoztehnike-464889-2021/>

<sup>118</sup> Zalessky, B. Time for new opportunities. Collection of articles / B. Zalessky. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2021. - C. 26.

<sup>119</sup> Zalessky, B.L. Twin-cities of Belarus and Russia: in an atmosphere of trust - to mutually beneficial projects / B.L. Zalessky // Materiały XII Międzynarodowej naukowo-praktycznej konferencji "Perspektywiczne opracowania sa nauka i technikami - 2016" Volume 3. Ekonomiczne nauki. Zarzadzanie. Politologia. Historia. Filozofia : Przemysl. Nauka i studia. - C. 42.

and Vyazma.

The topic of the meeting in Zhodzina was "Twinning as an important potential for strengthening the Union State of Belarus and Russia and the unity of peoples". Specific areas of discussion at the meeting by the Belarusian public organisation "Twin Cities" (BOPG) included proposed such as economy and business, encouragement of mutual investments, expansion of production cooperation, "interaction in the social sphere, infrastructure development, as well as cultural, educational cooperation and twinning as a platform for improving youth work"<sup>120</sup>. Note that at the end of 2020, there were 36 cities in the BOPAG, which have established twinning and partnership links with over 450 cities in 38 countries, with Russia being the clear leader.

Belarus assumes that such bilateral meetings of the twin cities are very important for the development of the twinning movement as a whole, as they represent new opportunities for expanding cooperation in the implementation of investment, trade and economic relations, cultural and educational programs. After all, "twin cities are an important and effective sector of international cooperation, the feature of which is openness, mutual trust, tolerance and kind-heartedness"<sup>121</sup>. In the Union State these relations are even more pronounced and should be used within the framework of the Union integration as an effective tool of local authorities for the development of constructive dialogue and implementation of various cooperation projects. The main goal of cooperation between the cities in this regard is "comprehensive development of urban environment, infrastructure, social sphere, culture, education, sports, recreation and leisure opportunities in order to improve the well-being of the

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<sup>120</sup> Grishkevich, A. Belarus and Russia at the meeting of twin-cities in Zhodino will discuss expansion of interaction / A. Grishkevich // [Electronic resource] : <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/belarus-i-rossija-na-vstreche-gorodov-pobratimov-v-zhodino-obsudjat-rasshirenie-vzaimodejstviya-462834-2021/>

<sup>121</sup> Batura, B. Twinning - small links of big friendship / B. Batura // [Electronic resource]. - 2020. - URL: [https://www.belta.by/interview/view/pobratimskoe-dvizhenie-malenkie-zvenija-bolshoj-druzhbymalenkie-zvenija-bolshoj-druzhby-7603/](https://www.belta.by/interview/view/pobratimskoe-dvizheniehttps://www.belta.by/interview/view/pobratimskoe-dvizhenie-malenkie-zvenija-bolshoj-druzhbymalenkie-zvenija-bolshoj-druzhby-7603/).

population, strengthen tolerance, deepen business cooperation"<sup>122</sup> .

One of the concrete results of this twinning meeting in Zhodino was the signing of a cooperation agreement between the cities of Grodno and Ukhta from **the Republic of Komi**. The first agreement to establish and develop trade and economic, scientific, technical and cultural relations between them was adopted in September 2017 during the International Investment Forum "Grodno Region at the Crossroads of Borders". The new document primarily envisages trade and industrial cooperation. The fact is that Grodno has quite a few twins and partners in Russia today. Among them are Dzerzhinsk (2005), Khimki (2005), Moscow Schukino (2005), Vologda (2007), Cheboksary (2009), the Tuapse region of the Krasnodar Krai (2012) and Tambov (2015). As we can see, few of them are located in the northern part of the neighbouring country. Thanks to the new agreement, supplies from Grodno are expected to increase, not only of meat and dairy products, but also of other products. "Among the companies whose products may soon appear in large quantities in the Russian city [Ukhta] are JSC Molochny Mir, JSC Grodno Meat Factory, JLLC Quinfood, JLLC Conte Spa"<sup>123</sup> .

The intensification of partnerships between Grodno and Ukhta is an interesting form of deepening cooperation between the Grodno region and the Republic of Komi on the municipal level. The fact is that back in April 2021 the Grodno Oblast Executive Committee noted that this Russian region is interested in cooperating in wood processing and furniture production. "There are plans to establish ties with the business community of Grodno region for this purpose. The Russian side is ready to share the Grodno experience in this field. A joint

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<sup>122</sup> Surikov, A. City diplomacy - effective way of regional integration of not only the Union State, but also the Eurasian Economic Union / A. Surikov // Belarus - Russia: city diplomacy: informational-interactive project / co-comp. and interviewer: B. Zaleski, M. Valkovski, A. Mostovoy. - Minsk: Biznesofset, 2013. - C. 4-5.

<sup>123</sup> Grodno and Russia's Ukhta signed a cooperation agreement [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/grodno-i-rossijskaja-ukhta-podpisali-dogovor-o-sotrudnichestve-463558-2021/>

venture for furniture production is also possible."<sup>124</sup> . In September 2021, the Belarusian and Russian regions held the second working group meeting to discuss specific areas of cooperation. The partners from the Komi Republic intend to share the experience of Grodno Oblast in agricultural business from design and construction of agricultural facilities to implementation of technologies for processing of raw materials; they also plan to interact in the construction industry. "Great potential is inherent in cooperation in education, culture, tourism and sports"<sup>125</sup> . It goes without saying that Grodno and Ukhta are planning to make their considerable contribution to the development of all these business ties between the republic and the oblast, which will fully correspond to the contents of the agreement signed in the framework of the 10th twin-cities meeting in Zhodino.

Another driver of engagement with Russian regions in 2021 is the activities of the Belarusian Universal Commodity Exchange (BUCE). Suffice it to say that from January through August 2021 the commodity turnover between Belarus and Russia increased by half and reached 375 million dollars. It is the highest index among 68 countries represented on the BUCE. The fact that more than a half of all foreign clients of the exchange - over 2,600 - are Russian non-resident companies - speaks volumes. At the same time, "the largest volume of transactions is accounted for by representatives of the Leningrad, Moscow and Smolensk regions"<sup>126</sup> .

To a large extent, all these positive trends can be explained by the fact that "today there are no obstacles to use the technological and intellectual potential of commodity exchanges as a tool for the implementation of integration

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<sup>124</sup> A meeting on cooperation between Belarus and the Komi and Tyva republics was held at the regional executive committee [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: [https://grodno-region.by/ru/https://grodno-region.by/ru/oblispolkom\\_news-ru/view/vnews-ru/view/v-.-proshlo-zasedanie-po-sotrudnichestvu-belarusi-i-respublik-komi-i-tyva-3oblispolkome-proshlo-zasedanie-po-sotrudnichestvu-belarusi-i-respublik-komii-tyva-31118-2021/](https://grodno-region.by/ru/https://grodno-region.by/ru/oblispolkom_news-ru/view/vnews-ru/view/v-.-proshlo-zasedanie-po-sotrudnichestvu-belarusi-i-respublik-komi-i-tyva-3oblispolkome-proshlo-zasedanie-po-sotrudnichestvu-belarusi-i-respublik-komii-tyva-31118-2021/)

<sup>125</sup> The Republic of Komi intends to adopt the Belarusian experience in the agrarian and construction spheres [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/respublika-komi-namerenahttps://www.belta.by/regions/view/respublika-komi-namerena-perenimat-belorusskoj-opyt-v-agramoj-i-stroitelnoj-sferahperenimat-belorusskoj-opyt-v-agram-i-stroitelnoj-sferah-267750-2017/>

<sup>126</sup> Zalessky, B. In search of new points of growth. The Potential of Multi-vector Foreign Trade / B. Zalessky. - Palmarium Academic Publishing, 2021. - C. 112.

programmes of the Union State"<sup>127</sup> . Russian partners are also attracted by the opportunity to use the BUTB as a kind of springboard to enter third country markets. "In the eight months of 2021, the amount of transit transactions made by bidders from the Russian Federation was \$5.5 million. These were mainly supplies of woodworking, petrochemicals, construction products, as well as equipment and machinery"<sup>128</sup> . All of these were successfully sold through BUTB to Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland. B

In particular, about 30 companies from the Smolensk, Moscow, Leningrad and Bryansk regions have used this mechanism. And, to all appearances, in the near future, these areas of Belarusian-Russian exchange cooperation will get new impetus for development in other Russian regions as well.

For example, there is great interest in cooperation with the BUTB in the **Samara region**, which is one of the leaders in terms of exports of agricultural products in the Volga Federal District. In November 2021, 30 production and trade enterprises of the region expressed their readiness to use the potential of the BUTB to expand the volume and geography of their exports, including "sales of agricultural products of the Samara region to the European Union. In particular, the BUTB has already formed a pool of regular buyers of vegetable oils from the Baltic States, Poland and Switzerland, who could purchase Samara sunflower oil as part of transit deals".<sup>129</sup> . It should be noted that so far these

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<sup>127</sup>Exchanges of Belarus and Russia discuss the creation of a unified exchange commodity market of the SG [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/birzhi-belarusi-i-rossiihttps://www.belta.by/economics/view/birzhi-belarusi-i-rossii-obsudili-sozdanie-edinogo-birzhevogo-tovamogo-rynka-sgobsudili-sozdanie-edinogo-birzhevogo-tovamogo-rynka-sg-467052-2021/>.

<sup>128</sup> Russia leads in exchange trade with Belarus [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/rossiia-lidruet-po-obiiemam-birzhevogo-tovarooborota-shttps://www.belta.by/economics/view/rossiia-lidruet-po-obiiemam-birzhevogo-tovarooborota-s-belarusjubelarusju-462016-2021/>

<sup>129</sup> . BUTB and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Samara region intend to jointly develop exchange trade in agro-industrial products [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-i-tpp-samarskojhttps://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-i-tpp-samarskoj-oblasti-namereny-sovmestno-razvivat-birzheviju-torgovlju-produktsiej-apkoblasti-namereny-sovmestno-razvivat-birzheviju-torgovlju-produktsiej-apk-471097-2021/>

countries mostly have been supplied with Belarusian oilseed products, the volume of which may exceed 70 million dollars in 2021. The Russian region can also see considerable potential in attracting metallurgical companies to the BUTB to sell ferrous and non-ferrous rolled metal products, which are annually used in the Belarusian industry in not small quantities. So far "as a rule, the way of the Samara metal to the Belarusian buyer is through intermediaries, which makes it more expensive and less competitive... ",<sup>130</sup>.

The development of exchange trade with Belarus in the **Stavropol Territory** is seen as a factor contributing to the growth of mutual trade turnover and diversification of its structure. Updating contacts with the BUTB in November 2021, representatives of the regional Export Support Center expressed confidence that this exchange platform "will become "one window" for Stavropol companies, through which they will get access not only to the Belarusian market, but also be able to successfully trade with countries in Europe, Asia and the Middle East, where it is quite difficult to do business without their own distribution network"<sup>131</sup>.

As for the **Pskov Oblast**, they see the prospects for active use of the BUTB's potential in selling the products of the region's timber industry enterprises. This is evidenced by the fact that 30 Pskov Oblast companies took part in the business forum held in October 2021, where it was detailed how "the exchange mechanism will allow Pskov companies to supply their goods not only to the Belarusian market, but also to Europe and Asia, where the exchange has already

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<sup>130</sup> The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Samara region sees significant potential for the development of exchange trade with Belarus [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL:

<https://www.belta.by/economics/view/tpp-samarskoj-oblasti-vidithttps://www.belta.by/economics/view/tpp-samarskoj-oblasti-vidit- znachitelnyj -potentsial--potentsial-razvitij a-a-birzhevoj -torgovli--torgovli-s --belarusji u-4646u-464619-2021/>

<sup>131</sup> Stavropol Territory is interested in developing exchange trade in agricultural products with Belarus [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL:

<https://www.belta.by/economics/view/stavropolskijhttps://www.belta.by/economics/view/stavropolski-j- kraj-zamteresovan-v-razvitii-birzhevoj-torgovli-selhozproduksiej-s-belarusjiukraj-zamteresovan-v-razvitii-birzhevoj-torgovli-selhozproduksiej-s-belarusjiu-467948-2021/>



formed a network of business partners who are ready to purchase timber products in almost any volume"<sup>132</sup>.

**The Republic of Karelia** also has an interesting project at the BUTB, which is primarily interested in the possibility of applying the exchange mechanism to the sale of raw milk from nearby Russian regions in the region. It is likely that this initiative to sell raw milk from the Vologda, Kaliningrad, Pskov and other regions of the North-Western Federal District has all the chances of success, since the BUBS considers raw milk to be a commodity position with a great potential, which is yet to be discovered on the exchange trading platform. In addition, in November 2021 the Belarusian exchange confirmed its readiness "to organize separate trading sessions specifically for participants from the Republic of Karelia, which will allow <...> companies to maximize the economic effect of the exchange mechanism"<sup>133</sup>. So, hopefully, the results will not be long in coming.

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<sup>132</sup> BUTB expects to increase sales of timber products from the Pskov region [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-rasschityvaet-uvelichit-prodazhihttps://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-rasschityvaet-uvelichit-prodazhi-lesoproduktsii-iz-pskovskoj-oblastilesoproduktsii-iz-pskovskoj-oblasti-464211-2021/>.

<sup>133</sup> Karelia is interested in selling dairy products through BUTB [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/karelija-zainteresovana-v-realizatsii-molochnoj-produktsii-cherez-butb-469068-2021/>.

### **Belarus-Russia: Priority - Common Science, Technology and Innovation Space**

The set of measures to develop the national innovation system for 2021-2025 approved by the Belarusian government in December 2021 includes the need to develop interstate science, technology and innovation cooperation within the Union State of Belarus and Russia among the main activities. At the 7th session of the Commission for Creation of a Common Scientific-Technological Space of the Union State (STS), held in Minsk in December 2021, the sides agreed to intensify bilateral science, technology and innovation cooperation, above all, through new Union programmes and projects. For this purpose, a tentative priority list of them was considered.

As a reminder, there were four programmes under implementation in the Union State in 2021: 1) "DNA-ID"; 2) "Development of the Union State hydrometeorological security system"; 3) "Kombikorm-SG"; and 4) "Integration-SG". A number of other new high-tech programmes were in the pipeline. These included "the introduction of mobile fibre-optic locators, sensor systems for preventing natural and man-made disasters, microchip design and production systems, high-yield agriculture technologies and a food industry focused on improving public health, as well as developments in additive technologies and the production of modern industrial and household 3D printers"<sup>134</sup>. All in all, scientists of the two countries are now developing the concepts of more than ten more union programs, where, for example, the Russian Academy of Sciences, the Kurchatov Institute, Moscow State University and the Joint Institute for Nuclear Research are only partners of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus. And this demonstrates already "the formation of a common infrastructure of fundamental and applied scientific research of the Union State, and joint work on a probiotic vaccine, which will

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<sup>134</sup> Belarus and Russia outline mechanism for deepening scientific, technological and innovation cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-rossija-nametili-mehanizmy-uglublenija-nauchno-technicheskogo-i-innovatsionnogo-475398-2021/>.

complement the series of vaccines to combat COVID-19"<sup>135</sup> . In addition, programmes are being developed at the cutting edge of genetics, biology, the peaceful atom and nuclear medicine. Among the new topical programmes are concepts in the field of small- and medium-sized tonnage chemistry In the agro-industrial sector, programmes focus "on the breeding of new farm animals and plant types. These are concepts such as Smart Farm and Intelligent Farming"<sup>136</sup> . An important task also for the new alliance programmes is to reach a high level of innovation in the development of new materials. All the more so because both countries have the necessary potential for this. For instance, in Belarus, within the framework of the National Academy of Sciences, the Belarusian State Technological University, works are carried out related to new electric energy storage units, production of new materials. And Russia is now implementing the Arktika programme, "which requires new fuel, new materials that will be able to operate at ultra low temperatures"<sup>137</sup> . A lot of promising developments in this area were demonstrated by scientists and specialists of the two countries in autumn 2021 at the "Chemical and Oil & Gas Industry Innovations" fair held in Minsk. For instance, researchers from Yanka Kupala State University of Grodno demonstrated nanocomposite high-strength materials for high-power cable fastening. There, "Kuzbass State Technical University named after T.F. Gorbachev presented a carbon magnetic oil sorbent for cleaning water environments from hydrocarbons, and Belspetskomplekt LLC presented a material for creating barriers for liquidation of emergency oil/oil product spills"<sup>138</sup> .

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<sup>135</sup> Dindilevich, N. NAS of Belarus: more than a dozen scientific programs of the Union State are being developed / N. Dindilevich // [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://soyuz.by/realizaciya-soyuznyh-programm-i-proektov/nan-belarusi-razrabatyvaetsya-bolee-desyatka-nauchnyh-programm-soyuznogo-gosudarstva>

<sup>136</sup> Timofeeva, P. Scientists of Belarus and Russia have developed more than 15 new union programs / P. Timofeeva // [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://soyuz.by/realizaciya-soyuznyh-programm-i-proektov/uchenye-belarusi-i-rossii-razrabotali-bolee-15-novyh-soyuznyh-programm>

<sup>137</sup> Kubrin: within the framework of scientific programmes of the Union State much attention is paid to creation of new materials [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://soyuz.by/realizaciya-soyuznyh-programm-i-proektov/kubrin-v-ramkah-nauchnyh-programm-soyuznogo-gosudarstva-bolshoe-vnimanie-udelyaetsya-sozdaniyu-novyh-materialov>

<sup>138</sup> Scientists from Belarus and Russia presented more than 20 joint developments at the Innovation

The unified register of technoparks of Belarus and Russia formed in 2021 should become an important step on the way to creating the unified science and technology and innovation space of the SG. 28 leading subjects of innovative structure of the two countries should be included in the register. The contest for technoparks of Belarus and Russia announced at the X Forum of the Union State Institutions of Higher Education in the field of engineering and technology, which was held in Minsk in December 2021, should also play a positive role in reaching the set objectives. Its organizers rely on the understanding that technoparks are an example of the development of university infrastructure for the commercialization of knowledge. This means that when the best innovative entities in each country are identified during the competition, their residents will receive support to put the results of their activities into practice. "In addition, assistance will also be provided in mastering the production of industrial products created primarily under the science and technology programmes of the Union State"<sup>139</sup>.

Note that a common scientific, technological and innovation space is necessary "to create equal opportunities for Belarusian and Russian scientists to work on the territory of the Union State and to carry out joint research and development in priority areas for the two countries..."<sup>140</sup>. As we can see, the parties are taking very different concrete steps to successfully address this task in the near future.

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Fair [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://soyuz.by/realizaciya-soyuznyh-programm-i-proektov/uchenye-belarusi-i-i-rossii-predstavili-bolee-20-sovmestnyh-razrabotok-na-yarmarke-innovaciy>

<sup>139</sup> Timofeeva, P. Belarus and Russia to hold Union State Technopark Competition / P. Timofeeva // [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://soyuz.by/realizaciya-soyuznyh-programm-i-proektov/belarus-i-rossiya-provedut-konkurs-tehnoparkov-soyuznogo-proektov/belarus-i-rossiya-provedut-konkurs-tehnoparkov-soyuznogo-gosudarstva>

<sup>140</sup> Zalesky, B. The fulcrum is pragmatism. International co-operation under constraints / B. Zaleski. - Palmarium Academic Publishing, 2021. - C. 40.

### **Belarus-Kazakhstan: plans for the future - in the road map**

In May 2021, the 16th meeting of the Belarus-Kazakhstan Intergovernmental Commission on Trade and Economic

The meeting was followed by the adoption of a roadmap or programme of activities for 2021-2022. The results of cooperation between the two countries in the first quarter of 2021 were a kind of tuning fork for this meeting. "The trade turnover amounted to \$215 million and compared to the corresponding period in 2020 increased by 12 per cent"<sup>141</sup>. At the same time, the surplus for the Belarusian side amounted to \$133.5 million. Among the main activities of the adopted roadmap is the development of Belarus-Kazakhstan cooperation in industrial cooperation and supplies of machinery, agriculture and construction, as well as in the interaction between the regions of the two countries.

Another important event in Belarusian-Kazakhstani engagement took place in late June 2021, when a Belarusian governmental delegation led by Prime Minister R. Golovchenko visited Kazakhstan, during which the sides made serious progress in terms of the development of bilateral **trade and economic relations**. The visit took place against the backdrop of a very positive dynamic in mutual trade between the two countries. Suffice it to say that "in 2020 the trade turnover between Belarus and Kazakhstan amounted to \$847.9 million. The main Belarusian export items were tractors, combines, beef, milk, cream, sugar, cheese, cottage cheese, furniture and medicines"<sup>142</sup>. The figures also speak for themselves. Fifty-four companies with Kazakhstani capital, including 13 joint ventures and 36 foreign ones, are operating on the Belarusian soil today.

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<sup>141</sup> Promcooperation and Days of Culture - Belarus and Kazakhstan held an intergovernmental commission meeting [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/promkooperatsija-i-dnihttps://www.belta.by/economics/view/promkooperatsija-i-dni- kultury-belarus-i-kazahstan-proveli-zasedanie-mezhpravkomissii-kultury-belarus-i-kazahstan-proveli-zasedanie-mezhpravkomissii-443204-2021/>.

<sup>142</sup> Ruslan Golovchenko visited major enterprises in Kazakhstan [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/roman-golovchenko-posetil-krupnye-predpriyatija-kazahstana-447818-2021/>.

And 366 companies with Belarusian participation are operating in Kazakhstan. In addition, there are enterprises with Belarusian technologies operating in different regions of the country at ten production sites. And now the parties are focused on increasing the localization of machinery produced there - the same tractors and cars, so that in 2021 "to reach new figures in mutual trade - for goods and services totaling more than \$1 billion a year"<sup>143</sup>.

The contracts signed between the economic entities of the two countries at the end of June 2021 should help achieve this goal. In particular, Minsk Tractor Plant will supply 590 vehicles worth ten million dollars to Kazakhstan. "Another contract was signed between MAZ and Hyundai Trans Auto LLP for the supply of MAZ trailers for \$1.3 million. Also, BELAZ and ASTANABELAZSERVICE LLP signed a contract for the supply of BELAZ machinery for \$1.2 million"<sup>144</sup>. In the same list of Belarusian exporters is Bobruiskagromash, a company that has been working closely in the Kazakh market for the past five years, where it has an assembly facility for trailers, balers and mowers. In 2020, it increased its exports of agricultural machinery to that country by one and a half times. In 2021, the results promise to be no worse. At least, that is what the signed one million dollar contract with Bobruiskagromash's distribution network in Kazakhstan promises. An agreement to develop cooperation in 2021-2022 was also signed by Gomselmash and AgromashHolding KZ JSC, the only industrial enterprise in this country that produces a wide range of combine harvesters, tractors and additional products and is the exclusive distributor of Gomel's products in Kazakhstan.

But the Minsk tractor plant, which already has three assembly plants and its own trading house in Kazakhstan, is perhaps the most prominent in terms of the

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<sup>143</sup> Belarus negotiates with Kazakhstan on oil deliveries [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-dogovorilas-s-kazahstanom-o-postavkah-nefti-447959-2021/>

<sup>144</sup> Belarus increases supplies of equipment to Kazakhstan [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-naraschivaet-postavki-tehniki-v-kazahstan-447970-2021/>

development of **production cooperation** with Kazakhstani partners, and plans to develop another assembly plant in this Central Asian country - with an investment of \$50 million - on the basis of the Composite Group Kazakhstan in Kostanai. Now the assembly line here is calculated on release of 1200 tractors "Belarus". But plans on development of a platform, creation of new workplaces, increase in quantity of the carried out technological operations directed on growth of localization of manufacture are already generated. In particular, "in the first stage, a workshop for production of cabins will be constructed together with our Kazakh partners. The next stage is the construction of another 25,000 square metre building to assemble engines and radiators of all types. It is also planned to produce a new product - diesel pumps"<sup>145</sup>. It is quite possible that the enterprise will become an important element of the Belarusian industrial centre being created in the industrial zone of Kostanay. "It will be a multidisciplinary structure that will combine not only production facilities, but also scientific and technical activities and training of specialists"<sup>146</sup>. And there is every reason to believe that such a centre could become the core of innovative development. Among other areas of Belarusian-Kazakhstani cooperation that should receive accelerated development in the near future is **agriculture**. The market of this Central Asian country is important for Belarusian farmers because it ranks second after Russia in terms of food supplies from Belarus. By the end of 2021, the Belarusian side plans to "reach 120% of our exports to Kazakhstan as compared to last year: in 2020 it was over \$300 million."<sup>147</sup>.

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<sup>145</sup> Belarus and Kazakhstan industrial enterprises intend to sign major contracts [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/prompredpriyatija-belarusi-i-kazahstanahttps://www.belta.by/economics/view/prompredpriyatija-belarusi-i-kazahstana-.podpisat-krupnye-kontrakty-447namereny-podpisat-krupnye-kontrakty-447828-2021/>

<sup>146</sup> Golovchenko: the foundation of Belarus-Kazakhstan cooperation is trade and economic relations [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL:

<https://www.belta.by/economics/view/golovchenkohttps://www.belta.by/economics/view/golovchenko-.belorussko-kazahstanskogo-sotrudnichestva-torgovo-ekonomicheskije-otnoshenijafundament-belorussko-kazahstanskogo-sotrudnichestva-torgovo-ekonomicheskije-otnoshenija-447956-2021/>

<sup>147</sup> Brylo: Belarusian food exports to Kazakhstan increase every year [Electronic resource]. - 2021. -

In this regard, it is important to recall the results of 2020, which showed that even in the face of restrictions related to the spread of coronavirus infection, the agro-industrial complex of both countries continued to show growth trends in 2020. In particular, data from the Eurasian Economic Commission indicate that "agricultural production in the territory of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) member states increased by 2.3% in 2020 to 114.3 billion US dollars. The highest production growth among EAEU countries was recorded in Kazakhstan (by 5.6%) and Belarus (by 4.9%)."<sup>148</sup>.

Positive trends in the growth of interaction between the two countries in the agro-industrial complex were also recorded at the second meeting of the joint Belarusian-Kazakh working group on the development of promising areas for bilateral cooperation in agriculture, which was held in Minsk in February 2021. The meeting focused on the issues of trade in foodstuffs, crop and livestock production, veterinary medicine, breeding and selection, taking into account that "in 2020 the turnover of agricultural products and foodstuffs between Belarus and Kazakhstan increased by 1.2 times by 2019 and reached \$307.2 million. Export was equal to \$289.9 million (more than 20% growth)"<sup>149</sup>. The two sides noted the serious potential for further stable growth of trade turnover and the consolidation of positive trends in mutual trade.

On the Belarusian side, these prospects are seen in the supply of equipment for the construction of dairy farms, introduction of new technologies, expansion of procurement of agricultural equipment, and retraining of personnel for the agro-industrial complex. The Kazakh side is especially interested in Belarusian

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URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/brylo-eksport-belorusskogohttps://www.belta.by/economics/view/brylo-eksport-belorusskogo-prodovolstvij-a-v-kazahstan-a-v-kazahstan-kazhdij-god-god-uvelichivaetsj-a-447a-447921-2021/>.

<sup>148</sup> On the meeting between the Ambassador of Belarus and the Minister of Agriculture of Kazakhstan [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <http://kazakhstan.mfa.gov.by/ru/embassy/news/c66dcb28873a0b75.html.mfa.gov.by/ru/embassy/news/c66dcb28873a0b75.html>

<sup>149</sup> Belarusian agricultural exports to Kazakhstan increased by more than 20% in 2020 [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/eksport-belorusskoj-selhozprodukcii-v-kazahstan-v-2020-godu-vyros-bolee-chem-naselhozprodukcii-v-kazahstan-v-2020-godu-vyros-bolee-chem-na-20-430100-2021>



experience in the development of the dairy and sugar industries, as well as other areas of agricultural production. The nature of this interest lies in the fact that "the coronavirus has shown how much demand there is for all agricultural products now. New niches are opening up"<sup>150</sup>.

In particular, the parties are pinning great hopes on the continuation of cooperation between Belarus's Gomselmash and Kazakhstan's largest manufacturer of agricultural machinery AgromashHolding KZ, which increased its output 1.7 times in 2020. The joint assembly of combine harvesters by these companies on Kazakh soil began back in 2007. "In 2019, the organisation produced 429 harvesters and tractors, and in 2020, 730 units of machinery."<sup>151</sup>. This includes the first ESSIL KZS-790 combine harvester, which has already been tested in the Karaganda region and has shown good results. The new machine has increased engine power and cleaning area, and threshing is done by a combination of drum and rotor. In 2021 we plan to start serial production of this model. In addition, the production of self-propelled mowers will also increase, which is explained by the growing demand for them among farmers in Kazakhstan. We would also remind you that more than 70 machine sets of the KZS-10 MAX model were sent from Gomel to Kazakhstan back in the summer of 2020. "The innovations introduced on this harvester model, relating mainly to more comfortable work of machine operators, were liked by the agrarians of Kazakhstan.

This prompted them to order another 30 such harvesters"<sup>152</sup>. And in the second half of December 2020, this additional batch of 30 sets of machines was shipped to the Kazakh partners.

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<sup>150</sup> Kazakhstan is interested in Belarusian experience in the development of the dairy and sugar industries [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/kazakhstan-zainteresovan-vhttps://www.belta.by/economics/view/kazakhstan-zainteresovan-v-belorusskom-opyte-ravzvitija-belorusskom-opyte-ravzvitija-molochnoj-i-saharnoj-i-saharnoj-otraslej-430102-2021>

<sup>151</sup> "Gomselmash and AgromashHolding KZ will expand the range of agricultural machinery in 2021 [Electronic resource].- 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/gomselmash-i-www.belta.by/economics/view/gomselmash-i-agromashholding-kz-rasshirjat-linejku-agrotehniki-v-2021-godu-424825-2021/>

<sup>152</sup> "Gomselmash has shipped an additional 30 KZS-10 MAX machine sets to Kazakhstan [Electronic resource]. - 2020. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/gomselmash-dopolnitelno-otgruzil-v-kazakhstan-30-mashinokomplektov-kzs-10-max-421382-2020/>

Among the events that should positively affect the development of cooperation between Belarus and Kazakhstan in agriculture in 2021, let us mention a few more. First, an interesting result could be brought by the idea discussed at the meeting of the Belarus-Kazakhstan Business Council in November 2020, which was attended by representatives of over 160 enterprises of the two countries. Given the fact that one of the most important issues in the development of relations between the two former Soviet republics is the holding of exhibitions, "Belarus and Kazakhstan are considering the possibility of holding an agricultural road show Belagro in Kazakhstan"<sup>153</sup>. This could be another concrete step towards intensifying bilateral cooperation and increasing mutual trade turnover. Second, back in November 2020, the Belarusian Universal Commodity Exchange (BUCE) offered Kazakhstani companies to buy Belarusian meat and dairy products and sugar on the exchange trades. At the same time, BUTB could help Kazakh companies sell their products on the Belarusian market. Following up on this proposal, in January 2021, the BUOTB agreed to intensify cooperation in electronic trade with the Astana Universal Commodity Exchange, which "will make it possible to form a unified database with commercial offers of Belarusian and Kazakh companies and facilitate the growth of mutual trade"<sup>154</sup>.

Another important area of cooperation between Belarus and Kazakhstan that should be intensively developed in the very near future is the **construction sector**, as the parties are seriously interested in this interaction. This is explained by the fact that "today Belarus and Kazakhstan have multifunctional construction complexes, which continuously carry out their activities, increasing

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<sup>153</sup> Utyupin: the possibility of holding the Belagro exhibition in Kazakhstan is being considered [Electronic resource]. - 2020. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/utiupin-rassmatrivaetsiahttps://www.belta.by/economics/view/utiupin-rassmatrivaetsia-vozmozhnost-vozmozhnost-provedenij-a-vystavki-belagro-v-kazahstane-vystavki-belagro-v-kazahstane-417045-2020/>.

<sup>154</sup> BUTB and Kazakhstan's Astana Exchange intend to develop cooperation in e-commerce [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-i-kazahstanskaia-birzha-astana-namereny-razvivat-sotrudnichestvo-v-sfere-elektronnoi-torgovlikazahstanskaia-birzha-astana-namereny-razvivat-sotrudnichestvo-v-sfere-elektronnoi-torgovli-425206-2021>

the pace every year"<sup>155</sup> . Among the priorities of cooperation in this area the parties see such areas of cooperation as construction of industrial enterprises, construction of housing and dairy complexes, production and supply of building materials, as well as establishment of a trading house of Belarusian building materials in Kazakhstan and expansion of supplies of sanitary faience, thermal insulation and roofing materials and floor coverings to this Central Asian country.

As far as industrial construction is concerned, it was noted at the 16th meeting of the Intergovernmental Commission that "the construction of a plant for the production of tractor cabins and front axles by MTZ OJSC in Kazakhstan will be an important step in cooperation"<sup>156</sup> . Let's add that works on the specified industrial areas in Kostanay city of Kazakhstan have already begun. "About 7 million dollars of investments will be directed on realization of the project. A total of about 50 million dollars is planned to be invested in the development of production facilities"<sup>157</sup> .

In addition, the parties are currently working on a joint venture for the production of ceramic tiles in Kazakhstan. This project will be realized in reality, if there will be enough raw materials for production of these products in the subsoil of this country. That is why "now the geological, environmental services of Kazakhstan are studying the volume of available resources"<sup>158</sup> .

Another interesting construction project that is being worked out by the parties concerns the construction of a 'Belarusian quarter' in Nur-Sultan. The Belarusian

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<sup>155</sup> Belarus and Kazakhstan are interested in expanding cooperation in the construction sector [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-kazahstanhttps://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-kazahstan- zainteressovany-v-rasshirenii-sotrudnichestva-v-stroitelnoj-sferezainteressovany-v-rasshirenii-sotrudnichestva-v-stroitelnoj-sfere-452678-2021/>.

<sup>156</sup> On holding the 16th session of the Belarus-Kazakhstan Intergovernmental Commission [Electronic resource ]. - 2021 . - URL: <https://kazakhstan.mfa.gov.by/ru/embassy/news/dda48a09c28d30da.html>

<sup>157</sup> Multi-million dollar contracts and oil supply arrangements: a summary of the Prime Minister's three-day visit to Kazakhstan [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <http://http://www.government.by/ru/content/9894.government.by/ru/content/9894>

<sup>158</sup> A joint ceramic tile factory and Belorusskiy Kvartal may appear in Kazakhstan [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/sovместnyi-zavod-keramicheskoi-plitki-i-plitki-i-belorusskij-kvartal-kvartal-mo-gut-gut-poj-avitsj-a-v-kazahstane-a-v-kazahstane-452553-2021/>

side could use it as an example to demonstrate its ability to design and build residential complexes. The peculiarity of this project lies in the fact that it does not exclude "the possibility of equipping the constructed housing with Belarusian furniture and household appliances, as some construction companies in Kazakhstan have such a practice of selling completely finished housing."<sup>159</sup>

In this regard, the next project discussed by the parties looks logical, i.e. the opening of a trading house in Kazakhstan, which will include such Belarusian construction industry enterprises as Keramin, Berezastroymaterialy, and Belarusian Glass Company. Belarusian Architecture and Construction Ministry believes Bellesbumprom will probably join them later. The fact is that during the first four months of 2021 alone its enterprises increased their exports to the Kazakhstani market by nearly 30 percent - to more than seven million dollars. "First of all, it is furniture: it is delivered for over \$2 million. Belarusian upholstered furniture and cabinet furniture made of solid wood are especially popular in Kazakhstan. Wood chipboard and fiberboard, plywood, wooden windows and doors, wallpaper, paper, cardboard and lumber are also exported to this country..."<sup>160</sup>. There is every reason to believe that sales of Belarusian woodworking products in the Kazakh market will continue to grow steadily.

The potential of a specialised sales outlet can only open up new sales opportunities in this respect.

Finally, with regard to the construction of agricultural facilities, the Kazakhstani side is particularly interested in this issue. At the end of June 2021, it was even agreed to meet with Kazakh partners in Belarus, where "we will show them our capacity to build fairly large farms for 2,400 animals"<sup>161</sup>. If this Belarusian

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<sup>159</sup> Belarus Interested in Construction of "Belarusian Quarter" in Kazakhstan - Utyupin [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-zainteresovana-vhttps://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-zainteresovana-v-stroitelstve-belorusskogo-kvartala-v-kazahstane-utjupinstroitelstve-belorusskogo-kvartala-v-kazahstane-utjupin-451644-2021/>.

<sup>160</sup> Enterprises of Bellesbumprom increased exports to Kazakhstan by 28.7% in January-April [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/predpriatiia-www.belta.by/economics/view/predpriatiia-bellesbumproma-v-janvare-aprele-narastili-eksport-v-kazahstan-na-287-448021-2021/>.

<sup>161</sup> Belarus plans to double export of construction materials to Kazakhstan - Parkhamovich [Electronic resource]. - URL : <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-planiruet-udvoit-eksport->

experience is favourably received by the Kazakhstani side, then in the future a similar turnkey Belarusian farm project could be implemented in Kazakhstan, with its further expansion throughout the country. The term "turnkey" in this case includes design, construction by Belarusian companies, supply of equipment and pedigree livestock.

**Interregional cooperation** also plays an important role in the development of the Belarus-Kazakhstan partnership. Suffice it to say that there are about 30 cooperation agreements between Belarusian and Kazakh regions. In particular, the Executive Committees of the Minsk, Brest, Gomel, Vitebsk and Mogilev Regions and the Akimat of the Karaganda Region have signed the relevant documents. The Gomel and Vitebsk Oblasts have an agreement on cooperation with the North Kazakhstan Oblast, and the Brest Oblast has an agreement on cooperation with the East Kazakhstan Oblast. Grodno Region cooperates with Aktobe, Kostanay and Mangystau Regions, Gomel Region - with Almaty and Atyrau Regions. These partnerships between the two regions are complemented by documents on cooperation between such cities as Minsk and Nur-Sultan, Brest and Semey, Bobruisk and Ust-Kamenogorsk, Mogilev and Shymkent. But due to the fact that "in 2020, the development of regional cooperation was to some extent hampered by the introduction of quarantine restrictions related to the spread of the COVID-19 coronavirus infection"<sup>162</sup>, in 2021, the aim is not only to activate existing partnerships, but also to work on establishing new ones. In particular, Gomel Oblast demonstrates serious intentions in this regard, offering its Kazakhstani partners to expand cooperation, including through joint ventures, small businesses, transport infrastructure and tourism. In 2020, the region's foreign trade with Kazakhstan exceeded \$115 million. "The growth rate of trade turnover in January-April [2021] reached 161% compared to last year's

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[www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-planiruet-udvoit-eksport-](http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-planiruet-udvoit-eksport-stroj-materialov-v-kazahstan-parhamovich-447920-2021/)

[stroj-materialov-v-kazahstan-parhamovich-447920-2021/](http://stroj-materialov-v-kazahstan-parhamovich-447920-2021/)

<sup>162</sup> On Interregional Cooperation of the Republic of Belarus with the Republic of Kazakhstan

[Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL:

[https://kazakhstan.mfa.gov.by/ru/https://kazakhstan.mfa.gov.by/ru/bilateral\\_relations/relationstrade-economic/regioneconomic/region/](https://kazakhstan.mfa.gov.by/ru/https://kazakhstan.mfa.gov.by/ru/bilateral_relations/relationstrade-economic/regioneconomic/region/)

four months"<sup>163</sup>, and Gomselmash and the meat and dairy company are among the main suppliers. The same Gomselmash signed a cooperation development agreement in June 2021-2022 with Kazakhstan's Agromashholding JSC. The crux of the matter is that "the Kazakh side has requested 570 units [harvesters] for this year - \$60 million. In the next three years the task is to produce up to 1,000 units of combines annually"<sup>164</sup>. The parties are also discussing other areas of cooperation. In particular, there are prospects for mutually beneficial partnership in the chemical and glass industries. Also noteworthy is a proposal by the head of Kazakhstan's diplomatic mission to Belarus, A. Beisenbayev, who spoke in Gomel, about the need to hold a forum of the regions of the two countries.

Brest Region, which exceeds \$130 million in foreign trade turnover with Kazakhstan in 2020, intends to actively develop cooperation with the Kazakhstani side. Now there are nine registered enterprises with Kazakhstan's capital in Brest Region. But there is certainly room and potential for further cooperation. And today we are talking about "supplies of products with surplus value primarily in such sectors as woodworking and food industry"<sup>165</sup>.

A real breakthrough in the development of cooperation between the regions of the two countries could be the emergence of the Belarusian Industrial Center in the Kostanay Region, which was agreed by the parties in June 2021. "It will be a multidisciplinary structure that will combine not only production facilities, but also scientific and technical activities and training of specialists"<sup>166</sup>. The centre

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<sup>163</sup> JV, small business, tourism - Gomel region intends to expand cooperation with Kazakhstan [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/sp-malyj-bizneshttps://www.belta.by/regions/view/sp-malyj-biznes-turizmturizm-gomelskaj-a-oblast-namerena-a-oblast-namerena-rasshirj-at-sotrudnichestvo-at-sotrudnichestvo-s-kazahstanom-446559-2021/>.

<sup>164</sup> Multi-million dollar contracts and oil supply arrangements: a summary of the Prime Minister's three-day visit to Kazakhstan [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <http://http://www.government.by/ru/content/9894.government.by/ru/content/9894>

<sup>165</sup> The Belarus-Kazakhstan intergovernmental commission plans to meet in Brest [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/belorusko-kazahstanskaja-mezhpravkomissija-planiruethhttps://www.belta.by/regions/view/belorusko-kazahstanskaja-mezhpravkomissija-planirueth-v-brestesobratsja-v-breste-434510-2021/>

<sup>166</sup> A Belarusian industrial centre will appear in the industrial zone of Kostanay [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.sb.by/articles/beloruskiy-industrialnyy-tsentr-poyavitsya->

will be located in the Kostanay Industrial Zone, which was opened in 2017 and is a 400-hectare industrial site, provided with communications, where enterprises of mechanical engineering, food and light industry, production of construction materials and structures, and agricultural equipment are already located. Interestingly, the first "swallow" of this zone was the "Belarus Tractor Production Plant of Composite Group Kazakhstan Holding Company". It was opened in 2018, and it is now successfully developing"<sup>167</sup>. So, the foundation for the appearance of the Belarusian industrial centre is already here.

As we can see, Belarus and Kazakhstan have great prospects for cooperation in various areas, and a good foundation has already been laid for long-term cooperation between industrial, agro-industrial and construction complexes, as well as at the level of the regions of the two countries. Let us hope that all of these plans mentioned above will be successfully implemented.

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<https://www.sb.by/articles/beloruskiy-industrialnyy-tsentr-poyavitsya-v-industrialnoy-zone-industrialnoy-zone-kostonaya.html>

<sup>167</sup> Goray, O. Kostanay Industrial Zone is gradually filling up with new productions / O. Goray // [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://top-news.kz/industrialnaja-zona-kostanaj-postepenno-zapolnjaetsja-novymi-proizvodstvami/>.

### Belarus-Uzbekistan: Participation in trade fairs as a tool for promotion to foreign markets

In 2021, Belarusian enterprises participating in exhibitions and forums organized by Belinterexpo, an exhibition company of the Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, signed 86 agreements and contracts worth over \$80 million. At the same time, "agreements and contracts worth \$15 million were signed within the framework of national expositions"<sup>168</sup>. Among the most effective in terms of the amount of signed contracts is the national expositions organized within the framework of the exhibitions in Uzbekistan - **"INNOPROM. The national expositions organized within the framework of exhibitions in Uzbekistan - INNOPROM and UzProdExpo/UzAgroExpo.**

Speaking about the first of these, it should be noted that the **"Great Industrial Week in Uzbekistan"**, held in April 2021 in Tashkent, was the largest event in this Central Asian country after a break caused by the pandemic. The exhibition then brought together "over 200 companies working in the fields of mechanical engineering, metallurgy, energy, pharmaceuticals, chemical industry and medicine from Armenia, Belarus, China, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Turkey, Uzbekistan, and the EAEC countries and Central Asia"<sup>169</sup>. The Belarusian pavilion included 65 companies and organizations exhibiting engineering, metallurgy, chemical, pharmaceutical products, medical equipment, scientific developments and consumer goods. One of the concrete results of their participation in this exhibition was "signing of a letter of intent by a subsidiary of Minsk Automobile Plant in Uzbekistan, MAZ-

<sup>168</sup> Domestic enterprises signed contracts worth \$80 million at Belinterexpo forums and exhibitions [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.beha.by/economics/view/na-forumah-ihttps://www.beha.by/economics/view/na-forumah-i-vystavkah-belinterekspo-otechestvennye-predpriyatija-podpisali-kontrakty-na-80-mln-vystavkah-belinterekspo-otechestvennye-predpriyatija-podpisali-kontrakty-na-80-mln-476100-2021/>.

<sup>169</sup> More than 20 Belarusian companies took part in a major industrial exhibition in Uzbekistan [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/boleehhttps://www.belta.by/economics/view/boleeh-belorusskih-predpriyatij-prinjali-uchastie-v-krupnoj-promyshlennoj-vystavke-v-uzbekistanebelorusskih-predpriyatij-prinjali-uchastie-v-krupnoj-promyshlennoj-vystavke-v-uzbekistane-436286-2021/>.



Tashkent LLC, to supply chassis and vehicle assembly kits to the Uzbek market for \$10 million. Also a contract was concluded with a private Uzbek company to supply 50 MAZ vehicles for the total amount of \$3 million"<sup>170</sup> . It is interesting that in April 2022 the Uzbek exhibition will be held under a new name - **"INNOPROM. Central Asia" and will include** six thematic sections: mechanical engineering, metallurgy, energy, chemicals, industrial automation, pharmaceuticals and medicine. A plenary session on 'Central Asia. Territory of Technological Breakthrough' and specialized sessions on infrastructure projects, logistics, financial instruments, and education. One should assume that Belarusian participation in this business forum will be even more representative due to the fact that "exports of Belarusian goods to Uzbekistan have grown sixfold in five years. Machinery from Belarus (tractors and tractor units, trucks), chemical products, foodstuffs, ferrous and nonferrous metals, energy resources, oil products are in the highest demand. In total, Belarus supplies 360 commodity items of all industries to Uzbekistan"<sup>171</sup> .

As for the **UzAgroExpo** and **UzProdExpo** agricultural and food exhibitions, held in Tashkent in November 2021, they are the largest industry business forums in Uzbekistan, which this time brought together 120 companies from 18 countries. The national pavilion of Belarus, where 17 companies exhibited, demonstrated the export capabilities of domestic enterprises in three main areas: food industry; agricultural machinery; and science. The first one included beef in lingonberry sauce, soft cheese made according to the Italian technology from ricotta whey, high-quality coffee produced according to its own patented technology, peanut paste with sea salt, fruit bars made from a mixture of dried prunes, dried apples, oat flakes and syrup; protein milk chocolate with increased protein content; and "Belarusian whisky, an alcoholic blended drink made from

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<sup>170</sup> Zalessky, B. The key task is development. Collection of articles / B. Zalessky. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2021. - C. 40-41.

<sup>171</sup> The Belarusian national pavilion will be represented at the INNOPROM' exhibition in Uzbekistan [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/beloruskij-natsionalnyj-pavilj-on-budet-predstavlen-na-vystavke-innoprom-v-uzbekistane-480872-2022/>

artesian water on the basis of national cereals - rye, wheat, barley malt<sup>172</sup> . Scientific developments in agro-industrial and food spheres, including technologies for rehabilitation of damaged soils, methods of production of innovative fermented milk drinks, cosmetics, have been demonstrated to numerous visitors of the exhibitions by Belarusian State University, Belarusian National Technical University, Belarusian-Russian University and Belarusian State University of Food and Chemical Technologies. Minsk Automobile Plant and Lidselmash also brought innovative equipment to the Uzbek capital, including a specially designed for the Uzbek market MAZ-65012K dump truck "with a metal body, which tilts using a hydraulic mechanism, and is designed for transportation of loose materials, including agricultural purposes"<sup>173</sup> , and new modifications of a cultivator for cotton cultivation - the most popular crop in this Central Asian country. A concrete result of the work at these exhibitions was "an agreement between the official distributor of the Minsk automobile plant in Uzbekistan the company MAZ-Tashkent and the enterprise Nurafshon Maxsus Texnika on the delivery of machinery products to the amount of \$1 million"<sup>174</sup> . At the Uzbekistan-Belarus agrarian forum, agreements were reached on construction and reconstruction of a dairy complex using Belarusian technologies on Uzbek soil.

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<sup>172</sup> The National Pavilion of Belarus presented at the exhibitions in Tashkent [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/natsionalnyj-paviljon-belarusi-predstavlen-na-vystavke-v-tashkente-471340-2021/>.

<sup>173</sup> Minsk Automobile Plant presented a new gas-powered dump truck at an exhibition in Uzbekistan [Electronic resource]. -2021. - URL: [https://www.belta.by/economics/view/minskij-avtozavod-predstavil-novyj-gazovyj-samosval-na-vystavke-v-uzbekistane-47samosval-na-vystavke-v-uzbekistane-471501-2021/](https://www.belta.by/economics/view/minskij-avtozavod-predstavil-novyj-gazovyjhttps://www.belta.by/economics/view/minskij-avtozavod-predstavil-novyj-gazovyj-samosval-na-vystavke-v-uzbekistane-47samosval-na-vystavke-v-uzbekistane-471501-2021/).

<sup>174</sup> MAZ has signed a contract to supply machinery to Uzbekistan for \$1 million [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/maz-podpisal-kontrakt-na-postavku-tehniki-v-uzbekistan-na-1-mln-471344-2021/>.

### **Belarus-Armenia: cooperation projects as a tool for partnership development**

In November 2021 the 15th session of the Intergovernmental Belarusian-Armenian Commission for Trade and Economic Cooperation was held, where the parties considered ways to strengthen the positions of Belarusian and Armenian exporters in each other's markets, expand the commodity distribution network, and cooperate in agriculture, science and technology. A characteristic feature of the partnership between the two countries is the fact that trade turnover between them is growing annually. "So, while in 2016 it was a little over \$32 million, in 2020 it already exceeded \$82 million. The growth in trade turnover was recorded in the first nine months of this year [2021] as well, it exceeded \$62 million."<sup>175</sup> . Dairy products, furniture, computers for automatic data processing and medications made up the bulk of Belarusian exports to the Armenian market. This made it possible to reach a surplus in mutual trade exceeding \$32 million in 2020. Another positive trend observed today in the relations between the two former Soviet republics is the increase in Armenian investments in the Belarusian economy. In the first half of 2021, they came in at over ten million dollars. All in all there are 46 companies with capital from Armenia operating in Belarus, including 11 joint ventures and 35 foreign enterprises.

When discussing the prospects for partnership development at the meeting of the intergovernmental commission, the sides noted that there are significant reserves for increasing the volume of mutual trade. One of them is that "the economic path of trade development through increased supplies of traditional commodity groups is outdated and it is necessary to enter into cooperation projects"<sup>176</sup> ,

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<sup>175</sup> Belarus and Armenia increase trade turnover by 2.5 times in 5 years [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-armenija-za-5-let-uvelichili-tovarooborot-v-25-razahhttps://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-armenija-za-5-let-uvelichili-tovarooborot-v-25-razah-471337-2021/>.

<sup>176</sup> Drozhza: Belarus and Armenia have reserves for increasing mutual trade [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/drozhzha-u-belarusi-i-armenii-est->

which will ensure long-term and fruitful cooperation that is less dependent on various market fluctuations. The sides are already making certain practical steps in this direction. For instance, as part of the programme for modernising the lift sector in Yerevan, Mogilevliftmash supplied five hundred sets of lift equipment to Armenia. And the issue of creating a joint assembly facility for production of lifts in Armenia is already being worked out. There are great opportunities for Belarusian companies to participate in the implementation of other Armenian government infrastructure and industrial development programmes.

The Belarusian side sees another reserve for increasing its trade with Armenian partners in the active use of the trade fairs and exhibitions that take place in that South Caucasus country. Thus, the high interest of Belarusian manufacturers in the Armenian market was eloquently demonstrated by the Made in Belarus exhibit at the 20th universal regional trade and industrial forum Armenia Expo, which was held in Yerevan in September 2021. Suffice it to say that 17 enterprises of the "Belgospisheprom" Concern became exhibitors at this one of the largest exhibitions in the Transcaucasus: "Red Foodstuffs", "Kommunarka", "Red Mozyryanin", "Spartak", and "KF Slodych",

"Malorita KOSK, Gamma Vksa, Mashpischeprod, Minsk Sparkling Wine Factory, Slutsk Sugar Refinery, Gorodeisk Sugar Factory, Minsk Kristall - the managing company of Minsk Kristall Group Holding, Krinita, Minsk Margarine Factory, Lidapischekontsy, Belcofe, Interferm. Their presence at this business forum in Yerevan can be explained by the fact that "practically all the products of the Concern's organizations are supplied to Armenia. In January-July 2021, exports to this country amounted to \$640,700 or 215.4% of the same period last year"<sup>177</sup>.

Having demonstrated the best samples of their products at the exhibition,

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[rezervyhttps://www.belta.by/economics/view/drozhzha-u-belarusi-i-armenii-est-rezervy-dlj a-a-naraschivanij a-a-vzaimnoj .torgovli-47-torgovli-471650-2021/](https://www.belta.by/economics/view/drozhzha-u-belarusi-i-armenii-est-rezervy-dlj-a-a-naraschivanij-a-a-vzaimnoj-torgovli-47-torgovli-471650-2021/)

<sup>177</sup> "Belgospisheprom presented its products at the Armenia Expo exhibition in Yerevan [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: [https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belgospisheprom-predstavil-produktsiju-na-vystavke-armenia-expo-v-erevane-460vystavke-armenia-expo-v-erevane-460163-2021/](https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belgospisheprom-predstavil-produktsiju-nahttps://www.belta.by/economics/view/belgospisheprom-predstavil-produktsiju-na-vystavke-armenia-expo-v-erevane-460vystavke-armenia-expo-v-erevane-460163-2021/).

Belarusian exporters are planning to significantly expand their presence in the Armenian market. A good example in this regard was demonstrated by the Kalinkovichi Dairy Plant, which signed a contract for USD 55,000 to supply skimmed milk powder for ice cream production during the exhibition. "The company has also reached an agreement to sign another contract for the supply of products for the production of ice cream."<sup>178</sup>. The Slutsk Cheese Factory will considerably increase the supplies to the Armenian market, as it has demonstrated in Yerevan the products of the "Yas Belous" brand - cheese, milk powder and butter, which together with cream and curd cheese dominated the export of Belarusian products to Armenia in 2020. Belarusian agricultural machinery manufacturers also see good prospects here - Gomselmash, whose two Palesse-branded machines have been operating in the fields of this country since 2020, and Grodnooblselkhoztech Holding Management Company OJSC, which produces tillage, forage, postharvest machinery and milking machines, as well as Gomel Electromechanical Plant OJSC, producer of railway locomotives and rolling stock. All of them attracted much attention from visitors to the Armenia Expo international exhibition. And there is every reason to believe that new contracts with Armenian partners will not be long in coming.

On the whole, as it was pointed out at the 15th session of the Intergovernmental Commission, the potential for cooperation between Belarus and Armenia is still quite extensive, i.e. joint ventures, cooperation, agriculture, humanitarian and interregional cooperation.

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<sup>178</sup> Kalinkovichi Dairy Plant signed a \$55,000 contract at the Armenia Expo. [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: [https://www.belta.by/economics/view/https://www.belta.by/economics/view/kalinkovichskij --molochnyj - .-na-armenia-expo-zakljuchil-kontrakt-na-55-tyskombinat-na-armenia-expo-zakljuchil-kontrakt-na-55-tys-460231-2021/](https://www.belta.by/economics/view/https://www.belta.by/economics/view/kalinkovichskij--molochnyj-.-na-armenia-expo-zakljuchil-kontrakt-na-55-tyskombinat-na-armenia-expo-zakljuchil-kontrakt-na-55-tys-460231-2021/)

## CHAPTER 10

### **Belarus: 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 envisage the transfer of powers to change the borders 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 forestry territories within the boundaries of free economic zones"<sup>179</sup>. This innovation is expected to shorten the time from the idea to the start of new investment projects in the territories, which are considered to be growth points in the regions, as it will encourage potential investors to invest resources in FEZs. A clear rule remains unchanged for them: FEZ boundaries can be expanded only for specific investment projects"<sup>180</sup>. It will be recalled that the law "On Free Economic Zones" itself was adopted in December 1998. In it, one of the main purposes of the emergence of FEZs is defined as "attraction of investments into creation and development of export-oriented and import-substituting productions based on new and high technologies"<sup>181</sup>. It should be noted that there are only six FEZs operating in Belarus. As of October 1, 2021 there were registered 429 companies with the number of employees about 137 thousand people, where projects are carried out with investments of almost seven billion dollars from more than 30 countries. The fact that FEZs are the places where it is possible to build successful businesses today is also confirmed by the statistics of 2021. In three quarters, the volume of exports here increased almost one and a half times, and the inflow of foreign direct investment was one fifth of the country's total.

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<sup>179</sup> The Council of the Republic has approved a bill on free economic zones [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/sovet-respubliki-odobril-zakonoproekt-ohhttps://www.belta.by/economics/view/sovet-respubliki-odobril-zakonoproekt-o- svobodnyh-ekonomicheskikh-zonah-47svobodnyh-ekonomicheskikh-zonah-476194-2021/>.

<sup>180</sup> Nikitina: An attractive national jurisdiction boosts investment [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/nikitina-privlekatelnajahttps://www.belta.by/economics/view/nikitina-privlekatelnaja- natsionalnaj a-a-j uridsiktsij a-aktiviziruuet-pritok-a-aktiviziruuet-pritok-investitsii -475406-2021/>

<sup>181</sup> Zalesky, B.L. Free economic zones and special economic zones as points of growth in the regions / B.L. Zalesky // Social and Humanitarian Studies. - 2020. - №3. - C. 64.

In particular, residents of **FEZ Grodnoinvest**, whose export volume exceeded one billion dollars in January-September, are achieving high results in 2021. The geography of these supplies is very wide: Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Germany, Denmark, Egypt, Italy, Lithuania, Great Britain, and Turkey. "Over 9 months a foreign trade surplus of \$540 million has been recorded, which is the best figure among Belarus' FEZs.<sup>182</sup> . As a result, FEZ residents already account for over 43% of exports and over 30% of industrial output of the entire Grodno Region. The machine-building segment is developing especially dynamically in this FEZ. Suffice it to say that here "the export of computer, electronic and optical equipment has doubled in nine months of this year [2021]"<sup>183</sup> . In total, nine companies have so far registered in Grodnoinvest in the mechanical engineering sector and another seven in metalworking. In total, there are 75 companies with investments from 40 countries that are residents of the free economic zone. They successfully implement investment projects in woodworking and furniture production, mechanical engineering and metalworking, food, chemical and light industry, agriculture and export a wide range of products, with the largest share of foreign supplies being woodworking products and furniture, food and chemical products, machinery and equipment, textile products.

It is noteworthy that new investment projects are being established in FEZ "Grodnoinvest", which in the near future will have a very positive impact on the export component of both the FEZ itself and the entire Grodno region. In particular, at the Smorgon site of the FEZ, Europlastex Invest LLC has already taken up its second project as a resident of Grodnoinvest. The first involves the construction of a vertically integrated complex for the production of cotton yarn

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<sup>182</sup> Exports by residents of FEZ Grodnoinvest in January-September exceeded \$1 billion [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/eksport-rezidentov-sez-grodnoinvest-https://www.belta.by/economics/view/eksport-rezidentov-sez-grodnoinvest-v-j-anvare-anvare-sentj-abre-abre-prevysil-1-mlrd-47-mlrd-472551-2021/>.

<sup>183</sup> Residents of FEZ Grodnoinvest double exports of electronic and optical equipment [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/rezidenty-sez-grodnoinvest-udvoili-eksport-elektronnoj-i-opticheskoj-apparatyry-udvoili-eksport-elektronnoj-i-opticheskoj-apparatyry-473562-2021/>.

and cotton products. The second project is to set up a metal processing plant in Smorgon, the total value of which will exceed five million euros. The first products are planned to be launched there in 2022. Most of it "will be oriented towards exports to Central Asia, Western Europe, the Middle East."<sup>184</sup> . To this end, new production facilities will be built and existing ones will be modernised and state-of-the-art process equipment will be purchased for the production of steel pipes and profiles. As a result, the new investment project will create dozens of new jobs, bring unused facilities into use and partially replace imported products from abroad.

It should be noted that nine resident enterprises, including those with investments from the Netherlands, Poland, Turkey and other countries, are already successfully operating on the industrial sites of FEZ "Grodnoinvest" in Smorgon district, which since 2015 have "invested over \$470 million in the creation of modern export-oriented enterprises"<sup>185</sup> . This is where almost half - 48 percent - of all industrial production in the Grodnoinvest FEZ was produced in 2020. As for the other FEZ industrial sites, "the city of Grodno accounts for 29% of production and the Lidsky District for 8%. The leaders in terms of growth rate for 2020 were Smorgon (136%), Grodno (123%) and Svisloch (123%) districts"<sup>186</sup> .

And there is good reason to believe that new domestic and foreign investors will soon appear here. The fact is that in August 2021 the second start-up complex of a large-scale infrastructure project to reconstruct the city's main traffic artery - Industrial Avenue, which connects the residential area with the FEZ industrial

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<sup>184</sup> A foreign investor will set up steel pipe production in Smorgon [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/inostrannyj-investor-organizuet-v-smorgonihttps://www.belta.by/regions/view/inostrannyj-investor-organizuet-v-smorgoni-proizvodstvo-stalnyh-trubproizvodstvo-stalnyh-trub-454884-2021/>.

<sup>185</sup> The second part of the infrastructure project of FEZ Grodnoinvest is completed in Smorgon [Electronic resource] : <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/vtoraja-ochered-www.belta.by/regions/view/vtoraja-ochered-infrastruktturnogo-proekta-sez-grodnoinvest-zavershena-v-smorgoni-455912-2021/>

<sup>186</sup> Industrial production of FEZ "Grodnoinvest" residents increased by 14% [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/promyshlennoe-proizvodstvo-rezidentov-sezhttps://www.belta.by/regions/view/promyshlennoe-proizvodstvo-rezidentov-sez-grodnoinvest-vyroslo-na-grodnoinvest-vyroslo-na-14-430320-2021/>.



park and includes a modern four-lane road, engineering infrastructure networks, landscaping and landscaping of the adjacent territory, and lighting was put into operation in Smorgon. In 2021, the third stage of the project will be launched here, involving the creation of a roundabout, as well as the provision of the industrial park with additional electricity. All of this will make the operating conditions for both existing and potential FEZ residents even more attractive.

The FEZ industrial site in Grodno also continues to develop, with two new residents registered in 2021. The first one, the company Unis Trade, is setting up production of metal constructions in Grandichi. The second one, OV-PlastSnab LLC, was registered here in June 2021 and will set up an enterprise to produce a wide range of products from synthetic polymers. Besides exporting finished goods and import substitution, the investment project of the new resident will make it possible to form additional preconditions for development of the chemical cluster in the Free Economic Zone at the industrial site in the "Auls" district, where such residents as PCC Consumers Products Navigator LLC, Belagrofert LLC, Grodnoraiagroservis JSC, PT Typhoon LLC are already successfully implementing their projects. And "the construction of a unique plant for the production of glass products has recently begun"<sup>187</sup>. So, the prospects for growth of the export component are very serious here as well.

The residents of **FEZ "Vitebsk"** have increased their export supplies by more than 60 percent in the first three quarters of 2021, bringing their volume to \$623 million and cooperating with partners from 73 countries. As a result of the export diversification work, FEZ participants managed to almost

The company's products were shipped to the Far Arc countries by half, and to the UK, the United Arab Emirates, India, Pakistan, Israel and Brazil by a factor of three or more. In addition, "for the first time, fiber-optic cables were supplied

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<sup>187</sup> A new FEZ "Grodnoinvest" resident will create an innovative production of synthetic polymer products in Grodno [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://grodnoinvest.by/presscenter/novyj-rezident-sez-grodnoinvest-sozdast-v-grodno-innovacionnoe-proizvodstvo-izdelijcenter/novyj-rezident-sez-grodnoinvest-sozdast-v-grodno-innovacionnoe-proizvodstvo-izdelij/>

to Afghanistan, gas and smoke analysers were shipped to Poland, fur skins to China, linen to Chile and insulated cables to France"<sup>188</sup> . The more than 50 investment projects currently under implementation in the free economic zone are likely to be complemented in the near future by a row of new ones, as foreign investors are showing interest in setting up production of composite materials, machinery, wood processing and manufacture of wood-based materials, as well as in the production of micro-fertilizers. In particular, "a Swedish investor 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 furniture production with an investment volume of 100 million euro. <...> A German company is planning to set up the production of decking worth about \$9 million"<sup>189</sup> . In addition, Chinese businessmen have already registered a legal entity in Vitebsk to implement a woodworking project with an expected investment of about \$26 million. All in all there are "about 8 more projects in the pipeline, the implementation of which will attract at least \$160 million to the economy of the Vitebsk region"<sup>190</sup> .

It should be reminded that currently 56 investment projects are being implemented in this FEZ in 16 sectors with participation of investors from 15 countries, including Germany, the Czech Republic, Russia, Poland, Lithuania, the UK, Israel, Cyprus and Spain. In the first quarter of 2021, three new residents registered here with projects to develop the production of special

<sup>188</sup> Residents of the Free Economic Zone "Vitebsk" increased exports of goods by almost 62% in January-September [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/rezidenty-sez-vitebsk-v-janvarehttps://www.belta.by/regions/view/rezidenty-sez-vitebsk-v-janvare-. - uvelichili-eksport-tovarov-pochti-nasentjabre-uvelichili-eksport-tovarov-pochti-na-62-471298-2021/>

<sup>189</sup> Investors from 4 countries show interest in implementing projects on the sites of FEZ "Vitebsk" [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/investory-iz-4-stranhttps://www.belta.by/regions/view/investory-iz-4-stran- projavljajut-interes-k-realizatsii-proektov-na-ploschadkah-sez-vitebsk-472892-2021/>

<sup>190</sup> Residents of 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-9mesj.-narastili-proizvodstvo-produktsii-bolee-chem-na-40-47atsev-narastili-proizvodstvo-produktsii-bolee-chem-na-40-471323-2021/>

hydraulic press equipment, construction materials and modernization of facilities for the production of import-substituting components for agricultural machinery and passenger cars. "The projects attracted \$12.2 million in foreign direct investment on a net basis, which was more than 40% of the figure for the Vitebsk region as a whole."<sup>191</sup> .

The residents of **FEZ Gomel-Raton** also exported more than half of the goods produced in January-September 2021. More than USD 1.1 billion worth of goods were shipped to the markets of 63 countries. The top five importers here are Russia, Ukraine, Poland, Lithuania and China. It is not a bad indicator if you consider that on October 1, 2021. 69 economic entities, of which 30 - the companies with foreign capital from 16 countries worked in the Free Economic Zone. In 2021 three more resident companies with about \$50 million in investments were registered here. All in all "\$76.3 million of direct foreign investment has been attracted in FEZ Gomel-Raton for 9 months for the realization of investment projects"<sup>192</sup> . This is almost half of the total volume of investments in Gomel Region.

By the end of 2021, the FEZ was expected to increase production by 18.5 percent by upgrading existing facilities and registering new residents with promising investment projects. For example, "the Alkopak company is building a new building in which it plans to produce new medical products. "Polikap is working on a project to produce disposable tableware made of cellulose"<sup>193</sup> . Residents such as Veza-G and Multipak will also expand their production.

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<sup>191</sup> Residents of 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-9https://www.belta.by/regions/view/rezidenty-sez-vitebsk-za-9- mesj .-narastili-proizvodstvo-produktsii-bolee-chem-na-40-47atsev-narastili-proizvodstvo-produktsii-bolee-chem-na-40-471323-2021/>

<sup>192</sup> Residents of FEZ Gomel-Raton increased production of industrial products by more than 42% over 9 months [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/rezidenty-sez-gomelhttps://www.belta.by/regions/view/rezidenty-sez-gomel- raton-za-9-mesiatsev-uvelichili-proizvodstvo-promproduksii-bolee-chem-naraton-za-9-mesiatsev-uvelichili-proizvodstvo-promduksii-bolee-chem-na-42-471389-2021/>

<sup>193</sup> The residents of FEZ Gomel-Raton intend to increase output by 18.5% in 2021 [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/rezidenty-sez-gomel-ratonhttps://www.belta.by/regions/view/rezidenty-sez-gomel-raton- namereny-uvelichit-objem-proizvodstva-namereny-uvelichit-objem-proizvodstva-na- - 185-v185-v-2021- godu-4345godu-434576-2021/>

MIRTEK-Engineering LLC, which produces energy metering devices, has already been supplying more than half of its output to foreign markets - Russia, Kazakhstan, Armenia, and European countries. Recently, it has started outsourcing manufacturing of SMD and DIP components - a promising direction, which is relevant to all companies involved in the production of electronic modules and assemblies. Note that "in 2020, \$230 million of investment has been invested in the Gomel-Raton FEZ"<sup>194</sup>.

As for **FEZ Brest**, its potential was presented in January 2022 at the World Expo 2020 in the United Arab Emirates for the first time on the platform of the Belarusian national exposition with a separate pavilion. The numerous visitors to the world forum saw such FEZ resident-companies as Santa Bremor JV LLC, STiM group of companies, and Barhim OJSC. The very presence of FEZ "Brest" at "EKPO-2020" eloquently illustrates the growing role of this "multi-profile economic territory, where manufacturing, technological, logistical activities can develop"<sup>195</sup>, for the economy of Brest region.

It should be reminded that in 2021 the residents of this FEZ accounted for one fifth of the total industrial output of this Belarusian region. "Goods worth \$936 million were delivered outside the country (growth rate - 123.9%). The share of the FEZ in the total exports of Brest Oblast was 29%, with the foreign trade surplus of \$289 million"<sup>196</sup>. In December 2021 there were 72 residents, including 42 with foreign capital, and 21.5 thousand people working there. An additional 700 jobs were created in the FEZ in 2021. At the end of December 2021 the 73rd resident of Brest free economic zone was "Green-Glass" LLC with the investment project on modernization of the production of glass articles up to the full cycle. "The investor intends to invest over €500,000 in the

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<sup>194</sup> FEZs are a driver of territorial development - Asluk [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/sez-javlajajutsja-drajverom-razvitija-territorij-asljuk-434551-2021/www.belta.by/regions/view/sez-javlajajutsja-drajverom-razvitija-territorij-asljuk-434551-2021/>

<sup>195</sup> Zalesky, B.L. Free economic zones and special economic zones as points of growth in the regions / B.L. Zalesky // Social and Humanitarian Studies. - 2020. - №3. - C. 67.

<sup>196</sup> The investment potential of Brest FEZ to be presented at an exhibition in Dubai [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/investitsionnyj-potentsial-sez-brest-predstavjat-na-www.belta.by/regions/view/investitsionnyj-potentsial-sez-brest-predstavjat-na-vystavke-v-dubae-480588-2022/>

business within three years. The product range includes processed sheet glass, tempered and multi-layered flat glass, glass mirrors, single- and double-glazed windows"<sup>197</sup>.

Prior to that, in October 2021, Cesar Industrial LLC, a company with Belarusian-Israeli capital, based in Kobrin and specializing in lumber, became a resident of the FEZ. The new resident has leased a plot of land and acquired ownership of the buildings on it, where, after reconstruction, production of "furniture boards made of laminated chipboard and glued laminated timber products, which have a wide range of applications, will be transferred. A large proportion of the products will be exported to foreign markets"<sup>198</sup>. The production of these products is planned to start within three years. Kesar Industrial, s.r.o. intends to invest more than half a million euro in the first phase of this investment project. Interestingly, the new resident will be the fifth company operating in the FEZ in the wood processing sector.

It should be noted that the Brest FEZ today is characterized not only by the emergence of new residents, but also by the expansion of the activities of companies that have already been operating here for a long time. The fact is that in 2016, its territory was expanded mainly due to companies that had vacant space. In five years, about 80 enterprises have been located in the unused facilities of former industrial giants, including the Electric Lamp Factory, Carpet Factory and Electromechanical Factory. Overall, the FEZ residents

"Brest" are now stationed both in the regional centre and Brest district and in Baranovichi, Pinsk, Kobrin and Ivatsevichi.

For example, in August 2021, Anrex FLLC, which has been a FEZ resident for a quarter of a century, bought production and administrative and household premises from Brest-based Tsvetotron OJSC and set up furniture production

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<sup>197</sup> New resident registered in FEZ Brest [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL:

<https://www.belta.by/regions/view/novogo-rezidenta-zaregistrirovali-v-sez-brest-476969-2021/www.belta.by/regions/view/novogo-rezidenta-zaregistrirovali-v-sez-brest-476969-2021/>

<sup>198</sup> Woodworking company joins the ranks of Brest FEZ residents [Electronic resource]. - 2021. -

URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/derevoobrabatyvaiuschee-predpriatiehttps://www.belta.by/regions/view/derevoobrabatyvaiuschee-predpriatie-.chislo-rezidentov-sez-brestpopolnilo-chislo-rezidentov-sez-brest-462782-2021/>

there. "It is planned to invest about Br60 million and create 500 jobs in the project. The first start-up complex has already been commissioned..."<sup>199</sup>. As a result, the city got rid of unprofitable buildings of the former factory and got a new production facility. Another example in this context is Arlait & K LLC, a company with Russian-Chinese capital, registered in the Brest FEZ in November 2015 and located in the Aeroport Industrial Zone. Over the past six years, the company has created a high-tech LED production facility here, which is used to produce LED strips and lighting devices that 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 commissioned here, which "will double the capacity of the plant and produce up to 3,000 linear lights and 350 km of LED strip per month"<sup>200</sup>. This will make it possible to increase the number of employees to 250.

A number of other existing resident companies are also planning to expand their production facilities. Polipol Mebel Bel LLC, registered here in the summer of 2020 and the "seventh company in the FEZ with German capital"<sup>201</sup>, is building a large plant for the production of upholstered furniture in Ivatsevichi with a planned investment of 26 million euros. "A new line for the production of smoked sausages is going to be launched by IE "Inko-Food" Ltd. Santa Bremor JV Ltd. is investing at least \$5 million annually in the development of production"<sup>202</sup>. All these facts clearly show what serious investment and

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<sup>199</sup> An investor on the premises of the Brest "Tsvetotron" created a furniture production [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/mvestor-na-ptoschadjah-brestskogo-tsvetotronahttps://www.belta.by/regions/view/mvestor-na-ptoschadjah-brestskogo-tsvetotrona-.mebelnoe-proizvodstvo-45sozdal-mebelnoe-proizvodstvo-457323-2021/>

<sup>200</sup> A manufacturer of LEDs in the Brest FEZ plans to double production [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/proizvoditel-svetodiodov-v-sez-brest-planiruethhttps://www.belta.by/regions/view/proizvoditel-svetodiodov-v-sez-brest-planirueth-udvoit-objem-proizvodstva-45udvoit-objem-proizvodstva-450766-2021/>

<sup>201</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>202</sup> Five new enterprises to be launched in Brest FEZ this year [Electronic resource]. -2021. - URL:

production potential FEZ "Brest" has today in terms of prospective development. And which, once demonstrated at the world exhibition Expo 2020 in Dubai, may get 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 certainly only contribute to maintaining the positive development dynamics that they have already managed to achieve in the past more than 20 years since the emergence of FEZs in Belarus.

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## CHAPTER 11

### **Belarus: a plan for innovative ideas based on local reserves**

In December 2021, the Republic of Belarus approved the National Green Economy Action Plan for 2021-2025, which defines the development of a smart digital economy contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals as a strategic goal. This document envisages the development of the Belarusian green economy based on such principles as: sustainable development, inclusiveness inter-sectorality, innovativeness, science, efficiency and residuality, resource conservation, waste management as resources, increasing competitiveness and strengthening the positions held in the global markets "taking into account the global trends of greening, transparency, international cooperation and responsibility"<sup>203</sup>. Let us remind you that the Programme of Socio-Economic Development of the Republic of Belarus for 2021-2025, approved in July 2021, stated that in the next five years "the emphasis will be placed on the introduction of tools to support the green economy. Work on the formation of a national system of carbon regulation, attraction of green investments, development of eco-innovations and creation of green jobs will be intensified"<sup>204</sup>.

Among the priority areas for the development of a green economy in Belarus, the national plan identifies the following: 1) introduction of sustainable consumption and production principles; 2) development of circular or closed cycle economy; 3) production of organic products; 4) ecological and agro-ecotourism; 5) formation of smart and energy efficient cities; 6) development of electric transport and its infrastructure. In other words, the plan "sets a practice-oriented trajectory, providing for the implementation of promising innovative

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<sup>203</sup> Smart cities, eco-tourism and electric transport: how the green economy will develop in Belarus [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/umnye-gorodahttps://www.belta.by/economics/view/umnye-goroda-ekoturizm-i-elektrotransport-kak-budet-ekoturizm-i-elektrotransport-kak-budet-razvivatsj-a-a-zelenaj-a-ekonomika-v-belarusi-47a-ekonomika-v-belarusi-475021-2021/>

<sup>204</sup> Programme of socio-economic development of the Republic of Belarus for 2021-2025 [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://pravo.by/documenthttps://pravo.by/document/?guid=3871=3871&p0=P&p0=P32100292>



ideas in the regions relying on local resources and creating comfortable living conditions for people"<sup>205</sup>. This should certainly include the development of electric transport and its infrastructure.

It should be noted that back in March 2020, Belarus issued a decree "On Encouraging the Use of Electric Vehicles", which contained "measures designed to stimulate demand for this environmentally friendly vehicle in the country, as well as the creation of appropriate charging and service infrastructure in the regions"<sup>206</sup>. At the beginning of 2021 there were already more than one thousand electric cars in our country, and by the beginning of the second half of the year more than four thousand. As for the nearest five-year plan, "by 2025 Belarus may approach the mark of 100 thousand such vehicles, and by 2030 about 20% of Belarusians will have electric motors"<sup>207</sup>. The important tendency here is that in Belarus not only citizens start switching over to electric cars, but also industrial enterprises, which get considerable savings from their operation. "This was demonstrated by Gomelenergo, which was one of the first energy supplying organisations to implement a pilot project to upgrade its vehicle fleet with electric cars"<sup>208</sup>.

The network of fast charging stations for electric vehicles is also developing rapidly in the country. Since 2018, it has increased from 14 to 486, and by the beginning of 2022, it should already include 600 such facilities, which will

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<sup>205</sup> The National Plan for a Green Economy will strengthen the environmental and innovation segments of the 2025 Agenda [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL:

<https://www.belta.by/economics/view/natsplan-po-https://www.belta.by/economics/view/natsplan-po-zelenoj-ekonomike-usilit-ekologicheskij-i-innovatsionnyj-segmenty-programmyekonomike-usilit-ekologicheskij-i-innovatsionnyj-segmenty-programmy-2025-475288-2021/>

<sup>206</sup> Zalesky, B. The key to success is cooperation. Collection of articles / B. Zalesky. - Palmarium Academic Publishing, 2021. - C. 113.

<sup>207</sup> "Belorusneft: the country has created the largest network of fast charging stations for electric vehicles in the EAEU [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belorusneft-v-strane-sozdana-krupnejshaja-v-caes-set-bysttyh-zarj-adnyh-stantsij-dlj-a-elektromobilej-474986-2021/>

<sup>208</sup> Number of electric cars in Belarus increased to 4 thousand - Karankevich [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/chislo-elektromobilej-v-belarusi-uvelichilos-do-4-tys-https://www.belta.by/society/view/chislo-elektromobilej-v-belarusi-uvelichilos-do-4-tys-karankevich-45karankevich-450761-2021/>

make it possible to operate more than 25,000 such vehicles. In a few years, it is expected that owners of such vehicles will spend no more time at charging stations than owners of cars with internal combustion engines do at petrol stations. An important role in this regard is assigned to the Vitebsk JSC Vityaz, a diversified enterprise developing about twenty kinds of activities today. It started manufacturing electric charging stations for electric vehicles in 2017. Today, they actively cooperate with the national charging infrastructure operator RUE PA Belorusneft, to which they supply high-tech products under the Malanka brand. At the same time, the company plans to develop its own network of electric charging stations under the ISKRA brand. Here they aim to "develop the niche of the so-called slow chargers. The network facilities will be installed in residential areas, business centres and other sites where it is possible to leave a car in the car park and connect it to an electric charging station at the same time"<sup>209</sup>. The first two such charging stations have already been put into test operation in Vitebsk - near the Vityaz production site. The opening of the first branded electric charging station in Minsk and several other facilities in the residential areas of the Belarusian capital are on the way.

Domestic models of these eco-friendly vehicles should appear in Belarus in the near future. In particular, there are plans to supply Geometry C electric cars from BELJI CJSC to the market, where tests were completed in August 2021. This Belarusian-Chinese electric car "has many innovative solutions: from active safety systems to sophisticated design. <...> The range on a single charge is 550 km"<sup>210</sup>. If there is a demand for these vehicles, the company will already

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<sup>209</sup> "Vityaz will develop its own network of electric charging stations under the ISKRA brand [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/vitjaz-budet-razvivathttps://www.belta.by/economics/view/vitjaz-budet-razvivat-sobstvennuju-set-elektrozarjadnyh-stantsij-pod-brendom-iskrasobstvennuju-set-elektrozarjadnyh-stantsij-pod-brendom-iskra-473377-2021/>

<sup>210</sup> "BELJI plans to start selling a new electric car in the fourth quarter of 2021 [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/beldzhi-planiruet-nachat-prodazhi-novogo-elektromobilja-v-chetvertom-kvartale-2021-godaprodazhi-novogo-elektromobilja-v-chetvertom-kvartale-2021-goda-454431-2021/>

be using the corresponding plant capacities for the production of new electric vehicles in 2022. So, this innovative vehicle has a good future in Belarus. And its development will be a significant contribution to the implementation of the National Action Plan for the development of green economy in our country until 2025.

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