System partnerships

In October 2022 a summit of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) was held in Astana, the capital of Kazakhstan, where participants of the international organization discussed a wide range of issues to maximize multilateral and bilateral dialogue, including for deepening trade and economic cooperation in the post-Soviet space. Today the CIS countries continue to work together systematically to implement the action plan to implement the first stage of the Commonwealth Economic Development Strategy until 2030. Participants of the integration association make the necessary efforts to determine the area of application of the efforts of the parties to obtain solutions in areas of maximum mutual interest. It is important to implement the agreed priorities of multilateral interactions and form joint programs and projects. The study uses examples of cooperation between the Republic of Belarus and Azerbaijan, Armenia, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan to analyze vital initiatives that prove in practice the effectiveness and priority of collective measures to counteract negative economic processes in the member states of the Commonwealth of Independent States.



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System partnerships

Specifics of economic interaction of the Belarusian side with the post-Soviet republics

Boris Zalesskij

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The potential of an exchange platform in the field of foreign trade is enormous	53

Cooperation in a spirit of openness, trust and mutual assistance

Azerbaijan is among those countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States, interaction with which is strategic for the Republic of Belarus. Over less than thirty years, and diplomatic relations between the two former Soviet republics were established back in June 1993, Belarusian-Azerbaijani interaction has formed the traditions of the two peoples, which are based on "openness, trust, friendship and mutual support." Among the significant interstate documents that Minsk and Baku consider basic are: 1) Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation between the Republic of Belarus and the Republic of Azerbaijan (2007); 2) Treaty between the Republic of Belarus and the Republic of Azerbaijan on Social and Economic Cooperation until 2025 (2015).

In 2018, when Belarus and Azerbaijan were celebrating the 25th anniversary of their diplomatic relations, the parties noted the high dynamics of expanding cooperation in all areas, including the trade and economic sphere, where the main priorities were industrial cooperation, joint projects in science and technology, and investment cooperation. This was evidenced, in particular, by the results of 2018, when the Belarusian-Azerbaijani trade turnover "amounted to about \$465.3 million and increased threefold compared to 2017"². The fact that supplies of Belarusian products to the Azerbaijani market were carried out for more than 220 commodity items at that time also spoke volumes.

One of the key areas of cooperation between Belarus and Azerbaijan was industrial cooperation, the flagship of which is the Ganja Automobile Plant. The Ganja Automobile Plant was the flagship of this cooperation, and

¹ Belarusian-Azerbaijani bilateral relations [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://azerbaijan.mfa.gov.by/ru/bilateral relations/political/

² Igor Lyashenko made a working visit to Azerbaijan [Electronic resource]. - 2019. - URL: http://www.government.by/ru/content/8786

it was the assembly facility for Belarusian tractors, Gomselmash grain harvesters, Minsk Automobile Plant equipment, and Belkommunmash electric buses. The efficiency of their activities is evidenced by at least the fact that since 2007, more than 11 thousand tractors, as well as about 3.5 thousand units of automotive and special equipment have been assembled here. In May 2019, a new assembly line was opened at the Azerbaijani company, "for the first time a KZS-575 "Palesse GS575" grain harvester and E321 electric bus rolled off the assembly line"³.

The production of electric buses - a public transport designed for 83 passengers, equipped with 26 seats, air conditioning, an information monitor and a video control system - has attracted particular interest in Ganja. This technique is beneficial both in terms of minimal environmental impact and energy consumption savings. "The time to fully charge the batteries of an electric bus capable of reaching speeds of up to 60 km/h < ... > is only six minutes"⁴. It is expected that in the future the Ganja Automobile Plant will produce up to 40 percent of spare parts for this eco-friendly technology. In case of sufficiently high demand, the capacity of the enterprise will allow producing up to 150 electric buses a year. And projects to assemble and supply utility vehicles of Minsk Automobile Plant and medium-sized passenger vehicles were still under development. In addition, in July 2019 in the Turkish city of Kırıkkale, which is 80 kilometers from Ankara, with the support of the Ganja Automobile Plant began assembling Minsk tractors so as to produce a hundred cars by the end of the year and two hundred next year. And as a result, "the capacity of the plant will allow assembling up to

³ President of Azerbaijan met with Deputy Prime Minister of Belarus Lyashenko [Electronic resource]. - 2019. - URL: https://www.belta.by/politics/view/prezident-azerbajdzhana-vstretilsja-s-vitse-premjerom-belarusi-ljashenko-347392-2019/

⁴ Azerbaijan started producing Belarusian grain harvesters and electric buses [Electronic resource]. - 2019. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/v-azerbajdzhane-pristupili-k-yypusku-belorusskih-zernouborochnyh-kombajnov-i-elektrobusov-347363-2019/

three thousand tractors a year"5. The assistance of the Azerbaijani side in this matter made it possible to save about one million dollars only for the construction of one building of the future production in Turkey.

Another important area of Belarusian-Azerbaijani cooperation, which received a strong boost in the spring of 2019, is the participation of Belarusian exporting companies in Azerbaijani exhibition events. In May, the exposition of Belarusian manufacturers "Belarus. Taste of Nature" was presented in Baku at the international agricultural exhibition Caspian Agro, which has already "proven to be an important platform for promoting Belarusian interests in agriculture in the Azerbaijani market."⁶ . More than 200 companies from 25 countries, who presented their traditional products and innovations in various sectors of the agricultural sector, included 25 organizations and companies from Belarus. Thus, organizations of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus demonstrated innovative equipment for agriculture - energy-efficient harvester for berry harvesting, LED lights and greenhouse irradiators for growing plants in greenhouse farms. Belagro Bel company offered visitors of the exhibition "a multi-brand portfolio of agricultural machinery produced in Belarus and integrated solutions for processing a wide range of crops"⁷.

Even more diverse Belarusian products could be seen at the exhibition in the confectionery, beverages and groceries section. In particular, "Red Foodstuffs" from Bobruisk attracted attention with such novelties as:

⁵ Matiyevsky, M. Assembly production of Belarusian tractors in Turkey should start in July / M. Matiyevsky [Electronic resource]. 2019. https://www.belta.by/economics/view/sborochnoe-proizvodstvo-belorusskih-traktorov-v-turtsiidolzhno-zarabotat-v-ijule-344079-2019/

⁶ Belarus is interested in developing cooperation with Azerbaijan in the agro-industrial complex and industrial cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2019. - URL: https://www.belta. by/economics/view/belarus-zainteresovana-razvivat-s-azerbajdzhanom-sotrudnichestvo-v-apk-ipromkooperatsiju-347429-2019/.

Belarus presented the largest national exposition at the agricultural exhibition in Baku [Electronic resource]. - 2019. - URL: https://belta.by/economics/view/belarus-predstavilakrupnejshuju-natsionalnuju-ekspozitsiju-na-selskohozjajstvennoj-vystavke-v-baku-347619-2019/

marshmallow - in the form of rose flower, pomegranate and duchesse flavors; marmalade - in the form of bottles with tequila, wine and cognac flavors. "Spartak" from Gomel demonstrated chocolate - bitter and milk, as well as white with almonds and coconut, with hazelnut and biscuit balls, with hazelnut and cereals. The Belarusian exposition in Baku was supplemented by baby food, meat and poultry products, and products of the Minsk Margarine Plant. The business part of the Caspian Agro exhibition was also very productive for the Belarusian participants. In particular, the cooperation document was signed by the concern "Belgospischeprom" and Azerbaijan Industrial Corporation, in which the parties agreed to cooperate "in the supply of tobacco products between the agricultural complex "Azertabak" and the Grodno Tobacco Factory, which is part of the concern "Belgospischeprom"⁸, and also to exchange production experience.

Now let us look at the results of the year 2021. They showed that Azerbaijan became one of the main trade and economic partners of Belarus, with which cooperation is developing especially intensively today. This is evidenced by the fact that the Belarusian-Azerbaijani trade turnover in 2021 almost doubled and amounted to \$885.5 million. At the same time, "Belarusian exports of goods increased 2.5 times and amounted to \$478.0 million, reaching record levels in the history of bilateral relations" The main export items from Belarus to Azerbaijan are railway trains, wood-fiber plates, medicines, furniture, timber, electric transformers, as well as beef, butter, cheese and cottage cheese. "There is also a reliable channel for the purchase of Azerbaijani fruits and vegetables, which replaced imports from

^{8 &}quot;Belgospischeprom" and the Azerbaijan Industrial Corporation signed a protocol on cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2019. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belgospischeprom-i-azerbajdzhanskaja-promyshlennaja-korporatsija-podpisali-protokol-o-sotrudnichestve-347723-2019/

⁹ On the results of Belarusian-Azerbaijani trade in goods in 2021 [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://azerbaijan.mfa.gov.by/ru/embassy/news/a81fa7c9e40a3b23.html

unfriendly countries. The Belarusian side is interested in further expansion and diversification of trade and economic cooperation."¹⁰.

The parties paid much attention to such a promising area of bilateral cooperation as **agriculture and food**. In September 2021, they even held the first meeting of the Belarusian-Azerbaijani Working Group on Agriculture and Food Security, at which they "discussed issues of cooperation in crop and livestock farming, food security, agricultural education, expansion of trade and economic relations in the sphere of agriculture..."11. Coordination of joint efforts in this area has made it possible to achieve good results in bilateral trade in agricultural goods and agricultural raw materials, the volume of which has increased by nearly 20 percent - up to 41.6 million dollars - with the share of Belarusian exports amounting to 35 million dollars by the end of 2021. It is important that these positive trends are still in place. "In January-February 2022, the turnover of food products and agricultural raw materials between Belarus and Azerbaijan amounted to \$5.7 million. Belarusian exports of goods amounted to \$4.6 million" 12.

Another promising sphere of Belarusian-Azerbaijani cooperation, where serious positive shifts are expected, is **construction**. The fact is that this segment of the economy ranks second in Azerbaijan after the oil segment by the volume of state investments. Belarusian companies may also be interested in the fact that there is a very high demand for sawn timber in this country, and a simplified tax for companies in the industry. In 2021, the basis of Belarusian construction exports to the Azerbaijani market consisted of

¹⁰ Petrishenko: Belarus is interested in expanding trade and economic cooperation with Azerbaijan [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/petrishenko-belaruszainteresovana-v-rasshirenii-torgovo-ekonomicheskogo-sotrudnichestva-s-526693-2022/

¹¹ On the meeting of the Belarusian-Azerbaijani Working Group on Agriculture and Food Safety [Electronic resourcel. https://azerbaijan.mfa.gov.by/ru/embassy/news/b29ba1099335e43e.html

¹² Belarus and Azerbaijan in 2021 increased food products and agricultural raw materials by almost 20% [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarusi-azerbajdzhan-v-2021-godu-uvelichili-tovarooborot-prodtovarov-i-selhozsyrjja-pochti-na-20-496191-2022/

reinforced concrete and metal structures, equipment and spare parts. The following figures illustrate the dynamics of these supplies: "The construction industry organizations of Belarus in the first quarter of 2021 delivered to Azerbaijan products worth over \$ 3.5 million. This is 2.2 times more compared to the same period in 2020.¹³ . Further bilateral cooperation in this area can be judged by some of the Belarusian participants at the 26th International Specialized Exhibition BakuBuild, held in October 2021 in the Azerbaijani capital. In particular, the Scientific and Production Association "OKB TSP" has demonstrated there its own innovative technology for the erection of arched structures for various purposes, developed by specialists of the company "Spets Mashinostroenie", which is part of the "OKB TSP". It is interesting that the company has already built 19 industrial buildings in Azerbaijan by using this technology.

Belarusian regions also see their own prospects for developing cooperation with Azerbaijani partners. For example, **Grodno Region** is going to actively expand these relations. Recall that in 2021 the exports of Grodno region enterprises to Azerbaijan doubled and amounted to 17.4 million dollars. A total of about 40 business entities of all forms of ownership from the Belarusian region delivered goods to the South Caucasus. The Azerbaijani side remains highly interested in importing Belarusian agricultural machinery, woodworking and food products. According to the parties, "we have enough promising areas for cooperation. This is agriculture and mechanical engineering. We will be redoubling our efforts to develop our relations". 14

¹³ The national pavilion of Belarus will be presented at BakuBuild [Electronic resource]. - 2021.

 $⁻ URL: \underline{https://www.belta.by/economics/view/natsionalnyj-paviljon-belarusi-budet-predstavlenna-vystavke-bakubuild-463807-2021/\underline{\ }$

¹⁴ Grodno region is interested in expanding cooperation with Azerbaijan [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://www.belta.by/regions/view/grodnenskaja-oblast-zainteresovana-v-rasshirenii-sotrudnichestva-s-azerbajdzhanom-494171-2022/

Another interesting example in this context is **the Brest region**, whose trade turnover with Azerbaijan grew by almost half in the first quarter of 2022. For example, "supplies of machines and mechanisms for harvesting and threshing crops increased 15-fold. Brest residents also export batteries and furniture" ¹⁵. The main export from the Belarusian region is food products, among which dairy products prevail.

Finally, the cities **of Gomel** and **Ganja**, which signed a friendship and cooperation agreement back in November 2013, are active participants in Belarusian-Azerbaijani interregional cooperation. This city of Azerbaijan is known to have an automobile plant, where assembly facilities of Belarusian companies - Minsk Tractor and Automobile Plant, Gomselmash and Belkommunmash - have already been established. The first PALESSE KZS-575 combine harvester was assembled here in 2019. At the same time, the parties noted that "there are many points of contact for further development of relations between the Belarusian and Azerbaijani cities in various industries, cultural, educational and sports spheres" ¹⁶. So the reserves for the development of cooperation here are not insignificant.

In June 2022, the 12th meeting of the Belarusian-Azerbaijani intergovernmental commission was held. At the meeting, the parties mentioned the following promising areas of cooperation: expansion of industrial cooperation, cooperation in the fields of machine building, transport, agriculture, woodworking, healthcare, education, and science. In particular, "it is necessary to fully implement the unassembled contract for delivery of tractors to the Ganja automobile plant, as well as to study

¹⁵ Azerbaijan is interested in cooperation with the regions of Belarus [Electronic resource]. - 2022.

⁻ URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/azerbajdzhan-zainteresovan-v-sotrudnichestve-s-regionami-belarusi-499846-2022/

¹⁶ Ganja Automobile Plant is interested in joint production of combines with Gomselmash [Electronic resource]. - 2019. - URL: https://www.belta.by/regions/view/gjandzhinskij-avtozavod-zainteresovan-v-sovmestnom-proizvodstve-kombajnov-s-gomselmashem-333783-2019/

economic and technical aspects of a joint project of this plant and MTZ on the entry into third countries' markets"¹⁷. It is also necessary to ensure the completion of tests of a grain harvester produced by Gomselmash and modified to meet the technical requirements of the Azerbaijani side, and to agree on the volume of supplies. Among the proposals is the joint production of electric transport. Elevator manufacturer Mogilevliftmash expects to take part in the programs of modernization of elevator facilities in the cities of Azerbaijan. In the near future the preparatory work to establish a joint production of veterinary drugs in the Azerbaijani territory will also be completed.

In terms of exhibition activities, Belarus in 2022 presented national expositions at major international exhibitions in Baku: Caspian Agro agricultural exhibition and InterFood Azerbaijan food industry exhibition, Caspian Oil and Gas exhibition, defense exhibition ADEX, International Exhibition of Medical Innovations. For example, the Belarusian pavilion was presented at the 27th international exhibition "Caspian Oil and Gas" in early where the Belarusian enterprises "Grodno Azot". "Mogilevkhimvolokno", Mozyr Oil Refinery, "Naftan", Steklovolokno", "Seismotechnika" participated. The exposition was diverse: nitrogen fertilizers, polyamide and polyester varns, cord fabrics, polymer composite materials, polyester technical yarns, nonwoven fabrics, motor gasoline, diesel fuel, heating oil, oil bitumen, fuel gases, glass fiber and materials on its basis, oilfield and geophysical equipment. "Among the unique products presented at the exhibition is a polyester fiber of conjugate

¹³

¹⁷ Engineering, Construction, Agroindustrial Complex. Petrishenko on the plans of interaction with Azerbaijan [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/mashinostroenie-stroitelstvo-apk-petrishenko-o-planah-vzaimodejstvija-s-azerbajdzhanom-505333-2022/

type for use as a filler in textile products, which is produced by Mogilevkhimvolokno" 18 .

In the transport sector, in August 2022, the Belarusian Railway started to deliver cargoes by fast trains from Belarus to Azerbaijan. "This makes it possible to deliver cargoes produced in Belarus to Azerbaijan in the shortest possible time (within a week) and at competitive tariffs <...>. The first three trains loaded with timber products have already departed from Orsha-Zapadnaya station (Belarus) to Apsheron station (Azerbaijan)"¹⁹.

Bilateral contacts in the educational sphere are also developing closely. In particular, Belarusian State University (BSU) intensifies cooperation with the institutions of Azerbaijan. In September 2022 BSU signed an agreement on cooperation with Baku State University, which is the oldest and leading university in this country in the South Caucasus and has 16 faculties in different fields, two research institutes and the Confucius Institute. The document prescribes agreements in the field of education and science. "In particular, the parties have agreed to implement joint projects in the scientific, educational and cultural spheres, to develop a publication partnership, academic scientific and cultural mobility, to exchange information, students, researchers, teachers" It is also envisaged to develop and implement joint research projects, educational programs, courses and curricula, interaction in the field of scientific management of undergraduates and graduate students. It should be noted that BSU is currently interacting with other Azerbaijani scientific and educational

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¹⁸ Belarus presented a pavilion at the oil and gas exhibition in Azerbaijan [Electronic resource]. -2022. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-predstavila-paviljon-na-neftegazovoj-vystavke-v-azerbajdzhane-505359-2022/

¹⁹ Belarusian Railways started to deliver cargoes by fast trains from Belarus to Azerbaijan [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/bzhd-nachala-postavljat-gruzy-uskorennymi-poezdami-iz-belarusi-v-azerbajdzhan-517606-2022/

²⁰ BSU and Baku State University signed an agreement on cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://www.belta.by/society/view/bgu-i-bakinskij-gosuniversitet-zakljuchili-soglashenie-o-sotrudnichestve-525475-2022/

institutions. Since 2019 there is an agreement on cooperation and exchange of students with ADA University (Baku). In 2021 BSU International State Environmental Institute named after A.D. Sakharov signed a cooperation agreement with Khazar University (Baku) and an agreement on scientific and technical cooperation with the Livestock Research Institute of the Ministry of Agriculture of Azerbaijan. Two joint projects have been submitted for participation in the competition of joint scientific projects for 2022-2023 announced by the State Committee on Science and Technology of Belarus and the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) of Azerbaijan: Institute of Nuclear Problems and Institute of Physics of NAS of Azerbaijan; Faculty of Chemistry and Institute of Catalysis and Inorganic Chemistry after academician M. Nagiyev of NAS of Azerbaijan. One more thing: six Azerbaijani students are currently studying at BSU.

So, despite the new geopolitical challenges, the dynamics of Belarusian-Azerbaijani interaction continues to develop at all levels: from industrial cooperation and transport to participation in exhibitions, science and education.

The key area is long-term interaction

In 2023, Belarus and Armenia will celebrate the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations. In recent years there has been a positive trend in mutual trade. Interaction between the two countries in almost all major vectors of bilateral relations is gradually "gaining momentum. In the current international environment, Minsk and Yerevan focus on the development of economic relations. Armenia has been and remains the state for Belarus, in its engagement with which the Belarusian side seeks to expand its trade and economic component and is ready to participate in any projects, including in Armenia, that will be of interest to its Armenian partners.

Recall that back in 2018 the Belarusian-Armenian trade turnover had positive growth dynamics, increasing by more than 17 percent and exceeding 50 million dollars. Investment cooperation has become an important element of bilateral cooperation. Suffice it to say that "from Armenia to Belarus in 2018 there were \$7.6 million of investments, including direct investments - \$7.5 million. In the first quarter of this [2019] \$3.5 million of direct foreign investments were attracted" 121 . More than 80 entities of the commodity distribution network of Belarusian companies operating on Armenian soil, as well as 57 companies with Armenian capital - 17 joint ventures and 40 foreign companies operating in Belarus - significantly complemented this picture of the partnership between Belarus and Armenia. Besides, there are three enterprises with the Belarusian capital operating in Armenia: Armenian-Belarusian Trading House Ar-Be LLC, BelAZ Caucasus Trans Service LLC and BelAR Trading House CJSC" 22 . Nevertheless, according

²¹ President of Armenia Sarkisian arrived in Belarus [Electronic resource]. - 2019. - URL: https://www.belta.by/politics/view/prezident-armenii-sarkisjan-pribyl-v-belarus-353322-2019/

²² Meeting with the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Armenia to the Republic of Belarus [Electronic resource]. - 2019. - URL: http://www.government.by/ru/content/8605

to the parties, "there are few joint investment projects so far, and those that are being worked on are often implemented in a sluggish mode" 13 . That's why a few years ago Belarus and Armenia raised an urgent question: not just to trade with each other but to create joint companies so that the business of the two countries could work more actively with each other. And there are such opportunities in many vectors of cooperation.

One of the priority areas of bilateral Belarusian-Armenian cooperation was agriculture, because at present the saturation of the market with safe and high-quality food products is very important for Armenia. That is why international cooperation in this regard has great prospects. The Armenian partners want "to create a platform of food safety, on the basis of which certain agreements with the producers of different countries will be realized"²⁴. And the partnership with the Belarusian side looks very promising in this regard. This is evidenced by the fact that in 2018, exports of agricultural products from Belarus to Armenia increased immediately by 30 percent and amounted to 13 million dollars. The parties considered not only joint actions in food trade, but also expansion of deliveries of agricultural and other machinery, strengthening the role of the Belarusian trade house in Yerevan, establishment of the Armenian trade house on Belarusian soil, as well as organization of joint ventures and cooperation in cattle breeding as measures contributing to the growth of trade turnover in the agricultural sector. Realizing that with the growth in trade turnover the next step in the bilateral relations should be to reach a higher level of cooperation, the Belarusian side also suggested "taking part in the renovation

²³ Myasnikovich proposed Armenia to intensify investment cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2019. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/mjasnikovich-predlozhil-armenii-aktivizirovat-investsotrudnichestvo-343419-2019/

²⁴ Armenia is interested in developing cooperation with Belarus in agriculture [Electronic resource]. - 20190. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/armenija-zainteresovana-razvivat-sotrudnichestvo-s-belarusjju-v-oblasti-selskogo-hozjajstva-353502-2019/

Another promising area for the development of Belarusian-Armenian partnership relations is the improvement of transport links between the two former Soviet republics. As you know, there are no direct communications between Belarus and Armenia, but there is an opportunity to create them within the framework of the Eurasian Economic Union, along with the appropriate infrastructure to ensure the delivery of goods and transit traffic between the countries. In particular, the parties are considering the possibility of transportation of Armenian goods to Belarus and transit through its territory by rail. A promising logistical direction in this regard is the use of the "North-South road under construction, which will connect Georgia with Iran, and the free economic zone in the city of Meghri, where there is a free economic zone. This is a good opportunity to expand the geography of supplies of Belarusian goods" 26.

In November 2021 the 15th session of the Belarus-Armenia intergovernmental commission on 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, to expand the commodity distribution network, to cooperate in agriculture, science and technology. A characteristic feature of the partnership between the two countries is the fact that trade turnover between them continues to grow annually. "So, if in 2016 it was a little more than \$32 million, in 2020 - already more than \$82 million. The growth in trade turnover is also recorded in the first 9 months of this

²⁵ Belarus is ready to participate in the renewal of Armenia's passenger vehicle fleet [Electronic resource]. - 2019. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-gotova-uchastvovat-v-obnovlenii-parka-passazhirskoj-tehniki-armenii-334782-2019/

²⁶ Heads of transport departments of Belarus and Armenia outlined the points of growth of cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2019. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/glavy-transportnyh-vedomstv-belarusi-i-armenii-nametili-tochki-rosta-sotrudnichestva-354239-2019/

year [2021], it exceeded \$62 million."²⁷ . Dairy products, furniture, computers for automatic data processing and medications made up the bulk of Belarusian exports to the Armenian market. This allowed Belarus to reach a surplus of over \$32 million in mutual trade by the end of 2020. Another positive trend observed in the relations between the two republics is further growth of Armenian investments in the Belarusian economy. In the first half of 2021 there was more than ten million dollars.

Discussing the prospects for the development of partnership relations at the meeting of the intergovernmental commission, the parties stated that there are significant reserves for increasing the volume of mutual trade. One of them is that "the economic way of trade development at the expense of increasing supplies of traditional groups of goods is outdated and it is necessary to enter cooperative projects" which will ensure long-term and fruitful cooperation that is less dependent on various market fluctuations. And the parties are already making certain practical steps in this direction. So, taking part in the program of modernization of the elevator sector of Yerevan, "Mogilevliftmash" supplied five hundred sets of elevator equipment to Armenia. And the issue of creating a joint assembly production of elevators in the Armenian land is already being worked out. There are great opportunities for Belarusian companies to participate in the implementation of other Armenian government programs for the development of infrastructure and industry.

It should be noted that in 2021 the volume of the Belarusian-Armenian trade increased again and amounted to about \$100 million. This trend continues this year as well. "Thus, in January-June 2022, the trade turnover

²⁷ Belarus and Armenia increased 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-uvelichilitovarooborot-v-25-raza-471337-2021/

²⁸ Drozha: 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-rezervy-dlja-naraschivanija-vzaimnoj-torgovli-471650-2021/

increased by more than 70% and amounted to \$60.3 million"²⁹. This applies to both exports to Armenia and imports from Armenia to Belarus. In addition, the countries ensured mutual growth in the supply of agricultural and food products, outlined industrial cooperation projects, and maintained a high frequency of air flights on the Minsk-Yerevan-Minsk route.

In October 2022, the 16th meeting of the Belarusian-Armenian Intergovernmental Commission for Trade and Economic Cooperation was held in Yerevan, where the parties again came to the conclusion that the extensive way of trade development by increasing the supply of traditional groups of goods is outdated, and it is necessary to develop cooperation projects that would guarantee long-term cooperation. At the same time, "the key direction of this work should be the strengthening of production cooperative ties and the pooling of efforts to create joint competitive products that are in demand not only in the domestic and EAEU markets, but also in third countries.³⁰.

In general, the signed minutes of the 16th meeting of the Intergovernmental Commission included a variety of activities aimed at strengthening and developing cooperation in a number of areas: mutual trade; industry and industrial cooperation; innovation, digital transformation and postal communication; transport and energy; agriculture; scientific and technical cooperation; education, culture, youth, sports, tourism, health, labor and social protection; environmental protection; interregional cooperation. In particular, "Belarus and Armenia will work out the issue of

²⁹ Belarus is interested in supplying lumber products to Armenia [Electronic resource]. - 2022. -URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-zainteresovana-v-postavkah-piloproduktsii-v-armeniju-523446-2022/

³⁰ Kulik on the development of trade with Armenia: we need cooperative projects [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/kulik-o-razvitii-torgovli-s-armeniei-nuzhny-kooperatsionnye-proekty-526560-2022/

using national currencies for settlements.³¹ . The parties agreed to assist Armenian and Belarusian business entities in expanding the commodity distribution network on the territory of both countries. The Armenian side will work on the issue of creating an "Armenia Trading House" on the territory of Belarus, which will have the status of an exporter/importer. The partners "will also continue cooperation in mechanization of the Armenian agro-industrial complex and will consider the possibility of creating cooperative projects in the territory of Armenia. An agro-industrial forum is planned, where products of Belarusian and Armenian manufacturers will be exhibited."³² . In addition, the Armenian side expressed interest in introducing Belarusian experience in the use of innovative technologies in agriculture.

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

The Belarusian side sees another reserve for increasing its trade with Armenian partners in the active use of fair and exhibition events that take place in that Transcaucasian country. The high interest of Belarusian

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³¹ Belarus and Armenia are interested in using national currencies for settlements [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-armenija-zainteresovany-v-ispolzovanii-natsionalnyh-valjut-pri-raschetah-526881-2022

³² The 16th session of the Armenian-Belarusian Intergovernmental Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation was held in Yerevan [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://cis.minsk.by/news/24151/v erevane sostojalos 16-e zasedanie armjano-

belorusskoj mezhpravitelstvennoj komissii po torgovo-ekonomicheskomu sotrudnichestvu ³³ Minsk Automobile Plant will supply 500 passenger vehicles to Armenia [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/minskij-avtozavod-postavit-500-mashinokomplektov-passazhirskoj-tehniki-v-armeniju-527026-2022

manufacturers in the Armenian market was 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. It is enough to say that 17 enterprises of the concern "Belgospischeprom" became the exhibitors of one of the largest exhibitions in Transcaucasia: "Red Foodstuffs", "Kommunarka", "Red Mozyryanin", "Spartak", "KF Slodych", "Malorita KOSK", "Gamma of Taste", "Mashpischeprod", Minsk factory of sparkling wines, Slutsk Sugar Refinery Plant, Gorodeisky sugar refinery, "Minsk Crystal" - managing company of "Minsk Crystal Group" holding, "Krinitsa", Minsk Margarine Plant, "Lidapischekontsentraty", "Belkofe", "Interferm". Their presence at this business forum in Yerevan can be explained by the fact that "almost all the products of the concern organizations are delivered to Armenia. In January-July 2021, exports to this country amounted to \$640.7 thousand or 215.4% of the same period last year"³⁴.

Having demonstrated the best samples of their products at the exhibition, Belarusian exporters continue to significantly expand their presence in the Armenian market. A good example in this regard was demonstrated by the Kalinkovichi Dairy Plant, which concluded a contract for 55 thousand dollars for the supply of skimmed milk powder for the production of ice cream at this exhibition. "The enterprise also has agreements to sign more contracts for the supply of products for the production of ice cream" The Slutsk Cheese Factory is also planning to seriously increase its supplies to the Armenian market, which demonstrated in Yerevan "Yas Belous" brand products - cheese, milk powder and butter,

³⁴ "Belgospischeprom" presented its products at the Armenia Expo exhibition in Yerevan [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belgospischeprom-predstavil-produktsiju-na-vystavke-armenia-expo-v-erevane-460163-2021/

³⁵ Kalinkovichi Dairy Plant signed a contract for \$55 thousand at Armenia Expo. [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/kalinkovichskij-molochnyj-kombinat-na-armenia-expo-zakljuchil-kontrakt-na-55-tys-460231-2021/.

which together with cream and cottage cheese prevailed in the export of Belarusian products to Armenia in 2020. Belarusian manufacturers of agricultural machinery also see good prospects here: Gomselmash, whose two machines under the brand name "Palesse" have been working in the fields of this country since 2020; OJSC "Managing Company of Grodnooblselkhoztech Holding Company," which produces tillage, forage, postharvest machinery and milking machines; and OJSC "Gomel Electromechanical Plant," a manufacturer of railway locomotives and rolling stock.

One year later, in September 2022, Belarusian companies again took part in the regional trade and industrial forum Armenia EXPO, where "a wide range of thematic sections were presented: mechanical engineering, petrochemicals, construction, interior design, transport, cargo transportation, medical equipment, pharmaceuticals, woodworking, financial services, tourism and leisure"³⁶. Exhibitors include over 170 companies, associations, unions and organizations. Among the participating countries were Armenia, China, the Czech Republic, Georgia, Germany, India, Iran, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia and Ukraine. There was also presented an exposition of Made in Belarus. In particular, 12 enterprises of the concern "Belgospischeprom" demonstrated their products. For example, the exposition displayed a wide range of confectionery products, instant food, food concentrates, baby food, alcoholic beverages, sauces and cooking oil, products from fruits and berries, including a new line of morses and nectars, jams, jams, mushrooms and other food products. It should be noted that practically all products of the Concern's organizations are delivered to Armenia this year again. "During the 7 months of 2022 the export volume

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³⁶ An exposition of Belarus will be presented at the trade and industrial forum in Armenia [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/ekspozitsija-belarusi-budet-predstavlena-na-torgovo-promyshlennom-forume-v-armenii-512548-2022/

increased 1,2 times compared to the same period last year, first of all due to the increase of supplies of malt, beer, food concentrates, potato products and fat and oil products" 37.

The potential for cooperation between Belarus and Armenia remains quite extensive today in interregional cooperation as well. In particular, cooperation between the Viciebsk region and Armenian regions in all spheres, from science to trade and culture, is intensifying. "The commodity turnover of Vitebsk region with Armenia in January-March [2022] exceeded \$1.6 million. The export of goods made up almost all these funds. Vitebsk region supplies meat and dairy products (it accounts for over 71%), specialpurpose machines, medicines, carpets and imports fire detectors. A total of 8 organizations with Armenian capital operate in the territory of Vitebsk region"38. It's interesting that in Vitebsk region can set up the production of the Armenian medication Narine, a dairy product created by scientists in Armenia in the 60s and is very popular in this country. The supplement helps regulate digestive problems. "The preparation has an EEU certificate; it may well be used in the Vitebsk region, if there are those willing to create such a line at the dairy plant. In Armenia this product is produced in the form of paste, powder, kefir, pills. It will be another good article of trade turnover between Armenia and Belarus."³⁹. The proposal to develop the production of Armenian sour-milk product used as medicine in Vitebsk region was supported by Vitebsk authorities. The implementation of such a project will

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³⁷ "Belgospischeprom" presented its products at the "Armenia EXPO 2022" exhibition in Yerevan [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belgospischeprom-predstavil-svoju-produktsiju-na-vystavke-armenia-expo-2022-v-erevane-524117-2022/

³⁸ Trade, science and culture: Vitebsk region and Armenia intend to intensify cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://www.belta.by/regions/view/torgovlja-nauka-i-kultura-vitebskaja-oblast-i-armenija-namereny-aktivizirovat-sotrudnichestvo-505369-2022/

³⁹ The Ambassador of Armenia proposed to develop the production of sour-milk product Narine in the Vitebsk region [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://www.belta.by/regions/view/posol-armenii-predlozhil-osvoit-v-vitebskoj-oblasti-proizvodstvo-kislomolochnogo-produkta-narine-505390-2022/

strengthen and expand the range of plants and make them even more competitive.

Another Belarusian region intends to intensify cooperation with partners from Armenia is the Brest region. So far, the trade turnover between the parties is insignificant. "Recently, however, there has been a positive trend: in the first quarter of 2022, it grew by 71 percent, and enterprises of the region increased exports by 50 percent." Brest region intends to intensify cooperation with Armenian partners in the production of livestock products, mechanical engineering, woodworking, light industry. Another interesting fact: an agreement on cooperation between the Brest region and the Ararat region has been in force for more than 10 years. The pandemic was a hindrance to maintaining contacts between the regions, but there are already intentions to restore ties.

On the whole, as it was noted at the 16th session of the Intergovernmental Commission, the potential for cooperation between Belarus and Armenia continues to develop: from mutually beneficial trade, economic and innovative cooperation to industrial and inter-branch cooperation, humanitarian and interregional partnership relations.

⁴⁰ Armenia is interested in interregional ties with Belarus [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/armenija-zainteresovana-v-mezhregionalnyh-svjazjah-s-belarusjju-502868-2022/

The priority is to accelerate cooperation

The Republic of Belarus has traditionally been interested in the closest partnership with the Kyrgyz Republic, a country in Central Asia that is rich in natural resources and minerals, high potential for the development of agriculture, hydropower, and tourism. All the more so because trade and economic cooperation between Belarus and Kyrgyzstan has recently intensified markedly.

Back in May 2013, the Kyrgyz side noted: "I would like the economic relations between Belarus and Kyrgyzstan to develop dynamically. Belarus has a number of goods in which Kyrgyzstan is interested. In turn, we are also ready to supply goods that are of interest to the Belarusian economy." In September 2015, at the meeting of the heads of the governments of the two countries, focusing on the need to increase mutual trade turnover, the parties agreed that "in addition to trade cooperation, efforts should be focused on the development of industrial cooperation" In the first quarter of 2017, Belarusian-Kyrgyz trade turnover increased one and a half times, reaching \$15.2 million. The Belarus-Kyrgyzstan Intergovernmental Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation, whose sixth and seventh meetings were held in Bishkek in June 2016 and in Minsk in June 2017, played an important role in boosting bilateral cooperation between the countries.

In particular, at the seventh meeting of the commission, the parties noted a significant increase in contacts between Belarusian companies and Kyrgyz partners, which only contributes to the expansion of cooperation between Belarus and Kyrgyzstan in terms of supplies of machinery and production cooperation, in energy, agriculture, healthcare, education,

⁴¹ Kyrgyzstan is interested in developing trade and economic relations with Belarus [Electronic resource]. - 2013. - URL: http://www.belvpo.com/ru/26710.html

⁴² Andrei Kobyakov met with the head of the Government of Kyrgyzstan [Electronic resource]. - 2015. - URL: http://www.government.by/ru/content/6027

science, culture, information and tourism, as well as development of cooperation between the regions and free economic zones of the two countries. This extensive list of areas of Belarus-Kyrgyzstan cooperation also included "training of specialists, improvement of their skills, creation of distribution networks, joint ventures for production of agricultural machinery, supplies of Belarusian elevators to Kyrgyzstan.⁴³.

As far as mutual trade is concerned, supplies of Belarusian agricultural products to the Kyrgyz market are clearly in the lead, as evidenced by the following figures: "In 2016, exports of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food to Kyrgyzstan increased 3.1 times, and in the first quarter of 2017 - almost 14 times. The basis of exports is meat and dairy products" Agreeing to further increase mutual supplies of agricultural products and expand their product range, the parties also decided to consider the possibility of implementing joint projects in livestock and crop production development.

The flagship of Belarusian-Kyrgyz production cooperation is the tractor assembly plant and the service center for servicing agricultural equipment from Belarus, which opened in Bishkek in November 2016 on the basis of Avtomash-Radiator LLC. An important detail - "about 90% of the radiators for tractors assembled in Minsk are supplied from Kyrgyzstan. In the same assembly shop assembly of Gomselmash combine harvesters has begun" ⁴⁵. In addition, the parties actively worked on the issue of establishing joint ventures in the light industry, the prerequisite for which was the actualization of trade relations in this area. In April 2017, the Kyrgyz

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⁴³ On the meeting of the Intergovernmental Belarus-Kyrgyzstan Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2017. - URL: http://kyrgyzstan.mfa.gov.by/ru/embassy/news/b7a170b217ff5943.html

⁴⁴ Kyrgyzstan is interested in creating assembly facilities for Belarusian agricultural machinery [Electronic resource]. - 2017. - URL: http://www.belta.by/economics/view/kyrgyzstan-zainteresovan-v-sozdanii-sborochnyh-proizvodstv-belorusskoj-selhoztehniki-251058-2017/

⁴⁵ Omuraliev noted a positive trend in the development of relations between Kyrgyzstan and Belarus [Electronic resource]. - 2017. - URL: http://www.belta.by/politics/view/omuraliev-otmetil-pozitivnuju-tendentsiju-v-razvitii-otnoshenij-mezhdu-kyrgyzstanom-i-belarusjju-269017-2017/

company "Opt-Invest" for the first time delivered to Belarus a batch of textiles, and in September 2017 signed a contract with the Belarusian side for the supply of clothing products.

In February 2020, Minsk hosted the ninth meeting of the intergovernmental Belarus-Kyrgyzstan commission on trade and economic cooperation, which addressed topical issues of development and strengthening of systemic mutually beneficial partnership relations. In Minsk and Bishkek, this meeting of the intergovernmental commission, where the status of the co-chairs has already been raised to the level of deputy prime ministers, was considered as "a new impetus for the development of relations between our countries"⁴⁶. As a reminder, in 2019 the volume of Belarusian-Kyrgyz trade amounted to more than 105 million dollars with a surplus for the Belarusian side of more than 90 million dollars, which was ensured by the supplies from Belarus of dairy products, tractors and tractor trucks, meat and poultry products, medicines, furniture and wood and chipboard. However, according to the parties, the volume of mutual trade between Kyrgyzstan and Belarus does not correspond to the economic potential of the countries. For this reason, at the regular meeting of the intergovernmental commission the attention of the parties was focused on the priority directions of interaction: 1) increasing the volume of mutual trade; 2) deepening industrial cooperation and creation of joint assembly productions; 3) expanding interregional cooperation.

In terms of **increasing the volume of mutual trade**, the Belarusian side voiced specific proposals to increase supplies of passenger, cargo and municipal vehicles to Kyrgyzstan, which is quite in line with the plans of the Kyrgyz side to renew, for example, the fleet of passenger vehicles in Bishkek

⁴⁶ A meeting of the Belarusian-Kyrgyz intergovernmental commission will be held in Minsk on February 21 [Electronic resource]. - 2020. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/zasedanie-belorussko-kyrgyzskoj-mezhpravkomissii-projdet-v-minske-21-fevralja-378085-2020/

and other cities. In addition, while promoting its products on the Kyrgyz market, the Belarusian side continued its practice of actively participating in exhibition events in Kyrgyzstan in 2020. Thus, in April, the exposition of Belarusian exporters was presented for the third time at the international exhibition of food industry "FoodExpo" in Bishkek, where visitors could get acquainted with the products and beverages from Belarus. The focus was on healthy food and Halal-certified products. For the first time in the exposition there were "food additives, casings for meat and sausage products, baby food" 47.

When it comes to **deepening production cooperation, the** Kyrgyz side proposed to intensify cooperation in agriculture and the agro-industrial complex. First of all, it is about the establishment of a joint agricultural cluster for milk processing in Kyrgyzstan using Belarusian technologies, as well as about "the construction of dairy complexes with the necessary equipment produced in Belarus and the supply of pedigree livestock.⁴⁸. To consolidate these agreements in the legal field following the meeting of the intergovernmental commission an agreement on cooperation in agriculture and food was signed between the Ministry of Agriculture and Food of Belarus and the Ministry of Agriculture, Food Industry and Land Reclamation of Kyrgyzstan. As for industrial cooperation, the plans voiced in Minsk look quite realistic: "assembly production of transformers may be set up with the Kozlov Minsk Electric Plant, elevators - with Mogilevliftmash, gas meters - with BelOMO"⁴⁹. The seriousness of these

⁴⁷ Nemankova, Yu. Exposition of Belarusian manufacturers will be presented at FoodExpo in Bishkek / Yu. Nemankova // [Electronic resource]. - 2020. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/ekspozitsija-belorusskih-proizvoditelej-budet-predstavlena-na-vystavke-foodexpo-v-bishkeke-378791-2020/

⁴⁸ Kyrgyzstan proposes Belarus to create an agro-cluster for milk processing [Electronic resource]. - 2020. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/kyrgyzstan-predlagaet-belarusi-sozdat-agroklaster-po-pererabotke-moloka-380586-2020/

^{9.} Vladimir Kukharev: Belarusian electric buses may appear on the streets of Bishkek [Electronic resource]. - 2020. - URL: http://www.government.by/ru/content/9293

intentions of the parties is evidenced, in particular, by the fact of signing an agreement on cooperation between the V.I. Kozlov Minsk Electromechanical Plant and Maselektrosnab LLC following the meeting of the intergovernmental commission.

Speaking about the expansion of interregional cooperation between Belarus and Kyrgyzstan, so far the tone is set by the capitals - Minsk and Bishkek, which in 1997 signed an agreement on economic, scientific, technical and cultural cooperation, and in 2008 established sworn brotherhood relations. In the language of figures this interregional cooperation looks as follows: "The growth rate of trade turnover of Minsk enterprises with Kyrgyzstan in January-June 2017 to the same period of 2016 was 306%, exports of goods - 393.7%, exports of services - 176.1%"50. Tractors, paving slabs, radiators, air heaters, refrigerators, and medicines were supplied to Kyrgyz partners. New goods exported from Minsk were dairy products, chipboard, and tools. In the future, cooperation between the two capitals in the development of public transport may become very promising. After all, Bishkek plans to buy about 400 high-capacity buses. And the Kyrgyz capital's authorities are studying the supplier market. In addition, Minsk transport vehicles manufacturers have good chances of taking part in this project. In 2009, Minsk Belkommunmash supplied 20 trolleybuses to Bishkek and later won the tender for export of another 30 units of electric transport.

At the 9th meeting of the intergovernmental commission in Minsk, the agreement on cooperation in trade and economic, scientific and technical, humanitarian and cultural spheres was signed by the Gomel Regional Executive Committee and the Office of the authorized representative of the

Matveeva, N. Bishkek plans to buy equipment from Minsk enterprises to develop public transport / N. Matveeva // [Electronic resource]. - 2017. - URL: http://www.belta.by/economics/view/bishkek-planiruet-zakupit-u-minskih-predprijatij-tehniku-dlja-razvitija-obschestvennogo-transporta-265609-2017/

government of Kyrgyzstan in the Chui Region. Although this was the first agreement for the Belarusian region with its Kyrgyz partners, Gomel Oblast enterprises had already been present in the market of the Central Asian country before that. Suffice it to say that in 2019 the trade turnover of the region with Kyrgyzstan exceeded ten million dollars. "At that, exports were at the level of \$8.5 million. 26 enterprises of the region supplied their goods, including JSC Gomselmash, IPUP Multipak, JSC MozyrSol, manufacturers of doors, wallpaper. The promotion of products of the Turov Dairy Plant, in particular, soft cheeses, to the Kyrgyz market began"⁵¹.

It should be noted that in 2021 the trade turnover between Belarus and Kyrgyzstan again amounted to almost one hundred million dollars, including Belarusian exports - more than 86 million dollars. The balance was positive in the amount of \$75.4 million. "Last year [2021] the nomenclature of goods supplied by Belarus included 749 commodity items (by comparison, in 2020 - 620). In January - June this year, the bilateral trade turnover amounted to \$56.4 million, an increase of 44.3% compared to the same period in 2021, including Belarusian exports - \$42.8 million (an increase of 24.8%)."⁵². The main Belarusian export commodity items to Kyrgyzstan are fresh or chilled beef, sugar, poultry meat, pharmaceuticals, finished meat products, carpets and other textile products, fiber optic cables, cheese and cottage cheese, diagnostic reagents, and chicken eggs. And there are reasons to believe that Belarusian companies have every chance not only to consolidate and increase their presence in the market of Kyrgyzstan in terms of already supplied products, but also to expand the list of export items. In particular,

⁵¹ Gomel region will develop cooperation with Chui oblast of Kyrgyzstan [Electronic resource]. - 2020. - URL: https://www.belta.by/regions/view/gomelskij-region-budet-razvivat-sotrudnichestvo-s-chujskoj-oblastjju-kyrgyzstana-381123-2020

⁵² NCM told about the prospects for promoting Belarusian goods and services in Kyrgyzstan [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/ntsm-rasskazal-o-perspektivah-prodvizhenija-belorusskih-tovarov-i-uslug-v-kyrgyzstan-519484-2022/

Belarusian manufacturers of agricultural, passenger and municipal machinery have prospects for increasing supplies to Kyrgyzstan.

Another interesting component of export supplies from Belarus to this Central Asian country is medical drugs. "Belarusian pharmaceutical companies are active in the Kyrgyz market. Thus, in 2021 the volume of export of medicines to Kyrgyzstan amounted to \$4.3 million" In April 2022 Belarusian manufacturers took an active part in the 16th International specialized health care exhibition MedExpo Kyrgyzstan-2022 in Bishkek. Their well-known and well-established drugs and new products that have no analogues on the Kyrgyz market were presented by "Technology and medicine 2030", RUE "Belmedpreparaty", JSC "Borisov plant of medical preparations", UE "Minskinterkaps", JSC "Exon", SE "Akadempharm" and NP LLC "Medbiotech". In particular, "JSC Ekzon presented a line of vitamins VITAX, hematogen with new flavors (apple, apple with cinnamon, cranberry)" As a result, the Belarusian companies signed contracts for the supply of products and planned to hold training seminars among medical representatives on the promotion of medicines in Kyrgyzstan.

In the second half of 2022 - in September - the 10th meeting of the intergovernmental commission was held in the city of Osh, where it was stated that a promising area for the development of Kyrgyz-Belarusian cooperation is to increase production capacity, capacities to produce products with high added value, as well as the creation of joint ventures in all industrial sectors. "Currently, there are 54 representative offices of the entities of the commodity distribution network and distributors of Belarusian

⁵³ Belarusian enterprises presented their products at the health care exhibition [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belorusskie-predprijatija-predstavili-produktsiju-na-vystavke-zdravoohranenija-v-bishkeke-494393-2022/

⁵⁴ Pharmaceutical enterprises of Belarus plan to expand the range and volume of drug supplies to Kyrgyzstan [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://www.belta.by/society/view/farmpredprijatija-belarusi-planirujut-rasshirit-assortiment-i-objemy-postavok-lekarstv-v-kyrgyzstan-494553-2022/

enterprises in the country, including the assembly production of tractors of the Minsk Tractor Plant Joint Stock Company"55. The Kyrgyz side is also interested in attracting investment in areas such as information technology, agriculture, and tourism.

In this regard, the Kyrgyz-Belarusian Business Forum was also held in Osh in September 2022, which demonstrated the growing interest of Belarusian businesses in the development of bilateral business contacts with Kyrgyzstan. Representatives of the Belarusian side - the Ministry of Agriculture and Food. "Belgospischeprom", concern "Belkommunmash" - presented to the forum participants opportunities for cooperation with the enterprises of agricultural, food and industrial sectors of Belarus. A business contacts exchange was organized at the forum. "Meetings were held between the Belarusian and Kyrgyz companies working in the food sector, mechanical engineering, health and agriculture. As a result of the business forum, bilateral contracts totaling \$900 thousand were signed"56.

Also held in Osh was the international universal exhibition "South Expo-2022", where the Belarusian exposition was presented by the concern "Belgospischeprom" and its 16 companies, which brought together export goods - "confectionery, snacks, instant products, food concentrates, baby food, spirits - haist, tinctures and balsams on Belarusian herbs, distillates, whiskey full cycle production from Belarusian grain, products of fruits and berries..."57 . World famous Belarusian brands Gomselmash, MTZ and MAZ

⁵⁵ Within the framework of the 10th meeting of the Kyrgyz-Belarusian Intergovernmental Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation a business forum was held in Osh [Electronic URL: https://cis.minsk.by/news/24072/v ramkah 10go zasedanija mezhpravitelstvennoj kyrgyzsko-belorusskoj komissii po torgovoekonomicheskomu sotrudnichestvu v oshe sostojalsja biznes-forum

⁵⁶ Contracts for \$900 thousand signed as a result of the Belarusian-Kyrgyz business forum [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/kontrakty-na-900tys-podpisany-po-itogam-belorussko-kyrgyzskogo-biznes-foruma-523912-2022/

⁵⁷ 16 enterprises of "Belgospischeprom" presented their products at the exhibition "Yug Expo" in Kyrgyzstan [Electronic resource].

were represented at the exhibition by a local dealer - OSOO AVTOMASH-RADIATOR. The exhibition participants also included other Belarusian companies: one of Europe's largest manufacturers of electrical equipment - JSC "Minsk Electrotechnical Plant named after V.I. Kozlov", the leading medical institutions - RSPC "Oncology and Medical Radiology named after N.N. Alexandrov" (ORM) and RSPC "Cardiology", as well as the manufacturer of veterinary drugs - JSC "Belzovetsnabprom". In particular, educational services in radiology, surgery and ultrasonic diagnostics were offered to the Kyrgyz specialists at the stand of the RSPC MPA. As a result of negotiations between RMRC MPA and Osh State University, "an agreement on cooperation was prepared to provide for the exchange of experience between the staff of the institutions on educational programs for advanced training and internships; the organization of conferences, seminars, symposiums, round tables" 58

All these facts confirm that Belarus and Kyrgyzstan intend to realize the potential of bilateral relations in all areas of cooperation and especially to accelerate cooperation in the economic sphere, including partnerships in industrial cooperation, agro-industrial complex, transport, as well as in various issues of the cultural, humanitarian and regional agenda.

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https://www.belta.by/economics/view/produktsiju-na-vystavke-jug-ekspo-v-kyrgyzstane-predstavili-16-predprijatij-belgospischeproma-523807-2022

⁵⁸ The 6th International Universal Trade Fair "South Expo-2022". [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://omr.by/news/news-main/6-ya-mezhdunarodnaya-universalnaya-vystavka-yarmarka-yug-ekspo-2022

From commission decisions to priorities roadmap

Belarus and Tajikistan have traditionally enjoyed close relations, and the countries have consistently strengthened their mutually beneficial strategic partnership. The Intergovernmental Commission (IGC) on trade and economic cooperation, established back in 1999, plays a key role in the development of effective Belarusian-Tajik bilateral cooperation today. The scope of its interests "covers such priority areas as: the supply of engineering products on the basis of new leasing schemes; cooperation in agriculture and energy; participation in joint economic projects; the creation of a network of joint production enterprises in both countries" 59.

In April 2021, Dushanbe hosted the 14th IGC meeting, which addressed topical issues of interaction in industry and production cooperation, agriculture and transport, healthcare and education, investments and information technology. At the same time, the following events were organized in the capital of Tajikistan: the exhibition of Belarusian manufacturers Made in Belarus; the Belarus-Tajikistan-Afghanistan business forum; and the TajBelAgro forum. All these events once again demonstrated that "despite the crisis phenomena in the world, Belarusian-Tajik trade and economic cooperation shows a positive and dynamic nature. Since 2016, the mutual trade turnover has grown 5.5 times and reached \$111.7 million in 2020." At the same time, Belarusian exports to the Tajik market have increased more than sixfold over the same period and reached almost \$110 million, while the surplus amounted to \$107.5 million due to

⁵⁹ Zalessky, B. Vector of post-Soviet integration. A view from Belarus / B. Zalessky. - Palmarium Academic Publishing, 2019. - C. 211.

⁶⁰ Belarus and Tajikistan need to more actively implement projects in agriculture - Krupko [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarusi-i-tadzhikistanu-nuzhno-aktivnee-realizovyvat-proekty-v-selskom-hozjajstve-krupko-435795-2021/

supplies from Belarus of cars, sugar, tractors and tractor trucks, flour, meat and fish products, paper and cardboard stationery, wood and chipboard.

Among the major joint projects implemented recently is the shipment to Afghanistan of the first batch of Belarusian tractors assembled at "Agrotehservis" JSC in the Tajik city of Gissar, where in the future it is planned not only to produce modern equipment for the agricultural sector forage harvesters, attachments, expanding the range of assembled tractors, but also to create over a hundred qualified jobs in view of further development of the project. In this regard, at a meeting of the intergovernmental commission an agreement to expand the assembly production through the development of tractor semi-trailers PST-9 at Gissar were signed by "UKH Bobruiskagromash" and "Agrotekhservis". "In addition, the companies signed a contract for the supply of the first batch of machine sets, which shipment is planned for the second quarter of 2021"61. It should be reminded that in Gissar with the Belarusian assistance "there is also a training center for training specialists for effective operation and maintenance of machinery and equipment operating in the fields of Tajikistan"⁶². The implementation of the contract for the delivery of one hundred Belarusian trolleybuses with autonomous running to Dushanbe is in its final stage.

Belarusian-Tajik cooperation in agriculture also developed quite dynamically in 2020. Suffice it to say that the volume of mutual trade in agricultural products and foodstuffs between the two former Soviet republics reached nearly ten million dollars. An important detail is that "the Belarusian

⁶¹ "Bobruiskagromash will expand assembly production in Tajikistan [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/bobrujskagromash-rasshirit-sborochnoe-proizvodstvo-v-tadzhikistane-436621-2021/

⁶² Belarus and Tajikistan discussed the development of trade and economic cooperation and industrial cooperation. - 2021. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-tadzhikistan-obsudili-razvitie-torgovo-ekonomicheskogo-sotrudnichestva-i-promkooperatsiju-436006-2021/.

export of food to this country grew by 1.4 times and totaled \$9.5 million <...>. In January 2021 domestic agricultural products and foodstuffs worth \$775 thousand were delivered to Tajikistan (a sevenfold increase compared to the same period last year)."63 . And there is every reason to believe that this positive trend will continue in the medium term. The Bellegprom Concern is also working on possibilities to supply flax to this Central Asian country, which arouses keen interest in Tajik business circles. In particular, the IGC discussed "the issue of supplies of Orsha flax processing plant products and Kamvol's flax-containing fabrics to the Tajik market.⁶⁴ .

The exhibition of Belarusian manufacturers Made in Belarus, which was held in Dushanbe in 2021, also aims to promote exports from Belarus to Tajikistan by demonstrating products of 40 domestic companies from key industries: Agrofood - agriculture and food; TechMach - mechanical engineering and technology; Wood - woodworking industry and furniture products; Health - health care and pharmaceuticals; FMCG - consumer goods. Export opportunities of the Belarusian agro-industrial complex and the prospects of bilateral cooperation in crop and livestock Tajik partners were also able to learn at the agricultural forum "TajBelAgro", where they talked not only about contracts for mutual supplies of agricultural products and machinery, but also to explore options for cooperation. Finally, during the business forum "Tajikistan-Belarus-Afghanistan", which was attended by more than two hundred enterprises from the three countries, "eight documents were signed on the development of partnerships in the fields of

⁶³ Exports of Belarusian agricultural products to Tajikistan in 2020 increased by 1.4 times [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/eksport-belorusskoj-selhozproduktsii-v-tadzhikistan-v-2020-godu-vyros-v-14-raza-434869-2021/

⁶⁴ "Bellegprom is working on the possibility of supplying flax to Tajikistan [Electronic resource].
- 2021. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/bellegprom-prorabatyvaet-vozmozhnosti-postavok-lna-v-tadzhikistan-435980-2021/

industry, education, food and beverages supply"⁶⁵, which shows the growing dynamics of partnership in this trilateral format.

It should be noted that in June 2022 the 15th meeting of the IGC was held in Minsk, where the parties noted the most significant areas of bilateral cooperation: investments, industry, agriculture, transport, social, cultural, scientific and technical sphere. Recall, "in 2021, trade turnover between Belarus and Tajikistan amounted to more than \$ 126 million and increased by 12.6% compared to 2020, export - just over \$ 122 million (an increase of 11.1%), import - \$4 million (increased by 90.5%)"66 . Today, the two countries are mutually interested in expanding areas of cooperation, which may include the development of assembly production of Belarusian elevators organized in Tajikistan, creation of a joint venture to produce carpets, supplies of Belarusian passenger, quarry and construction equipment, as well as Belarusian breeding cattle, increasing food exports, including those certified according to Halal standards. For its part, Belarus is interested in importing raw materials for the Belarusian light industry from Tajikistan and continuing cooperation in education, culture, and sports.

In this context, it is important that Tajikistan declared 2022-2026 as the years of industrial development. "During this period, it is planned to ensure an average annual economic development of at least 7% and to double the GDP per capita, create more than 500 thousand new jobs and reduce the poverty rate to 15%. Belarusian companies were invited to take an active part in tackling these tasks. They also expressed the wish to continue training

forume-8-dokumentov-o-razvitii-partnerstva-435998-2021/

⁶⁵ Belarus, Tajikistan and Afghanistan signed eight documents on partnership development at a business forum [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-tadzhikistan-i-afganistan-podpisali-na-biznes-

⁶⁶ Belarus and Tajikistan are interested in expanding areas of cooperation [Electronic resource]. -2022. - URL: https://www.belta.by/politics/view/belarus-i-tadzhikistan-zainteresovany-v-rasshirenii-napravlenij-sotrudnichestva-506166-2022

Tajik specialists in Minsk for various spheres of the economy.⁶⁷ In this regard, the Belarusian side is ready to provide its Tajik partners with any types of machine-building equipment, primarily quarry and road-building equipment for implementation of infrastructure projects of the country's mining and electric power industry. There is an opportunity to significantly increase supplies of new models of Belarusian buses, trucks, woodworking products, petrochemicals and metallurgy to the Tajik market, as well as to open joint ventures to assemble elevators, household appliances and furniture.

In the agro-industrial sector, Tajikistan is interested in increasing the supply of Belarusian agricultural machinery and meat and dairy products. In particular, there is considerable work on the shipment of agricultural equipment from Belarus, which is badly needed by the Tajik agricultural sector. "In 2021, 411 units of tractors of various brands and more than 124 agricultural machines were delivered to Tajikistan" At the same time, the Tajik side expresses interest in continuing cooperation in this area. In addition, the partners from Tajikistan plan to expand the range of supplies of beef products, dairy products and raw materials. During the 15th IGC meeting, the parties also noted "the potential for growth in supplies of pedigree cattle of Belarusian selection and the possibility of providing Tajik farmers with highly productive, balanced mixed fodder and admixtures" 69.

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⁶⁷ Pivovar, E. Krutoy said that Belarus is ready to provide Tajikistan with any types of machinery / E. Pivovar // [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/krutoj-zajavil-o-gotovnosti-belarusi-obespechit-tadzhikistan-ljubymi-vidami-mashinostroitelnoj-tehniki-523859-2022/

⁶⁸ Tajikistan is interested in increasing the supply of Belarusian meat and dairy products and agricultural equipment [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/tadzhikistan-zainteresovan-v-uvelichenii-postavok-belorusskoj-mjaso-molochnoj-produktsii-i-506657-2022/

⁶⁹ Belarus is ready to supply halal products to Tajikistan [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-gotova-postavljat-v-tadzhikistan-haljalnuju-produktsiju-506619-2022/

Cooperation between the regions of Belarus and Tajikistan is also developing successfully in 2022. In particular, on the agenda is the development of cooperation between the capitals of the two countries in a number of areas, including technology, production of pharmaceuticals, and education. Recall that in 2019, Minsk implemented a big project to provide Dushanbe with Belkommunmash trolleybuses. And today these cars already decorate the Tajik capital. Another project is being implemented in the field of dairy production - cooperation between the Tajik partners and Minsk Dairy Plant No. 1. There are plans to develop cooperative ties and create a joint production of municipal machinery. As for education, about 600 Tajik students are currently studying in Belarus. They mainly choose Minsk and technical universities for their studies. Many of them study at the Academy of Aviation and at different faculties of the Belarusian State University. In addition, there are four joint departments of Belarusian and Tajik universities. So, the two capitals are developing many mechanisms of cooperation. And "in the future a document will be signed, which will regulate further development of relations between Minsk and Dushanbe⁷⁰.

Another example of interaction between the regions is the Gomel and Khatlon regions, which intend to develop cooperation in agriculture and industry. Thus, Gomel specialists are ready to build turnkey farms in the Tajik region. Partners from Khatlon region have "intentions to purchase mineral fertilizers, timber, cattle, as well as feed for poultry farms" ⁷¹. Khatlon oblast is a major region of Tajikistan, growing between 48 and 78

https://www.belta.by/politics/view/sotrudnichestvo-belarusi-i-tadzhikistana-obsudili-v-mingorispolkome-525441-2022/

⁷⁰ Cooperation between Belarus and Tajikistan discussed at the Minsk City Executive Committee [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL:

⁷¹ Gomel and Khatlon regions intend to develop cooperation in agriculture and industry [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://www.belta.by/regions/view/gomelskaja-i-hatlonskaja-oblasti-namereny-razvivat-sotrudnichestvo-v-apk-i-promyshlennosti-507131-2022/

percent of the republic's total agricultural output for some agricultural products. These are vegetables, early fruits, melons, and citrus fruits.

Another important document was signed by Belarus and Tajikistan in Dushanbe in October 2022, a roadmap for 2022-2026. In the context of the implementation of this Central Asian country's accelerated industrial development program, Tajik partners are interested in developing cooperation with the Belarusian side in the light, food, pharmaceutical, chemical, and mining industries. In addition, "the agrarian sector in the sphere of industrial cooperation and interregional cooperation were identified as priority areas of economic interaction.⁷². In addition, the two republics adopted a number of important bilateral documents. These include intergovernmental agreements on the system of mutual trade facilitation and on cooperation in the field of youth policy. The Prosecutor General's Office of Belarus and the Agency for State Financial Control and Anti-Corruption of Tajikistan adopted a document on cooperation in combating corruption. The Ministry of Sports and Tourism of Belarus and the Tourism Development Committee under the Government of Tajikistan agreed to develop cooperation in tourism. The National Centre for Marketing and Price Study of Belarus and the Export Agency under the Government of Tajikistan also signed an agreement on cooperation. The National Academies of Sciences of the two countries agreed to train personnel in virology, microbiology, molecular biology, epidemiology, biotechnology and pharmacology. In addition, a "plan of measures on development of trade, economic and humanitarian cooperation between the Minsk city executive committee and the Dushanbe city executive body for 2023-2024" was

⁷² Rakhmon identified priority areas of cooperation with Belarus [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://www.belta.by/politics/view/rahmon-oboznachil-prioritetnye-napravlenija-sotrudnichestva-s-belarusjju-528619-2022/

approved. Mogilev District has established twinning relations with the Spitamen District of Sughd Region of Tajikistan..." .⁷³

This October, Dushanbe also hosted a Tajik-Belarusian business forum, which was attended by representatives of 73 companies from Belarus, and almost fifty of them showed their products at the Made in Belarus exhibition. "Almost all sectors of the Belarusian economy were represented at the business forum: machine building, metallurgy, food, woodworking and light industry. The total amount of contracts signed was about \$46 million. In addition, another \$2 million worth of agreements were secured during online negotiations". 74

In particular, the Minsk tractor plant has signed contracts with Tajik companies for \$11 million. "Thus, the company "Madadi Tursunzoda" will be supplied with 170 units of BELARUS tractor machinery worth about \$4 million. With the company "Agrotekhservis" a trade agreement was signed for the supply of 320 tractors worth more than \$7 million" . It should be mentioned that during the three quarters of this year about 370 Belarusian tractors have been supplied to Tajikistan. This is an increase of almost 50 percent over January-September 2021. For reference: in November 2017, an assembly facility for BELARUS tractors was opened in Gissar and contracts were signed for the production of seven models.

One more fact: Minsk Automobile Plant will supply 14 units of motor vehicles to the Tajik market for almost 500 thousand dollars. The contract in the framework of the Tajik-Belarusian business forum was signed by MAZ

⁷³ Belarus and Tajikistan signed a roadmap for 2022-2026 and several other important documents [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-tadzhikistan-podpisali-dorozhnuju-kartu-na-2022-2026-gody-i-esche-neskolko-vazhnyh-dokumentov-528597-2022/

⁷⁴ Tajik-Belarusian business forum takes place in Dushanbe [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/fotofakt-tadzhiksko-belorusskij-biznes-forum-prohodit-v-dushanbe-528500-2022/

⁷⁵ MTZ signed contracts with companies from Tajikistan for \$11 million [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/mtz-zakljuchil-kontrakty-s-kompanijami-iz-tadzhikistana-na-11-mln-528650-2022/

and Obi Zulol, "the largest producer of bottled water, carbonated drinks and natural juices in Tajikistan. In 2019 MAZ delivered 18 units of equipment to the company, among them road trains and flatbed trucks with trailers". ⁷⁶

Another participant of the Tajik-Belarusian business forum was the concern Belgospischeprom, eight enterprises of which took part in the Made in Belarus exhibition and even signed a number of contracts with Tajik partners for the supply of sugar, brewing malt and confectionery products. By the way, "this year Tajikistan ranks first among the concern's trading partners in Central Asia and the Middle East in terms of export volume"⁷⁷.

Representatives of the Bellegprom Concern explored the possibility of investing in cotton production in Tajikistan during the business forum. The heads of the Orsha flax mill and Baranovichi Production Cotton Association, who visited Dushanbe, negotiated the possibility of importing cotton yarn and fiber, since the price of cotton yarn has become more acceptable for Belarusian producers in Tajikistan in recent years. Note that there are other interests in the light industry cooperation between the two countries. "This [2022] year, the Belarusian company Mogotex supplied its products to Tajikistan for the first time. Technical fabrics were exported, the amount of transactions was \$250 thousand. Mogilev residents have agreed to supply Tajikistan in 2023 as well. <...> Mogotex will supply technical fabrics for \$300 thousand"

The Vitebsk Carpets Holding will also be represented in the Tajik market, which with its Tajik partners is setting up a joint production in

⁷⁶ MAZ will supply machinery to Tajikistan for almost \$500 thousand. [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/maz-postavit-tehniku-v-tadzhikistan-pochtina-500-tys-528637-2022/

⁷⁷ Zhidkov: Tajikistan is one of the key partners for Belgospischeprom in the Central Asian market [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/zhidkov-tadzhikistan-odin-iz-kljuchevyh-partnerov-dlja-belgospischeproma-na-tsentralnoaziatskom-rynke-528642-2022/

⁷⁸ Belarus is studying the possibility of investing in cotton production in Tajikistan [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-izuchaet-vozmozhnost-investirovanija-v-proizvodstvo-hlopka-v-tadzhikistane-528489-2022

Khujand, Sughd Region. Interestingly, in mid-April 2022, the official opening ceremony of the joint Belarusian-Tajik assembly production of elevators of OJSC "Mogilevliftmash" was held in this city, with Khujandtorgmash LLC becoming its partner. The new workshop for the production of elevators provided jobs for 50 residents of Khujand, where "using modern equipment and technology will produce different types of elevators - passenger lifts for high-rise buildings, industrial enterprises, as well as health care facilities.⁷⁹.

As for cooperation in education and science, at the forum of rectors of Belarusian and Tajik universities held in October 2022, the parties saw great potential in innovation, in the implementation of joint educational programs, and in training Tajik students at Belarusian universities and institutes. In particular, the Belarusian National Technical University (BNTU) signed a number of agreements on cooperation with universities in Tajikistan. This applies to the Dangara State University and Tajik Agrarian University, the Tajik National University and the Technological University of Tajikistan, as well as the Mining and Metallurgical Institute of Tajikistan. Belarusian and Tajik partners already see a number of joint points for cooperation. "Interaction with the named universities is a new level of access to the Tajik market of educational services. <...> Opening of new horizons of cooperation..."80. As a result, the parties believe that innovative interaction is the key to the creation of new joint ventures on the territory of Tajikistan and Belarus. And as a whole, all these facts "show the growing interest of the two former Soviet republics in fruitful cooperation in a wide variety of

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⁷⁹ Emomali Rahmon took part in the opening of the assembly production of elevators "Mogilevliftmash" in Tajikistan [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/emomali-rahmon-prinjal-uchastie-v-otkrytii-sborochnogo-proizvodstva-liftov-mogilevliftmash-v-496483-2022/

⁸⁰ BNTU and universities in Tajikistan to cooperate in science, education and innovation [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://www.belta.by/society/view/bntu-i-vuzy-tadzhikistana-budut-sotrudnichat-v-sfere-nauki-obrazovanija-i-innovatsij-528871-2022

areas¹⁸¹, which are taken to a new level in the form of comprehensive measures of the road map of Belarus and Tajikistan for 2022-2026.

⁸¹ Zalessky, B. International Relations and the Media. Peculiarities of multi-vector international cooperation in the period of global challenges / B. Zalessky. - Palmarium Academic Publishing, 2016. - C. 129.

The potential of the exchange platform in the field of foreign trade is huge

The results of the Belarusian Universal Commodity Exchange (BUCE) in 2021 showed that the application of the exchange mechanism increasingly contributes both to the creation of equal and competitive conditions for doing business within the country, as well as to the increase in effective procurement activities, the expansion of markets for Belarusian products. Let us remind you that "as of the end of 2021, over 27.5 thousand business entities from 69 countries have already been registered on the BUTB. <...> At the same time, the geography of new participants of trading sessions held here continued to steadily expand on the BUCE"82. In this connection one of the main tasks of the exchange in 2022 is to help domestic enterprises to promote their goods for export. For this purpose "it is necessary to pay special attention to realization of the exchange platform potential in the sphere of foreign trade. First of all it is diversification of export of Belarusian goods with the focus on the People's Republic of China and other Asian countries, 1883. And, it must be said, the BUTB is already taking energetic measures to solve the above tasks.

As for China, "in 2021, the Belarusian-Chinese exchange turnover grew three and a half times"⁸⁴, and according to the results of the first quarter of 2022, this country became one of the three largest buyers of rapeseed oil at the Belarusian Fuel and Energy Exchange. "This was aided by the expansion of the pool of Chinese buyers, as well as an increase in the number

⁸² Zalessky, B.L. From expansion of geography - to deepening of cooperation / B.L. Zalessky // Materials for XVIII International Scientific Practical Conference, Present Investigations and Development - 2022, 17 - 25 January 2022; Sofia, "Byal GRAD-BG". - C. 6.

⁸³ MART identified priorities for the development of exchange trade [Electronic resource]. - 2022.
- URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/mart-oboznachil-prioritety-razvitija-birzhevoj-torgovli-488282-2022/

⁸⁴ Zalessky, B. From Trust to Cooperation. Collection of articles / B. Zalessky. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2022. - C. 135.

of transactions they made. As a result, compared to the same period in 2021, rapeseed oil sales to the PRC increased 67% in value, to \$2.2 million." . 85

In the first half of 2022, the Belarusian-Chinese exchange turnover exceeded \$40 million, which is one and a half times more than during the same period last year. Since the beginning of the year, 20 new residents have come to the exchange. Now there are almost 90 of them. About half regularly participate in trading, and three have brokerage status. "The most demanded by the Chinese were cut coniferous lumber and unrefined rapeseed oil. Belarus imported steel products from China, including rolled sheets and seamless steel pipes." 86.

One more interesting fact: in July 2022 the first deal on sales of skimmed milk powder to China was made at the BUTB. "The volume of the pilot batch amounted to 75 tons, and the amount was \$250 thousand. The purpose of the trial deal is to practically work out the issues of mutual settlements and logistics, which will not only increase the volume of purchases of Belarusian dried milk, but also organize supplies of other dairy products, such as butter, cream, cheese and whey, to the Chinese market in the future" So far, Chinese companies have been using the Belarusian exchange platform mainly for the purchase of lumber, which prevented them from fully realizing the potential of exchange trade between the two countries. Expansion of the commodity nomenclature creates additional opportunities to increase the volume of mutual trade, so the first successful experience of exporting dried milk to China via the exchange can be later

 85 China is one of the top three buyers of rapeseed oil on the BUTB [Electronic resource]. - 2022.

⁻ URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/kitaj-voshel-v-trojku-krupnejshih-pokupatelej-rapsovogo-masla-na-butb-493049-2022/

⁸⁶ Markina, T. What Belarusian enterprises enter Chinese market with / T. Markina // [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/s-chem-belorusskie-predprijatija-vyhodjat-na-rynok-kitaja-513455-2022

⁸⁷ Belarusian dairy products sold to China through BUTB [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belorusskaja-molochnaja-produktsija-prodana-v-kitaj-cherez-butb-512556-2022/

extrapolated to other dairy products represented on the exchange platform. The plus side is that Chinese consumers have already been convinced of the high quality of Belarusian dairy products by buying them in the over-the-counter market.

In June 2022, the BUTB in China got another international partner the Xinjiang Asian-European International Trade Center (AEERC), which is the operator of the electronic trading platform Asia Europe Exchange. The goal is to combine efforts and jointly promote an increase in trade turnover between Belarus and China. Cooperation in promotion of Belarusian goods to the Chinese market, informing Chinese companies about opportunities for searching business partners in Belarus through the BUTB platform, exchange of analytics and statistical data reflecting the current situation in the commodity markets of both countries are defined as priority areas of cooperation. As for the commodity items promising for mutual trade, "the most liquid Belarusian goods are sawn timber, which is in steadily high demand in China, especially in the construction sector. In this case, delivery of the goods purchased at the BUTB is possible by rail along the New Silk Road. In addition, to diversify export supplies of Belarusian timber products, it is planned to use the network of business contacts of the AEEX in the countries of the Asia-Pacific region"88. Special attention is paid to the prospects of participation of suppliers from China in the bidding on the import substitution exchange platform. In particular, it is expected that the entry of Chinese manufacturers of spare parts and technological equipment will increase the concentration of supply of these products and expand their range, which will have a positive impact on the price level for Belarusian consumers.

⁸⁸ BUTB and China's AEEX will cooperate in e-commerce [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-i-kitajskaja-ploschadka-aeex-budut-sotrudnichat-v-sfere-elektronnoj-torgovli-510290-2022/

And one more fact. In April 2022, China Merchants CHN-BLR Commerce and Logistics Company (CMCB), a part of China Merchants Group Corporation, signed a memorandum with BTUB that provides for interaction between the parties in the field of transport and trade logistics. The parties proceed from the assumption that the extensive logistics infrastructure and well-established transport communications are a basic condition for the functioning of the Belarusian-Chinese exchange commodity market. Therefore, it is only through the synergy of electronic exchange trade technologies and extensive logistics capabilities that the potential of bilateral cooperation can be fully realized.

Since July 2022, the Chinese side has been assisting in attracting suppliers and customers from China to the electronic import substitution platform of the commodity exchange. In order to optimize logistics costs, CMCB together with BUTB will work out alternative routes for the delivery of Belarusian goods purchased on the exchange to China using various modes of transport. The prospects of this direction are also evidenced by the results of the analysis of purchase orders placed on the BUTB import substitution platform. "This is especially characteristic of such categories of goods as electrical equipment, communications, as well as components and materials for industry. So far only a few suppliers of import-substituting products from China work on the exchange trading platform, but their number may increase in the near future. First of all due to Chinese companies that are already accredited at the BUTB, but participate in the bidding in other commodity sections" As for logistics issues, the delivery of goods from Belarus to China and back is carried out as usual.

⁸⁹ A Chinese company will help attract suppliers and customers to the site of import substitution of the BUTB [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/kitajskaja-kompanija-pomozhet-privlech-postavschikov-i-zakazchikov-na-ploschadku-importozameschenija-514280-2022

Speaking about the implementation of plans to diversify exchange exports by reaching end consumers in the Middle East, we note that until recently, residents of Israel, Lebanon, and Egypt were the most active on the Belarusian exchange platform. In February 2022, the United Arab Emirates was added to the list, when the first deal on the sale of lumber products to this country of the Persian Gulf was made on the BUTB. During the export trade session a company from Abu Dhabi purchased a trial batch of edged hardwood lumber from a Belarusian woodworking company. The goods were delivered to the country of destination by the buyer. Now the BUTB sees its priority task as getting a foothold in the Emirati market, increasing the number of accredited companies and the volume of supplies. After all, this Middle Eastern country is an international trade and logistics hub. "This means that by supplying their products to Abu Dhabi, Dubai or Sharjah, Belarusian companies automatically get access to potential buyers from Africa, Southeast Asia and other regions" of plants in the products of the potential buyers from Africa, Southeast Asia and other regions of plants.

In March 2022, participating in the Dubai International Wood & Wood Machinery Show in the UAE, BUTB representatives had a number of effective meetings with companies interested in business partnerships. As a result "a large importer and distributor of timber on the territory of UAE Beston Wood Industries LLC expressed readiness to enter the market of Belarus through the exchange platform and Egyptian producer of furniture boards and door leaves Good Wood LLC intends to accredit on the BUTB to purchase softwood edging boards and other products of Belarussian timber processing enterprises" 1 And now BUTB is focusing its main efforts on entering new markets as well as on expanding its presence in countries whose

⁹⁰ Belarusian lumber sold to the UAE for the first time through BUTB [Electronic resource]. -2022. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belorusskie-pilomaterialy-vpervye-prodany-v-oae-cherez-butb-485480-2022/

⁹¹ BUTB refocuses lumber exports to the Middle East and North Africa [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-pereorientiruet-eksport-pilomaterialov-v-strany-blizhnego-vostoka-i-severnoj-afriki-491054-2022/

share of wood products imports used to be insignificant. For this reason, apart from China, where supplies of sawn wood products have already tripled, Asian countries such as Azerbaijan, Georgia, Israel, Lebanon and Turkey, which are ready to increase imports of Belarusian lumber products, seem to be very effective. So, "only Azerbaijan for the first three months of 2022 has already sold more than half of the entire last year's volume" Let us remind you that by the middle of May 2022 more than 28.5 thousand companies from 70 countries have already been accredited to the BUTB. Now here "about 5 thousand items of goods are traded, with more than 400 thousand transactions per year" And there is every reason to believe that these figures will only increase in 2022.

Speaking about promotion of BUOTB interests in Central Asia it should be noted that in March 2022 the Belarusian exchange platform accredited a new broker in Kazakhstan - "First-KO" LLP, which became the 16th in the network of BUOTB stock brokers representing already 11 countries. It is assumed that the arrival of the broker will increase the number of participants in trading from Kazakhstan, which on March 1, 2022 had already been accredited 85, as well as facilitate the growth of the Belarusian-Kazakh commodity turnover. For reference, we note that in 2021 "the commodity turnover between Belarus and Kazakhstan amounted to about \$30 million. Kazakhstan's market was mainly supplied with meat and dairy products, leather goods and sugar, while Belarusian buyers most needed goods were coal and rolled steel. 94. The new broker is going to simplify the

⁹² BUTB expands the geography of exports: the first deals were made in the UAE and Switzerland [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-rasshirjaet-geografiju-eksporta-pervye-sdelki-proveli-oae-i-shvejtsarija-493578-2022/

⁹³ More than 28,500 companies from 70 countries have been accredited to the BUTB [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/na-butb-akkreditovano-bolee-285-tys-kompanij-iz-70-stran-502289-2022/

⁹⁴ BUTB accredited a new broker in Kazakhstan [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-akkreditovala-novogo-brokera-v-kazahstane-490807-2022

work of Kazakhstani companies in the Belarusian market and focus on the goods for which Belarus is the leader in the post-Soviet space - milk products, potatoes, tires, spare parts for special equipment.

Another BUTB partner in Central Asia is Uzbekistan. For reference, we note that as of April 1, 2022, 5673 foreign organizations, including 40 Uzbek ones, were accredited to participate in trading on the Belarusian exchange platform. And in the same April here was made the first deal for the export of chemical products to this Central Asian country. The Uzbek company bought 20 tons of polyacrylonitrile fiber on terms of shipment from the manufacturer's warehouse within the trade session. Earlier only goods of agricultural group - first of all meat and meat by-products - were supplied to the Uzbek market through the exchange platform"95. Taking into account the fact that synthetic fibers are in steady demand among textile industry enterprises in Uzbekistan, there are good reasons to believe that the exchange deal will be the first step of Belarusian exporters in expanding the potential of this product line in the Uzbek market. The grounds for this conclusion are seen in a fairly high level of development of the Uzbek textile and clothing and knitwear industry and the constantly growing needs of local enterprises in high-quality raw materials.

Another interesting step towards expanding the potential of exchange trade with Asian and Middle Eastern countries was made at the BUTB in February 2022, when it registered as a new broker the Belarusian Meat and Dairy Company CJSC, which is an official exporter of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food of the Republic of Belarus. This company represents the interests of all Belarusian exporters of meat and dairy products. Uniting its efforts with the BUTB can certainly ensure more efficient work of the

⁹⁵ The BUTB expanded the commodity range of exports to Uzbekistan [Electronic resource]. -2022. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-rasshirila-tovarnuju-nomenklaturu-eksporta-v-uzbekistan-494941-2022/

domestic agricultural organizations in the markets of non-CIS countries as well as facilitate expansion of the sales geography. In this case we mean not only intensive work on Chinese market. Apparently, other Asian countries and the Middle East region will not be neglected. These are destinations with great export potential, which <...> together with the stock exchange have to be uncovered."96. And there is every reason to believe that in the near future this engagement will show high efficiency in terms of the increase in Belarusian exports to the countries of the Asian continent.

And let's consider one more topical topic related to the BUTB in this context. Today the Belarusian side is looking for new forms of industrial and business development. One such solution in 2022 is import substitution. This process has already involved not only large enterprises, but also private, medium and small businesses. "Import substitution has become the most important task of every enterprise that has to do with imports to work ahead of the curve"97. And there are already interesting examples.

In particular, the BUTB has been operating an import substitution platform for more than three months, which is gaining momentum, proving its effectiveness, and already has about three hundred companies from Central Asia and the Far East, including from the People's Republic of China and the Commonwealth of Independent States. During this time, "since May 27, 2022, 6387 transactions worth Br46.6 million have been made on the BUTB import substitution platform"98 . In June-August, products for construction, components and materials for industry, electrical connections

⁹⁶ The official exporter of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food has become a BUTB broker [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/ofitsialnyjeksporter-minselhozproda-stal-brokerom-butb-482741-2022/

⁹⁷ Zalessky, B.L. The most important task of each enterprise / B.L. Zalessky // Materialsy XVII Miedzynarodowej naukowi-praktycznej konferencji "Nauka: teoria i napiska - 2022", Volume 1. Przemysl: Nauka i studia. - C. 15.

⁹⁸ About 300 companies from Central Asia and the Far East work on the site of import substitution BUTB [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/okolo-300kompanij-iz-stran-srednej-azii-i-dalnego-vostoka-rabotajut-na-ploschadkeimportozameschenija-521269-2022/

and electrical equipment, heating equipment and air conditioning systems, as well as measuring equipment and workwear dominated the structure of sales of import-substituting goods. "In particular, plastic and rubber products, adhesive compositions, LED lights, paint products are in special demand among customers. These product groups account for more than a quarter of the total amount of transactions made on the exchange since its launch." The vast majority of suppliers are domestic small and medium-sized businesses, which, thanks to the import substitution service, received an additional sales channel and were able to find new business partners, including among large public sector companies. Also "now the Belarusian metallurgical plant and enterprises of Bellesbumprom are successfully working at the site" 100 . In the second half of August, a new company from China was accredited to participate in the bidding at the import substitution site.

Through the platform of import substitution BUTB expects to establish exchange trade also with Pakistan. It is planned to work out the issue of selling sawn wood to the Pakistani market, which is in high demand in the construction and furniture industries, as well as to start exporting petrochemical products, which are already actively purchased on the exchange platform by companies from India. Pakistan is a new market for BUTB, but it has great potential both in terms of sales of Belarusian goods and imports of Pakistani products. To this end, the first brokerage company from Pakistan, AP Sakafat Forever, was accredited at BUTB in July 2022 and has been participating in the export exchange trading in lumber products

⁹⁹ In the leaders of sales on the site of import substitution BUTB goods for construction and industry [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/v-liderah-prodazh-na-ploschadke-importozameschenija-butb-tovary-dlja-stroitelstva-i-promyshlennosti-520451-2022

¹⁰⁰ Parkhomehik told what enterprises work on the site of import substitution BUTB [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/parhomehik-rasskazal-kakie-predprijatija-rabotajut-na-ploschadke-importozameschenija-butb-521262-2022/

as a trade visitor since December 2021. "As a professional bidder, it intends to attract buyers of lumber and agricultural commodities to the exchange platform, as well as to assist Pakistani producers of rice, non-ferrous metals and textiles in finding business partners in Belarus." The new broker may also help Belarus sell synthetic fiber, polyethylene, ammonium sulfate, and other chemical and petrochemical products to Pakistan. The broker company has planned "a turnover of about \$150 million and will try to use all stock exchange instruments to achieve it." A Pakistani company that produces sports equipment has expressed its desire to enter the Belarusian market by placing its products in the electronic catalog of import-substituting goods. As for the transactions, at the initial stage, the option of bidding through a broker is being considered.

The Iraqi company Al Seraj Al Mubeen Co. is planning to study the issue of organizing supplies of Belarusian dried milk and beef to Iraq. The firm "specializes in the import and wholesale trade of food products, the demand for which has increased significantly against the background of continued instability in the global food market.¹⁰³ . In this regard, there was a need to expand the geography of purchases, and Belarus is seen as one of the most promising markets.

Another country that is very active in the BUTB is Switzerland, which is working on commodity directions with Belarusian partners. In particular, in the first half of 2022, agricultural products accounted for 95 percent of Belarusian commodity exchange turnover with Switzerland, "which is a net

¹⁰¹ BUTB plans to establish trade between Belarus and Pakistan through the import substitution platform [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-planiruet-naladit-torgovlju-belarusi-i-pakistana-cherez-ploschadku-importozameschenija-515035-2022/

¹⁰² The first broker from Pakistan accredited at the BUTB [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/na-butb-akkreditovan-pervyj-broker-iz-pakistana-519087-2022/

 ¹⁰³ An Iraqi company intends to buy Belarusian dried milk and beef [Electronic resource]. - 2022.
 URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/irakskaja-kompanija-namerena-zakupat-belorusskoe-suhoe-moloko-i-govjadinu-515773-2022

importer of Belarusian goods, since all 16 Swiss companies accredited at the Belarusian Universal Commodity Exchange act exclusively as buyers. In January - June this year the Swiss companies performed about \$6 million in transactions on the exchange floor, of which more than \$5 million was export of Belarusian rapeseed oil and vet-blue leather¹⁰⁴. This demonstrates the high demand for Belarusian agro-industrial products in the Swiss market and the significant potential for deepening cooperation in this area. Not only rapeseed oil, but also other no less liquid items, such as milk powder and whey, cattle meat and beet molasses. It remains to add that agricultural products are not the only group of Belarusian goods that are in demand in Switzerland. There are other areas as well.

¹⁰⁴ BUTB: agricultural products accounted for 95% of the exchange turnover between Belarus and Switzerland [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-produktsija-selskogo-hozjajstva-sostavila-95-birzhevogo-tovarooborota-belarusi-i-shvejtsarii-515347-2022

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