BELARUS

BUSINESS PARTNER
The second edition of informational and reference publication "Belarus. Business partner" by the Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry contains information about Belarus, its economic, export and investment capacity, presents its foreign partners opportunities for business organization and operation, offers guidance on domestic companies and enterprises which provide the most up-to-date and top-quality services in business, banking, tourist, transport, culture, leisure and other spheres.

"Belarus. Business partner" is to become a country business guide, provide practical opportunities for partner enterprises to expand business activity and enlarge distribution networks, assist in establishing mutually beneficial contacts between Belarusian and foreign companies.

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The Republic of Belarus is a country in the centre of Europe. The territory of the republic is 207.6 thousand sq.km. Extension from north to south – 560 km, from east to west – 650 km. Border extension – 2,969 km. It takes 8–10 hours to cross the territory of Belarus in any direction travelling by car. The country is divided into six regions: Brest, Gomel, Grodno, Minsk, Mogilev, Vitebsk. The city of Minsk, the capital, is an independent administrative unit, which does not form part of a region.

The country borders on Latvia and Lithuania in the north-west, on Russia in the east, on Ukraine in the south, and on Poland in the west.

Borders:
- Latvia 143 km
- Lithuania 462 km
- Poland 399 km
- Russia 990 km
- Ukraine 975 km
The Republic of Belarus is a unitary, democratic, welfare state based on the rule of law.

The President of the Republic of Belarus is the Head of State. In 1994 Alexander Lukashenko was elected the President of the Republic of Belarus.

The Parliament – the National Assembly of the Republic of Belarus is a representative and legislative body of the Republic of Belarus, consisting of two chambers – the House of Representatives and the Council of the Republic.

Executive power is exercised by the Government – the Council of Ministers – which is the major state administrative body.

In its activities the Government is accountable to the President and liable to the Parliament of the Republic of Belarus.
100–35 thousand B.C. First settlements were formed in the territory of present-day Belarus.

6th–13th centuries. First state formations in the territory of Belarus (Principality of Polotsk).

13th–16th centuries. The formation of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, embracing the territories of present-day Belarus, Lithuania, Kiev, Chernigov and Volyn regions of Ukraine, and western regions of Russia.

16th–18th centuries. The Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Kingdom of Poland created on equal terms a federative state – Rzeczpospolita.

18th century. As a result of the sustained wars of Rzeczpospolita, the state was portioned out by Russia, Austria and Prussia. Belarusian lands were incorporated into the Russian Empire.

1917. The October Revolution.

1919. Belarusian Soviet Socialist Republic (BSSR) was established.

1922. BSSR became one of the Soviet Union (USSR) founding republics.

1941–1944. Belarusian lands were occupied by the German troops during World War II.

1944. Liberation of the country's territory from the German occupation.

1986. As a consequence of the Chernobyl accident, a significant part of the country’s territory was exposed to radioactive contamination.

1991. After the collapse of the USSR, Belarus was proclaimed an independent state.

The Agreement on the creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States was signed. Minsk was defined the official headquarters of the CIS coordinating authorities.

1994. The Constitution of the Republic of Belarus was adopted. The first presidential elections in the history of the independent state were held.

1999. The Treaty on the creation of the Union State of Russia and Belarus was signed, and the action programme for the implementation of its provisions was adopted.

2009. The documents on the creation of the Customs Union of Belarus, Kazakhstan and Russia were signed.

2012. The Declaration on the creation of the Eurasian Economic Community was adopted, and the Agreement between Belarus, Russia and Kazakhstan on the Common Economic Space came into force.

2014. The Agreement on the creation of the Eurasian Economic Union on the basis of the Customs Union was signed. The members of the Union are Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Armenia and Kyrgyzstan.
Belarusian moderate continental climate, influenced by the Atlantic air masses, is characterized by rainy warm summers and mild winters with frequent thaws. The weather is changeable in spring and autumn.

Average annual precipitation in the territory of Belarus is 600–700 mm.

Month precipitation is characterized by well-defined annual cycle with its minimum amount in February – March and maximum in summer. 70% of rainfall falls on for April – October.

The number of snowy days varies from 75 in the south-west to 125 in the north-east, snow cover depth ranges from 15 to 30 cm.

Average temperature varies depending on region: in June it ranges from +17°C in the north to +18.5°C in the south.

Average temperature in January varies from – 4.5°C in the south-west to – 8°C in the north-east.

In some regions of Belarus sub-zero temperatures are maintained for over a tertial.
Places to visit in Belarus

Belarus starts with the capital city. **Minsk** enjoys almost a thousand-year history. During World War II Minsk was destroyed by more than 80%. Therefore, very few ancient buildings have survived in the city. However, Minsk can be proud of wide avenues and streets, spacious squares, diverse architectural ensembles, verdurous boulevards and parks. The Belarusian capital offers over 40 pedestrian and bus tourist routes allowing the guests of the city to get acquainted with historical and cultural heritage, museums, theaters, exhibition halls.

**The Mir Castle Complex (Mir Castle)** is an outstanding example of the 16th century fortification art. It is included in the UNESCO World Cultural Heritage List. Following restoration works, Mir Castle opened its doors to visitors in December 2010.

**The Nesvizh palace and park complex** is a unique monument of architecture and landscape design of the 16th–18th centuries. It is closely connected with the Radziwills family history. It is a UNESCO World Heritage site. In June 2011, Nesvizh Castle opened its doors to visitors following intensive restoration works.

**The Augustow Canal** is a hydraulic engineering specimen of the early 19th century. It is situated in Grodno region and connects the rivers Vistula and Neman. Numerous international cultural and sport events, national and regional contests, tourist gatherings take place at the canal. Tourists can go for kayak, canoe, motorboat trips along the Augustow Canal.
The memorial complex Khatyn is one of the most impressive monuments to the victims of World War II. It is located at a distance of 54 km from Minsk. Khatyn is a former Belarusian village destroyed by fascist invaders. Today’s Khatyn complex is one of the most revered places in Belarus. The memorial complex has its own museum and a photo exhibition.

The Brest Fortress memorial is a specimen of the 19th century fortification art, located in a 30-minute walk from Brest’s downtown. The fortress is a symbol of Soviet resistance during World War II. On June 22, 1941, the fortress garrison repelled the first attacks of the Nazi invaders. The besieged fortress managed to hold the line for over a month. It was awarded the Hero Fortress title in the wake of World War II for outstanding courage displayed by Soviet soldiers when they fought against fascist troops.

Belovezhskaya Pushcha is one of the major tourist attractions of Belarus. It is the biggest forest in Central Europe famous for its oak trees, which are over 500 years old. Belovezhskaya Pushcha is also home to numerous bird and animal species, including Europe’s largest population of rare bison. The Belovezhskaya Pushcha National Park is a UNESCO World Heritage site.

The Braslav Lakes National Park is located in Vitebsk region. The park includes the most beautiful glacial lakes in Belarus. The lakes are the habitat of rare birds and animals included in the Belarus Red Book of Endangered Species. There are a lot of tourist camps in the region.
The Marc Chagall museum in Vitebsk is one of the most popular museums in Belarus. Marc Chagall is a world-famous Belarusian surrealist painter. Marc Chagall’s creative phenomenon arouses particular interest in people both in Belarus and abroad. The museum’s exposition comprises more than 300 original works of art, including lithographies, xylographs, gravures, aquatints, and illustrations for the poem Dead Souls by Nikolai Gogol. Reproductions of Chagall’s most famous canvases are also displayed at the museum.

Polotsk is one of the most beautiful towns in Belarus, located 250 km to the north of Minsk in Vitebsk region, enjoying an attractive riverside location on the river Western Dvina.

Polotsk was first mentioned in the Tale of the Bygone Years in 862. In its eventful history the town endured Viking incursions from the north, fought against crusaders and had been occupied numerous times. Polotsk became the centre of Christianity in the East Slavic land. The town was a birthplace for the first Belarusian canonized woman Euphrosyne of Polotsk.

Not only is it the oldest town in the country, but also one of the oldest in the whole Slavic region, making it a popular tourist attraction in Belarus. There are numerous historical buildings and monuments in Polotsk.

The Gomel palace and park complex is the most beautiful example of the region’s architecture. Currently, the unique museum complex in central Gomel unites the palace of the Rumyantsevs and the Paskeviches, a chapel and a burial vault, a winter garden, a watchtower and a picturesque old park.

Today the former aristocrats’ residence in Gomel is one of the most interesting and frequently visited Belarusian museums and a major historical, cultural and educational centre. The collection of the Gomel palace is one of the richest in Belarus. It comprises archeological, ethnographic and numismatic collections, pictures, handwritten books, icons and religious items, marine organisms and memorial complexes commemorating outstanding people.
Tourist attractions of Minsk

The capital of Belarus, Minsk Hero-City, is the largest and the most interesting settlement within the territory of Belarus. The city is rich in tourist attractions, and even a quick look at them takes not less than two or three days. There are 17 museums, 36 palaces of culture, 30 theatres, 23 cinemas, and over 100 libraries in Minsk.

**Independence Square** is the beginning of the avenue bearing the same name. It is ranked among the biggest squares in Europe and is supposed to be the main square in Minsk. It has rectangular outline, situated on the west-east axis and occupies a territory of 7 hectares.

The historical centre of Minsk has preserved majestic temples and historical landmarks. The pearl of the Minsk downtown is the **Trinity Suburb** – an old picturesque part of Minsk located on the bank of the Svisloch river in the city centre. Its cozy little streets and houses with tile roofs and delicate colours have become a symbol of Minsk. Their image can be often seen on souvenirs and candies.

One of the landmarks of Minsk is **Independence Avenue** that crosses the capital city from the centre to the north-east. The avenue is 15 km long, which makes it one of Europe’s longest city thoroughfares.

The second biggest thoroughfare of Minsk – **Pobeditelei Avenue** – starts at the ancient Upper Town near the Trinity Suburb.

Minsk is famous for its picturesque **parks and gardens**, including the Gorky Central Children’s Park, Mikhailovskiy Garden, Aleksandrovskiy Garden, Troitskaya Gora Garden (Teatralny Garden), Central Botanical Garden of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, the Chelyuskinites Park, Victory Park.

Minsk has entered the top 10 of the most promising European cities for foreign investors in the **European Cities and Regions of the Future 2016-2017** ranking, compiled by fDi Intelligence resource (subdivision of the Financial Times). In 2016, 223 settlements took part in the competition. While compiling the ranking, 96 independent indicators were taken into account. Calculations were carried out according to the analysis and evaluation of the leading experts of Foreign Direct Investments Magazine and included the following: economic potential, human resources, level of costs of doing business, quality of life, quality of infrastructure, ease of doing business, FDI strategy.

The capital of Belarus ranked 2nd in “Top 10 Major European City of the Future – Cost Effectiveness” and 10th in “Top 10 Major European City of the Future – FDI Strategy.”
Population

The population numbers over 9.498 million (as of January 1, 2016).

2015 was characterized by natural population increase of 17,873 persons compared to 2014.

2015 became record-breaking for the last 20 years in the number of newborn children – there were 119,506 children born in the country.

Male population – 46.5%.
Urban population – 77.6%.
Expectancy of life as of 2016 – 71.2 years.
Average age of the population – 40 years.
Activity rate – 58.6%.

In December 2015, about 4.5 million people were involved in economic activities. The number of the unemployed amounted to 43.3 thousand (1% of the economically active population).

60% of the population consider themselves religious. At present, there are 3,400 religious communities of 25 religious denominations in Belarus. These are communities of Eastern Orthodox believers, Roman-Catholics, Evangelical Christians, Baptists, Seventh-day Adventists, Lutherans, Jews, and Muslims.

Eastern Orthodoxy is the principal religion in Belarus. It is the foundation of inter-faith stability in the country.

Catholicism is one of Belarus’ traditional religious denominations. Catholics account for 14.5% of the Belarusian population.

Protestant religious organizations comprise over 1,000 religious communities, 21 associations, and 22 missions.

Jewish communities are widely presented in the country as well. At present, there are over 50 Jewish communities functioning in Belarus.

There are 25 Muslim communities in Belarus.

Lutheranism is one of traditional denominations in Belarus. Today there are 27 Lutheran communities in Belarus.
Belarusian business ethics

Peculiarities of Belarusian mentality
The Belarusians are very friendly and kind. Expressiveness, emotional outburst, and boisterous spectacles in public are uncharacteristic of them. For centuries the Belarusians have lived in communities, which have left a mark on the character of the relationship between them. Mutual help, respect for the elder and for an interlocutor have always been of great importance. All the major matters are solved conjointly, with holidays being celebrated either by the whole big family, or even by the whole settlement.

Business ethics
The Belarusians are characterized by openness and trust in people. Therefore, in business they tend to observe all the agreements and ensure reputation. The Belarusians believe that successful business relations are based only on trust and good personal relations.

All business meetings shall be arranged beforehand and then confirmed just before they are held. First business contacts imply business environment and business style of negotiations and clothes. Besides, a meeting with Belarusian state authorities representatives will be more formal than a meeting with businessmen.

Language
State languages are Belarusian and Russian. Russian, English and German are widely used for business negotiations. In everyday life Russian and Belarusian predominate. It's frequent that the Belarusians use a peculiar international slang – the mixture of Russian and Belarusian. For instance, it's possible to hear conversations starting in Belarusian and finishing in Russian, and vice versa.
Belarus in international ratings

In a joint study **Doing business 2016**, prepared by the World Bank, Belarus is ranked **44th** among 189 countries in the general index of ease of doing business. According to the previous (2015) year study, our country was **57th**. The study consists of 10 indicators of business operations:

- starting a business – 12th (last year – 39th);
- dealing with construction permits – 34th (34);
- getting electricity – 89th (85);
- registering property – 7th (6);
- getting credit – 109th (105);
- protecting minority investors – 57th (54);
- paying taxes – 63rd (60);
- trading across borders – 25th (25);
- enforcing contracts – 29th (29);
- resolving insolvency – 69th (68).

Belarus' positions are among the strongest in the CIS. Only Kazakhstan (41) and Armenia (35) are higher in the rating, and Russia is 7 positions below Belarus. 

The world’s top ten countries with the most favorable conditions for doing business include Singapore, the leader, followed by New Zealand, Denmark, Republic of Korea, Hong Kong (China), Great Britain, USA, Sweden, Norway and Finland.

Belarus remained the **50th** out of 102 countries in the **Rule of Law Index 2015**, prepared by World Justice Project – an international non-governmental organization. The rating includes several indicators such as absence of corruption, orderliness and security, limitation of authority of the institutions of power, transparency of government institutions, protection of fundamental rights, respect of law, civil justice, criminal justice.

Kazakhstan holds 65th place, Moldova – 69th, Ukraine – 70th, Kyrgyzstan – 74th, Russia – 75th. The top-5 includes Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland and the Netherlands.

Belarus was ranked **63rd** among 189 countries in the **tax burden ranking (Paying Taxes 2016)**, which was drawn up by the World Bank and the auditing firm PwC. The tax burden as a percentage of the model company that does not use tax benefits, the amount of taxes and the required number of hours for their payment were taken into account during the preparation of the ranking. According to the rating, average tax burden (Total Tax Rate) in Belarus amounted to 51.8%, while the world average figure is 40.8%.

Russia went 47th in this list (TTR 47%), Uzbekistan – 115th (TTR 41.1%), Georgia – 40th (TTR 16.4%), Moldova – 78th (TTR 40.2%), Armenia – 41st (TTR 19.9%), Ukraine – 107th (TTR 52.2%).
Belarus ranks 85th among the 174 countries represented in the world ranking of investment attractiveness International Business Compass 2015. In 2014, Belarus occupied the 115th position. The rating has been compiled by the Hamburg Institute of International Economics in cooperation with the audit firm BDO. The country’s investment attractiveness is connected to its level of development and is based on economic, political, legal, social and cultural factors.

Russia was ranked 100th, Ukraine – 89th. Switzerland tops the list. Top ten also includes Singapore, Hong Kong, Norway, Denmark, the Netherlands, Canada, the UK, Sweden and New Zealand.

According to the rating of quality of life assigned by Numbeo (the world’s largest database of user content, dedicated to cities and countries), Belarus took 54th position among 86 countries.

The rating is based on updated information on the cost of living and conditions of life, property prices, healthcare and crime, transport and environmental pollution. The information was collected with the help of online research, without the use of official government reports.

Belarus has the best result among its partners in the Eurasian Economic Union – Russia (72th), Kazakhstan (63rd) and Armenia (60th). The top places are taken by Switzerland, Germany and Sweden.

Belarus took the 63rd place out of 142 countries in Legatum Prosperity Index 2015. The rating prepared by investment organization Legatum Institute evaluates the level of country’s prosperity based on personal income and well-being.

The country’s position in the rating is based on the sum of points in 8 categories:

- economy (89);
- entrepreneurship (54);
- governance (128);
- education (32);
- health (38);
- safety and security (53);
- personal freedom (121);
- social capital (37).

Among neighboring countries Poland has the highest rank (29th), Latvia is 40th, Lithuania – 41st, Russia – 58th, Ukraine – 70th. The leading countries are Norway, Switzerland, Denmark, New Zealand and Sweden.

Belarus holds the 53rd position among 141 countries in the Global Innovation Index 2015, assigned in cooperation with Cornell University, business school INSEAD and the World Intellectual Property Organization.

The Index examines the “effective innovation policy for further development” and reveals new ways that will help policy-makers in developing economies to strengthen innovation and stimulate growth based on local advantages and ensuring the development of a robust national innovation environment.

Switzerland, the UK, Sweden, the Netherlands and the United States are world leaders in the area of innovation.
The Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry is a non-governmental non-commercial organization operating on the basis of the existing law of the Republic of Belarus "On the Chamber of Commerce and Industry". Currently, it is a leading business community of the Republic of Belarus uniting over 2,000 members. They represent the entire spectrum of the Belarusian entrepreneurial business starting from small business representatives, including private entrepreneurs, up to large enterprises, that are the flagships of the Belarusian industry.

The Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry is a member of a number of international organizations: International Chamber of Commerce, Association of European Chambers of Commerce, International Council of Chambers of Commerce and Industry and Economic Chambers of the Central and Eastern European countries, Council of Chambers of Commerce and Industry of the Central European Initiative countries, a member of the Advisory Council of Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Member States of the Eurasian Economic Area, and other international associations.

The Chamber has been implementing more than 280 cooperation agreements and Memoranda with national and regional chambers of commerce and industry, associations and other organizations in 96 countries around the world – traditional and promising trade partners of the Republic of Belarus.

There have been established business cooperation councils, including those with Austria, Bangladesh, Georgia, India, Iran, Kazakhstan, Qatar, UAE, Oman, Pakistan, Serbia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Turkey, Saxony (Germany), Switzerland, Ukraine as well as with Belarus-EU Business Council with the headquarters in Brussels.

The Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry has a staff of 36 foreign representatives in 30 countries around the world.

**Foreign economic activities**
- organization of business missions abroad;
- arrangement of business matchmaking sessions;
- company presentation in Belarus and abroad;
- arrangement and holding of business councils, economic and investment forums, seminars, conferences in Belarus and abroad;
- issuing of certificates on availability (absence) of goods production within the territory of the Republic of Belarus;
- reception of foreign delegations (including related services: visa support, ticket reservations and hotel booking, transport services, rent of premises and lease of office equipment, insurance, translation/interpreting);
- translation/interpreting (consecutive);
- customs and statistical declaring of export (import) of goods;
- confirmation of the validity of documents used in the international economic turnover;
- force majeure confirmation.

**Appraisal**
- independent value appraisal of objects of civil rights, including: plots of land, buildings and facilities, including construction in progress, machinery and equipment, vehicles, intellectual property, appraisal of property (seized, arrested or appropriated by the government);
- assessment of damage caused to property and vehicles;
- determination of appraisal credibility.
Expert examination

- examination as to quantity, completeness and quality of goods, including: expert examination (inspection) of acceptance of goods, sampling, pre-shipment examination (inspection) of export goods, expert examination of goods sold through the Belarusian Universal Commodity Exchange, expert examination of consumer goods;
- forensic examination, including: forensic construction and technical examination, forensic and merchandising examination, forensic vehicle examination, forensic examination in relation to value appraisal of objects of civil rights.

Certification

- certification of the origin of goods: expert analysis of the country of origin, certification and issue of certificates of origin of various forms (Form "A", Form "ST-1", general form, and others);
- certification of goods (works, services) of own production, including: rating of manufactured goods (work, services) as products (works, services) of own production, issue of certificates for goods (works, services) of own production.

ATA Carnet

- execution and issue of ATA Carnet, an international customs document used as a customs declaration enabling to carry out simplified duty-free clearance of temporary import and export of goods. It is issued by chambers of commerce and industry or other national associations, authorized customs bodies in the states – members of conventions, and guarantees payment of import duties.

Information activities and publishing

- informational and technical support for business events;
- publishing of "Belarusian exporters", "Belarus. Business Partner" information directories, "Mercury" news bulletin and other print media of the BelCCI;
- publishing activities: publishing commercial information in print media, catalogues, placement of information materials on the Internet;
- production of video presentations;
- media coverage of Belarusian and foreign companies’ activities.
National currency – Belarusian ruble.
GDP in real terms compared to the previous year – 96.1%.
GDP per capita BYR 91,646 thousand (regardless 2016 denomination).

The Republic of Belarus is an export-oriented state with well-developed industry, agriculture and service sector. Belarus adheres to the model of socially-oriented market economy that has proved its sustainability, consistency and efficiency.

Over the past decade, the foreign trade dynamics is characterized by rapid increase in goods and services turnover volume. It is determined by high economic growth, enhancement of scientific and technical and transit potential, participation in integration processes within the CIS, as well as diversification of trade and economic relations.

Belarus maintains key positions in the CIS in the fields of chemical and petroleum industry, agricultural and car engineering, agroindustrial complex, light industry, in certain branches of the IT industry. It surpasses all the CIS states in terms of IT services exports per capita. There is significant progress in the hi-tech sphere, especially in the production of optical and laser devices, automation control systems. Belarus boasts 17% of the world output of harvesters, 6% of tractors, 6.4% of flax and 1.6% of potato, and its share in the world mining dump trucks production is 30%.

8 BELARUSIAN CORE PRODUCTS
- freight vehicles, road and construction equipment
- tractors and agricultural equipment
- refrigerators and household equipment
- fertilizers
- flax fibres
- chemical fibres and threads
- meat products
- dairy products
Belarus trade turnover of goods and services (after methodology of balance of payments) amounted to US$ 65.6 billion in 2015. The positive trade balance in goods and services amounted to US$ 0.2 billion.

Export of goods totaled US$ 26.7 billion; imports amounted to US$ 30.3 billion.

Export of services totaled US$ 6.7 billion; imports amounted to US$ 4.4 billion.

Export is one of the major priorities of the Belarusian economy, traditionally making up more than a half of its gross domestic product.

Belarus maintains trade relations with over 190 countries worldwide. Exports make up 50% of the GDP, imports – about 60%.

Useful links:
Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Belarus
www.economy.gov.by

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus
www.mfa.gov.by
Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
www.cci.by
Priority areas of industrial development:

- production of high-precision casting for the engineering complex;
- production of engineering process equipment;
- production of complete automated hydromechanical transmissions of a broad power range (210 to 850 hp) for various transportation and technological machines;
- specialized long-run production of tools for the metal-working industry of super hard materials and composite materials on their basis;
- production of components for vehicles and buses, corresponding to Euro 5 and Euro 6 requirements;
- creation of new types of competitive optical electronic and laser products of special purpose;
- production of photo-sensitive devices, optical electronic devices, high-quality solar cells.

Useful links:
- Ministry of Industry of the Republic of Belarus
  www.minprom.gov.by
- Belarusian State Light Industry Concern
  www.bellegprom.by
- Belarusian State Concern for Oil and Chemistry
  www.belnftekhim.by
- Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
  www.cci.by
Automobile industry is one of the leading branches of the mechanical engineering sector. It accounts for one fourth of the sector’s output.

Belarus specializes in manufacturing freight vehicles, buses and special vehicles. The biggest companies are Minsk Automobile Plant and BELAZ. Belarusian Automobile Plant accounts for a third of the global market of rock haulers and is one of the leading producers of quarry equipment in the world.

Belarus is a leading producer of agricultural equipment such as tractors, grain harvesters, all kinds of forage harvesters. Minsk Tractor Works is among the biggest manufacturers of wheeled tractors. Belarusian tractors account for 96% of the global market.

Useful links:
Ministry of Industry of the Republic of Belarus
www.minprom.gov.by
Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
www.cci.by

In 2015, Belarusian manufacturers produced:
• 1.1 thousand metalworking lathes;
• 34.3 thousand tractors;
• 6 thousand dump trucks;
• 795 buses.
The Belarusian State Concern for Oil and Chemistry (Belneftekhim) incorporates over 60 enterprises. It accounts for more than 30% of the country’s industrial output.

The top exporters of mineral fertilizers in Belarus are Belaruskali and GrodnoAzot.

Belaruskali is one of the world's biggest manufacturers of potash fertilizers. The Belarusian enterprise accounts for 16% of the global potassium market. About 90% of Belaruskali's output is exported to Europe, East Asia, Mediterranean countries, South Africa, India, China, South and North Americas – a total of 65 countries across the globe.

Belshina is a Europe’s largest tire producer. The Belarusian oil processing industry includes Novopolotsk-based Naftan Oil Refinery and Mozyr Oil Refinery. These are modern facilities manufacturing high-quality oil products which are exported to Central and Northwest Europe.

Useful links:
Belarusian State Concern for Oil and Chemistry
www.belneftekhim.by
Ministry of Industry of the Republic of Belarus
www.minprom.gov.by
Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
www.cci.by

In 2015, Belarusian manufacturers produced:
- 3,968.5 thousand tonnes of motor gasoline;
- 8,158.5 thousand tonnes of diesel fuel;
- 7,508 thousand tonnes of mineral or chemical fertilizers;
- 182.9 thousand tonnes of chemical fibres;
- 3,911 thousand tires.
The Belarusian metalworking industry includes over 20 manufacturers of steel pipes, metal cord, various kinds of wire, and more than 100 producers of finished metal elements for steel structures, various kinds of metal instruments, reservoirs, cisterns, containers, boilers, radiators, fixing hardware, etc.

Useful links:
Ministry of Industry of the Republic of Belarus
www.mingrom.gov.by
Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
www.cci.by

Major metalworking enterprises

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<td>Mogilev Metallurgical Works</td>
<td>Steel electric-welded round and profiled tubes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tsentrolit Gomel Foundry Plant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rechitsa Metizny Plant</td>
<td>Bolts, screws, nails of all dimension-types</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minsk Plant of Heating Equipment</td>
<td>Heating boilers, radiators, fittings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Light industry in Belarus accounts for 28–30% of the total production of non-food goods. There are about 500 light industry enterprises in the republic, producing over 5,000 product names.

Belarusian light industry is passing through a period of modernization: a number of key enterprises are investing in the replacement of production equipment with the view of releasing more competitive products. An active search for investors for the re-equipping of plants, updating of marketing policy, and working on the image of the product are being carried out. Knitting enterprises are reckoned among the most promising areas for investment. The strength of the Belarusian light industry in attracting foreign investments consists in good raw materials base, as well as cheap labour force.

The textile industry is regarded as the largest in production volume. The segment combines the production of all kinds of fabrics, knitwear, felting and other products.

The knitting industry focuses on the production of knitwear, knitted fabric, hosiery and other products.

The main activity of sewing industry enterprises is sewing suits and outerwear, children’s clothing, underwear, hats and fur items. The largest sewing factories in Belarus have a “portfolio” of export brands which are exported not only within the CIS, but also to the Czech Republic, Denmark, Great Britain, the Netherlands, Poland, the USA.

Footwear industry enterprises tend to improve the quality of raw materials and reduce the level of import capacity.

The establishment of the Belarusian fashion industry takes place nowadays together with the rapid development of our country’s economy. Belarus Fashion Week, which for the last eleven seasons has been successfully representing the Belarusian fashion on the international stage, and the republican fashion and photo contest-festival "Mill of Fashion" stand out among many fast-developing projects in this sphere.

Useful links:
Belarusian State Light Industry Concern
www.bellegprom.by
Ministry of Trade of the Republic of Belarus
www.mintorg.gov.by
Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
www.cci.by

In 2015, Belarusian manufacturers produced:
• 152 mln sq.m of fabrics;
• 38 mln knitwear articles;
• 9.9 mln pairs of footwear.
Over the last 60 years the percentage of forest land of the republic has almost doubled and reached its maximum volume for more than a century-long period.

Conscious efforts of the Belarusian wood-growers foster the improvement of the quality of forest reserves. The volume of man-made stands is consistently growing. Furthermore, the steady enlargement of the areas with the maturing, mature and overmature forest stands is observed.

The pulp and paper industry of Belarus produces about 292.2 thousand tonnes of paper and cardboard annually, part of the products are exported.

Imported pulp and waste paper are used as raw material.

Despite the growing production volumes of the Belarusian enterprises, the level of import of paper in the republic remains high. In this regard, as well as due to the fact that there is a significant proportion of low-value softwood timber and thinners, which are unclaimed on the domestic market, it is planned to accelerate the development of pulp and paper production.

Useful links:
Ministry of Forestry of the Republic of Belarus
www.mlh.gov.by
Belarusian Production and Trade Concern of Forestry, Woodworking and Pulp and Paper Industry
www.bellesbumprom.by

Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
www.cci.by

In 2015, Belarus produced:
- 1,450 nominal cu.m of clip board;
- 90.6 million nominal sq.m of fibreboard;
- 292.2 thousand tonnes of paper and paperboard.
Agricultural production accounts for about 7.7% of the country’s GDP. Less than 10% of the employed in the national economy work in the agricultural sector.

Belarusian companies almost completely satisfy the needs of the domestic food market. Food stuffs import accounts for less than 10% of the total consumption. The production of milk per capita in Belarus is 2.8 times higher than that in the European Union and 8.4 times higher than that in the world. The production of meat per capita is 1.1 times and 2.2 times higher, the manufacture of grain is 1.6 times and 2.5 times higher respectively.

The country accounts for 1.4% of the global export of milk, 11% of butter export, and 5.7% of cheese export. Belarus is a top exporter of dairy products in the world along with Australia, New Zealand, Brazil, and Argentina.

Belarus is ranked first in terms of per capita production of potato and is one of the major potato producers in the world.

Besides, about 25.7% of the world’s flax crops are grown in Belarus. Belarus is a top five country among the world’s 26 flax fiber manufacturers.

Useful links:
Ministry of Agriculture and Food of the Republic of Belarus
www.mshp.minsk.by
Belarusian State Concern of Food Industry
www.bgp.by/ru
Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
www.cci.by

| Number of livestock and poultry |
|-------------------------------|----------------|
| Cattle                        | 4,356 thousand heads |
| Pigs                          | 3,205 thousand heads |
| Sheep and goats               | 153 thousand heads  |
| Horses                        | 64 thousand heads   |
| Poultry                       | 48.5 mln heads      |

Commercial catch of fish (tonnes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>From natural reservoirs</td>
<td>870.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From artificial reservoirs</td>
<td>9,610.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>10,480.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Food industry

Key export products are milk and dairy products (57.2%), meat and meat products (32.3%), casein (2.3%), eggs (1.4%). The share of food products in total exports has increased from 7% to 10% over the last five years.

Belarusian food products are supplied to 50 countries worldwide. The largest importers are Russia, Ukraine, Poland, Germany, Kazakhstan, Lithuania, Moldova.

Promising trends in attracting investments are:

- increase of the production capacity for products with longer shelf life;
- manufacture of narrow-niche products – in cheese and meat industries;
- expanding capacities for processing cheese and milk whey using biotechnological methods;
- creation of "shock" freezing complexes for berries and mushrooms, as well as various treatment technologies for vegetables and fruits.

Per capita production of main agricultural products (kg)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product</th>
<th>Per capita</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grains</td>
<td>912</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potatoes</td>
<td>632</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beet</td>
<td>348</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetables</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruits and berries</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milk</td>
<td>743</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livestock and poultry</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(slaughter weight)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eggs, pieces</td>
<td>402</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Production of basic animal husbandry products

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Milk, thousand tonnes</td>
<td>7,047</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eggs, mln pieces</td>
<td>3,816</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales of livestock and</td>
<td>1,662</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>poultry for slaughter,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thousand tonnes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>live weight</td>
<td>1,662</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>carcass weight</td>
<td>1,150</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2015, Belarusian manufacturers produced:

- 633.6 thousand tonnes of meat and edible by-products;
- 1,966 thousand tonnes of wholemilk dairy products;
- 209.2 thousand tonnes of vegetable oils;
- 55.4 thousand tonnes of chocolate and sugar confectionery;
- 39.5 mln dal of alcohol-free beverages;
- 11.1 mln dal distilled alcoholic beverages;
- 40.6 mln dal of beer.

Useful links:

Ministry of Agriculture and Food of the Republic of Belarus
www.mshp.minsk.by
Belarusian State Concern of Food Industry
www.bgp.by/ru
Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
www.cci.by
The Belarusian fuel and energy complex includes companies engaged in production, transportation, and storage of all kinds of energy resources. About 85% of energy resources consumed by the national economy are imported. Electricity generation is the core of the Belarusian fuel and energy complex. This is one of the leading branches of the national economy with a traditionally high level of Belarus’ technical and engineering potential concentrated. Gazprom Transgaz Belarus OJSC distributes and transports gas across Belarus.

In the near future nuclear energy will play a leading role in the fuel and energy complex. At the moment, the country is building a nuclear power plant. The commissioning of the first energy unit with the capacity of 1,200 MW is scheduled for 2017.

Useful links:
Ministry of Energy of the Republic of Belarus
www.minenergo.gov.by
Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
www.cci.by

In 2015, Belarus produced:
- 33.8 billion kWh of electricity.
Belarus is a major transport corridor of Eurasia. Over 100 million tonnes of European cargoes are transported via Belarus annually. About 90% of the cargoes are transported between Russia and the European Union. The territory of the country is crossed by two out of ten cross-European transportation corridors: Berlin–Minsk–Moscow; Helsinki–Mogilev–Bucharest. Transport services are rendered by railway, automobile, air, inland water, and pipeline transport operators.

Geographical location of Belarus favours the deployment of logistics centres along the routes used to transport cargoes between Europe and Asia.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cargo transportation (thousand tonnes)</th>
<th>Cargo turnover (million ton-km)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>180.4</td>
<td>24,523</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>132.5</td>
<td>60,552</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>131.4</td>
<td>40,784</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>447.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Passenger transportation (million persons)</th>
<th>Passenger turnover (million pkm)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1,216.2</td>
<td>9,463</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>777.1</td>
<td>4,114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87.1</td>
<td>7,117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>3,164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>2,094.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Stretch of republican roads**

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public railway tracks</td>
<td>5 491 km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>including electrified</td>
<td>1 128 km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public roadways</td>
<td>101,7 thousand km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>including hard-surfaced</td>
<td>87,4 thousand km</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Availability of personal passenger cars in 2015 amounted to 307 units per 1,000 population.

Useful links:
Ministry of Transport and Communications of the Republic of Belarus
www.mintrans.gov.by
Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
www.cci.by
In 2015, 5,085 million sq.m of residential buildings were put into service in Belarus.

The number of flats per 1000 population is 5.8 (55.5 thousands of flats). The average size of the constructed flats is 91.2 sq.m. Housing per capita is 26.5 sq.m.

**Useful links:**
- Ministry of Construction of the Republic of Belarus
  www.mas.by/ru
- Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
  www.cci.by

### Commissioning of social and cultural facilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Secondary education establishment</td>
<td>3,855 pupil places</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-primary education establishment</td>
<td>1,826 places</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitals</td>
<td>400 places</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambulatory-polyclinic institutions</td>
<td>336 visits per shift</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural institutions (clubs)</td>
<td>300 places</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Main performance indicators of construction organisation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Volume of contract works within “Construction” activity</td>
<td>95,017.5 billion rubles (regardless 2016 denomination)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average number of workers</td>
<td>192.41 thousand people</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Commissioning of residential buildings

Total 5,058.4 thousand sq.m
Belarus has a two-level banking system which is common worldwide. It consists of the National Bank of the Republic of Belarus, or the Central Bank, and commercial banks.

The National Bank of the Republic of Belarus is the first level of the banking system of the country. It performs the following functions: state registration and regulation of the banks’ activities, licensing of banking, regulation of credit relations and monetary circulation, determination of the settlement procedure and the exclusive right for currency emission.

As of January 1, 2016, the banking sector of Belarus comprised 26 banks. Besides, there are five representation offices of foreign banks.

The main agency of the stock market of the Republic of Belarus is the Belarusian Currency and Stock Exchange.

The country has a well-developed information and analytical system, covering the results of the circulation of securities issued in the country, information about the activities of the issuers and participants of the securities market, news of the stock and financial markets of the Republic of Belarus.

Useful links:
- National Bank of the Republic of Belarus
  www.nbrb.by
- Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Belarus
  www.minfin.gov.by
- Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Belarus
  www.economy.gov.by
- Republican Central Securities Depository of the Republic of Belarus
  www.centraldepo.by

### Investment portfolio profile of the Belarusian banks as of February 1, 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Security Type</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Securities, issued by Central Government</td>
<td>42.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Securities, issued by local authorities</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Securities of the business entities of the Republic of Belarus</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Securities, issued by the banks of the Republic of Belarus</td>
<td>37.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Securities, issued by non-residents and purchased by the banks of the Republic of Belarus</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equity investment</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The countries of origin of the foreign capital in the banking system of Belarus are Austria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Great Britain, Iran, Ireland, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Russia, USA, Ukraine, Switzerland, and others.
The number of organized visits was 276.3 thousand in 2015. 252.3 thousand tourists came from the CIS states. Among non-CIS countries, the largest number of visitors came from China, Germany, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland.

A number of large-scale nature protection projects are being implemented in the republic. There are five national parks in Belarus protected by the state. National parks enjoy good opportunities for the development of ecotourism. There are various tourist routes, ecological paths, multi-day specialized ecotours, aiming at observing wild animals and birds in their natural environment, nature museums, hunting tours in subordinate hunting farms, as well as joint scientific research of nature habitat and ecosystem.

Rural tourism is popular in Belarus nowadays. The number of tourists who made use of agro-ecotourism services in 2015 was 294.3 thousand.

It’s also possible to visit holy places in Belarus. Belarus’ most revered places include St Euphrosyne Convent in Polotsk, the Church of the Resurrection of Christ in Brest, the Roman-Catholic Church in Novogrudok built on the site of the former pagan temple, and biblical frescoes of St Stanislaus Cathedral in Mogilev.

The guests of Belarus are fond of therapeutic tourism as well. In 2015, 475 health resort and health improvement facilities were functioning in Belarus; 760.7 thousand guests were accommodated. Belarusian health resorts are located in the most picturesque corners of the country: in pine forests, on the banks of rivers and lakes, where nature itself is beneficial. Belarus enjoys moderate continental climate with mild winter and warm summer, there are four types of mineral water springs, which makes it possible to have a rest in Belarus all the year round.

Useful links:
- Ministry of Sports and Tourism of the Republic of Belarus
  www.mst.by/ru
- National Tourism Agency
  www.belarustourism.by

House in the village Sutkovo
Gomel region, Loev district, village Peredelka (Sutkovo)
Phone: +375 232\606-762, +375 29\336-2779
www.tour.garant-tv.by, tour@garant-tv.by
Tourist complex with modern decor, comfortable guest rooms for up to 24 persons, banquet hall (for 30 persons), a sauna, billiards, free wi-fi. The cottage is located in the heart of the complex of the former estate of Countess Baranovskaya, where you can explore the palace, walk through the old park, as well as swim or go fishing in the Dnieper river.

House in the village Chernoe
Gomel region, Rechitsa district, village Chernoe, Beregovaya St., 24
Phone: +375 232\606-762, +375 29\336-2779
www.tour.garant-tv.by, tour@garant-tv.by
The house with a mansard, all facilities included: a functional dining room, a comfortable living room, a sauna, an apple garden with a summer house and barbecue. Fishing, picking berries, mushrooms and medicinal herbs, walking to the lake, healing springs and sacred places – a real holiday in the countryside!

House in the village Chaplin
Gomel region, Loev district, village Chaplin
Phone: +375 232\606-762, +375 29\336-2779
www.tour.garant-tv.by, tour@garant-tv.by
Two-storey cottage on the bank of the Dnieper, with a spacious dining room, a comfortable living room, a bright terrace, a room for billiards. The complex offers a sauna, garden furniture, BBQ. The house in the village Chaplin is ideal for both family and corporate entertainment.
The National Geographic Traveler magazine held a contest for the best tourist destinations in the most popular types of tourism, the **2015 National Geographic Traveler Awards**. The winner was chosen by online voting of over 240 thousand people. Following the results of the voting, Belarus has been placed second in the Agro Tourism category.

Belarus shared the 10th place in the Family Vacation category with Austria, Russia (Kalinin-grad), the USA and Thailand.

The country was ranked 8th in the Rest and Recreation category together with Hungary, the Crimea, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Sri Lanka.

Belavia, the largest airline of Belarus, was 7th in the Best Foreign Airline nomination, sharing its position with AZAL, Cathay Pacific, Etihad, KLM, Qantas, Qatar Airways, Ryanair, Singapore Airlines, Wizzair, and Aeroflot airlines.

Belarus ranks 1st in the world by the number of bisons living in natural conditions. In August 2015, there were 1,200 bisons in our country – this is the best figure in the world by the number of that species living in a state of natural freedom.
According to the 2009 population census, the level of literacy of Belarusian population aged 15 and over was 99.6%.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-primary educational institutions</th>
<th>Secondary educational institutions</th>
<th>Vocational technical educational institutions</th>
<th>Colleges</th>
<th>Higher educational institutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3,951</td>
<td>3,230</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>409.8 thousand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>969.1 thousand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72.2 thousand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>121.3 thousand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>336.4 thousand</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Useful links:
- Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry: www.cci.by

Belarusian State University has entered the list of 800 world’s best universities according to Times Higher Education. BSU is the only Belarusian higher education establishment on the list. It is placed among higher educational establishments ranked from 601st to 800th. The top five universities are California Institute of Technology, Oxford, Stanford, Cambridge universities and Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

BSU was also ranked 584th in Webometrics Ranking of World Universities, having gained 25 positions and entered top three CIS universities in comparison to the previous year. 22 thousand universities were ranged in accordance with four criteria that are characterizing the amount of scientific publications and their presence on the Internet: influence (citation of the website), presence (size of the website), openness (the number of files according to Google Scholar), quality (the number of the staff’s scientific publications that are included in the 10% of the most cited ones according to Scopus).

According to Webometrics, the top ranked universities include Harvard University (1st), Stanford University (2nd), Massachusetts Institute of Technology (3rd), Lomonosov Moscow State University (134th), St Petersburg State University (452nd).
Science

Science is a strong intellectual industry in Belarus that plays a key role in knowledge-driven economy building.

The Belarusian innovation development program prioritizes resource-saving and energy-efficient technologies, industrial biotechnologies, nanomaterials and new energy sources, medicine and pharmaceutics, information and aerospace solutions, technologies of manufacturing, refining and storing agricultural produce, environmental protection and rational use of natural resources. Research is mostly focused on specific needs of the manufacturing sector and other industries. Scientific activity aims to upgrade the manufacturing industry, create the innovation-driven economy, and set up new production facilities.

Major achievements of the Belarusian science

- On July 22, 2012, the Belarusian satellite for the remote sensing of the Earth was launched into outer space.
- The members of NASB Stepanov Institute of Physics developed new generation lasers, a device for non-contact express optical cancer diagnostics.
- Specialists of the NASB Institute of Physical Organic Chemistry developed a series of original medications on the basis of amino acids and their modified derivatives. Belarusian chemists devised new technologies to produce medications with various therapeutic effects.
- The NASB Institute of Genetics and Cytology opened a unique centre for DNA biotechnologies.
- Scientists of the NASB United Institute of Informatics Problems designed a SKIF-GRID supercomputer on the basis of 12-core AMD Opteron processors and graphic processing units. This is the most efficient configuration in the family of Belarusian supercomputers SKIF of the SKIF-GRID cluster.

According to the Human Development Index published by the United Nations Development Programme, Belarus is classified as a country with high level of HDI ranking 50th among 188 countries. The Human Development Index combines three dimensions: life expectancy index, education index and GNI per capita index.

According to the Global Creativity Index 2015, Belarus ranked 37th out of 139 countries maintaining the leading position among the CIS states. The experts evaluated the countries according to three "T"s: "Talent", "Technology" and "Tolerance". Russia followed Belarus being ranked 38th. The leaders were Australia, the USA and New Zealand.

15 Nobel Prize winners have Belarusian roots.

Useful contacts:
State Committee on Science and Technology of the Republic of Belarus
www.gknt.gov.by

Ministry of Education of the Republic of Belarus
www.edu.gov.by
National Academy of Science of Belarus
www.nasb.gov.by
In the past several years Belarus has earned the reputation of a leading IT country in Eastern Europe. The prerequisites of successful development include:

- education system, training specialists in the sphere;
- high-quality IT professionals;
- reasonable prices for IT services, ideal price/performance ratio.

Besides, the Hi-Tech Park (HTP) has been established in the country, providing special business environment for IT business. The Park mainly specializes in the development and assimilation of information and communication technologies and software for the domestic and foreign markets. Its activities include 12 high-tech areas ranging from the creation of materials for micro- and nanoelectronics to aircraft, rockets and space technologies.

Useful contacts:
Belarus Hi-Tech Park  
www.park.by
Ministry of Communications and Informatization of the Republic of Belarus  
www.mpt.gov.by/ru
Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry  
www.cci.by

According to the Global Services 100 rating, the Republic of Belarus rankes 13th among the 20 leading countries in the sphere of IT outsourcing and high-tech services. Three companies with Belarusian roots entered the top 100 of the world largest companies in this sphere.

Belarus ranks 48th in the IT ranking of the UNO.

Five companies with Belarusian divisions have entered the top 100 of the Global Outsourcing 2016 list of best outsourcing service suppliers. The list is compiled by the International Association of Outsourcing Professionals (IAOP). The rating participants are not merely IT companies, but the whole range of services suppliers. Major criteria used for listing include the company's size and growth rate, services quality, innovations and corporate social responsibility.

Ten companies – Hi-Tech Park residents are included into Software Magazine’s Software 500 rating of largest software developers. The rating is topped by IBM, which is followed by Microsoft, Oracle, HP, SAP, and Apple.
The **Belpatentservice** Unitary Enterprise is a specialized organization of the Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry which provides services for economic entities over the whole range of issues in the sphere of intellectual property management in Belarus and abroad. We offer both individual services on request and complete turn-key services.

**We resolve the problems of our clients professionally, comprehensively and promptly.**

220029, Minsk, Republic of Belarus, Kommunisticheskaya St., 11, office 211
Phone: +375 17 288 11 65
www.ip-cci.by
ip@cci.by
The territory of the Republic of Belarus is divided into six regions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Urban population</th>
<th>Economically active population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brest region</td>
<td>32.8 thousand sq.km</td>
<td>1,387.0 thousand persons</td>
<td>69.8%</td>
<td>611,787</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gomel region</td>
<td>40.4 thousand sq.km</td>
<td>1,422.9 thousand persons</td>
<td>76.8%</td>
<td>619,226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grodno region</td>
<td>25.1 thousand sq.km</td>
<td>1,050.2 thousand persons</td>
<td>74.3%</td>
<td>491,292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minsk region</td>
<td>39.8 thousand sq.km</td>
<td>1,417.4 thousand persons</td>
<td>56.6%</td>
<td>693,317</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mogilev region</td>
<td>29.1 thousand sq.km</td>
<td>1,067.7 thousand persons</td>
<td>79.6%</td>
<td>469,513</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vitebsk region</td>
<td>40.1 thousand sq.km</td>
<td>1,193.6 thousand persons</td>
<td>76.8%</td>
<td>524,202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Minsk</td>
<td>348 sq.km</td>
<td>1,959.9 thousand persons</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1,079,264</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Gross regional product)

(Agricultural products)

(Industrial products)

(Regardless 2016 denomination)
Brest region

Brest region is located in the south-west of the country, in the basins of the Western Bug, the Neman and the Dnieper, borders on Poland and Ukraine.

Region advantages
- development of consumer complex, processing organizations using local raw materials;
- favourable climatic conditions.

Resources and mineral deposits:
construction stone, clay, sand, gravel, oil shales, brown coal, granite, chalk, glass-making and moulding sand, table salt, mineral water.

Production:
incandescent lamps, forming machines, limited-swing shovels, electric cookers, household electric appliances for heating and cooking, chipboard, cotton fabrics.
Agriculture specializes in the production of meat, milk, potato, corn, sugar beet and vegetables.

Export:
trade and economic relations with 124 countries

Export products:
gas stoves, milk and meat industry products, fish products, sugar, ovens, children’s toys, clothing, flagging, incandescent lamps.

Attracting investment:
- high-tech and innovative projects;
- export-oriented and import-substituting production;
- production and processing of agricultural products;
- development of infrastructure of roadside service;
- development of tourist services.

Useful links:
Brest Regional Executive Committee
www.brest-region.gov.by
Brest Branch of the BelCCI
www.ccibrest.by
Gomel region is located in the south-east of Belarus, it borders on Russia and Ukraine.  

**Region advantages:**
- highly-developed industrial area;
- largest deposits of rock salt in Europe;
- one of the highest forest cover per cent in Europe;
- significant competitive manufacturing, natural-resources, agricultural, and research-and-technology potential.

**Resources and mineral deposits:**
- oil, potassium and rock salt, brown coal, peat, construction and cap stone, glass-making and moulding sand, chalk, plaster, brick clays and clayish soils, kaolin.

**Production:**
- steel, ferrous metals, phosphate fertilizers, forage harvesters, harvesting complexes, combine harvesters, oil and associated gas, sheet glass, wallpaper, tableware.

Region’s industrial enterprises produce a significant part of gasoline, diesel fuel, cardboard, plywood, particle board.

Industry is the basis of the regional economy.

**Export:**
Gomel region organizations cooperate with trade partners from 115 countries worldwide.

**Export products:**
- metal ware, grain and forage harvesters, oil, meat and dairy products, complex chemical fertilizers, chemical fibers and articles thereof, fitments and plastic articles, glass products, mechanical engineering and metalworking products.

**Attracting investment:**
- there is a high-tech base of enterprises, operating in radio, instrument-making, engineering, electrical and cable industry branches. These companies boast spacious production areas, storage facilities, infrastructure, and a full range of engineering communications.

**Useful links:**
- Gomel Regional Executive Committee  
  www.gomel-region.by
- Gomel Branch of the BelCCI  
  www.ccigomel.by
Grodno region is located in the west of the country and borders on Poland and Lithuania.

**Region advantages:**
- region's potential is accumulated in chemical production;
- favourable climate conditions to develop agriculture and food industry.

**Resources and mineral deposits:**
- iron ores, peat, chalk, brick and tile clays, cement raw materials, silicate sands, limestone raw materials, sand and gravel materials.

**Production:**
- milk and meat production, poultry farming;
  - Grodno region economy specializes in agriculture;
  - the area also specializes in the production of caprolactam, nitrogen fertilizers, ammonia, potato, seeders, planters and transplanters, cord tire fabric, slate, cement, tobacco products.

**Export:**
Grodno region supplies its products to the markets of 120 countries.

**Export products:**
nitrogen fertilizers, caprolactam, dairy and meat products, hosiery, furniture.

**Attracting investment:**
- modernization of the enterprises, operating in food processing, chemical, woodworking, light industry, fuel, construction, and machine-building branches;
  - establishment of high-tech enterprises;
  - reconstruction and equipping of agricultural systems with modern technological machinery and equipment;
  - development of infrastructure for tourism and recreation, road service;
  - development of transport and telecommunication systems.

**Useful links:**
Grodno Regional Executive Committee  
www.region.grodno.by  
Grodno Branch of the BelCCI  
www.grotp.by
Minsk region is the central region of the Republic of Belarus bordering on all the other regions of the country.

**Region advantages:**
- developed manufacturing infrastructure;
- modern industrial organizations and communication;
- high quality of land and recreation resources;
- deposits of unique for Belarus minerals (rock phosphate);
- largest resources of cement raw materials in the country.

**Resources and mineral deposits:**
potassium and rock salt, peat, clay, sapropels, sand and gravel materials, iron ore, oil shales, mineral water, rock phosphorites, etc.

**Production:**
dump trucks, passenger cars, potash, tiles, parquet, leather goods, knitwear, pasta, sugar, mineral water. The region has a developed industry structure and close production links with the industrial complex of Minsk.

**Export:**
Minsk region exports its products to more than 120 countries worldwide.

**Export products:**
potash fertilizers, dairy and meat products.

**Attracting investment:**
- introduction of new technologies, technological equipment, which helps to enhance the quality characteristics of products and services;
- development of new products with high added value, certified by modern international standards of quality;
- maintaining and strengthening of the region’s and country’s position in traditional markets of Russia, Ukraine, the European Union, as well as the expansion of markets in foreign countries;
- expansion and diversification of distribution network organizations;
- active development of the export of all kinds of services.

**Useful links:**
Minsk Regional Executive Committee
www.minsk-region.gov.by
Minsk Branch of the BelCCI
www.tppm.by
Mogilev region

Mogilev region is located in the east of the Republic of Belarus and borders on the Russian Federation.

**Region advantages:**
- developed manufacturing infrastructure;
- modern industrial organizations and communication;
- high industrial and export potential;
- deposits of unique for Belarus minerals (rock phosphate);
- proximity to the Russian target markets.

**Resources and mineral deposits:**
- rock phosphate, cement raw materials (chalk, malmstone, cement clays and clayish soils),
- large resources of construction and silicate sands, sand and gravel mixtures, peat, sapropel, mineral water,
- the largest deposit of tripolit, characterised by high technological properties.

**Production:**
- elevators, pneumatic rubber tires, tractor trailers, tractor mowers, steel pipe, cement, slate, chemical fibers and threads.

One of the major industrial regions of Belarus. The region is a leader in the CIS in the production of self-propelled scrapers and underground trains, agricultural trailers, passenger elevators.

Main agricultural crops are cereals (barley, rye, wheat), potatoes, fodder crops, flax.

Animal breeding specializes in milk and meat production.

**Export:**
- import-export operations are carried out with 125 countries worldwide.

**Export products:**
- tires, lifts, synthetic fibers, plastic containers, cement, dairy and meat products.

**Attracting investment:**
- industrial and trade organizations are the most attractive ones for foreign investments;
- companies, specializing in mechanical engineering, woodworking, chemical industry, construction, textile and apparel industries.

**Useful links:**
- Mogilev Regional Executive Committee
  www.mogilev-region.gov.by
- Mogilev Branch of the BelCCI
  www.cci.mogilev.by
Regional opportunities

Vitebsk region

Vitebsk region is located in the north-east of the Republic of Belarus. It borders on Lithuania, Latvia, and Russia.

Region advantages:
- significant wood resources (largest amount of felling resources in the republic, which enables to actively develop the construction industry, wood-working, agriculture);
- presence of large-scale organizations producing oil products and chemical enterprises;
- significant number of knowledge-consumptive companies.

Resources and mineral deposits:
- vast deposits of dolomite, peat, sapropel, mineral water, deposits of clay.

Production:
- electricity, petrochemical products, machine tools, polyethylene, limestone and dolomite powder for liming acid soils, TV-sets, linen fabrics, shoes.

Key role in the region’s economy development belongs to industry.

Export:
- Vitebsk region exports its products to 111 countries around the world.

Export products:
- oil products, meat and dairy products, synthetic fibers and yarns, ethylene polymers, glass, shoes, insulated wires and cables.

Attracting investment:
- establishment of new modern enterprises, production and modernization of the existing ones.

Useful links:
Vitebsk Regional Executive Committee
www.vitebsk-region.gov.by
Vitebsk Branch of the BelCCI
www.cci-vitebsk.by
Minsk is the capital of the Republic of Belarus, its political, economic, scientific and cultural centre.

City advantages:
- significant industrial potential;
- developed infrastructure;
- highly-qualified personnel;
- development of knowledge-consumptive production works.

Production:
heavy trucks, tractors, buses, motorcycles, bicycles, transformers, household refrigerators and freezers, ball and roller bearings, woolen fabrics.

Economy of the city specializes in industrial production, construction, science and scientific services.

Export:
import-export operations are carried out with 189 countries of the world.

Export products:
Minsk enterprises export to foreign markets the products manufactured both in the city and in other regions of Belarus. First of all, it concerns oil, tractors, heavy trucks, refrigerators and freezers.

Attracting investment:
- over the last five years, Minsk has been a leader in the number of established organizations with foreign investment;
- priority sectors for attracting foreign investment are industrial production and projects, implementing advanced resource-saving technologies with export and import-substituting orientation;
- development of high-tech industries, especially the production of electrical and optical equipment, expansion of the range of high-tech products in other types of economic activities. Particular attention is given to the introduction of next-generation technologies, including nanotechnologies and their application to the production of automation tools, space, information and communication technologies.

Useful links:
Minsk City Executive Committee
www.minsk.gov.by
Minsk Branch of the BelCCI
www.tppm.by
The Republic of Belarus is a country with great investment potential.


Investment ratio in the country’s GDP is 31.8%.

Attraction and effective use of investments is one of the main priorities of the state investment policy of Belarus.

All sectors of our economy are open to foreign investments (except the production of weapons, narcotics and toxic substances).

Foreign investors may set up companies in Belarus with any amount of foreign investments, of any legal form, as well as their branches and representative offices.

Unprecedented measures of investment liberalization have been taken in Belarus, all the necessary legal conditions for foreign investors have been created. All investors are guaranteed equal, without discrimination, protection of rights and legitimate interests, regardless of ownership form and national status.
Tax burden for the enterprises with foreign capital has been decreased. The country has established a system of incentives, privileges and preferences for investment activities. Special legal regimes can be applied to investors in free economic zones, small and medium-sized cities, rural areas, the Hi-Tech Park, Great stone Chinese-Belarusian Industrial Park, etc.

Belarus continues the efforts to join the top 30 countries with the most favourable business conditions. The country has constantly carried out reforms aimed at the liberalization of economy and improvement of investment attractiveness.
Belarus is the best place for investment

**Advantageous economic and geographical location in the centre of Europe**

Establishing business in the territory of Belarus opens up the opportunity to supply goods to large and fast-growing markets of the European Union states, Russia, Ukraine and other CIS states. The advantages include, along with the strategic location, the membership of Belarus in the Customs Union and the Common Economic Space of Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan.

**Political, social and economic stability**

- economic stability
- political predictability
- friendly relations with the neighboring countries

**Decent living standards**

Belarus is one of the countries with high human development level, with only three rating positions separating it from the group of countries with very high human development level.

**Progressive legislation**

Belarus has created an effective legal framework for the investment business underpinned by international treaties and the national legislation.

**Unique privatization opportunities**

Belarus provides foreign companies with unique opportunities of speedy development of their business related to stepping up the privatization process in the country. Today around 70% of the country’s industrial production accrues to the governmental sector. A key prerequisite for attracting foreign investments in Belarus is the decrease in the share of the public sector and privatization of state property. This ensures the efficient use of resources and production capacity, improvement of the financial situation of organizations, increase in the economic entities investment activities. The national legislation provides various forms of participation of an investor in the privatization process: participation in the procedure of transformation of the enterprise into an open joint-stock company, the acquisition of shares of established joint stock company at auction or by tender, the purchase of the enterprise (the opportunity to purchase at a reduced price, in the amount of one base unit).

**Competitive investment and taxation conditions**

There are a number of preferential regimes in Belarus which can be of use for foreign companies, including from the point of view of their taxation planning and optimization.

**Low crime rate**

Belarus occupies the 16th place (out of 117) in the Numbeo portal's safest countries ranking. In compiling the list, the information about living conditions, including living standards and the situation in the fields of transport, health care, crime, environment, etc. was taken into consideration.
Investment

Belarus is a country of educated, highly-qualified and industrious people. Over 90% of the population have higher, secondary or basic education. A well-developed system of professional training, as well as a high level of the industry and services development enable the Belarusian workforce to work successfully in companies of any industry, be it sewing, agriculture, biotechnologies or software development.

Developed transport and logistics infrastructure
The transportation infrastructure of Belarus is represented by a broad network of motorways, railways, air routes. The thoroughfares crossing the country are the most important components of the European transportation system. Thus, Belarus is crossed by two cross-European transportation corridors, according to the international classification: No.II (Berlin–Warsaw–Minsk–Moscow) and No. IX (Russian – Finnish border – Vyborg – St Petersburg – Vitebsk – Gomel – Ukraine – Moldova – Bulgaria – Greece) with branch IXB (Gomel – Minsk – Vilnius – Klaipeda – Kaliningrad). Over 100 million tonnes of European cargoes cross Belarus’ territory annually, with 90% of the cargoes being transported between Russia and the EU. At the same time, the transit potential of Belarus has not been exhausted – the Belarusian transportation corridors are used by 25-40% of their real traffic capacity.

Direct access to the markets of the five EAEU countries (Belarus, Russia, Kazakhstan, Armenia and Kyrgyzstan)
Today companies investing in Belarus automatically enter the market of the Eurasian Economic Union. The EAEU is:
- free movement of goods, services, capital, workforce;
- a common customs territory of Belarus, Russia, Kazakhstan, Armenia and Kyrgyzstan with a single customs tariff;
- equal business conditions (including the costs of the principal energy resources);
- common rules of technical regulation, common sanitary, veterinary and phytosanitary norms.

Highly qualified workforce
Belarus is a country of educated, highly-qualified and industrious people. Over 90% of the population have higher, secondary or basic education. A well-developed system of professional training, as well as a high level of the industry and services development enable the Belarusian workforce to work successfully in companies of any industry, be it sewing, agriculture, biotechnologies or software development.
The National Agency of Investment and Privatization acts as a "one-stop shop", providing support to foreign businesses during the whole term of their investment projects implementation, including post-investment service.

The Agency is ready to assist foreign investors interested in doing business in Belarus in:

- organization of a visit to Belarus, including visa formalities;
- getting the required information about the country's investment opportunities, special regimes and benefits, state programmes of industries support and development, the procedure of making investment decisions;
- selection of investment objects (investment projects, land plots, buildings) – consulting in selection of the optimum alternative;
- collection and analysis of information about the certain investment object an investor is interested in taking into consideration the regulations and norms of undisclosed information protection;
- organization of the meetings required to make an investment decision, including with market regulators, representatives of sector ministries, local authorities, key players of the market and potential partners;
- resolution of the issues arising during implementation of an investment project (solution provider).

The Agency is also ready to render post-project support (aftercare).

The services are free of charge for foreign investors.

Useful links:
National Agency of Investment and Privatization
www.investinbelarus.by
10 FAQs about starting a business

1. What projects are offered to investors?

A potential investor can search for available investment projects in the NAIP’s database or address the Agency.

2. In which cases do investors receive governmental support?

Governmental support and incentives are provided in accordance with the legislation as soon as the investment activities are performed:

- in the territory of medium, small towns, in the countryside;
- in the case of entering into an investment agreement with the Republic of Belarus;
- in the High-Tech Park;
- in the Great Stone Chinese-Belarusian Industrial Park;
- in the territory of free economic zones.

3. How can a potential investor visit Belarus to study investment opportunities?

Foreign citizens can receive information about visa support at the diplomatic missions and consulates of the Republic of Belarus in the countries of their citizenship.

The list of documents and other detailed information in relation to visa support of foreign citizens is available on the web site of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus.

An investor may apply for a visa:

- of type C – short-term and valid for 90 days, issued, among others, for a business trip;
- of type D – long-term, valid up to one year, providing the right to stay for up to 90 days unless otherwise provided for by the international treaties of the Republic of Belarus.

A visa may be issued to support business ties.
The citizens of the following countries may visit the Republic of Belarus without obtaining a visa: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Cuba (up to 30 days), Ecuador (up to 30 days), Georgia, Israel (up to 90 days), Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Macedonia (in the presence of private invitation or travel voucher), Moldova, Mongolia, Montenegro (up to 30 days with the presence of private invitation or travel voucher), Qatar (up to 30 days), Russia, Serbia (up to 30 days), Tajikistan, Turkey (up to 30 days), Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (up to 90 days).

The foreign investors who have invested at least one hundred and fifty thousand euros into investment objects on the territory of the Republic of Belarus can apply for a permanent residence permit in the Republic of Belarus.

4. Which forms of legal entities' incorporation are more popular for doing business in Belarus?

The most widespread and convenient for doing business for foreign investors on the territory of Belarus are the following legal forms of commercial organizations:
- limited liability company (LLC);
- unitary company (Private Enterprise);
- closed joint-stock company (SA).

5. How to form a company in the Republic of Belarus?

The companies are registered in Belarus on the day of application on "one-stop shop" basis. There are five steps to the company registration:
- check the availability and register the name of the company;
- find an office and determine the place of business;
- take a formal decision on incorporation and prepare company bylaws;
- form the authorized capital (fund) of the company;
- submit the documents for state registration.

6. What is needed to set up a representation office of a foreign company in Belarus?

A representation office may be set up upon authorization of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus.

Setting up procedures and regular activities of foreign companies' representation offices in Belarus are carried out by the MFA's Foreign Representations Coordination Department.

7. What are the main taxes for businesses in Belarus?

The more detailed information about taxation and other obligatory payments (their size) is available at the website of the Ministry for Taxes and Duties of the Republic of Belarus.

There are several taxation regimes in Belarus including standard tax regime and special regimes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form of company</th>
<th>Number of participants (natural and legal persons)</th>
<th>Minimal capital requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Limited Liability Company</td>
<td>From 2 to 50</td>
<td>There are no minimum requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unitary Enterprise</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>There are no minimum requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closed Joint Stock Company</td>
<td>From 2 to 50</td>
<td>100 base units (approximately 1,250 US dollars)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8. Is it possible to acquire ownership of land in Belarus?

There is a private land ownership in Belarus and the citizens of the Republic of Belarus, non-governmental legal persons of the Republic of Belarus, foreign countries and international organizations may acquire land according to the legislation of Belarus.

Foreign citizens, stateless persons can inherit the land which was privately owned by their relatives unless otherwise provided for by the legislation.

9. How much does it cost to rent office premises?

The average rental rate including VAT per month for office space in business centres in Minsk in euro per square meter is as follows: class A – 22, class B – 14, class C – 9. The main demand for office space is concentrated in the price range of 10-15 euros.

10. What is the average salary in Belarus?

The nominal average monthly salary as of January 1, 2016 is BYR 6,551,585 million (regardless 2016 denomination) (about US$ 350).

Useful links:
National Agency of Investment and Privatization
www.investinbelarus.by
Ministry of Taxes and Duties of the Republic of Belarus
www.nalog.gov.by

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### Taxation in Belarus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Taxation Category</th>
<th>Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Profit tax</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital gains tax</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profit taxation of branches while transferring to the head organization</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carriage charge, freight (including demurrage and other payments arising from transport) in connection with the implementation of international transportation, as well as for the provision of freight forwarding services</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income from debt of any kind, including income on loans, yields, issue terms of which provide the receipt of income in the form of interest (discount rate), income from the use of temporarily free funds on the bank accounts of the Republic of Belarus</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dividend yields</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income from royalties, income from licenses and other income according to the list defined by the legislation</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value-added tax</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Real estate tax</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Required premium</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compulsory social insurance in case of retirement, disability and survivors (pension insurance)</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obligatory insurance payments in case of temporary disability, pregnancy and childbirth, etc.</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Free Economic Zones (FEZs)

Free economic zones (FEZs) provide the enterprises with an opportunity to operate in special favourable conditions.

The FEZ residents are exempt from:

- own product profit tax within 5 years after profit is declared, upon the expiration of 5 years, the profit tax is paid in the amount of 50% of the normal standard (the reduced rate shall not exceed 12%);
- real estate tax on buildings and structures located in the territory of FEZs;
- state tax for issuance to foreign citizens and persons without citizenship special permits for employment in the Republic of Belarus;
- land tax for the plots of land provided to the residents registered after January 1, 2012 for construction of real estate objects needed for the investment project implementation during the period of design and construction of such objects, but not exceeding 5-years' period after the abovementioned registration.

Besides, financing of expenses on creation of engineering and transport infrastructure required for the implementation of the investment project of the resident of the FEZ with declared volume of investments in the amount equivalent to a sum exceeding 10 mln euros, is carried out at the expense of the funds stipulated in the State Investment Program and in local budgets for the next financial year for the respective FEZ, on a priority basis.

There are six free economic zones in the territory of Belarus:
"Brest"  www.fez.brest.by
"Gomel-Raton"  www.gomelraton.com
"Grodnoinvest"  www.grodnoinvest.com
"Minsk"  www.fezminsk.by
"Vitebsk"  www.fez-vitebsk.com
"Mogilev"  www.fezmogilev.by

Hi-Tech Park

Companies operating in the field of information technologies and developing business in the Republic of Belarus in this area can benefit from a preferential tax regime in the Hi-Tech Park. HTP resident companies are registered according to the extraterritorial principle of registration.

Residents are exempt from:

- income tax;
- value-added tax;
- offshore tax on dividends;
- real estate tax on the buildings located in the territory of the HTP;
- land tax for the construction period, but not more than for three years;
- customs payments.

Individual income received from the residents is subject to income tax at the rate of 9%.

Currently, the HTP residents are 152 companies engaged in software development and providing IT services to clients from 55 countries.

www.park.by

"Great stone" Industrial Park

The "Great stone" Industrial park is a territorial entity of approximately 80 sq.km with a special legal status for the provision of comfortable conditions for doing business.

The industrial park in Belarus offers to investors:

Preferential taxation by formula "10+10": exemption from all corporate taxes for 10 years from the date of registration as a Park resident and reduction of the effective tax rate by 50% for the next 10 years of activity in the Park.

By formula "10+10" Park residents are exempt from:

- income tax in respect of profits derived from the sale of own-made goods (works, services) manufactured in the Park;
- property tax on buildings and facilities located in the territory of the Park;
• land tax in respect of privately owned land plots in the territory of the Park.

Park residents exemption from customs duties and VAT on goods imported to Belarus for use in investment projects implementation in the Park.

Rate of personal income tax for employees of companies operating in the Park is fixed and comprises only 9%.

Park residents, as well as foreign employees are exempt from compulsory insurance contributions from their wages fund. Mandatory insurance contributions are not charged from income of Park residents' employees with Belarusian citizenship to a part of income in case such a part exceeds one-time amount of the average wage in the country.

Exemption from payment of fees for issuance, renewal of permits for attracting foreign labour power, special permits for employment in Belarus, for issuance of permits for temporary residence in Belarus.

In full VAT deduction paid at acquisition of goods (works, services, property rights) used for design, building and equipping of buildings and facilities in the Park.

Exemption from tax on dividend income accrued for the founders for 5 years from the year of gross income origin of a Park resident.

Tax rate on income of foreign companies without permanent representation in Belarus according to royalty accrued by Park residents as a reward for know-how, licenses, patents, utility models, process comprises 5%.

www.industrialpark.by

Medium-sized and small towns, rural areas

Commercial organizations located in medium and small towns, rural areas producing goods (works, services) in their territory are exempt within seven years since the date of state registration from:

• income tax payments for the sale of goods (works, services) of own production;
• real estate tax on the cost of capital structures (buildings, constructions).

Similar tax incentives on income tax and estate tax are provided for separate subdivisions (branches).

Investment agreement

Investment agreement is one of the possible forms of public-private partnership. Investor receives additional guarantees and preferences through signing such an agreement. The preferences include:

• simplification of the procedure of getting a land plot, implying the right to conclude a contract of lease of a land plot without holding an auction;
• exemption from import customs duties and value added tax on technical equipment (accessories and spare parts thereto) to be used in the territory of the Republic of Belarus within the framework of the investment project implementation;
• exemption from the compensation of losses of agricultural and/or forestry production, caused by the seizure of lands for implementation of the investment project;
• exemption from the state tax for issuance to foreign citizens and persons without citizenship special permits for employment in the Republic of Belarus;
• exemption from target fees to the local budgets.

The legislation of the Republic of Belarus provides the possibility of additional individual benefits and preferences, taking into account the project specifics.
International Arbitration Court at the BelCCI

- Local disputes proceedings
- International disputes proceedings

220029, Minsk, Kommunisticheskaya St., 11, office 309, 320
Phone: +375 17 288 21 02, 288 20 76
iac@cci.by
Public holidays:
Constitution Day – 15 March
Day of Unity of the Peoples of Belarus and Russia – 2 April
Victory Day – 9 May
Day of the State Coat of Arms and Flag – second Sunday of May
Independence Day (Republic Day) – 3 July

Republican holidays:
New Year – 1 January
Day of the Defender of the Fatherland and the Armed Forces of the Republic of Belarus – 23 February

Emergency numbers
Ministry of Emergency Situations – 101
Militia (police) – 102
Emergency medical services – 103
Rescue service – 112

Transport
Taxi – 135
Bus station information centre – 114
Railway station information centre – 105
Booking of railway tickets – 151
Airport information centre – 106

What to bring from Belarus
Natural Belarusian flax and articles from it
Slutsk belts
Various souvenirs made of golden straw
Ceramics

Central European Time Zone:
GMT +3

Line voltage: 220V

Public holidays:
Women’s Day – 8 March
Labor Day – 1 May
October Revolution Day – 7 November

Religious holidays:
Orthodox Christmas – 7 January
Easter – according to the Orthodox and Catholic calendars
Radunitsa – by the Orthodox calendar
Memorial Day – 2 November
Catholic Christmas – 25 December

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What to bring from Belarus
Natural Belarusian flax and articles from it
Slutsk belts
Various souvenirs made of golden straw
Ceramics

Central European Time Zone:
GMT +3

Line voltage: 220V
State administration bodies

Ministry of Agriculture and Food
220030, Minsk, Kirova St., 15
Phone: +375 17\327-3751
www.mshp.minsk.by

Ministry of Architecture and Construction
220048, Minsk, Myasnikova St., 39
Phone: +375 17\327-1934
www.mas.by

Ministry of Communications and Informatization
220050, Minsk, Nezavisimosti Ave., 10
Phone: +375 17\287-8706
www.mpt.gov.by

Ministry of Culture
220004, Minsk, Pobediteley Ave., 11
Phone: +375 17\203-7574
www.kultura.by

Ministry of Economy
220030, Minsk, Bersona St., 14
Phone: +375 17\222-6048
www.economy.gov.by

Ministry of Education
220010, Minsk, Sovetskaya St., 9
Phone: +375 17\327-4736
www.edu.gov.by

Ministry of Energy
220030, Minsk, K.Marksa St., 14
Phone: +375 17\218-2102
www.minenergo.gov.by

Ministry of Finance
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www.minfin.gov.by

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www.mlh.by

Ministry of Health
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www.minzdrav.gov.by

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www.minprom.gov.by

Ministry of Information
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www.mininform.gov.by

Ministry of Justice
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www.minjust.by

Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection
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Phone: +375 17\200-6691
www.minpriroda.gov.by

Ministry of Sports and Tourism
220030, Minsk, Kirova St., 8, building 2
Phone: +375 17\226-1959
www.mst.by

Ministry of Taxes and Duties
220010, Minsk, Sovetskaya St., 9
Phone: +375 17\229-7911
www.nalog.gov.by

Ministry of Trade
220030, Minsk, Kirova St., 8, building 1
Phone: +375 17\327-4802
www.mintorg.gov.by

Ministry of Transport and Communications
220029, Minsk, Chicherina St., 21
Phone: +375 17\334-1152
www.mintrans.gov.by

State Border Committee
220050, Minsk, Volodarskogo St., 24
Phone: +375 17\327-7003
www.gpk.gov.by
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Contact information</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>State Customs Committee</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>220007, Minsk, Mogilevskaya St., 45/1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone: +375 17\1218-9000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.gtk.gov.by">www.gtk.gov.by</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>State Committee for Standardization</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>220053, Minsk, Starovilensky Trakt St., 93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone: +375 17\1233-5213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.gosstandart.gov.by">www.gosstandart.gov.by</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>State Committee on Property</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>220005, Minsk, Krasnozvezdny Lane, 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone: +375 17\1288-1019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.gki.gov.by">www.gki.gov.by</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>State Committee on Science and Technology</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>220072, Minsk, Akademicheskaya St., 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone: +375 17\1294-9244</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.gknt.gov.by">www.gknt.gov.by</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>State Military Industrial Committee</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>220114, Minsk, Nezavisimost Ave., 115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone: +375 17\1280-9100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.vpk.gov.by">www.vpk.gov.by</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Belarusian Production and Trade Concern of Forestry, Woodworking and Pulp and Paper Industry</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>220030, Minsk, K.Marksa St., 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone: +375 17\1327-4483</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.bellesbumprom.by">www.bellesbumprom.by</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Belarusian Republican Union of Consumer Societies</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>220004, Minsk, Pobediteley Ave., 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone: +375 17\1226-8050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.bks.by">www.bks.by</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Belarusian State Concern of Food Industry</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>220006, Minsk, Aranskaya St., 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone: +375 17\1285-0396</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.bgp.by">www.bgp.by</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Belarusian State Concern for Oil and Chemistry</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>220116, Minsk, Dzerzhinskogo Ave., 73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone: +375 17\1269-0101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.belnftekhim.by">www.belnftekhim.by</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Belarusian State Light Industry Concern</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>220050, Minsk, K.Tsetkin St., 16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phone: +375 17\1200-3065</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.bellegprom.by">www.bellegprom.by</a></td>
</tr>
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<th><strong>Regional executive bodies</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Brest Regional Executive Committee</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>224006, Brest, Lenina St., 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone: +375 162\1219-666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.brest-region.by">www.brest-region.by</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gomel Regional Executive Committee</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>246050, Gomel, Lenina Ave., 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone: +375 232\1754-520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.gomel-region.gov.by">www.gomel-region.gov.by</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grodno Regional Executive Committee</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>230023, Grodno, Ozheshko St., 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone: +375 152\1723-190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.grodno-region.gov.by">www.grodno-region.gov.by</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minsk Regional Executive Committee</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>220030, Minsk, Engelsa St., 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone: +375 17\1500-4125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.minsk-region.gov.by">www.minsk-region.gov.by</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mogilev Regional Executive Committee</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>212030, Mogilev, Pervomaiskaya St., 71, Seat of the Local Councils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone: +375 222\1328-059</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.region.mogilev.by">www.region.mogilev.by</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vitebsk Regional Executive Committee</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>210010, Vitebsk, Gogolya St., 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone: +375 212\1425-757</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.vitebsk-region.gov.by">www.vitebsk-region.gov.by</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minsk City Executive Committee</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>220030, Minsk, Nezavisimost Ave., 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone: +375 17\1218-0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.minsk.gov.by">www.minsk.gov.by</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diplomatic corps in Belarus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| **Embassy of the Republic of Armenia**  
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Phone: +375 17\297-9257 | **Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany**  
220034, Minsk, Zakharova St., 26  
Phone: +375 17\217-5900 |
| **Embassy of the Republic of Austria**  
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Phone: +375 17\328-3584 | **Embassy of Hungary**  
220034, Minsk, Platonova St., 1b  
Phone: +375 17\233-9168 |
| **Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan**  
220113, Minsk, Starovilensky Trakt St., 41a  
Phone: +375 17\300-3759 | **Embassy of the Republic of India**  
220040, Minsk, Sobinova St., 63  
Phone: +375 17\262-9399 |
| **Embassy of the Federative Republic of Brazil**  
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Phone: +375 17\210-4790 | **Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran**  
220053, Minsk, Starovilenskiy Trakt St., 41a  
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| **Embassy of the Republic of Bulgaria**  
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Phone: +375 17\328-6558 | **Embassy of the Republic of Iraq**  
220131, Minsk, M.Bogdanovicha St., 267/29  
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Phone: +375 17\285-3682 | **Embassy of the State of Israel**  
220033, Minsk, Partizansky Ave., 6a  
Phone: +375 17\330-2500 |
| **Embassy of the Republic of Cuba**  
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Phone: +375 17\200-0383 | **Embassy of the Italian Republic**  
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| **Embassy of the Czech Republic**  
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Phone: +375 17\226-5244 | **Embassy of Japan**  
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| **Embassy of the Republic of Ecuador**  
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Phone: +375 17\240-5018 | **Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan**  
220029, Minsk, Pobediteley Ave., 67  
Phone: +375 17\276-0110 |
| **Embassy of the Republic of Estonia**  
220034, Minsk, Platonova St., 1b  
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220123, Minsk, Bogdanovicha St., 82, 9  
Phone: +375 17\331-2564 |
| **Embassy Subdivision of the Republic of Finland**  
220030, Minsk, Revolutionsnaya St., 15  
Phone: +375 17\329-1700 | **Embassy of the Republic of Korea**  
220035, Minsk, Pobediteley Ave., 59, 5 floor  
Phone: +375 17\306-0147 |
| **Embassy of the French Republic**  
220030, Minsk, Svobody Square, 11  
Phone: +375 17\229-1800 | **Embassy of the Kyrgyz Republic**  
220053, Minsk, Starovilenskaya St., 57  
Phone: +375 17\334-9117 |
| **Embassy of Georgia**  
220030, Minsk, Svobody Square, 4  
Phone: +375 17\327-6193 | **Embassy of the Republic of Latvia**  
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Phone: +375 17\217-6491

Embassy of the Order of Malta
220034, Minsk, Zakharova St., 28
Phone: +375 17\284-3369

Embassy of the Republic of Moldova
220030, Minsk, Belorussskaya St., 2
Phone: +375 17\289-1441

Embassy of Islamic Republic of Pakistan
220030, Minsk, Kirova St., 18
Phone: +375 17\229-7210

Embassy of Palestine
220040, Minsk, Olesheva St., 61
Phone: +375 17\237-1087

Embassy of the Republic of Poland
220034, Minsk, Zm.Byaduli St., 11
Phone: +375 17\388-5201

Embassy of Romania
220012, Minsk, Kaliningradsky Lane, 12
Phone: +375 17\292-7399

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Phone: +375 17\334-5497

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Phone: +375 17\222-7122

Embassy of the Republic of Serbia
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Phone: +375 17\284-2984

Embassy of the Slovak Republic
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Phone: +375 17\285-2999

Embassy Subdivision of South Africa
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Phone: +375 17\329-1700

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Phone: +375 17\327-1383

Embassy of Turkmenistan
220040, Minsk, Nekrasova St., 90
Phone: +375 17\335-2451

Embassy of Ukraine
220002, Minsk, Starovilenskaya St., 51
Phone: +375 17\383-1989

Embassy of the United Arab Emirates
220018, Minsk, vil.Medvezhino, Privlekatelnaya St., 6, 8
Phone: +375 17\313-2601

Embassy of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
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Phone: +375 17\229-8200

Embassy of the United States of America
220002, Minsk, Starovilenskaya St., 46
Phone: +375 17\210-1283

Embassy of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela
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Phone: +375 17\284-5099

Embassy of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam
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austria@mfa.gov.by
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www.moldova.mfa.gov.by

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