

Industry driving economy forward

Economy Ministry acknowledges positive dynamics of growth of production figures in the country

By Alexander Burmistrov

The Economy Ministry notes that, in the first quarter on 2011, figures almost equalled those from the pre-crisis year of 2008. GDP growth reached 10.9 percent (against the similar period of 2010). Among the major 'drivers' are industry (3.7 percent), trade, repair of cars, household appliances and personal use goods (3.6 percent) and construction (1.7 percent). The spheres of construction and trade have seen the largest growth of gross value added (by 30.3 and 20.6 percent respectively).

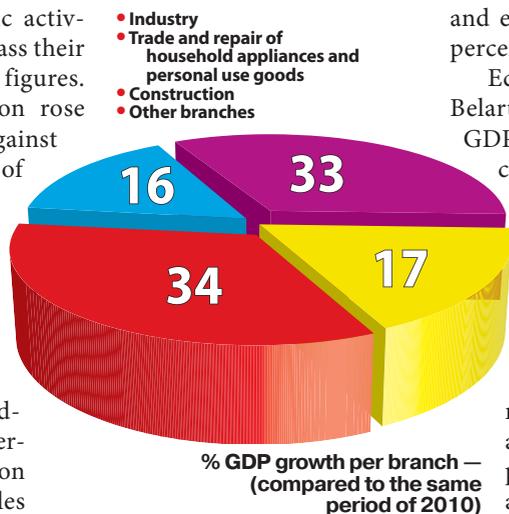
The first months of 2011 were characterised by

a high pace of industrial production growth (by 11.8 percent) — much owing to increased growth in the processing industry (114 percent). Meanwhile, most spheres of economic activity managed to surpass their annual prognosed figures. Industrial production rose by 111.8 percent (against the first quarter of 2010), the ore-mining industry — by 113.9 percent, food production — by 109.9 percent, metallurgy — by 117.2 percent, machine building — by 114.9 percent and production of transport vehicles



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Construction branch steadily leads for growing production figures



and equipment — by 114.9 percent.

Economists note that Belarus' trend to raise GDP's material intensity continues; from January-March, this rose 0.3 percent. The largest growth was registered in industry (accounting for a third of Belarus' GDP): ore-mining (0.5 percent) and processing (0.2 percent). Production and distribution of gas

and water saw 0.4 percent growth. The trend is the result of rising prices for imported raw materials, products and fuel.

Industrial growth in early 2011 was accompanied by a reduced ratio of ready products and average monthly industrial production volumes. In comparison to those registered on April 1st, 2010, this figure fell from a quarter to half. In turn, industrial labour productivity rose 10.4 percent — due to the optimisation

of the number of staff and growing monthly volumes per worker.

Export of services was the most optimistic branch last year, with figures continuing to strengthen in 2011. From January-February 2011, the foreign trade balance was positive, standing at \$309m. However, growth against the same period of 2010 is not so large: just \$6.6m. This mostly comprised computer (\$13.6m), business (\$14.5m) and construction (\$2.8m) services.

Co-operation could be further strengthened

By Anatoly Ivanov

Belarusian-Lithuanian Economic Forum in Druskininkai attracts attention

Lithuania's Vice-Minister for Transport and Communications, Rimvydas Gradauskas, has noted that Lithuanian entrepreneurs are showing great interest in the Belarusian market and joint projects. He sees the Belarusian market as convenient due to its logistical accessibility and scale: Belarus' population is triple that of Lithuania. The Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Lithuania to Belarus, H.E. Mr. Edminas Bagdonas, is in agreement.

To attract Belarusian manufacturers of cars and tractors, Klaipeda port has cut tariffs for shipping large wheeled machinery, with a similar approach applied to potash fertilisers. As a result, cargo flow from Belarus has considerably increased. The Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Belarus to Lithuania, H.E. Mr.

Vladimir Drazhin, notes that Belarus expects a wave of activity from Lithuanian businessmen, with transport and privatisation projects being priorities.

Many other projects are possible, with some being quite unexpected. Bronislovas Lubys, President of the Lithuanian Confederation of Industrialists, explains, "One project deals with the purchase of German surpluses of natural gas, with onward transportation to Belarus and Lithuania. A transport network for this already exists, as do specialists. Financing is available, with talks underway. It could be launched in the near future."

Mr. Lubys tells us that Belarusian-Lithuanian turnover currently stands at \$1bn, but could rise further. Belarus' Deputy Economy Minister, Anton Kudasov, stresses that Belarus plans to join the top thirty global states for having an attractive investment policy and conditions for doing business. This would inspire business co-operation with neighbours.

Programme concepts ready

Belarus and Russia to expand use of supercomputers



'SKIF' supercomputers used in many technological branches

By Olga Pimenova

Our two states' scientists have developed new Union State programmes for the design and use of supercomputer technologies — entitled 'SKIF-NEDRA', 'SKIF-SOYUZ' and 'ORBISS'. They envisage considerable expansion of the use of supercomputer technologies in the real

sector of the economy.

'SKIF-NEDRA' aims to enhance energy security within the Union State by developing and utilising high capacity information technologies for use in geological exploration and mining. A new series of supercomputers will be designed, alongside high-performance software for processing ge-

ology and geophysics data, for use in modelling. "The programme will considerably reduce our reliance on foreign oil and gas providers, while providing domestic companies with a competitive edge in this segment," explains the Executive Director of the Union State 'SKIF-GRID' programme, Anatoly Krishtofik. The latter is also a

member of the United Institute of Informatics Problems of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus.

The 'SKIF-SOYUZ' programme is to create unified cyber-infrastructure. "This is a new step in the development and use of service-oriented supercomputer technologies, aiming to match world levels of research in the field of highly productive computing and application," the specialist stresses. The introduction of basic cyber-infrastructure will be achieved via a network of supercomputer centres, database systems, and communication and technology systems.

Under the 'ORBISS' programme, specialised data processing centres for industrial enterprises will be created, alongside united infrastructure for the supercomputer industry.

Flaxseed oil goes on sale

By Darya Inina

First domestic flaxseed oil soon to appear in country's outlet chain

Lidlen JSC is ready to sell flaxseed oil to Bela-

rusians, with a specialised automated line already installed at one of the enterprise's workshops, situated in the Lida District's Dorzhi village. It is designed to process flaxseed,

while producing five hundred 0.33 litre plastic bottles hourly.

Belarus has never before manufactured flaxseed oil in such volumes, obliging customers to buy

imported goods. Lida's company plans to conquer the domestic market within a short time, while also exporting its flaxseed oil. Profitability could stand at 35 percent.