

# Divin's extra quality textiles

Brest's Kobrin District — using German capital — exports worldwide

By Yuri Chernyakevich

Every company has its own unique history, which is closely intermixed with the economic fortunes of its home country. The internationally respected Langheinrich was set up almost two centuries ago and its 'biography' is truly interesting. Georg Langheinrich established a weaving factory in Schlitz, Germany in 1832. In just a short period, the company had become highly successful. After quickly conquering the German market it soon occupied its place in Europe. Today, Langheinrich's table and bed linen still are still known for their top grade yarn and bright colours, their quality stitching and rich decoration. Its napkins and tablecloths are loved by fashionable restaurants like the Hilton, Ritz and Ambassador hotels, taking the Langheinrich range to over 30 countries worldwide.

Interestingly, Belarus is directly connected to this international firm. In 2005, its affiliate, Langheinrich Konfektion Bel, opened in the village of Divin (in Brest Region's Kobrin District). This venue was chosen intentionally, as a large sewing factory had previously operated in Divin, and locating here would benefit the local community. The old premises was in need of repair, but was ideal for production purposes. Moreover, the German specialists were convinced

that Divin's former seamstresses (mostly unemployed by then) were true professionals. The Kobrin District Executive Committee also helped to attract the German investors, creating all possible conditions for a positive decision, including the asphaltting of around 1km of the road that connected the company premises to the highway.

Work at Langheinrich Konfektion Bel began, and in under a year they had repaired the premises, dispatched and assembled the new German equipment and had begun to manufacture the first batch of goods that met the company's quality standards. Importantly, the sewing facility created enough jobs to ease the unemployment problem in Divin and the surrounding villages.

Langheinrich Konfektion Bel is a well-run company. As I saw when visiting Divin's workshops recently, all its processes are well developed. Ten minutes are enough to get an understanding of each element, as each specialist's work is well established. Around 150 Belarusian seamstresses work with the German fabric, cutting it out, sewing and packaging the finished items. All the products are then sent to the head company which distributes them globally. The quality of the fabric defines the product, but advanced German and Japanese sew-



Products made by Divin's seamstresses arrive in European hotels

ing equipment also add to the final success.

In the first seven months of 2013, the Divin based facility dispatched around 3 million pieces to its German customer, generating an income of over 500,000 Euros. Locally made napkins and tablecloths are not only exported, but also decorate cafes and hotels across Belarus. Moreover, the company hopes to deliver its bed linen to Minsk's hotels for the

forthcoming 2014 Ice Hockey World Championship.

The facility never stops working, as orders are coming steadily, justifying the German company's risky investment. As Langheinrich Konfektion Bel's Director, Valentina Shugai, who has been acknowledged the Brest Region's best entrepreneur several times, believes. "I consider we have all grounds to assert that our production is a success," she

says. "We've conquered our heads' trust and they have no doubt that all planned work will be qualitatively done by our Belarusian seamstresses in time. Moreover, we apply a 'piece plus-bonus' system and each employee understands that their profit depends on their efforts. We've created truly comfortable working conditions. All our workshops are clean, and special rest rooms are available. As I see, it's quite fine to

work here."

Of course, Langheinrich Konfektion Bel faces challenges, as any company does. However, the employees spot the potential problems and quickly find efficient and effective solutions. Goals for further development are outlined, and there are no doubts that the success of this company, backed by German capital, is no longer a game of chance, but a solid fact.

## High reliability at reasonable price

20 Belarusian trolley buses, assembled in Moldova, to service Chisinau

By Igor Svetlov

"By late September, 12 Belarusian trolley buses — assembled in Chisinau this year — will be servicing city routes; another 8 will join by late 2013," explains the Director of the Chisinau Electric Transport Department, Gheorghe Morgoci.

Two years ago, Chisinau bought 120 trolley buses from Belkommunmash, following the company winning an international tender. The city now needs to replace over 150 obsolete vehicles and, with this in mind, an agreement has been signed to set up assembly of Belarusian trolley buses in the Moldovan capital, with the participation of Belkommunmash.

Work began last July and contributed to the de-



Belkommunmash trolley buses for Chisinau

velopment of industrial-technological co-operation between the Minsk company and Chisinau's Electric Transport Department. The first 'joint' vehicle hit the streets of Chisinau on

July 17th, 2012 and, last year, ten vehicles were assembled. In 2013, the city Mayoral Office has allocated around 3bn Euros to produce another 20 trolley buses.

It's expected that up to 50 Belarusian trolley buses will be assembled in Chisinau in future, with staff specially trained in Minsk. Produced on a modernised line, they'll bear a Belaru-

sian trademark and will allow full modernisation of electric transport in Chisinau and Balti. Moreover, modern Belkommunmash trolley buses may then be sold successfully across Europe — taking into account Moldova's preferences in trading with the EU.

Belarusian vehicles produced in Moldova consume 35 percent less electricity than old models, while seating more passengers and producing 22 percent more profit. New vehicles will cover an extra 800km annually in their lifetime, compared to old models, and meet all European standards, providing good value for money. They are reliable and ensure modern design and enhanced comfort for passengers and drivers, including passengers with limited mobility.

## Virtual purchases

Almost six thousand e-shops operating in the country

"The number of e-shops in Belarus is actively increasing. Today, about 5,960 e-shops are recorded in the trade register — an increase of almost 1,000 since the beginning of the year," noted Irina Baryshnikova, Head of Department of the Ministry of Trade of Belarus at a recent press conference.

The decision to register internet shops was made in 2010. Irina Baryshnikova stated that today, about 70 percent of all e-shops are situated in Minsk. On the whole, most of them specialize in the sale of different household products (42 percent) including home appliances, clothes and shoes. The representative of the Ministry of Trade has noted that, since 2012, the assortment of e-shops has been widened. They also tend to actively cooperate with Belarusian manufacturers.