

Migration has own statistics

About 15,000 foreigners take permanent residence in the Republic of Belarus annually

By Maria Solonovich

If you visit a Belarusian construction site, factory or agricultural enterprise, you may see a variety of ethnicities, although far fewer than you would in Russia.

According to some calculations, there may be from 0.5 to 5 million illegal migrants working in Russia. They come in such numbers that they perhaps feel the separation from their homeland less acutely, with so many of their countrymen around. Of course, the situation is far from ideal, and can lead to criminality, as has recently been heard of in the Moscow micro-district of Biryulevo.

Belarus lacks as many foreigners, despite being tolerant and welcoming. As of the middle of this year, about 150,000 migrants held residence permits: most citizens of Russia, Ukraine and Lithuania. Just 12-14 foreigners take permanent residence in Belarus annually. The Head of the Institute of Economics at the National Academy of Sciences, Alexander Luchenok, tells us, "The majority of foreign workers are



Refugees from Afghanistan work at Minsk enterprise for bed-linen production Mir Komforta

taking the place of former highly skilled local experts, who have gone to Russia in search of 'easy' money.

I'm not sure that guests from Vietnam or Central Asia can replace our builders fully."

Of course, personnel shortages need to be filled, even when low-skilled workers, in theory, take cur-

rency out of the country. In addition, foreign workers tend to arrive with their families, who then receive state support. The need to fill jobs exists not just in the capital, to which people are more readily attracted in search of well-paid employment and good living standards. In fact, there are plenty of towns country-wide in need of workers; they may open new, profitable and unique enterprises but many of their workers have already left and it's difficult to attract them back again.

Annually, 1,900-2,200 people are deported — at a cost of nearly \$80,000 last year. Some are foreign students who have no desire to return to their homeland, despite being expelled for poor progress. It happens with some regularity, requiring the institute to apply for a court order. Foreign communities do what they can to help but, in most cases, it falls to the state to pay for the deportee's airfare: perhaps to China, Vietnam or Nigeria. After dispatch, the person in question may not return for up to 10 years and after deportation — up to 5 years; the established minimum is one year.

Visiting world-famous English detective

By Vladimir Samsonov

Sherlock Holmes' house to be built in Orsha in coming spring

The land plot for the fascinating project is just 2km from the main avenue in Orsha, with building to begin next March-April. The design is likely to encompass a whole tourist complex, including a hotel, souvenir shop and an old-fashioned British style pub, as well as the house-museum — recreated by architect Polina Ryabchevskaya.

The modern day Baker Street home is to feature the well-known rooms of the famous literary detective and his faithful friend, Doctor Watson, as well as those of his trusty and long-suffering housekeeper, Mrs. Hudson. The heart of the house is the light and spacious drawing room, where Holmes, sitting by the fireplace, often solved vital aspects of the crimes he was commissioned to investigate. The design even includes a cellar (with modern day boiler-room, garage and gym).

Holiday stemming from our childhood

By Sergey Fiodorov

Christmas charity ball includes book auction as part of New Year Our Children event, at National Library of Belarus

The ball and auction were organised by the Information Ministry jointly with the Union of Publishers and Distributors of Printing Media. The event was part of Minsk's effort to promote itself to receive the World Book Capital title in 2017. It is keen to encourage reading nationwide, to improve citizens' intellectual potential.

The New Year charity campaign — *Our Children* — is being held in Belarus from early December 2013 until January 10th 2014. During the event, the heads of Republican state run public authorities and local executive authorities visit children's boarding schools, custodial and foster families, family-type orphanages and families raising handicapped children.



On ball — with a book

As is traditional, the New Year holiday at the Palace of the Republic, held in late December, will become the central event of the campaign, inviting over 2,000 handicapped children from across the country.

There is no need for human captain on high-speed pilotless cutter

By Marina Ivanova

About a year ago, Belarus made a powerful technological breakthrough, rivalling the progress of superpowers in introducing its first pilotless aircraft: Sterkh-BM. Success is now being consolidated, with a pre-production multi-purpose marine model being presented at Tsnyanskoye Reservoir, near Minsk. It is the first such within the CIS.

The project is the result of international co-operation by companies from Belarus, Russia and China, with the Shanghai Organisation of Co-operation giving particular support. Work was divided equally, with a Russian company making and designing the craft, using innovative polymeric materials supplied by China. Belarusian Kvand Intelligent Systems LLC provided the software and a system of automatic control for the pilotless vessel.

The new craft uses modern technologies of composite shipbuilding,



Foreign experts are already interested in pilotless cutter

providing high operational characteristics, suiting its operation in even the most harsh of conditions. The developers assert that mass production is possible for the high-speed pilotless cutter, which is designed for use in patrolling harbours and similar sites, providing visual and hydro-acoustic data, as well as ecological monitoring. It can be used in rescue operations and in security work, such as clearing mines and

detecting submarines. The vessel is barely 6m in length and 2m wide and is designed to have extra equipment attached. While being an independent system, it has automatic, semi-automatic and manual control settings and can operate even 360km from the coast, over a period of 120 hours, using a satellite data link. Its maximum speed is 55 knots.

Negotiations with two countries have begun, to discuss terms of sale.

Energy of the sun saving money

By Andrey Fiodorov

National Academy of Sciences working on supplying agro-towns with energy from renewable sources

Belarusian experts are developing the supply of agro-towns with energy from biogas technologies, as well as solar and wind installations. "In order

to supply agro-towns with energy and heating, it's usually necessary to lay costly gas pipelines. However, biomass, straw and timber waste can be used as fuel; as can solar and wind energy, saving money," emphasises Vladimir Dashkov, the Director of the Power Engineering Institute of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus.

Experts are creating a computer

program to select the best system for each town, for testing in one of our agro-towns by 2015. Naturally, Belarusian scientists are drawing on use European experience.

Biogas technologies have been in use in Belarus for some time countrywide. Renewable energy will also be used at agro-industrial complexes, helping save on production costs.