

Departure from the seventh platform

Small enterprises in Belarus are known to need support, to ensure that they contribute fully to the economy. While neighbouring states brag of private entrepreneurs generating 50-90 percent of GDP, Belarus is set to reach just 27 percent by the end of this year. The question is how best to help private businesses — as discussed in Minsk, at the 15th Assembly of Business Circles.

By Alexander Benkovsky

The first assembly was held in 1992, and has since become a platform for business dialogue between the state and private entrepreneurs. Each year, a different theme is chosen: in 2013, they debated surviving the world crisis under conditions of a weakened nation-

al currency. The forthcoming entry of Belarus into the Eurasian Economic Union (expected from January, 1st, 2015) was the area under discussion this year.

The Chairman of the Minsk Capital Union of Entrepreneurs and Employers, Vladimir Karyagin, noted, "We cannot ignore the norms and rules of new eco-



About 80 jobs created at Chechersk branch of Stetskevich-Spetsodezhda over two years of work at the enterprise

omic associations, since they'll bring sharper regional competition." More than 200 representatives of state bodies took part in the assembly, including those from legislative, executive and judicial branches.

The Belarus-2014 National Platform for Business was held as part of the International 7th Assembly

of Business Circles, which launched in 2006. It is a 'road map' for businesses worldwide, with about one million people taking part, aiming to improve the business environment and the development and co-operation of private businesses. The event is an opportunity for entrepreneurs to offer feedback to the government

and, in recent years, has inspired almost 300 new pieces of legislation, which have considerably simplified entrepreneurs' working lives.

Mr. Karyagin asserts, "Last year, 107 suggestions were put forward, leading to 21 issues being somewhat tackled and over 30 solved; others have been 'carried over' to this year."

Entrepreneurs have accepted the *National Business Platform*. Soon, the document will be finally developed, taking into account comments and suggestions. A large circulation is planned for the document which will be then presented to the public and will be sent to the country's leadership.

Belarusians constructing metro line in Moscow

Belarus among Moscow's top five economic partners, with mutual goods turnover increasing by 5 percent last year, to reach almost \$5.2m

By Irina Smirnova

Our two countries aim to further strengthen foreign economic relations, including raising volumes of mutual trade, and developing co-operation in all directions. The Deputy Prime Minister of Belarus, Anatoly Kalinin, has told a Moscow governmental delegation, gathered in Minsk, "It's important not to slow down rates of trade and economic interaction, and to support positive dynamics in mutual trade."

Last year, Belarus increased its exports to Moscow of dairy products, meat and baked products, as well as light industry goods. Contracts have been signed to deliver trolley buses and suburban electric trains, with Belkommunmash sending 150 trolley buses to Moscow this year.

Further expansion of ties is being discussed regarding the provision of housing and communal services, development of trade and economic relations, and liaisons in the scientific and technical, humanitarian-cultur-

al and social spheres. The Belarusian regions and capital are working with Moscow's administrative divisions, and Belarus is submitting a tender to develop transport infrastructure in the Russian capital.

Minister Sergey Cheremin, who heads Moscow's Department for External Economic and International Relations, tells us, "Minskmetrostroy won a tender to participate in building the Kalininsko-Solntsevskaya Moscow metro line and Borovskoye Shosse station. It's an

important project."

Mr. Kalinin mentions that a recent session of a working group coordinating interaction looked at the possibility of erecting a Belarusian quarter in Moscow's suburbs. "We're working on this, seeking to offer a modern town-planning project to satisfy in terms of price, quality and speed of building." Our chambers of commerce and industry are to consider creating a council of young entrepreneurs for Minsk, Moscow and Astana.



Belkommunmash trolley buses ready for despatch to Moscow

Easing ring-road traffic congestion

By Andrey Fiodorov

Construction launched on Minsk's second ring road

The project is to be implemented in two stages: a 40km section from the M-3 Minsk-Vitebsk road

to the M-6 Minsk-Grodno road (with around 20km to open this year); followed by around 40km from the M-6 Minsk-Grodno road to the M-1/E30 Brest-Minsk-Russian border road.

It was decided to launch con-

struction of the 80km second ring road in 2010, due to the original road having reached capacity. Traffic intensity reaches 100,000 vehicles per day on some sections and will continue to grow, thanks to city development, causing jams.



No obstacles to migrants finding work in Belarus

Labour imports still beneficial

Last year, Belarusians left the country to work in 12 states — including Russia, the USA, Germany, Poland, Saudi Arabia, Norway and Lithuania

By Andrey Fiodorov

The Director of the Research Institute of Labour, at the Belarusian Labour and Social Protection Ministry, Svetlana Shevchenko, emphasises, "At the same time, Belarus employed migrants from 81 countries worldwide."

Analysis of the geographical structure of labour imports shows that residents from within the post-Soviet space comprise most of those arriving in Belarus. Until 2008, Russia was one of the major suppliers of labour to Belarus; however, in 2009, only one labour migrant was registered from this country and none between 2010 and 2013. Ukraine has now taken the lead in this sphere, followed by China, Turkey, Uzbekistan and Lithuania.

According to Ms. Shevchenko, Belarus is primarily interested in

accepting workers from abroad since this helps us to meet national economic and demographic targets. Labour migration can be the first step for foreign nationals seeking to move to Belarus for permanent residence. Of course, international migration raises a number of issues — such as provision of accommodation and social security. Meanwhile, the number of migrant workers should be commensurate with the country's rate of economic development.

The distribution of labour migrants isn't consistent country-wide. From 2005-2013, 40-60 percent of foreigners arriving to work under contract were employed in Minsk, with the Minsk Region next in line, followed by the Gomel and Brest regions. "Most are men, working as labourers," adds Ms. Shevchenko.