



Romanian-Belarusian Cooperation: Solid Achievements and Excellent Prospects

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Dear readers of the Commercial
Diplomacy Journal!

It is my pleasure to do my best to try to attract your attention to further development of friendly relations between Romania and Belarus. I am grateful to the Union of Bilateral Chambers of Commerce from Romania and its President, Mr. Nasty Vladoiu, for this perfect opportunity.

First I would like to mention a few figures about my country, then move on to the Belarusian – Romanian cooperation in economy and other spheres.

Belarus is situated in the very center of Europe. In the ancient Belarusian city of [Polotsk](#) there is a monument in honor of this. By the population (9,5 million) and the territory (207,6 thousand sq. km) Belarus is comparable to Romania. Would you believe that even the contours of both states on geographical maps are nearly coincide!

The major branches of the *Belarusian economy are processing industry, agriculture, construction, trade*. Belarus has an open and an export-oriented economy: in 2018, value of exports was 70% of GDP.

Being on a major trade crossroad, Belarus plays an important role in the development of world trade as a transit state.

Today Belarus produces the complete range of transport and passenger vehicles, including electric buses and personal cars, as well as tyres of over 300 types, for passenger cars and heavy duty trucks, road construction, lifting-transporting, agricultural machinery and tractors. World class railway rolling stock as well as metro carriages, trams are manufactured in Belarus at Swiss company Stadler plant.

Today Belarus has a share of more than 7% of the world market of tractors, selling the products to over 120 countries of the world.

Belarus keeps one third of the world market of dump trucks and produces the largest truck in the world, appearing in the Guinness Book of World Records, – an 810-ton vehicle with 500-ton payload.

Belarus produces the whole range of so called “white

goods” with 8% share of the global market of refrigerators as well as practically all the range of electronic devices.

In 2018 Belarus produced about 41,00 tractors, 11,000 trucks, lorries and dumpers, 860,000 household refrigerators and freezers, 600,000 TV sets, 3,5 million ton of gasoline and 6,6 million ton of diesel fuel.

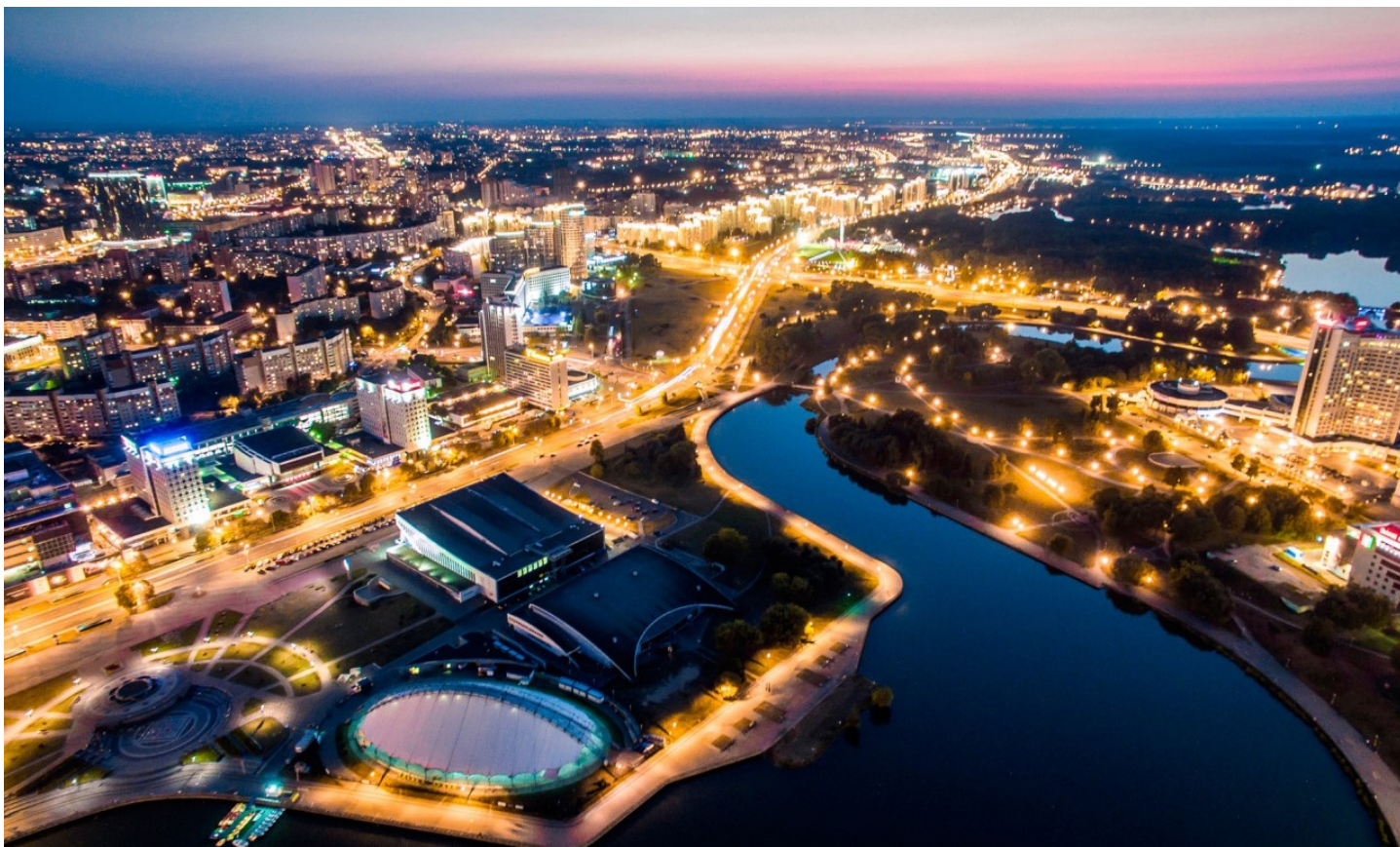
Over 60% of Belarusian mechanical engineering products are sold abroad.

In 2012 Belarus developed, produced and launched into space its first satellite.

Belarus is one of the five countries in the world which possess with the whole range of optical and precise mechanical technologies. Belarusian optics is used worldwide, including the armed forces of several EU member states (which use NATO standards, though Belarus does not use NATO standards). Belarus won several tenders, and today, for example, the Swedish grenade launchers are equipped with the Belarusian laser pointers.

Belarus produces over 500 kinds of petrochemical and chemical products and accounts for the seventh part of the world potash production.

Belarusian [metallurgy](#) and metal-work manufacture produce steel electric round and shaped tubes, steel cast blanks, rolled steel, various kinds of wires, metal cords, bolts, screws, nuts, nails, molding materials, heating equipment.



Minsk, Belarus (c) <https://www.goodfon.com>

Belarus remains one of the leading producers of agricultural products. For example, Belarus is the 6th biggest producer of butter and 11th biggest producer of powder milk in the world.

Belarusian software engineers are considered some of the best in the world. It is they who invented Viber, World of Tanks (Wargaming), MSQRD, EPAM, MAPS.ME, FLO. In terms of software exports per capita, Belarus today is ahead of such countries as the USA, China, and India.

Earlier in this year in Belarus a cryptocurrency exchange was launched – the first in the post-Soviet space. All this allows Belarus to prepare at home qualified specialists (both engineers and technicians) for all the branches of the national economy.

In 2017 Belarus and Romania celebrated the 25th anniversary of establishing the diplomatic relations, and both our countries jointly reached strong success in all the areas of cooperation.

Our bilateral trade turnover increased by 20% during the last three years (in the first two months of 2019 the turnover rose by 16%).

In 2018 Romania among the EU member states ranked 7th in terms of the Belarusian exports (excluding hydrocarbon raw materials, as well as nitrogen and potash fertilizers), taking into account that the European Union is the second largest trading partner of Belarus on the whole (after Russia).

Belarusian tractors are assembled in Romania (in Mureș). Around ten Romanian cities use Belarusian buses and trolleybuses today.

Quite a number of roads in Romania are marked by the Belarusian machinery and with the usage of Belarusian painting. Romanian pharmaceutical products are very popular in Belarus.

Our countries actively trade with machinery and machine tools, chemical, metallurgical and construction materials. In March, 2019 new direct railway route between Belarus and Romania was opened. It will greatly contribute to further increasing of the Belarusian exports of wood products (sawn wood, fibreboards, plywood, etc.) to Romania. In this regard, I should like to note traditional interest in Belarus to production of the Romanian furniture makers. Therefore, the interest is mutual.

By the way, Belarusian investments are present in wine production in Romania, and this company is one of the official suppliers of the Royal Court of Romania.

Belarusian companies, as well as in the past years, will take part in the International Trade Fair INDAGRA in Bucharest (30th October – 3rd November, 2019). At that time the meeting of the Belarusian – Romanian Inter-Governmental Commission on economic cooperation and Belarus – Romania Business Forum will be held.

Today we do not only witness, but are also actively involved in developing bilateral inter-regional relations (being in Romania for 2,5 years – I have already visited all the counties, some of them – for several times).

Official delegations of four Romanian counties headed by the Prefects (Mureș, Cluj, Iași) and the President of the County Council (Tulcea) visited Belarus in 2017 – 2018. The first ever Agreement on inter-regional cooperation between Belarus and Romania at a county level was signed last June

(between the Mogilev region and the Cluj county).

Several Agreements between the regional Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Belarus and Romania were signed. Delegation of one of the most developed Belarusian cities Baranovichi headed by the President of the city Council visited Râmnicu Vâlcea last July to participate in the celebration of the Anniversary of the National Anthem of Romania. And the delegation headed by the Mayor of Râmnicu Vâlcea visited Belarus last November.

In February 2019, we had the pleasure of welcoming the visit to Belarus of the Romanian delegation headed by H.E. Minister of Waters and Forests of Romania Mr. Ioan Deneș.

Our political, educational, cultural relations also show good dynamics.

The Belarus – Romania inter-parliamentary groups of friendship were established in our Parliaments two years ago, and the Chair of the Belarusian group visited Romania in September, 2017.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Romania paid official visit to Belarus in November, 2017.

Belarus and Romania conducted two rounds of inter-ministerial consultations at the levels of Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs in 2017 –2018. More than 30 Belarusian and Romanian Universities established relations in the years 2017—2018, and more than 20 Agreements on cooperation between our Universities were signed during that period.

More than 15 Museums from Belarus and Romania established relations within the same period, and quite a few agreements on cooperation were signed (including National Brukenthal Museum, National Historic Museum in Bucharest). We are planning to arrange an exhibition of Corneliu Baba paintings in Belarus and also to bring the exposition of Belarusian Orthodox Icons to Romania this year.

Ties between our theatres, libraries, schools are also under rapid development.

The representative of Romania for the first time ever was awarded last July with the Grand Prize of “The Slavic Bazaar” – one of the biggest International song festivals, which is annually conducted in Vitebsk city of Belarus. Participants from over 40 countries from all the continents traditionally participate in this festival. By the way, a very famous Belarusian painter Marc Chagall was born in Vitebsk and spent his childhood and youth there. There are the native house of Marc Chagall and his Museum in Vitebsk.

Romanian actors and movies regularly become the laureates of the annual International Film Festival “Listapad” in Belarus.

All the recent positive developments between our countries without any doubt confirm the existence of great potential for further strengthening bilateral Belarus-Romania relations.

To my mind, the most important fact with regard to bilateral cooperation between our countries is that Romania stands strong in all the above

mentioned areas, which makes it possible for the economies of our countries to complement each other. Moreover, specialists and managers of our countries talk the same language (not as teachers and pupils) which further increases the opportunities for interaction on the principles of partnership and equality.

Speaking about our bilateral cooperation, I refer not only to trade but also to reciprocal investments and establishing of joint ventures and manufactures.

Being a member of the Eurasian Economic Union, Belarus can offer Romania the access to the market with 185 million people, while at the same time Romania can become the enter point to the EU – market for Belarus. Moreover, Belarus and Romania can serve as the gates for the European products to the Eurasian market and vice versa – for the goods from the Eurasian Economic Union – to the EU member states and to the countries of the South – East Europe.



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