



# VARTA

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the present and future  
developments**

*Dzmitry Mitskevich*

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**The Fifth Column  
of “Russian world”  
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Konrad  
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## The Globalisation of Terrorism

# Foreword

Since autumn 2015, the relations between Belarus and the West are showing positive signs of improvement. In the contemporary analyses, experts from East and West state that this corresponds to a familiar pattern – Minsk and Brussels only repeat the procedure we already know from the years 2008 to 2010, when the relations saw a honeymoon phase first, only to become fully frozen several months later. At first glance, these assessments might seem to be right; however, there are two decisive factors in power that make 2016 incommensurable to 2008: Firstly, a grave economic situation and secondly, the tangibility of challenges to Belarus' external security as well as the perception of them within the Belarusian establishment.

The current economic situation in Belarus has its roots in the events of the last seven years, and even earlier. The financial crisis spread through many nations in 2009. Although Belarus wasn't spared by it, the effects of the crisis on the Belarusian gross domestic product stalled for only one year. However, currently there is another challenge; the negative growth of the GDP. This has been made worse by the fact that the last four years only had modest growth. Such a contraction of Belarusian economy is a precedent, by itself, within the economic dynamics of the country over the last 20 years. What compounds this

issue is the economic situation of Russia, which is the most important trading partner of Belarus. Although the world already saw a shrinking GDP in Russia in 2009, the current economic setback seems to be more substantial. This is caused at least partly by fundamental political and economic tensions between East and West, which are directly related to Russia's breach of International Law in regard to Ukraine. As President Lukashenko stated, Belarus is caught between a rock and a hard place. Belarus suffers economically from the conflict in Ukraine, which Minsk is not directly involved in. The economic implications of this seem to be so severe that President Lukashenko has recently stated that the people in Belarus should be worried more about the economy than the war.

Minsk's call for better relations with the West can be interpreted not only as a plea for economic assistance, but as a step in foreign policy. One has to notice that the current draft of the military doctrine of Belarus not only calls for better relations with the EU, but also with NATO. A couple of events – a seminar on NATO at the Belarusian State University in 2015, a visit of Belarus' Foreign Minister Vladimir Makei to NATO Headquarters in 2015, a visit of a state delegation to Brussels upon invitation of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation in April 2016 – are



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indicators for Belarus' substantial intentions to work on its Western relations in the foreign and security policy. Compared to Russia, this resolution is nothing special since Russia was also ready to get back into discussions, as evidenced by the NATO-Russia Council in spring of 2016. What is new, however, is the situation that Belarus – following its right for a sovereign and independent position - gives more and more voice to its own security concerns. This became especially visible through Belarus' role in the Minsk peace negotiations (Minsk II) and the negotiations of the Trilateral Group and other entities.

It is to be expected that this tendency of a more proactive foreign and security policy of Belarus will be upheld in the upcoming years. Belarus is not only confronted with the situation in its neighbor country Ukraine. Refugees to Belarus from Ukraine, the demarcation of the border and intensified diplomatic activities of Belarus are only some relevant developments. In addition, continued tensions between Russia and NATO might lead to severe concentration of military forces in and around Belarus during the next few years. At present, a new battalion is being set up by Russia near Smolensk, which is only 50 km

from Belarus. Moscow also moved a motorized infantry brigade to Klincy, only 120 km away from Gomel. In reaction to the current manner of Russian foreign and security policy, NATO is strengthening its reassurance in the Baltics. Rotating forces in this region will be another element Belarusian security policy needs to take into account. One of the most visible reactions of contemporary Belarusian security policy are the measures to prevent hybrid warfare on different levels - an instrument that is currently mostly attributed to Russia. Besides this, the implementation of a broader concept of resilience must also include bi- and multilateral negotiations. It is especially in this field, however, that only a very limited infrastructure for establishing a dialogue on questions of regional security exists between Belarus, its neighbors, and international organizations like NATO and EU. This holds for institutional frameworks as well as for structured debates. Too long have the discussions about Belarus excluded aspects of military, defense, and security - caused by the narrow-sighted views in the West and in Belarus.

In line with Germany's role as the chair of the OSCE for the year 2016, the Konrad Adenauer Foundation

takes up the opportunity to bring a new impulse and more substance into the security debates between Belarus and the West. A peaceful and collaborative Europe needs more discussions about cooperation and coordination in military, defense, and security matters – especially among direct neighbors. That is precisely the reason why Konrad Adenauer Foundation supports the VARTA journal as a contribution for discussion and constructive exchange. Minding our goal to make discussions more fact-based and substantially grounded, we'd like to encourage experts from Belarus and the West to provide insights in the Russian language as well as in English. The authors are requested to use unclassified, openly accessible and verifiable information only.

The Konrad Adenauer Foundation is delighted to have won Belarus Security Blog as a partner for this project. We are confident that it will result in a mutually beneficial platform for finding a better understanding of security concerns in the West and in Belarus in order to strengthen peace in our common Europe.

Vilnius, June 15, 2016

Dr. Wolfgang Sender



# Private military companies as a tool of the expansionist policy of Russian Federation



## **Siarhei Martseleu**

*A political scientist, political consultant. In the elections of 2010 - the head of the electoral headquarters of presidential candidate Mikalai Statkevich. In 2010-2011 - political prisoner, convicted under Art. 342 of the Criminal Code for the events of December 19, 2010. Recognized a prisoner of conscience by Amnesty International. A member of the Belarusian Association of Journalists, member of the Council of the public association «Centre for Human Rights».*

Private military companies (hereinafter PMC) de facto appeared in Russia in the 90s of the last century. Commercial institutions organized by former and current officers of the Russian secret services, have formed a group of professional soldiers, resigned during the collapse of the Soviet Union and the economic crisis.

In such a way Russian military experts secretly participated in the armed conflicts in Bosnia, Abkhazia, Nagorno-Karabakh, Transnistria. One of such commercial institutions, the prototype of PMC, is considered to be a security agency "Rubicon" (Saint-Petersburg).

However, PMC is not a corporate trade of mercenaries. The beneficiary of the activities of private military companies is always the state.

Modern private military company could be defined as a commercial institution, staffed by highly qualified

military specialists, state-controlled, and acting in the interest of the state. Therefore, the term "private" is quite relative.

In Russia, these organizations often refer to themselves as military consulting firms. For example, the most famous of Russian PMC is "RSB-group". There are companies of military logistics involved in logistical support of troops and military construction. "Moran security group" is specializing in the fight against maritime piracy.

The indefinite legal status of this business and at the same time the demand for such a tool by the state creates numerous conflicts. Private military companies in the current conditions on a par with the special forces operations and information warfare are the tools of so-called "hybrid warfare".

## Political and legal base for activities of Russian private military companies

Legal base for the activities of Russian private military companies is still not clearly codified.

Current Russian legislation doesn't provide for legal activities of PMCs, so they are registered in the Russian Federation as consulting agencies, private security companies, or even as social organizations. To avoid formal charges of recruiting mercenaries to carry out orders overseas they hire staff through foreign missions.

Formal legal obstacles to the activities of PMCs in the Russian Federation are also Art. 359 of the Criminal Code "Mercenarism" and Art. 208 "Organization of illegal armed group and participation in it". Given the situation in the foreign policy of Russia, in 2013 in Article 208 of the Criminal Code the wording "participate in the armed formations in a foreign country" was supplemented with the following: "for purposes contrary to the interests of Russian Federation".

Article 359 of the Criminal Code also specifies that the mercenary is "a person who acts in order to obtain material compensation", which, is difficult to prove in practice. The Russian head of state in one of his speeches expressed confidence that Russian citizens, who are taking part in the war in the Donbass, act according to their own beliefs, rather than for money. Such statements by the officials also affect the law-enforcement practice. As expected, the Russian courts haven't passed any sentence in Article 359 against Russian mercenaries fighting on the side of the terrorists of "DPR" (so-called Donetsk People's Republic) and "LPR" (so-called Lugansk People's Republic), including the participants the PMCs.

The only precedent when the leaders of a Russian private military company have been detained on suspicion of mercenarism refers to 2013, "Moran security group" recruited and sent to Syria more than 250 Russian citizens. The court verdict was 3 years of imprisonment. It is remarkable that ordinary mercenaries didn't get any sentence.

Despite the absence of clear legislation, Russian law makes an exception for enterprises of fuel and

energy complex. Amendments to the law "On Weapons" from 2008 state that security institutions which protect overseas property and infrastructure of Russian energy companies can legally use military weapons.

The infrastructure of Russian fuel and energy complex is situated in many post-Soviet countries. Theoretically, this means the possibility of armed men to guard the pipeline of "Beltransgaz" or "Kyrgyzneftegaz" in accordance with applicable Russian legislation.

From the point of view of national law, the state PMC in Russia can be compared with public-private partnerships, where the very concept de jure doesn't exist yet, but actually the projects are carried out.

The top Russian leaders understand the need to use some other instruments besides the armed forces in the modern mixed (hybrid) war. In 2012, Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin approved the establishment of private military companies. In his opinion, "it really is a tool for the realization of national interests without the direct involvement of the state".

A year later, the chief of the General Staff of the Russian Federation Valery Gerasimov formulated the doctrine which clarified what tools Russia will use to implement these interests. He recalled, in particular, the foreign experience of using PMCs in cooperation with the armed opposition for destruction of the enemy. Interaction with irregular formations allows, according to the general, to create a permanent front of the entire territory of the opposing state.

The latest version of the Russian military doctrine of 2014, in turn, among the external threats mentions "the establishment of the regimes, whose policies are threatening the interests of Russia, in the neighbouring countries, including as a result of the overthrow of the legitimate state authorities".

One of the services offered by the Russian PMCs is formulated in a similar manner. Thus, the website of "RSB Group" offers: "In agreement with the legitimate governments of other countries - helping to keep public order in emergencies.

Protecting important state facilities from marauders and criminals".

Interpretation of the concept of "legitimate government" is usually significantly different among the opposing sides of the conflict. Ex-President of Ukraine Viktor Yanukovich, who fled to Russia, from the point of view of Russian officials has remained "legitimate president", i.e. he also theoretically could be a customer for the services of "RSB Group" or similar institutions.

Despite the immediate approval of Vladimir Putin, "Law on PMCs" hasn't been adopted yet.

In 2014, the Russian State Duma introduced a bill on private military and security companies, but the government rejected it. In 2016, a new version of the draft law "On private military and security activities" was introduced to the consideration of the State Duma. If it is accepted, it would open the way for private military and security companies (hereinafter PMSC) of the Russian Federation abroad.

Lobbyists of the "Law on private military and security activities", a private law firm Tensor Consulting Group, explaining the need for its adoption, says that the legalization of private paramilitary structures will allow Russia to legally intervene in an armed conflict in the Donbass, without the help of the armed forces.

Under the bill, PMSC is defined as a legal entity, licensed by Russian Federal security service, which provides relevant services to the state, individuals and legal entities on a contractual basis. PMSC functions are divided into the military, security and consulting ones.

The main and fundamental difference between private military and security organizations from the usual private security company - the license provides the right to officially operate outside the Russian Federation.

Part of the military and political elite of modern Russia isn't so optimistic about the idea of legalizing PMCs (or PMSCs by the bill's terminology) for several reasons. Firstly, the emergence of armed groups organized with the experience of "restoring constitutional order" in other countries frightens

the officials by the possibility of destabilizing the social and political situation in Russia itself.

Secondly, the Ministry of Defence considers the PMCs to be uncontrolled competitors who will

compete for budget funds allocated by the government for military purposes. In addition, according to Yuri Baluyevsky, the former Chief of General Staff of the Russian Federation, creation of PMC violates

the “Law on the defence”. Most likely, the right to use military force outside the borders of the Russian Federation was in question.

## Participation of Russian private military companies in Crimea annexation and armed conflict in the Donbass



One of the leaders of the terrorists in Eastern Ukraine Igor Girkin (Strelkov).

For nearly a year the Russian government denied that the Armed Forces of Russian Federation participated in the annexation of Crimean Peninsula. Versions that the “polite people” were PMC fighters multiplied and were repeated by pro-government publicists and political scientists. Western media reacted in a similar way.

The influential Polish newspaper “Rzeczpospolita”, citing its own sources, reported that Russian private military company “Svarog” took part in the annexation of Crimea. No information about the institution could be found in open sources.

English-language resources repeated the version that the seizure of administrative buildings and military units was carried out by the PMC protecting the mining infrastructure of the Russian concern in the Black Sea.

On the eve of the anniversary of the Crimea annexation, a senior Russian military official acknowledged the participation of his subordinates in these events. February 27, 2015 a propaganda film “Crimea. The way

home”, in which this version was officially confirmed by the Russian president, was shown on Russian TV.

It seems that the issue of the role of PMCs in the Crimean crisis is settled, if the Russian side has not only agreed with the version on the participation of the regular army, but even boasts of it. But the message of the propaganda shouldn't be taken literally.

Of course, the seizure of administrative buildings and government bodies was carried out by special forces. In particular, 31 separate air assault brigade of the Armed Forces of Russian Federation. They have been identified with the help of photographs in social networks.

But apart from the Armed Forces some structures performed police functions, preparing hundreds of new recruits in training camps in the peninsula, which then took part in an armed conflict in the Donbass. It is unlikely that this was done by the Russian army.

The presence in Crimea of Russian PMCs was also stated by the head of Ukrainian military consulting firm

“Omega Consulting Group”, the co-workers of which were performing a commercial order in Crimea at that time. According to international volunteer project “Informnapalm” Russian PMCs “Cossacs” and “E.N.O.T” were acting in Crimea.

According to some versions, a private military company, associated with Orthodox oligarch Konstantin Malofeev, was actively involved in Crimean events and then in the Donbass war. Alexander Boroday, the Prime minister of self-proclaimed “DPR”, formerly was Malofeev's PR consultant, and Igor Girkin (Strelkov) worked in the security service of the odious businessman. Igor Strelkov himself actually became the head of the armed groups who seized the power in Slavyansk and other cities in the south-east of Ukraine.

At the moment it isn't possible to make reliable conclusions about the quantitative and qualitative composition of private military institutions and their role in the annexation of Crimea and war in the Donbass.

## The activities of Russian network private military company in the territory of the Republic of Belarus



Member of a terrorist organization "DNR" Jan Petrovski is training Belarusian children in a so-called "military-patriotic camp". Russia, 2015.

One of the oldest Russian PMC network, existing in the form of public organizations that support horizontal communication on the post-Soviet space, is active in Belarus. It is Belarusian branch of the so-called "Cossack movement".

"Cossacks" like to point out that the first Russian private military company was an army of Ataman Yermak, hired by the Stroganovs for the occupation of Siberia. According to experts, historically there were never any Cossacks on the Belarusian land.

Nevertheless, today's "Cossacks" are carrying out broad ideological work among Belarusian youth, conduct military training without hiding intentions to create a "backing armed groups" with unclear goals and objectives. In 2010, as stated by one of the leaders of the so-called "Belarusian Cossacks" Mikalay Yarkovich, they conducted training of more than 1,600 cadets aged from 6 to 18 years.

"Cossack" organizations maintain links with their Russian counterparts, who are directly involved in the war in the Donbass. Thus, the Belarusian "Cossacks" are associated with "Kuban Cossack Association of Russia", previously seen in recruiting fighters for illegal armed groups of self-proclaimed "DPR".

"Cossacks" together with Belarusian Exarchate of the Moscow Patriarchate of the Russian Orthodox Church regularly recruit young people in the so-called "military-patriotic clubs" and hold trainings for them. In the specially created military camps teens are taught to handle weapons and ammunition. One of such camps existed in Zaslonava village, Lepel district, Vitsebsk region of Belarus, on the basis of military unit №71325. The training of children was supervised by "military-patriotic brotherhood of the church of Holy Nativity of the Virgin".

The most visible and active is the "Cossack spas" organization. It is supervised by acting officers of 45 separate reconnaissance regiment of the airborne troops of Russia. Formally, the "Cossack spas" is a branch of the registered public association "City Without Drugs" and is

actively communicating with the same associations in the territory of the former Soviet Union.

In the summer training camp the organizers gather about 150 children aged from 12 to 16. The persons in charge of the Ministry of Defence of Belarus, for whatever reasons, provide a base infrastructure for such trainings. Children are subjected to harsh indoctrination in the interests of the neighbouring state.

Ukrainian military expert Dmitry Tymchuk noted that the same operations were unfolded in the Donbass and Crimea by Russia. There were also youth training camps which used flags of the current so-called "DPR" and "LPR". Subsequently, the "Cossacks" took an active part in the conflicts on the side of the "LPR" terrorists.

The events of Belarusian "Cossacks" are visited by diplomatic representatives of the Russian Federation, in particular, by the Consul General of Russia in Brest, as well as representatives of "Rossotrudnichestvo" – the institution for financing pro-Russian organizations in the post-Soviet countries.

The threat is understood by the official Belarusian leader. In one of his public speeches he sent a request to the intelligence agencies "to find these "reactionaries" who are not only running in the woods". According to him, "neither Russian nor the Western, nor our home-grown, if they are acting contrary to the interests of the state, the measures will be tough".

It is unknown whether the instructions by President Lukashenka will be properly executed, since many Belarusian security forces officials are loyal to Russia and sympathize with the separatists of Donbass. It is even a bigger threat to Belarusian sovereignty and independence than the "Cossacks" and other pro-Russian extremists on the territory of Belarus.



The head of a number of so-called "Cossack" organizations in Belarus Tatiana Gavrilina presents a "medal" with the Russian flag to a Belarusian student. Orsha, 2015.

# Belarusian military-industrial complex: current state and prospects of development



## Dzianis Launikevich

Worked in the "Belorusskaya Delovaya Gazeta" (Belarusian Business Newspaper) before the issue of printed version of the newspaper was stopped in March 2006. Since 1999 as a freelance journalist collaborated with many Belarusian media, which include the "Belorusskaya Gazeta", the "Economics, Finance, Management", the "Moskovsky Komsomolets in Belarus", the "Business lady", the "Finance director", the "Detective newspaper", BEL.BIZ, "Interfax". Since spring of 2010 - the correspondent of Russian federal newspaper "Gazeta.ru". Since January 2013 has been working on the BDG website.

*The Republic of Belarus, notwithstanding its relatively small size and population, for the 25 years of independence has become one of the major players on global arms market. Partly this is connected with the Soviet legacy in the form of defence industry enterprises remaining on the territory of Belarus. But to a large extent the success of the Belarusian defence industry later is connected with its own developments and products.*

## Available resources

In order to understand and evaluate the current condition of the military-industrial complex (MIC) of the Republic of Belarus, at first it's necessary to see what industrial capacities the country had when a quarter century ago the USSR collapsed. After the Second World War, the Soviet Union turned Belarus into a kind of "a rear logistics base" of Western group of troops - a huge military group located in Eastern and Central Europe.

As a result, for almost 50 years a large number of airfields, military and fuel depots were built in Belarus. But, more importantly, there were companies specially created for the maintenance, repair and modernization of armoured vehicles and aircraft, as well as air defence systems. After the collapse of the Soviet Union they were preserved and already in the 90's began to receive new orders from Belarusian Armed Forces as well as from Russia and other countries possessing arms produced in the USSR. These are "140th Repair Plant" (Barysau), JSC "Orsha Aircraft Repair Plant" (Orsha), 558th Aircraft Repair Plant (Baranavichy), of "2566 Radio-Electronic Weapons Repair

Plant" (Barysau), UE "Tetraedr" (Minsk).

Later, in the 70-80 years of the XX century, on the territory of Belarus the enterprises for the production of high-tech electronic and optical components for modern weapons systems started to be created. In addition, automobile and tractor plants in Belarus originally had a dual purpose - they were focused on the development and production of equipment for both civil and military (not necessarily combat) use.

As a result, today a total of Belarus MIC structure includes about 60 companies, most of which were created in the times of the Soviet Union. 45 of them are working on electronic and optical equipment and means of communication and control (including military trainers and specialized military computers, radars); 9 - on design, manufacture and service of wheeled and tracked systems for military use as well as armoured vehicles; 3 - on development and production of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs).

## External and internal market

According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), Belarus consistently ranks in the top 20 leading exporters of weapons (and this is without taking into account the repair and modernization of military equipment). However, it is necessary to distinguish the various stages of the military-technical activity of Belarus in the world market. In 1991-1997, the country's leaders preferred just to sell the rest of the USSR huge stocks of weapons, military equipment and ammunition. Basically, deliveries went to the markets of Africa, the Middle East and Central Asia, Latin America. Special enterprises have been created to provide these supplies: "Beltechexport", "Minotor Service" and "Belvneshpromservice". From 1999 to 2006, according to official data, the export of arms, ammunition and military equipment from Belarus amounted to about \$1 billion, which at that time made Belarus the 11th largest exporter of weapons in the world (according to the US Congress data). In reality, according to experts, the volume of arms exports from Belarus was much larger.

Meanwhile, since the late 1990s the other areas of military-technical business began to develop in Belarus.

Different countries are increasingly ordering the repair and thorough modernization of their military equipment to Belarusian enterprises. Since 2000, Russia, increasing its defence budget, is actively ordering a wide range of accessories for various military equipment – both for Soviet and new products, on Belarusian enterprises. The orders for new wheeled chassis for various Russian missile complexes are made as well – they are received by Minsk Wheel Tractor Plant (MWTP).

Also, since the beginning of the XXI century Belarus has started exporting own products such as radars, simulators, optical sights, communications and control systems, more actively. The main customers are the countries of Asia and Latin America. From 2005 the enterprises of Belarusian defence industry enter into production cooperation with arms manufacturers from other countries, first of all from Ukraine and China.

One of the first tangible results of such cooperation was the Belarusian-Ukrainian anti-tank missile complex "Skif", developed by the State Kyiv Design Bureau "Luch" and the Minsk JSC "Peleng". The missile is made in Kyiv by SJSHC "Artem" and guidance

device "PN-S" - in Minsk by JSC "Peleng". The logical development of ATGM "Skif" was 3rd generation ATGM "Shershen". It's adopted by the Belarusian army and is delivered to different countries of the world. Another ATGM "grown" from "Skif" is "Caracal". Other successful Belarusian-Ukrainian products are anti-aircraft missile complexes "Alebarda" and "Stilet".

The Chinese, who are significant players on the arms market, bought technical documentation of Belarusian MWTP chassis for the creation of their own military products. In addition, there is a joint Belarusian-Chinese enterprise "Volat-Sanjiang", which produces components for these chassis.

The demand for the Belarusian military products on the world market is confirmed by the results of MILEX-2014 international arms exhibition held in Minsk. Only member organizations of "Goskomvoenprom" (State Military Industrial Committee) signed 55 contracts worth more than \$350 million. In whole, Belarusian companies concluded contracts worth about \$700 million at the exhibition.



Anti-aircraft missile system "Alebarda".



Anti-aircraft missile system T-38 "Strilet".

### The new concept of defence and the MIC of Belarus

Approximately since 2011 the issue of rearmament of Belarusian Armed Forces is getting more and more pressing. Military equipment, which Belarusian army possesses, is rapidly getting obsolete, its service life ends and it is removed from service. This is especially true of planes and helicopters, to a slightly lesser extent – of tanks and other armoured vehicles. Meanwhile, Belarus has never before produced complete offensive weapons. Some units started to appear in 2000 - for example, 2T "Stalker" - tracked stealth armoured reconnaissance vehicle created by "Minotor Service". However, these units haven't become widespread.

By 2014, a new concept of development of the Armed Forces of Belarus was created. In particular, a significant increase in autonomy in the production of weapons was stated. First of all, the autonomy from Russia. Also, the country's defence industry began to be considered as an export-oriented industry, able to generate high added value. This ideology

provides for the development of own military industry with the creation of the full weapons production cycles - ready combat systems in Belarus. In 2014 this was repeatedly said by President Lukashenka. According to him, Belarus has to set up production of a wide variety of weapons, including own airplanes and helicopters as well as armoured vehicles, primarily for special operations forces. At the same time the complete absence of Belarus' own developments in the field of missile weapons was mentioned among the key issues. This factor was expected to be compensated due to the intensive cooperation with Ukraine and China.

In the new defence concept of Belarus there are some points that haven't been voiced publicly. They appeared after the beginning of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict and, in particular, after the annexation of the Crimea. According to these points, Belarusian army should have a sufficiently powerful system of missile weapons, which could reach

the capital of any of the neighbouring states in case of a conflict.

On January 29, 2015 at the big press conference President Lukashenka said: "We work on the issue of Belarus' having its own weapons. Now the main production of weapons which are used by our army is concentrated in Russia. We only create some part of the weapons: electronics, optics and others. We need to have a good weapon in order a future aggressor not to think about fighting against Belarus. We will have such systems in a few months".

One of the first examples of such weapons is multiple launch rocket system "Polonaise" (the range of more than 200 km), which has been created in cooperation with China and tested in China as well. Also, according to some reports, the creating of Belarusian tactical operational missile complex corresponding to the characteristics of the Russian "Iskander" is discussed. At the end of 2015 there was information about creating the Belarusian cruise missile "Aist".



MLRS "Polonaise".



UAV "Grif-1".

## Most important enterprises of Belarusian military-industrial complex

1. JSC "Minsk Wheel Tractor Plant". Produces wheel chassis of very high load capacity for the mobile missile complexes "Topol" and "Topol-M", as well as for a variety of missile systems of other purposes.
2. JSC "BelOMO". Specializes in designing and manufacturing the electro-optical, laser and opto-mechanical products for military and space needs.
3. OJSC "AGAT - Control Systems". Carries out research and development work on the creation of weapons and military equipment.
4. JSC "Peleng". Produces electro-optical systems for special land use.
5. UE "Tetraedr". Develops and manufactures advanced radio-electronic weapons systems, software and hardware used in radar systems and electronic control systems as well as in the modernization of air defence missile systems.
6. JSC "KB Radar" (Design bureau "Radar"). Conducts research in the field of radar and electronic warfare, carries out development work in the field of producing, processing, recording and simulation of radar signals and information, electronic warfare, telemetry and data transmission, produces the appropriate equipment and provides its support.
7. LLC "Midivisana". Develops staff cars for the commands and staffs of army units, the Interior Ministry, Emergencies Ministry, special communication vehicles, medical vehicles and other military and special purpose vehicles.
8. JSC "558 Aircraft Repair Plant" (Baranavichy). Performs overhaul and modernization of military aircraft and helicopters as well as development and manufacture of electronic protection equipment.
9. JSC "140 Repair Plant" (Barysau). It is the only enterprise in Belarus performing overhaul of armoured vehicles and diesel engines to them.
10. JSC "2566 Radio-Electronic Weapons Repair Plant" (Barysau). It is a leading enterprise specializing in the repair of radio-electronic Air Defence equipment, as well as other equipment.

## Perspective developments of Belarusian MIC

- Production of several families of UAVs with small and medium range (about 100 km) – "Grif", "Sterh" and others.
- MWTP offers the latest chassis MZKT-600 201, as well as MZKT-500 200, MZKT-600 100, and MZKT-600 201 series, which were repeatedly demonstrated at the international exhibitions and got positive feedback there. In 2015 Belarusian chassis MZKT-79291 were tested in Russia. This platform, which has wheel formula 12×12, is designed for being a base for the Russian strategic missile system "Rubezh" (IBM).
- Means of electronic warfare (EW): a brand new unit has been created in Belarus - R-934UM2 jamming station (development of "KB "Radar"). It was created with the consideration of the prospective development of communications technology. It is universal and replaces four to six old stations. That is, the P-934UM2 crew now performs a volume of tasks that previously was performed by a platoon. Among other products a navigation jamming complex "Naves" and electronic intelligence complex "Peleng" can be mentioned.
- Belarusian-Ukrainian 3rd generation ATGM "Shershen-D", which outperforms ATGM "Skif" in a number of characteristics.

# Special services of Belarus: the present and future developments



## **Andrei Paratnikau**

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*Fields of interest: internal policy and national security problems of Belarus, international and regional security, climate change issues.*

Beginning of the confrontation of the West and Russia requires a serious rethinking of the entire national security system of Belarus, where the security services play a big role. The war in Ukraine has demonstrated that they are the sword and shield, and their effectiveness of actions largely determines the winning and losing sides of the conflict.

## **The system of special services of Belarus**

In Belarus there is no official definition of "special services" is the law. In this regard, it is necessary to identify those features by which one or another public authority can be attributed to the special services.

Firstly, the basic functions of an institution are related to the national security. Belarus national security concept defines national security as a state of security of the national interests of the Republic of Belarus from internal and external threats. The national interests are the aggregate of needs of the state for the implementation of the balanced interests of the individual, society and the state, aim to ensure the constitutional rights, freedoms, quality of life of citizens, independence, territorial integrity, sovereignty and sustainable development of the Republic of Belarus .

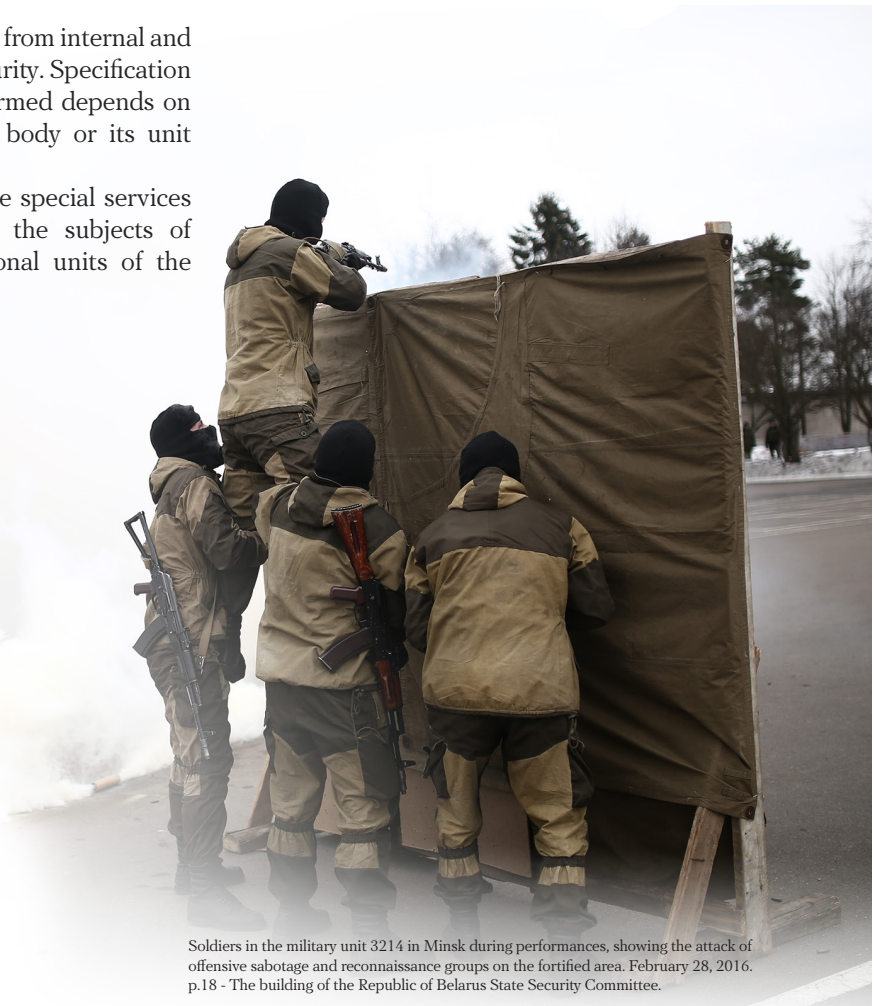
Secondly, special services are specialized services. The main, but not exclusive, areas of their activity are connected with fighting intelligence and other illicit activities of foreign intelligence and counter-intelligence agencies, struggling with the most dangerous forms of organized crime, countering terrorism, protecting state secrets. Special services have the right to use both open and secret methods in their activities, while the volume of secret activities prevails over the volume of open ones .

Thirdly, the basic tools of the special services are the special secret activities. They are carried out within the established competence by performing special (counterintelligence, intelligence, investigation, search and other) activities that are mostly unofficial in nature and aimed at solving the tasks

to ensure the security of the individual, society and state from internal and external threats, entrusted to the bodies of national security. Specification of the tasks, as well as a list of special activities performed depends on the functional specialization of the national security body or its unit (intelligence, counterintelligence or other) .

As mentioned above, one of the main activities of the special services is investigation and search operations. In Belarus, the subjects of investigation and search operations are the operational units of the following departments:

1. The Ministry of Internal Affairs;
2. The State Security Committee (SSC);
3. The State Border Committee;
4. Presidential Security Service (PSS);
5. Operational and Analytical Centre (OAC);
6. Financial Investigations Department of the State Control Committee of the Republic of Belarus (FID SCC);
7. The State Customs Committee (SCC);
8. The intelligence services of the Ministry of Defence of Belarus .



Soldiers in the military unit 3214 in Minsk during performances, showing the attack of offensive sabotage and reconnaissance groups on the fortified area. February 28, 2016. p.18 - The building of the Republic of Belarus State Security Committee.

However, intelligence and counter-intelligence activities, as well as analysis of external risks for the Belarusian state aren't within the competence of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the FID SCC and SCC. The activities of these bodies are mainly public and can be classified as law enforcement.

Thus, by elimination method on the basis of the respective competences, the special services in Belarus at present include:

- Independent institutions with the status of the republican body of state administration (SSC, OAC, PSS);
- Units of the republican bodies of state administration (Main Intelligence Directorate and border intelligence agencies).

## Definition and system of state security bodies of Belarus

Under the definition of state security is understood the security of state sovereignty, constitutional order, economic, scientific-technical and defence potential, the information sector and state secrets from external and internal threats, intelligence, terrorist and other illicit encroachments of the special services of foreign states and organizations, separate groups and persons. Ensuring state security is a special kind of activity in the field of national security, which is performed by a system of state bodies and military units with the participation

of non-governmental organizations, citizens and other persons with the use of a complex of legal, organizational, regime, counterintelligence, intelligence, operational-search, special and military measures aimed at protecting public safety facilities (state sovereignty, constitutional order and territorial integrity, economic, scientific-technical and defence potential, the information sector and state secrets) .

State security – a component of national security – is the state of law and respective security

institutions, which guarantees the protection of sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence and constitutional order of the state .

Art. 13 of the Law “On the Republic of Belarus State Security” attributes to them SSC, highlighting its territorial units in the regions and in Minsk, as well as military counterintelligence bodies.

However, on the basis of practical activities, the state security institutions also include the OAC, PSS and border intelligence agencies. All these bodies are paramilitary agencies.

## Definition and system of bodies of the Foreign Intelligence Belarus

It is worth noting that in Belarus there is no current law on foreign intelligence, its project is still under consideration.

Paragraph 1.1. of Decree of the President of the Republic of Belarus of March 25, 2003 № 116 "On issues of foreign intelligence" defines foreign intelligence as "a special kind of activity ... providing the protection of vital interests of the individual, society and the state by obtaining and using intelligence information, as well as by assisting public authorities and organizations in the implementation of measures in the field of political and socio-economic development of the Republic of Belarus".

At present, the subjects of foreign intelligence agencies include the state

security bodies of the Republic of Belarus (i.e. SSC), the Armed Forces, bodies of border service of the Republic of Belarus. At the same time the legal definitions permit the existence of a number of intelligence services in the national army. Currently, it is known only about the existence of the Main Intelligence Directorate of Defence Ministry of Belarus.

In the present situation the priority of intelligence development is an objective necessity. The events in Ukraine confirm this. Implementation of the intelligence activity is a necessary measure, which allows to proactively obtain information about national security threats and adequately respond to them.

International practice actually offers

two versions of intelligence agencies' existence:

- In the framework of a unified security service;
- As an independent service or a specialized body of another body.

It seems that for Belarus the path taken by other post-socialist countries (for example Poland, Ukraine, Russia, Kazakhstan, Macedonia) is preferred: the division of general (political) and military intelligence into independent/autonomous bodies.

This division (of the political, military and border intelligence) is incorporated in the CIS model law "On foreign intelligence" and it seems rational.

## Possible areas of improvement of the system of Belarusian special services

With all the tragedy of the Ukrainian situation, it is really interesting from the point of view of studying the stability of the national security in the face of external aggression and mass betrayal inside. Of course, this case is unique in many respects. However, it allows to make certain general conclusions.

In the course of events after the Ukrainian revolution, it became clear that the Security Service of Ukraine (SSU) was almost incapacitated, since overrun by foreign agents. The situation wasn't better in the State Service for Special Communications and Information Protection of Ukraine. In fact, only foreign and military intelligence, as well as the Office of the State Guard were capable of functioning.

Ukrainian security services were performing the functions of each other, especially in terms of intelligence and counterintelligence. And this, to a certain extent, "levelled" the situation in the framework of the initial SSU crisis. The first conclusion comes out of that: if the duplication of functions doesn't entail significant costs and there is a personnel reserve for the several agencies working in parallel, it should be implemented. First of all, we are talking about human intelligence, counterintelligence,

combating terrorism and extremism, anti-sabotage activities.

The second conclusion is that the fragmentation of intelligence services ensures the stability of the national security in the face of foreign agents' impact.

The interdepartmental competition can be a problem here. It creates difficulties in establishing information exchange and interaction between the various intelligence agencies. On the other hand, the competition allows to adjust the control system within the security services. It is certainly not all-embracing, but, nevertheless, it plays a significant role.

It is worth noting that in November 1996, after completing the total concentration of state power in his hands, Aliaksandr Lukashenka has consistently pursued a policy of fragmentation of law enforcement agencies. State Security Committee remains the largest universal body, however, by no means the only one. The fact of existence in Belarus of a draft law on foreign intelligence suggests the possibility of separation of foreign intelligence units from the SSC as a separate department.

In addition to these special services, within the security agencies in Belarus there are bodies that can be called "sleeping secret services". They have

the appropriate human and technical capacity, but by nature of the tasks performed by them at the moment it's not possible to include them in the list of special services. Above all, it is about the Main Directorate for Combating Organized Crime and Corruption and the Department to ensure operational-search activities of Ministry of Internal Affairs, as well as about the structure of the General Staff of the Belarusian army occupied by the intelligence representatives according to open sources of information (analytical intelligence).

Another goal is the optimization of the individual tasks of intelligence services. Thus, the Main Intelligence Directorate should be able to conduct operations in the cyber environment. Due to the fact that such operations require a high level of training of the professionals involved, it is advisable to concentrate all resources in the Main Intelligence Directorate to conduct cyber operations.

The Directorate should be given the status of a single governing and planning body for management of strategic electronic intelligence. To do this, it's necessary to develop an algorithm for Belarusian space system of remote sensing of the Earth (the operator of the unitary enterprise "Geoinformation Systems of the

National Academy of Sciences of Belarus”) to participate in solving the problems in the interest of the intelligence, despite the fact that the Belarusian satellite is more adapted for civilian use than for the intelligence.

In addition, the Main Intelligence Directorate has to act as a coordinator of all departments in the planning of information and psychological operations, including misinformation about the real plans and intentions of the military and political leaders of Belarus.

The body of political intelligence (SSC or the foreign intelligence service in the future) should focus primarily on intelligence activities, interaction with special services of friendly countries, as well as analytical intelligence. Technical means of obtaining information should be complementary for them.

Obviously, in the light of the events

in Ukraine, Belarusian special services should receive enhanced abilities for special military operations on the territory of hostile states.

Ever since the early 20-ies of the last century, the activities of Belarusian border agencies combine the intelligence and counterintelligence. Perhaps the most closed secret service of Belarus is a Separate service of active measures of the border service. Little is known about its tasks, and the information is sketchy. Current legislation doesn't allow the State Border Committee to have a full-fledged intelligence service. Thus, the law on the State Border Committee limits the receipt of information on the threats to national security only with the information about border and border territory, that is, only from the part of Belarusian territory. There is a need of creating a border intelligence system as a single vertically integrated

body within the State Border Committee.

It is obvious that the main burden falls on the undercover methods of obtaining information, monitoring the situation in the territories controlled by the neighbouring countries and analysis of publicly available information relating to these areas. Border Intelligence should preserve the functions to fight against criminal activities in the border area. Thus, we are talking about the creation of special service with separate functions of law enforcement agency operating in strictly designated geographical area: the territory of Belarus and neighbouring countries to a certain depth. The main function of the Border Intelligence: preventing adverse events that endanger the integrity of the state border and border security.

*Contrary to the existing stereotypes of the power system in Belarus as a neo-Soviet and left in the past one, after the restoration of independence in 1991, the system of ensuring the national security of the country has been actively forming. Belarusian national security system is dynamic and evolving even today. These changes are multidirectional, often with a “minus” sign, which doesn't make them less important for research.*



The building of the State Security Committee of the Republic of Belarus

# The Fifth Column of “Russian world” in Belarus

**“Russian world” is a world of people who are not able to respond to the challenges of globalization**



## **Siarhiei Nikaliuk**

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The main characteristic of Belarusian society is a split. It’s easily revealed by the answers of the people to politicized issues in the national polls. Young, educated city dwellers are mostly supporters of the European choice. They don’t trust President Lukashenka, don’t vote for him in the presidential election and are critical to all of his initiatives.

Senior, less educated people, living in small towns and rural areas, as a rule, are in favour of a close alliance with Russia. They form the core of Lukashenka’s electorate, and there is nothing surprising in the fact that they support any decisions of their idol without any discussion.

Of course, we are speaking of a purely declarative disapproval and purely declarative support, as the second most important characteristic of Belarusian society is its atomization. What in Belarus is called the “society” (including the most educated and informed part of it - the population of the largest cities), doesn’t have the potential of solidarity and especially the self-organization skills. Therefore, the society, usually understood in the West as a system of stable relations, based on mutual values, a sense of belonging and mutual interests, doesn’t exist in Belarus.

It is easy to notice that the Belarusian split is generated by the

clash of modernity and traditionalism. It is a legitimate child of unfinished modernization process.

The situation looks like as if there are two different peoples living in Belarus at the same time. Representatives of the first one are the minority (20-30%) that can independently develop personal life strategies. The minority doesn’t need to be taken care of by the authoritarian (paternalistic) state. The majority’s share in the Belarusian society is about 70%. They see a world without hard “vertical” power as a chaos. They simply will not survive without state care in a pseudo-market economy.

Any scheme is a simplification, including the above stated one. Among the majority the proportion of people with higher education is high. The explanation for this is obvious: the Belarusians with higher education are the basis of the so-called public sector, i.e. people whose material well-being is directly dependent on the state.

It’s necessary to note the situational affiliation of young people to a minority. Over the years they are spending their human capital, which reduces their competitiveness on the labour market. As a result, the majority is not only losing their followers due to natural causes, but also is constantly joined by neophytes.

## Differences are rather quantitative than qualitative

The stability of the split Belarusian society structure is demonstrated by table 1. The view on Belarusians, Russians and Ukrainians as the three branches of one nation is actively supported at the official level in Belarus and Russia. It is not surprising that the majority of Belarusians is almost unanimously in favour of such a "trinity". It should be noted that the sequence of events, which was launched in March 2014 (Russian annexation of the Crimea), had no effect on the distribution of responses.

For over two decades Belarusian intellectual counter-elite refuses to recognize the social reality, fixed by IISEPS. There's nothing exclusively Belarusian in this. According to sociologists Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, mythology should be defined "as the concept of reality, which suggests a continuous penetration of the sacred forces into the world of everyday experience. This concept, of course, involves a

continuous sequence between the social and cosmic order, as well as between their respective legitimations; the whole reality appears to be woven from a single fabric".

Intelligent counter-elite conceives modern Belarus to be a result of a continuous sequence of events originating in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (GDL). No doubt, GDL during its dawn was part of the Western civilization and opposed the Russian civilization emerging in the East. However, after two centuries of purposeful Russification the differences between the two peoples were greatly smoothed. And if today they can still be found, then we should talk about a quantitative structure rather than qualitative differences.

In July 2014 51% of respondents agreed that according to their national character, culture and traditions Belarusian people are close to Russians. And only 4% underlined the closeness to the West Europeans. At

the same time 12% mentioned that Belarusians are close to the Poles as well. But the second popular answer was "Belarusians are not like anyone" – 22%.

After 1917 active Russification of Belarusians gave way to Sovietization, which has become a key element of large-scale repression, aimed primarily at the national intelligentsia. The Communists set out to create a new social type of person, and on the territory of Belarus they were able to make significant progress in this.

In one of the first surveys of Russian Public Opinion Research Center (RPORC) conducted in March 1991, i.e., before the collapse of the USSR, a record share of a "Soviet man" was recorded among Belarusians: 69% of Belarusian population in the first place considered themselves citizens of the USSR, and only 24% – the citizens of their Republic. For comparison, in Estonia the response rate was 3% vs. 97%.

Table 1. Dynamics of answering the question: "Belarusians, Russians and Ukrainians - are two different nations or three branches of one nation" (Percentage of respondents)

<b>VARIANT</b>	<b>08'06</b>	<b>12'09</b>	<b>03'15</b>
<b>Three branches of one nation</b>	66	67	67
<b>Different nations</b>	28	30	27
<b>DA</b>	6	3	6

## Not fear, but euphoria

The reaction of the Belarusian society to annexation of Crimea by Russia was predictable: "This is the imperialist occupation" – 27%, "This is the return of the Russian lands to Russia, restoration of historical justice" – 62%. All subsequent evaluation of the Ukrainian events, formulated by the Russian federal TV channels, was maintained and continues to be maintained approximately in the same proportion.

Approximately 90% of Belarusians watch Russian TV channels with varying degrees of regularity. But it would be wrong to consider the population of the country as a victim of Russian propaganda. The propaganda was effective because it fell on a well-prepared soil. It stirred only those who were ready to be stirred.

"The Ukrainian revolution – says political analyst Vladimir Pastukhov – exacerbated the fears of the "little man". It became the trigger of philistine hysteria. This hysteria is a form of psychological defence: people are trying to push frightening reality away from them. It's easier for them to live in a soothing myth than to think about the threats they are unable to prevent. That's why today in Russia (and in Belarus – author's note.) without any visible coercion people lapse into patriotic dreams with pleasure. Russia was tired of pain and asked a "doctor" for anesthesia. The annexation of Crimea was enough for a weak body to fall into euphoria".

Russian society fell into euphoria after the annexation of Crimea. And

the Belarusian one? Independent Belarusian analysts couldn't afford to recognize that the fall of the electoral rating of President Lukashenka in December 2013 was replaced by growth in March 2014 under the influence of similar causes. Such recognition would mean the betrayal of an established mythology. The euphoria of Russians is generated by the imperial complex. But the heirs of the traditions of GDL can't suffer from a similar complex.

Here's the reason for explaining President Lukashenka's growing rating by fear factor in the situation of a drop in real incomes. Like, on the background of the collapse of the Ukrainian state, provoked by Maidan protests, Belarusians got a natural desire to unite around a strong leader.

This is a logical explanation. However, in March 2014 IISEPS sociologists have documented not only the growth of the electoral rating of President Lukashenka, but also the growth of positive sentiments in the society. In particular, the expectations index rose in March compared to December to 21 unit, which is an absolute record for all the years of measurement of the index.

IISEPS conducts surveys on a quarterly basis, which doesn't explicitly

link the break in public sentiment with the annexation of Crimea. Therefore, we turn to Table 2, borrowed from the "Analytical workshop of Andrei Vardamatsky".

Apogee of the events on Maidan was in February 2014. In addition, February was the month of triumph for the Russian athletes at the Winter Olympics in Sochi. However, neither the first nor the second event didn't cause in Belarusians additional desires to integrate with Russia. But in March

there was a turning point: the share of supporters of integration with Russia increased by 7 points, while the volume of supporters of integration with the European Union fell by 3 points. In April the divergence of integration vectors increased by 7 points.

And we can't find another explanation to this besides the positive (euphoric) reaction of Belarusians to the annexation of Crimea by Russia.

Table 2. Dynamics of answering the question: "In your opinion, in which union it would be better to live for the people of Belarus: in the European Union, or in union with Russia?" (Percentage of respondents)

<b>Variant</b>	<b>01'14</b>	<b>02'14</b>	<b>03'14</b>	<b>04'14</b>	<b>05'14</b>
<b>In union with Russia</b>	58	55	<b>62</b>	66	65
<b>In the European Union</b>	24	24	<b>21</b>	18	19
<b>DA</b>	18	21	<b>17</b>	16	16

Meeting of the OSCE delegation with the Foreign Ministry of Belarus. Minsk, June 15, 2015.



## The majority would try to adapt

“For a split – historian Alexander Akhiezer notes – a typical vicious circle, that is, activation of positive values in one of the two parts of the divided society, which drives the other forces of society that rejects these values, is quite typical”. Therefore, the euphoria of the majority on the occasion of the annexation of Crimea was responded by the minority’s negative forebodings of possible repetition of the scenario in the east of Ukraine. In September 2014, 26%

of Belarusians stated its readiness to resist Russian aggression with arms. In June 2015 the share of anti-Russian patriots reduced to 19%. Dynamics of the number of patriots declaring their readiness to defend Belarus from NATO, was just opposite – 26% and 31%, respectively (Table 3.).

But the majority of the citizens of the “Partisan Republic”, whose main national holiday (Independence Day) is timed to the day of liberation of Minsk from German troops, chose the

answer “would try to adapt to the new situation”. The aggressors from the East would be welcomed by 13% and 12%, from the West – by 10% and 6%.

In reply to a direct question about the attitude towards the concept of “Russian World”, which was used by Russian President Vladimir Putin to justify the annexation of Crimea, in September 2015 positive reaction to it was given by 35%, 41% didn’t care about it, and 16% reacted negatively.

Table 3. Dynamics of answering the question: “If Russian armed forces tried to annex the entire territory of Belarus or part of it, how would you act?” And “If NATO countries tried to change the policy of Belarus by force of arms, how would you act?” (Percentage of respondents)

Variant	Russia		NATO	
	09'14	06'15	09'14	06'15
Would rise in arms	26	19	26	31
Would try to adapt to the new situation	40	53	40	46
Would welcome the changes	13	12	10	6
DA	21	16	24	17

## Brief summary

Belarusians, like Russians, don’t fit into the present. The train of history speeds up, and every day the chance of the two fraternal peoples to be late for it increases.

“Russian world” is a world of people who are not able to respond to the challenges of globalization. “Russian world” is a world of the village people, who were resettled to the cities in the years of industrialization, but never mastered urban culture. That’s the

reason for aggressiveness as a way to drown out the feeling of inferiority (psychological compensation).

Hence the need for a “strong” state. Whether this state will be Belarusian or Russian is a secondary issue for the representatives of the “Russian world”. The main thing is that this state should be paternalistic and freed the bearers of traditional culture from personal choice.

The threat posed by the fifth column

of the “Russian world” (its ranks include most of the Belarusian society), is not in the presence of the people willing to open the gates to the aggressors from the East. The likelihood of such a threat is greatly exaggerated. The threat is in the numerical strength of the fifth column. Here we see a classic example of the quantity, which is not able to transform into a new quality, and in today’s dynamic world this is equal to falling out of history.

Column of the Armed Forces of Russian Federation during a parade in Minsk in honour of the Republic of Belarus Independence Day, July 3, 2014.



# Belarus in the Russian information space



## **Dzmitry Mitskevich**

*A journalist, analyst of Belarus Security Blog project. In 2012 graduated from the Faculty of Intercultural Communication of Minsk State Linguistic University.*

*Fields of interest: international relations, international terrorism, information warfare and propaganda.*

At the moment the situation in the Belarusian media field has developed in such a way that in fact the vast majority of Belarusians is not in the home, but in the foreign information space. This situation has been made possible due to a frankly poor quality of the product produced by Belarusian mass media, while foreign players have free access to the Belarusian market. First of all we are talking about the Russian media, the activity of which is growing every year.

For Russian media holdings with their budgets and capabilities it is not a big problem to create products that would be focused on the Belarusian market.

## **TV**

In order to see how good the Russian TV channels feel in Belarus, it is necessary to look at the Belarusian TV ratings. And here we are faced with a problem: the Belarusian TV ratings are not possible to find. It would be naive to assume that they simply are not conducted and that public institutions do not engage in collecting and analyzing such information. However, the reluctance to publish this kind of information leads to the idea that this information could expose the state media, which live at the expense of the budget, not in the best light. And, accordingly, call into question the appropriateness of financial investments and the competence of

Especially because the language barrier is virtually absent, as Russian for many years has been the second (and in fact the main) official language of Belarus. For a long time of presence on the Belarusian market Russian media were able to acquire a large and loyal audience who reluctantly accepts any information alternative to their deep-seated perception of the world.

In order to show the influence of Russian media in Belarus and their role in shaping public opinion, we have to consider the situation in the three most popular types of media: television, print media and new media.

those who manage them.

So, not having these ratings at hand, we take as a basis the report “Mediasphere of Belarus” for the year 2014, published by the Information and Analytical Centre under the President of the Republic of Belarus (hereinafter IAC), although its objectivity, so to speak, can raise some questions. However, even painted on the basis of official data, the picture about the prospects and the power of the Belarusian television is not very optimistic.

In accordance with the rating of the IAC, the first place in the Belarusian

TV ranking belongs to the ONT channel, a joint Belarusian-Russian project – it is watched by 67.7% of the population. In the second place is Belarus-1 – 62.3%. NTV-Belarus is slightly behind – 59.4%. The fourth place takes RTR-Belarus with 53.6%, and Belarus-2 closes the top-5 – 46.8%. The figures for the Belarusian TV channels are seemingly good, but everything is not so simple. First of all because the number of viewers of the leading Belarusian channels decreases from year to year, and of the Russian, on the contrary, increases.

However, there is another interesting point. The IAC report indicated that 80.7% of viewers watch Belarusian news programs, and 30.9 – the information and analytical ones. For their foreign analogues the proportion is 55.4% and 22.9%, respectively. At the same time the information about the most popular programs on each of the top 5 channels is the following: the programs of Russian production have the leading position on ONT, while on the Belarus 1 and Belarus-2 channels news or information and analytical programs had no place in the top of audience preferences.

This direct inconsistency can again be explained by the reluctance of IAC to unveil the real statistics on watching Belarusian and foreign programs of news and information-analytical character, because it may not be the most optimistic for the domestic TV channels. It is worth noting that these are the kinds of programs which have the greatest propaganda component, and therefore have the greatest impact on viewers and their views.

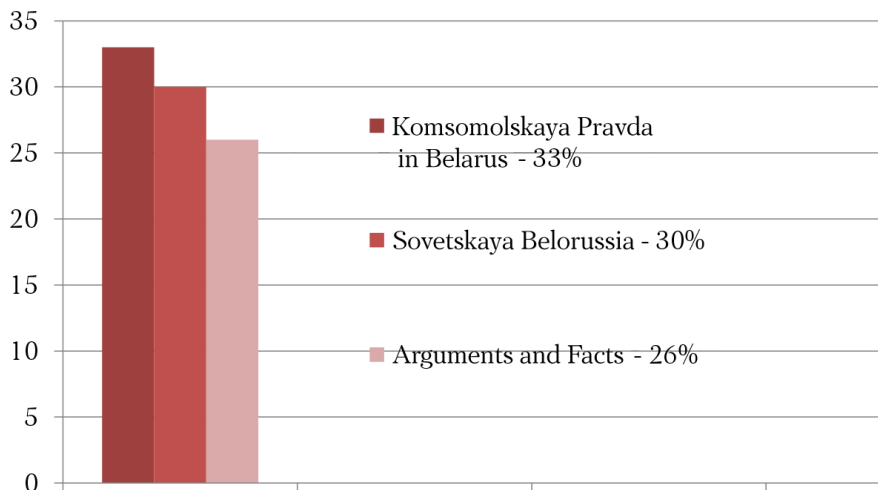
It is also necessary to emphasize that according to the above statistics, more than 85% of the population receive information through television, and in terms of influence it takes second place in Belarus after information received from friends and relatives (it got 8.8 points out of 10, while TV got 8). Given that “friends and family” also watch television, we can safely say that it is blue screen that is the most authoritative source of information for the population of Belarus.

## Print mass-media

At the moment, the effect of the print media can't compete with television. Thus, according to IAC, only 43.8% of Belarusians receive the necessary information from newspapers and magazines, while 25.9% do not read them at all. And according to the degree of trust Belarusians gave press 6.7 points out of possible 10 (third place after the information from friends and relatives and TV).

However, it is worth noting that Belarusians tend to draw more important information from the printed media than from television programs. Thus, 63.9% of readers are primarily interested in international events, exactly one half – in local news, 44.7% – in the internal political situation, and about 32% – in social issues and problems

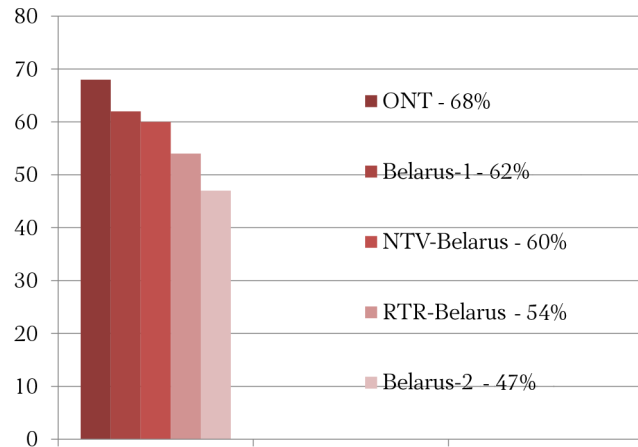
Most popular printed media in Belarus



of economic development. That is why the printed media can't be ignored - people often turn to them in a search for serious information

rather than entertainment content. Consequently, the efficiency of any propaganda in them will be quite high.

Most popular TV channels in Belarus



This corresponds exactly to the study of the Independent Institute of Socio-Economic and Political Studies (IISEPS). So, the question “How do you assess the Crimea joining Russia?” 26.9% of Belarusians said that this was “an imperialist annexation, an occupation”, and 62.2% – that this was “the return of the Russian lands to Russia, the restoration of historical justice”. To the question “How do you assess the events that in the spring of 2014 took place in the east of Ukraine, especially in the Donetsk and Lugansk regions?” 65.5% of respondents gave the answer “this is the people’s protest against the illegitimate government”, while only 23.2% said that “this is a riot organized by Russia”.

This is a good example of how an “influential source of information” could deform the minds of Belarusians in a relatively short period of time. The Belarusian TV always tried to take a more neutral position in relation to the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, but they were unable to bring it to the audience.

Russian printed media are the most popular in Belarus. The situation is even worse than with TV. According to the IAC, the first place among newspapers which Belarusians read takes the Russian “Komsomolskaya Pravda in Belarus” (hereinafter KP) – 32.9% of the printed press readers prefer it. Second place has the state newspaper “Sovetskaya Belorussia”, also referred to as “SB -- Belarus Today” (hereinafter SB), with 30.3%. And closes the top three the Russian “Arguments and Facts” (AiF) – 25.4%. The remaining editions have a much smaller share of the media market. Here it is worth paying attention to the fact that much of the popularity

of “Sovetskaya Belorussia” is due to compulsory subscription to state newspapers in many state companies.

Though the SB’s circulation is 400 thousand copies, there’s no independent reliable information on the number of readers of this newspaper. KP thus has a daily circulation of 50 million, but the Wednesday edition of the newspaper is printed in 290 thousand copies. And, unlike SB, by Wednesday evening it can be difficult to buy – the newspaper sells very well. Weekly AiF has 159 thousand copies, but isn’t this popular among Belarusians.

Both Russian newspapers are socio-political media and at times tend to

spread the Russian state propaganda in the crudest and most undisguised form. For example, the anti-terrorist operation in the Donbass is called “punitive”, the Ukrainian government – “junta”, Ukrainian patriots – “fascists”, etc. Actively spread are the myths about the “conspiracy against Russia,” “the American world domination” and others. Although such straightforward methods of propaganda are not always used, the example above with the IISEPS survey can be the proof of the effectiveness of such messages in printed media.

## New media

The role of the Internet is growing every year in all areas of human and state activity and, and the media is no exception. The proportion of people who regularly get their information from the global network is constantly growing: according to IAC, it makes 53% of Belarusians, while in 2010 they amounted to only 24.3%.

Unlike television and printed press, Belarusian internet at the moment it is not yet fully under the influence of Russian media, although they attempt to continuously increase their presence in this media segment in Belarus. In accordance with the rating of websites among Belarusian users, composed by Gemius company, as well as with the data of Akavita site which gathers such statistics, the major online media in Belarus are Belarusian non-governmental Russian-language portals Tut.by and Onliner.by. These media can be considered politically neutral because they do not articulate any particular political position, trying to present this kind of materials as mildly as possible to avoid falling from grace with the Ministry of Information. By the way, Onliner.by had once been closed by order of the Ministry, but after a while the access to the site was resumed.

However, in the rating of attendance Belarusian portals are way behind of the Russian postal services Yandex.ru and Mail.ru, which also publish news on their websites. Although it is worth noting here that visitors mainly use the

original functions of these services, such as mail and search. But the news feed is not left without attention because of its advantageous location on the pages of these sites. The bulk of the news there are events related to Belarus. However, sometimes important international news are published there, and the information is given through the prism of the Russian state propaganda.

It is also worth noting the increasing popularity of the Odnoklassniki.ru Russian social network. It is one of the most important tools of Russian propaganda in the most perverse forms of it. The fact is that there are practically no pages in this social network giving alternative to the official Russian point of view, since the vast majority of users of the network are Russians, and there is only a small portion of users from Belarus. In addition, pages there are censored, and the possibility to provide any information clearly contradicting the Russian propaganda is virtually non-existent.

The rating of attendance of online media in Belarus says that the leading position is held by independent media. Only one state socio-political resource, the BelTA news agency, managed to get in the top-5. It should be mentioned that the access to the Charter 97 and the Belarusian Partisan resources is limited to the citizens of Belarus – they will not open in all state institutions.

Russian informational and analytical resources, meanwhile, don’t even come close to the leaders.

In recent years Russia has decided to enter the market of Belarusian online media though, and in different fields at that. There are projects that claim to be serious and analytic (ImhoClub), and socio-political publications for a wide range of readers (Sputnik.by). The latter is worth looking at more closely, although its attendance and popularity are far from the leading Belarusian media. The fact is that it is a tool of an effective scheme of Russian media market games in its neighbouring countries. Sputnik is the Russian state project, part of the MIA “Russia today”, an analogue of the American “Radio Liberty”, designed to articulate the pro-Russian position almost on the entire globe.

In Belarus at the moment the project is valid only within the online edition and even has a Belarusian version. The site materials cover various topics, however, the political component is given through the prism of the Russian position. Although it should be noted that gross propaganda techniques such as replication of outright fakes isn’t applied. Rather there is a repetition of the same technology used by Russian press, which is to create and maintain the image of an “authoritative opinion” in popular areas, and then use it to promote certain political message, while not always in a crude manner. Like, “an authoritative edition will not lie”.

Thus, Sputnik's articles covering the urban and social issues, psychology, entertainment, etc. do have a high enough quality, which has a positive effect on the image of the publication. The site functions according to modern media schemes, publishes many unique texts on various subjects. At the same time, crude propaganda stamps are not used in the sphere of politics, but the basic formulations are of pro-Russian character. For example, terrorists in Donbass are called "militias", and the constant violation of the Minsk agreements is not mentioned at all, as the fact of Russia's participation in the conflict. Thus, the reader has the necessary perception of certain events formed. How effective the scheme is, we have seen from the previous examples.

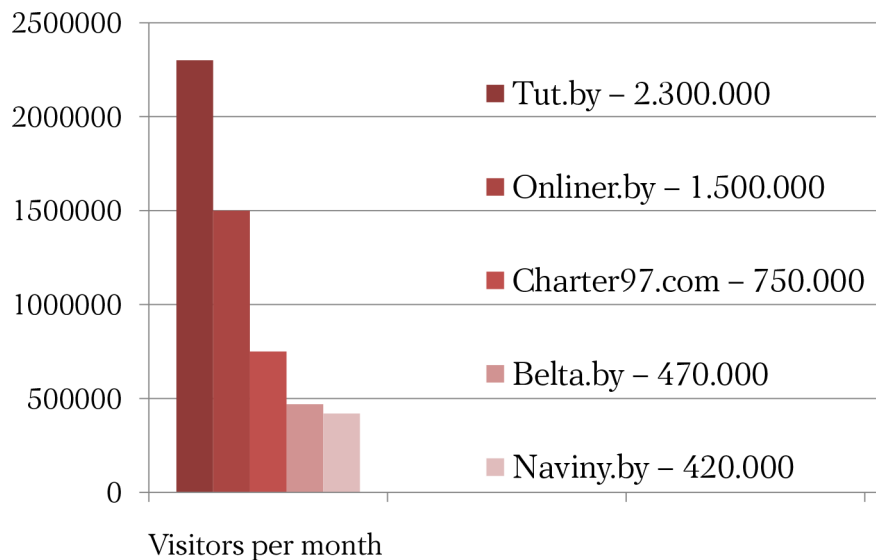
At the same time, it is necessary to pay attention to the fact that the staff (as well as the group of columnists) is formed of professionals who were not in demand by the top Belarusian mass media, and had no desire to work in the state ones, because wages there are too low even for Belarus standards. For a Belarusian journalist working in a media with the Russian propaganda background such as Sputnik is an undesirable point in a CV, because in the leading media (which, as we have already pointed out, almost without exception are private) and NGOs such a person will be treated with suspicion and, very likely, won't be hired.

## Conclusion

Of course, the challenges that Belarus may face in the event of a propaganda campaign in the Russian media against Belarus are quite serious, because, as we see, the influence of the neighbouring countries is very strong in the domestic market of traditional media. However, Belarusian authorities have the option of censorship, which has already happened with the Russian TV programs which were aimed at discrediting the current Belarusian government and the President in particular: they were simply removed and replaced by other programs.

In case of Russian media attempt a massive information attack on Belarus, the Belarusian authorities can make use of an extreme measure, which is

Online media rating in Belarus



Liliya Ananich, Minister of information of Belarus

total shutdown of TV channels, print media ban, restriction of access to online resources. However, it should be borne in mind that a product withdrawn from the broadcasting will have to be substituted with a similar domestic one. And if in the sphere of new media there are no problems with this component, in the traditional ones they are quite substantial. The Belarusian state-owned companies simply are not able to produce a media product comparable in quality with the Russian one. Firstly, because the resources required to manufacture the product are incomparable, and secondly, due to improper distribution of these resources.

The Belarusian state-run media are

a kind of a slightly improved version of the Soviet ones, where the odes to the present government are mixed with dilettante and unprofessional articles, with occasional informative headings. Therefore, there is a task before the Belarusian authorities to transform the state media so they could create a national media product in various niches, which can displace foreign analogues in the domestic field. Although this problem hasn't been solved for many years, and it was declared at various levels, its implementation is still quite far away. And so far we do not see much effort of persons responsible for its execution, which could have serious consequences in the future.

# The exit of Belarus from the Russian economic sphere: possibilities and price



## **Pavel Kirkouski**

*A master of Economic Sciences, an economic analyst of Belarus Security Blog.*

*Research interests: macroeconomic imbalances, monetary policy, economic relations between Belarus and Russia.*

From the first years of independence Belarus made a strategic move for economic integration with Russia. This is connected with the industrial relations left after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the structure of the Belarusian economy, heavily dependent on Russian energy supplies and accessories. Currently, Belarus is a member of the main pro-Russian international entities: the Eurasian Economic Union (hereinafter the EAEC), the CIS Free Trade Zone (hereinafter CIS FTZ) and the Collective Security Treaty Organization.

For a long time the chosen strategy has been successful. Preferential terms of trade with Russia (in particular the duty-free zone and the supply of gas and oil on favourable terms) have become an important factor of accelerated economic growth in the second half of the 1990s and 2000s. Thus, the average annual GDP growth between 1997 and 2008 exceeded 7%. However, at first the crisis of 2008, and then the fall of oil and other commodity prices in 2014-2015 have shown that preservation of economic dependence on Russia significantly worsens the prospects for further economic development.

The current recession in Russia has resulted in the fall of Belarus' GDP by almost 4% in 2015 and the reduction of the Belarusian industry for more than 10% over the last 3 years.

In addition, the excessive economic dependence on Russia implies a serious risk on national security. In order to achieve their foreign policy goals the Russian authorities often resort to the methods like the introduction of the trade embargo, the ban of import of specific products for farfetched reasons, the manipulations with energy prices, etc. With neo-imperial and nationalist sentiments growing in Russia this is a worrying issue.

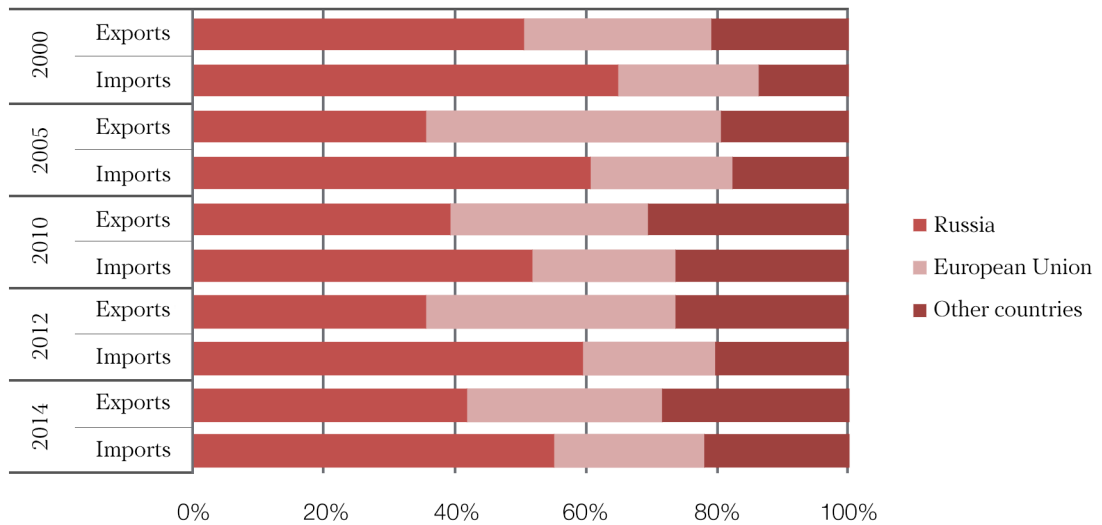
The economic influence of Russia is implemented through the following channels in Belarus:

- Foreign trade channel
- Subsidies channel
- Investment channel
- Transfer channel
- Loan channel

Let's take a look at each of these channels in terms of its scale and the possibility of levelling its influence.

**Foreign trade** plays a key role in the economy of Belarus, and its turnover exceeds the GDP. At the same time Russia has traditionally been a key trade partner of Belarus. Over 40% of Belarusian exports and about 55% of imports is connected with Russia.

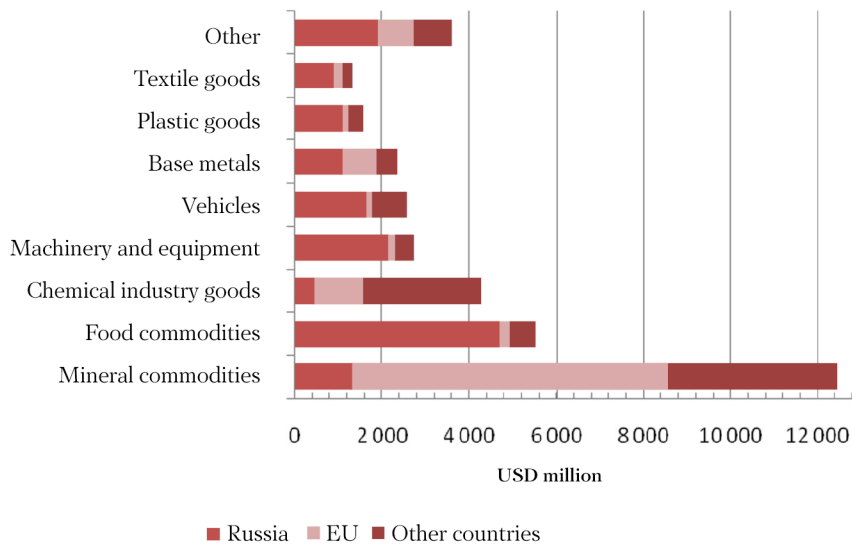
Regional structure of Belarus' exports and imports in 2005-2014



**Source:** own calculations on the basis of the Republic of Belarus National Statistics Committee data

The degree of dependence of the Belarusian economy on trade with Russia varies greatly by industry. This dependence is strong in agriculture and food processing, oil refining, mechanical engineering. Among backbone industries this dependence is not so high in the production of potash.

Regional structure of Belarus' exports in 2014 branch-wise



**Source:** balance of payments of the Republic of Belarus in 2014, the National Bank of Belarus

In addition, due to the difference in size of the economy (GDP of Russia is more than 20 times bigger than GDP of Belarus), this dependence is asymmetrical: the share of Belarus in Russia's foreign trade accounts to only a little more than 4%.

Belarusian authorities are trying to solve the problem of exports diversification with the help of the “one-third – one-third – one-third” concept, according to which the export to the EU, the EAEC and the so-called “far-arc countries” must be equal in 2020. In fact, the reduction of the dependence on the Russian market is expected due to the reorientation of the exports to the Asian countries, Latin American, Middle Eastern and African regions, the share of which will be increased almost 5 times from the current 7%. Obviously, the orientation on these countries is connected with the difficult access for the Belarusian goods to the EU market. The reasons for this lie in the relatively low competitiveness of the most of

Belarusian products and obstruction measures by the EU. In case of the “far-arc countries” the authorities are trying to compensate for the lack of competitiveness by achieving bilateral exclusive agreements with local regimes. In fact, they are trying to repeat the experience of a relatively successful Belarusian-Venezuelan cooperation.

The problem is that according to the gravity model theory of international trade it is not probable to increase exports to these countries to the declared level. Empirical studies show that the potential of bilateral trade between the countries is directly proportional to the size of their economies, and inversely proportional to the physical distance between

them. In this case, the negative factors in increasing exports to the “far-arc countries” are the high transport costs for cargo delivery, low level of economic prosperity, serious cultural differences and lack of cooperation experience.

The most realistic option to reduce dependence on supplies to the Russian market is increasing exports to the EU – the largest market bordering Belarus. Although currently the export to the EU accounts for about 30% of Belarusian exports, its structure is poorly diversified and focused on low-productivity goods: about 80% of exports to the EU are oil and oil products, mineral fertilizers and metal-rolls.

An agreement on free trade zone, similar to the one which came into force between the EU and Ukraine on January 1, 2016, could significantly increase the Belarusian export volume and improve its structure as well. The agreement would have positive impact on the economy of Belarus in the following areas:

- Reduction of protective measures (reduction and cancellation of fees, obtaining quotas for food export) could contribute to the growth of Belarusian exports to the EU. The highest success could be achieved by the Belarusian dairy products, furniture and other wood products, metal products, chemical industry, instrument-making industry.
- Simplified access to EU markets would increase the investment attractiveness of the country. Belarus has relatively cheap and sufficiently qualified human resources, which in combination with a good transport infrastructure creates a favourable environment for investment projects focused on the EU market.
- Abolition of duties on investment imports from the EU would help to accelerate the technical modernization of the economy.



The meeting of the Supreme Eurasian Economic Council in October 2015. - kremlin.ru

The downside of such an agreement would be the inevitable costs and problems for the economy:

- The substantial investment costs to bring the product into compliance with technical, sanitary and phytosanitary rules of the EU are necessary.
- Probable condition of a free trade zone with the EU will be the adjustment of legislation and practice in the field of state industries, ensuring fair competition, protection of intellectual property rights and other areas. In general, this will require the acceleration of market reforms in Belarus, as well as the reduction of fiscal and quasi-fiscal support to the public sector (the latter in 2014 was about 4% of GDP). In the medium to long term it should improve the efficiency of domestic investment, but in the short term it will inevitably be associated with a reduction in GDP and an increase in unemployment, especially in agriculture, engineering and construction.
- Increase of competition on the domestic market in connection with the simplification of access to it for the goods of the European manufacturers. Research shows that manufacturers of medicines, trucks, tractors and truck tractors, refrigerators and fish products will face the greatest risks of import liberalization.
- The main threat to an agreement on an FTA with the EU is a possible sharp deterioration in the terms of trade with Russia. The experience of Ukraine shows that Russia is ready to suspend the operation of the CIS free trade zone in the case of inclusion of its neighbours in the European integration projects.

In the case of Belarus' exiting the EAEC and the FTA with Russia the most vulnerable sectors of Belarusian economy will be refining, machine building and agriculture. The export of petroleum products and crude oil provides more than 30% of total Belarusian exports and 70% of exports to the EU. The machined depth of refining by Belarusian oil refineries is significantly lower than those of European competitors (70-72% vs. 85-90%). Therefore, the economic efficiency of the petrochemical industry is entirely dependent on access to cheap Russian oil, which comes to Belarus on a duty-free basis at the moment. Mechanical engineering and agriculture could only partially re-orient the exports, and in case of the closure of the Russian market will experience a sharp decline in production and a deterioration of financial situation. In fact, up to 70% of Belarusian exports will be under the threat, which, through the budgetary mechanism and cross-connection, may lead to a drop in GDP of Belarus to at least 30% and to an increase of unemployment to 15-20% according to the most conservative estimates.

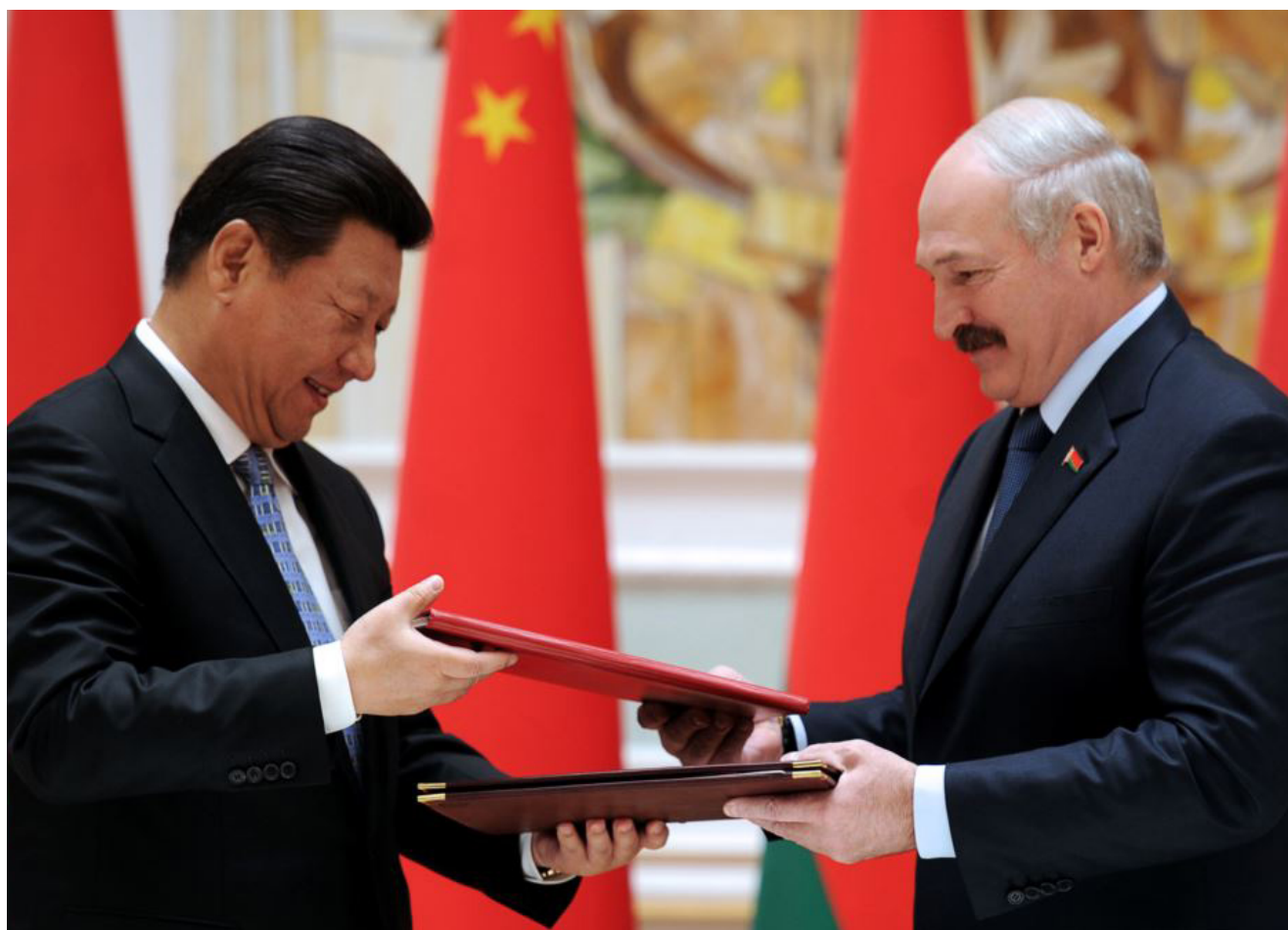
For many years, receiving a discount when purchasing energy products

played a significant role in reducing the deficit of the trade balance of the country. According to some reports, in the mid-2000s the cumulative effect of such preferences reached the level of 10% of GDP. At the same time the end of the commodity super cycle reduced the importance of this factor. So, if before Belarus saved up to USD 160-180 on 1 thousand cubic meters of gas in relation to the average European price, in the first quarter of 2016 the savings could be reduced to USD 40-60. The revenues from Russian oil taxes will reduce as well – from USD 2.5 billion to USD 1.1 billion. Thus, the total effect of the energy benefits for the balance of payments could amount to about USD 2-2.4 billion in 2016 (or about 3.5-4% of GDP). The loss of these preferences will increase the balance of payments deficit. On the other hand, the rise in the cost of energy will be an additional incentive to accelerate structural reforms in the economy and reduce its energy consumption, which is 1.5-2 times higher than in developed countries.

A significant part of Belarusian citizens is engaged in Russian economy: from 100 to 300 thousand people (or 2-6% of the people employed in Belarus), according to various estimates. According to

the official information, the primary income and transfers from them amounted to almost USD 1 billion in 2014. A serious deterioration in relations with Russia could lead to the introduction of the visa regime and creation of unfavourable conditions for Belarusian citizens (earlier similar measures have been taken by Russia against Georgian citizens after 2008 conflict). Such course of events would lead to additional pressure on the balance of payments of the country and the deterioration of the situation on the labour market.

The Russian capital generates a significant part of foreign investments in the Belarusian economy. Thus, as of 2014, Russia's share in the volume of accumulated investments in the real sector of the economy amounted to 28.3%. Another 14% and 10.3% of accumulated investment are from Cyprus and the UK, where residents are often the de-facto Russian commercial institutions. The largest investment project in the country – the construction of Belarusian nuclear power plant with the budget of USD 10 billion – is implemented due to the Russian loan and technologies. At the same time the impact of foreign investment on the economy as a whole is not really big – the level of accumulated investment



Chinese President Xi Jinping and President of Belarus Aliaksand Lukashenka meeting in Minsk, May 2015.

per capita in Belarus is significantly lower than in neighbouring countries (for example, in Poland it's 4.5 times bigger, in Lithuania – 3 times bigger). In addition, most of the investments are direct rather than portfolio, which is connected with the underdevelopment of the stock market. Mobility of such investments is limited, and the investor can not withdraw them quickly out of the economy.

Russia is the main creditor of the Government of Belarus. About 70% of the external debt of Belarus accounts on loans of the Russian government, the affiliated banks of the Russian government and EurAsEC Anti-Crisis Fund, and recent years have seen the growth of this share. In 2016 the payments to service the external debt of Belarus amount to USD 3.2 billion, while the gold reserves amount only to USD 4.5 billion. At the same time the main source of refinancing deals are considered to be new Russian loans. It's much more complicated to get alternative

resources in the framework of IMF programs, because the standard requirement of the Fund is to carry out deep structural reforms, which the Belarusian authorities are trying to avoid. The possibilities of attracting resources from the sovereign bonds market are limited by the high cost of borrowings.

In general it can be concluded that the economic dependence of Belarus on Russia is critical at the moment. Belarus has no serious leverages to resist aggressive Russian actions in the economic sphere in the event of a conflict situation. The ability to lock the transit of Russian goods through the territory of Belarus after the sale of Beltransgaz to Gazprom in 2011 is severely limited. The main potential of the gradual reduction of this dependence lies in the development of economic ties with the EU. The key condition to a successful solution of this problem is carrying out deep structural reforms of the Belarusian economy and the liberalization in terms of trade with the EU.

The first practical steps of the Belarusian authorities in this direction could be the following:

- Agreement with the IMF on credit program for carrying out deep structural reforms, including large-scale privatization of state enterprises in order to improve their efficiency, to include them in international cooperation links and to balance payments deficit.
- Completion of modernization of the refining industry, the budget of which for 2017 amounts to USD 2 billion.
- Accession to the WTO, negotiations on which are still continuing in a slow mode.
- Simplification of the visa regime with EU countries.

At the same time it is important to avoid a sharp deterioration in relations with Russia, as the economic consequences of the conflict with it pose a threat to the preservation of the statehood of Belarus.



## Policies of Ukraine with regard to Belarus: main directions and impact on regional security



### Ihar Tyshkevich

*A journalist, political analyst and expert. His texts are published in a number of leading Ukrainian media, as well as in the analytical projects of Belarus and Czech Republic. At the request of a number of diplomatic missions prepared analytical reports on regional policy and security. Fields of interest: regional policy, connection of economic processes with political decisions, regional security, the transformation of closed systems of government.*

The development of the Ukrainian crisis drew attention of a number of politicians to the Republic of Belarus. Or, to be precise, to its position with regard to Ukraine. The formal ally of Kremlin used the time to implement a number of economic and political projects. In particular:

- to ensure the suspension and the lift of sanctions by the EU and the US;
- to reduce the dependence of the domestic economy on the Kremlin's political decisions due to more lucrative long-term contracts for the supply of raw materials;
- to reduce the overall impact of the Russian Federation on the economy of Belarus;
- to prepare for the structural reforms, to start negotiations about raising funds for these purposes;
- to alleviate the problem of depopulation.

The Belarusian authorities have purposefully worked to achieve the goals listed above. Official Minsk has a clear understanding of its policies in the light of the "Ukrainian issue". The reverse process – Ukrainian policy towards Belarus – is more interesting.

Alas, we can't talk about even the consolidated medium-term plans of the Ukrainian authorities for policies towards Belarus. Kiev can't answer the question: "Where we want to see Minsk in the regional system of powers in 5, 10, 15 years?" However, there are a number of spheres in which the agenda is offered both by the Ukraine and Belarus. Or at least a part of the Ukrainian elites formulates possible goals and methods of cooperation. So let's talk about the policies of Ukraine towards Belarus and how their implementation can have an impact on the balance of powers in the region.

## Economics

Ukraine is one of the most important economic partners of Belarus. Moreover, the balance of trade between the two countries has a significant bias. During the last 8 years the volume of Belarusian export has exceeded volumes of supplies from Ukraine by USD 1.7 - 2.9 billion, depending on the year. At the same time Ukraine is critically dependent on the Belarusian fuel supply: it is between 45% and 61% of consumption volume, depending on commodity item. Positions of Belarus are also strong on the Ukrainian mechanical engineering and chemical industry products market.

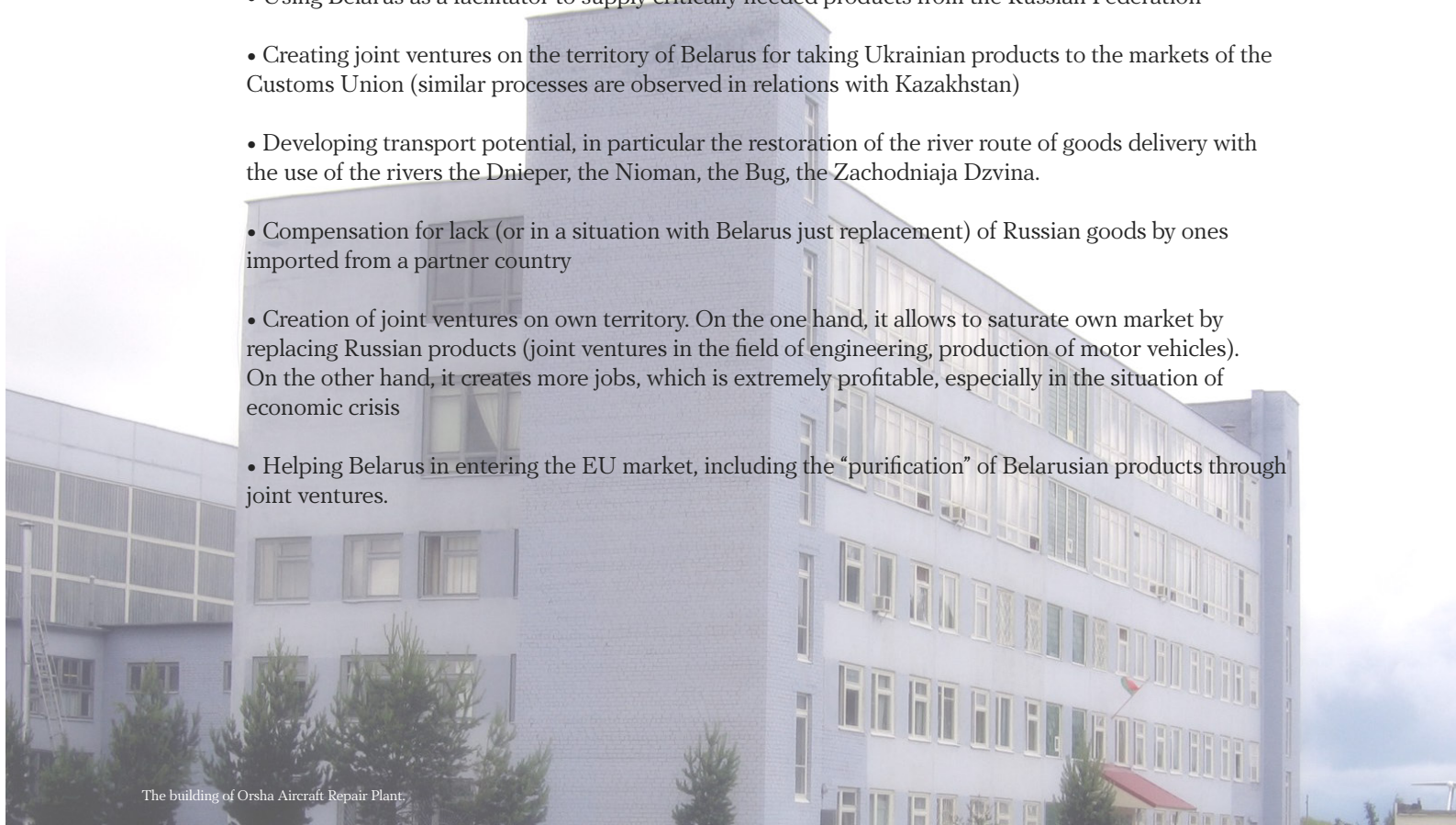
Another topic which is interesting for both countries is the development of transit potential of the route from the Baltic to the Black Sea.

These are preconditions for the development of cooperation. The crisis of 2013-2015 adds some topics for discussion:

- Limitation of mutual trade (and in 2016 its actual stop for a large part of commodity items) creates additional difficulties for Ukrainian enterprises, which were oriented on the Russian market or depend on the supply of raw materials from Russia.
- Ukrainian defence industry until recently has been (and now partially is) dependent on Russian supplies. In particular it's necessary to mention components and parts for the vehicles, armoured vehicles and parts of aircraft. In 2014, Belarus met the demand in many cases.
- Creation (or development) schemes for transporting goods, bypassing the territory of the Russian Federation, including the possibility of supply of hydrocarbons on the North-South axis.
- Development of cooperation and trade between the two countries in conditions when one is a member of the Customs Union, and the other has signed an agreement on association with the EU.

All of the above is reflected in the new policy of economic cooperation between Ukraine and Belarus. It isn't formalized, but is realized. And from the Ukraine's side it is as follows:

- Saving a free trade zone with Belarus
- Using Belarus as a facilitator to supply critically needed products from the Russian Federation
- Creating joint ventures on the territory of Belarus for taking Ukrainian products to the markets of the Customs Union (similar processes are observed in relations with Kazakhstan)
- Developing transport potential, in particular the restoration of the river route of goods delivery with the use of the rivers the Dnieper, the Nioman, the Bug, the Zachodniaja Dzvina.
- Compensation for lack (or in a situation with Belarus just replacement) of Russian goods by ones imported from a partner country
- Creation of joint ventures on own territory. On the one hand, it allows to saturate own market by replacing Russian products (joint ventures in the field of engineering, production of motor vehicles). On the other hand, it creates more jobs, which is extremely profitable, especially in the situation of economic crisis
- Helping Belarus in entering the EU market, including the "purification" of Belarusian products through joint ventures.



It is necessary to emphasize that such tendencies are extremely beneficial for both Belarus and Ukraine, as well as for other countries in the region. Yes, and for the EU as a whole. Here are some arguments in favour of this statement:

- Development of trade on the North-South axis reduces the dependence of the region's economies on Russian supplies
- Creation of new jobs reduces the negative impact of the crisis on the labour market, including reduced migration flows from Ukraine and Belarus
- Increased volume of transport of goods and the creation of a full-fledged North-South transport axis ensures economic stability of the Baltic States. It's enough to mention that in 2015 Latvian and Lithuanian ports compensated for the fall of Russian cargo by increasing volumes of cargo from Belarus and China
- Enhancing cooperation and creating joint ventures is impossible without technological cooperation, which increases the potential of both Belarusian and Ukrainian economies.

### Military-industrial complex (MIC)

Taking into consideration the war in the east of Ukraine and the activity of Russian Federation in the military sphere, the development of military-industrial complex is more than just an economic issue. Ukraine and Belarus were the parts of the former Soviet Union. Their defence industry is not self-sufficient. Soviet Union has deliberately avoided the creation of closed production cycles in small areas. And today most of the assembly facilities are located in the Russian Federation.

At the moment, all the post-Soviet countries (including the eastern part of the EU) to a greater or lesser extent are dependent on supplies of Russian equipment.

At the same time, Belarus and Ukraine have their own achievements and technologies which are very interesting, for developed countries as well. Military-industrial complexes of Belarus and Ukraine supplement each other in many spheres, especially taking into account the development

in the past 20 years. Thus, Ukraine has the potential in:

- creation of armoured vehicles;
- aviation industry;
- missile industry;
- electronic warfare industry (partially).

Belarus can boast of:

- optics and guidance systems;
- UAV production technologies;
- capacities for the development and production of motor vehicles, chassis for heavy artillery and missile weapons;
- electronic warfare industry.

The two countries have been cooperating in MIC long before 2014. In 2014 there was a noticeable increase in the supply of military and dual-use goods from Belarus to Ukraine. 2015 added a new trend – the joint development and joint ventures. Thus, Ukraine made a “breakthrough” in the field of guidance systems for anti-tank missiles – this

is what Belarusian MIC specializes in. Belarus created a multiple launch rocket system (based on a Chinese one) and, according to some sources, started the development of the tactical missile system, which means that it got engaged in the development that have been and are conducted in Ukraine. However, cooperation in these areas is denied by both Ukrainian and Belarusian officials.

In Belarus (in Orsha) there is a Belarusian-Ukrainian enterprise for the repair and manufacture of helicopters, including ones equipped with a new engine, developed by Ukrainian enterprise “Motor Sich”. In Ukraine, a factory for assembling Belarusian military trucks started its work. The Belarusian engineers have created an armoured vehicle for Ukraine National Guard. Joint work for the production of special fabrics for the needs of the Ukrainian military-industrial complex is underway

Thus, we can say that the policy of Ukraine in the sphere of military-industrial complex is the following:

- Replacement of some Russian components by Belarusian ones (or delivered via Belarus) in the productions of own goods
- Attraction of technologies and capacity building in areas that have not been developed. This is the car industry, the production of engines, UAVs, optics and electronic warfare industry
- Co-operation with Belarus in the field of aviation and missile technologies. On the one hand, it creates a new chain of cooperation, and on the other – allows to trade with Russia (in a limited format) by means of joint ventures on the Belarusian territory.

This work increases the defence capabilities of the two countries and in the long term is able to have an impact on the defence of the countries on the Eastern flank of NATO. The Baltic States, the former Warsaw Pact countries are largely armed with old Soviet units that need to be upgraded and/or replaced. The cooperation of MICs of Belarus and Ukraine is capable to some extent to alleviate the problem.

## Politics

On the one hand, it is obvious that Belarus pursues a policy toward Ukraine that is largely independent from the Kremlin. On the other hand, there are still 3 things that Kiev has to take into account in its policy towards Minsk:

- Dependence of the Belarusian economy on Russia
- Republic of Belarus is a formal ally of the Russian Federation, and has signed agreements in the field of politics, economics, defence
- Personality of Aliaksandr Lukashenka, who, despite his position, has been and still is a dictator.

Accordingly, the policy of official Kyiv is as follows:

- Doing everything to contribute to the normalization of relations between Belarus and the EU and the US. In particular, being a lobbyist of Belarus on several issues along with Lithuania
- Making direct steps to reduce the economic dependence of Belarus on Russia or contribute to such programs, including being an intermediary for the delivery of Belarusian goods to the EU market
- At the same time trying not to create grounds that allow the Kremlin, based on bilateral agreements, to demand from Minsk the change of Belarusian policy towards Ukraine
- Demonstrating the absence of intent to support the “democratic initiative” in Belarus and also not creating tension points associated with the evaluation, reaction, influence on political processes in Belarus. A typical example is Kiev being cautious on providing asylum to Belarusian democrats and citizenship to Belarusians who fought on the side of Ukraine in Donbass.

This position, coupled with economic policy, can lead to balancing the Russian influence on Belarus. That will allow Minsk to even more distance itself from Moscow. This alleviates security problems not only in Ukraine, but also in the Baltic states and Poland – the EU’s eastern borders. The further development of this policy may lead to the involvement of the Republic of Belarus in the regional system of cooperation in the field of military, political and economic security.

## Demography and Migration

Ukrainian authorities haven’t adequately evaluated the demographic risks to the country and to neighbouring states yet. Ukraine is the source of migratory flows and a transshipment point for illegal migration to the EU.

The migration policy of Kiev is deservedly criticized, especially in terms of complex flows management: labour migration, refugees, stimulating the migration of certain groups.

Belarus, on the contrary, resolves its demographic problems at the expense of managing migration flows. By creating attractive conditions, Minsk

has drawn into its territory from 120 to 160 thousand immigrants from Ukraine and has taken measures to integrate some of them into the society – especially because these people are mentally and culturally close to the titular nation.

Nevertheless, the development of cooperation between the two countries, industrial cooperation, sooner or later will lead to labour migration. This is one of the areas that will be discussed by the two governments in the coming years.

Summarizing what has been said above, the development of Ukrainian-Belarusian relations is beneficial not only to the two countries. Such cooperation creates a new configuration of forces in the region, bringing stability and sustainability in politics, economics and defence. However, the brake on this process is fragmentariness of the Ukrainian politics – the lack of common goals and methods to achieve them. And to a certain extent the passivity of official Kiev, especially in comparison with the activity of the Belarusian side.

# The state and prospects of development of non-civil helicopter aviation in Belarus



## **Leanid Spatkai**

*In 1981-1998 served in combat units of the Air Force and Army Aviation of the USSR, Russian Federation and the Republic of Belarus. In 1998-2004 served in the border troops of the Republic of Belarus, was a member of the Military-heraldic Commission of the Belarus Security Council. After transfer to the reserve has been studying the work of the Border Guard and Air Force on the territory of Belarus in different periods of its history. Author of three books and more than 300 publications in the media and online resources on these topics.*

## **Aviation legacy of the USSR**

At the time of the proclamation of independence of Belarus about 350 military helicopters for various purposes, assigned to certain aircraft and helicopter regiments and helicopter squadrons of Air Defense Forces, Air Force, Land Forces and the Strategic Missile Forces of the Armed Forces of the USSR, were stationed on its territory.

## **Creation and reformation of helicopter aviation of Armed Forces of the Republic of Belarus**

After the proclamation of independence of Belarus by the Resolution of the Supreme Council of the Republic on 20 September 1991 all the controls, staffs and military units stationed on its territory were subject to the Council of Ministers starting from the January 1, 1992. Also, the Council of Ministers was granted the right to determine the order of relocation "in the boundaries of the Republic of Belarus, entering and withdrawal from the territory of the Republic of Belarus of units and formations of the USSR Armed Forces, border, railway and construction troops and other military units located in the territory of the Republic of Belarus, as well as the procedure for entering and withdrawal of weapons, military equipment, export of material and technical means belonging to them and other military equipment". In addition, the Council of Ministers, together with the Commission of

Supreme Council on national security, defence and fight against crime as well as with the command of the Red Banner Belarusian Military District and "other concerned ministries and departments" had to submit to the Supreme Council the proposal on the structure and the principles of development of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Belarus before November 1, 1991.

Therefore, all air units stationed on the territory of Belarus became part of the Armed Forces of the Republic.

Since, according to the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe and "Agreement on the Principles and procedure implementation of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe", adopted on May 15, 1992 in Tashkent, Belarus was allowed to have no more than 260 combat aircraft and no more than 80 combat helicopters as part of its

Armed Forces, since the formation of the Air Force Belarus began to decline their size.

As a result, in the beginning of 1996 there were eight air bases of Belarus Air Force, four of which had helicopters: 50th (in Machulishchy) 65th (in Kobryn), 181st (in Pruzhany) and 276th (in Barautsy). In total, these air bases had 215 combat and special helicopters: 107 Mi-8T/MT, 70 Mi-24V/P/K/R, 24 Mi-6, 14 Mi-26.

All helicopters of disbanded squadrons and the “excess” helicopters of reformed air bases were removed and relocated to the reserve airfield in Luninets. There the 1169th base storage of aircraft was formed.

In addition, some of the helicopters were sold to foreign countries.

In December 2001, the Air Force and Air Defense Forces of Belarus have been combined into a single institution – Air Force and Air Defense Forces, as part of which two operational and tactical command units were formed: Western (headquarters – Baranavichy, area of responsibility – western and southern parts of Belarus) and North-Western (headquarters – the Machulishchy village, area of

responsibility – northern, central and eastern parts of Belarus).

However, the aircraft structure hasn't changed – there were still eight air bases, including four helicopter ones.

In 2001-2015 Air Force and Air Defense Forces of Belarus aviation structure underwent significant changes. In particular, in 2002, the 65th transport and combat helicopter base, based in Kobryn, was reformed in the 65th Separate Mixed helicopter squadron. However, in 2003, the 65th Separate Helicopter mixed squadron was disbanded, and the majority of its personnel was transferred for further service to the 181st air base, based in Pruzhany.

In 2002-2003 276th helicopter base was disbanded as well. The bulk of its personnel was transferred for further service to the 181st air base. The helicopters from 276th helicopter base, some of which were put on service of 181st helicopter base and some were later used as donors of spare parts for helicopters with lower operating resource, were transferred there as well.

In 2015, 181st helicopter base, based in Pruzhany, was disbanded

too. By December 1 its personnel and helicopters were transferred to the 50th Mixed Air Base based in Machulishchy, where the 3rd Squadron (25 Mi-24 and 6 Mi-8) was formed. In addition, in order to maintain the flight crews in the squadron the aviation detachment of 12 crews that don't have assigned helicopters was formed (in this regard, the detachment is informally called “horseless”).

In connection with the dissolution of a significant amount of air bases and other military units of the Air Force and Air Defense Forces and, consequently, reduction in the number of aviation equipment and personnel, in autumn 2014 the control units of the Western and North-Western tactical commands were disbanded as well.

Thus, at the moment the Air Force and Air Defense Forces of Belarus have only one air base - 50th Mixed Air Base (in Machulishchy), which in addition to transport and special aircraft includes 42 Mi-8, 29 Mi-24 and 1 Mi-26, while about 10 Mi-26 are stored. In addition, as part of 3rd Squadron of the Air Base there are 12 “horseless” crews of Mi-24 and Mi-8.

### Helicopter aviation of other law enforcement agencies of Belarus

At the time of the proclamation of the Belarusian independent state, on the territory of the country there were no other military or special aviation of law enforcement agencies, in addition to aviation of the Armed Forces of the former USSR.

However, with the creation of the law enforcement agencies, some of them, in particular, border guards, and then the Ministry of Emergency Situations (MES), began to create their own air units.



Military transport helicopter Mi-8 of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Belarus.

## Aviation of Border Guard

Aviation of Border Guard of Belarus was established in accordance with the Resolution of Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus of October 5, 1993 № 667 by the Order of the Commander of Border Guard of Belarus of 25 October 1993 № 074. In response to this order, on the basis of the 206th separate helicopter squadron of USSR Strategic Missile Troops, stationed at Aziarki airfield (near Pastavy), by the end of 1993 the 1st Separate Air Squadron of Border Guard of Belarus was created.

Already in January 1994, the crew of the Squadron began training flights, and on March 2, 1994 helicopter crews started the protection of the Belarusian State border. From this day for almost 20 years they have carried out missions to conduct patrol service, air and radiation reconnaissance (together with reconnaissance and

search team on board), troops landing, air search and arrest of violators of the State border. In 2008 alone, the crews of border aviation helicopters detained more than 20 violators of the State border and about 30 violators of border regime as well as material assets worth more than 150 mln BYR, discovered more than 100 bypass roads and trails.

The same year the contract for the purchase of four helicopters AS-355NP Ecureuil of French company Eurocopter for the Border Guard of Belarus and for training of border aviation crews was made.

On June 25, 2009 the first AS-355NP Ecureuil landed at the airfield of Separate special aviation detachment of the Border Guard (this was the new name of the 1st Separate Air Squadron according to the Decree of the President of the Republic of

Belarus of June 16, 2009). The other three helicopters were delivered in 2010. After their preparation and retraining of the crews, helicopters Mi-8, the service life of which had almost finished, began to be withdrawn from the service. By the end of 2013 only one flying Mi-8 – the last of those helicopters which were at the beginning of the history of Belarus Border Guard aviation, was left in Separate special aviation detachment.

In 2014, due to the necessity of redistribution of financial resources allocated for border security, and optimization of the staff number of the Border Guard, according to the Presidential Decree of June 3, 2014 №262 the Separate special aviation detachment was transferred to the structure of Ministry of Emergency Situations.

## MES aviation

In 2002, the Belarusian government decided to create the State aviation rescue institution “Aviation” of the Ministry of Emergency Situations of the Republic of Belarus, based at the airfield “Lipki” and consisting of aircraft and special equipment provided by Air Force and Air Defence Forces.

Helicopters Mi-8MT (Mi-17) and two Mi-26T were transferred to the new formation from the 50th Mixed Air Base (in Machulishchy) and 65th Separate Mixed Helicopter Squadron (in Kobrin), that was disbanded earlier.

In September 2003, Unitary Enterprise of aviation protection of forests “Bellesavia” was transferred from the Ministry of Forestry to the Ministry of Emergency Situations. The aims of the organization are: finding fires and traffic accidents, medical services and assistance during floods, rescuing the lost in the forest, providing the information about the tornados and defining the volume of damage in forests and forest health.

“Bellesavia” includes the total of eight helicopters Mi-2. In addition, a significant number of helicopters are in storage and conservation.

The third MES aviation detachment – Aviation SAR level of “Homel Engineering Institute” – doesn’t have helicopters.

In this regard, in order to equip agencies and departments for emergency situations with modern technical facilities and equipment, including aircraft, the State program for 2001-2005 was adopted in 2001. However, due to limited funding, its implementation from the republican budget amounted to only about 6%.

In 2005, the second State program to equip the MES of the Republic of Belarus with modern fire and rescue equipment in 2006-2010 was approved by the Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus of December 26, № 1337. According to the State program it was planned to purchase two Russian helicopters: “Ansat” and Mi-34 for the budget funds “in order to broaden the spectrum of tasks and update the aircraft fleet”. The third Russian helicopter Ka-226 was planned to be purchased for other funds. The modernization of four Mi-2 was planned as well.

However, this State program also hasn’t been implemented in full.

Only in October 2013 the Minsk City Department of Ministry of Emergency Situations signed a contract with the holding company “Helicopters of Russia” on the acquisition of fire-fighting helicopter Ka-32A11BC with horizontal fire-extinguishing system, which was planned to be used to extinguish fires in high-rise buildings in Minsk. This specialized helicopter was supposed to be delivered in 2014. But due to financial problems the purchase of the helicopter didn’t take place.

However, in 2014 MES aviation got three helicopters – by August 1, 2014, in accordance with the Presidential Decree of June 3, №262, Separate Aviation detachment, including three helicopters AS-355NP Ecureuil, was transferred to the structure of MES from the Border Guard.

Thus, currently MES aviation includes four types of helicopters coming to the end of their service life. In this context, the possibility to perform overhaul reconditioning and modernization of Mi-2 and Mi-8 at the Orsha Aircraft Repair Plant is considered at the moment.

## Aviation of the Ministry of Internal Affairs internal troops

The creation of an aviation unit in the internal troops of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Belarus was declared in 2008. And, according to the order, signed by the Interior Minister Uladzimir Naumau a helicopter squadron of seven helicopters had to be formed. It had to be based at the National Airport "Minsk".

In this regard, the acquisition of the first helicopter AS-355NP of French company Eurocopter in April 2008 and of Russian helicopters Mi-17 in 2009-2010 was announced.

However, in 2008 the contract for the purchase of helicopters AS-355NP Eurocopter was concluded in the interests of the Border Guard. At the moment the helicopter squadron of the internal troops of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Belarus hasn't been formed, and there's no information on the prospects of its formation.

## Prospects for non-civil helicopter aviation of Belarus

During the period of the independent Republic of Belarus the aircraft fleet of combat and special helicopters almost hasn't been updated.

In this regard, on April 2, 2014 President Lukashenka during the visit to 558 Aircraft Repair Plant set the task of organizing the production of Belarusian planes and helicopters at the 558 and Orsha Aircraft Repair Plants.

558 Aircraft Repair Plant is one of the largest and fastest growing enterprises to implement the overhaul reconditioning and modernization of helicopters Mi-8 (Mi-17) and Mi-24 (Mi-35).

Orsha Aircraft Repair Plant, located in the village of Balbasava near Orsha, has been certified by the Aviation Register of the Interstate Aviation Committee, which certifies compliance of the plant with the requirements of Aviation Regulations, the ICAO standards and recommendations of international standards ISO 9000 as well as with JAR-145 and EAR-145 rules. The plant also has a certificate of Russian federal aviation rules FAP-145R for the right to perform overhaul of Mi-8.

Currently Orsha Aircraft Repair Plant (ARP) performs overhaul reconditioning and modernization of Mi-8 helicopters. In 2014, together with the company "Motor Sich", five helicopters Mi-8, which were put up for sale under the name of Mi-8MSB, were upgraded. Another 10 helicopters were in production. Thus, in 2014 Orsha Aircraft Repair Plant actually started serial production of Mi-8MSB, the basis for which are old Mi-8, which "Motor Sich" buys from operators and supplies to Belarus for

overhaul and modernization.

The basic cost of the civil Mi-8MSB is 6 million USD. It is equipped with aircraft engines TV3-117VMA-SBM1-4E with which the helicopter during a demonstration flight with journalists reached an altitude of 4,500 meters in 7 minutes. In 2014 with these engines Mi-8MSB set 12 world records, including the record of altitude of level flight – 9150 m.

At the same time Orsha Aircraft Repair Plant carries out the modernization of Mi-24, and in the future is able to modernize Mi-35, which are planned to be purchased in Russia for the Air Force and Air Defense Forces of Belarus instead of the more expensive and less reliable Mi-28.

In 2014, the Air Force and Air Defense Forces of Belarus conducted flight tests of Mi-24R with engines TV3-117VMA-SBM1V-02 produced by the Ukrainian company "Motor

Sich". There flight tests of Mi-24V equipped with the engine TV3-117VMA-SBM1V with the capacity of 2500-2800 hp (the power of base engine TV3-117VMA is 2200 hp) were carried out as well. During the flight tests Mi-24V with these engines showed significantly better flight performance, including speed and climbing capacity than the basic Mi-24V with engine TV3-117V.

The second helicopter, besides Mi-8MSB, the production of which can soon be started at Orsha Aircraft Repair Plant, is MSB-2. It is planned that this helicopter based on Mi-2 and designed by Ukrainian company "Motor Sich", will be equipped with more powerful aircraft engines AI-450M produced by this company, will have a bigger volume of cargo compartment (due to the external fuel tanks) and modern aeronautical complex. MSB-2 is planned to have several modifications: transport and



Transport-combat helicopter Mi-24V of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Belarus.



Light helicopter Eurocopter AS-355NP.

passenger – to carry up to 8 passengers at a distance of up to 750 km; search and rescue – for the departments of emergency situations; medical; fire – equipped with a tank of 900 litres; agricultural; military.

Military helicopter modification named SMB-2MO is planned to be produced in three versions: antitank, reconnaissance and ship-based. The helicopter will be able to carry two B8-V20A blocks (20 unguided 80 mm missiles S-8) or universal gun containers UPK-23-250 (two-barrel

23 mm autocannon GS-23L with ammunition of 250 rounds).

In addition, Belarus purchases helicopters from foreign manufacturers. On June 16, 2015 in Moscow region at the International military-technical forum “Army-2015” the contract for the supply of 12 Russian military transport helicopters Mi-8MTV-5, six of which must be delivered to the Air Force and Air Defense Forces of Belarus in 2016, and another six – in 2017, was made.

Mi-8MTV-5 is a new, deeply

modernized version of Mi-8MTV-1 and is designed to perform combat and transport missions in any climate at any time of the day. To do this, the helicopter is equipped with a modern set of flight and navigation and attack equipment as well as with means of communication.

At the same time Belarusian authorities are considering different variants for the purchase of helicopters of other manufacturers. In particular, of the company of AgustaWestland, which is interested in cooperation with Belarus. On September 10, 2015 this was announced by the Belarusian Prime Minister Andrei Kabyakou during his visit to AgustaWestland departments.

Moreover, it was stated that “we are talking about Belarus’ inclusion in the production cooperation of such a distinguished company”. The Prime Minister recalled that even during the existence of the Soviet Union aerospace components, including navigation systems and radars, were produced in Belarus. He perfectly knows that, because at this time he worked at the enterprises of BelOMO association, producing aiming systems and optical devices.

Military transport helicopter Mi-26 of the Russian Aerospace Forces.



# The scientific potential of the Republic of Belarus for defence purposes



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## **Funding for research and development**

Budget funds are the main source of funding for research and development - 48% of the total financing of domestic spending on research and development, including means of the republican budget - 42.9%, budget of Union State of Belarus and Russia - 3.7%, and local budgets - 1.4 % [1].

Domestic spending on research and development in 2014 amounted to 0.52% of GDP [1]. At the same time since 2007 there is a trend to reduce the ratio of expenditures to GDP (in 2007 - 0.96%). Such expenditures on research and development are much lower in comparison to the countries, advanced in innovative development. For example, the expenditures in South Korea amount to 4.15% of GDP, in Japan - 3.47%, in USA - 2.81% and in the EU - 2% [2]. It is worth noting that according to the National Strategy for Sustainable Development of Belarus until 2030 it is planned to increase expenditures on research and development to 1.2% in 2020 and to 2.5% of GDP by 2030 [3].

Since 2010, Belarus is increasing the share of expenditures of the republican budget on “basic and applied research” (from 33% to 34.9%

in 2014 of total budget expenditures on science) and reduce expenditures on “conduct of development activities in the framework of programs” (from 38 to 28%, respectively).

Funding from the Union State budget is aimed at the implementation of scientific and technical programs (STPs) that involve development activities and preparation to small-scale production. Fundamental research is financed only within the framework of scientific and technical programs. It is worth noting that the funding of joint activities in the framework of the Union State is carried out by each country separately i.e., Russia finances the work of the Russian side, Belarus – of the Belarusian. At the same time the shares in the total cost of the work are the following: 35% is financed by Belarus, 65% - by Russia [2].

With the implementation of scientific and technical programs at the expense of Belarus Union State budget there is a requirement according to which part of the cost (up to 50% of the total cost of the works) for the implementation of STP must be financed from own funds of the implementing organizations

## Research and development is also carried out by the organizations at the expense of economic agreements with Belarus or foreign states.

Funding for research and development from the state budget is associated with the following problems:

- in connection with the irregular inflow of funds in the national budget during the year, the funding of the programs is irregular as well (most of the money comes in the 3rd and 4th quarters), which can lead to disruptions in terms of their performance and rise in price of the work (due to inflation and devaluation, which lead to an

increase in the cost of purchased equipment and accessories);

- volume of financing is not always sufficient to bring development to creation of a full-fledged appliance, equipment or tool.

Implementation of STPs of the Union State has no such problems.

State procedures for procurement of expensive equipment and components also can significantly lead to higher prices of STP, which require the purchase of imported equipment

and components. This is connected with the need for registration of participants of trade on the Belarusian Currency and commodity exchange, which virtually no foreign company does (except Russian ones). Thus, the purchase of goods directly is virtually eliminated, which leads to higher prices for goods because both of the cost of dealer services (intermediaries) and the application of VAT (the goods for the performance of STPs purchased abroad are exempt from VAT).

## Areas of research and development related to the field of defence

In accordance with the Law of the Republic of Belarus "On the basis of the state scientific and technical policy" one of the goals of the development of the state scientific and technical programs is to solve the most important problems of defence. According to the Decree of the President of the Republic of Belarus of 04.22.2015 № 166 "On priority areas of scientific and technical activity in the Republic of Belarus for 2016-2020" the priority areas of scientific and technological activities affecting developments in the sphere of defence are the following:

- production of automobile and special vehicles and diesel engines for them;
- robotics, intelligent control systems;
- optoelectronics and optical systems, electronic engineering technologies, microelectronics, electronics, microwave electronics, electrical engineering;
- information and communication, aerospace technologies;
- the means of technical and cryptographic protection of information;
- perspective tools and technologies to ensure national security and defence.

The share of works (of all registered ones) in priority areas of science and technology activities in the field of defence capability and national security is being reduced since 2011 (from 18.32 to 13.54% in 2014) [1].

The Council of Ministers Decree of March 12, 2015 № 190 "On priority areas of scientific research of the Republic of Belarus for 2016-2020" provides for the following priority areas of basic and applied research, that in the future related to the developments in defence sphere:

- computer science and space exploration;
- electronics and photonics;
- machinery systems and complexes;
- security of people, society and the state.

The results obtained in the framework of these areas of fundamental and applied research are used in the development of the following systems and devices:

- Specialized software for aviation and space systems managing, decision support and modelling of combat operations systems, the protection of essential information, automated guidance and fire control systems, integrated air defence and air force control systems, interactive maps, combat systems simulators, and others;

- active phased array antennas for the air force and armoured vehicles, electronic high reliability control units for combat systems and spacecraft, command and staff vehicles, radio communication systems, radar stations, electronic warfare systems, air defence systems, range finders and target designators, surveillance and lighting devices, systems of optics disabling, optical air defence systems,

the sights of various purpose and complexity, chemical reconnaissance and remote detection of explosives complexes, etc.;

- automotive systems for special applications in harsh environments, armoured and light armoured vehicles, mobile robotic systems, etc.;

- human security components (body armour and armed helmets based on new materials, personal protective equipment, etc.).

At the same time, priorities of scientific and technical measures are established and funded under the state innovation development programs approved by the Council of Ministers. As part of this program for 2011-2015 MLRS "Polonaise" was designed.

Scientific and technical works are STPs of the Union State [5] should be noted as well. With the participation of the enterprises of Belarusian military-industrial complex about 15% of Russian arms is produced [6]. In connection with the introduction of sanctions against the Russian Federation the work in the framework of the Union State in the replacement of previously purchased instruments and components of foreign production (thermal imaging, electronics components, etc.) with the tools and equipment of the Russian and Belarusian production was activated. Scientific and technical programs of the Union State, to varying degrees affecting the research in defence area, can be divided into

4 main groups: optoelectronics; radio electronics (including micro- and nanoelectronics); space technology; hardware and software complexes.

As a part of the programs on the optoelectronics issues, the technologies, components and devices, which are used in the production of the following systems, are developed:

- ABM suppression systems, space surveillance and early warning about the start of intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBM) systems;
- aiming and astrocorrection equipment for ICBM, aiming equipment for tactical missiles;
- optical-electronic seekers for the aircraft missiles and air bombs;
- equipment for optical-electronic countermeasures;
- night vision devices for the battlefield and aircraft systems;
- hydrooptical and aviation equipment detecting submarines, underwater laser location and navigation systems,
- equipment for reconnaissance photography and ground data

processing;

laser rangefinders, highlighters, laser gyroscopes for airplanes and helicopters;

sights and fire control systems for armoured vehicles and artillery systems, sights for small arms and grenade launchers;

optoelectronic and laser systems for remote monitoring of chemical and radiological situation, equipment for remote detection of explosives devices.

The systems, where the research within the framework of the STP of the Union State in the field of electronics programs (including micro- and nanoelectronics) is used, are the following:

- mobile multifunctional complexes of external trajectory measurements for spacecraft;
- electronic components with high reliability and durability to the special external factors;
- radio interference systems and

electromagnetic shields;

transceivers of systems of information transmission to secure digital radio channels and AESA transceiver modules of airborne self-guidance systems;

locators of ground, ship and air-based air defense systems;

weapon control systems in condition of electronic countermeasures.

Within the framework of Union State programs in the field of space technology the systems of deciphering of space images, control of space objects, the pilot sample of application systems of research on rocket and space objects for various purposes descent from orbit are developed.

Program of creation of software and hardware complexes is focused on the development of theory and methods of artificial intelligence, pattern recognition, decision making and expert systems, simulation of complex phenomena and systems.



The building of Belarusian National Academy of Sciences.

## Organizations engaged in research and development in the field of defence

In the Republic of Belarus scientific research and development is carried out by around 450 organizations.

Institutes of National Academy of Sciences are carrying out research and development usually aimed at creating components and components of combat systems. It is important to note that the National Academy of Sciences is the customer for the implementation of many of the state scientific and technical programs, including the programs of the Union State.

Organizations of the Ministry of Education, together with the preparation of the scientific manpower, perform mainly basic research in priority

areas. In particular, the Belarusian National Technical University produces optoelectronic devices, special tools and machine parts, while Belarusian State University of Informatics and Radio Electronics develops communication facilities.

Direct defence research is held at the Research Institute of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Belarus. Main research areas are: development of the theory of military science, the formation and development of the Armed Forces, the Armed Forces management, types of strategic, operational and combat support, arms and rear, military law, military history; improving

the methodology for assessing the effectiveness of the troops (forces) in operations, decision-making support methods of military control bodies in the performance of intended tasks; solving the major problems of military security; creating proposals for the development of systems and models of armaments and military equipment.

Among the organizations conducting research and development work on the creation of new systems there is a number of enterprises both subordinate and insubordinate to "Goskomvoenprom".

### Human resources

In Belarus, the number of workers who were carrying out research and development in 2014 amounted to 27,200 persons, of which 17 300 were researchers and 1860 – technical specialists [1]. Almost a third of workers who were carrying out the research and development were concentrated in the organizations of National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, in the Ministry of Industry - 23.5%, in the State Military Industrial Committee - 12.6%, in the Ministry of Education - 8.3%.

In the field of natural and technical sciences 79.3% of researchers were employed. In this case, in postgraduate studies 35.6% of students were conducting research on natural,

technical and military sciences [1].

Potential and real problems of the research staff are the following:

- the lack of researchers in the age of 40-50 years due to a sharp outflow of graduates and young professionals from the scientific sphere in the 1990s. Specialists of this age are very important because they have the experience and skills to manage large projects and are active at the same time.

- A general decline in the number of university students and change of the ratio of graduates according to the specialities. Since 2010, the number of students per 10 thousand of population decreased from 467 to 381 in 2014 [7]. In recent decades, a decrease in the

number of applicants to the scientific and engineering specialities in favour of humanitarian disciplines (law, management, etc.) is observed.

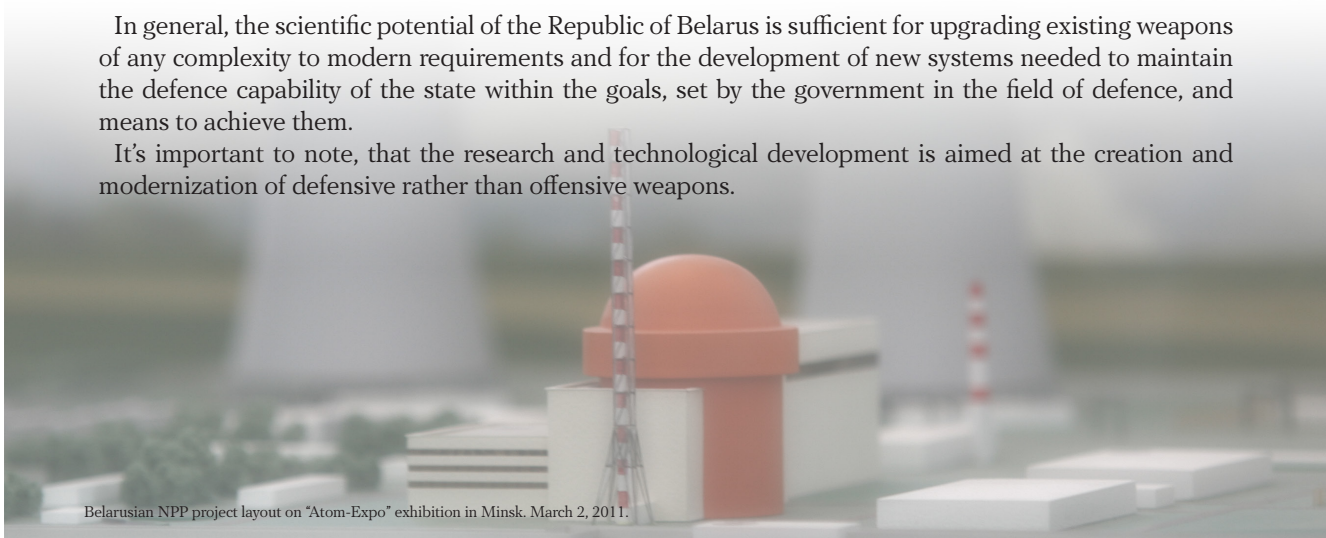
- The outflow of specialists in natural science and engineering from their core industry. If earlier the outflow of specialists abroad was a threat, at the moment is the outflow of researchers and engineers (specializing in physics, mathematics, programming, etc.) to the organization of various forms of ownership, engaged in software development.

However, these problems are not crucial in the foreseeable future.

### Conclusion

In general, the scientific potential of the Republic of Belarus is sufficient for upgrading existing weapons of any complexity to modern requirements and for the development of new systems needed to maintain the defence capability of the state within the goals, set by the government in the field of defence, and means to achieve them.

It's important to note, that the research and technological development is aimed at the creation and modernization of defensive rather than offensive weapons.



Belarusian NPP project layout on "Atom-Expo" exhibition in Minsk. March 2, 2011.

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## Научный потенциал Республики Беларусь для целей обороны

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# VI



## INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF BELARUSIAN STUDIES

SECTION:

***Belarus Security:  
Challenges and Responses***

# 8

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