

Main trends in economic and social development of the Republic of Belarus in January-June, 2013

In January-June, 2013 Belarusian economy grew 1.4 percent compared to January-June, 2012.

The highest growth rates were registered in the output of electric equipment (113.6 percent), pharmaceutical products (113.1 percent), rubber and plastics products (109.1 percent), wood products (106.9 percent), food products (104.1 percent), metallurgy (102.4 percent), leather, leather goods and footwear (102.3 percent).

The share of **innovative products** in the total volume of production was 17.7 percent.

The **agricultural output** growth was 1.5 percent, **fixed capital investments** increased 17.7%.

Financial indicators demonstrate growth of revenues from sales of products and services at 9.3 percent, profitability of sales in industry grew at 8.2 percent.

Situation **in the social sphere** remains stable; the unemployment rate at the end of June 2013 amounted 0.5 percent of the economically active population.

A 19.8 percent growth of **real incomes of population** contributed to the growth of **retail trade sales** through all distribution channels by 18.8 percent, sales of consumer services at 9.6 percent, the **consumer price index** during January-June 2013 compared to December, 2012 amounted 107.0 percent.

Despite a decrease of the exports of goods high export of services growth rate (at 15.4 percent) contributed to the growth of positive foreign trade balance in services and counterweighed the negative foreign trade balance in goods. In January-June 2013 the foreign trade balance in goods and services (by balance of payments methodology) was positive with surplus of \$ 369.2 million. The trade balance as a percentage of GDP was at 1.1 percent as compared to the forecast of 0.7 percent.

Foreign Direct Investments have been attracted in the clear amount of \$ 1.67 billion.

In January-June 2013 **foreign exchange reserves and gold** (by the IMF methodology) remained on the same level as at the end of December 2012 and amounted to the equivalent of \$ 8 billion.

The exchange rate of the Belarusian ruble remained relatively stable. In general, as of 20th August 2013 the exchange rate of the Belarusian ruble was at the same level as in December 2012.

Stability in the monetary sphere, in its turn, allowed to **reduce the refinance rate** from 30 percent in December 2012 down to 23.5 percent (active from June 10, 2013).

Thus, the economic growth in January-June 2013 has been achieved on the background of maintaining macroeconomic external and internal balance.