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DIGITALIZATION OF THE ECONOMY AS A KEY FACTOR IN ENHANCING THE COMPETITIVENESS OF THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS AMID GLOBAL ECONOMIC CHANGES

In an era of rapid technological advancement and global economic transformations, digitalization has become a cornerstone of national competitiveness. Integrating digital technologies into economic processes boosts productivity, fosters innovation, and streamlines operations. For the Republic of Belarus, embracing digitalization presents both opportunities and challenges in maintaining and enhancing its economic standing amid intensifying global competition.

Digitalization serves as a pivotal driver of economic modernization, promoting innovation, enhancing efficiency, and facilitating the integration of national economies into the global digital landscape. For Belarus, the adoption of digital technologies has significantly elevated productivity across various sectors, thereby improving the country's competitiveness on the world stage. Studies have shown that the level of digital economy development closely correlates with competitiveness, easing access to global markets and resources. As noted by Emerging Europe, "Belarus was being hailed as a burgeoning tech hub in Eastern Europe, with its IT sector positioning itself as a regional success story." [1].

Belarus has demonstrated a commitment to digital transformation through initiatives like the establishment of the High-Tech Park (HTP) and the implementation of Decree No. 8 "On the Development of the Digital Economy." These efforts have spurred growth in the information and communication technology (ICT) sector, attracted foreign investments, and promoted IT exports. The HTP, operating under a favorable legal regime, has become a hub for numerous IT companies, contributing significantly to the national economy. However, recent challenges, including political instability and economic sanctions, have adversely affected the sector's stability and growth. The Belarusian Information and Communications Technology (ICT) sector experienced significant growth until 2022 but since then a number of political and economic factors have resulted in shortages and a subsequent crisis in the industry [2].

The integration of digital technologies has positively influenced various sectors of the Belarusian economy:

- **Industry:** The adoption of digital solutions has enhanced manufacturing processes, increasing efficiency and reducing costs.
- **Agriculture:** Digital tools have improved crop management and forecasting, leading to better resource utilization.
- **Logistics:** The implementation of digital platforms has optimized supply chain operations, improving delivery times and reducing expenses.

These advancements have facilitated the integration of Belarusian industries into global value chains, strengthening their competitiveness.

Digitalization has become a key factor in enhancing the competitiveness of the Republic of Belarus amid global economic transformations. Strategic initiatives such as the establishment of the High-Tech Park and the implementation of Decree No. 8 "On the Development of the Digital Economy" have significantly contributed to the growth of the ICT sector, positioning Belarus as a notable player in the global digital market [3].

However, recent challenges, including political instability and economic sanctions, have adversely affected the sector's stability, leading to a reduction in its contribution to the national economy. To address these issues, Belarus must invest in modernizing its digital infrastructure, develop human capital, update regulatory frameworks, and support innovation and entrepreneurship.

By embracing these strategies, Belarus can navigate the complexities of the global digital landscape, enhance its economic competitiveness, and achieve sustainable development in the face of ongoing global economic changes.

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THE PROBLEM OF THE ROLE OF THE STATE. THE MAIN CONCEPTS

The problem of defining the role of the state in the economy arose quite a long time ago. Concepts and paradigms were changing, and the same time the role of the state was changing.