

which may be introduced to the mass market. Moreover, such measures contribute to further strengthening of entrepreneurial culture and, possibly, a creation of new entities.

Thus, all these changes will help the national economies to revitalize and to reboot a new circle of economic growth and, potentially, will make the national economies more prepared for other unforeseen situations, such as COVID-19 pandemic.

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DEVELOPMENT TRENDS OF SMALL AND MEDIUM BUSINESSES IN THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS

Small business is an important subject of the economic system. The growth in the number of small businesses entails an increase in the level of employment in the country, creates competition in the domestic market, and is highly mobile. Therefore, it is very important to identify trends in the development of small and medium-sized businesses in the Republic of Belarus and its place in the global ranking of doing business.

The results of the study can be used to further improve the analysis of the main characteristics that allow assessing the level of development of small and medium-sized businesses (SMB).

The share of SMB products in the total gross domestic product (GDP) is not high, but it is growing every year. For example, if in 2015 this indicator was 23.4%, then in 2019 it was 26.1% [4, p. 4]. Also, the average number of SMB employees increases annually from 1136.1 thousand people, in 2015 up to 1192.9 thousand people, in 2019,

which was, respectively, 25.3% in 2015 and 27.5% in 2019 of the total number of employed in the country. Thus, it can be argued that during the analyzed period the number of people employed in SMEs is growing [4, p. 8].

The ratio of the nominal wages of SMB workers to the wages in the country is insignificant. Therefore, we can conclude that a private sector employee earns the same as the average employee in Belarus (Table 1).

Table 1. Ratio of the nominal average monthly wage of SMB workers to the nominal average monthly wage of workers in the Republic of Belarus

| Nominal average monthly wage of employees, BYN | | | | Nominal average monthly salary of SME workers, BYN | | | | The ratio of the nominal average monthly wages of SMB workers and workers of the Republic of Belarus | | | |
|--|-------|-------|--------|--|-------|-------|--------|--|------|------|------|
| 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 |
| 722.7 | 822.8 | 971.4 | 1092.9 | 696.4 | 816.8 | 960.7 | 1078.1 | 0.96 | 0.99 | 0.98 | 0.99 |

Source: Own development based on [1, p. 150, p. 206]

The volume of foreign trade in goods from SMBs increased slightly but increased. So, if in 2015 the indicator of the volume of foreign trade was 41.4% of the total republican indicator, then in 2019 it was 45.1%. The share of exports of goods by SMBs in the total export of Belarus in 2015 was 48.2%, then by 2018 it reached 50.3% of the country's foreign trade, but in 2019 the share of exports by SMBs decreased and amounted to 47.3% [4, p. 24-25].

The improvement in the conditions for doing business in the Republic of Belarus is evidenced by the change in the country's position in the global Doing Business 2019 ranking (Table 2).

According to the data of 2019, Belarus ranks 37th in the ranking of doing business, whereas in 2015 it took 57th place. Consequently, Belarus moved up 20

Table 2. Ranking of Doing Business 2019 and Costs of Starting a Business

| The country | Ranking place | Expenses for starting a business,% of income per capita | The country | Ranking place | Expenses for starting a business,% of income per capita |
|-----------------------|---------------|---|---------------------|---------------|---|
| New Zealand | 1 | 0.20 | Norway | 7 | 0.80 |
| Singapore | 2 | 0.40 | USA | 8 | 1.00 |
| Denmark | 3 | 0.20 | Great Britain | 9 | 0.0 |
| The Republic of Korea | 5 | 14.60 | Macedonia | 10 | 3.10 |
| Georgia | 6 | 2.10 | Republic of Belarus | 37 | 0.50 |

Source: own development based on [2, p. 5], [3]

positions in the ranking of doing business. It should also be noted that the cost of starting a business in Belarus is significantly lower among some of the TOP-10 countries. For example, countries such as the Republic of Korea, Georgia, Norway, the United States and Macedonia are inferior to Belarus in terms of the cost of starting a business.

It should be noted that at present the state is actively stimulating and supporting small businesses by providing: subsidies for starting a business from the employment center; a soft loan for the development of SMBs in the country; subsidies for job creation from the State Fund for Social Protection of the Population; grants for business development from the innovation fund of the regional executive committee; gratuitous transfer of land plots in rural areas for farming.

All of the above types of state support for SMBs are aimed at developing such priority areas as: agricultural business; business related to innovation; export-oriented production; import substitution; development of technologies and products related to energy and resource conservation.

According to the analysis, it can be concluded that the domestic business is developing steadily. This is due to the favorable conditions created in the country.

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VIRTUAL REALITY IN BELARUSIAN EDUCATION, A DREAM OR REALITY?

Virtual reality (VR) is a simulated experience that can be similar to or completely different from the real world. For many years, virtual reality has been an expensive technology used in only a few spheres of human life, though its application has been rapidly increasing over the past 10 years. In 2015, the VR market was valued at USD