

## **Main trends in economic and social development of the Republic of Belarus in January-April, 2013**

In January-April, 2013 Belarusian economy grew by 2.5 percent compared to January-April, 2012.

The highest growth rates were registered in the output of electric equipment (115.7 percent), rubber and plastics products (111.4 percent), pharmaceutical products (110.8 percent), transport facilities (104.4 percent), food products (107.4 percent), wood products (106.8 percent), metallurgy (104.9 percent), leather, leather goods and footwear (104.2 percent).

The share of **innovative products** in the total volume of production was 18 percent.

The **agricultural output** growth was 2,3 percent, **fixed capital investments** grew by 12.5%.

**Financial indicators** demonstrate growth of revenues from sales of products and services by 9.9 percent, profitability of sales in industry at 7.9 percent.

Situation **in the social sphere** remains stable; the unemployment rate at the end of April 2013 amounted to 0.6 percent of the economically active population.

A 21.4 percent growth of **real incomes of population** contributed to the growth of **retail trade sales** through all distribution channels by 18.6 percent, sales of consumer services by 9.2 percent, the **consumer price index** during January-April 2013 compared to December, 2012 was 105.9 percent.

Despite a decrease of the exports of goods high export of services growth rate (by 16.2 percent) contributed to the growth of positive foreign trade balance in services and counterweighed the negative foreign trade balance in goods. In January-April 2013 the foreign trade balance in goods and services (by balance of payments methodology) was positive with surplus of \$ 303.4 million. The trade balance as a percentage of GDP was at 1.5 percent as compared to the forecast of 0.7 percent.

**Foreign Direct Investments** have been attracted in the clear amount of \$ 1.5 billion.

In January-April 2013 **foreign exchange reserves and gold** (by the IMF methodology) grew compared to the end of December 2012 by \$ 175 million and amounted to the equivalent of \$ 8.3 billion.

**The exchange rate of the Belarusian ruble remained relatively stable.**

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-April 2013 has been achieved on the background of maintaining macroeconomic external and internal balance.