

Freshness of the sweep

## First presentation for European investors

# Success of the economic forum promises to have a long-term outlook



Our newspaper has already reported about the International Economic Forum BUG that took place in Brest on October 8-9. The Forum was held in the context of the project “EU-Enlargement and Foreign Direct Investments in Border Regions to the CIS” with the financial support of the TACIS Program for the development of the cross-border cooperation. More than 80 representatives from Belarus, Poland, Ukraine, France and Germany took part in the Forum. Discussion issues included development and positioning of the Business Valley BUG, an economic “triangle” formed by the Brest and Shatsk (Volyn region) regions and Biala Podlaska povet (the Lublin Voivodeship).

A research has been made and a marketing strategy has been developed in order to promote the promising market that the forum participants called “Business Valley BUG”. Potential investors are attracted by the region’s favorable geostrategic position that opens the way both to the West and to the East, as well as by its huge economic potential and wide opportunities.

The key moment of the forum’s second day was the international contact and cooperative exchange, when businessmen from the federal land Baden-Württemberg and Euroregion Bug met in Brest. They spoke in Belarusian, Russian, German, English and Ukrainian, shared their thoughts and ideas, and established new business contacts. Interaction between businessmen was determined by the sector principle. For instance, German enterprise “Magna Electronics Europe GmbH” which specializes in vehicle system industry and automobile design and assembly held negotiations with the representatives of the Brest machine-building plant, “Brestmestprom”, “Brest-Lada”, and Baranovichi Automobile Assemblies plant. The contact and cooperative exchange was possible due to the comprehensive support of the Ministry of Economics of the federal land Baden-Württemberg - a partner in the spheres of cooperation and assistance of the European projects. As a rule, Ministry representatives, together with the federal land enterprises, used to visit world capitals in large regions (from Dubai to Shanghai, from Moscow to New-Delhi). Current trip to the cross-border region was a new experience for the delegation, and, judging by their comments, this experience was a successful one.

Therefore, the project will definitely have a continuation. A workgroup created by the forum participants will have to work on it. The representatives of the Brest region, the Lyublin Voivodeship and the Volyn region have already signed the protocol on the structure and functions of the coordinating body. They have already achieved agreement on the next meeting of the Business-Valley Bug partners that is to take place in a year. Furthermore, the German side has suggested that the region’s enterprises take part in the biggest international foreign trade exhibition in Stuttgart (Germany) on November 11-12, 2008.

Speaking about the International Economic Forum BUG, it received well-deserved appreciation. This is what its participants and organizers said about it.

Dr. Hans-Dieter Frey, Assistant Secretary of State of the Baden-Württemberg Ministry of Economy:

- Due to our visit to the special economic zones in Poland and in Brest, as well as to our talks with political and economic representatives of the region, we managed to get a solid outlook and important information about the opportunities of the industry distribution and economic potential of the Business Valley BUG. I am looking forward to hearing comments and impressions from individual enterprises of the contact and cooperative exchange.

Ms. Patricia Ruppert, the FDI-Project Manager:

- Trans-border cooperation with the neighboring Brest, Biala Podlaska and Shatsk regions is essential for the economic development of each of these regions.

Mr. Jean-Eric Holzapfel, Counselor of the European Commission delegation in Ukraine and Belarus:

- This is a very dynamically developing project that combines the interests of all its partners. It can be continued in the context of the program of the trans-border cooperation development which is supported by the European Commission.

In his interview to “*Vechyorka*”, Mr. Counselor pointed out that Brest which hosted the Forum is a very interesting city with rich history. He added that he would like to come back to Brest in order to have a chance to get to know it better.