

**CHINA-BELARUS COOPERATION IN THE FRAME
OF BELT AND ROAD INITIATIVE**

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Abstract. The collaboration between China and Belarus is viewed within the context of the Belt and Road Initiative, which has great importance in enhancing cooperation between the two nations.

Keywords: China-Belarus cooperation, Belt and Road Initiative.

In the era of continuous development of the global knowledge economy, the Belt and Road cooperation is committed to achieving global connectivity and interconnected development, further opening up the main channels of economic globalization, facilitating the flow of information, capital, technology, products, industries and people, and promoting international cooperation in a larger scope and at a higher level. It is conducive to national economic growth and development, and effectively solves the problem of insufficient supply of international public goods, providing sustained driving force for world economic growth.

Based on infrastructure connectivity, the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) promotes all-round and multi-sectoral connectivity among countries, promote economic policy coordination and institutional synergy among countries, innovate cooperation models, and carry out broader and deeper regional cooperation.

The core concept of building “the Belt and Road” through extensive consultation, joint contribution and shared benefits has been written into important official documents of international organizations.

The Belt and Road Initiative takes full account of the differences in economic development, factor endowments, cultural and religious traditions among the partners.

Since the establishment of diplomatic relations in January 1992, China and Belarus have gone through 31 years of friendly cooperation. Last year, the leaders of the two countries jointly announced that China-Belarus relations would be upgraded to an all-weather comprehensive strategic partnership, injecting strong impetus into bilateral cooperation in various fields. Mutual trust between both countries has been continuously strengthened; mutually beneficial cooperation in various fields has been gradually deepened.

The Belt and Road Initiative plays a significant role in fostering cooperation between China and Belarus.

Firstly, the BRI has encouraged infrastructure development in Belarus, including the construction of transportation networks. These improvements have enhanced connectivity between China and Belarus, facilitating trade and investment flows.

Secondly, the BRI has promoted economic cooperation between the two countries. It has facilitated increased bilateral trade, with China becoming one of Belarus' major trading partners. Additionally, Chinese investments in Belarus have grown, particularly in sectors such as manufacturing, logistics, and technology.

Furthermore, the BRI has encouraged cultural and people-to-people exchanges between China and Belarus. This has led to increased tourism, educational collaborations, and cultural understanding between the two nations.

On November 4, 2022, the Belarusian State Biotechnology Company's full cycle high-tech agro-industrial complex project undertaken by Chinese enterprises was put into operation in Minsk Oblast, Belarus. The project is the first amino acid production enterprise in Belarus and the first export and import substitution project in the grain processing industry.

In recent years, the economic and trade relations between China and Belarus have been continuously deepened and the practical cooperation in various fields has achieved fruitful results. Statistics shows that the bilateral trade volume between China and Belarus has increased from US \$60.8 million at the beginning of the establishment of diplomatic ties to US \$5.08 billion in 2022 [1]. A large number of cooperation projects have taken root in Belarus, the most representative of which are high-tech agro-industrial complex project, as well as the China-Belarus Industrial Park and the Geely Automobile manufacturing project in Belarus. In 2022, the net profit of enterprises in the Industrial Park increased by 140% compared with the previous year. At present, the industry involves machinery manufacturing, e-commerce, new materials, traditional Chinese medicine, artificial intelligence, 5G network development and other fields, with an intended investment of more than 1.3 billion US dollars [1].

Over the years, people-to-people exchanges between China and Belarus have increased greatly. The number of Chinese students studying in Belarus has increased rapidly and has already exceeded 7,000. The two sides have set up cultural centers in their capitals, and Confucius Institutes and Confucius classrooms in Belarus. Learning Chinese has become a popular trend in Belarus.

To promote organizational cooperation between China and Belarus in the frame of knowledge economy development it is necessary to strengthen and promote the following mechanisms and instruments of cooperation:

(1) Laying the legal foundation mechanism for educational cooperation between the two countries

Establishing a solid legal framework is crucial to facilitate educational collaboration between two nations. Bilateral and multilateral agreements serve as essential legal pil-

lars, ensuring the continuous, robust, and sustainable development of educational cooperation. In the case of China and Belarus, their cooperation agreements encompass three levels: inter-governmental, inter-departmental, and agreements between universities and other educational institutions. However, to ensure the effective implementation of these agreements, it is necessary to enhance the operations of the joint Education Subcommittee and gradually establish relevant working mechanisms to promote cooperation smoothly.

(2) Establishing bilateral educational cooperation mechanisms

China and Belarus have carried out cooperation in various fields on the basis of mutual trust and win-win cooperation, helped each other in the complex international environment, and worked together to build a China-Belarus community, setting a good example for the new type of international relations. In 2022 the two sides jointly carried out cooperation on the Digital Silk Road on the basis of relevant China-Belarus pilot zones, industrial clusters and industrial parks, covering high-tech, digital economy, digital trade, artificial intelligence, big data, e-government and block chain technology. The two sides should strengthen scientific and technological cooperation, expand practical cooperation between research institutes, universities and enterprises, and encourage the creation of joint research centers, laboratories and other cooperation platforms. The two sides should obviously increase investment in scientific and technological cooperation projects and promote the transformation of innovative achievements.

(3) Promoting the teaching of the Chinese and Belarusian languages

With the strong support of the Chinese and Belarusian governments, in recent years, there has been a “Chinese fever” in Belarus. Primary schools, middle schools, colleges and Universities are promoting Chinese teaching.

The proposal of the Belt and Road Initiative has also provided opportunities for Belarusian language teaching and Belarusian studies in China. In 2016, Beijing International Studies University was the first to offer Belarusian language teaching, and in 2017 the University sent first students to attend a Belarusian culture training class. In September 2017, Tianjin Foreign Studies University opened the Department of Belarusian studies. East China Normal University and Beijing International Studies University established Belarusian research centers. A Center for Belarus Studies was also established at Beijing Foreign Studies University in 2017.

(4) Promoting the development of overseas study

Since the establishment of diplomatic ties between China and Belarus, the number of overseas students has increased year by year. China has received the first Belarusian students since 1992. In 1995, only five Belarusian undergraduates studied in China, while eight Chinese undergraduates and postgraduates were in Belarus. With the promotion of educational cooperation between the two countries, the number of international students has increased significantly. In 1998, the number of student visas issued by the Belarusian Embassy reached 220. In 2002 that number grew to 260. In the same year, there were about 1,000 Chinese students studying in Belarus. In 2016, more than 850 Belarusian students studied in China, and 2,067 Chinese students studied in Belarus. With the rapid development of China’s economy, more and more Chinese students choose to study abroad, and the field of higher education in Belarus has attracted much attention. The high quality of higher education in Belarus, internationally recognized degree certificates, and relatively low tuition fees are a good choice for Chinese students. At present, there are already a number of cooperation projects between Belarusian and Chinese universities, such as student exchange programs and teacher exchange

programs. These cooperation projects can not only strengthen cultural exchanges between the two countries, but also expand students' international perspectives and enhance their career competitiveness. The number of Chinese students in Belarus in 2022 amounted to 39,939, while the number of Belarusian students in China has already exceeded 10 thousands.

(5) Promoting diversified forms of educational cooperation

With the support of the Ministries of Education of the two countries, a series of cooperation agreements have been signed between the institutions of the two countries to promote the continuous progress of educational cooperation. There are various forms of cooperation between the universities of the two sides, including student exchange, faculty exchange, establishment of joint research centers and laboratories, joint training, joint conferences and forums, and joint compilation of teaching materials. Cooperation training models such as “2+2”, “3+1” and vacation exchanges have been widely used, and it is obvious that new forms should appear and be developed.

In today's era, the knowledge economy has become an essential element for the progress of society. The advancement of the knowledge economy has the potential to significantly enhance a country's economic growth and productivity. China and Belarus have both demonstrated a strong dedication towards bolstering their collaborative efforts. By engaging in frequent dialogues, establishing bilateral agreements, and undertaking joint initiatives, they can cultivate a stronger and more advantageous partnership. Creating a specialized cooperation mechanism exclusively between China and Belarus, based on the proposed recommendations, will further facilitate the smooth development of the knowledge economy system.

Literature references

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