

UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

Innovation Performance Review

BELARUS



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United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

**INNOVATION
PERFORMANCE REVIEW
OF BELARUS**



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FOREWORD

The *Innovation Performance Review of Belarus* initiates a new focus of activity for the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, which draws on the experience accumulated so far in the identification of good practices and policy lessons in the area of knowledge-based development.

Innovation in the modern economy is influenced by the decisions of numerous stakeholders and depends on a multitude of factors. Public policies have a significant influence on innovation performance. Public intervention is necessary not only for creating favourable framework conditions and stimulating innovative activities but also for encouraging cooperative actions by innovation stakeholders and putting in place institutions and policy mechanisms that address different market failures in the innovation process. An assessment of the national innovation system, which takes into account both the international experiences and the local needs, opportunities and constraints, is a basic precondition for the development of effective evidence-based policies.

This *Review* presents the main outcomes of a participatory policy advisory exercise undertaken at the request of the Government of the Republic of Belarus. It aims to provide a set of recommendations and policy options to stimulate innovation activity in the country, enhance its innovation capacity and improve the overall efficiency of the national innovation system. Close collaboration with the national authorities and other Belarusian experts throughout the project has helped in identifying issues of practical importance to policymakers and in ensuring the relevance of the *Review* conclusions and recommendations to national circumstances.

The *Review* aims to contribute to the existing body of policy-relevant analytical work on policies promoting innovative development, thus facilitating the further identification of good practices in this area. The assessments and recommendations presented in the *Review* will serve to identify areas in which capacity-building activities can yield greater benefit, thus providing a solid basis for future work in this direction.

I would like to thank the Government of the Republic of Belarus for its support in launching this pioneering initiative. I hope that the recommendations of the *Review* will provide useful guidance to policymakers and other innovation stakeholders in their activities and that the lessons learnt in this process are also of relevance to other UNECE Member States in their efforts to promote innovation.



Ján Kubiš
Executive Secretary
United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

PREFACE

The practical work on the *Innovation Performance Review of Belarus* began in June 2010 with a preparatory mission by representatives of the UNECE secretariat to establish contacts and discuss the structure and content of the *Review* with the national authorities and other stakeholders. The main project mission took place from 12 to 22 September 2010 with the participation of a team, including representatives of the UNECE secretariat, international and national experts.

The *Review* reflects the outcomes of a series of consultations and discussions between the *Review* team and Belarusian policymakers, government officials, representatives of academic institutions and the business community and other innovation stakeholders.

The draft text of the *Review* was submitted for comments to the Belarusian authorities and to a group of independent international experts who had not participated in the field mission. The main outcomes of the project, including its main conclusions and recommendations were presented and discussed during the Substantive Segment of the fifth session of the Committee on Economic Cooperation and Integration on 1 December 2010 with the participation of the *Review* team, the external reviewers, the members of a high-level delegation from Belarus and delegates from other UNECE Member States. In the course of deliberations, a number of delegates shared their high appreciation of the results of this pilot project, its relevance and usefulness for policymaking and commended the secretariat for undertaking it.

The final text of the *Review* was prepared for publication by the UNECE secretariat reflecting the outcome of these discussions as well as other comments and suggestions by different stakeholders.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The *Innovation Performance Review of Belarus* was prepared by a group of international and national experts as well as staff of the UNECE secretariat. The *Review* was the result of a collective effort in which the lead authors for each chapter were: José Palacín (chapter 1), Julia Djarova (chapter 2), Marina Ranga (chapter 3), Slavo Radosevic (chapter 1 and chapter 4), Anna Kaderabkova (chapter 5), Hannes Leo (chapter 6), Anna Pobol (chapter 7) and Christopher Athey (annex). Krzysztof Gulda, Malcolm Parry and Hans Wissema reviewed the first draft of the *Review* and provided useful proposals. During the discussion at the Substantive Segment of the fifth session of the Committee on Economic Cooperation and Integration, Nina Bohdan, Anatoly Hryshanovich and Ivan Solonovich presented comments and suggestions on behalf of the Belarusian delegation. Rumen Dobrinsky contributed to the overall editing of the publication.

UNECE would like to express its deep appreciation to the Eurasian Development Bank for its generous financial contribution which made possible the implementation of the project *Innovation Performance Review of Belarus*.

The project was undertaken in close collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme Office in Belarus which provided logistic support and contributed to the substantive work.

The smooth work throughout the project was greatly facilitated by the helpful support and cooperative attitude of the State Committee on Science and Technology of the Republic of Belarus which was UNECE's leading partner in Belarus in implementing this project.

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