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**THE ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE
VALUE OF CHINA-BELARUS GREAT STONE INDUSTRIAL PARK:
EXPERIENCE AND OUTLOOK**

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Summary. *As a flagship project under the Belt and Road Initiative, the China-Belarus Great Stone Industrial Park has developed into a comprehensive platform for bilateral cooperation, demonstrating remarkable achievements in both economic collaboration and cultural exchange over the past decade. This paper systematically examines the Park's multidimensional value, drawing upon official statistics, institutional reports, and field research to present a holistic assessment of its developmental experience and future potential.*

In the economic dimension, the Park has established itself as a crucial logistics nexus within the China-Europe economic corridor. The strategic location and advanced infrastructure of the Park's railway terminal have significantly enhanced regional connectivity, with operational data showing a remarkable growth trajectory. By the first quarter of 2024, the terminal was regularly handling over 120 China-Europe Railway Express trains monthly, representing a substantial 46 % increase compared to 2022 levels. This enhanced logistics capability has been instrumental in facilitating trade flows, contributing to the record China-Belarus bilateral trade volume of \$52.3 billion achieved in 2023. Within this broader trade picture, enterprises operating within the Park demonstrated particularly strong performance, accounting for \$142 million in export value with a healthy 6.1 % year-on-year growth rate.

The Park's success in attracting international investment is equally noteworthy. Comprehensive statistics reveal that 158 enterprises from 16 countries have established operations within the Park, with total committed investment surpassing \$16.2 billion. These investments are strategically concentrated in high-value sectors including precision machinery manufacturing, pharmaceutical and biotechnology research, and emerging digital technologies. The economic impact extends beyond capital investment, with verified creation of over 5,300 sustainable employment opportunities for local residents. A particularly illustrative case of

industrial upgrading is the strategic joint venture between China's Weichai Power and Belarus' established MAZ Group, which successfully transformed production capabilities, increasing annual vehicle output from 10,000 to 32,000 units and effectively establishing Belarus' capacity in high-end automotive manufacturing.

Beyond its economic contributions, the Park has evolved into a vibrant hub for cross-cultural dialogue and mutual learning. The establishment of formal partnerships with eight leading Belarusian universities, including the prestigious Belarusian State University, has enabled the implementation of innovative bilingual education programs. Since their inception in 2020, these initiatives have successfully trained over 400 technical professionals with genuine cross-cultural competencies. Complementary to these efforts, the network of six Confucius Institutes throughout Belarus has developed specialized "Industrial Chinese" language courses, specifically designed to address the communication needs of enterprises operating within the Park. The cultural integration extends beyond formal education, with annually recurring events such as the "China-Belarus Friendship Festival" and "Tea and the World" cultural gatherings attracting consistent participation from approximately 10,000 local residents each year, creating organic opportunities for people-to-people connection.

The Park's operational philosophy emphasizes deep community integration, demonstrated through thoughtful initiatives such as the preservation of the historically significant "Xiao Niu Village" within its development area, the construction of three fully-equipped community service centers, and the conscious allocation of 30 % of entry-level positions to residents from surrounding villages. These deliberate policies have significantly enhanced mutual understanding and trust between Chinese and Belarusian participants in the project.

Analysis of the Park's operational model reveals three fundamental success factors: comprehensive policy coordination manifested through bilateral agreements that provide attractive incentives including ten-year exemptions from corporate income and value-added taxes; administrative innovation exemplified by the efficient "One-Stop Service Hall" that digitally streamlines procedures, enabling 95 % of administrative matters to be resolved within three working days; and a consistently implemented people-centered approach that thoughtfully integrates cultural exchange with economic development, ensuring the partnership remains balanced and sustainable.

The recent formal accession of Belarus to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in 2024 presents new strategic opportunities for the Park's next development phase. Ambitious plans are already underway, including the creation of a dedicated SCO Digital Economy Pilot Zone designed to attract innovative cross-border e-commerce enterprises, substantial expansion of green energy cooperation through a planned \$200 million investment in solar power generation projects, the introduction of 500 electric buses to modernize Minsk's public transportation system, and enhanced regional connectivity through better integration of China-Europe Railway Express services with the established logistics networks of the Eurasian Economic Union.

In conclusion, the Great Stone Industrial Park represents a sophisticated model of international cooperation that successfully integrates economic

complementarity with cultural understanding. The Park not only delivers substantial material benefits through trade and investment but also builds crucial relational capital through meaningful people-to-people exchanges. Its comprehensive development experience provides valuable insights and a replicable template for other cooperative initiatives under the Belt and Road framework, while its continued evolution promises to make significant contributions to the enduring strength of the China-Belarus all-weather strategic partnership in the years ahead.

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**DIGITAL ECONOMY: A NEW DRIVING FORCE FOR
CHINA-BELARUS BILATERAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION UNDER
THE BELT AND ROAD INITIATIVE**

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Summary. *Amid the deepening Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and Belarus' accession to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), digital economy has emerged as a pivotal new driving force for China-Belarus bilateral economic cooperation. Drawing on official statistics, intergovernmental reports, and authoritative industry data, this paper explores its enabling role through three core dimensions: digital infrastructure interconnection, digital-industrial integration, and institutional-talent synergy. The study reveals that digital economy significantly enhances cooperation efficiency and resilience, while confronting challenges such as mismatched technical standards and digital talent scarcity. Strengthened strategic alignment and targeted collaboration will be crucial to unlocking its full potential for high-quality bilateral relations.*

Digital infrastructure interconnection serves as the foundational pillar of China-Belarus digital economic cooperation. With an internet penetration rate exceeding 80 %, Belarus boasts one of the most connected markets in Eastern Europe, creating favorable conditions for cross-border digital collaboration. Bilateral 5G cooperation has achieved remarkable milestones: Huawei partnered with Belarusian Telecommunications Company to conduct 5G application trials at the China-Belarus Great Stone Industrial Park, attaining a maximum transmission speed of 1.235 Gbps and validating key technologies like autonomous logistics and smart factory robotics – solutions now deployed by 12 leading park enterprises. ZTE Corporation, in collaboration with local operator A1, launched Belarus' first 5G SA test network, enabling 5G VoNR voice services and laying the groundwork for nationwide commercialization. By 2023, Belarusian Telecommunications Company's fiber-optic network coverage surged from 60 % (2020) to 85 %, with rural areas witnessing a doubling of average bandwidth to 100 Mbps, effectively narrowing the urban-rural digital divide. This upgraded infrastructure, integrated with the China-Europe Railway Express logistics network, has positioned the park as a regional digital-industrial hub, attracting 154 enterprises by 2025, with e-commerce, AI, and digital services accounting for 35 % of its industrial portfolio.