

LEGAL AND REGULATORY SUPPORT FOR BUSINESS IN THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS DURING THE CRISIS

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The role of small and medium-sized businesses in the economy of Belarus is well known to everyone, so it is quite logical and relevant to analyze the trends and measures observed in the field of entrepreneurship as of the beginning of 2020.

In order to create conditions for the development of entrepreneurial initiative and stimulate business activity, 10 regulatory legal acts were adopted in 2019 alone, including two decrees of the President of the Republic of Belarus and six resolutions of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus aimed at improving the business environment. The most effective measures were those that provide citizens with the opportunity to engage in their own business without registering as a business entity. As of January 1, 2020 - 42660 people were engaged in craft activities. In just a year, their number has increased by almost 16,000.

As of January 1, 2020 - 257 thousand individual entrepreneurs and 111 thousand small and medium-sized businesses were engaged in economic activities in the Republic of Belarus, including 97 thousand micro-organisms (87% of the total number of small and medium-sized businesses), 12 thousand small organizations (11 %) and 2 thousand medium-sized organizations (2 %).

The contribution of small and medium-sized businesses to the GDP of the Republic in 2019 amounted to 26.1 %, including small business organizations-15.9 %, medium-sized businesses-7 %, individual entrepreneurs-3.2 % [2].

It should be noted that entrepreneurship is fully able to reveal itself only in the appropriate business climate, which is formed, including through state policy. And the current role of individual, small and medium-sized businesses in ensuring the country's economic development is the main argument in favor of the need to continue providing state support and introducing its new forms in the current situation in the country.

Belarus did not introduce strict quarantine in 2020. The main part of the working economy and labor collectives have been preserved. Of course, health is a determining factor in making any decision, but there is a second side to the situation. The pandemic will end, and then-an economic crisis, reduced consumption, reduced social activity, a population with a depleted psyche, a depressive mood.

The country's leadership has chosen the tactic of «targeted measures» with strict control and responsibility on the part of state management bodies.

On April 24, 2020, President Alexander Lukashenko signed Decree No. 143 «on supporting the economy», which defines measures to ensure the sustainable operation

of the country's economy and social sphere, taking into account the impact of the coronavirus pandemic.

The decree provides for the implementation of measures to support business entities in certain sectors of the economy that are most affected by the current epidemiological situation. Certain provisions of the Decree take into account the interests of business.

Rent holidays and a moratorium on increasing the base rent and rent are being introduced. In addition, local administrative and Executive bodies are granted the right to reduce property taxes. It is recommended that legal entities and individual entrepreneurs - property owners - provide tenants with a deferred payment of rent, as well as reduce its amount, taking into account the volume of their revenue.

In accordance with the decree, the repayment of debt for energy resources in foreign currency is made at the ruble exchange rate set by the National Bank of Belarus as of December 31, 2019 to the foreign currency used for payments for energy resources.

According to the Decree, the Ministers of health, Antimonopoly regulation and trade, and the Chairman of the State Committee for standardization are granted the right to suspend the operation of stores and public catering facilities for a period of no more than 90 days if violations are detected. This measure is aimed at improving discipline in the work of business entities, which is especially necessary in the current economic and epidemiological situation.

The decree provides for changes in labor and social relations. The minimum period for warning employees about changes in essential working conditions without reducing the amount of remuneration is reduced. The period of possible temporary transfer of employees due to production needs, due to the adverse impact of the epidemiological situation, as well as to replace an absent employee is extended to three months.

It provides for the payment of temporary disability benefits to persons caring for a child under the age of ten who attend pre-school or General secondary education institutions, if this child belongs to the first-level contacts.

The procedure for public procurement and subsidiary liability is changing, and it is determined that the debt for energy resources in foreign currency is repaid at the ruble exchange rate set by the National Bank as of December 31, 2019 to the foreign currency used for payments for energy resources.

The decree also provides for other rules and regulations that will support the work of business entities and preserve labor collectives in conditions of slowing economic activity.

On the one hand, a lot depends on the decisions to support small and medium - sized businesses made by public administration bodies and local Executive authorities. on the other hand, those business entities whose managers (owners) show the ability to make creative and balanced business decisions survive, while maintaining stability and predictability. Nevertheless, there is a certain confusion and slow awareness of the need for rapid reorientation in the main mass of business entities, taking into account the already established economic policy in the market and the decline in consumer demand.

References:

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