

Successful Kyrgyz business mission to the Benelux countries

From May 31 to June 4, 2022, a business mission of the Kyrgyz Republic composed of more than 20 major Kyrgyz businessmen visited the Benelux countries

The Kyrgyz business mission was jointly organized by the Embassy of the Kyrgyz Republic to the Kingdom of Belgium and the Kyrgyz company "BGlobal" within the framework of the implementation of goal to promote economic diplomacy tasked by the country's leadership to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and foreign representations of the Kyrgyz Republic abroad. The successful interaction of the state apparatus with the private sector contributed to the establishment of mutually beneficial contacts with the business community of Benelux countries, the effective exchange of information and experience.

The business mission was dedicated to the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Kyrgyz Republic and the Kingdom of Belgium, the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. For the first time in the history of diplomatic relations between the parties, such a large-scale Kyrgyz business delegation visited three Benelux countries and six European cities. Of particular importance is the the timeliness and relevance of this business mission, which is taking place for the first time after a protracted pandemic and global lockdown.

The rich and intensive program of the business mission began with a welcome reception at the Embassy of the Kyrgyz Republic in Brussels with the participation of representatives of the Belgian public sector, think tanks and the media, as well as businessmen from the Brussels-Capital Region. As part of the B2B meetings held at the Embassy, the delegations of two countries discussed the prospects for cooperation in the field of hydropower, construction, processing, export of organic products, tourism, etc.

On June 1, 2022, during a business seminar on the basis of the Wallonia Foreign Trade and Investment Agency "AWEX", the business delegation of the Kyrgyz Republic got acquainted with the promising sectors of the economy of Wallonia (Belgium) and the mechanism of doing business in the region. Also, during the events, the economic and investment potential of Kyrgyzstan was presented.

To familiarize with the advanced technologies of Flanders (Belgium) the Kyrgyz delegation visited the "Mulder" breakfast cereal factory in Roeselare of the Belgian corporation "Maselis", owned by the Honorary Consul of the Kyrgyz Republic in Belgium Mr. Patrick Maselis.

The owner of one of the supermarket "MiniMix" in Liege (Belgium), Kyrgyz compatriot Mr. Aidar Samatov shared with Kyrgyz businessmen his personal experience of opening and doing business in Belgium, knowledge of local legislation and taxation, as well as the

opportunities for business development in Kyrgyzstan on the example of the Belgian experience.

On June 3, 2022, with the organizational support of the Flanders Investment and Trade "FIT" and the "Voka" Chamber of Commerce and Industry Antwerp-Waasland, the Kyrgyz business mission visited a multimedia exhibition dedicated to the history of the production of the world famous Belgian chocolate "Chocolate Nation" and the diamond quarter in Antwerp (Belgium). Specialists of the "HRD Antwerp" diamond laboratory certified in accordance with international ISO standards introduced businessmen from Kyrgyzstan with the diamond sector in Belgium, the process of their processing, the mechanism of certification and sales at auctions.

During this business mission, on June 2, 2022, a business seminar was held at the Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce, on which the Luxembourg side was informed about the economic potential of Kyrgyzstan, the achievements of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic in improving the investment climate and attractive industries for foreign investment. Particular attention was directed to the benefits of doing business in Kyrgyzstan, taking into account the possibilities of the current status of the "GSP+". Noted the interest of the Kyrgyz side in attracting European, including Luxembourg, investments to the Kyrgyz Republic. Also, B2B meetings were held on the basis of the Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce with representatives of the business community of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, during which specific projects were discussed on the supply of Kyrgyz honey, export of organic products, as well as in the field of construction and IT technologies.

As part of the cultural program the Kyrgyz delegation paid tribute to the memory of the great Kyrgyz and Soviet writer, the first Ambassador of independent Kyrgyzstan to the Benelux countries, Mr. Chingiz T. Aitmatov and visited the street named after him. Luxembourg is the only European state where one of the streets of the capital is named after a Kyrgyz compatriot.

On June 3-4, 2022, the Kyrgyz business delegation continued its mission to the Kingdom of the Netherlands, where they visited the production facilities of the Dutch beer "Heineken". For further exchange of information and experience, the participants of the business mission exchanged contacts with compatriots working in the world-famous companies "Miro" and "Booking.com" in Amsterdam (the Netherlands).

During the program of this visit of the Kyrgyz business mission, the Embassy of the Kyrgyz Republic to Belgium jointly with the Kyrgyz company "BGlobal" was guided by the goal of acquainting Kyrgyz businessmen with the advanced industries of the Benelux countries, focusing on priority areas for Kyrgyzstan, covering all three countries of accreditation, and all three Belgian regions.

The Kyrgyz side has high hopes and prospects for further practical cooperation between representatives of the business community of Kyrgyzstan and their Belgian, Dutch and Luxembourgish counterparts.