



*Empowered lives.  
Resilient nations.*

# Tech skills centers

The digitalization of the economy is one of the priorities of the Government's Sustainable Development Agenda which foresees the expansion of the existing advanced tech sector. Firstly, Internet penetration is growing fast, especially the number of Internet users and active social media users (i.e. digital infrastructure is ready to embrace new jobs in the digital sector, and basic digital literacy persists). Secondly, after the adoption of the Presidential Decree #8 at the end of 2017, Belarus started to change its image from a transition economy, stuck in its soviet past, to an "IT country". It has one of the most advanced and transparent legal frameworks for cryptocurrency-related activities, and is open for international projects and investors, offering legal provisions along with simple and attractive tax regulation. Thirdly, the economic effects of good infrastructure and attractive legislation are strong; in the last five years, IT services exports' share in total exports of services has doubled, exceeding 20%.

## PROJECT NAME

## MODERNIZING REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT CENTERS FOR MEETING THE DEMANDS OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

## GOALS

- To reduce unemployment in economically underdeveloped regions;
- To improve access to education required by the IT sector;
- To (re)integrate women after parental leave into the labour market;
- To improve access for the least mobile groups to decent jobs;
- To augment regional IT infrastructure.

## BACKGROUND

The economic recession of 2015–2016 launched the process of divergence in the economic development of Belarusian regions. The least developed regions face a lack of decent jobs, and households are often looking for different coping strategies – from labour migration to Minsk or neighboring countries, to childbirth which brings three years of maternity benefit which is higher than salaries for most of the jobs available for women at a regional level. Local employment promotion centers (or employment centers) are simply collecting information about vacancies at a local level and proposing them to jobseekers.



However, Belarusian regions possess high-quality digital infrastructure that allows remote work and training. In other words, it is possible to escape from the local poverty trap by entering national or even global labour markets. The missing link is skills. Local employment centers cannot provide necessary training due to the absence of trainers; a gap that can be filled by accessing HTP opportunities. Finally, HTP companies are constrained in their development by a lack of IT specialists – the sector's demand for a skilled labour force is growing faster than the number of people graduating with the appropriate skills.

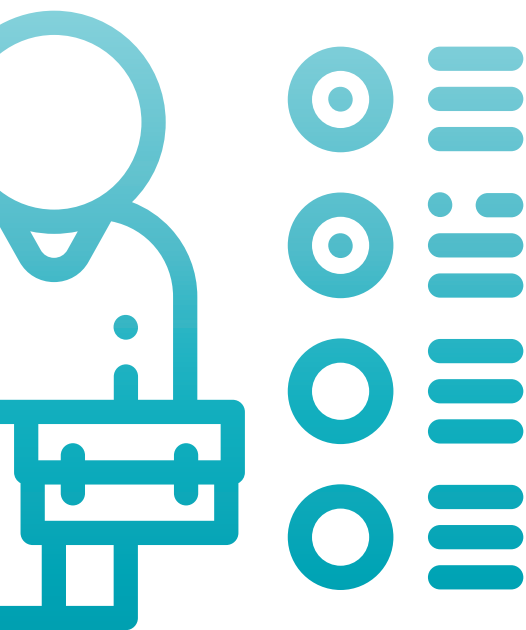


# WHAT TO DO?

- **Select pilot employment centers in localities that would cover the least developed regions (ensure good transport connectivity if necessary);**
- **Equip classes with modern computers and a video conference service connected to the HTP training center in Minsk, as well as making them accessible/friendly for people with disabilities;**
- **Train local staff to operate the equipment; to teach the basics of coding/testing or other in-demand digital skills to assist remote trainers from the HTP;**
- **Develop the curriculum for courses that will be trained;**
- **Organize remote training for the following target groups:**
  - children and adolescents (with symbolic scholarships for the best pupils);
  - youth (with the possibility of remote or permanent employment);
  - adults (different age groups could be targeted, with the possibility of remote or permanent employment);
  - women with children/on parental leave (additional flexibility of schedule is important; training with a short-term focus on remote employment).

## NEXT STEPS:

**start cooperation with local schools to augment their programmes for the demands of modern labour markets. All courses should cost a minimal amount in order to incentivize students.**



## IMPACT AREA

# NATIONAL ACCELERATORS



Digital Transformation



Future Generation Orientation



Gender Equality

## SDGs



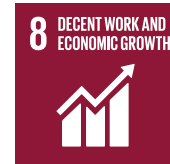
(via building digital skills and providing employment opportunities for people vulnerable to poverty risk)



(via providing access to training that helps to build digital skills demanded in the labour market)



(via providing training to women on parental leave and creating opportunities for flexible employment, including remote working)

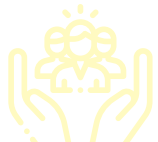


(via providing access to training that helps to build the digital skills demanded in the labour market)



(via the creation of a network of Tech Skills Centers alongside existing local employment centers)

## INTENDED OUTCOMES



### INVESTORS

would get access to a labour force across the country with specific skills built for particular purposes



### LOCAL AUTHORITIES

would get lower unemployment, lower poverty, and smaller outflow of the most active labour force from their regions



### WORKING-AGE POPULATION

in least developed regions would get skills that increase their "value" in the labour market, allowing them to enter the national or even international labour market remotely



### CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

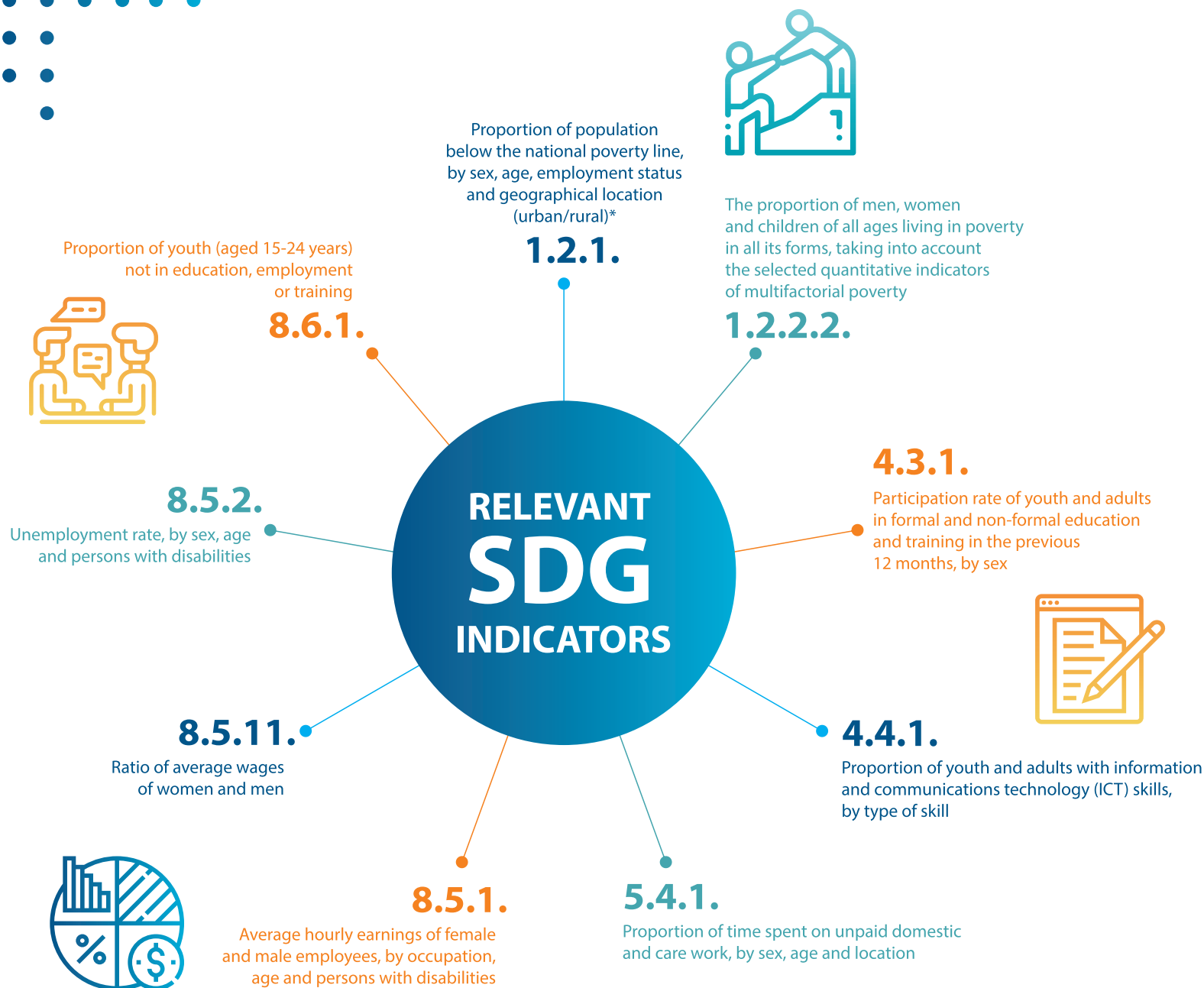
in the least developed regions would get higher incentives to invest their time in education and training



### WOMEN

in the least developed regions would get opportunities to develop skills and to stay economically active during parental leave, which would contribute to higher financial independence of women and a lower gender pay gap

## RELEVANT SDG INDICATORS



\*National indicator does not imply this degree of disaggregation, but it is required for proper impact measurement.

## POTENTIAL IMPACT INVESTORS

