

Drugmaker Borismed Holds Struggling Belarus' First IPO

By [The Moscow Times](#)

June 29, 2011

The  Moscow Times

Belarus' largest drugmaker held the country's first initial public offering Wednesday as companies seek to raise domestic funds amid a shortage of foreign currency.

State-owned Borisov Plant of Medical Substances was selling a 15 percent stake at 476,000 Belarussian rubles (\$95.60) per share on Minsk's Belarussian Currency and Stock Exchange, the Finance Ministry's securities department said in an e-mailed statement.

Belarus is seeking loans from the International Monetary Fund and Russia as it struggles to bridge a current-account gap equal to 16 percent of gross domestic product last year and to lure foreign investment into the centralized economy.

"Before, shares were sold to closed circles of investors," Valery Postovsky, director of the plant's underwriter, Brostok, said in an interview in Minsk. "This is the first time shares are available to anybody willing to buy them — from individuals to major investors."

Belarussian law has allowed IPOs since 2007, according to the Finance Ministry.

“The crisis was actually good for us,” Alexander Fando, director of Borisov Plant, known as Borismed, said June 15 in Minsk. The currency’s 36 percent devaluation reduced the plant’s market value, making it more affordable for investors, he said.

Borismed was established in 1965 and has 40 percent of the Belarus market. It exports 60 percent of its output, mostly to Russia and Kazakhstan.

This first share offering will help the ministry estimate whether there is demand for open share sales. “This is a rehearsal for future IPOs abroad,” the statement said.

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