

Belarus Seeks Loans

By [The Moscow Times](#)

September 21, 2011

The  **Moscow Times**

Belarus is seeking between \$3 billion and \$7 billion from the International Monetary Fund as it continues talks with the lender, Deputy Prime Minister Sergei Rumas said Wednesday.

An IMF mission is due to arrive in Belarus next month, Rumas said, adding that a new program of financial assistance is the "fastest way" of overcoming the nation's foreign-currency shortage.

Rumas also said his government might give guarantees and pledge a 51 percent stake in refiner Naftan to receive a one-year, \$1 billion loan from Sberbank. He confirmed that the Russia-led Eurasian Economic Community's bailout loan to Belarus is linked to his country's pledge to raise at least \$2.5 billion from asset sales in the next three years.

Belarus' economy expanded 9.1 percent in the first eight months from the same period last year, and the country had a trade surplus of \$200 million in August, Rumas said.

(Bloomberg)

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