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## **LEGAL PROTECTION OF INDUSTRIAL DESIGNS IN THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS (HISTORICAL ASPECT AND TRENDS OF DEVELOPMENT)**

The main stages of the development of legislation on industrial designs during the Soviet period and the period of independent Belarus are reviewed in the article. The analysis of the main documents regulating legal protection of industrial design which were passed during the Soviet Union period is given herein.

In particular, the article specifies peculiar features of the Decree of Council of Ministers of the USSR “On Industrial Designs” 1965; Ordinance of the Council of Ministers № 539, which affirmed the “Regulations on Industrial Designs” 1981; the USSR Law “On Industrial Designs” of 1991.

The analysis of the above documents allows viewing the gradual expansion of the range of products that fall under the terms of legal protection as industrial designs.

The article describes the main sources that contain legal norms for the protection of industrial designs in the Republic of Belarus. Some drawbacks and peculiarities of the Act of the Republic

of Belarus of 1993 “On Patents for Industrial Designs” are also indicated here. The author specifies the role of the Civil Code of the Republic of Belarus in the protection of industrial designs.

The author conducts a critical analysis of the Law of the Republic of Belarus “On Patents for Inventions, Utility Models, Industrial Designs” of 2002 and characterizes major changes relating to the protection of industrial designs in connection with the adoption of the law. Thus, these changes affected the conditions of patentability of industrial designs (the requirement of “industrial applicability” was annulled). The current law does not require the examination of an application for an industrial design, and also establishes a smaller list of documents that must be included in the application for an industrial design.

Considering these peculiarities, the tendency of mitigation of the requirements for the protection of products as industrial designs under the laws of the Republic of Belarus was remarked.