

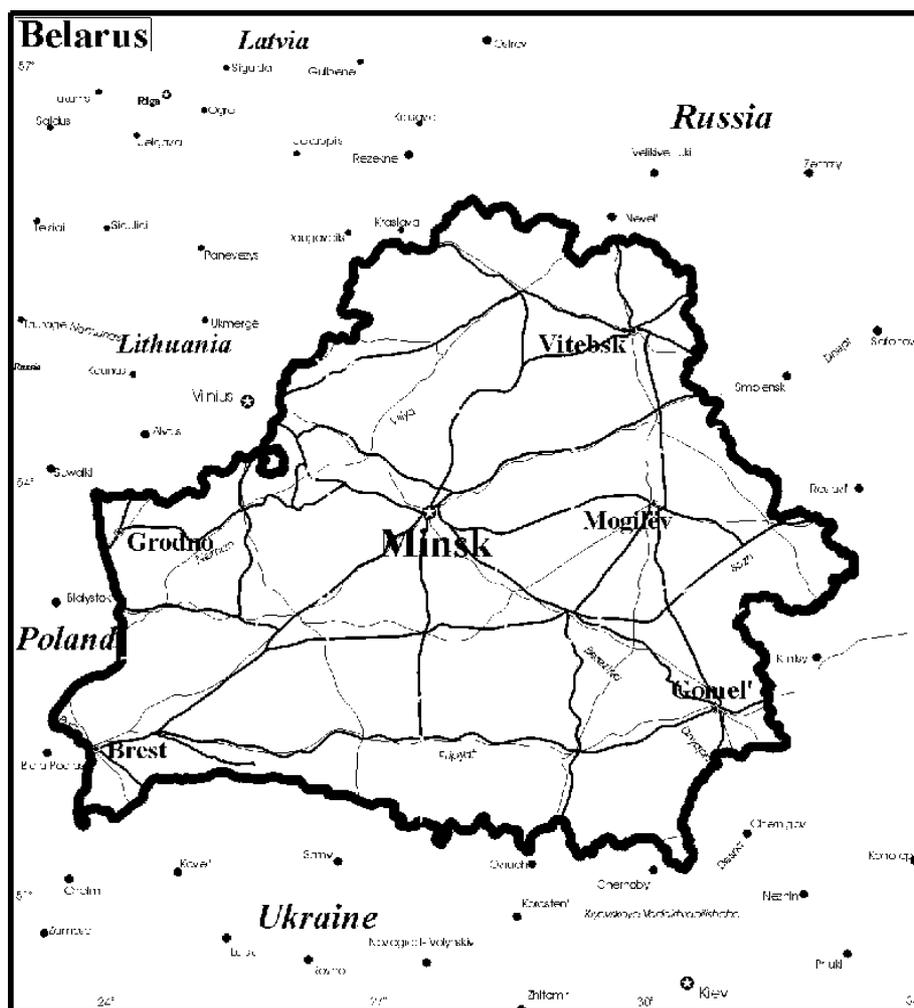
**International Bureau of Education
Ministry of Education of the Republic of Belarus**

THE DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION

**National report of the Republic of Belarus
by Ministry of Education of the Republic of Belarus**

**MINSK
2001**

BELARUS IN BRIEF



GENERAL INFORMATION

Republic of Belarus is a unitary democratic lawful state that exercises a principle of legislative, executive and judicial powers separation. The independence of the State was proclaimed on July 27, 1990. President, parliament, government and courts of the Republic of Belarus are the state authorities in the Republic of Belarus. President is the head of the State. Alexander Lukashenko won the first presidential election in July 1994. Parliament named The National Assembly of the Republic of Belarus is a representative legislative body that consists of two chambers. They are The Chamber of Representatives (110 members) and The Council of Republic (1 representatives from every region and the city of Minsk and 8 members appointed by President). The Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus is the government of the State which carries out executive authority in the republic. The Constitution of the republic of Belarus was adopted on March 15, 1994. Then it was revised by the people referendum on November 24, 1996.

There are 20 registered political parties with number of members over 1,000. Trade unions have a long history since 1894. The Federation of Belarusian Trade Unions acts since 1990. There are 33 branch trade unions that engage 4.4 millions of members.

Mass media is not bad developed in Belarus. There are 1097 newspapers and magazines. The first newspaper was opened in 1776 (Gazeta Grodzienska) in Grodno. Broadcasting started since 1925, TV since 1956, cable TV since 1991.

Republic of Belarus is among the founders of Organization of United Nations and its member since 1945.

The city of Minsk is the capital of the State. It is known since 1061 and it was awarded with Magdeburg rights since 1499. The population of Minsk is now over 2 million of inhabitants.

There are 6 regions with 118 administrative districts in Belarus. The city of Minsk has its special status that is equal to region.

Belarus has the developed public transportation network. General extent of rail ways is 582 km. Density of highways equals to 240 km per thousand of square km. Public bus lines serve in every settlement.

GEOGRAPHY

Territory of the Republic of Belarus makes 207,6 thousand square km. Forests covers 36% of the territory, lakes and rivers — 2%. Agricultural activities involve 45% of land. 17% of the area are in different use. The extent of the territory from North to South is as long as 560 km and from West to East it is 650 km.

Extent of borders is 2969 km (with Russia — 990, Ukraine — 975, Lithuania — 462, Poland — 399, Latvia — 143).

The following rivers are the longest in the republic among 20 000 rivers and creeks (km): Dnieper — 700, Berezina — 613, Pripjat — 495, Sozh — 493, Neman — 459, Ptich — 421. The largest Belarusian lakes are (square km): Naroch — 79,6, Osvejskoe — 52,8, Chervonoe — 40,3. The total number of lakes is over 10,000.

The landscape is mainly plane. The average altitude is about 160 m. The Mountain Dzerzhinskaya near Minsk of 345 m above the sea level is the highest point. The lowest point of 80-90 m above the sea level is in the valley of the river Neman near Grodno.

Nowadays there are Minsk, Gomel, Brest, Vitebsk, Grodno and Mogilev among the largest cities of Belarus.

Belarus is a main victim of Chernobyl disaster. About 70 % of radioactive materials from destroyed reactor have dropped out across Belarus; 23 % of its territory are contaminated now. It affected over 18% of agricultural area and forests and concerned 2 million of Belarusian citizens in Gomel and Mogilev regions mainly.



POPULATION

The population of Belarus is about the sustainable level of 10 million of habitants during the latest 20 years. This provides 14th place in Europe. Nevertheless, the trend of slow population decrease appeared after 1990 and continues running now. There are low income and after Chernobyl effect among the main reasons of the trend. The most significant decrease was observed at country area where a bit more than 3 million people live now in 24222 villages. About 7 million urban inhabitants are in 423 cities and towns.

TABLE 1. POPULATION (BY THE BEGINNING OF YEAR, THOUSAND OF PEOPLE)

Year:	1997	1998	1999	2000
Total population	10236.1	10203.8	10179.1	10017.9
Urban	7089.8	7122.6	6961.5	6984.1
Rural	3146.3	3081.2	3083.7	3033.8
Male	4777.7	4760.7	4717.6	4708.4
Female	5458.4	5443.1	5327.6	5309.5

Despite of ecological problems in a southern part of the republic caused by the Chernobyl' accident the mortality parameters in the republic are lower than in Russian Federation, Ukraine and in the Baltic countries. Average life duration is now 68.5 years (62.7 years for male and 74.4 for female); maximum of 72.4 years was reached in 1970.

TABLE 2. MORTALITY PARAMETRES

Year:	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Number of births	95.8	89.6	92.6	93.1	93.1
Number of died	133.4	136.7	137.3	141.8	134.5
Natural gain	-37.6	-47.1	-44.7	-48.7	-41.3
Marriages	64	70	71	73	62
Divorces	43	47	47	47	43

Declaration on the country sovereignty provides a cultural autonomy for national minorities living at the territory of Belarus. At present there are over 120 minorities in Belarus. In November 1992 the Law of the Republic of Belarus «On national minorities in the Republic of Belarus» was accepted. The law confirms free development of cultures, languages, traditions of all people living at the territory of the republic. It proclaims also the freedom of creation of national public organizations, cultural and educational establishments. In 1994 in Minsk the Center of national cultures of Belarus was opened.

TABLE 3. POPULATION OF THE MOST NUMEROUS NATIONALITIES OF THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS (ACCORDING TO THE 1999 CENSUS):

Belarusians	8 159 thousand	81.2 %
Russians	1 141.7 thousand	11.4 %
Poles	395.7 thousand	3.9 %
Ukraines	237 thousand	2.4 %

Jews	27.8 thousand	0.3 %
Tatars	10.1 thousand	0.1 %
Gypsy	9.9 thousand	0.1 %
Lithuanians	6.4 thousand	0.1 %
Other nationalities	53.6 thousand	0.6 %

The language culture of the Belarusian people is extremely rich and original. According to the 1999 census 85.6% of the Belarusians and 73.3 % of total population of Belarus consider Belarusian to be their native language. According to the Law on languages accepted by the Supreme Soviet of Belarus since 1990 the Belarusian language received the status of a state language. Since 1996 by the people referendum the Russian language has the status that is equal to Belarusian.

There are 5.1 million people are engaged in the labor sphere in Belarus. 3.6 million of them work in a public sector. Everyone eighth employee has higher education.

HISTORY

Belarus is a new independent state in the center of Europe.

The territory of nowadays Belarus was settled about 120 thousand years ago. In VI-VIII centuries Slavic tribes occupied this land, assimilated and superseded more ancient inhabitants Balts. That was the initial pulse to formation of Belarusian ethnos. In IX century the ancient state formations named Polotsk and Turovo-Pinscoe Principalities appeared in the river basins of Western Dvina and Dnieper

At the end of X centuries the Christianity was accepted, that strictly affected further cultural development of the Belarusian lands.

Belarusian Ponemanie (Noth-West part of the contemporary Belarus) in XIII century became an important political and cultural center of Europe. Here, Great Principality Lithuanian, Russian and Zemajtiskoe came into being and soon appeared among the largest feudal monarchy of Europe. Statute of Great Principality Lithuanian from 1588 is recognized to be the most accomplished and perfect collection of laws of the medieval Europe and a classical sample of the feudal legislation. In the middle of XVI century Great Principality Lithuanian and Polish Kingdom were united on a federal basis into the Rech' Pospolitaya.

At the end of XVIII century the territory, where the Belarusians lived, were integrated into the Russian Empire. The new rise of democratic and national-liberation movement at the end of XIX and in the beginning of XX century created the real preconditions for revival of the Belarusian culture and state. After the October revolution in Russia and Lenin's decree on independence of nations On March 25, 1918 Belaruskaya Narodnaya Respublika (Belarusian National Republic) was proclaimed. This state was not vital enough and on January 1, 1919 Bolsheviks changed it for the Belarusian Soviet Socialist Republic. Belarus, Russian Federation and Ukraine became the founders of the Soviet Union in winter 1920. On July 27, 1990 the Supreme Soviet of Belarusian Soviet Socialist Republic adopted the Declaration on State Sovereignty of Belarus.

Belarus went through a number of wars. During the conflicts of the middle of XVII century each second inhabitant was lost, during Northern War every third one was killed, Napoleon's Wars carried away a quarter of population. During the World War II more than 3 million people were lost, i.e. each third inhabitant of the republic died. Many historical and cultural values were lost irrevocably, such as the libraries of

Kuteinskij Monastery in Orsha and Sofia Cathedral in Polotsk. Ephrosinia Polotskaya's Cross that is the masterpiece of national and world art was lost, too. The most valuable assemblies of the books and archival documents from Radzivils', Oginskies' and Khreptovichs' patrimonial manors are taken out.

RELIGION

According to the data of the State Committee on Religions and Nationalities, at the beginning of 2000 year 2256 religious communities acted in Belarus. They belonged to 26 confessions (from them 15 — Protestant). The majority of believers in Belarus are of Christian orientation. Orthodox Church is the leading one (about 1000 communities). Second by the number of the believers is Rome-Catholic church (405 communities). There are 357 Protestants communities and this number grows dramatically. There are opened 138 church-parish and Sunday schools. 4 brotherhoods, 10 sisterhoods, 7 religious educational institutions, 68 religious associations, centers, unions are created.

All these communities are equal at the law. Their activity is under the statements of The Law «On freedom of creed and religious organizations» that was accepted by the Supreme Council of Belarus in December 1992. The mentioned above law provides human rights protection for believers according to the internationally accepted democratic traditions.

ECONOMY

The natural, technical, economic, social and demographic features determine the branch specialization of republic. Nowadays there are over 2000 industry enterprises with 1.5 million of employee in Belarus.

There are potassium, salt, peat, limited stocks of oil, coal, iron ores, slates, bitumen and building materials, mineral waters, agricultural and forest abilities are among the main natural resources of Belarus.

The industry gives 70% of a total national product. The main branches are mechanical engineering, wood processing, chemical, fertilizers, tractor, track and tool production and food industry. The country provides itself with buses and trolleybuses, main food, shoe and textile. High-tech industry after the crisis of 90th demonstrates the rise of output. It produces refrigerators, TV and radio sets, electrical lamps, computers, electronic components and aggregates and software.

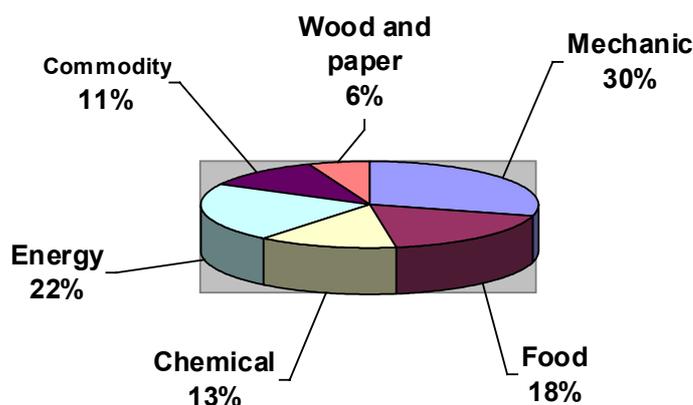
Energy, oil, gas, cotton, metals, paper and grain are the most important items of import. Belarus exports potassium, steel, nitric fertilizer, meat, potato, textile, tractors, tracks, TV-sets, refrigerators, electronic components, furniture and software.

TABLE 4. STRUCTURE OF INDUSTRIAL MANUFACTURE OF THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS (%)

Year:	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Electric power industry	11,3	11,8	7,5	9,2	9,1
Fuel industry	3,8	3,5	3,6		6,6
Metallurgy	2,7	3,1	3,2		3,8
Chemical industry	12,9	13,3	10,5	15,7	14,9

Mechanical engineering	24,4	24,7	23,7	25,6	24,3
Wood-processing industry	5,6	5,7	5,4	6,1	5,2
Building materials	4,5	4,8	3,4		3,4
Commodity industry	7,9	8,1	8,5	9,8	9,1
Food industry	19,0	17,8	15,6	17,2	18,1
Other branches	12,9	13,2	18,6	16,4	13,4

THE BRANCHES CONTRIBUTION INTO INDUSTRIAL OUTPUT



A lot of lands involved in agricultural industry (0.8-0.6 hectare per capita), natural and adopted pastures, soft climate with rare local droughts promote to the development of a diversified agriculture. This sector gives grain, linen, potatoes, beet, meat, milk, eggs vegetables and fruits.

TABLE 5. AGRICULTURE

Year:	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Land in agricultural use (thousand hectare)	9333	9306	9307	9282	9257,7
Agricultural ground (hectare per citizen)	0.91	0,91	0,9	0,9	0,9
The workers, engaged in agricultural industry (% from general number of employees)	18,8	17,0	16,8	15,0	7,1
Gross production in agricultural industry (% of GDP gross domestic product)	13,5	11,5	33,4		

TABLE 6. DYNAMICS OF BASIC ECONOMIC PARAMETERS OF BELARUS

Year:	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Gross domestic product (billion rubles)	184.2	356.1	675.2	2890.3	9125.6
Per capita (thousand rubles)	17.9	34.7	65.9	288.1	912.1
Industrial output (milliard rubles)	183.9	396.9	755.2	3322.0	8852.2
Per capita (thousand rubles)	17.9	38.7	73.8	331.0	884.9
Manufacturing of the consumer goods (milliard rubles)	76.1	162.7	331.9	1460.8	4200.2
Per capita (thousand rubles)	7.4	15.8	32.4	145.6	419.0
Agricultural production (milliard rubles)	72.8	127.7	221.7	924.5	35018.8
Per capita (thousand rubles)	7.1	12.4	21.6	92.1	3501.8

The capital investments (milliard rubles)	29.9	68.2	130.1	564.0	1809.0
Per capita (thousand rubles)	2.9	6.7	12.8	56.2	180.9
The state budget (trillion rubles)	54.3	120.8	249.6	1142.8	
On education (trillion rubles)	11.2	23.3	43.8	185.7	562.1
On science (trillion rubles)	0.88	1.77	3.03	13.5	

According to the classification of the World Bank the Republic of Belarus is in the group of the countries with an average level of the incomes (report of the World Bank on the basic results of development for 1996).

NATIONAL SYSTEM OF EDUCATION

STATE POLICY AND GENERAL PRINCIPALS

Development of educational system in the Republic of Belarus is based on national traditions and global tendencies in education field. It guarantees equal access to all education stages, unity of its elements and requirements, continuity of all training stages. National education system is regulated by the Constitution of the Republic of Belarus, Laws «On Education in the Republic of Belarus», «On languages», «On national minority», «On child's rights», other provisions adopted for past years. The Law "On Education in the Republic of Belarus" announces the right to receive complimentary education at every stage of the national structure.

According to article 14 of the Law all state and non-state educational establishments on the territory of the republic are included into the national education system of the Republic of Belarus. There are the following main components in it structure:

1. Preschool education
2. General secondary education
3. Out-of-school education
4. Vocational education
5. Secondary professional education
6. Higher education
7. Research education
8. Adult education and staff retraining (lifelong education)
9. Self-education of citizens
10. Education for people with disabilities.

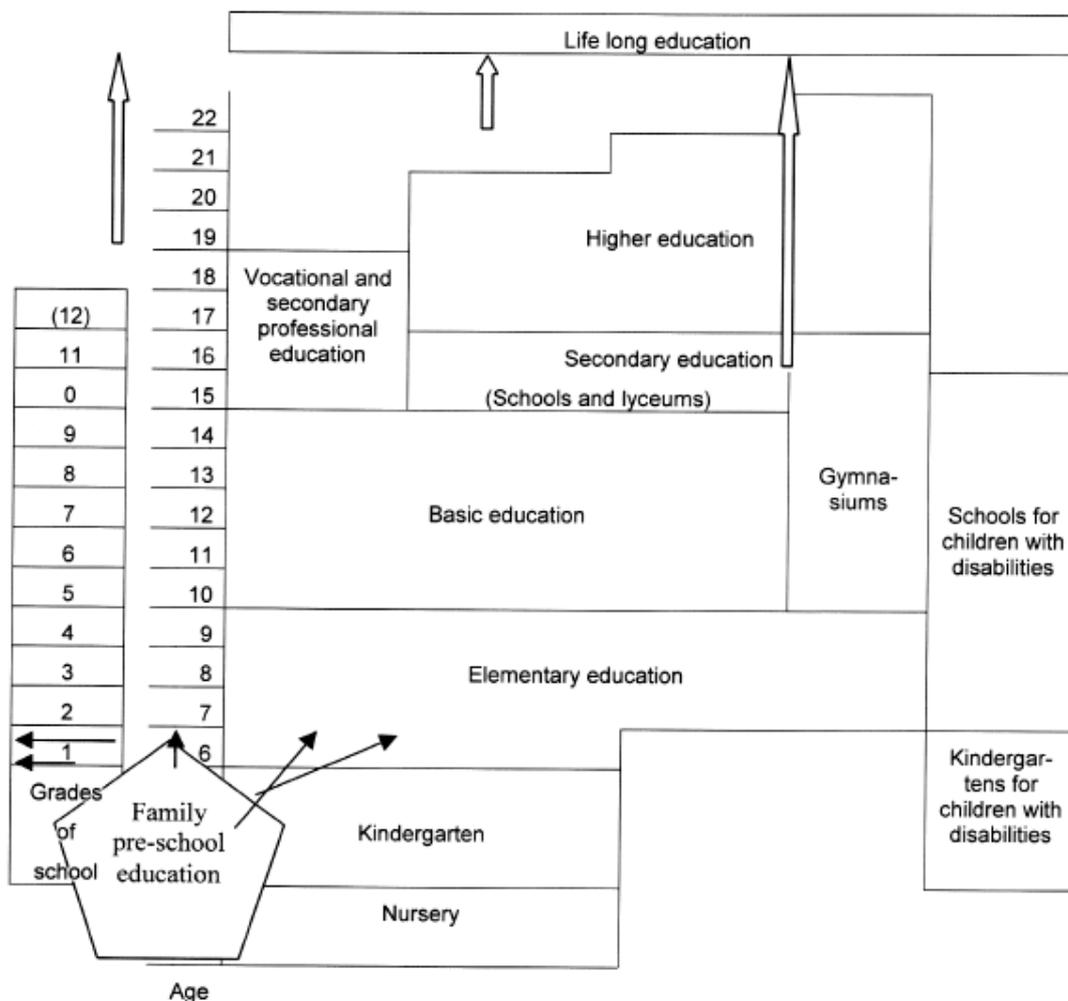
The system of education of the Republic of Belarus includes different types of educational establishments:

- Children's preschool (kindergartens, nurseries) and out-of-school establishments
- General education (primary, basic and secondary schools, gymnasiums, lyceums) establishments

- Special and boarding establishments (child’s home, boarding school, reformatory for the minor offenders etc.)
- Vocational and high vocational schools and technical lyceums
- Secondary professional schools (technicums, uchilishche and colleges)
- Higher education establishments (universities, academies, institutes and higher colleges)
- Institutes of adult education and staff retraining.

The system of education of the Republic of Belarus includes also bodies of education system management — the Ministry of Education, subdivisions and departments of education at executive committees of local territorial administrations and subordinated instructional-methodical establishments.

Continuity of the successful stages in the education system, its structure, levels of training and the types of educational establishments are shown at the figure.

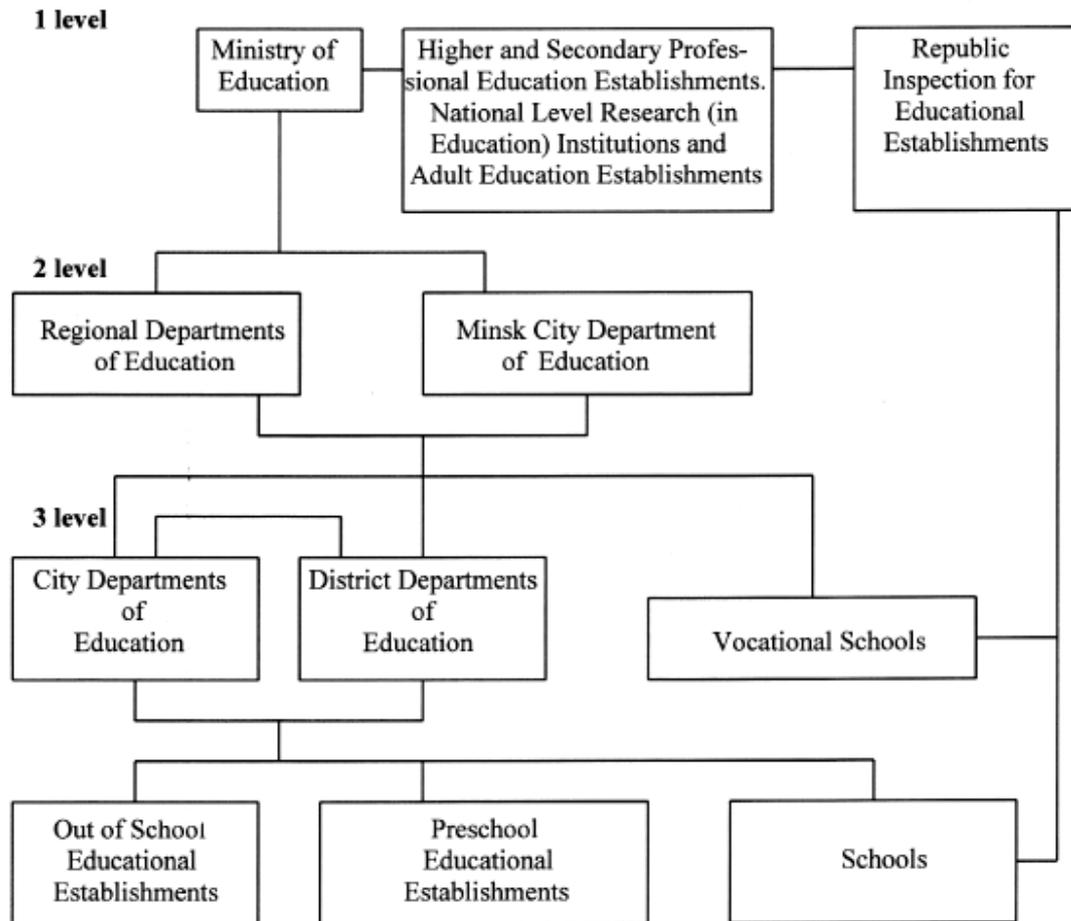


THE SYSTEM OF EDUCATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS

MANAGEMENT IN THE SYSTEM OF EDUCATION

The diagram at the next figure explains the hierarchy and links in the system of higher education. According to the Law “On Education in the Republic of Belarus” the Ministry of Education is responsible for the state and development of the system of education. In this sense all the educational establishments are subordinated the Ministry of Education which organizes the system of quality assurance and elaborates national regulation in this area. It manages also subordinated research and instructional-methodical establishments, institutes for adult education and staff retraining, some national enterprises and organizations. It manages activity of subdivisions and departments of education in territorial authorities together with these authorities. The Ministry of Education of the Republic of Belarus governs by means of regulations and methodical guidance the system of higher education irrespective of an ownership type and subordination of a higher education establishment. The main tasks of the Ministry of Education are:

- Development and realization of the State policy and state control in the field of education;
- Maintenance of functioning and development of the national system of education of the Republic of Belarus;
- Coordination of activity of other republican authority, subdivisions for education management of regional and Minsk City executive committees in education field; coordination of activity of various establishments, organizations, enterprises for the system of education issues.



STRUCTURE OF MANAGEMENT IN THE SYSTEM OF EDUCATION

The local governments are in charge of preschool and out-of-school establishments as well as primary, basic and secondary schools, a part of vocational and secondary professional schools and colleges and have them in the privacy. A part of universities and secondary professional educational establishments (private, medical, agricultural, military and etc.) are in different privacy, too.

The Republic Inspection for Educational Establishment is the core of national system of quality assurance in the Republic of Belarus. The Inspection is independent from Ministry of Education and educational establishments but it subordinated directly to the Council of Ministers. It organizes and executes attestation and accreditation of the educational establishment. The evaluation and analysis are in responsibility of independent evaluators who are recruited by the Inspection from the best specialist from universities, research institutes and etc. The evaluators are jointed in expert commissions but every evaluator acts separately. The Inspection formally checks the reports of the evaluators and makes final decision. The issued after this certificates of accreditation or attestation valid for 5 following years. Negative decision or low grade upon accreditation could be a subject of appeal.

REFORM OF THE NATIONAL EDUCATION SYSTEM

The current reform of the Belarusian education system assumes to develop every its element on the base of the common educational policy. In accordance with this intention in the «Main Directions of the National System of Education Development» the special aims for every of these elements are stated.

The document proclaims providing the children with of the optimal conditions for physical and psychological development with due regard to age and individual features in the system of pre-school education. This is to provide a high value of childhood as well as a high level preparedness and equal start abilities to further education. It is necessary to save and develop the State system of pre-school establishments, to diversify the types of such establishments, to involve the family in the process of education, to change the content and technology of pre-school education, to make a rush to preliminary school more comfortable for children, to improve child healthcare system. The rural pre-school education and upbringing system development is among the first level problems.

At the level of secondary education the efforts should be focused to preparedness of the young generation for life in the changing world. That is based on the harmoniously developed individualities who know basic of national and world culture. The average educational level of population will rise. To achieve this goal the structure and content of secondary education will be enhanced; the system of patriotic, civil and moral education will be established. Compulsory basic education will include 4-year preliminary level and 6-year basic level. Full secondary education requires additional 2-year study at school.

Special education system serves to children with disabilities who can not attend a conventional school. The system provides them with equal opportunities to study and to have a profession. The staff of these schools does all their best to make children integrated into all the public affairs without any discrimination.

This is out-of-school education that is to provide all-round meeting of the educational requirements of children and their parents. No one talent can be missed. This system offers also some additional healthcare abilities, enhancing in life skills, handicraft, music, sports and etc. The network of out-of-school education establishments will be developed; the conditions for young people activity will be created. There is a problem of Chernobyl's children healthcare at the first line of the State actions.

Vocational education should meet the requirements of young people in profession and demands of labor market. It is possible in Belarus to start vocational study just after graduation from basic or secondary school. Anyway, vocational establishments offer classes of secondary education. This system has to become the more effective service that faces the needs of new social and economic conditions. The transformation of secondary education on 12-year basis enforces the vocational schools to meet new demands.

The Republic of Belarus saves the system of secondary vocational education that provides graduates with qualification of «technic» that is between qualifications of workers and engineers. The system includes technicums and colleges establishments with two or three years training program for the people who graduated from a secondary school. Some establishments offer earlier enrolment for the people who have got basic education and can continue secondary education in parallel with

vocational training. The main problem of this system concerns out of day equipment and weak co-operation with higher education establishments. To overcome the difficulties there will be established a new system of educational standards and some courses and periods of education will be adapted to university's ones and recognized. This will permit the access of «technics» to the second or even third grade of an affiliated higher education establishment. That idea is realized completely in higher colleges that are incorporated simultaneously in the secondary vocational education and higher education systems and that are strong linked with their supervisors.

The system of higher education needs transformation also. It should better meet population requirement, be better managed and exercise more autonomy and academic freedoms. The system development will come through legislation and regulation enhancement. For example, acts of regulation on the system of university ranks, structure of the higher education levels, academic freedoms and university autonomy will be established. The establishments of higher education will become the centers for lifelong education in accordance with the decision of the UNESCO World Conference in Hamburg in 1997. The system of enrolment will be revised to provide more fair access to universities. Research in universities will be supplied with more effective financial and equipment support. This will be also better coordinated with industry requirements and basic investigations in National Academy of Science.

New spirit must instill into post-graduate courses' system to make it more effective and attractive. Particularly, the problem could be solved through intensification of international scientific co-operation and academic mobility. Another action is a special financial support of young scientists' research projects through the system of the state grants as well as opportunity to provide young scientists with more abilities to publish the results.

Lifelong education system in Belarus is the most diverse among different parts of the national system of education. It covers all the levels of education and informal education. There are a lot of non-state investments and establishments in this sphere. It includes now the traditional staff retraining courses and new branches for unemployed and retired military officers. Just this system provides small business and innovation spheres with leaders and specialists.

Education of personality in the system of education should be enhanced, too. It should provide students with general and professional culture, moral values, patriotism, environmental knowledge and health life in respect to every business, citizen's conscious position and etc.

STAGES OF THE CURRENT REFORM OF THE NATIONAL EDUCATION SYSTEM

The reform includes three stages that cover period till 2010. The stages will result in new vision of the national education system that should be formed through wide scale investigation in educational management. New system will be based on the special legislation and regulation elaborated with use of the world experience and achievements. The stages are the following:

STAGE 1. PROGRAMS FOR THE REFORM OF EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT (1999 – 2001).

First of all during this stage there should be elaborated and adopted a revised draft of the Law «On Education in the Republic of Belarus». It will provide the legislative basis of the national priority of education and the legal environment for further transformations.

The draft presupposes the inclusion in educational legislation of the following new elements:

- correction of basic state policy principles in the area of education;
- better conditions of the rights of citizens to education ensuring;
- declaration of equality of two basic languages of instruction: Belarusian and Russian;
- State standards on the content of education;
- setting up a new educational system structure (family and special education are added);
- introducing the multilevel system of higher education;
- sharing the State bodies, public organizations and educational institutions competence;
- setting up common and equal requirements to the participants of the educational process and regulation of state controlled system of quality assurance;
- structuring of financing, material and technical supply of educational institutions.

The most significant correction should be done in legislation for secondary and higher education as well as on occupational education. The Ministry of Education together with established at the President's administration a special body on legislation and regulation elaborated a new draft of the Law on Education which regulates all the features of the national system of education in the Republic of Belarus. Simultaneously, the drafts of all mentioned above laws are under consideration in the Ministry of Education and in expertise bodies like international and national institutions and the leading universities. In particular, the draft of the Law on Higher Education was under expert evaluation in the Legislative Reform Program of the Council of Europe. A fruitful idea to create a code of higher education rules before 2005 has been recently put forward. Permanent updating of regulation in the system of education is among the most important goals of the Ministry of Education. Ministries of Finance, Labor, Economy, Justice, National Academy of Science, State Committees on Research and Technologies, Research Staff Accreditation, Standards, National Commission for UNESCO, a lot of domestic, international and foreign organizations participate in this process.

Simultaneously, current state and branch programs of research and development will support the reform. There are «Teacher», «Rural schools», «Foreign Languages», «Informatisation of the System of Education», «Capital Repairing of the School Buildings and Different Education Establishments in 1998 – 2005», «Textbooks», «Textbooks for Higher School», «Personnel» among them. In accordance with these programs the new titles of concepts and programs of development for the levels of vocational and specialized secondary education, out-of-school forms of education and upbringing, youth movements, higher education and research should be elaborated.

In addition special target projects «Education and Employment», «Guidebooks for Education», «State Standards for Professional Education» and «Education in Vocational Lyceums» as well as some regional and branch programs for the support and development of the vocational education system will be executed.

In the financing sphere there will be introduced a new regulation of budget expenditures, material and technical supply of educational establishments. The salary and social security systems for employees in education sphere will be improved.

Improvement of education management is among the most important actions in the reform. Special attention should be focused on the background of the manager staff in education. The number of bureaucratic staff in education management will be optimized.

There will be introduced a revised regulation for the system of primary and pre-school education and upbringing. This regulation should provide facilities to start the educational process with 5 years children on the basis of a new curriculum and content of education.

STAGE 2. IMPLEMENTATION (2001-2005).

On the basis of the revised Law «On Education in the Republic of Belarus» the list of the special legislative acts will be prepared. There are the laws «On Higher Education», «On Vocational Education», «On Books for Education», «On Toys and Games for Children» as well as the revised Law «On Children Rights» on the list.

The fundamental acts of legislation will require to evaluate and enhance the regulation to provide transformation of the basic compulsory education into 10 years study format with a new content of education. The system of monitoring of new educational technologies will be organized. Co-operation of universities and different research establishments in their programs of research and design will be provided.

New forms and methods of management in the system of vocational and higher education should be implemented. Educational establishments will focus to recent achievements including computer-based technologies.

The system of education staff training will be revised to meet new requirements of the reformed school system. State and branch programs as well as special projects of the reform should be fulfilled. The creation of the materials and educational resources that meet national requirements will ensure successive educational process on the basis of advanced educational technologies.

STAGE 3. FINAL ACTIONS IN COMPLETION PERIOD (2005-2010).

It includes monitoring and generalized review of the results of the former two stages to correct the aims and methods of the reform.

The appearance of a new system of management in education is expected. The system should be more flexible to provide adequate actions to meet the requirements of the changing world. The special system of financing will provide outstripping development of the education system. The system of education staff training will be finally organized to provide educational establishments of all the levels with the specialists of new generation.

So, it is expected that these actions should result in appearance in Belarus of a new system of education that will become the base for further development. The realization of the indicated measures will enable to complete the formation of the integrated national system of continuous education in the Republic of Belarus by 2010.

METHODOLOGICAL PROVIDING

Scientific and theoretical researches together with the results of experiments on working out of variational programmes of learning technologies at the pre-school institutions have been applied to elaborating the content of pre-school education. The

strategy of pre-school educational development has been elaborated for the period 2001-2010. This strategy is presented in the Concept of pre-school education and in the programme of its realisation. The basic programme "Praleska" of children education and care at pre-school institutions and 28 methodological materials to it, 11 variational programmes (on physical training, artistic and moral education of children) were published.

The educational programme "Step by step" oriented to a child, methodological guidance "How to make a choice" and a manual "Family and pre-school establishment: interaction in the interest of a child" have been published in order to render assistance to pre-school institutions which implement new educational technologies. For a period 1994-2001 103 manuals for pedagogical staff of pre-school establishments, parents and children have been published.

Present pre-school education system provide family with social protection and strengthening of children health ensuring free access to pre-school education (low parents fee, allowance for marginal-income families and large families, "Chernobyl children", parents right to choose form, type, profile, work regime and locality of the establishment).

In the Republic of Belarus all necessary conditions are created to ensure equal opportunities for the preparation of 6 year old children to schooling and entering school within the framework of a transition period to education since 6 year age;

- the state programme "Praleska" of up-bringing and education of pre-school age children, giving opportunity to prepare children. including 5 year old ones to schooling has been elaborated;
- the programme of education and care of 5 year old children not attending pre-school institutions through their group games and artistic activity and mutual communication on the base of general secondary schools and out-of-school establishments has been elaborated;
- the complex of methodological and didactic materials for teaching staff who deals with children of 5 year old is elaborated;
- the addendum to a new project of law "On Education" on the preparation of 5 year age children to schooling has been amended.

At present the pre-school education covers 85,7% of 5 year old children. Taking into account actual demographic situation and potential of pre-school institutions and general secondary schools (especially in rural locality) the aim of a complete pre-school education coverage of 5 year old children can be achieved in the forthcoming 3-5 years.

PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION

1.SHORT STATISTIC (YEARS 1991-1997-2001)

Year	Number of pre-school establishments	Number of children in pre-school establishments	Number of pedagogical staff of pre-school establishments
1991	5304	561912	63533
1997	4500	434411	54310
2001	4423	390812	53308

The demographic and economic situation in recent years gave rise to a tendency towards the reduction of the amount of children covered by pre-school education. This trend is much more considerable in rural areas.

The decrease of the number of children in pre-school institutions caused the reduction of the number of pre-school institutions (the number of pre-school institutions made up to 871 items) and a pedagogical staff reduction.

However, despite this negative tendencies in operating a pre-school education system, both the network of budget pre-school institutions and departmental ones were preserved proceeding from the demands of family, and a new diverse network of pre-school institutions differing by their type, kind, profile and working regime was created what is shown in the table below.

Year	General establishments	Establishments of sanatorium type	Establishments with sanatorium groups	Special establishments	Establishments with special groups
1990	5112	30	127	22	228

Year	General establishments	School-kindergarten	Est. with narrow specialization	Est. of sanat type	Est. with sanat. groups	Special establishments	Est. with spec. groups
1997	3875	163	13	27	138	28	? 497

Year	General establishments	School-kindergarten	Est. with narrow specialization	Establishments of health care	Establishment with health care gr.	Special establishments	Establishments with Special groups	Centres of child development
2000	3564	292	23	42	264	35	706	18

However, the proportion of children involved in pre-school education widely increased.

If in 1994 it was 58,5% (including 35,8% in rural area), in 1997-65,3% (including 39,5 in rural area). By 2000 the number of children, attending pre-school education

institutions reached up to 70,3% (including 44% in rural locality), exceeding the level of 1990 (67,6%) up to 2,7%, which is the best index in CIS.

The network of pre-school educational establishments in the Republic of Belarus was preserved due to allocation of funds by the government and a minimum parents fee (within the capacity of a family it is equal to 6,6% of a total sum of expenditures).

TOTAL NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN PRE-SCHOOL ESTABLISHMENTS

Year	number of children		
	Total	In urban area	In rural area
1990	607769	480009	127760
1995	212994	178451	34543
2000	403000	331100	71900

GENERAL SECONDARY EDUCATION

SHORT STATISTICS ON THE LEVEL OF EDUCATION (YEARS 1991 - 1994 - 2000)

EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENTS NETWORK

Number of the working days in full-time general secondary schools network (including boarding schools)

Academic year	Total	Elementary schools		Basic schools		Secondary schools	
	Days	Days	%	Days	%	Days	%
Urban and rural locality							
2000/2001	4559	659	14.5	1000	21.9	2785	61.1
1994/1995	4859	871	17.9	1155	23.8	2753	56.7
1991/1992	5075	1023	20.2	1347	26.5	2661	52.4
Urban locality							
2000/2001	1230	35	2.8	44	3.6	1040	84.6
1994/1995	1179	24	2.0	46	3.9	1031	87.5
1991/1992							
Rural locality							
2000/2001	3329	624	18.7	956	28.7	1745	52.4
1994/1995	3680	847	23.0	1109	30.1	1722	46.8

Number of new type educational establishments (gymnasiums, lyceums, colleges)

Academic year	Total	Gymnasiums		Lyceums		Colleges	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Urban and rural locality							
2000/2001	115	86	1.9	24	0.5	5	0.1
1994/1995	80	56	1.2	22	0.5	2	0.04
1991/1992	46	33	0.65	11	0.22	2	0.04
Urban locality							
2000/2001	111	83	6.7	23	1.9	5	0.4
1994/1995	78	54	4.6	22	1.9	2	0.2
Rural locality							
2000/2001	4	3	0.1	1	0.04	-	-
1994/1995	2	2	0.1	-	-	-	-

COHORT OF PUPILS

Cohort of pupils in full-time general secondary schools

Academic year	Total	In elementary schools		In basic schools		In secondary schools	
	Number	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Urban and rural locality							
2000/2001	1498417	20624	1.4	71251	4.8	1316073	87.8
1994/1995	1515270	21645	1.4	81373	5.4	1342848	88.6
1991/1992	1467070	17578	1.2	85210	5.8	1330389	90.7
Urban locality							
2000/2001	1107310	9623	0.9	9041	0.8	999625	90.3
1994/1995	1108792	5631	0.5	10884	1.0	1023588	92.3
Rural locality							
2000/2001	391107	11001	2.8	62210	15.9	316448	80.9
1994/1995	406478	16014	3.9	70489	17.3	319260	78.5

COHORT OF STUDENTS IN NEW TYPE ESTABLISHMENTS (GYMNASIUMS, LYCEUMS, COLLEGES)

Academic year	Total	In gymnasiums		In lyceums		In colleges	
	Number	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Urban and rural locality							
2000/2001	90469	78213	5.2	10433	0.7	1823	0.1
1994/1995	69404	54053	3.6	14021	0.9	1330	0.1
1991/1992	33893	26197	1.76	7042	0.47	654	0.04
Urban locality							
2000/2001	89021	76807	6.9	10391	0.9	1823	0.2
1994/1995	68689	53338	4.8	14021	1.3	1330	0.1
Rural locality							
2000/2001	1448	1406	0.4	42	0.01	-	-
1994/1995	715	715	0.2	-	-	-	-

At present implementation of the General Secondary School Reform Program and transition to its new structure and content are going on in the Republic of Belarus. The new model of general secondary school would include 3 levels: 1-4th years of study (preparatory -1-3 classes) – primary general education; 5-10th years (4-9 classes) – basic general secondary education; 11-12th year of study (10-11 classes) – complete general secondary education. The new idea assumes transition to 12-year period of study with 5-day training week, which gives wider possibilities in respect to individual pupil's requirements and interests, peculiarity of each educational institution, regional, social and cultural surroundings. The new curriculum includes only 17 teaching courses and subjects instead of 24-27 subjects existing earlier. The maximum study load is from 30 to 40 class hours a week on basic and senior school stages that corresponds to average world levels. It is being done for the cost of realization of the ideas of integration of educational content, structuring of basic and auxiliary study material according to levels of school, its new aims, objectives and functions.

General Secondary School Reform will be carried out till 2010. Its main objectives are:

- achievement of up-to-date level of education,
- promotion of prestige of education,

- acquisition real priority status of education for state and society.
The basic principles of educational reform are as follows:
- equality of citizen rights in obtaining education irrespective of national, religious and social background,
- orientation of national and cultural as well as regional base of education at the adoption of higher achievements of national and world culture,
- humanization and democratization of education,
- unity of educational and pedagogical aims,
- differentiation of ways in obtaining education; protection of young generation,
- succession of education and continuity of its stages.

In 1997/1998 academic year the following important actions were realized in the sphere of general secondary education. State programs «Rural Schools», «Foreign Languages», «Teacher», «Education system informatization» and departmental programs «Cadres» and «Textbooks» were adopted and realized. State educational standards of general secondary education, new basic curricular and 38 subject programs for different levels of general secondary schools of the new model were elaborated that time. 212 items of new textbooks including 33 for special ones with common circulation more than 10 millions copies were published and disseminated among general secondary schools. The Ministry of Education acts to provide the schools with reform coherent new normative and methodological documents aimed at cardinal improvement of education quality in general secondary school.

The reform started in 1997 in a few selected schools under strong supervision by the Ministry of Education, National Institute of Education and Belarusian State Pedagogical University. When testing displayed positive results adopted by authorities, school staff and pupil's parents the experiment was decided to be national wide. Next year dozen of schools in all the regions were involved in the reform. Every participating school was supplied with sufficient amount of new textbooks. The staff obtained special training and was supplied with guide materials and recommendations. The reform's run is on the agenda of every Board of the Ministry of Education meeting.

Since 1999/2000 year a reformed secondary education has become a routine for all local governing bodies and a lot of school. Nevertheless, nowadays there are three different opportunities for children and their parents to get access to secondary education. They can start study at 6 or 7 years old under a conventional or new program. The choice is due to pre-school education level and physical conditions of a child. Home and transport circumstances can be taken into account as well.

This situation of a step-by-step transformation will exist for a few years more. Then all the secondary schools will execute 12 years study program with 6 years old children enrolment. The exceptions for some groups of population to start schooling at 7 years old will be saved.

This reform is of great value for the further development of higher education. More perfect education in secondary school requires to revise the university curricula. First of all that concerns humanities which have now about 30% share in the engineer and

basic science programs. The same period the content of professional training will be made more effective through the better practical orientation.

The trend to decrease the amount of general secondary education establishments, especially in rural locality should be seen for the last 10 years due to actual demographic situation in the Republic of Belarus. At the beginning of 1991/1992 year there were 5075 secondary education establishments, in 1994 the number became 4859 (216 establishments or less than 4.3%), in the year 2000 the number reached 4559 (516 establishments less in comparison to the year 1991 or 10.2%).

Analysis of statistical data shows that the reduction of the number of general secondary schools takes place because of closing of primary schools. The number of them was 1023 in 1991 and decreased in 1994 for 152 schools (14.9%); in 1991-2000 -364 primary schools (35.6%) were closed. This situation is seen mainly in rural locality while in urban locality only low increase of primary school takes place.

The same situation is observed for a basic school the total number of which was 1347 in 1991 (decrease of 192 was in 1991-1994 – 14.3%), in 1991-2000 347 schools (25.8%) were closed. As for the basic school network its reduction is going on both in urban and in rural locality.

However, during the last 10 years the total number of general secondary schools increased by 192 (6.9%) that satisfied the population demand in every region of Belarus. Their number rose in the following way: There were 2661 schools in 1991, 2753 in 1994, 2785 schools in 2000.

The most considerable changes have occurred in 1991-2000 with a creation of new type establishments: lyceums, gymnasiums, colleges. In 1991 their number was only 46, in 1994 it reached 80 (73.9% growth), in 2000 there were 115 such establishments that is equal to the rise over 150%. These establishments have mainly urban locality. At the beginning of the current school year only 3 gymnasiums and 1 lyceum functioned in the rural area.

The analysis of pupil cohort shows the tendency towards a reduction of a total number of pupils in basic schools and a considerable increase of them in the new-type establishments. In the academic years of 1991/1992 33893 pupils attended new-type establishments, in 1994/1995 there were 35511 pupils more (104,8% increase), in 2000/2001 their number occurred 90469 (56576 pupils more than in 1991/1992, or 166,9% increase).

BACKGROUND OF THE PEDAGOGICAL STAFF IN FULL-TIME, SHIFTING GENERAL SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND BOARDING SCHOOLS, INCLUDING BOARDING SCHOOLS FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Academic year	Total number of teachers	Higher				Incomplete higher		Secondary professional				General second	
		Total number	%	Pedagogical		Number	%	Total number	%	Pedagogical		Number	%
				Number	%					Number	%		
2000/2001	148142	119671	80.8	117534	98.2	3751	2.5	23694	16.0	22038	93.0	1026	0.7
1994/1995	140503	111263	79.2	109088	98.0	4587	3.3	22234	15.8	20528	92.3	2419	1.7
1991/1992	129939	103313	79.5	-	-	4326	3.3	19200	14.8	17783	92.6	3100	2.4

The indicated above reduction of a number of educational establishments and their students has no influence on the quantity of a teaching staff in general secondary education establishments.

The number of teachers in secondary schools, including boarding schools for mentally and physically handicapped children, in the academic years 1991/1992 was 129939; in 1994/1995 it increased to 140503 (10564 teachers or 8.1% more); in 2000/2001 their number reached 148142 (18203 teachers or 14.0% more in comparison with 1991). The most significant growth was in the numbers of the teachers in English (from 5251 in 1990 to 6760 in 2000 or 29% rise) and in Sport (from 7228 to 7591 or 5%).

The essence of transformations carried out in the 90th is followed.

Some principled reformations were introduced in the curricula of the general secondary schools during the 90th with respect to their variations, free curricula choice by educational establishments, reduction of a compulsory part of study hours, creation of a system of optional learning according to one's talent, abilities, interests and health. All this actions permitted to extend individualisation of study by means of increasing non-compulsory part of school curricula and meeting the rural school's interests.

A great attention was paid to a strengthening of the national content in a study process. The number of lessons in Belarus literature, language and history rose, the content of historical and geographical education, and the way of study were changed. In particular, Belarusian history and geography, general geography are now the separated courses.

Instead of communist ideology oriented courses of the Soviet period two new integrated course "Man and Society" and "World history" were introduced.

In conformity with the laws of the Republic of Belarus "On Education in the Republic of Belarus" and "On Languages" the basic languages both Russian and Belarusian have become compulsory for study. The share of time allotted to one of the European languages increased significantly, necessary conditions in native language study for national minorities are created.

Since the academic years of 1993/94 the gradual transition of general secondary school to a new educational content in conformity with the Concept of 12 years general secondary school is going on. The main objectives of general secondary school Reform are:

- increasing of educational level of population;
- improving of a quality assurance of general education;
- satisfaction of requirements of a personality to get education in accordance with one's peculiarities and abilities;
- increasing of education prestige, which is being realised through such positions as transition to 10-year period of basic education and 12-year period of general secondary education, extending of possible opportunities to study at highest level, ensuring of a right to a general secondary education for every citizen;
- standards of school education;
- versions of study, free access to study materials, implementation of modern educational technologies, informatisation of the system of education,
- introduction of the quality control system;

- development of differentiation of study, large differentiation at upper secondary school grades, extending of integrated education classes network, excluding of study overloading, provision with additional education service;
- legislation of the priority of education, permanent improvement of the financial support of the educational system, gradual increasing of salary for pedagogical staff, acceptance of package of arrangements aimed to a social protection of a teaching staff, development of self-regulations of educational establishments.

On the base of main goals and objectives of general school reform the priority directions of its successful realisation are the following:

- changing of school structure;
- renewing of general secondary education content;
- implementation of modern pedagogical technologies.

The following achievements of general secondary education reformation are being expected:

- the maximum pre-school education coverage of 6 year old children;
- introducing of 10-year compulsory education,
- transition of the secondary school upper grades to a lyceum education;
- transition to 5-day training week;
- excluding of study overloading;
- supply the pre-school educational system with guide and textbooks for teachers and materials for children;
- introduction of the general secondary education standards that allow high degree of curricula diversification;
- methodological provision of multilevel education;
- total transition of 12-year school system to new curricula programmes and methodological complexes;
- systematic and classification of pedagogical technologies, working out and implementation of computer technologies for mass users, creation of information rent centres network.

VOCATIONAL TRAINING

SHORT STATISTICS ON THE SYSTEM OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Year	Total number of establish.	Number of full-time establishments	Total number of students, thousand persons	Prepared in day establishment thousand persons	Number of students. thousand persons					Number of teaching staff. thousand persons
					Total number	In full-time establishments	Girls	After basic school	After general secondary school	
1991	254	240	138.7	135.2	71.9	65.2	25.8	41.1	23.8	13.9
1997	249	234	125.6	123.1	56.9	54.7	20.2	36.9	17.8	13.8

2000	248	233	137.7	135.1	60.8	58.5	23.2	39.1	19.4	14.3
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During the period of the last 10 years the establishments of the vocational education system were focused to the creation of certain conditions for providing society with educational services, meeting the interests of a society and a person as well as economics.

The process of diversification and improvement of vocational education process is going on raising the vocational institutions leavers mobility in a labour market and their social security. Approximately 60% of vocational institutions act as multi-profile educational establishments. Positive trends in job placement of leavers are being observed.

The system of vocational education training ensures getting not only a trade, but general secondary education too. More than 1500 students get secondary education on profile subjects at an advanced level in lyceum groups increasing their chances in obtaining a higher education grade. More than 1500 students continue their education on integrated reduced programmes at the 2nd year of higher education vocational institutions and colleges and approximately 1000 students within the frames of associations “Vocational technical school – secondary professional establishment” and they receive both professional and general secondary education.

The system of vocational training has a considerable impact on the solution of many moral and social problems. About 50% of vocational technical schools students need a support of a government and a society (orphans, children with special needs, including invalids, children from marginal income families). Children with special needs including invalids study at 35 vocational technical schools.

The vocational schools of a new type called higher professional schools have appeared in the structure of vocational education and training. Since 2000 they are being renamed as professional colleges focusing on ensuring of educational demands of youth, requirements of the society and industry in skilled workers and specialists.

Creation of “Vocational technical school – secondary professional establishment” associations began in 1997 in conformity with appropriate Regulation.

In connection with current changes in the professions structure in order to satisfy the requirements of enterprises and regional labour markets in working cadres the Instructions of the Ministry of Education and Science dated the 19 of May 1995 titled “On improvement of the professions structure for vocational schools” significantly extended the rights of education establishments and education Departments of Minsk region administration in integration of a temporary List of professions and in realisation of initiatives on elaboration and approbation of pilot study-planning documentation.

In 1998 the Collegium of the Ministry of Education considered the question “On improvement of curricula and methodical provision of the system of vocational training in present-day conditions and transition to a new structure of professions”.

In June 1998 the Collegium of the Ministry of Education adopted basic approaches to the vocational training content planning.

The structure of vocations and unitary qualifications for vocational schools is adopted as a base for planning of the model curricula documentation and of the experimental one.

The new models of study plan and qualification characteristics, forms of the model and work curricula, structure and form of the model study programmes and the List of specialities and unitary qualifications for vocational schools are established as a base for planning of the model and experimental study-programme documentation by the

Order of the Ministry of Education in June 1999 titled “On putting into operation the study-programme documents for vocational education provision”.

To improve vocational orientation of general secondary schools pupils and the differentiation in their professional education the regional centres of vocational training were created on the basis of some institutions of vocational and technical education. The first lyceum groups with a heightened level of general subjects teaching were opened in 1996 in some 6 vocational schools of the Brest region. The same groups were opened in the vocational schools of other regions of the Republic on lyceum classes after adoption of the Approximate regulation too. Now such lyceum groups function in 61 vocational schools of the republic.

The need of differential education for 10-11th forms pupils, creation of equal conditions for children from general secondary schools in rural locality by means of a supplementary education support for them when entering the higher education institutions, transition of upper classes of the reformed school to lyceum education required the increase of the number of lyceum groups in the vocational schools and transformation of such schools into professional lyceums. The 9 better vocational schools have been transformed into professional lyceums.

In order to improve the access to vocational training according to the Constitution of the Republic of Belarus, the Acts of the President, the Laws, the International Agreement between the Republic of Belarus and Russia Federation and other Resolutions of the Government the Standards of vocational schools enrolment were changed several times.

In 1994 the standards of hors-concours vocational education enrolment for orphans and children without parental care, for the first and second group invalid children were established.

In 1996 the Standards of hors-concours enrolment of children suffered from Chernobyl disaster and having privileges accordingly to the Article N18 of the Law “On social protection of citizens, suffered from catastrophe at the Chernobyl station” were implemented.

In 1999 the number of vocational schools applicants has increased. That is why the restricted terms of the documents admission to day-time vocational schools were introduced ensuring the access to vocational training for basic school-leavers, choosing working profession and learners of upper secondary classes facing difficulties in their further education.

An interview as a form of the selection has been excluded from the procedure of admission. The standard of vocational school enrolment without enter examinations for basic school leavers with distinction and for general secondary school leavers with gold or silver medals was introduced. The school -leavers who have become the winners of republican regional subjects olympiades were set free from enter examination on respective subject, after obtaining an excellent mark.

THE MAIN CONCEPT REGULATIONS OF PRESENT CHANGES IN VOCATIONAL TRAINING

As for the vocational and technical education development and the educational standards implementation the process of working out of new study programmes which allow to enhance workers mobility and competitiveness in the job market has begun.

Besides this the process of creation of mechanisms for interaction of the vocational training system together with social-economic complex has started, the introduction and implementation of the system of social partnership is being developed.

The necessity to provide the system of vocational training with features of flexibility, openness, readiness to permanent changes in the changing world of labour and technologies determines the transition to a new structure of study specialities, modernisation of the system of practical skills, involving the authorities of economic sectors into the process of vocational education training development.

In new conditions when educational establishments become multi-functional, multi-profiled and workers training standards become diversified and flexible, the importance of quality evaluation is on the rise.

In the standards and learning-programme documentation of a new generation the requirements to final outcome of vocational training are determined more clearly and must improve the system of students training quality assessment.

The main objectives of vocational education are as follows:

- training of skilled workers and specialists on the base of employers demands and distribution of the school leavers for further education and job placement;
- establishment of effective instruments of interaction between vocational training system and economic branches;
- flexible meeting the needs of job market in highly qualified workers;
- giving an opportunity in obtaining equal educational service at the vocational training schools in conformity with a personality, society and state requirements;
- gradual forming of the educational structures based on the integration of vocational training, general secondary education and colleges learning programmes.

The main directions of vocational training development have been determined by the Concept and Programme of vocational training development in the Republic of Belarus approved by the Council of Ministers of the Republic in June, 2000.

The essence of the reformation carried out over the 90th.

Of major priority is the aim to reform the pre-school education in order to:

- create certain conditions for providing people with an opportunity to choose various forms, methods and content of education for children;
- meet the educational needs and requirements of parents and children.

The tasks of the pre-school education reform are:

- maintaining of the state system of pre-school institutions (budget and departmental);
- standardisation of pre-school education;
- transition to a new content and technology of pre-school education;
- changing of the organisational structure of pre-school institutions in accordance with the principles of variations. openness, free access, collaboration with a family, interaction of pre-school institution, general secondary school and other public institutions;
- prompt reaction for changing conditions, overtaking development of pre-school institutions with respect to a family, school and to a society as a whole;

- improving of science, methodological and functional skills of pedagogical staff for better orientation in the changing structure of pre-school education.

The reform of pre-school education is based on some important stipulations:

- humanisation of teaching activity;
- differentiation and individualisation;
- democratisation, providing of children with equal educational rights;
- dynamism and variations.

The realisation of the main concept stipulations of the reorganisation of pre-school education is based on the following principles:

- humanisation of pedagogical work oriented to the development of the child's abilities through organisation of a network of playing facilities, making it ready for school education;
- using new achievements concerning the importance of pre-school period in the formation of a personality;
- recognition of the priority of a personally oriented education;
- recognition of such priorities as life-security and health care of a child , his physical and mental development, forming of healthy life-style basis;
- orientation of pedagogical work to a socialisation of children, development of communicating skills, and of living together, easy transition to a next grade of education;
- unity of human and national values in the content, forms and methods of pedagogical work;
- participation of parents in administration of pre-school institution, organisation of up-bringing process together with parents and teachers as their partners, realisation of specific opportunities of families and kindergartens in care, learning and development of children;
- continuity of pre-school and primary education, interaction of public and family pre-school education; creation of equal start conditions for everybody to get general school education;
- taking into account regional peculiarities;
- reaction of the teacher training system to changes, which take place in the pre-school education system.

The goals of the pre-school educational system reformation required a legislative provision of the pre-school education renew.

In the period of 1990-2000 a collection of legislative and standard documents was worked out and published. This collection includes currently acting laws, normative legal acts of ministries and departments of the Republic of Belarus related to pre-school education problems, normative and legal acts on the content and care of pre-school age children with special needs.

Besides this the following documents were worked out and affirmed:

- The Concept of Pre-school Education (the decree of the Ministry of education N35 dated 16.08.2000, published in “The Collection of normative documents of the Ministry of Education” N10, October, 2000);
- The Programme of realisation of the Concept of pre-school education for the period of 2001-2010 (the order of the Ministry of Education dated 29.12.2000, N515);
- ✓ Guiding document of the Republic of Belarus titled “Educational Standard. Pre-school Education. Readiness to schooling. Special readiness” registered at the National Register of Acts 26.09.2000 put into operation 01.01.2001 and some other documents concerning pedagogical staff development and financing of pre-school establishments.

HIGHER EDUCATION STRUCTURE

INTRODUCTION

Sovereignty, acquired by the Republic of Belarus in 1990, initiated revolution reforms in social and economic structure of the society, turn over to market economy, changes in political orientation of the society. These reforms had a great impact on the development of higher education system. New conditions demanded to develop a different education model, to review the higher education structure and to match higher education content with the quest for national revival. It was chosen an approach of evaluation reforms step by step on the platform of the existed system.

These resulted in quantitative and qualitative changes. First of all, communist demagogy was excluded from curricula. It was replaced with political science study and sociology. Training of managers was removed from the closed Highest Party School to conventional universities. Admission to all the higher education establishments (HEI) became to rise. This was followed by the significant growth of the citizens' interest to higher education and shaping their self consciences as persons who need to be educated in the best way for better future. The regulation in the area of higher education was significantly revised. The content of education was dramatically renewed. The attempt to introduce multilevel system of higher education was undertaken. Non public HEI appeared as a new phenomenon in national life.

Belarusian HEI exercises some university autonomies. They are free in staff employment and promotion (rector's position is an exception. Rectors are appointed in offices by the Minister's order in public university and by owner's decision in private ones) and internal bodies creation, procedures and elections. They are able to spend income money for any goal of development or extra payments and budget money within the budget lines. They can apply to change their structure or list of study programs to Ministry of Education that adopts the proposal after evaluation of the applicant ability to operate in new conditions. The proposal can not be refused if it

meets actual regulation and does not exceed current state budget allocation. They establish the procedures of enrollment and staff benefits. The HEI can participate in any multilateral domestic or international organizations, projects, networks or contracts. It is not prohibited to establish in university newspapers, magazines, TV or radio channels or held conferences and exhibitions. Public HEI are free of political or clerical activity but they can support public professional or trade union organizations for faculty and students.

The HEI community uses academic freedoms of teaching, research and study. Every university teacher has the right to offer any course for delivering within a field of the program or any topic for investigation. He/she is able to participate in officially announced research topic for the department or apply for a new project. The methods of teaching are also in responsibility of the teacher. The results of the individual or group research are protected by the legislation on intellectual property and could be published or reported by the authors in homeland or abroad. Academic staff has also the right for personal development that is realized through free information receiving by libraries or computer networks. Everybody can present when his or hire personal business becomes under any university body consideration. It is possible to appeal about any these bodies' decision in accordance with the university's status to a responsible official or body that must accept the application and reply in the legal way and term. Faculty has the right to have own casual opinion or a theory in the field of science, policy, economy, public life, management and so on and protect this position in open discussion. He/she may belong any public, religious, trade union or political organization or community or establish it.

The students are free in their choice of program of education when they apply to enter. Then, they can change the program if it is possible to provide. A student can apply for participation of any lesson in his/hire HEI or for set an individual educational plan. They are free in their choice of research topic within facilities of the HEI. The students may belong to any public, self-governing, religious and political organization or community or establish it. It is possible and even popular to be a member of a trade union.

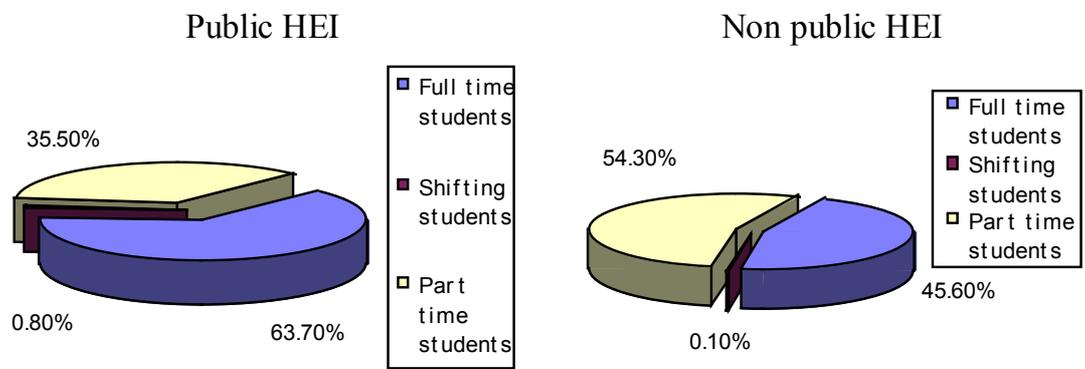
GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Nowadays, Belarusian system of higher education includes a wide network of educational, staff retraining and research institutions that use unified official standards and rules in the processes of study, governance and research. These provide the needs of population with background updating as well as the national economy with highly qualified personnel. The system includes 42 public higher education institutions (HEI) with 228,600 students. There are 146.7, 1.9 and 80.0 thousands in stationary (full-time students), shifting (evening classes for working adults) and correspondence (distance) education among them respectively. The Fig. 5 shows that 15 non-public HEI involve 33,500 students in addition. There is limited admission of students in the President Academy of Management, National Institute of Education and Republic Institute of Vacation Education but the goal of these institutions is to retrain the managers for

government establishment network, for public industry and service sectors and for the system of education. So, “density” of students is over 260 persons per 10 thousands of population that is close to average European level.

Multistage system of higher education is in embroiling state in Belarus. Formally, 4 stages exist by the Ministry of Education’s appropriate provision. They are diploma of higher education, bachelor degree certificate, diploma of specialist and master (magistr) degree certificate. In fact these levels are equal in every further application and they are rather honorable within Belarus. Moreover, diploma of specialist was never required. Nevertheless, according to Bologna Declaration adopted by the European Union and some countries of Council of Europe it is expecting that at least two levels will survival and develop.

ALLOCATION OF THE HEI STUDENTS ALONG THE FORMS OF STUDY



Study in public institutions is free of charge as a rule. However, since 1993 there is appeared a cohort of students who pay for their study in public HEI due to governmental permission to increase enrollment over state granted abilities if the conditions of a HEI allow to do this. During the years the cohort grows permanently. In 1993 there were already 13.9 % of such first year students. Following years display figure 16.4 % in 1994, 19.5 % in 1995 and 28.3 % in 1996. Now less than 70 % of students of all public HEIs study at the expense of the state budget, but the absolute number of them did not fall. More than 4.4 % of students have financial support from enterprises and firms. The annual cost of study is mostly between 700 and 2500 \$.

There could be ability for a “payable” student to change the status and to occupy free of charge student place if it become vacant at any reason. HEI administration must fill such vacant places with applied pretenders on the base of academic success competition.

HEI of Belarus concentrate scientific and engineering power. It is comparable with a potential of all academic and industrial research institutes. Teaching process is d by 15.4 thousand teachers ensure the educational process here. Over a half of them (54%) has a Candidate’s or Doctor’s scientific degree.

POST GRADUATE STUDIES

Almost every HEI runs post graduate courses (aspirantura). The same ability could be given to research or staff retraining institutions that have appropriate learning and investigation conditions. Total number of postgraduate students is over 2.5 thousand.

Aspirantura in Belarus is not recognized as a level of higher education but a special level for scientific and pedagogical staff training. A graduate person is not awarded with any certificate of background. Awarding with diploma of scientific degree of candidate of science - in a definite research field - is available after public defense of a dissertation in front of a specialized council. Positive evaluation of the state expert body is necessarily. Degree of candidate of science is equal to Ph.D. degree.

The second level scientific degree named doctor of science in the field of a concrete discipline could be awarded to a person who has already the first one. As a rule, pretenders make their doctor degree dissertations in their own time and on their own risk. But it is available to apply to the Academic Council of the HEI for a special fellowship for doctorantura. The right to run doctorate can be given by the State to the institutions with common recognized scientific schools. Defense of a doctor degree dissertation is to be in front of a specialized council. The state expert body should approve the council's decision.

Doctorantura and aspirantura exist also in the majority of research institutes of the National Academy of Science and in national wide retraining institutions.

HEI DIVERSIFICATION

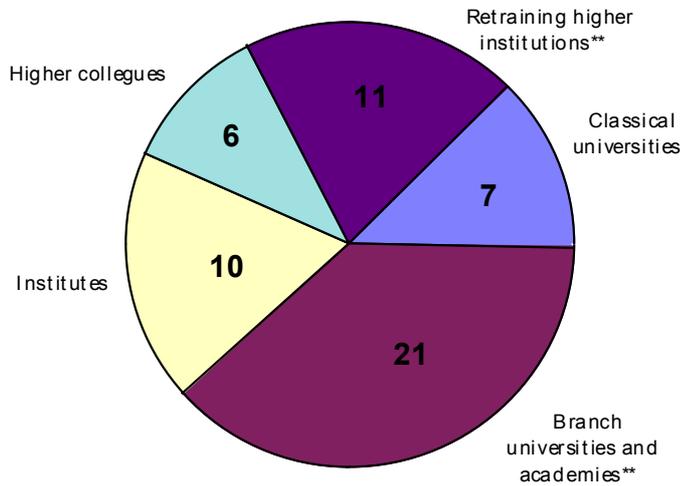
There are four different kinds of HEI in Belarus. They are classical universities, branch universities or academies, institutes and higher colleges. Professionally the diplomas of these institutions are equal but higher college's diploma of higher education that is only available here does not permit to continue study in aspirantura. Also, an institute was never awarded to run doctorantura but the staff members could apply for doctorantura to different HEI.

Classical universities are mostly oriented to basic science and humanities. Branch universities and academies cover the programs for industry, economy, medicine, defense, secondary school system, art, music, sport etc. Institutes mainly execute a limited number of programs in narrow field of disciplines. A few existing now higher colleges run a couple of higher education programs working basically as a two year college¹ affiliated and supported with a real HEI. The structure of public HEI system is shown on fig. 6. Between 15 non-public HEI there is one only that looks like a classical university of humanity field. Two non-public HEIs are clerical academies that are out of state regulation. All different 11 establishments belong to the level of institute but some of them use the word "university" in their name.

The Government awards some of public HEI with their special title and privileges. So, Belarusian State University has a title of Leader HEI in the National System of Education. It subordinated to the Council of Ministers directly and it has a separate line in the State Budget.

¹ * Two years colleges as well as technicums are not formally belong to higher education system but special secondary education network.

STRUCTURE OF BELARUSIAN PUBLIC HEI SYSTEM* 2



Five branch universities and academies are awarded with the title of Special Leader HEI in the National System of Higher Education. All this receives addition state resources for staff salary and equipment.

DYNAMICS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN BELARUS

Dynamics of higher education in Belarus is illustrated with fig. 6. More minute description of the process is given in the Table 9. The valley of 1945 is due to World War II. The plateau at 1980-1990 appeared because of stagnation and following perestroyka. The growth after 1995 was initiated by population demand's to have more access to higher education and softening of the regulation and administrative pressing. Rising was achieved due to payable enrollment in public HEI mostly that is over 30% of total now. Non public HEIs demonstrate almost constant cohort during last three years.

DYNAMICS OF HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENTS IN BELARUS

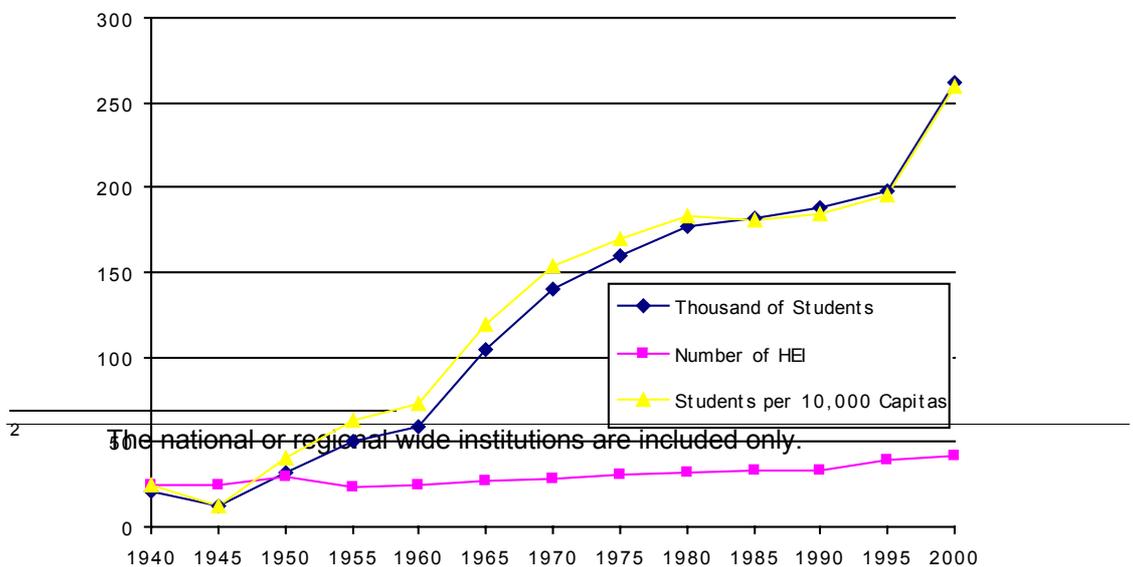


TABLE. STUDENT COHORT IN THE BELARUSIAN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS (THE DATA ON NON-PUBLIC HEIS IS PLACED AT THE END OF THE TABLE AND MARKED WITH ASTERISKS)

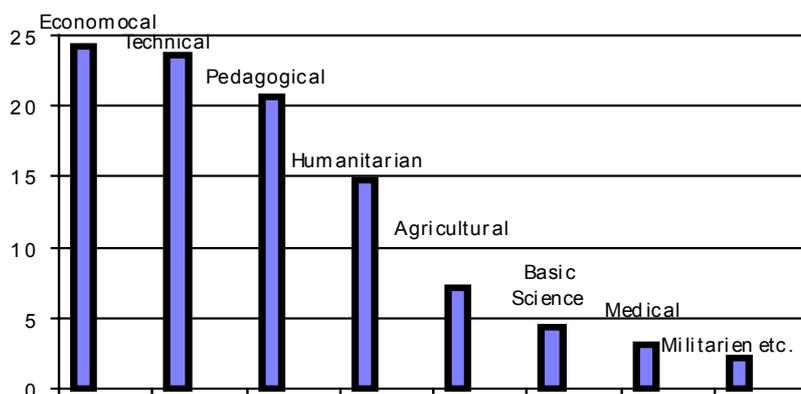
Year	The number of HEIs	Thousands of students				Number of students per 10000 capita
		Total	Kind of program			
			Fulltime	Shifted	Distance	
1940/41	25	21.5	13.1	0.3	8.1	24
1945/46	24	12.8	8.4	0.1	4.3	
1950/51	29	31.6	19.4	0.8	11.4	41
1955/56	23	50.5	32.3	1.9	16.3	63
1960/61	24	59.3	32.3	5.5	21.5	72
1965/66	27	104.0	49.0	12.0	43.0	119
1970/71	28	140.0	79.5	15.7	44.8	154
1975/76	31	159.9	97.1	17.2	45.6	170
1980/81	32	177.0	110.0	16.6	50.4	183
1985/86	33	181.9	102.1	12.9	66.9	181
1987/88	33	179.4	98.4	9.9	71.1	177
1988/89	33	178.6	100.2	8.4	70.0	176
1989/90	33	189.4	113.8	7.1	68.5	186
1990/91	33	188.6	115.9	5.9	66.8	184
1991/92	33	184.6	115.9	5.3	63.4	180
1992/93	37	185.0	118.1	4.6	62.3	179
1993/94	38	175.4	112.8	3.6	59.0	169
1994/95	39	173.8	114.3	2.4	57.1	168
1995/96	39	174.2	115.6	2.1	56.5	169
1996/97	39	180.0	120.3	1.7	58.0	175
1997/98	42	190.0	126.0	1.4	62.6	185
1998/99	42	207.2	136.4	1.7	69.1	227
1999/2000	42	228.6	146.7	1.9	80.0	230
2000/2001	43	241.1	152.0	2.3	86.8	277
1993/94*	9	8.0	5.2	0.3	2.5	
1994/95*	17	138.0	86.0	04	4.8	
1995/96*	20	23.2	13.0	0.6	9.6	
1996/97*	20	29.0	16.0	0.4	12.6	
1997/98*	17	34.5	16.9	0.1	17.5	
1998/99*	15	36.5	16.8	0.1	19.6	

1999/2000*	15	33.5	15.3	0.04	18.2
2000/2001*	14	36.6	16.7	0.02	19.9

Total number of the students in all kinds of HEI reached the highest level of 277 thousands in 2001 (a previous pike was in 1988). This gives about 275 students per 10 thousands of population. That complies with the mean European index, however, the rate is not yet achieved for students involved in stationary education.

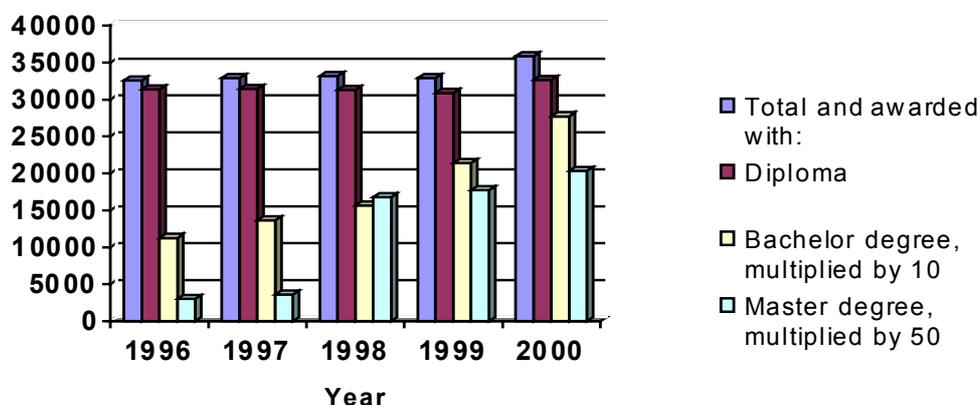
Public HEI system provides more 260 professional qualifications in all the professional fields. It offers to students over 400 programs of education. Earlier, the technical programs dominated in Belarusian HEI system. In the middle of 90th humanitarians, economical and management programs' student cohort risen very fast but a few last years the proportion is rather stable. Non-public establishments prefer to run programs in management, economics, law and foreign languages, mainly. By regulation they can not teach in defense and medicine fields. The proportion among 8 main profiles of higher education training is illustrated with Fig. 8 (data for 1999).

ALLOCATION OF THE FIRST YEAR HEI STUDENTS ALONG THE PROFILES OF EDUCATION (IN %, 1999)



Naturally, the growth of cohort results in the increase of the gradulators number. It is obviously these two processes are moved for 5 years roughly in accordance with the average duration of study in HEI. The graduation from the public HEIs is shown by the Figure 9 and Table 10 for a few recent years.

NUMBER OF STUDENTS GRADUATED FROM BELARUSIAN HEIS IN 1996-2000



NUMBER OF PERSONS GRADUATED FROM BELARUSIAN PUBLIC HEIS IN 1996-2000

Fulltime students

Year of graduation from HEI	Total	Among them the persons who were awarded with		
		Diploma	Bachelor degree	Master degree
1996	21987	20815	1112	60
1997	22248	20848	1329	71
1998	22859	21007	1535	317
1999	22608	20266	2023	319
2000	25187	22201	2660	326

Shifted students

Year of graduation from HEI	Total	Among them the persons who were awarded with		
		Diploma	Bachelor degree	Master degree
1996	540	531	9	-
1997	492	492	-	-
1998	306	287	-	-
1999	268	230	22	16
2000	233	192	18	23

Distance students

Year of graduation from HEI	Total	Among them the persons who were awarded with		
		Diploma	Bachelor degree	Master degree
1996	10053	10047	6	-
1997	10167	10134	34	1
1998	10044	9994	31	19
1999	10449	10372	57	20
2000	10425	10262	95	68

The growth of the student number is achieved due to rise of payable education service. That concerns both public and private HEIs. Formers have now a right to enroll till 20% of students who cover the education expenditures in total or in a part. Some of them have fundators. The situation is illustrated with the Table 11 which shows fast decrease of free of charge students percentage in public HEIs. Nowadays over a half of distance learning students pay for their study. The situation with the fulltime students sponsored by their future employers requires the further analysis due to decrease of their number. This seems to be a reflection of the economic situation and less demands of new managers, economists and lawyers who are excessive present at the labor market.

FIRST YEAR PUBLIC HEI STUDENT ALLOCATION ALONG THE SOURCES OF THEIR EDUCATION FUNDING

Year	Totally admitted	Admitted at the expense of the State Budget		Admitted at the expense of future employers		Admitted at the own expense or the expense of private persons	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Fulltime students							
1994/95	25869	22293	86.2	1082	4.2	2494	9.6
1995/96	26934	22678	84.2	1051	3.9	3205	11.9
1996/97	30307	23252	76.7	1078	3.6	5977	19.7
1997/98	31081	23201	74.6	1391	4.5	6489	20.9
1998/99	35474	23517	66.3	2161	6.1	9796	27.6
1999/2000	35717	23961	67.1	1985	5.6	9771	27.4

2000/2001	36393	23900	65.7	1907	5.2	10586	29.1
Shifted students							
1995/96	331	291	87.9	1	0.3	39	11.8
1996/97	371	296	79.8	-	-	75	20.2
1997/98	339	247	72.9	-	-	92	27.1
1998/99	594	327	55.1	75	12.6	192	32.3
1999/2000	568	360	63.4	68	12.0	140	24.6
2000/2001	711	416	58.5	101	14.2	194	27.3
Distance students							
1995/96	11269	8053	71.5	697	6.2	2519	22.3
1996/97	13194	7914	60.0	1370	10.4	3910	29.6
1997/98	15275	7887	51.6	1441	9.4	5947	39.0
1998/99	17316	7962	46.0	2026	11.7	7328	42.3
1999/2000	18251	8069	44.2	2205	12.1	7977	43.7
2000/2001	19781	7328	37.0	2055	10.4	10398	52.6

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Access to higher education is among of major human rights of Belarusian citizens. It is provided with accordance with personal background and abilities of people. Everybody can apply for any higher education program to every HEI and has the equal right. The application must be considered by a responsible body (admission commission) and replied in legal way and term. This right is available for foreigners also. Any decision of the admission commission, evaluator or university's officer can be complained to the responsible officer or body in accordance with the procedure prescribed by the Admission Rules. The application should be considered and answered in a legal way and term.

The access to higher education in Belarus is limited with the pre-requisite of secondary education certificate (11 years school or equal training in a vocational or specialized education establishment). Admission to HEI is by competitive examinations. Individuals who are permanent residents of the Republic of Belarus as well as citizens of the Republic of Belarus and Belarusians who live outside Belarus and citizens of the Russian Federation have their right to be admitted and find free education in Belarusian public HEI. That right is for one only entry. Equal opportunity exists in the Russian Federation for the citizens of Belarus. There is no discrimination by race, gender, origin and religious or political orientation.

Every public higher educational establishment has a certain number of vacancies financially supported by the state budget. The entrants are admitted to fill these vacancies according to the required number of points gained at the entrance examinations.

The entrance examinations correspond to the curricula made up and recommended by the Ministry of Education. These curricula meet the public school program of the current year and it is reduced to provide equal opportunity for school graduates of the previous years. The curricula for entrance examinations include the following subjects: Belarusian language and literature, Russian language and literature, foreign language (English, French, German or Spanish), history of Belarus, world history of the newest time, man and society, geography, physics, information science, mathematics, chemistry, biology, drawing and music. Applicants for certain programs in culture, arts, sport go in for additional examination in a given specialty, and those entering institutes of the Ministry of Defense or Ministry of Internal Affairs' examination in physical training. The entrants have the right to take their entrance examinations either in the Belarusian or Russian language by choice.

Every year the Ministry of Education elaborates the Rules of Admission to the public HEI. These Rules are the subject of the Council of Ministry approval. The Rules include the mentioned above curricula, a list of higher education programs for every HEI, application filling forms and recommendations. The Ministry of Healthcare is authorized to make some restrictions on pretender's health conditions for certain specialties if these conditions could be dangerous when student runs the program or starts profession. To protect people from such dangers every HEI applicant must have a special form health certificate from his/her local regional hospital. Any different restriction is prohibited.

The national Rules are a background for Admission Rules of a concrete HEI. Every HEI is responsible to publish the Admission Rules three months before the beginning of admission. HEIs decide for themselves upon:

- number (2 to 5) and kind of admission examinations according to the particulars of the specialty. Besides examinations proper these may include an interview, test, listening comprehension test, looking over applicants' papers, etc.,
- procedure for the admission of individuals who have completed secondary school with a gold or silver medal or specialized secondary educational establishment with a first-class diploma, as well as winners of Olympiads and competitions,
- procedure and terms of admission in regard to study without interrupting one's work (part time study by correspondence or in shifted classes),
- number of additional vacancies for applicants admitted by contracts of tuition fees to be paid by juridical or physical persons (sponsorship) and the level of the tuition fee,
- the order of appellation.

The admission becomes completed with the rector's order that lists all the admitted students in accordance with their programs, forms of study and tuition fee level. After this every student receives a personal photo ID and a book of personal academic records which validation is a subject of annual reconfirmation.

A few years ago Ministry of Education launched a limited experiment with general admission tests that were harmonized with the similar tests exercised in Russia. The former experience of local testing of the applicants in several Belarusian universities was used also. Belarusian State Polytechnical Academy was the executive body during that period.

The experimental testing was found positive and popular. The results of general tests are recognized now by a half of HEIs. Belarusian State university made and introduced its own system of admission tests and grades. The success of the experiment resulted in establishment by Ministry of Education the special Institute of Knowledge Evaluation in 2000. The independent body is expected to provide more democratic and objective procedure.

The system of general tests is in the way of fast development now. Established Institute opened the field bureaus in all the regions and started research in the field of its activity. Over 10 000 of HEI applicants tried these tests and a half of them was profited by the results in the admission process. Different part of tested people preferred to pass admission examinations in accordance with the selected HEI's rules.

STUDENTS' OBLIGATIONS AND PRIVILEGES

Photo ID issued by a public HEI is an evidence of its owner belongs to. That gives the right to the student to consult the staff, both academic and administrative, free of charge, use all the public city libraries free of charge, take public city (but not taxi) transport in a half of rate over the year and inter city public transport, as train and bus, in a half of rate from September 1 to June 30. A public HEI student whose permanent address is in different place can apply to university for residence hall room under extremely low cost. Foreign students are provided with a room also. Anyway such room should be shared with one or two roommates. There are many abilities for the students to participate in additional sport, tourist or cultural classes free of charge.

Presence at all the scheduled lessons and labs is obligatory for HEI students. These lessons take from 24 to 36 hours per week. An advanced student with great academical success might have the individual educational plan adopted by the council of the department and approved by dean. Such plan includes more individual study or consulting and less classes. Almost every course includes a marked (examination) or credential (zachet) exam. An examination result could be estimated as unsatisfactory, satisfactory, good or excellent corresponding to the found level of knowledge. Zachet could result in received or not received. The title of the course, number of class hours and result should be written in the personal book of records. There are 3-5 examinations and 3-7 zachets per semester. As a rule all the zachets should be successfully passed before December 31. Then, it will be a four weeks semester examination session.

The students of public and sometimes private universities can be awarded with their stipends that cover residence hall renting price and minimum different living expenditures. The highest level personal stipend is for the most advanced students with excellent academical success. This one could be awarded by the President of the Republic of Belarus, Council of Ministries or just Academic Council of the university. Sometimes such a stipend has its honorable title in respect of an outstanding person. Within a department there are available the stipends of three grades. They are for the students who got during the last examination session excellent or excellent and good marks and social one. The latest one is available for a low-income person who passed successfully all the zachets and the session without unsatisfactory mark. In public HEI over 70 % of full time students receive a stipend.

SOME RECENT APPROACHES

Development of the new educational model is closely linked with renewing the structure of higher education programs and multi-level system of higher education. Since an academic year of 1994/95, the Ministries of Education, Labor, Economics, Finance and Justice approved a new list of programs for HEI. The idea behind the list is specialty extension that would offer any HEI graduate a wider choice of employment and the possibility of prompt occupation changing. Over the past two years Belarusian HEI started training in the following specialties: classical languages and literature, Japanese, Chinese, commercial activity in commodity and service market, metrology, standardization and certification, printing industry technology, record keeping (archiving) and etc. This list is a subject of annual upgrading in accordance to the requests of citizens, HEI, communities' administration, enterprises and different stakeholders.

Late in 1998 Council of Ministries approved 5-years Concept of Development of Higher Education System in the Republic of Belarus that was elaborated by the Ministry of Education. Among the issues of this Concept there are preparation of the mentioned above draft of the Law "On Higher Education", renewal of the existing

regulation, creation of national wide standards of the content of programs, development of diversification, support of peripheries HEI, development of research in HEI, development of laboratories and librarian facilities and etc. Actually, there are more national programs just for higher education in Belarus. The most important there are Program on Higher Education Guidebooks and Program for Standards in Higher Education. Now some new approaches to quality assurance in higher education appeared. These standards would become a basis for elaboration of documents enabling certification and accreditation of education institutions, defining the status of diploma and its equivalence outside the Republic of Belarus. It also makes it easier academic mobility of students within country and abroad.

Nowadays some positions of the adopted Concept are met already. About 50 new rules instead of those acted from the Soviet period were adopted and introduced in HEI system. More then 200 standards of education were created by academic society and approved by Council of Ministries. National Institute for Higher Education prepared the draft of the Law "On Higher Education" and it is now under consideration in the Ministry of Education. The Council of Europe's expert team evaluated this draft and elaborated a number of constructive proposals and recommendations which were taken into consideration with gratitude. The draft of the National Program for University Research Development was recently represented to Council of Ministries after Ministry of Education adoption.

RESEARCH

In 1991-1995 HEI and research institutes of the Ministry of Education worked under stringent conditions of reduced budgetary allocations for research and unfavorable economic situation, severance of traditional ties with the partners in the former USSR's republics. However, diversification of the sources of finance, more active negotiations with manufacturers allowed to retain the staff by only dismissing part of researchers who was not involved in teaching. In this case attention was focused on the projects of greater practical value and fundamental research. The major lines were optics and optical instrument making, computer sciences, electronics, synthesizing new substances and materials, environmental control. Pedagogical problems, humanism and humanities have received much consideration. International relations of HEI became more active.

Nowadays, budget funding of HEIs is of stable level that allows fulfilling some republic wide research programs and projects just for HEI in basic and applied fields. Ministry of Education allocates the money for these among the subordinated institutions in accordance with public evaluation councils' recommendations. The HEI subordinated different ministries get their research funds from these ministries. Conference activity could be also supported.

There are more sources of research support in Belarus. Belarusian Fond for Fundamental Research supports mostly institutes of Belarusian Academy of Science and HEI including private ones. It is possible to get an allowance from this fond for monograph or textbook edition and printing. Some conferences annually receive a share of funding from the Fond.

Applied research and design are the subjects of State Committee for Science and Technology's support. This Committee annually provides 10 at least national wide technological and social programs as well as over a hundred of separate projects. Applicant should reach a very practically important result as a new technology or product and invest at least 10% of it own money. The similar activity is provided by

Republic Innovative Fond but the allocated money should be returned back in 3-5 years that is not so attractive for HEI.

It is necessary to mention the specialized Fond of Informatization that supports basic and applied projects forwarded to “computerization”. That means creation of local networks, Internet activity support, development of new hard and software .

Before 1990 it was a lot of industry contracts in Belarusian HEI mainly with electronic, machinery and chemical enterprises from all the Soviet Union. Some of these contracts were not industrial but basic science or applied research to provide prospective development of production. Now, only Belarusian partners are of significance. Some last years show a few contracts with Russian enterprises.

The National Academy of Science of Belarus is among the major partners of university researchers. It does not allocate funds outside the Academy system of research institutes but it coordinates the basic research in the republic and owned a number of prestige research journals that are opened and free for university contributors. The Academy is an excellent place for student fellowships. Over 1/3 of Academy’s employees are involved in joint research projects and in teaching. The Academy for Agriculture also unites a number of institutions and acts in a similar way in its own sphere.

ACADEMIC STAFF

There are university teacher staff (UTS) and researchers in the academic staff of a HEI. UTS includes professors, docents, senior lecturers, lecturers and assistants. A researcher could occupy a position among the following: main researcher, leading researcher, senior researcher, researcher, junior researcher. Usually, engineers of research laboratories are included in the research staff, too. It is out of research staff obligation to deliver any education work but the majority of researchers are involved in the teaching process. This activity is extra paid.

Every HEI involves a lot of part time teachers from different external HEI, research institutes, enterprises and government bodies. That allows to use an additional experience, avoid employment of more expensive extra permanent staff and support fruitful links with student employers and different stick holders. Mainly, part time teachers are enlisted for single narrow scientific courses delivering. A lot of such teachers are alumni of the employing HEI.

The members of the UTS must participate in educational, research, methodical and creative activities of his/her department. Usually, lessons, consults, examinations and different work with students take about 16 hours per week in average. This is so called “the first half of a day”. Different activities are included in “the second half of a day” within 36 hours week. Schedule of lessons and training labs covers every day from Monday till Saturday and from the very morning till late evening.

Ministry of Education approved The recommendation on teaching work planning in HEI on November 29, 1999. According the document the first half of day school be within 450 and 1000 hours per year and include at least 150 hours of lecturing. HEI’s rector is personally responsible for different decision that must have good background. The recommendation is a basic framework for the HEI’s Academic Council decision. The last adopts the local rules for teacher work planning.

Every academic staff member has a right of annual payable holiday. It has 8 weeks duration for teacher staff (Belarusian State University provides the teachers with 56 days holiday) and 4 weeks for research staff. Everybody has a right for an additional not payable holiday or days off under the certain personal circumstances. Also, by the Academic Council decision it is possible to receive the special holiday

till 6 months for finishing candidate dissertation. The holiday for doctor dissertation finishing could be as long as 2 years and has a special title “Doctorantura”.

For the period of the mentioned above special holidays HEI administration can employ different person under strictly terminated contract. Sometimes department allocates the work of the “holiday person” between different members of the staff to avoid employment of extra personnel.

The current cohort of UTS is shown by the Table 12-14. The table demonstrates the good sex parity in total number of teacher staff. The difference is less than a half of percent in public HEIs on male favor; female teachers win in private HEIs. Women have worse position among the persons awarded with scientific degrees and titles especially in private HEIs.

THE COHORT OF UNIVERSITY TEACHER STAFF IN 2000/2001 YEAR

PUBLIC HEIS

Scientific qualification		Total	Male	Female
Any qualification		18530	9492	9038
		100%	51.2%	48.8%
Scientific degree	Doctor of science	1033	891	142
		100%	86.2%	13.8%
Candidate of science		7250	4536	2714
		100%	62.6%	37.4%
Scientific title	Professor	1054	899	155
		100%	85.3%	14.7%
Docent		5589	3694	1895
		100%	66.1%	33.9%

PRIVATE HEIS

Scientific qualification		Total	Male	Female
Any qualification		1556	630	926
		100%	40.5%	59.5%
Scientific degree	Doctor of science	86	82	4
		100%	95.3%	4.7%
Candidate of science		431	280	151
		100%	65%	35%
Scientific title	Professor	52	46	6
		100%	88.5%	11.5%
Docent		313	197	116
		100%	62.9%	37.1%

FORMS OF TEACHER STAFF EMPLOYMENT

HEI privacy	Total number of teacher staff members	Fulltime	Part time	Employed for single course teaching
Private	1556	1241	942	315
	100%	79.8%	60.5%	20.2%
Public	18530	16806	3101	1724
	100%	90.6%	16.7%	9.3%

AGE ALLOCATION OF UNIVERSITY TEACHER STAFF IN PUBLIC HEIS

Age. years old	Total. %	Doctors of science. %	Candidates of science. %
Before 29	17.2	0.0	1.6
30-40	20.0	1.8	17.3
41-50	25.4	20.7	30.6
51-60	23.4	33.4	30.1
after 61	14.0	44.1	20.4

The alarming situation is found with the age of UTS in Belarusian higher education. Over 14% of the staff is in the age of retirement. 44% of all doctors of science and over 1/5 of candidates of science belong to this age group. Nobody has doctor degree at the age of 30.

UNIVERSITY TEACHER STAFF PROMOTION AND EVALUATION IN BELARUS

The practice of university teacher staff evaluation exists in Belarus from late 20-th. Nowadays this concerns the system of employment of the personnel that is realized through 5 years contracts for everybody who belongs to a full time personnel or who pretends for a scientific degree or title. The goal of this paper is to make the process and its objectives in Belarus clearer just when some USA universities start to introduce their own systems of UTS evaluation. There is below the description of position system and degrees and titles awarding to avoid referring to the poor available official Belarusian regulation that is in Belarusian or in Russian in a part.

There is 5 levels system of UTS positions. These positions are the following: professor, docent, senior lecturer, lectures and assistant. Salary, obligations and features of a person's work depend on a level of position.

Persons who have higher education even just after graduation from university might occupy the latest two of them. As a rule the field of background and the supposed teaching are to be the same. But for people with significant practical experience in a different establishment like a research or design institute, advanced entertainment or university this is not obvious requirement. Moreover, positions of senior lectures are mainly just for such experienced specialists in practical areas. Assistants mainly are engaged in practical lessons like labs, practices and training. Through rector's permission the lecturing can be possible but limited. The position of lecturer is not just for lecturing but it is similar to assistant one. Mostly this position is in use for teachers in foreign languages, arts, sports and military disciplines.

The docent position strongly requires a scientific degree of candidate of science or doctor of science and 5 years at least higher education institution teaching experience. A docent is a supervisor of a program or subprogram, or educational laboratory. A docent should deliver lectures in the appropriate field, develop curricula and supervise a research direction. It is possible to combine the docent and administrative positions in the same university. In that case docent position might be part time one mainly. Full time teaching is only available for heads of chairs and faculty departments. A docent position could be temporary occupied by an advanced or promising person who has not scientific degree. It is unlimited available for a person awarded with docent scientific title. Moreover, everybody primary held a docent position should apply in due process for docent scientific title. Otherwise, the length of being can not be more than 5 years by rules.

A professor position strongly requires a doctor of science degree and also 5 years at least teaching experience in a higher education institution or achievement of great results in supervising of doctorate students in a research institute. A pretender is

requested to issue a guidebook for students and provide a work with doctorate students. Professor's obligations and work features are similar to the docent's ones but, usually, a professor is a leader of a research area and has a recognized formal and informal research or teaching "school". A professor position could be temporary occupied by an advanced or promising person who has a candidate of science degree. It is unlimited available for a person awarded with a professor scientific title. Moreover, everybody primary held a professor position should apply in due process for a professor scientific title. Otherwise, the length of being can not be more than 5 years by rules. Professors have some bonuses from government in their health care, recreation and living conditions.

As it was mentioned above there is the system of two levels scientific degrees and two levels scientific titles in Belarus. According to the State adopted Provision on scientific degrees and titles it is possible to receive a degree of candidate of science or doctor of science for a definite area of knowledge. The degrees might be awarded after successful defense of the dissertation and following state evaluation.

A degree of candidate of science is awarded for persons who riches a recognized result in appropriate area of science, applied research or/and technology. Some principle issues should be published in two at least recognized journal articles. A pretender has to demonstrate also excellent knowledge in scientific literature, ability to solve research problems, treat and explain results. To be admitted to defense he or she should pass four special exams in philosophy, foreign language, computer science and in the investigated area. The defending theses are a subject of peer review and are to be under department consideration in advance. The defense can be arranged in a special appointed by state for this area council. At least one of the council members must be a doctor of science just in the same narrow area of knowledge. A pretender should argue and satisfy two official opponents who are the specialists just in the same field of science and one of them is a doctor of science.

A doctor of science degree is one of higher requirements. A pretender should prove he/she is a real leader in the field of investigation. Main results have to be published in recognized magazines and discussed along prestige conferences. The dissertation is a subject of external peer review and to be under department consideration as well as under special state consideration after defense. It should be demonstrated a significant contribution in the field of science or/and technology. The defense can be arranged in a special appointed by state for this area council that should include at least three doctors of science just in the same narrow area. A pretender should argue and satisfy to three official opponents who are the doctor of science just in the same field. The doctor degree awarded persons can apply to their very prestige membership to National Academy of Science of Belarus that provides the members with some State guaranteed privileges.

The State Supreme Attestation Committee (SSAC) is in charge of these degrees and titles awarding. This Committee approves also regulation in that field. SSAC also collects, treats and publishes appropriate information. There is in it responsibility to approve the curricula for candidate examinations.

The role of SSAC is very high. It appoints councils for doctor or candidate dissertation consideration (former councils are eligible for candidate dissertation also) and the list of members, evaluation councils and members. SSAC is looking after the process of dissertation consideration and documents. Then, just SSAC awards with scientific titles and doctor of science degree. The councils for dissertation consideration award a candidate of science degree. Since 2000 Belarusian State University started to award scientific titles according to a government decision.

Nevertheless, every pretender's file will be researched in the SSAC office and in the evaluation council. The final decision after this procedure will be done by the Presidium of SSAC.

Then SSAC issues a certificate that is only officially recognized one. It is a lifelong valid document. Some universities and public associations sometimes issue their similar or honorable certificates. These documents are valid inside the responsible body only and they are not the subjects for state recognition.

Titles and degrees are important and required features UTS in Belarus but there are more official requirements and recommendations. First of all there is a procedure of temporal employment for UTS members. The contract is limited by 5 years only and it can not be prolonged automatically. The position becomes free after the term of the contract validation and the university opens a public competition for it occupation. The announcement should be published to provide everyone with ability to try. This announcement is valid for a month and then it is a month length period for delayed mail applications because competition is open for all the world participants. Outsiders do not apply for a former occupied position as a rule. Nevertheless, this tradition is too far from to be absolute one and at least a quart of such positions is occupied by real competition.

This competition is a hot time for a pretender if it is even a solo event because the applicant should attach a number of defined documents that confirm the qualification. There are formal application for participation in competition, personnel filling form, autobiography, report about previous teaching and research activity, list of employment, copies of higher education background certificates, copies of scientific titles and degrees certificates, list of publications and inventions, copy of recent 5 years certificates of qualification upgrading and chair's and department's recommendation in the pretender's file. If some of these documents can not be enclosed before deadline or are not valid the person will not be admitted for competition under this formal reason.

A self-evaluation report is a document of high value that is under consideration in all the stages of competition process. This report has usually its volume from 2 to 5 pages of pure text with refers to different the applicant file contained documents. No strong official rules for such report preparing exist but according due practice pretender outlines the background, recent upgrading (certified or not), teaching and research experience, delivered courses, total number of scientific publications, conference reports and inventions (for some positions newspaper articles or software programs have a value). Short description of research and methodological projects participation and the results are welcome. Memberships in National Academy of Science of Belarus, different professional organizations, editorial boards, governing bodies, commissions and councils, won honor and official prizes and titles are usually listed. There is the information of high value about pretender's contribution in the development of the university and national system of education and science. It is very important to show recently received official degree or titles. As well it is profit to mention postgraduate students who defended their dissertations under competitor's supervision. Because an outdoor competitor in not usually able to demonstrate all these items the domestic ones have some not official advantage.

For a person who is already a staff member it is usually necessary to deliver a special open lecture or seminar that is to be participated with a few officials and faculties as well as everybody who wish to do this. The lectures should display all the possible teaching abilities through this lesson because the following formal discussion

under head of chair presidency strongly impacts to the chair's recommendation. Outsider can be offered to deliver such lesson but this is not the obligation.

The open lesson is to be announced for faculty in advance otherwise it could be not recognized as open one through the procedure of complain. Usually, such lesson is prepared significantly better than regular one. It is saturated with newest technologies, illustrations and demonstrations. Active student involvement in discussions and their good knowledge earn to positive assessment. As well interdisciplinary links and refers to recent research results and classics' opinions are welcome. Acceptable balance of different teaching methods is valued. But a big difference found could be a subject of students' complains about wrong performance and lower real level of lecturing.

Procedure of chair recommendation generation includes a self-evaluation report study and discussion between the chair's faculty members. Then, meeting approves the recommendation that should be ended with key words "approved" or "not approved". The decision is a matter of open voting. If applicant continues the process the personal file will be removed to a department's council that will discuss and vote again. The voting procedure is closed. After this all decisions and other documents become a subject of University's Academic Council consideration. If previous decisions are positive and the only pretender is available the discussion and closed voting are rather formal ones as a rule. But sometimes the Council ballots with "black spheres" and creature becomes refused. The Academic Council's decision should be made valid by the order of rector.

Every stage decision of this competition could be complained by pretender to an authorized person who is the next in hierarchy as a rule. But this can not be a subject of a court decision. As well Ministry of Education is able to apply to a rector of the university to reconsider the decision only not to order. Anyway, only a formal break of actual rules can be a sufficient reason for secondary consideration.

Positions of chair's head, dean and sometimes rector are occupied also through open competition in the similar way. The representative of higher administrative level should be among the discussions above mentioned. This person introduces competitors and provides due process. Such competitions are cuter sometimes and involve more pretenders just outside the university. Nevertheless, mainly the majority of pretenders withdraw themselves from competition after consultations in the university especially when the position was former occupied with one of the applied for it person.

Also there is no tenure in Belarusian universities. Nevertheless, the occupation of a university teacher position is usually continuing till the person decides to change the workplace or retires. There is no national wide regulation that requires to retire from university at the special age but some universities' regulation permits to employ such persons through one or two years contract. Also, the retirement age is 60 years old for male and 55 years old for female UTS there are a number of examples of even 80 years old professors. Last years' trend of average UTS age rising result in increase of retired age faculty share.

So, there is advanced system of UTS employment and evaluation in Belarus. Five years period of guaranteed position for faculty members is guessed a sufficient one to realize their ideas and skill abilities and to contribute to university development. Nevertheless, terminated position period becomes sometimes to be criticized as well as "closed" voting procedure these are considered as not democratic and human right broken. In contra, it is necessary to outline the really existing situation and traditions in Belarusian higher education as well as a stimulation role of every five years stress.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Five year contracts for the fulltime UTS in a Belarusian HEI protects a contracting person from fire or dismissing during the validation term. But the procedure of competition and election requires everybody to develop the background, skill and competence. As a rule, terms of competition prescribe a degree of candidate or doctor of science or make some preference for a pretender with a degree. Every position demands a certificate of upgrading or retraining course in exclusion of junior pretenders who are try to get a teaching position first time. List of publications, inventions and conference participation is to be represented obviously as well as report on professional skill in teaching. So, every pretender must work hard as a teacher and researcher.

There are a number of abilities to provide personal development of UTS. First of all it is every 5 years sabbatical from two weeks to 4 months of length. A person saves a position and average salary during this period. Sabbatical could be in the form of research fellowship or a training course in an authorized institution. Legal fellowship as well as training course is to be certified after the “student” graduate report approval or examinations passed. Being involved in activity that can not be interrupted a teacher has his/her own right to change sabbatical with a part time training course of 70 learning hours at least.

The most popular place for university teaching and administration staff training there is National Institute for Higher Education that enrolls over 3000 students annually. Most of them are involved in short term courses that are as long as two weeks. The Institute offers also the courses of one-semester duration and retraining one-year courses awarded with a special certificate of new qualification. There are permanently a few courses for part time and shifted students. Research fellowships and postgraduate courses are also available. Some of offered courses are available in different cities in cooperation with local universities. The Institute is the most attractive because of it’s leading role in legislation and regulation of higher education development, close contacts with ministerial authorities and a lot of high top specialists engaged from government, academy of science advanced universities and enterprises.

Participation in research is among the academic freedoms in Belarusian HEI. A teacher can choose the own topic for research if it meets the need of the university. Otherwise the research is private business of a person. Every university offers for the staff to participate in a number of different programs and projects. As a rule every chair has at least one special project in science and one more in teaching methodology. These programs and projects could be extra earning for the participants if they are funding by an external body. There is no restriction to be involved in international research. The staff members have the right to publish their research results in domestic media or abroad and to participate in all the available conferences. Universities try to support conference activity of academicians and post graduate students. Domestic publications and conferences are mostly free of fee. Funding abilities to university research support are discussed above.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Relative stabilization in economy and in political situation allows the Belarusian higher school to accelerate its integration in world education system. The Republic of Belarus joined the European Cultural Convention, which enables it to participate in European projects concerning higher and secondary education, academic mobility and

recognition of qualification. Lisbon Convention on Recognition of Qualifications of Higher Education in European Region of 1997 is now under consideration. It will dismiss the old pan European similar document that became out of day in many statements. Belarusian delegation participated in elaborating of Hamburg Declaration of 1997 on adult education and in World Conference in Paris, 1999 on higher education. Cooperation in the field of education with UNESCO and the Council of Europe develops fruitfully. For instance, in 1996 thirty teachers from Belarusian HEI attended seminars and conferences of the European Center of Modern Languages in Graz (Austria). Representatives of the Council of Europe participated in international seminars dedicated to problems of human rights and teaching history as well as reform of secondary school in the Republic of Belarus. Representatives of Belarusian HEI regularly participate in the seminars of The Council of Europe on quality assurance, management improvement and legislative reform. Belarus takes part in creation of European system of international recognition of education for professional and academic purposes. In 1995 in the National Institute of Higher it was established a department for recognition of qualifications. Now it is National Center for Information and Analysis and Quality Assurance created by the dual order by Minister of Education and rector of Belarusian State University those subordinate this Institute. Representatives of the department/Center took part in all the annual meetings of ENIC and NARIC networks since the 3-rd one that was held in 1996 in Rome.

Belarusian system of higher education is informally involved in the processes organized by European Union and Council of Europe for the members only. So, some recommendations and decisions of these bodies are used in Belarusian regulation. These concern development and qualification recognition. The most important in last years it was Bologna declaration of 28 European ministers of education of 1999 that proclaims a prospective way of European higher education development. Now this became a Bologna process that involves every country in its domestic system reform to make it more open, clearer understanding and accessible for everybody in common Europe without borders.

The Republic of Belarus and its HEI have a number of signed inter-governmental and inter-departmental agreements on cooperation in the sphere of education and science with the corresponding entities of Bulgaria, China, Germany, Lithuania, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Poland, Yugoslavia. On 27 February 1996, between the Governments of Russian Federation and the Republic of Belarus it was signed an agreement on equivalence of documents that certifies education, scientific degrees and academic ranks. The agreement is the only one on the territory of the former USSR.

Belarusian HEIs actively cooperate with foreign educational establishments, programs, organizations and funds. There are TEMPUS/TACIS, INTAS, COPERNICUS, UNESCO, UNDP, CEPES, International Nuclear Energy Agency, the British Council, German Service of Academic Exchanges, USA governmental programs of cooperation like run by Fullbright Fund, IREX, ACCELS and etc. among them. Here are the main lines of international activity of HEI:

- mutual preparation of a specialist through partial or complete training courses for undergraduate, graduate and post-graduate students,
- on-the-job training of specialists, teacher trainees,
- academic staff exchange,
- participation in international and abroad conferences, symposia, exhibitions,

- scientific and technical cooperation through participation in international programs and projects,
- exchange of scientific and technical information,
- student cultural and sports exchanges,
- foreign students training.

Belarusian HEIs have over 200 contracts on cooperation with higher educational establishments, enterprises and companies of 36 countries of Europe, Asia, Africa, North and Latin America. Every year about 2000 research and educational workers and students visited their partners abroad. About a thousand of foreign researchers, professors and students visit Belarusian HEI annually, too.

The most successful was cooperation in the educational sphere with Germany. During the year over 500 students and research and educational workers visit Germany. By the German Service of Academic Exchanges (DAAD) some tens of specialists and students from Belarus are sent to the Bundes Republik Deutschland to prepare innovative courses or attend a language course. The most effective international contacts were maintained by Belarusian State Polytechnic Academy, Belarusian State University, Belarusian State University of Informatics and Radio Engineering and Minsk State Linguistic University. Germany Cultural Center, Gete Institute and Volkswagen Fund demonstrate high activity also.

Ignoring political arguments the United States Embassy keeps it very active position in cooperation support of Belarusian academicians and students with US' universities and industry. Fullbright, IREX "Contemporary Issues" and Edmond Masky programs of exchange are the most popular. IREX offers also a system of small grants for alumni and projects in computer networks development. All the US exchange programs alumni can participate in ACSESS activity. A special library and Internet information are also available for visitors. It is very pity that Soros's Foundation cut it activity in Belarus.

A limited number of projects are offered by UNDP, UNESCO, World Bank, NATO. Nevertheless, these projects are rather huge and they are focused to the most important problems. These made cooperation with these international organizations of great value and prestige.

The Republic of Belarus is opened to international cooperation. It strives to diversify its forms. The expansion of international relations is regarded as one of the most important factors of development of Belarusian higher school. Now Belarusian HEIs become more effective, more democratic and more open for this cooperation.

FOREIGN STUDENTS IN BELARUSIAN HEIS

Teaching of the foreign students in Belarus was started in 1944 when Belarusian State University resumed it activity upon coming back after Minsk liberation. The first foreign students were from Germany and Poland. During 50th the only group of Polish citizens studied here. The regular work with foreigners started in 1961 when by the Council of Ministers the Department for Foreign Citizens Training was established at Belarusian State University. That year 61 Cubans were admitted to study Russian and harmonize the different countries' school programs.

Later the number of foreign students in Belarus rose fast and reached the pike in the season of 1988/89 year when 6840 foreigners from 102 countries studied in 17 HEIs, 12 technicums и 6 vocational schools. 23% of them came from East Europe and

76% had the origin from developing countries. There were 61% of Africans, 20% of Middle East, 15 Asia% from and 14% from Latin America.

After the announced independence of Belarus in 1991 there were 3832 foreign students from 97 countries. 180 of them were assigned to Belarus by Ministry of Higher and Special Secondary Education of the Soviet Union and did not pay to Belarusian HEIs for their study. In spite of very difficult economic situation the government of Belarus decided to continue teach these students free of charged and did not remove them to Russia as it was made in different new independent states. This decision permitted to support international prestige of Belarus and after introducing new regulation created an appropriate system for foreigners study in the republic. Taking into account the difficulty of living abroad Ministries of Education and Healthcare made some joint decisions and actions to improve the medical care for such students. Also the regulation of admission and study for them was made transparent, democratic and understandable.

Due to these measures and Belarusian Ministry of Education, HEIs and abroad establishments activity the cohort of foreign students is 2.5-3 thousands besides students from Russia and Belarusians from abroad. In 2000/2001 there were 2667 foreign students in 28 HEIs and one college. The most representative groups are from China, Lebanon, Iraq, Syria, Pakistan, Vietnam, Poland, Jordan and India. The most popular are the following Belarusian HEIs: Minsk State Medical Institute (480 foreign students), Vitebsk State Medical Institute (427), Belarusian State University (402), Belarusian State Polytechnical Academy (375), Grodno State Medical Institute (246), Minsk University of Linguistic (249).

The average annual tuition fee depends on the ability and prestige of a HEI and is between 800 and 2500 US dollars. The rate is in responsibility of HEIs which make the contracts with these clients with account to market of neighboring countries and real cost of service.

During 39 years history of foreigners teaching the Belarusian educational establishments enrolled over 20 thousands of students for 102 countries. The same time 3 foreigners were awarded with doctor of science degree and over 70 persons received the candidate of science degree. Over 3000 of foreign specialists in education and science got fellowships in Belarusian HEIs.

There are a lot of problems in this field. First of all it is a problem of qualified office staff that is cut three time in comparison with the Soviet period. That resulted in disappearance of the HEI's divisions for alumni and lower intensification of advertising abroad. Under these circumstances the favor was given to intermediary organizations and persons who know the local situation in their countries much better and are able to research real demand. Such intermediaries are committed to propagate Belarusian education service, provide contacts with students' parents, help to students with communication< transportation and accommodation in Belarus. A few such organization funds the selected projects of HEI development focused to the foreign students needs.

The situation with foreign students is under the permanent control of the Ministry of Education and HEIs' administration. It is expected to rise the number of foreign student by making more attractive the study in Belarus. The number of educational service will be increased also that first of all concerns short advanced courses and retraining with new qualification awarding. Study in aspirantura and doctoranture should be also made more attractive for foreign graduate students. Joining of the Republic of Belarus to Lisbon Convention will open new abilities for foreigners enrolling in Belarusian higher education establishments.

HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

At present there are four types of educational institutions within the system of higher education of the Republic of Belarus. In a Provisional rule on a higher educational establishment there is stated that the basic types of higher educational establishments are classical university, profile university or academy, institute, higher college. The classical and profile universities as well as academies concern to higher education establishments of a university type.

Classical university prepares specialists in scientific higher education, carries out fundamental and applied researches on a wide spectrum of natural, humanitarian and other sciences, prepares highly qualified scientific staff in postgraduate courses and doctoral studies, is the center of development of education, science and culture.

Profile university and academy as a rule, prepares specialists in one direction (for example, technical, agricultural or military); carries out researches, mainly in one branch of a science, engineering, culture; prepares highly qualified scientific staff in postgraduate courses and doctoral. It is the scientific and methodical center in the occupied activity field.

A higher educational establishment applying for the status of university or academy should meet 25 officially established criteria. The most important requirements are:

- international recognition of the very establishment as a scientific or scientific and methodical center in the appropriate field;
- available scientific and pedagogical schools, post-graduate courses and specialized councils on candidate and doctor's dissertations defense;
- students should participate in research and creative activity;
- volume of basic research should make not less than 30 % from total volume of research.

Institute prepares specialists in only or a few programs of a definite field, carries out research in a certain field of science, engineering, culture and etc.

Higher college runs very practical focused programs in a definite field. It is possible to graduate from a higher college after two years of study to be awarded with a diploma of technik or continue study as a student of higher education establishment to be awarded with a diploma of engineer.

At the beginning of 2000 the system of public higher education of the Republic of Belarus included 19 universities (7 classical and 12 profile), 9 academies, 10 institutes and 4 higher colleges among 42 higher education establishments.

A few HEIs are awarded by the Council of Ministries with honorable titles of leading HEI. The title provides prestige and some financial privileges. In the national system of education of the Republic of Belarus there are 5 leading higher education establishments:

- Leading higher education establishment in the national system of education — Belarus State University;
- Leading higher engineering-technical educational establishment in the national system of education — Belarusian State Polytechnical Academy;

- Leading higher education establishment in the national system of education in the field of economic staff preparation — Belarusian State Economic University;
- Leading higher pedagogical educational establishment in the national system of education — Belarusian State Pedagogical University named after Maxim Tank;
- Leading higher education establishment in the national system of agrarian education — Belarusian State Agricultural Academy.

QUALIFICATIONS, DEGREES, DIPLOMAS

Mainly, the programs of Belarusian HEIs include 4500-5700 hours of lessons and training that corresponds to 4-5 years of study for full time students. Study in medical programs lasts 6 years usually. After finishing of training graduates pass state examinations and defend the degree project (work). State examination commission awards every graduate with a professional qualification according to the elected program of study. The title of the pass program (spetsialnost) and received professional qualification are indicated in the Diploma of higher education. The owner of such diploma has the right to apply for any position that requires higher education of indicated professional qualification.

The right to receive the bachelor degree is available for the most successful students who are going to receive their diplomas of higher education. They should pass an additional training course or a few courses of 300 hours. This additional course is to be studied simultaneously with a courses of the regular program. Usually it includes profound basic, psycho-pedagogical disciplines and foreign language study. An applicant should pass examinations in bachelor program. Bachelor degree with the indication of scientific or professional field (for example, bachelor of pedagogical sciences or bachelor of economic sciences) is awarded by State examination commission and proves to be true by the Bachelor Degree.

Belarusian bachelor degree certifies that graduate has received a broadened academic training.

An applicant for special higher education should at first get a diploma of higher education and then studies an additional training course by term of 1-2 years. An enrolled graduate student as well passes a special examination and defends degree work (project). The State examination commission awards he/she with a professional qualification according to the chosen program of study that proves to be true by the Diploma of Special Higher Education. The presented type of the higher education is not used.

More popular are master (magister) degree courses that could be established in university type HEI. This educational activity is the subject of special licensing by the Ministry of Education. A licensed HEI announce admission in Magistratura that is the second (graduate) stage of higher education. It is aimed to train specialists for research and pedagogical activity in a higher school, work for public authority. It gives also access to continue training at a stage of scientific education. Magistratura provides training only in the accredited programs according to the authorized provision on Master preparation for the every higher education establishment.

Precondition of access to study at the graduate stage is the diploma of higher education. Enrollment is on a competitive basis.

Training at the second stage lasts 1-2 years and includes profound preparation in the elected field of study. The plan of study demands conducting some research,

preparation and public defense of master dissertation. Study week in magistratura makes 40 hours, including all kinds of auditorium and laboratory classes and out of class study, and also not less than 10 hours of research work. Magistratura students are given not less than two months free from classes and tests to prepare their master dissertations.

By graduation the magistratura student receives an academic master degree with indication of the field of study (for example, master of economic sciences), that proves to be true by the Master Diploma. State examination commission awards master degree after the defense of the dissertation.

The number of higher education establishments graduates who have received bachelor and master diplomas has increased for past years.

EUROPEAN STUDIES IN BELARUS

European Studies are a point of intent attention of Ministry of Education in Belarus. They are organized in different forms that are adopted for specific study programs. European Studies presents at all levels of higher and continuing education. Every institution of this system is involved in the process. Mostly, the programs of European Studies are represented as enclosed courses or parts of different courses. Sometimes these courses include language lessons for special topics but usually even this is a part of obligatory four-semester course of foreign language. The most popular are English, German and French among them. Spanish, Polish and Italian are available also.

Length of programs depends on a type of the institute of higher education and future professional qualification. As a rule, the programs cover all the term of study for undergraduate students. The are geography, geology, languages, culture, political science, history (including history of the concrete subjects), civics, philosophy, ethic etc. Some of them could be so long as one or two semesters. There are also some full university programs oriented immediately to European problems. We should outline programs “World History”, “Roman Languages”, “International Law”, “International Relations”, “Literature Abroad”, “World Culture” etc.

During last five years European Studies actively penetrate in the programs of technical universities. First of all it was through foreign language course that obviously should include study of geography, history, culture, economic and politic of the native country (or countries) for the language. Every technical university program includes also courses of word economy, political theory, culture (domestic and world), philosophy (strong based on the European traditions). Very important within this stream is a course of industry privacy protection, author and related rights that includes a lot of knowledge on the regulation and practice in European countries.

There are some difficulties in development of European Studies in Belarusian higher school institution and in the system continuing education. First of all it is existence of hard limits in prescribed educational plans. University autonomy is bounded within 5% of general courses and 20% of courses within any program. The situation could be enhanced with implementation of the system of Educational Standards in university regulation. The standards are framework documents and they contain the main state demands to the educational programs and skills only. The important obstacle is lack of skills and good textbooks in this field. Partly, the problem could be solved through lectures invitation and translation into Russian or Belarusian books from abroad. But this way requires special funding that is absent in the public universities. Mainly, universities find such funding from foreign fundators

and from income of paid service. Staff, supply and money shortage is the main problem in the system of continuing education too.

Cooperation in the field of European Studies is a subject of university activity, mainly. Bilateral treatment is the most popular form of such cooperation. As a rule a treatment is arranged to realize European (or West European government or humanitarian fund) grant (TEMPUS/TASIS, for example) or an industry contract. Without additional support this activity seems to be minimized immediately.

Further development of European Studies in Belarus requires more support from government through switching available funding from traditional programs in new fields and activation of Belarusian embassies in the education cooperation. It is so necessary to have also strong support from Council of Europe in forms of seminars for specialists and managers in education and, may be, in the form of a special program of lecturers exchange (senior, regular and young) including establishing a resource and information regional center of European Studies in CIS for higher and continuing education system.

APPENDIX 1. THE DETAILED SCHEME OF THE NATIONAL SYSTEM OF EDUCATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS

Level of general education		Sublevel of general education		Level of professional education		Educational establishments	Awarding document	Provided access to the following level/sublevel of general education	Provided access to the following level of professional education	Study duration, years	UNESCO system stage
Title	Cod	Title	Cod	Title	Cod						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Basic	A	Preschool	A0	Non	-	Kindergartens, nurseries, family education	Non	A1	-	Till 6 years old	0
		Primary	A1	Non	-	General schools	Non	A2	-	4	1
		Basic	A2	Non	-	General schools, gymnasiums	Certificate	B1	a, б	5/6	1
				Preliminary training	A2a	General schools, gymnasiums	Attestate	B1	б	2-3	2C
Secondary	B	-	B1	Preliminary training	-	General schools, Gymnasiums, Liceums	Attestate	B1	a, б, в	2 ²	3
				Basic professional	Б1а	Professional liceums ¹	Certificate	B1	б, в	1-2 ²	3
				Secondary professional	Б1б	Technicums ³ , Higher colleges	Diploma	B1	в	3-4 ^{2,4}	4
Higher	B	Higher education of the first stage	B1	Higher professional of the first stage	B1в	Higher colleges	Diploma	B2	г	4	5
				Universities, Academies, Institutes	Diploma, Diploma with Bachelor degree	B2	г	4-5	5		
		Higher education of the second stage (magistratura)	B2	Higher professional of the second stage	B2г	Universities, Academies	Diploma, Diploma with Master degree	Г1	д	2	5

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
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Scientific	Г	Post graduate course (aspirantura)	Г1	Scientific professional of the first stage	Г1д	Universities, Academies, Institutes, Research institutes affiliated to HEI or National academy of Science and Academy of agriculture	Diploma of Candidate of Science	e	3 (5) ^{5,6}	6
-	-	-	-	Scientific ⁷ professional of the second stage (doctorantura)	Г1е	Universities, Academies, Institutes, Research institutes affiliated to HEI or National academy of Science and Academy of agriculture	Diploma of Doctor of Science		2	6

Footnotes:

- ¹ Professional lyceum means also vocational or high vocational school or regional training vocational center.
- ² The term of study will be increased for 12 year program pupils.
- ³ Technicum means also College or Teacher School, or Medical School and etc.
- ⁴ For the persons graduated from the level A the term of study is increased by two years.
- ⁵ This is duration of study only. The term of the dissertation defense is not defined.
- ⁶ 5 year period of aspirantura is for the persons (soiskatel) who need to consult the supervisor only and study the candidate examination program independently.
- ⁷ Doctorantura is not a stage of study but a professional one. It aims to finish the text of the pretender's dissertation and provides the pretender with two years fellowship.

EDUCATION FOR ALL – BELARUSIAN DIMENSION

Republic of Belarus participates in the UNESCO program “Education for All” since 1980 after Jomtien (Thailand) World Conference that was dedicated this problem and adopted the 10 years program of actions. Within the frameworks of the program the assessments of the situation with basic education were made in the national reports of the participating countries. These assessments produced great impression upon delegates by the displayed progress in the field of education including elimination of illiteracy and discrimination.

However, not every goal among the named in Jomtien was achieved. Particularly, the elimination of illiteracy is not complete and the percentage of illiterate women is despondently high yet. Beside of that, World Conference in Dakar, 2000 displayed the principal difference in the level of national education systems in different regions and between rich and poor countries. It led to necessity to continue the program and creation of national plans of actions for the next period. The national plans would be the base of UNESCO world plan.

The assessment of the basic education state in Belarus showed the highest in the world level of literacy, absolute absence of discrimination and sustainable financing that allowed to indicate development of the structure and quality of basic education as well as management among the top aims of the future actions. In the deal with that the transition to new 12-year structure of secondary education is the key problem for the republic. Within this system the compulsory and free education takes 10 year period. This structure presents in the renewed Law on Education in the Republic of Belarus. Obviously, renewed law adoption will require big changes in the regulation.

The problems of monitoring arrangement, new textbooks and guides for pupils and teachers, visual aids and equipments seem to be of the same importance. A number of problems concerned the demography crisis and difficulties of school support in radioactive contaminated regions exist also.

It supposed to solve the mentioned above problems by the end of the first decade of XXI century within the frameworks of the attached list of key actions. Naturally, the attached plan includes the most important and global actions only which are the real core of the national educational policy. It is assumed also that during 10-year period a few national wide programs focused on development of the plan should be launched.

The reached level and prospects of the Belarusian education system development permit to exercise wider approach then it was stated in Jomtien and Dakar. Particularly, there are functional literacy rising by the development of vocational schools, colleges and universities as well as the establishments for adult education, background upgrading and rehabilitation, including education for invalids. The development of democracy, access to higher education, new role of universities in accordance with the Hamburg (1997) and Paris (1998) Declarations are on the agenda

also. It has already taken into consideration in the draft of the Law on Higher Education.

Everything mentioned above and dynamic of the social and economic development of the Republic of Belarus and European Region show that any long period plan should be a point of permanent Government's and civil society's attention. Such plans should be in the non-stop process of correction facing new trends in the world education system development, appearance of new approaches and research results as well as economic situation that defines the speed and effectiveness of any reform. Just evolutionary approach to the national plan of actions in the best way meets the Dakar aims and goals and national interests of the Republic of Belarus. Such plan of 54 actions was elaborated in National Institute for Higher Education and approved by Minister of Education on July 4, 2001.

APPENDIX 2. NATIONAL PLAN OF ACTIONS WITHIN THE UNESCO PROGRAM "EDUCATION FOR ALL"

Non official translation

Adopted
by Minister of Education
of the Republic of Belarus
July 4, 2001

Republic of Belarus participates in the UNESCO program "Education for All" since 1980 after Jomtien (Thailand) World Conference that was dedicated to this problem and adopted the 10 years program of actions. Within the frameworks of the program the assessments of the situation with basic education were made in the national reports of the participating countries. These assessments produced great impression upon delegates by the displayed progress in the field of education including elimination of illiteracy and discrimination.

However, not every goal among the named in Jomtien was achieved. Particularly, the elimination of illiteracy is not complete and the percentage of illiterate women is despondently high yet. Beside of that, World Conference in Dakar, 2000 displayed the principal difference in the level of national education systems in different regions and between rich and poor countries. It led to necessity to continue the program and creation of national plans of actions for the next period. The national plans would be the base of UNESCO world plan.

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The problems of monitoring arrangement, new textbooks and guides for pupils and teachers, visual aids and equipments seem to be of the same importance. A number of problems concerned the demography crisis and difficulties of school support in radioactive contaminated regions also exist.

It is supposed to solve the mentioned above problems by the end of the first decade of XXI century within the frameworks of the attached list of key actions. Naturally, the attached plan includes the most important and global actions only which are the real core of the national educational policy. It is assumed also that during 10-year

period a few national wide programs focused on development of the plan should be launched.

The reached level and prospects of the Belarusian education system development permit to exercise wider approach than it was stated in Jomtien and Dakar. Particularly, there are functional literacy rising by the development of vocational schools, colleges and universities as well as the establishments for adult education, background upgrading and rehabilitation, including education for invalids. The development of democracy, access to higher education, new role of universities in accordance with the Hamburg (1997) and Paris (1998) Declarations also are on the agenda. It has already taken into consideration in the draft of the Law on Higher Education.

Everything mentioned above and dynamic of the social and economic development of the Republic of Belarus and European Region show that any long period plan should be a point of permanent Government's and civil society's attention. Such plans should be in the non-stop process of correction facing new trends in the world education system development, appearance of new approaches and research results as well as economic situation that defines the speed and effectiveness of any reform. Just evolutionary approach to the national plan of actions in the best way meets the Dakar aims and goals and national interests of the Republic of Belarus.

LIST OF ACTIONS

#	Action	Term	Executive Body
1	2	3	4
1	Transition to 10-year basic school	1998-2008	ME, NIE
2	Research project "The State of the Secondary Education in Ecology Unfavorable Regions"	2002-2003	ME, NIE
3	Drafting the national wide program of school teachers development for new secondary education system	2002	APE, BSPU
4	Arrangement of a new system of statistic in education	2003	CAC, NIE
5	Annual national conferences on the state of every level of education	Since 2001	ME
6	Lobbying the draft of the Law on Education	2001	ME
7	Renewing the regulation of secondary school	Since 2001	ME
8	Preparing and printing the guides for school teachers	Since 2001	APE, Regional and Minsk Institutes for teachers development
9	Quantitative and quality analysis of school teachers	2003, 2009	APE
10	Analysis of functional literacy of school staff	2004, 2009	APE
11	Preparing of National report	2009	ME, National UNESCO Commission, National coordinator
12	Organization and holding of the seminars on national report preparation	2008, 2009	ME, National coordinator
13	Preparing of the monograph "Basic Education in Belarus"	2008-2009	ME, National coordinator
14	Lobbying the draft of the Law on Higher Education	2001-2003	ME, NIHE
15	Establishment of the National Forum on	2002	ME,

	Education for All (NFEA)		
16	Renewing the National Plan of Actions	Annually	NFEA, National coordinator
17	Holding a special Board of Ministry of Education dedicated to the problems of general education	Annually	ME, National coordinator
18	Establishment of a special bulletin on the education for all	2002	ME, National coordinator
19	Elaboration of the national concept “Education – for All”	2003	NFEA
20	Elaboration of the regional programs of development of the network of educational establishments	2000-2001	ME, Regional and Minsk city administrations
21	Elaboration of a national wide program on computerization of study process	2001	ME
22	Drafting the Law on State Support of Family Rest and Sanitation	2002	ME, Ministry of Healthcare, Republic Center for Sanitation and Resorts
23	Drafting the Law on textbook printing	2002	ME, National Center for Law Drafting
24	Drafting the Code of Education	2003	ME, National Center for Law Drafting
25	Drafting the Law on special education	2002	National Center for Law Drafting, Regional and Minsk city Administrations
26	Development of computer base of regulation in education	2001	ME
27	Elaboration and implementation of the system of standards for the system of conformity	2001-2005	ME, Belarusian State University, Republic Inspection for the System of Education
28	Development of the educational standards for the senior stage of secondary school	2001-2002	ME
29	Elaboration of the educational standards for children with disabilities	2004	ME
30	Elaboration and implementation of the system of standards for the system of secondary professional education	2000-2005	ME
31	Renewing the basic standards of the System of Standards for the Sphere of Education	2003-2005	ME, Republic Inspection for the System of Education
32	Development of the second generation of the system of standards for all the stages of education under creation of the national system of quality assurance	2005-2010	ME, Belarusian State University, Republic Inspection for the System of Education
33	Continuation and support of the national wide and branch programs: Teacher; Staff; Foreign Languages; Informatization in the System of Education; Rural School; Textbook; Textbooks for	1999-2010	ME, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Labour,

	University Students; Children of Chernobyl; Invalid Children		Regional and Minsk City administrations
34	Total involving of 5 years old children in school preparatory system	2005	ME, Regional and Minsk City administrations
35	Completion transformation of primary school to new system	2002	ME, Regional and Minsk City administrations
36	Completion transformation of basic school to new system	Since 2002	ME, Regional and Minsk City administrations
37	Completion transformation of senior secondary school to new system	Since 2008	ME, Regional and Minsk City administrations
38	Transformation of all the stages of special school to new content of education	2000-2012	ME, Regional and Minsk City administrations
39	Development of service for persons with disabilities in conventional educational establishments	2003-2010	ME, Regional and Minsk City administrations
40	Development of new kind educational establishments	2003-2010	ME, Regional and Minsk City administrations
41	Experimental implementation of 10-grade system of pupils	1999-2001	ME, Regional and Minsk City administrations
42	Creation of a system of distant learning	2000-2010	ME, BSU
43	Elaboration of the models of educational establishments of new kind	2000-2003	ME
44	Design and implementation of expert and teaching system for analysis of textbooks and training in intensive methods of information perception	2000-2005	ME, BSU, State Committee for Research and Technology
45	Implementation of the test system for every stage of education	1999-2010	ME, BSU
46	Development of the system of quality assurance and monitoring in education	2001	ME
47	Involving of stakeholders in enrolling planning and actions of quality assurance (accreditation)	2001	ME, Republic Inspection for the system of education
48	Creation of the system execution of the system of conformity	2003-2005	ME, State Committee for Standards, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Labor
49	Development of the system of quality assurance based on the educational standards	2005-2007	ME, BSU
50	Creation of the support of educational innovations system	2007-2010	ME, Regional and Minsk City administrations
51	Actions for support of the system of rural and contaminated area teachers development	2000-2005	ME
52	Completion of shaping of the system of training and development of school teaching staff	2005-2010	ME, Regional and Minsk City administrations
53	Creation of the manufacturing system for high-tech equipment	2000-2005	ME, State Committee for Research and

			Technology
54	Completion of the computer and information network of the system of education	2001-2005	ME

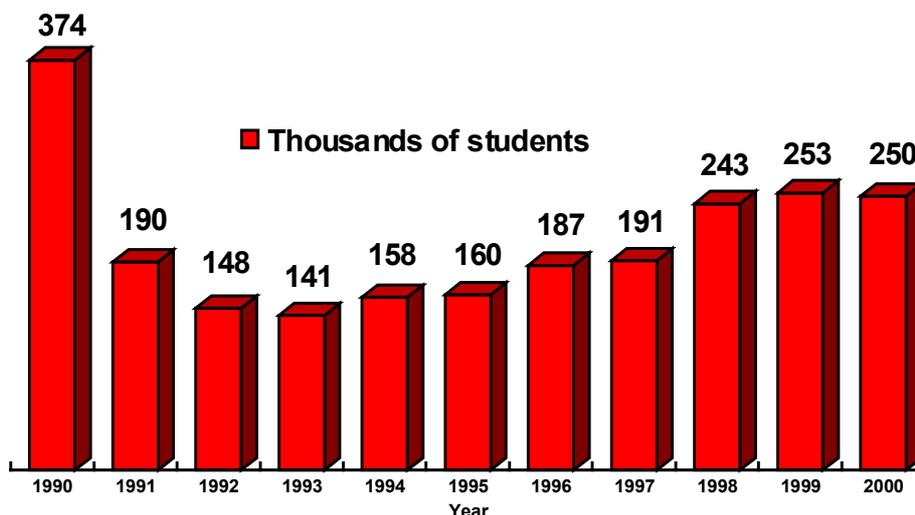
APE – Academy of Postgraduate Education,
 BSPU – Belarusian State Pedagogical University,
 BSU – Belarusian State University,
 CAC – Computer Analytical Center,
 ME – Ministry of Education,
 NFEA – National Forum “Education for All”,
 NIE – National Institute of Education,
 NIHE – National Institute for Higher Education

ADULT EDUCATION AND UNIVERSITIES

Hamburg Declaration adopted by the V World Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA-V) outlined that adult education is among the main human rights and even more. This is a key for XXI century. Indeed, fast change in technologies requires permanent upgrade of everybody skill and background in his/her traditional area or effective switch the activity in a different sphere that could be more promising. To save advanced position in the world market and provide prosperity of people a lot of countries reviewed national policy in the field of adult education.

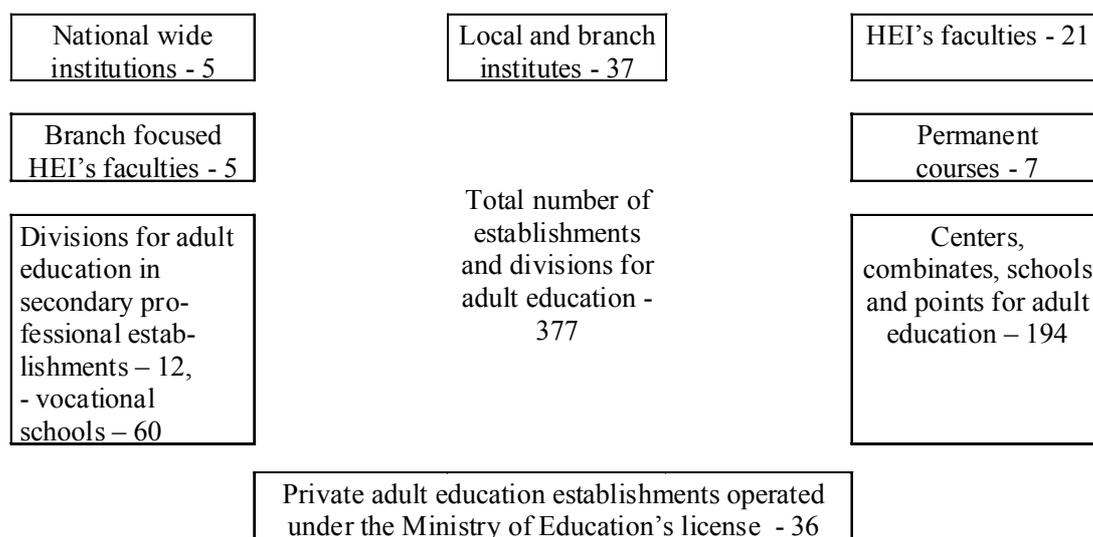
This sector of national education system of Belarus was dramatically renewed during a few recent years due to implementation of new technologies and structural reform of the national economy in favour to market and legislative regulation instead of former administrative governance and hard state planning. This process requires a lot of specialists in management, finance, foreign languages and legislation with higher education mainly. Also, all the engineering programs of HEIs and secondary professional establishments were adopted for new market and technological conditions. The admission was rapidly increased as it was shown above. Professional education became attractive for the population cohort who ignored the background upgrade earlier and involved high percentage of working adults. The educational demands demonstrate the growth even in school teacher training due to government decision to supply every school with a professional psychologist and social worker.

The spring 2001 Collegium of Ministry of Education stressed the importance of adult education development. It was found the positive trend in this direction after 1993 that demonstrated raise of the student number in this system. Figure 9 demonstrates this process during the last decade.



During that period 70 new establishments and university divisions for adult education were opened. There were 36 private units among them. The structure of the national system of adult education at the beginning of 2001 is shown on the figure.

STRUCTURE OF THE NATIONAL SYSTEM OF ADULT EDUCATION IN BELARUS



onomy, social sphere and administration the are 50-70% of staff need to be retrained to know new methods and technology. Moreover, the dominating public establishments work to meet the branch ministries demands mainly and the needs of population are out of their scope. That situation is about to be satisfactory for the traditional industry but it is not focused enough advanced technologies and methods of managements. Hence, the majority of people is not ready to accept the world achievements and new communication means that brakes the progress and leaves the country in the near crisis state.

Obviously, to overcome the difficulty it is necessary to reform the management of the adult education system that should meet the demands of the labor market. New flexible system will take into account the following features of the nowadays stage of the national development:

- step by step replacement of administrative methods in favor to market,
- co-existence for a long period of the centralized and market governance,
- necessity of stimulation of new market structures which are forced to act within the environment of the old regulation and the partners that belong to the old system,
- need of use within an establishment two mentioned methods of management in different activities like production, social security, supply and sale.

Hence, teaching in advanced management of production and human resources, marketing, advertisement should be among the priorities of the adult education. That includes the primary study of basic legislation, ecology, human rights and so on to provide shaping of the civil society supplied with all the democracy institutions and

socially oriented economy. The leaders are the first line client to improve their background because just the leaders define the speed and effectiveness of total reform.

This problem is under solution in Academy of Management at the President Administration that serves for all the branches and different national wide and regional institutions of adult education. It is possible to title National Institute for Higher Education that serves primary for academic staff, Academy of Post Diploma Education focused to school administration and Republic Institute of Professional Education that is for the staff of vocational schools and secondary professional establishments training.

According to the mentioned above Hamburg declaration the right of life long education is of primary value. This statement includes the rights to ask questions, to have the access to information resources, to upgrade background, competence and skill, for independent analyze any situation.

Realization of that right is a difficult problem for Belarus because the solution of it requires preliminary transformation of the country and community into the civil society where the practice of constrain is replaced with culture of peace, recognition and tolerance of different person opinion. That is able to provide the system with community with forms of education variety and ensure the ability of life long education for everybody in accordance with the personal ability and requirements to find a merited position in the changing world and face it challenges.

Figure 10 demonstrates the presence of some variety in Belarusian system of adult education. The right for education is among the major articles of the Constitution. The section on adult education is introduced in the draft of new text of the Law on Education. But the total democratic reform of Belarusian society has not finished yet.

The ways and principals of achievement of the right are the subject of the close partner actions of governmental, international and non government organizations and bodies as well as employers, trade unions, universities and research centers, mass media and the population itself. The problem was on the agendas of the world conferences in Jomtien (1990), Rio de Janeiro (1992), Vienna (1993), Cairo (1994), Hamburg (1997), Paris (1998), Dakar (2000) and Geneva (2001) as well as European forums in Bologna (1999), Salamanca (2000) and Prague (2001). The report of Jaque Delorm's Commission on education in XXI century prepared by the order of UNESCO named the main stream lines for national systems of higher education development and especially stressed the new role of universities in adult education.

STANDARDS AS A COMPONENT OF THE STATE POLICY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

GENERAL CONSIDERATION

The State policy in higher education concerns the problems of content and quality, financing, governance, autonomy, academic freedoms, status and working conditions of students and staff, diversification, research, accreditation and etc. These problems are the subject of the State and public control by legislation, regulation and governmental executive bodies activity. The State has its responsibility to citizens to uphold a certain minimum level of quality in the higher education system. This provision implies a conceptual understanding that indeed it is only the participants in the higher education system who can be the real guarantors of quality but they operate under generally recognized rules and control. It is their privilege and responsibility to do so. Thus, the State by the authorized bodies makes the rules and principals of

national policy and it leaves the execution of this policy for HEIs and academic community.

Being outside the scope of compulsory education, higher education has a different type of relationship with the State that has its legal and political obligations to ensure citizens' basic right for education and provide the country with educated citizens who are informed and able to obtain new knowledge and equal opportunities in national development. To reach these aims the government receives and allocates the national funds and monitors how the fund receivers meet the actual rules. In higher education this process is not too simple because the State should take into account autonomy or self-regulation, academic freedoms of research, expression, teaching and learning that are the main rights of universities, academic and student communities. Nevertheless, the State remains the primary source of funding, the most important employer of graduates and has an overall interest in the economic success of graduates and employees of the higher education system.

Under the current conditions in economy, some isolation of production and labor markets high quality and reputation of the higher education should be among the main priorities of the state policy. The system of higher education should meet new economical and political processes, new public conscience, especially that of new generation. The situation results in a combination of detailed input control of admission, curricula, academic staff qualification as well as strict output control through accreditation, attestation and different forms of certification and validation. Besides, the system should operate with respect to national culture, traditions, the understanding of current and strategic mission, aims and priorities. The main international processes in the field of higher education are to be taken into account for the most effective planning of the system development.

It is quite clear that it is impossible to switch such conservative systems from the former utterly administrative domain to the democratic methods of management and self-governance within only ten years of independence and democratic reforms. Some of the reasons are connected with the limited financial resource for the reconstruction and successful action in the previous period. Nevertheless, Belarus has already passed a long way of study and change that has resulted in new legislation and regulation. It is possible to say now that Belarus started to contribute to the general processes of higher education development in Europe. The national cultural features and traditions look quite promising within the context of enriching the higher school of Europe with new approaches and ideas.

There is the system of state standards and state regulation among the main features of any CIS's higher education system. This system is an important part of the State policy in education. So, an educational standard is a State instrument. And the State focuses mission of the universities by means of this instrument on the certain goal that combines administrative governance with labor market. No doubt, the government persecutes the very important goal to make the national system of education better, to provide industry with perfect specialists, to avoid lowering the level of knowledge, to guarantee quality education. Hence, the State saves the current period the role in steering of the national higher education system within the framework of democracy and market economy development. During this period the State considers the state standards to be the necessity and as:

- the essential steering instrument of the State;
- a mean to ensure the principle of equality between students, between academics and between institutions;

- a safeguard against abuses of all kinds in higher education;
- an objective guarantee of quality.
At the same time the standards should
- provide a flexible response to market forces;
- leave enough freedom for the teachers to provoke the creative, bottom-up renewal of educational programs and curricula;
- assist a drive to greater efficiency in teaching;
- focus both government and institutions to the true strategic issues facing them.

AIMS OF THE STATE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Each State considers its national system of higher education as the main key factor for providing progress in economy and prosperity for people. So, the creation and support of effective higher education system is a part of the State policy. The State provides this system with privacy, funding, prestige and social security of staff and students. The State creates conditions for the recognition of national qualifications awarded by higher education establishments abroad. However, the State is not a philanthropic organization but it is responsible for public funds spend. This results in the State system of quality assurance that combines the elements of public and administrative control. Obviously, such a system is effective if it acts under clear and commonly accepted rules.

According to this approach the State provides this system with a kit of standards that indicate the State requirements to higher education establishments, knowledge and skill level of the HEIs' students. The State also defines the mechanism of evaluation and executes this. Then, the State makes its decision on results and recognition. The Republic Inspection of the Educational Establishments is the appropriate State agent.

This method of management contains a few components of the former administrative system but in fact it is absolutely different. The difference is in new mission and aim of the State in higher education as well as in transparent, understandable and equal for all the participants rules of evaluation. First of all the Republic of Belarus proclaims the human mission of higher education. The mission is based on the human rights, the principles of university autonomy and academic freedoms. In general the mission implies the development of nation as a political, economic, social and cultural process that is directed to public and everybody prosperity on the basis of their constructive, free and permanent participation in the process.

According to this mission higher education has the following aims (the list below indicates the summarized position of different countries where the issue is included and if it does not contradict position of each country):

- satisfaction of the educational requirements of population,
- preparation of the population to act in changeable situation at the labor market and supply economy with specialists,
- research and design,
- dissemination and popularization of knowledge,
- support of economic, cultural and social development of a local region.

The mission and the aims really limit the administrative function of the State and give more freedom to higher education institution as well as more obligations. It results from step by step process of power transmission from the State to the institutions of higher education and their more independence. This can be seen in diversification of funding resources, development of non-public sector in higher education, participation of academics in the state decision making and etc. Now, the HEIs themselves approve the admission rules, adopt the internal regulation, structure, content of courses and methods of teaching. They are free in topic of research choice, fund rising, international relations and publishing of research books and guidebooks. Even national regulation drafting is now a business of universities. But the Government holds the right of the final signature under any document that is targeted to the national education system management and executes the State policy in this field through such documents.

It is possible to list some nowadays features of higher education governance in Belarus that reflect the political role of the State. First of all, the system of governance is strong centralized with the powerful Ministry of Education that acts by legislation, developed state regulation and funding.

The state regulation including the state system of educational standards is the main tool that is to use resources of higher education organizations effectively. This concerns financial as well as human resources and activities. The State implements its education policy through this regulation that refers also to procedures, documents and decision making. The current problem of that bilateral process efficiency is dealt with an environment of rapid and sustainable growth of the system.

Strong governance includes hard rules of the fund allocation. That concerns current expenditures, salaries, research and scholarships. It is clear that too strong rules face the principles of university autonomy and the rules will be changed in the nearest future in accordance with the general process of democratization in the country and university staff development for action within market economy. The excessive state regulation will be canceled too. The important step along this way seems to be the new text of the Law on Education that is under consideration in Parliament now.

TRANSFORMATION OF THE POLICY ROLE OF THE STATE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

According to mentioned above the policy role of the State in Belarus is aimed to acceleration of democracy development in the national system of higher education. Because of stable economic development during recent years the State will ready to share its power with universities on benefit of last ones. More trust to institutions of higher education will initiate more democracy in their internal governance and make the system meet all the human rights. It could be also possible to offer the strengthening of the financial support of the higher education system from the state budget to save and develop the universities' facilities in instructional and research equipment, to protect the buildings from slow destruction and to hold the high level of quality in education. It is also necessary to make the work in universities more attractive and prestige for young generation, for example in accordance with the UNESCO Recommendation «Concerning the Status of higher Education Teaching Personnel» of 11/11/97 that concerns in particular the security of employment and appraisal of teaching staff.

These steps should be made in accordance with the national legislation that is to be supported by a system provisions which are consistent with a democratic society and

which support the fundamental rights and freedoms of the institutions, their staff and students. The mentioned above draft of the general law on education seems to be too brief to cover all the problems of higher education system. It is clear necessarily to make the next step to Have a specific and more detailed law. No doubt, any blanket ban in the legislation is a serious broach of basic and fundamental rights. That bans are to be found enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. In the current situation it would be wise to ensure that at every point in the law where public bodies take decisions with specific consequences for individuals or institutions (like accreditation, admissions or expulsions, employment or termination of employment, promotions, etc.) that a mechanism or procedure for making appeals of those decisions be included in the law. This type of provisions will ensure that all participants and stakeholders in higher education are protected from arbitrary or unfair decisions.

Every act of regulation issued by not parliament bodies must be in absolute correspondence and notwithstanding the letter of the law and contribute to the national regulation being also linked with the demands concerned different branches. Such regulation must always be proportionate to the common good and must be exercised by the authorities in a manner that is reasonable and fair and based on a proper balance between the rights and duties of all concerned. These principal is actual for the governance of Belarusian education now and will be accurate executed in future.

Sharing the power between the State and universities involves the responsibility as a concept of regulation. Obviously, more rights attract more responsibility. In this way Belarusian HEIs are considered to be accountable to students, employees, the community served by the institution and public generally for the effective exercise of their functions and the effective use of public resources. This accountability is shared with the State that results in the effective system of quality assurance in every establishment of higher education and in the whole system.

The next direction of transforming state policy in higher education is to be dealt with international recognition of the qualifications awarded by HEIs. This means joining the international conventions like of the most important for the region Lisbon one of 1997 that will be made soon this year but also implementing of upgraded structure and content of higher education with transparent and available for everybody rules. This will afford academic and specialist mobility over the borders that enrich every country with new experience in science, research, design and technologies. Nevertheless, the connected problem of franchise and international education is very acute. That concerns also distant learning education. Recently the ENIC network adopted the recommendation for such qualifications recognition after about 10 years of discussions but the national procedures have not appeared yet. Anyway, recognition of the certificates should be on the base of national legislation and intergovernmental agreements and in the correspondence with respect to present national, foreign or international accreditation.

A few problems should be solved for access and admission to the HEIs. The policy role of the State in this problem is to provide the right for everybody by the legal means that should be included in the national legislation. Regarding the right of every university to select students among the applicants the State through the Ministry of Education must have a position of regulation interpreter but not a charge. That issue should to be a subject of permanent attention of the State as a process of basic human right execution proclaimed by General Assembly of UN on December 10, 1948 in Universal Declaration of Human Rights (art. 26). At the same moment admission is an

input control of the quality assurance system of a university and in the nation wide scale.

The output control of quality is the greatest care of public and government. Former stick holder should be satisfied with real qualifications that are demanded at the labor market. The second one seems to be a self-seeker in more stage than individuals are in the country. This is due to large public sector in economy. Because this situation is changing very slowly the government interest should be protected in the most effective way. The developed system of the State standards will become among the most important components of the protecting shield. But the system of accreditation is of more value because the standards are a part of it only and they play a role of samples for comparison. Moreover, accreditation is a measure of executed responsibility of a higher education establishment. Process of accreditation could include a number of the state examinations that are within the traditions in the region or such exams are the subject of a special session. There is a reason to think that successfully passed state examination confirms meet of quality of education with state standards.

THE ROLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM ENVIRONMENT

Higher education system of Belarus is now faced with a new set of social roles and responsibilities, a diverse of student cohort, changing demands from both students and society, declining resources and appearance of private sector. These changes together compose a fundamentally new set of challenges to higher education system.

This new environment immediately came in the conflict with traditional public opinion that considers the higher education system as a source of professionals - engineers, doctors, teachers, layers and etc. Society expects higher education to respond to traditional demands for instruction and research. But now this system is responsible to provide the state with the political and social lawyers to guide the new nation, the educated citizenship needed for economic development and democracy as well as to give an opportunity for every individual to pursue his or her goals. Nowadays the system is expected to prepare the next generation of citizens to live in a new world where human capital is a product of higher education that is clearly becoming the main motor for economical growth and public wealth.

Belarusian HEIs are not the passive recipients of external forces. They strive to modify or influence public perceptions and expectations of higher education. They also try to increase the resources by diverting the sources and using payable education serves. The institutions of higher education also attempt to make better use of their resources through increased efficiency.

COMPONENTS OF THE QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM

National system of quality assurance in higher education is a subject of the State policy in Belarus where the government is responsible for elaboration of the basic principles of this system action and its regulation development as well as for the content of education and skill level of graduated students who are awarded with a certain qualification. The State realizes its responsibility through legislation, rules, state standards (here and below they mean standards of content) and funding.

Regulation in the area of higher education becomes in Belarus enough completed and met the main democratic expectations of the community. The system of the State educational standards for higher education functions in Belarus since 1999. These standards were elaborated by the academic community of HEIs and then they were

adopted by Ministry of Education as the samples of knowledge and skill level. Now all the curricula have already been renewed in accordance with the requirements of the standards. This provided the common educational area on all the territory of the republic and equal demands for all the participants of the national system of education. The standards also became the important tool for quality evaluation.

Evaluation of higher education establishments is a very important part of a national system of quality assurance. Evaluation includes three stages. They are licensing, attestation and accreditation. Licensing means the permission to somebody to act as a new higher education establishment. Such a permission issue is within the competence of Ministry of Education. Accreditation means the state recognition of the applicant as university academy or institute of higher education. Attestation concerns the state recognition of the programs run in a HEI. Accreditation and attestation are in responsibility of the mentioned earlier Republic Inspection for Educational Establishments.

There are more components in the national system of quality assurance. First of all there is the state system of academic staff evaluation that includes awarding with scientific degrees and titles and competitive process of their employment. The system of course tests includes a few state examinations and a diploma project defense both under the state evaluation commission. The commission is appointed by the Minister of Education and includes the best specialists from different institutions.

In general, the national quality assurance system activity exercises the following five principles:

1. responsibility for ensuring the highest level of quality in teaching and research lies with the higher education institutions, their staff and students. Thus, the institutions are encouraged or even required to undertake internal quality assurance systems,
2. every fresh higher education institution must meet minimum criteria of its capacity to fulfil their educational aim in order to receive a license from the State authorised body,
3. every higher education institution that wishes to deliver State recognised diplomas or which receives State subsidies must undergo a regular process of evaluation,
4. the process of the state accreditation leading to recognition by the State is comprised of self-assessment and external review, it guarantees objectivity and equity of its implementation,
5. all decisions taken by the public authorities leading to consequences for the institutions or programs may be appealed through an established objective procedure.

In addition it should be mentioned that accreditation and attestation are the voluntary acts even for public HEIs. Nevertheless, every Belarusian HEI has already passed the procedures to provide the students with the state recognized diploma, professional qualifications and academic degrees. That became even more actual due to rising the international mobility of students and graduated from HEIs persons who need the simplest procedure of their qualification recognition abroad. Just the state recognized qualifications meet this requirement by the European ENIC network.

To meet the criteria of accreditation and attestation a HEI should have the internal system of quality assurance. Such a system is to be devised by the institution itself. It provides periodic evaluation of each department of the institution. Evaluation procedures should be conducted by the staff of the institution and should also provide for evaluation by people who are capable of making national and international comparisons on teaching, research and the other activities of the institution. The procedures should include evaluation by the students. The results of evaluations

should be published. The evaluation procedures themselves should be subject to periodic review to establish if they meet their objectives. The internal quality assurance system of institutions should be connected to the periodic external assessments of the accreditation process.

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