BELARUS

Inclusive Education: The way of the future
Third Workshop of the IBE Community of Practice, Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)

Minsk, Belarus, 29 – 31 October 2007
EXPERIENCE AND PERSPECTIVES OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT IN THE FIELD OF BELARUS COMPREHENSIVE SECONDARY EDUCATION

In accordance with the approved conceptual programmes and legal acts, the development of comprehensive education is aimed at positive changes conditioned by the priorities of state educational policy.

Currently, at all levels of education goals shift to the promotion of educational components concerning universal values; strategies and tactics are being changed to implement activities aimed at the creation of optimal conditions for meeting a person’s, society’s and state’s requirements for quality education; preparation of new generations for life and labour in a civil society with stable, socially-oriented market economy.

It should be noted that the main goal of the development of the national education system, connected with the creation of conditions for meeting a person’s needs in quality education, completely coincides with the basic characteristics of inclusive education, which is understood as education which gives every person equal rights to be involved in a holistic educational process and guarantees equal opportunities for socialization.

We can state assuredly, that “inclusion” or involvement in educational process of children and youths, targeted at meeting needs in quality education based on individual characteristics and capacities, is not a novelty for our country.

All children irrespective of their social, ethnic, psychophysical, emotional and behavioural peculiarities, state of health and intellectual differences are engaged in the process of education. At the same time the national system of education presupposes purposeful work with various groups of students:

• gifted and talented children;
• children with learning difficulty;
• children with health problems
• children with psychophysical peculiarities;
• children with behavioural disturbances and deviant conduct;
• children from ethnic minorities;
• children from families with a low social-economic status.

So, there are two simultaneous processes: implementation of an integration approach and promotion of special forms of education, social organizations and associations, including some types and forms of in- and out-of-school educational foundations. On the one hand, it guarantees an individual approach to children from the above groups in the process of education and instruction; and on the other hand, it gives a chance to involve them all in a holistic process of education and instruction at the national education system’s level.

As for the normative framework, equal access to free comprehensive education as well as creation of conditions for getting education based on national traditions, students’ individual needs, demands and capacities including people with psychophysical peculiarities, are stipulated: in the Constitution of the Republic of Belarus, basic Act of the Republic of Belarus on Education in the Republic of Belarus, Act On Comprehensive Education, Act On Education of People with Psychophysical Peculiarities (special education) and other legal acts regulating the system’s work and development.

Organizational framework for the state policy in the field of comprehensive education heading for achievement of strategic goals and implementation of priority issues aimed at complex development of educational foundations, environment and processes, and coordination of activities to create and improve developmental and developing educational space of comprehensive education as a holistic system, is based on the Governmental Programme for Comprehensive Education Development for the period 2007-2016, which was adopted in 2007.

We will show the implementation of inclusive education and its strategies in respect of the mentioned groups of children and youths, as there is a diversity of approaches, models, forms and
variants of involvement of Belarusian children and youths in an educational process and social programmes at the level of the national education system in general and comprehensive in particular.

It is important to mention that Belarus met the XXI century with the developed system of education. The rates of adult literacy (97%), youth literacy (aged 15-24) (99.8%), the number of children involved in primary education (94%) prove this fact.

The level of education, which is a complex index of adult literacy factor and the percentage of students attending educational foundation, brings Belarus to one of the leading places among CIS countries (the factor is 0.95).

There are 4,135 pre-school establishments in Belarus. They are: kindergartens (868), daycare centres (2336), day nursery (6), kindergarten-schools (855), centers for child’s development (70). There are also such new forms of pre-school education as seasonal and play grounds, short-duration groups, groups that include children of different age, child-care groups, family kindergartens (home kindergarten). In 2006-2007 more than 100 such new forms were introduced. The percentage of children involved in pre-school education is 82.3% (92.5% in urban areas, 53% in rural areas). Pre-school establishments are attended by 366,000 children. Moreover, 41.3% of pre-school establishments work in Belarusian, 53.3% - in Russian and 5.3% - in 2 and more languages.

Educational process is built in accordance with the State complex programme Praleska. In addition, every pre-school foundation provides with extra education services (esthetics, sport, language study groups and others). They are 6,248 and attended by more than 103 thousand children. Preschoolers interested and talented in some particular field (music, arts, etc.) have an opportunity to attend child development centres. They are more than 12,100 children.

Children with psychophysical disorders are engaged in the educational process of mainstream pre-school foundations, family kindergartens, kindergartens with extended care facilities, child-care groups, and home schooling. More than 720 children are educated and instructed in integrated groups. 22,894 children are supervised by a correctional-pedagogical service. For some categories of children including those with special needs (4062) there are 47 specialized pre-school foundations, but home schooling is also at use.

The experience of education and instruction of children based on individual plans is found positive and perspective, as well as introduction of new educative teacher’s guidelines, teaching aids, developmental games and toys; promotion of a health-improvement dimension of the educational process; development of home-education services (tutors, family pedagogues), etc.

The system of comprehensive education comprises 3,893 educational foundations (if compared with 2005 their number reduced by 113), and they are attended by more than 1,145,000 students. All conditions are created to educate all children of school age taking into consideration their individual abilities, capacities, educational needs, and parents’ requirements. Academic subjects are studied at three levels (basic, intermediate and advanced) in 165 gymnasia, 36 lyceums, 6 educative complexes function. There are 1600 mainstream educational foundations with advanced study of some subjects, 91 schools with the advanced study of a foreign language. About 22% of all students are taught in Belarusian, 76% - in Russian. In 159 mainstream schools in 2006 more than 7100 students studied languages of ethnic minorities such as: Polish was studied by 6700 students; Jewish by 305 students; Ukrainian by 46 students and Lithuanian by 40 students.

More than 2400 mainstream schools have profile classes and 640 classes focus on studying arts (music, drawing, choreography, dramatic art, folk dramatic art, etc.). There are also evening schools, boarding schools, sports schools, extended-day classes, classes that focus on studying special sport-oriented subjects and an advanced training process. A network of educative complexes “kindergarten-school” is being developed. At the present moment they are more than 850. And 96.8% of them are in rural areas.

Besides, 350,000 children and youths attend 360 out-of-school educational foundations which meet children’s needs and demands not only in creative expression, but also in moral, intellectual and physical development, vocational guidance and health improvement.

In accordance with the adopted Programme of Comprehensive Education Development the education system is aimed at the creation of high-technology learning environment in mainstream foundations, including progressive complex equipment of all educational foundations with up-to-date learning materials; creation of information resource centres combined with media libraries at the premises of school libraries. By 2016 52 gymnasia, 17 lyceums, 231 of educative complexes will start working and 89 new schools will have been built, etc.
1. Work with gifted and talented children and students

In Belarus activities aimed at detection, involvement, education, development and support of gifted and talented children and youths are one of the priority issues in state educational policy.

Since 1996 the Special Fund of the President of the Republic of Belarus has been functioning. It focuses on social support of talented students. A complex of measures targeted at creation and development of a holistic system of work with such children and youths functioned from 1996 till 2005 in the framework of the programme Gifted Children.

For the period 2006-2010 the State programme Young Talents of Belarus was approved by a presidential decree. This programme is coordinated and implemented by the Ministry of Education in close collaboration with other ministries and departments, the National Academy of Sciences, State Committee for Science and Technology, National Broadcasting Company and other republican public authorities, executive and administrative powers, public associations.

Main tendencies in the Programme’s implementation are:

- development of legislation concerning state policy aimed at support of gifted children and youths;
- development of an educational network aimed at work with gifted children and youths;
- promotion of methodological and staff provision for work with gifted children and youths;
- creation of conditions for involvement of gifted children and youths in intellectual and creative activities, and graduates – in scientific, administrative and other professional work;
- development of in-service training system for teachers working with gifted children and youths;
- development of mechanisms of state support and social protection of gifted children and youths;
- development of international cooperation in the field of work with gifted children and youths;
- information support of the system of work with gifted children and youths.

Let’s give a short description of some dimensions of the Programme concerning comprehensive education, including pre-school one.

Development of an educational network aimed at work with gifted children and youths:

- development of the network of pre-school educational centres for child’s development – one centre opens yearly in every region;
- progressive building and opening of gymnasia and lyceums (according to the Programme of Comprehensive Education Development);
- progressive building and opening of 60 affiliations of regional (town) out-of-school establishments on the premises of mainstream schools, including rural areas;
- introduction of classes with advanced study of arts, esthetics and sports-oriented academic subjects;
- implementation of individualization and differentiation of education through classes with advanced study of some academic subjects;
- implementation of the idea, measures and activities aimed at organization and implementation of systematic vocational and pre-profile training of students of grades 5-10;
- promotion of profile education at the upper level of secondary education in accordance with students’ educational needs and requirements, educational foundations’ capacities and the demands of the labour market and education services;
- progressive promotion of the network of study groups/ circles, sections, studios and other forms of work with students in pre-school and comprehensive educational foundations.

Methodological and staff provision for work with gifted children and youths:

- elaboration in the framework of scientific research work psycho-pedagogical basics for detection and development of general and special faculties of gifted children, methodologies for their detection, educational and methodological provision for their development, socialization and adaptation;
- forming a database and implementation of gifted youths’ career development monitoring;
- giving theoretical grounds and elaboration in the framework of scientific research work of new developmental games and toys for preschoolers and primary school children;
• elaboration and introduction of curriculum in all educational and subject areas for organization and implementation of optional classes and free electives in accordance with chief tendencies and goals of vocational guidance in comprehensive education;
• introduction of the Republican School of Correspondence Education in mathematics, physics, chemistry, informatics and other subjects under the Academy of post-diploma education for students from rural and remote schools;
• preparation and issuing of a popular science journal Focus for gifted students focusing on all subjects of the curriculum;
• forming a database and guaranteeing distribution of innovative pedagogical experience of work with gifted and talented children and youths, etc.

Creation of conditions for involvement of gifted children and youths in intellectual and creative activities:
• forming a computer database of gifted children and youths;
• organization and carrying out of annual school, district, city, regional and republican Olympiads in general subjects among students;
• organization and carrying out of tournaments, contests and research work, conferences in various academic subjects at school, area, city, regional and republican levels;
• organization of scientific research work in summer schools for students;
• organization and carrying out of tournaments, contests and exhibitions in the field of children’s creative work, tourist, excursion and ecology-biology activities;
• organization and carrying out of festivals, contests, art saloons and exhibitions of decorative and applied arts;
• organization and carrying out of profile rallies for gifted children and youths at the premises of summer camp Zubrenok aimed at assistance in preparation for international Olympiads, contests and tournaments in general subjects;
• organization of profile work at sport and health-oriented centres for specialized sport-oriented educational foundations for gifted children and youths, etc.

Improvement of state support and social protection mechanism of gifted children and youths:
• financing programmes and activities aimed at stimulating intellectual and creative activities of students in the field of education and science;
• awarding students who won international scientific research conferences, festivals, exhibitions, contests and Olympiads with stipends (40-55 minimum wages) and a badge Laureate of the Special Fund of President of the Republic of Belarus for Social Support of Gifted Students;
• awarding students, teachers, young activists in the field of culture and arts, as well as groups who won international scientific research conferences, festivals, exhibitions, contests and Olympiads with stipends (40-55 minimum wages) and a badge Laureate of the Special Fund of President of the Republic of Belarus for Social Support of Gifted Students;
• awarding winners of republican Olympiads, conferences, contests and tournaments (every year 20-300 students get stipends from 4 to 7 minimum wages);
• awarding students with high creative results;
• financial backing of students with high results in humanities, natural sciences, sport, creative work, as well as of educational foundations working with gifted children and youths;
• awarding teachers and tutors with achievements in work with gifted children and youths and who contributed to elaboration of modern methodologies in gifted students' faculties development, etc.

Supplemental information.
There is a database of gifted children in the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Belarus which includes more than 11,000 students who got stipends and financial support from the Special Fund of President of the Republic of Belarus for Social Support of Gifted Students. Among them there are more than 3000 students from comprehensive schools. Participating in international Olympiads as an independent team (for instance, from 1990 till 2005) 262 Belarusian students were awarded with medals. In particular, from 1998 till 2005 149 Belarusians won international Olympiads. 29 of them were twice champions and 4 people became champions 3 times.
From year to year the number of participants of Republican Olympiads grows, involving students from rural areas. In 2006 the Republican Olympiad was carried out in 16 academic subjects. And 685 students became winners of the final stage.

Yearly our students take part in Mendeleyev International Olympiad. In 2006 6 participants of our team won one gold, four silver and a bronze medal. Our students were a success in the international Olympiad of CIS and Baltic countries in the Russian language and literature; as well as in the Olympiad of CIS and Baltic countries in the Russian language and literature, mathematics, physics, chemistry, and biology among students of 9-10th grades; in the Olympiad for students of the Union State Russia and Belarus: Historic and Spiritual Unity (32 out of 54 prize-winning places were taken by Belarusian students). Participants of the International Tournament of Young Physics won a bronze medal. Belarusian students take an active part in such international contests as Kangaroo (mathematics), Russkiy medvezhonok (Russian), Kolosok (natural history), etc.

More than 100,000 students are educated in classes with advance study of artistic and esthetic subjects. The number of such classes is increasing and in rural areas too. For those gifted students who have already made their vocational choice there are educative complexes “Gymnasium-college of arts” in Minsk, Mogilev, Bobruisk, Molodechno. In 2006-2007 academic year more than 172 thousand students attended classes with advance study of some subjects, more than 205,000 attended profile classes. More than 77% of senior pupils are covered by various forms of differentiated education (70.3% in remote areas). In 2004 there were only 62% of such students and 35.5% of them in remote areas.

For many years the Republic of Belarus is the venue for music, artistic, dramatic art festivals and other contests and exhibitions aimed at detection of talented children.

Pending last 10 years there is the Republican summer research school for students and teachers in Belarus. In 1993 at the initiative of Belarusian State University and L.Etvesh Budapest University the International Conference of Young Scientists, ICYS, in physics, mathematics, informatics, and ecology was established. This conference enjoys wide popularity not only in Europe but also in many other counties of the world.

It is not coincidence, that pupils and gifted students of the Republic of Belarus show a high level of schooling to the whole world. Talented Belarusian young people contribute greatly to the development of the national and world culture; promote consolidation of the country’s prestige on the world arena.

At the present moment in accordance with the chief objectives of the State Programme Young Talents of Belarus psycho-pedagogical basis, scientific methodologies for detection and development of gifted children's faculties, methods of their socialization and psychological adaptation, as well as criteria and rates of a complex diagnostics of children’s special aptitude for humanities and natural sciences, relevant guidelines, diagnostic and didactic materials (tests, quizzes, individual creative tasks, etc.) are being elaborated.

Comprehensive educational foundations and out-of-school centres are working at creation of a special learning environment, guaranteeing child’s involvement in various activities: intellectual, creative, artistic, psychomotor (sports), leadership (organizational), constructive, etc.

2. Work with students with learning difficulties

Speaking about this category of students we should first of all concentrate on the problems that cause learning difficulty and result in low outcomes in general. This category of students comprises those who do not have mental or psychomotor disturbances, but who do not cope with the demands of the curriculum and education standards in general or in corpore. According to a survey the number of such students can vary from 30 to 50% of all students.

As the problem is quite complicated and multifaceted, let’s have a look at some pedagogical approaches and methods that guarantee inclusion of students with learning difficulties in an educational process. These are difficulties connected with the awareness of goals and essence of a student’s activity, development of educational needs and motives, comprehension and awareness of the studied material’s value, etc.

The upgrading educational process broadens the concept itself, i.e., education shifts from a receptive-reflective to constructive-action approach. This process presupposes:

- to acknowledge student’s individuality (his/ her needs, motives, goals, faculties, activity, intellect and other individual psychological peculiarities) as capable of self-actualization, autonomous learning and self-regulation in methodological framework as a backbone factor of educational process’s organization;
• teachers and students are equal participants of education, and educational process allows for a student’s personal experience;
• detection of pedagogical conditions focuses on implementation of a holistic educational activity and establishment of a motivational basis;
• fundamental motives of education are self-actualization and autonomous learning that become values in themselves;
• the conception of the curriculum is rooted in a culturalogical approach which corresponds to the sets of humanistic thinking best of all;
• forming grounded knowledge, skills and activities is a condition for providing individual's competence in the unity of social, personal, educative, information, communicative and other competences;
• assessment activity is based on fundamental principles of personality-oriented education, culturalogical approach, personality pedagogy and aims at assessing a student’s progress and not his drawbacks, etc.

Taking into consideration the curriculum and the list of compulsory academic subjects we are implementing:
   three-level curriculum model which predetermines 3 course levels: basic, intermediate and advance;
   there are extra academic hours in the curriculum financed by the State for individual and group consultations, supporting and stimulating student learning as well as optional classes and free electives;
   the content of the curriculum, as defined in educational standards, syllabuses and teaching guidelines, is aimed at prevention and elimination of academic overload, and is specified and changed in accordance with such specific factors as:
   - shortening a complicated material without reduction of a theoretical level and educative functions of an academic subject;
   - overcoming descriptive approach to teaching material, shortening fact-based information, exclusion of the material of minor importance;
   - shift of a complicated theoretical material which does not carry a backbone function from the second to the third level of comprehensive education curriculum;
   - simplification of an action component of the curriculum at the 1st and 11th stages of comprehensive education, etc.;
   - practical orientation is achieved through increase in study of real objects, volume of practical tasks, their structuring, as well as textbooks’ ranking according to the levels of students’ academic work, etc.

3. Work with children who experience health problems

The main goal with respect to such children is creation of favourable, health-improving environment, aimed at providing children with necessary education services taking into consideration their individual level of health.

It is important to say that children’s health protection in the Republic is guaranteed by 400 children’s polyclinics, departments and consulting rooms, a range of children’s hospitals, children’s homes (more than 50 establishments) and a state system of sanatorium-and-spa treatment of children.

In the structure of children’s primary morbidity leading places are taken by diseases of respiratory apparatus, then infectious and parasitic diseases, next come nervous system and sense organs disorders which are followed by illnesses caused by accidents, traumas and poisoning; skin diseases, digestive apparatus disorders, etc. (according to the national report The State of Children in the Republic of Belarus, 2003).

Most widely spread morphofunctional deviations of upper secondary school students are habit scoliosis. Visual impairments are frequent, too. Unfortunately, cases of mental disorder and behavioural disturbance also take place.

Prophylactic medical examinations help see the level of children’s health in proper perspective.

Endocrine system diseases are chief weak points in areas contaminated by radionuclides. The sickness rate there is 20% higher than on average in the country. There is information about more than 328 thousand children and 87 thousand teenagers in the Republican database who suffered in the result of Chernobyl catastrophe.

In accordance with the Act of the Republic of Belarus On Social Protection of Citizens Who Suffered in the Result of Chernobyl Catastrophe practically all children living in the area subject to resettlement are involved in sanatorium-and-spa treatment at the state’s expense. Free meals are
arranged for students of comprehensive, professional and specialized secondary schools in the contaminated areas.

The state system of sanatorium-and-spa treatment for all categories of children and students is developing. More than 110 sanatoria and health resorts restore children’s health. There are Republican and regional centers.

**In the Republic there are:**
- children’s sanatoria;
- children’s rehabilitation and health centres;
- children’s sanatoria and health resorts;
- family sanatoria.

In the framework of the international humanitarian cooperation Belarusian children, especially those from contaminated areas, improve their health abroad (23), mostly in such countries as Italy, Germany, Spain, Ireland, Belgium, Great Britain, and the Netherlands.

Children from socially unprotected families improve their health abroad on a gratis basis.

Children with some diseases (scoliosis, decrement in visual acuity, etc.) after adequate medical treatment attend mainstream schools where they are subject to medical and psycho-pedagogical supervision; special conditions are created to maintain the results of corrective work.

There are 59 sanatoria, 826 pre-school foundations with extended care facilities groups in the Republic. A network of specialized groups at the premises of comprehensive pre-school foundations is widening, there are 671 sanatorium groups, 763 offices providing corrective pedagogic service, 185 integrated groups.

Collaboration of medical officers, specialists in the field of education, sport and tourism, information and other ministries and departments gave a chance to introduce a whole complex of innovative forms of work in educational process aimed at shaping a positive image of a healthy life-style (HLS): HLS Olympiads, theme discos-actions for youths, organization of clubs promoting HLS, implementation of the programme Health Leader, project Live a Healthy Life in educational foundations; organization of “health fairs” for school children.

Health organizations give methodological assistance to educational foundations while preparing and implementing educative events, programmes for moral and sexual education, maintenance of reproductive health of teenagers and youths. Much attention is paid to teacher training in modern health maintenance techniques. There are standing workshops for various categories of educational staff in regions. To provide information support 2,000 information-educative guidelines were issued.

A lot of activities are carried out to prevent smoking. WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control is ratified in the Republic, the plan for the Convention’s implementation is approved. Due to a complex of activities the amount of smokers has reduced. The highest percentage of those who decided to give up smoking is among 21-25-year-olds, it is 15.9%, which shows the effectiveness of the activities held.

Inclusive education is reflected in the subject Principles of Personal and Social Safety, studied by students of comprehensive educational foundations. These are such topics as: “Conflicts in Class, in the Street and at Home as the Way to Dangerous Situations”, where problems of children’s misevaluation in each other’s respect are revealed, especially concerning children with physical and health disorders, they also get experience how to protect psychological and physical health; “Legal Protection of Children and Teenagers”, which focuses on inauspicious and violent actions in families and children’s legal protection; “Conflicts with Friends as a Source of Dangerous Situations”, where problems of deviant behaviour towards peers especially those with physical and psychological disorders are brought up; “Everyone Protects the Family” attracts attention to psychological aspects of family protection, and overcoming children’s fears, stress and depression; “Personal Safety and Community” shows community’s possibilities to protect its members.

This range of problems allows to implement several goals of inclusive education – implementation of the rights of the child and elimination of discrimination on the basis of health, cultivation of socially vital skills that help children with health disorders make friends with their peers, establish relations based on mutual respect and understanding.

It should be noted that a complex of measures and actions aimed at improvement of a social status of various categories of children, creation of conditions for a full-fledged development, improvement of their social and legal protection is being implemented at the state’s level in the framework of the presidential programme Children of Belarus, which includes a whole range of
4. Work with children with psychomotor disturbances

Currently in the Republic of Belarus a new attitude to children with psychomotor disturbances is shaping. Their learning capability and equal access to education of all children are admitted. In 2004 Belarusian Act of great importance On Education of Children with Psychomotor Disturbances (special needs education) was adopted. This act guarantees children with psychomotor disturbances all necessary conditions for getting education, as well as their social adaptation and integration.

Such children can choose freely the form of education and according to the survey as of 15.09.2006 53.3% of school children with psychomotor disturbances study in 5357 integrated classes. 2,140 children attend 211 specialized classes at the premises of mainstream schools. Besides, more than 35,000 such children get aid in 2,000 offices of corrective pedagogic at the premises of mainstream schools and kindergartens.

In total there are 62 specialized boarding schools in Belarus. They are attended by 34.6% of all school children with psychomotor disturbances. For the last 5 years the number of integrated classes has increased by 2083, the number of specialized boarding schools has reduced by 13 (but at the same time the number of children with psychomotor disturbances has increased).

Integrated education is not spread administratively and is not compulsory or coercive, and of course it is not opposed to education in specialized schools.

It should be mentioned that on November 1-2, 2006 the problem of inclusive education of children with psychomotor disturbances was scrutinized thoroughly at a similar Regional Workshop which took place in our Institute under the aegis of UNESCO office in Moscow. It is pleasant that collected articles of the Workshop were issued.

4. Work with children with behavioural disturbances

This category of children comprises juvenile delinquents. It should be said that in Belarus juvenile delinquency has reduced by 20% for the last 10 years.

The number of crimes committed by teenagers has considerably reduced (from 10.4% to 7.8%) if compared with the total number of all investigated crimes. The number of juvenile delinquents has reduced, too (from 7,592 in 1997 to 6,061 in 2006).

In the structure of juvenile delinquency minor offence prevails (87.2%), grave crimes are committed by 7.7% of teenagers and felonies – by 2.8%. In 2006 the number of lawless juveniles has considerably reduced (by 19.5%), and the amount of group juvenile delinquencies has reduced by 5.4%.

The number of premeditated assaults causing grievous bodily harm is reducing(-13.6%), as well as the amount of brigandage (-20.8%), robbery (-17.0%), theft/ burglary (-11.5%), and hooliganism (-2.5%). Most juvenile delinquencies are still property-oriented. Despite reducing number of teenagers (by 9.5%) every fourth (and in Minsk every third) teenager committed crime cockeyed. In 2006 18,035 juveniles were registered in narcological dispensaries. In 2006 5,812 juveniles were convicted of crimes and it is by 10.6% more than in 2005 (5,245).

Surveys show that 50% of offenders are young people from socially disadvantaged or one-parent families, where child-parent relations were broken, and the teenagers who were acknowledged orphans and unparented.

To prevent juvenile delinquency experts from the Department of the Interior, Education, Culture and others regularly carry out:

- days of legal informing;
- hours of legal education;
- brain-rings, conferences and Olympiads in legal knowledge;
- lectures on legal subjects;
- preventative measures aimed at detecting adults drawing juveniles into drinking alcoholic beverages;
- days of preventative measures, weeks and decades of legal knowledge;
- engaging teenagers in sports activities and recreation.

Republican mass media also focus on legal informing. There are such programmes as:

BT – Zone X, Rescuers;
ONT – Prompt Chronicle;  
CTV – On Good Authority.

The same projects are implemented in all districts and regions.

To assume active educative measures towards juvenile delinquents there are special clubs Teenager and Friend aimed at work with “problem” teenagers at the premises of every town/ regional department/ section of the Interior.

Clubs Militia’s Young Friends and its 1200 units function at the premises of educational foundation. 152 clubs for “problem” teenagers are established under local sections of the Department of the Interior.

Children from large families (3 and more children), “problem” and low-income families are sent to military-patriotic and defence-sports oriented centres. In summer 2006 there functioned 101 military-patriotic centres:

- At the premises of sections and units of the Department of the Interior (48);
- Department of Defence (39);
- State Committee of the Frontier Troops (15);
- Department of Extraordinary Situations (3).

More than 6,000 teenagers were involved in these activities during summer.

To assume active preventative measures towards juvenile delinquents, collaboration of educational foundations, church, public associations and the Department of the Interior was established. It is aimed at rehabilitation of the convicted youths, taking under patronage teens with deviant behavior. So Vitebsk Diocese organizes and sponsors summer recreation of “problem” teenagers. 300 children improved there heath in summer centre Druzhba under the Diocese. 100 children were from problem families.

In the framework of collaboration of Brest Department of the Interior and Brest State Pedagogic University, senior students of the socio-psychological department take under patronage “problem” teenagers who are supervised by local sections of the Department of the Interior to assume preventative measures.

5. Children from families with low income and social status

In 2006 more than 39.5 thousand children from 22,094 families were in a socially dangerous situation. The number of families where one of the parents’ rights were terminated was 3,712, and the amount of families where both parents' rights were terminated was 12,633.

Despite positive changes in marriage-family relations negative tendencies still influence family’s moral and psychological environment and children’s state. A low level of parental responsibility for children’s upbringing and family’s status in the society, spreading of alcoholism and drug addiction are still leading reasons for unstable family relations, violence and coercion towards members of the family. All these factors result in social orphanhood.

To protect children and promote parental responsibilities Act of the Republic of Belarus # 200-3 On the Basics of Child Neglect and Juvenile Delinquency Prevention was adopted on May 31, 2003. This Act introduced the concept “a juvenile in a socially dangerous situation. To promote the Act the Ministry of Education elaborated the How to Detect Juveniles in Need of State Aid Guidelines (Resolution #47 of the Ministry of Education adopted 28.07.2004). These Guidelines give a complete definition to that category of children and the criteria that help detect children in a socially dangerous situation.

In 2004 the term “children in need of State aid” was introduced into the Code of Laws. Presidential Decree #18 On Additional Ways of State Protection of Children from Problem Families was adopted on November 24, 2006. It aims at promotion parental responsibilities for children’s upbringing and provision. This Decree presupposes that children are subject to social security if their parents are chronic alcoholics or drug abusers, if their life-style is immoral and it affects children causing socially dangerous situations.

Unemployed parents debarred of their rights are registered in local sections of the Department of the Interior, provided with identity cards, if necessary, and are subject to fingerprint registration. Parents must pay all the expenses if the child is under state protection but parents are not debarred of their rights, or if they are debarred and are in prison, activity therapy centres or other institutions of confinement. The unemployed and those working but unable to waive expenses are subject to job placement to make them fulfill their duties concerning upbringing and provision.
6. Creation of equal conditions for getting quality education for children from ethnic minorities, those with cultural differences and children who do not know well the language of teaching

The position of ethnic minorities in Belarus can be described as stable and unique as there are no conflicts caused by ethnic or confessional differences. The Republic of Belarus homes more than 130 nationalities. Such situation can be explained by the state policy, people’s mentality, historic traditions of peaceful interethnic cooperation, old and lasting ties among ethnic groups inhabiting the territory of the Republic.

Absence of interethnic and interconfessional tension in Belarusian society that could result in interethnic and interconfessional conflicts is a characteristic feature mentioned by international organizations and independent experts.

Belarusian society managed to preserve its international characteristics, that meet tendencies of any modern state, and the policy of the Belarusian State is aimed at preservation and promotion of the situation.

The representatives of ethnic minorities have the right to get comprehensive education in their native language or study it and this right is reflected in the Act of the Republic of Belarus On Comprehensive Education.

In the framework of globalization, open frontiers and cyberspace the inflow of refugees has increased.

The system of education guarantees accessibility of comprehensive education for children of immigrants and refugees. According to legislation it is compulsory to study Belarusian, Russian and one of foreign languages. Children can exercise the right not to study the Belarusian language if they haven’t done it before. There is budget for academic hours aimed at individual lessons in Russian and/ or Belarusian in schools’ curriculum.

Methodological basis and elaboration of special curricula are aimed at giving assistance to students from ethnic minorities in learning the language of teaching and building up interethnic and intercultural confidence at school what is one of the most important conditions for these children’s integration into school communities and Belarusian societies in general.

It should be noted that one of the key goals of comprehensive education is to provide children with auspicious learning environment. This goal is reflected in the comprehensive education standard Fundamental Guidelines and Requirements adopted by the Ministry of Education in January 2007. This goal is implemented both through the contents of academic subjects and extra curricula, teacher’s and student’s guidelines (“Literature-Music-Painting”, “Mythology and Literature”, “Ethnography and Literature”, “Toponymy”, “Geography and Population”, “History and Culture of Ethnic Minorities of Belarus”, “Culture. ABC”, “Belarusian Mythology”, etc.)