



Annex 3

STUDY ON TEACHER EDUCATION FOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION IN SIX EASTERN PARTNERSHIP COUNTRIES

BELARUS

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1 OVERVIEW OF THE CURRENT STRUCTURE OF THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

According to Art.12 of the Education Code of the Republic of Belarus (2011), the educational system of Belarus consists of the following educational levels:

- pre-school education (age group from 2 months to 6 years old, up to 5 years and 10 months)
- general education (age group from 6 to 17, 11 years)
- vocational education (age group from 15 to 18, 1-3 years)
- specialised secondary education (age group from 15 to 19, 2-4 years)
- higher education:
 - Specialist degree (4-5 years)
 - Master's degree (1-2 years).
- post-graduate education,
 - Aspirantura (post-graduate courses) (based on specialist/master degree + 3 years of advanced research, Diploma of *Kandidat nauk* (Candidate to science))
 - Doctoral studies (Aspirantura + up to 5 years of scientific research, title of *Doktor nauk* (Doctor of Science)).

The education system also includes other types of education

- special education (age group from 7, 9-12 years)
- supplementary education for children and young people,
- supplementary education for adults¹.

1.1 Primary and secondary education system

School education is divided into three levels:

- primary (grades 1-4, 4 years),
- basic (grades 5-9, 9 years), and
- secondary (grades 10-11, 11 years).

Primary education is provided in primary schools and in grades 1-4 of secondary schools and gymnasiums. **Basic education** is provided in basic schools, grades 5-9 of secondary schools and grades 5-9 of gymnasiums. **General secondary education** is provided in general secondary schools, gymnasiums, lyceums and colleges, as well as during the first year in specialised and technical schools. **Specialised secondary education** lasts for two to four years depending on whether the students have followed basic or general secondary education.

All children from the age of six are obliged to attend school and obtain general basic education. General education and vocational training are free of charge. Secondary specialised and higher

¹ Education Code of the Republic of Belarus, Minsk, 2011 (Adopted by the Council of the Republic of Belarus on 22.12.2010, National Register of Legal Acts of the Republic of Belarus, 13.01.2011, № 243-3), http://www.tamby.info/kodeks/edu_tekst.htm



education is accessible to everyone and could be free of charge subject to academic achievements and available funds.

2 THE ROLE OF PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION AND THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL TEACHERS

The purpose of **primary education** is to identify pupils' abilities and aptitudes, develop their cognitive interests and personality, form basic knowledge and skills in reading, writing, numeracy, communication, healthy living and safe-conduct². Among the **objectives of primary education** the most important are: identification and development of educational and cognitive motivation; pupils' adaptation to school life; formation of the basic components of culture, human attitude toward the world.

Basic and secondary education is focused on fostering intellectual, moral and physical personal development, preparing pupils for meaningful life in society, enabling the acquisition of basic scientific knowledge, developing mental and physical skills, the system of moral principles, code of conduct, preparing pupils to make independent life choices, begin their working life and further their education³.

The role of the **teacher in primary** schools is to:

- implement a comprehensive training and education;
- train children in all subjects of the primary school curricula according to the educational standards;
- organise activities involving parents, arts and sports clubs and cultural events⁴;

The purpose of the **teacher in basic and secondary schools** is to:

- provide training and education in a given subject at the level corresponding to the requirements set by state educational standards;
- foster ability and skills for pupils' independent work;
- stimulate cognitive activity and law-abiding⁵;
- provide ideological and patriotic education;
- make proposals for improvement and strengthening of educational process;
- undertake all necessary preparations, systematically improve his/her professional skills, participate in teacher professional networks and other types of methodological work⁶;

Teachers in Belarus sometimes have to perform tasks which are not common or directly related to their professional responsibilities. These include for example, collecting the money from

² Educational Standard for the General Secondary Education: Basic standards and requirements, Decision of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Belarus № 96 of 3.10.2008.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Information from the questionnaire provided by the Belarusian State Pedagogical University.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Teacher Job Descriptions elaborated on the basis of the Decree of the Ministry of Labour of the Republic of Belarus № 1 of 9.01.1998, <http://sch78.minsk.edu.by/main.aspx?uid=48034>



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parents for the needs of schools, working with socially distant and potentially dangerous families , renovating school premises, participating in organisation of elections⁷.

3 KEY STATISTICAL DATA ON TEACHER EDUCATION

Statistical data on education in Belarus reflect the following trends for the period 2005-2009:

- Public expenditure on education in Belarus as a share of GDP over the period 2007-2009 has decreased to 5% against a constant share of 6% observed in 2005-2006.
- The share of government spending on education has slightly increased to 11% against a considerable drop in 2007 and attained the level of 2005.
- The number of primary, basic and secondary pupils and teachers has been steadily decreasing, but slightly slower in the case of teachers.
- Pupil-teacher ratio in primary and secondary schools has been stable during the period 2005-2006, but has been slightly declining starting from 2007.
- Over the considered period the net enrollment rate of secondary school pupils has been decreasing but still quite high (95%) whereas the net enrollment rate of primary pupils' has been constantly increasing (99%).
- Data on primary schools completion rate show improvement in case of Belarus (from 92% in 2007 to 96% in 2008).
- The percentage of female primary and secondary education teachers is high, but is almost the same as in other EaP countries.

Table 3.1: Statistics on education

Description/Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Number of general education schools	4099	3979	3846	3749	3656
Number of primary schools	348	313	266	225	217
Number of basic (middle) schools	841	763	708	688	615
Number of senior schools	-	-	-	-	-
Number of secondary schools	2635	2617	2573	2533	2513
Enrolment in general education schools	1 240 900	1 179 300	1 134 900	1 083 200	1 006 700
Number of pupils in primary schools	12 900	12 600	12 200	11 600	11 300
Number of pupils in basic (middle) schools	48 600	42 700	42 400	39 700	29 600
Number of pupils in secondary schools	1 013 500	958 800	913 600	867 500	803 100

⁷ Information from the questionnaire provided by the Belarusian School Association (NGO).



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Primary education, pupils (UNESCO data)*	379 577	367 736	361 493	362 377	-
Secondary education, pupils (UNESCO data)*	923 798	873 131	817 820	-	-
Primary education (ISCED 1) Net enrolment rate (%)*	95	96	97	99	-
Secondary education, Net enrolment rate (%)*	96	96	95	-	-
School enrolment, primary (% gross)	95	94	92	96	-
School enrolment, secondary (% gross)	96	96	95	-	-
Primary completion rate (% of relevant age group)	95	94	92	96	-
Literacy rate, youth total (% of people ages 15-24)*	-	-	-	-	100

Sources:*United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) Institute for Statistics)⁸, Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Belarus, 2010⁹

Table 3.2: Statistics on teacher education

Description	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Number of teachers in primary, basic, senior and special schools ¹⁰ , 1000 persons	91 000	90 200	90 300	87 400	85 400
Number of educational institutions providing teacher education programmes	-	-	-	-	-
Number of graduates of initial teacher training programmes	12 700	11 700	11 400	9 800	10 500
Primary education, teachers*	23 671	22 949	22 640	23 904	
Secondary education, teachers*	103 997	103 085	101 663	-	-
Pupil-teacher ratio, primary education ^{11*}	16	16	16	15	-
Pupil-teacher ratio, secondary education*	9	9	8	-	-

⁸ http://data.un.org/Data.aspx?d=UNESCO&f=series%3ANER_1

⁹ <http://belstat.gov.by/homep/ru/publications/yearbook/2010/main.php>

¹⁰ Schools for mentally or physically disabled children.

¹¹ Net enrolment ratio is the ratio of children of official school age based on the International Standard Classification of Education 1997 who are enrolled in school to the population of the corresponding official school age. Secondary education completes the provision of basic education that began at the primary level, and aims at laying the foundations for lifelong learning and human development, by offering more subject- or skill-oriented instruction using more specialized teachers (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Institute for Statistics).



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Primary education, teachers (% female)*	99	99	99	99	-
Secondary education, teachers (% female)*	80	80	80	-	-

Sources: *United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) Institute for Statistics, Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Belarus, 2010

Table 3.3: Education budget

Description	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
GDP (current US\$)	30,210, 91, 837	36,961,91, 859	45,275,711, 996	60,763,483, 146	49,037,390, 213
GDP growth (annual %)	8	11	10	11	1
Public spending on education, total (% of GDP)	6	6	5	5	5
Public spending on education, total (% of government expenditure)	11	13	9	10	11
Expenditure on teacher education	-	-	-	-	-

Sources: UIS Data Centre, UNESCO Institute for Statistics;¹² the World Bank.¹³

4 GOVERNMENT POLICY IN THE AREA OF TEACHER EDUCATION

4.1 General legislative framework

Belarus has a well-developed legal framework governing the field of education which includes the Constitution, the Education Code, laws and bylaws. The Education Code (2010)¹⁴ is the main legislative instrument comprising principal provisions of current legislative acts such as the Law on Education (1991), the Law on General Secondary Education (2006) and the Law on Higher Education (2007). It regulates social relations in the field of education, define the levels and types of education, its objectives, and also determines the role of teachers, their rights, functions and responsibilities. The Code has incorporated the provisions of the main legal documents governing the field of education such as:

- Law on Education (1991, with amendments) - defined the general principles of the state policy in education and its principles, the system of education, requirements and relations between involved actors, including the rights and obligations of teachers;
- Law on Special Education (2004) – determined the system of special education, requirements to teachers qualifications and skills

¹² <http://data.un.org/Data.aspx?q=education&d=UNESCO&f=series%3aXGOVEXP>

¹³ <http://www.worldbank.org.am/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/ECAEXT/ARMENIAEXTN/0,,contentMDK:20169001~menuPK:301604~pagePK:1497618~piPK:217854~theSitePK:301579,00.html>

¹⁴ Education Code was adopted on 13 January 2011 and will enter into force on 1 September 2011.



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- Law on General Secondary Education (2006, with amendments in 2009) - regulated the process of education at this level, establishes educational standards, clearly defines the types of secondary education institutions, requirements and tasks of teachers
- Law on Higher Education (2007) – introduced the two-level system of higher education: Specialist degree level (4-5 years) and Master's degree level (1-2 years), admission procedures, forms of education and types of higher education institutions.

The system of education and teacher training are also regulated by the decrees of the President of Belarus¹⁵ and the Council of Ministers, decisions and instructions of the Ministry of Education, regional and municipal state bodies.

Although being developed, the legislative framework for education requires further improvements from the perspective of democratic governance, competence-based approach and principles of inclusive education. The Education Code adopted in 2011 envisages increased control of education from the side of the state and imposes restrictions through unified state educational standards adopted by the Ministry of Education.¹⁶

4.2 Institutional framework and distribution of responsibilities

The system of education in Belarus is highly centralised and the most important changes or reforms are initiated and defined by the **President of the Republic of Belarus**. Formally, the president is the guarantor of realisation of the right of citizens for education, determining the state policy in the field of education, ensuring the succession and interaction of state bodies responsible for education¹⁷. At the same time, the President has the right to make single-handed decisions concerning internal and external aspects of the national education.

The overall management at all levels of education is performed by the **Government of Belarus**. It defines the ways of interaction of all bodies involved in the system of education, determines the number of specialists, teachers and students, guarantees and funds international educational activities, including academic mobility.

The **Ministry of Education** is responsible for general functioning of the system of education, implementation of experimental and innovative programmes, coordination of international cooperation in the sphere of education, control of the quality of education, implementation of the state policy concerning teaching staff, elaboration of educational standards, curricula and educational programmes, design of programmes for required human resources.

Elaboration of human resources policy and organisation of retraining and in-service training of teachers belong to the competencies of state education authorities subordinated to the President, the Government and the National Academy of Sciences.

As for the local education authorities, they design and submit the programmes of development of pre-school and general secondary education to the local self-government councils, assess the human resources' needs, and organise retraining and in-service training programmes¹⁸.

¹⁵ Belarus is a presidential republic and the President has wide competencies in all spheres of state policy, including education. For example, the return to the 11-years school system was decided unanimously by the Presidential decree in 2008.

¹⁶ Information from the questionnaire provided by the Belarusian School Association (NGO).

¹⁷ Education Code of the Republic of Belarus, Minsk, 2011, Art.107.

¹⁸ Ibid.



4.3 National policies, strategies and reforms in teacher education

As stated in the Education Code of the Republic of Belarus, the education in Belarus is seen as a particularly important resource and the main factor of technological progress, social and economic development of the country.¹⁹ The strategic objective is to create an educational system which corresponds to the needs of personal development, society and the State, creating conditions for further development of the system and preparing new generations for life and work in a civil society with the sustainable socially oriented market economy²⁰.

To achieve this, Belarus has been undertaking attempts to reform its educational system. The most significant changes include:

- the transition to a 12-year schooling (1998),
- introduction of the 10-points evaluation scale (2002),
- transition to the two-level higher education system (2007),
- introduction of the competence-based approach (2011)

However, due to the high degree of centralisation and the lack of clear vision of necessary changes in education, these reforms have not been implemented properly. Belarus has not yet joined the Bologna Process, and in 2008 moved back to 11-year schooling.

During the 1990s, the main objective for Belarus was to create the national system of pedagogical education. This required overcoming the gap between the national school and existing requirements and breaking the isolation from the international educational environment.²¹ In addition, the Government had to tackle the problem of devaluation of the status of higher education, 'overproduction' of specialists with pedagogical education and its feminisation.

In the 21st century, the main focus is placed on structural reforms of teacher education, in particular its modernisation, the use of competence-based approach, raising the quality of education, and development of new types of pedagogical activities.

The main documents defining the framework and context of transforming the teacher education are **the Concept for development of pedagogical education** (2000) and the programme of its implementation. These documents established the mechanism for bringing the structure, content and quality of teacher education in compliance with the requirements of modernisation of general secondary and higher education. The implementation of the Concept had three stages: 1) the creation of legal basis for necessary structural changes, pedagogical innovations and elaboration of regional and university programmes of teacher education (2000-2002); 2) development of the system of continuous teacher education, integration of secondary special and higher teacher education institutions, introduction of modern education technologies in teacher training (2003-2005); 3) monitoring and analysis of achieved results and the completion of creation of a comprehensive system of continuous teacher training (2006-2010).²²

¹⁹ Programme of Development of Secondary Education in the Republic of Belarus for the period of 2007-2016 (Decision of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus № 725 of 31.05.2007), part 2.

²⁰ National Strategy for Sustainable Socio-economic Development of Belarus up to 2020, Minsk, 2004.

²¹ Torkhova, A., Krasnova, T., Luhautsova, A. (2010) Teacher education in Republic of Belarus on the crossroads of international and national tendencies, p.3, http://unibel.academia.edu/AlenaLugovtsova/Papers/414289/TEACHER_EDUCATION_IN_REPUBLIC_OF_BELARUS_ON_THE_CROSSROADS_OF_INTERNATIONAL_AND_NATIONAL_TENDENCIES

²² Concept of development of pedagogical education in the Republic of Belarus (Decision of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus № 527 of 18.04.2000), <http://www.pravoby.info/docum09/part27/akt27165.htm>



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Other framework documents aimed at reforming the system of teacher education are as follows:

- **Programme for development of the national system of education for the period 2006-2010** aimed at raising the quality of all levels of education through improving teachers' qualification and in-service training;
- **Programme for development of general secondary education for the period 2007-2016** targeting the mechanisms that stimulate teacher's work, improve the level of professional qualification, facilitate the rational use of pedagogical staff potential and implementation of educational innovations;
- **Programme for development of higher education for the period 2011-2016** with a particular focus on raising the level of specialists' training, improvement of the curricula and implementation of the main principles of higher education development as part of European system of education²³.

The most visible results of implementation of the documents listed above are the introduction of multi-stage teacher education, shifting from the pedagogical institutes to the university system and the creation of a stable and comprehensive system of continuous training, elaboration and implementation of various conceptual approaches to the content of teacher education and a wider use of innovative educational technologies.²⁴

However, as to date, the initiated reforms have been only partially implemented and their understanding has been somewhat distorted: the transition to the two-level higher teacher education does not comply with the Bologna system, the in-service training remains highly formalised and obsolete, switching of the pedagogical institutes into universities did not result in the improved quality of education and the acquisition of necessary professional skills and capabilities.

4.4 Forecast of future needs in the field of teacher education

Despite numerous state initiatives and programmes aimed at improving and modernising teacher education, there is a clear need to undertake further steps in this area. At the national level, additional work should to be done to improve the content of education and organise educational processes in the country. This could be achieved through a better definition of objectives of training oriented on professional and personal development of teachers and the use of interdisciplinary approaches in the content of educational programmes.²⁵

Another task is to strengthen the link between teacher training and pedagogical sciences with a view to undertake the necessary research on adjustment of educational programmes and curricula. In addition, the issues of improvement of teacher education structure and management should be addressed in order to guarantee the continuity of teacher education.

On the institutional level, the priority actions to be taken in the future should focus on the creation of an effective system of educational services meeting the needs of labour market and the national economy concerning competitive and professional specialists. This could be achieved through increasing the number of teacher specialisations and variety of degrees.

²³ Programme of development of higher education in the Republic of Belarus for the period of 2011-2016, Decision of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus № 893 of 1.06.2011.

²⁴ Information from the questionnaire provided by the Belarusian State Pedagogical University.

²⁵ Programme of implementation of the Concept of development of pedagogical education in the Republic of Belarus (Decision of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Belarus № 47 of 25.10.2000)



5 EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM FOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS

5.1 Brief overview of historical development of teacher education

The progressive development of general secondary education in the 1930-1950s in Belarus was a strong impulse for creation of the national system of teacher education in the country. The goal to establish the system of obligatory and then basic secondary education within the shortest possible time determined the principle of separate training of teaching staff for every stage of general education. During this period, the system of teacher education was established. It underwent changes only in the 1990s and at that time it included pedagogical vocational institutions for pre-school and primary school teachers (2-4 years), pedagogical institutes for basic secondary education staff (3 years), pedagogical institutes for basic and secondary school teachers specialised in specific subjects (4 years) and universities that also trained teachers for secondary education (5 years). The system of in-service teacher education was also created at that time and was based on territorial principle.

The evolution of general education, the emergence of the new types of secondary education institutions (lyceums, gymnasiums and colleges), the transition to differentiated teaching and a need to introduce the new educational technologies led to an increase in the number of pedagogical specialisations and shifting towards the university education in early 1990s. These processes aimed at raising the competitiveness of graduates with pedagogical qualifications and preparing them for work in the new reformed schools.²⁶ In 2007, the two-level system of higher education was officially introduced in the Republic of Belarus for Specialist (4-5 years) and Master's (1-2 years) degree studies.

5.2 Teacher education providers and financing of teacher training

Nowadays, in Belarus, teachers are being trained in 52 different specialities at 11 universities across the country. Future teachers are prepared at:

- 2 pedagogical universities: Belarusian State Pedagogical University (BSPU) in Minsk and State Pedagogical University (SPU) in Mozyr;
- 8 classical universities: Belarusian State University (BSU), Brest State University, Vitebsk State University, Grodno State University, Gomel State University, Mogilev State University, Polotsk and Baranovichy Universities; and,
- Minsk Higher Radio Engineering College.

Secondary pedagogical education is delivered in 10 specialities at 6 pedagogical colleges and 9 colleges across the country providing educational programmes in different pedagogical specialisations.²⁷

Graduates of pedagogical colleges can continue their studies at higher education institutions through the system of reduced length of training, as the college and higher education specialisations are interconnected. Thus, one of the recent tendencies is the inclusion of colleges into the higher education institutions' structure since their function has become

²⁶ Zhuk, O. (2007) Pedagogical education in the Republic of Belarus, p.37, http://logosbook.ru/VOS/01_2008/37_40.pdf

²⁷ Torkhova, A., Krasnova, T., Luhautsova, A. (2010) Teacher education in Republic of Belarus on the crossroads of international and national tendencies, p.5, http://unibel.academia.edu/AlenaLugovtsova/Papers/414289/TEACHER_EDUCATION_IN_REPUBLIC_OF_BELARUS_ON_THE_CROSSROADS_OF_INTERNATIONAL_AND_NATIONAL_TENDENCIES



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outdated.²⁸ Many pedagogical qualifications are also available at higher education institutions of the Ministry of Culture and Ministry of Sports and Tourism. For example, teachers of physical education are trained not only in pedagogical universities but also at the University of Physical Education subordinated to the Ministry of Sports. Similarly, teachers of foreign languages are often trained at linguistic universities and faculties.

Retraining and in-service training of teachers is carried out at the Academy of Post-Graduate Education, the Republic Institute of Professional Training, and regional and municipal in-service training institutes. The conceptual and methodological framework is designed by the National Institute of Education and Ministry of Education of Belarus.

The level of financing of education in Belarus is higher than in other CIS countries and constitutes 5% of GDP and 11% of all government expenditures.²⁹ Teacher education institutions receive about 60% of their funds from the state budget, 36% come from enrolment fees paid by students, and about 3% from the research activities³⁰. Although there is a constant lack of teachers at all levels of general education, the state does not increase the financing of such institutions since very few graduates continue to work as teachers due to low wages and low prestige of this profession. The government does not have the necessary funds to finance the educational process at teacher training institutions, which would make them strive for greater openness and integration into the global education market in order to attract international students.

5.3 General organisation of teacher education

5.3.1 Initial teacher education

The admission to teacher education programmes depends on the type of educational institution, the form of study and specialisation. All students who have completed basic and secondary education can apply to pedagogical colleges offering training programmes for pre-school tutors and primary school teachers (3 years). This stage gives the right to continue education at any higher education institution of the corresponding specialisation (normally admitted to the 3rd year of studies) or to start working at school. Over the last decades, there has been a tendency towards some 40% decrease in the number of students applying for this level of teacher education.

As far as teacher education in higher education institutions is concerned, the admission is more competitive. It is organised through the examinations and interviews according to the procedures elaborated by the Ministry of Education and the respective institutions, but depends mainly on applicant's academic results and achievements. Currently, the two-stage system of teacher professional education (Specialist and Master's degrees) is implemented in Belarus. At the first stage, students obtain basic and specific knowledge according to their specialisation (4-5 years) and are awarded a diploma of 'Specialist' that gives the right to enter the labour market or continue studying at the Master's degree level.

Master's programmes for teacher education (1-2 years) are focused on research and innovation in education and are an obligatory stage towards the post-graduate studies level (3 years). Specialities are classified by the same types as scientific specialities at post-graduate institutions. There were certain attempts to introduce a three-cycle structure in higher education

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ UNESCO Statistics

³⁰ Information from the questionnaire provided by the Belarusian State Pedagogical University.



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system, but due to the unclear status of graduates with Bachelor's degree diploma on labour market³¹, these initiatives were officially abandoned in 2007, when the current structure of higher education was approved.

Teacher training in Belarusian higher education institutions is organised around three levels:

- **compulsory minimal level**, aimed at developing teacher competences of all students of the first stage;
- **professional or specialised level**, where students can follow specialised training in order to obtain **additional specialisation and therefore** the teacher qualification;
- **in-depth pedagogical level**, focused on training masters in a wide range of specialities in teaching a specific (basic) subject in higher education institutions, special secondary education establishments and at the secondary level of general education (lyceums, gymnasiums).

Professional training of future teachers for all levels of education includes three types of academic subjects that are taught over the entire period of studies:

- social sciences and humanities (ideological grounds of the Belarusian State, philosophy, economics, sociology, politics, foreign languages, physical education and other compulsory courses);
- sciences (natural science, ecology and energy security, information technologies, advanced maths); and,
- general core disciplines (pedagogy, psychology, special subjects depending on specialisation, including methodology of teaching for these subjects).³²

In addition, students study theory and methodology of teaching and educational work, undertake in-depth practical training courses in schools, produce papers and thesis on teacher education issues, study the basics of pedagogical diagnostics and participate in research activities. The most common forms of trainings are lectures, practical seminars, practices, discussions, consultations etc. All students of pedagogical specialisations are obliged to undertake various kinds of internship in the course of their studies depending on the faculty. As a rule, future teachers participate in a school practice (2nd and 3rd year students) aimed at acquiring practical subject-specific teaching skills, summer practice with children (3rd year students) and pedagogical internship (4th and 5th year students)³³.

The process of initial training of teachers is built on competence-based approach with a special focus on developing social and personal competencies of students.³⁴ This approach is based on new educational standards of teacher training that include academic, social, personal and professional competences. These standards specify not only traditional core skills necessary for

³¹ Torkhova, A., Krasnova, T., Luhautsova, A. (2010) Teacher education in Republic of Belarus on the crossroads of international and national tendencies, p.19, http://unibel.academia.edu/AlenaLugovtsova/Papers/414289/TEACHER_EDUCATION_IN_REPUBLIC_OF_BELARUS_ON_THE_CROSSROADS_OF_INTERNATIONAL_AND_NATIONAL_TENDENCIES

³² Information from the questionnaire provided by the Belarusian State Pedagogical University.

³³ Decision of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus on adoption of Regulation pedagogical internship for graduates of higher education institutions (Draft).

³⁴ Zhuk, O. (2007) Pedagogical education in the Republic of Belarus, p.39, http://logosbook.ru/VOS/01_2008/37_40.pdf



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organisation and implementation of organisational process, but also the ability to use the elements of scientific research and innovations and implement the process of self-education³⁵.

Students are also required to understand the system and nature of education, to know the content and structure of educational processes as well as the structure of national education and be familiar with modern teaching technologies.

Thus, at this level students have to acquire and develop necessary skills and abilities in order to:

- apply different methods, tools and forms of training and education;
- use technical means and implement new advanced technologies in the process of education;
- elaborate, maintain, evaluate and adjust educational process;
- plan, organise and carry out educational activities;
- build effective communication with children and their parents³⁶.

The initial training of teachers in Belarus often appears to be ineffective due to out-dated methodological base and largely theory-focused training of future teachers. Consequently, some university graduates do not possess proper understanding of the mission of pedagogical profession in terms of developing pupils' personality. They therefore reduce their professional activity to a simple transfer of factual knowledge, leaving out creative potential of pupils. In fact, training provided at pedagogical colleges appears to be more practice-oriented and students are better prepared to work in secondary education institutions³⁷ compared to the university programmes.

5.3.2 *Induction programmes for new teachers*

Graduates from the pedagogical colleges and teacher higher education institutions who received their degree on the state-sponsored basis are assigned by these institutions to work for the period of two years according to their specialisation and automatically receive a qualification of a young professional or a specialist after the employment contract enters into force.³⁸ The first year of teaching is considered to be the adaptation period and there is no special induction programme in place for new teachers. Some basic support mechanism for young professionals could be established in some schools through mentoring, individual professional development plan, or involvement in different methodological networks.

The 'School of Young Teacher' established at leading schools is a common platform for young professionals with 3 or less years of experience. The aim of such schools is to provide young teachers with methodological support and practical advice on designing lesson-plans and their effective implementation. New teachers may also be involved in some international programmes and initiatives addressing the issues of general education.

The main requirements at the early career stage of teachers in Belarus include the following: the knowledge of existing best teaching practices and the ability to analyse and design

³⁵ Ibid., p.13.

³⁶ Information from the questionnaire provided by the Belarusian State Pedagogical University.

³⁷ Information from the questionnaire provided by the Public Association 'Educational Centre 'POST'.

³⁸ Decision of the Council of Minister of the Republic of Belarus № 1702 of 10.12.2007 on assignment of graduates of professional, secondary special and higher education institutions.



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innovative pedagogical tools and approaches. In this respect, the following skills are necessary: the ability to use modern means of communication and technologies, readiness for independent decision-making related to educational process, the capacity to develop educational programmes and effectively put them into practice.

5.3.3 *Continuous professional development of teachers*

One of the specific features of teaching profession is that a continuous need to improve and develop skills and abilities in order to respond successfully to changes in education and apply new pedagogical technologies, methods and tools. Continuous training is simultaneously the right and the obligation, according to Belarusian legislation.³⁹ The purpose of in-service training is to deepen the professional knowledge and skills and meet the demands of individual professional development. Thus, the continuous training of teachers is an integral part of continuous education in Belarus and is provided by 3 academies, 39 institutes and 26 faculties of retraining and in-service training.

The activities of such institutions are based on tendencies and current developments in education, in particular intensification of education, new content and organisational forms, social and cultural changes as well as new strategies of funding. The main objective is to ensure continuity of professional development, cooperate with methodological teacher networks, link scientific potential of researchers with practical experience of teachers and develop the system of national education.

In-service training is regulated by the Law on Education and Resolution of the Council of Ministers of Belarus on continuous professional development of teachers according to which all teachers are obliged to undertake upgrading courses at least once every 5 years. The following types of post-graduate education of teachers exist in Belarus:

- in-service training: basic, targeted and experimental
- retraining: acquisition of new specialisation
- internship
- preparation through master's and doctorate programmes

In-service training and retraining of primary, secondary and special school teachers is provided by the Academy of Post-Graduate Education, 7 regional in-service training institutes for teachers (6 regional and 1 municipal) and 9 in-service training institutes at higher education establishments (for special categories of teachers). Some 50 000-60 000 teachers are trained every year, of which 42 000 are trained at the Academy of Post-Graduate Education and regional in-service institutes.⁴⁰ By the order of the Ministry of Education, all 350 000 of teachers are assigned to respective in-service training and retraining institutions by levels (general secondary, secondary special, professional and higher education) and education profiles (pedagogy, humanities, technology, arts and physical education). Today, in-service training has 145 available specialities and specialisations and takes into account types and fields of education as well as the nature of educational establishments. About 30% of programmes are devoted to retraining and are focused on the most needed teacher specialisations that are not provided in sufficient manner in secondary special and higher teacher education institutions:

³⁹ Education Code of the Republic of Belarus, Minsk, 2011, Art. 52-53.

⁴⁰ Tavgen, O. (2006) The system of in-service training of teachers in the framework of the reform of national education of the Republic of Belarus, *Chelovek i zakon*, № 7, p. 29



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informatics, applied psychology, defectology, social psychology, foreign languages and educational management.⁴¹

The objective of continuous teacher training in Belarus is to develop and update necessary competences and facilitate competitiveness and professional qualifications of teachers. Among the core competences acquired as a result of such programmes are the ability to generate new ideas, create and effectively apply pedagogical innovations, cooperate with colleagues from adjacent groups, build and maintain pedagogical excellence at their institutions⁴².

Although the system of continuous teacher training in Belarus is developed, a knowledge-transfer approach applied at this stage of education with its formal nature and short duration does not meet the needs of a modern school. Very often teachers participate in courses organised by a few but active NGOs and teachers networks, where they acquire advanced pedagogical methodologies and share individually designed innovative programmes⁴³.

5.4 Qualifications system for primary and secondary school teachers

According to the existing legal and regulative framework, teachers engaged in primary and secondary education have the following qualifications:

Level of school education	Qualifications required from teachers at different levels of professional career	
	Initial training	In-service training and professional development
Primary school	Pedagogue ⁴⁴ , Teacher ⁴⁵ (diploma certifying higher or secondary special teacher education)	Teacher (educator): 1) no category 2) 2 nd category 3) 1 st category 4) higher category
Secondary school	Pedagogue ⁴⁶ , Teacher ⁴⁷ (diploma of Specialist and/or Master's certifying higher teacher education)	Teacher (educator): 5) no category 6) 2 nd category 7) 1 st category 1) higher category

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Information from the questionnaire provided by the Belarusian State Pedagogical University

⁴³ Information from the questionnaire provided by the Belarusian School Association (NGO) and the Public Association 'Educational Centre 'POST'.

⁴⁴ At the level of secondary special education a qualification of 'educator' is obtained.

⁴⁵ At the level of secondary special education a qualification of 'teacher' is obtained.

⁴⁶ At the level of secondary special education a qualification of 'educator' is obtained.

⁴⁷ At the level of secondary special education a qualification of 'teacher' is obtained.



6 QUALITY ASSURANCE AND TEACHER EDUCATION STANDARDS

6.1 Teacher education standards

Starting from the 2008-2009 academic year, new educational standards for the first stage of higher education were implemented in teacher training institutions and the elaboration of standards for second stage is still in process. These standards are based on the competence approach and include professional competences in the following activities: educational, educational-methodological and scientific research, innovation, organisation and development.⁴⁸ According to these standards, graduates of pedagogical specialities are required to have skills necessary for teaching in all types of schools, for efficient elaboration of working plans and implementation of curricula. They must also be able to teach children to work independently, stimulate their cognitive interests and motivate them to study, etc.

In order to be efficient in their work, graduates must possess thorough and deep knowledge of their subject of specialisation, teaching methodologies, pedagogy, pedagogical, age and social psychology, forms and methods of education (corresponding to the age of children) and general understanding of ethics, pediatrics and aesthetics.⁴⁹

6.2 Assessment methods

The most common assessment methods of teacher's performance include evaluation of completeness and accuracy of teacher's recordkeeping; conducting cross-assessment; interviewing children and parents; evaluating the level of participants of school competitions at different stages; attestation score of teacher's performance in the process of awarding new qualification category.

6.3 Quality assurance mechanisms

The quality of education of teachers is assured through the established mechanism of state control based on instructions developed by the Ministry of Education. It includes the systems of internal and external control, individual control, attestation and personal attestation.⁵⁰

Internal school and central control ensure the monitoring of the quality of educational process and a competence of teacher. Feedback from a graduate's employer is often taken into account for updating and adjusting educational programmes in teacher training institutions. The Attestation Committees established at schools, retraining and in-service training institutions also review and assess competences of teaching staff, which results in awarding respective categories.

Principal mechanisms of quality assurance in Belarus include the optimisation of degrees, levels and types of teaching staff training, taking into account international trends in education; creation of a flexible system of restructuring of specialisations and specialities within the faculty taking into account increasing of teacher training function; elaboration and development of educational standards with the focus on practice-oriented approach and continuity; setting up

⁴⁸ Model of educational standard of high education of the first stage (Decision of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Belarus № 374 of 13.06.2006).

⁴⁹ Information from the questionnaire provided by the Belarusian State Pedagogical University. Zhuk, O. (2007) Pedagogical education in the Republic of Belarus, p. 39, http://logosbook.ru/VOS/01_2008/37_40.pdf

⁵⁰ Regulation of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Belarus on attestation of teaching staff of the system of education of Belarus (except higher education institutions), registered in the National Register of Legal Documents on 6.05.2006.



scientific and creative pedagogical schools and involvement of students in research; effective use of state funds.⁵¹

6.4 Stakeholders involved in the quality assurance process

Monitoring of teacher training quality is conducted by the Ministry of Education of Belarus, secondary special and higher teacher education institutions, re-training and in-service training institutions for teachers, research institutions (the National Institute of Education, the Academy of Post-Graduate Education, regional and municipal institutes of development of education), the Republic Institute of Knowledge Control, municipal and regional councils and, to a lesser extent, by non-governmental organisations.

7 INNOVATIONS IN TEACHER EDUCATION

7.1 Innovative practices and developments

As stated in Ministerial decisions, innovations and modern education technologies are at the core of teacher education and are implemented through the creation of necessary conditions for introduction of innovative training methods and the development of pedagogical creativity.⁵² The main possibilities for the use of innovative practices are: the inclusion of pedagogical innovations into the content of standard curricula, organisation of teacher training in the context of research cycle (propaedeutics), experimental activities at schools and joint lessons involving university and school teachers and students, application of interactive approaches and ICT technologies and establishment of pedagogical chairs at leading general education institutions.⁵³ The above-mentioned innovative practices have not been widely implemented across the country yet, and are mainly used at leading education establishments.

The majority of progressive innovations in the continuous teacher education are provided by NGOs, international partners and donors. Forms used for the development and implementation of innovations in Belarus include seminars, methodological meetings, competitions of educational projects and techniques, creation of information themed websites.⁵⁴ Belarusian NGO's network regularly organise innovation training programmes for teachers such as 'Active learning methods', 'Development of critical thinking', 'Project methods in education' and others. Currently the trends shift towards more effective and visible use of innovations in distance learning and e-learning for teachers, such as training programmes 'Prometheus' (in-service training and consultations) and 'Moodle' (virtual teacher community). However, the majority of such innovations are implemented in the capital city and opportunities for NGOs and partnerships in this field are quite limited.

Other successful and important projects and initiatives in this respect were developed within the IBE-UNESCO Community of Practice in Curriculum Development Project; MATRA Dalton Development for Inter-Ethnic Confidence Building and Violence Prevention Education Project; Swedish Leadership Project

⁵¹ Information from the questionnaire provided by the Belarusian State Pedagogical University.

⁵² Instructions on experimental and innovative practices in educational institutions of the Republic of Belarus, (Decision of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Belarus № 8 of 24.02.2003).

⁵³ Information from the questionnaire provided by the Belarusian State Pedagogical University.

⁵⁴ Information from the questionnaire provided by the Belarusian School Association (NGO).



7.2 The use of ICT

The main instrument of effective modernisation of the national educational system is the large-scale introduction of information and communication technologies into educational practices, further development of the existing educational approaches and models, as well as generation of new ones. For these purposes, the Programme of Complex Informatisation of the Educational System in the Republic of Belarus 2007–2010 has been implemented. Within the framework of this programme, the amount of 3 400 000 000 BR (approximately 1 000 000 USD) has been allocated for the development of more than 50 electronic learning-methodological facilities for institutions of higher education.⁵⁵ Practically each school is provided to Internet access. All universities and teacher education institutions are associated in unit information educational network by high speed communication links.

The implementation of the Strategy of the Information Society Development in the Republic of Belarus up to 2015 will become a new stage of educational system informatisation.

As a result of these initiatives, the following ICT are now widely implemented in teacher education institutions:

- multimedia devices and more than 50 electronic learning-methodological facilities for lectures and practical seminars; computer-based examinations;
- intellectual charts created on the basis of NodeMind programme (visualisation of theoretical material);
- network education on the basis of WEB 2.0;
- internet-resource www.antiplagiat.ru for verification of students' papers and thesis⁵⁶.

The use of computer visualisation devices is combined with the innovative methods of education, whereas internet technologies are more often used for distance and e-learning which create more possibilities for continuous teacher training and professional improvement.

7.3 Schools as 'learning organisations'

The promotion and approbation of pedagogical innovations are regulated by the Instruction of the Ministry of Education of Belarus on experimental and innovation activities in educational institutions (2003). The establishments where such activities are authorised and carried out receive the status of experimental platform (approbation of scientific research in order to determine the effectiveness and feasibility of their introduction) or innovative platform (implementation of piloted approaches), which remains in effect for the period from 1 to 5 years.⁵⁷

Some schools are members of the National Association 'Innovations in Education', which provides the opportunity to establish collaborative teaching and learning environments; encourages initiative and risk taking, allows studying and analysing existing best practices and

⁵⁵ICT in Teacher Education: Policy, Open Educational Resources and Partnership. Proceedings of International Conference IITE-2010, St.Petersburg, November 15-16, 2010, pp. 34-37, <http://iite.unesco.org/pics/publications/en/files/3214684.pdf>

⁵⁶ Information from the questionnaire provided by the Belarusian State Pedagogical University

⁵⁷ Ibid.



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provides opportunity for an innovation-oriented continuous professional development.⁵⁸ However, such schools are not independent in these activities and are lacking funds.⁵⁹

7.4 Main opportunities and limitations for introducing innovations in teacher education system

The legal framework governing the introduction of innovations in teacher education system is very formal and does not clearly define the necessary mechanisms and opportunities. In practice, their implementation is facilitated by established links with general education institutions, the use of ICT, participation in various conferences, seminars and competitions as well as through the assistance received from NGOs, international partnerships and educational networks.

The obstacles to implementation of innovations in teacher education include insufficient financial support, underdeveloped international cooperation of higher teacher education institutions, ban to cooperate with NGOs which are not agreed by the state and limited opportunities to use literature not approved by the Ministry of Education.⁶⁰

8 PARTNERSHIPS AND INTERACTION WITH EXTERNAL ACTORS

8.1 Partnerships between schools and teacher education institutions

According to the Concept of development of pedagogical education in the Republic of Belarus⁶¹, the entire system of teacher education aims at providing schools with competent and well trained teachers, advanced, up-to-date teaching technologies and innovations. The creation and development of strong links between them ensures further evolution of education in general and teacher education in particular. Partnerships between teacher education institutions and schools are assured through establishment of chairs of pedagogy at leading and experimental general education institutions, network of schools for pedagogical internships of students and schools for introduction of innovations and best practices.⁶² Also, some schools conclude agreements with teacher training institutions with the purpose of securing future employment of best graduates. As for retraining and in-service training institutions, they work closely with schools in their respective regions.⁶³

It is required that above mentioned partnerships are approved by the Ministry of Education and other state bodies at local and central levels, thus leaving very little room for independent joint activities not only for schools but also for universities.⁶⁴

⁵⁸ Information from the questionnaire provided by the Minsk Institute for Education Development, Pedagogy Department.

⁵⁹ Information from the questionnaire provided by the Public Association 'Educational Centre 'POST'.

⁶⁰ Information from the questionnaire provided by the Belarusian School Association.

⁶¹ Concept of development of pedagogical education in the Republic of Belarus (Decision of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus № 527 of 18.04.2000), <http://www.pravoby.info/docum09/part27/akt27165.htm>

⁶² Decision of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus on adoption of Regulation pedagogical internship for graduates of higher education institutions (Draft).

⁶³ Information from the questionnaire provided by the Minsk Institute for Education Development, Pedagogy Department.

⁶⁴ Information from the questionnaire provided by the Public Association 'Educational Centre 'POST'.



8.2 The role of business sector in teacher education

Although the involvement of private sector is formally declared, in practice, it remains almost not involved at all in teacher education since this field is monopolised by the state. The management of teacher education institutions looks at the business sector only as a source of finance but not as an important knowledge resource.⁶⁵ As for business sector, it is to some extent interested in specific teacher specialities (e.g. foreign languages, psychology, natural sciences) and provides financial and technical support to respective faculties.

8.3 The role of the third sector in teacher education

The third sector does not have enough possibilities to interact with the main stakeholders involved in teacher education. NGOs have more contacts with international partners and are often better informed about the existing innovations in teacher education. Thus, the most important input of the third sector is dissemination of best practices and modern educational technologies.⁶⁶

Most active associations and non-governmental organisations engaged in promoting educational changes in Belarus include: Belarus Educational Centre for Leadership Development (BECLD), Support Centre for Leadership Development (SCAF), National Association for Educational Innovations (NAEI) and National Association of Secondary Education Administrators (NASEA). Within the most successful programmes and projects implemented by the above-listed NGOs in Belarus there are: Educational Leaders for 21st Century Programme (1993-1995), Education Leadership Initiative (1994-1996), MATRA-programme 'Civic Education in Belarus' (1996-1998), Development of Expert School Leadership Practices through Multi-Dimensional Profiles (2000-2004).

8.4 The role of international institutions and experts

The cooperation with international institutions and experts in the field of teacher education is very important for Belarus as it creates necessary grounds for sharing best practices and innovations: common scientific and research programmes, joint programmes (e.g. with Stockholm Education Institute), partnerships with leading educational institutions and research centres, bilateral and multilateral cooperation programmes in research and training, invitation of international academics for lectures, consultations and expertise, international exchange programmes etc.⁶⁷

Belarus is not yet part of the Bologna Process, which restricts the ability of the European education community to cooperate with their Belarusian counterparts. At the same time, Belarusian universities continue to collaborate actively with European partners within the framework of Tempus Programme and take part in elaboration of distance education and life-long learning. In addition, over 15 innovative teacher education projects have been implemented with the involvement of international experts from the EU higher education institutions, such as the Danish University of Education (Denmark), Umea University (Sweden), Amsterdam University (Holland). Belarusian leading education experts have also participated in

⁶⁵ Information from the questionnaire provided by the Agency of Humanitarian Technologies.

⁶⁶ Information provided in the paper 'International Cooperation for Educational Innovations in the CIS: The Case of Belarus' prepared by Mr. Iouri Zagoumenov, p.6.

⁶⁷ Information from the questionnaire provided by the Belarusian State Pedagogical University.



main European and global expert networks aimed at teachers and school leaders education and professional development (EERA, ENIDREM, EFEA, ICSEI, IBE-UNESCO COP, AERA, UCEA, etc.).⁶⁸

9 KEY CHALLENGES, TRENDS AND PERSPECTIVES

9.1 Current strengths and weaknesses of teacher education

The strengths of the system of teacher education in Belarus lie in a developed network of teacher education institutions that creates the necessary preconditions for potential improvement of continuous training of primary and secondary school teachers. Teacher education is one of the priority areas of education reforms in the country as well as a platform for elaboration and implementation of innovative practices.

Nevertheless, there is an obvious need to improve the national legislative and non-legislative framework from the perspectives of democratic governance, competence-based approaches and principles of inclusive education.⁶⁹ The main problems of teacher education in Belarus include the following:

- lack of financial security to meet high demand for teacher education;
- non-compliance of teacher education and its content with requirements for the contemporary innovative teacher;
- absence of scientifically based long-term forecast for the need in teaching staff;
- more theoretical than practice-oriented teacher education;
- structural, substantive and organisational fragmentation of the retraining and in-service teacher training;
- non-availability of practices of international certification of educational programmes;
- insufficient international cooperation at the faculties, departments and other units of teacher education institutions including academic mobility.⁷⁰

9.2 The need for further policy action on national and European level and its potential impact

Considerable improvements in teacher education in Belarus demand further reforms and better integration into international educational community. In this respect, it is vital for Belarus to join the Bologna process. This will give an impulse for necessary structural changes and international openness of Belarusian teacher education.

The main priorities for the future of teacher education are as follows:

- clarifying and widening the range of pedagogical specialisations in the prism of international educational trends;

⁶⁸ Information from the questionnaire provided by the Minsk Institute for Education Development, Pedagogy Department.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Torkhova, A., Krasnova, T., Luhautsova, A. (2010) Teacher education in Republic of Belarus on the crossroads of international and national tendencies, pp. 20-21, http://unibel.academia.edu/AlenaLugovtsova/Papers/414289/TEACHER_EDUCATION_IN_REPUBLIC_OF_BELARUS_ON_THE_CROSSROADS_OF_INTERNATIONAL_AND_NATIONAL_TENDENCIES



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- development of new educational standards for the second stage (master) of higher pedagogical education and teaching; development of the methodological support of new educational standards for the first stage (specialist);
- rationalisation and improvement of the management of students' self-learning; elaboration of new programmes of distance teacher education and their methodological support; increasing use of new information technologies, monitoring and diagnostic programmes;
- development of strategies for managing financial and material resources of higher pedagogical education, rational and efficient use of budgetary funds; development of models for interaction between state, business community, society, science and educational institutions.⁷¹

There is also a strong need to enhance a dialogue between different international stakeholders involved in teacher education through the implementation of long-term framework programmes together with Belarusian side. The support for the third sector could lead to its consolidation and consequently playing more prominent role in the system of teacher education. Preliminary independent research in this field has to be carried out in order to better assess current strengths and weaknesses of the current system and determine the essential set of priorities for further reforms.

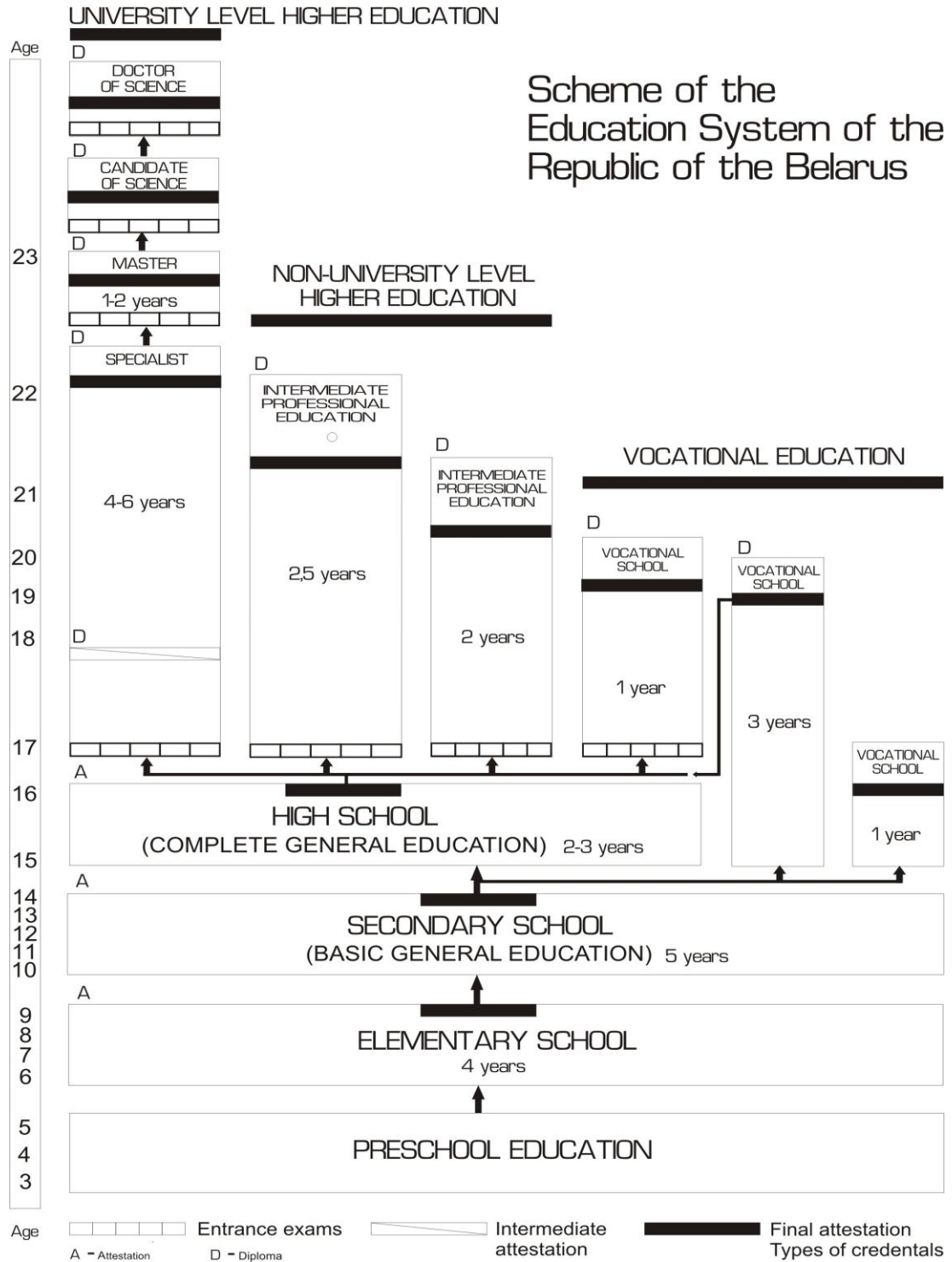
The EU initiatives in the area of teacher education appear to be very important for Belarus as they could enhance integration processes of teacher training and offer best practices and expertise available in this area.

⁷¹ Ibid., p..21; Information provided in the questionnaire by Ms. Anna Torkhova, Belarusian State Pedagogical University; Concept of development of the system of pedagogical education in the Republic of Belarus (Draft), Minsk, 2008.



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ANNEX A: THE STRUCTURE OF BELARUS' EDUCATION SYSTEM

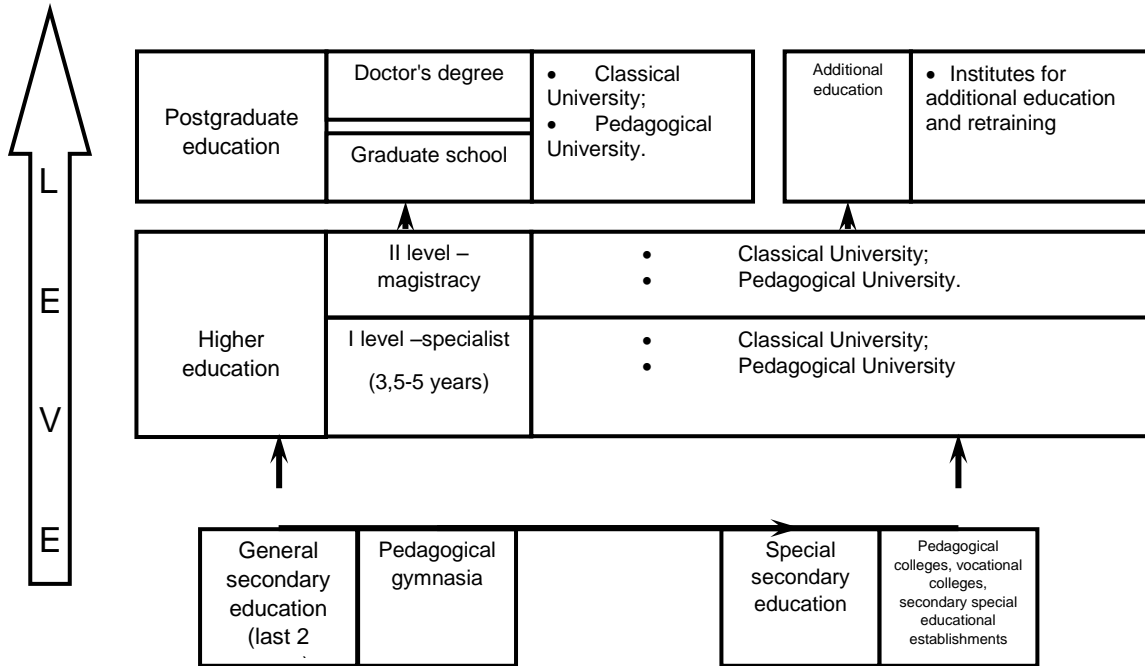


Source: eduBelarus.Info, <http://edubelarus.info/index.php?do=files&op=download&fileid=14>



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ANNEX B: SYSTEM OF TEACHER EDUCATION IN BELARUS



SOURCE: TORKHOVA, A, KRASNOVA, T, LUHAUTOVA, A (2010) TEACHER EDUCATION IN REPUBLIC OF BELARUS ON THE CROSSROADS OF INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL TENDENCIES, P.6, [HTTP://UNIBEL.ACADEMIA.EDU/ALENALUGOVTSOVA/PAPERS/414289/TEACHER EDUCATION IN REPUBLIC OF BELARUS ON THE CROSSROADS OF INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL TENDENCIES](http://unibel.academia.edu/AlenaLugovtsova/Papers/414289/Teacher_Education_in_Republic_of_Belarus_on_the_Crossroads_of_International_and_National_Tendencies)



ANNEX C: EXAMPLE OF GOOD PRACTICE

The development of pupils' and teachers' civic competence	
Type of initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Innovations in teacher education ▪ Cooperation among NGOs ▪ Cooperation with international organisations and experts in the field of teacher education
Aim of initiative	Promoting a competence-based approach in the development of civic awareness among pupils and teachers.
Target group	<p>Teachers (level ISCED 3) and high school students from Minsk and Minsk region.</p> <p>The Minsk Regional Institute for Educational Development is a project partner,</p>
Outcomes	<p>About 150 teachers took a direct part in this project.</p> <p>There were six 3-day-long seminars organised for them on 'Competence approach in the development of civic awareness among senior school students', as well as a workshop with experts from Germany for the most active teachers, a training in Germany and a camp for teams of the most active schools (teachers and pupils).</p>
Funding and costs	<p>The project was implemented with a financial support from the Belarus Support Programme of the German government.</p> <p>The Minsk Regional Institute for Educational Development provided a venue for some of the project seminars.</p> <p>Travel compensation for participant provided within the framework of the education system.</p> <p>The project participants did not pay for their participation in the programme, but after the seminars they carried out their own workshops for colleagues and students in their schools.</p>
Timeframe	<p>The project lasted one year (2007-2008).</p> <p>There is no permanent financing.</p>
Quality assurance	The quality-assurance process was a part of this initiative and involved regular monitoring and evaluation by the project implementation team.
Other comments (if any)	
Web link/contact details for further info	As a result of the project, a book on 'The possibilities of the competence-based approach in the development of civic awareness among school students' (electronic version of the book posted at: www.centerpost.org).
Source	Information from a questionnaire provided by the Educational Centre 'POST' Association



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