

**National Report of the Republic of Belarus**  
**on Carrying Out the Strategy on Implementation of the Major**  
**Objectives of the Education System Development in line with the**  
**EHEA Principles and Tools**  
*(May-December 2018)*

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## 1. Organizational Support of the Activities

For the purpose of forming the national legal framework for the implementation of the documents adopted at Paris Ministerial Conference of the European Higher Education Area (further referred to as EHEA) in the national higher education system, the Minister of Education of the Republic of Belarus approved *the Strategic Action Plan on Implementation of the Major Objectives of the Education System Development in line with the EHEA Principles and Tools (Strategic Action Plan)* on June 1, 2018.

*The Workplan for implementing the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) tools in the higher education system of the Republic of Belarus in 2018 (Workplan for 2018)* was developed for implementing *the Strategic Action Plan* provisions in 2018. It was agreed upon by the decision of the Presidium of the Republican Council of Rectors of Higher Education Institutions (minutes No. 3 as of July 5, 2018) and approved by the Minister of Education on July 12, 2018.

Higher education institutions were informed about the provisions of these documents in *the Guiding Letter* of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Belarus “*On Organization of Education Process in Higher Education Institutions in 2018/2019 Academic Year*” (the Letter of the Ministry of Education with ref. No. 03-01-17/7194/ds as of August 24, 2018). Besides *the Strategic Action Plan* and *the Workplan for 2018* were uploaded on the website of the Republican Council of Rectors of Higher Education Institutions at the following links: <http://srrb.niks.by/solution/2018-04-23-5.pdf> and <http://srrb.niks.by/info/plan2018.pdf>. This letter recommended the higher education institutions to inform higher education staff and students about *the Strategic Action Plan* and the major objectives for implementing by higher education institutions.

The Republic of Belarus appointed and sent the corresponding information to the Bologna Follow-Up Group Secretariat:

– *National Correspondent for Qualifications Frameworks (QF-EHEA)* – Sergei Kasperovich, Head of the Main Department of Professional Education of the Ministry of Education, and Elena Betenya, Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs of the Education Institution “Minsk State Linguistic University”;

– *representatives of the Republic of Belarus in the Bologna Follow-Up Group* – Vadim Bogush, Rector of the Education Institution “Belarusian State University of Informatics and Radioelectronics”; Elena Betenya, Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs of the Education Institution “Minsk State Linguistic University”;

– *representatives of the Republic of Belarus in peer support groups of the Bologna Follow-Up Group:*

- *Peer Support Group A for qualifications frameworks and ECTS* – Elena Betenya, Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs of the Education Institution “Minsk State Linguistic University”;

- *Peer Support Group C for quality assurance* – Svetlana Vegeera, First Vice-Rector of the Education Institution “Polotsk State University”;

- *Peer Support Group B for recognition* – Marina Shalupenko, Head of the Center for Document Recognition of the State Education Institution “National Institute of Higher Education” (Belarus ENIC);

– members of the National working group for implementation of the EHEA tools in the education system of the Republic of Belarus chaired by Irina Starovoitova, First Deputy-Minister of Education.

Besides, a new team of national Higher Education Reform Experts in the Republic of Belarus was formed (HEREs, the National Erasmus+ Office in the Republic of Belarus). Its composition includes the following members:

– Sergei Kasperovich, Head of the Main Department of Professional Education of the Ministry of Education (head of the team);

– Elena Betenya, Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs of the Education Institution “Minsk State Linguistic University”;

– Marina Shalupenko, Head of the Center for Document Recognition of the State Education Institution “National Institute of Higher Education” (Belarus ENIC);

– Svetlana Vegera, First Vice-Rector of the Education Institution “Polotsk State University”;

– Igor Titovich, Vice-Rector of the State Education Institution “National Institute of Higher Education”;

– Valentina Bogatyryova, First Vice-Rector of the Education Institution “Vitebsk State University named after P.M. Masherov”;

– Ivan Rybnikov, undergraduate student of Minsk State Linguistic University, Chairman of the Public Republican Students Council.

Upon the request from the BFUG Secretariat as of November 23, 2018, the Republic of Belarus provided the updated information for the country page of the EHEA website (<http://www.ehea.info/pid34250-cid101106/belarus.html>).

In addition, the Republic of Belarus is currently developing a multilingual website <http://by-ehea.info> for the purpose of information and analytical support of the process of implementing the EHEA tools in the national higher education system. Launching of the website is planned on March 1, 2019.

## **2. Events and Activities in the Republic of Belarus Related to the Bologna Process**

In 2018 the Republic of Belarus took part in discussions of the issues of implementing the EHEA tools within the frameworks of various international events as well as during meetings of the Minister of Education of the Republic of Belarus with international experts and heads of international and foreign organizations and institutions:

– on June 6, 2018 the Minister of Education of the Republic of Belarus held a meeting with the Advisor of the Council of Europe DG for Political Affairs Ms. Albina Ovcharenko, where they discussed directions for implementing *the Strategic Action Plan* provisions;

– on June 11-15, 2018 at the international conference “Implementation of Bologna Instruments: Towards Student-Centered Learning and Teaching” in the Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences (Vilnius) the representatives of Belarusian universities presented *the Strategic Action Plan* and the *Workplan for 2018* to international experts and discussed further directions of activities of our country;

– on July 5, 2018 the representatives of the higher education system of the Republic of Belarus took part in the first meeting of the Panel for Youth, Education and Culture within Platform 4 “Mobility and Contacts between People” of the Eastern Partnership initiative and made a report on the current activities in the national higher education system related to establishing the national system of quality assurance and to ensuring employability of young people;

– on October 30, 2018 the meeting was held with the Minister of Education of the Republic of Belarus and the Head of the European Parliament delegation for relations with Belarus Mr. Bogdan Zdrojewski where they exchanged opinions on activities related to implementing the EHEA tools;

– other events.

As for the national level of activities, various training courses, conferences and workshops on participation of the Republic of Belarus in the EHEA were conducted for representatives of higher education institutions of the Republic of Belarus (students, academic staff and administrative staff).

### **3. Qualifications Framework**

The Republic of Belarus has been developing the National Higher Education Qualifications Framework (BelQF) and the National Qualifications System simultaneously.

In 2018 the National Higher Education Qualifications Framework (BelQF) was fine-tuned after its discussion at the international workshop “Enabling Evidence-Based Higher Education Policies for Better Employment: Focus on Learning Outcomes and Graduate Tracking” (October 8-10, 2018, Minsk). Besides, within the implementation of the international technical assistance project “Employment and Vocational Education and Training in Belarus” the training course “Linking Vocational and Qualification/Educational Standard, Assessment of Student Practical Activities’ Outcomes, Recognition of Prior Learning Outcomes” was organized for Belarusian higher education staff (October 30, 2018, Minsk).

At present the draft National Higher Education Qualifications Framework (BelQF) is used when drafting intergovernmental agreements on mutual recognition of educational certificates as well as consulting citizens regarding compatibility of higher education acquired before the introduction of the multi-cycle higher education system with the higher education model in force.

Information about the National Qualifications System of the Republic of Belarus is provided below:

– the Sectoral Qualifications Council at the Ministry of Labor and Social Security of the Republic of Belarus, the Sectoral Council for Business Administration Qualifications at the Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Belarus, the Sectoral Qualifications Council at the Ministry of Industry of the Republic of Belarus were established and have been functioning;

– drafts of sectoral qualifications frameworks were developed: for industrial sectors and for business administration;

– professional standards were developed in the employment field “Management of Commercial Organization” (the Ministry of Economy of the

Republic of Belarus) and in the employment field “Social Worker” (the Ministry of Labor and Social Security of the Republic of Belarus);

– Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus No. 764 “On Strategy of Improving the National Qualifications System of the Republic of Belarus” was adopted on October 24, 2018. It defines further actions for improvement of the National Qualifications System of the Republic of Belarus.

The process of optimization of terms of training in Cycle I of higher education was finalized in the higher education system:

<b>Term of studies</b>	<b>ECTS</b>	<b>Number of study programmes (training started on September 1, 2018)</b>
3 years	180	<b>3</b> (0.75%)
4 years	240	<b>317</b> (83%)
4.5 years	270	<b>6</b> (2%)
5 years	300	<b>45</b> (12%)
5.5 years	330	<b>1</b> (0.25%)
6 years	360	<b>8</b> (2%)
		<b>380 (100%)</b>

A new draft of the National Classifier of the Republic of Belarus “Specialties and Qualifications” OKRB 011-20xx was developed and agreed upon with all stakeholders. It establishes a new structure of higher education qualifications (bachelor’s degree, master’s degree, integrated master’s degree) and its compatibility with OSCE 2011 and 2013 as well as the European Higher Education Qualifications Framework. This draft and a new version of the Education Code of the Republic of Belarus will enter into force simultaneously.

On December 17, 2018 the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Belarus approved Amendment No. 27 to the National Classifier of the Republic of Belarus “Specialties and Qualifications” OKRB 011-2009, which was agreed upon by stakeholders from among state bodies (organizations) and the National Statistics Committee and which stipulates a transition to a new model of master’s degree training.

#### **4. Quality Assurance**

The Republic of Belarus started the process of forming the national system of quality assurance in compliance with ESG-2015. International experts invited by the World Bank provide their support for this process. For this purpose a number of international round-table discussions and workshops were organized, where concepts of establishing internal and external quality assurance systems within the higher education system of the Republic of Belarus were developed. These events include the following:

– on March 21-22, 2018 the international conference “Quality of Higher Education of the Republic of Belarus: How Stakeholders See It” took place, where the results of the survey assessing employers’ opinions on competences required for successful employment of young people after graduation from Belarusian higher education institutions were presented;

– on June 5, 2018 the international workshop “Internal Quality Assurance System of Higher Education” took place, where Aurelia Valeikine, deputy director

of the Center for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (SKVC, Lithuania), Andree Sursock, senior advisor of the European University Association, and Jacques Lanares, professor of the University of Lausanne (Switzerland) took part (<http://nihe.bsu.by/news-instituta/2018-mezd-seminar-sistema-vnutr-kachestva-obrazovania>);

– on October 08-10, 2018 during the visit of the World Bank specialists to the Republic of Belarus meetings with the senior advisor of the European University Association Andree Sursock were held, where a logical framework of the compatibility of the current higher education quality assurance system in the Republic of Belarus with provisions of ESG-2015 was devised.

In general, the implementation of the World Bank project “Modernization of the Higher Education System in the Republic of Belarus” envisages the implementation of the Project Component “Quality Assurance” that stipulates establishing the national higher education quality assurance system and the national quality assurance agency with its further accession to ENQA.

## **5. Recognition of Qualifications**

In implementing *the Strategic Action Plan* provisions of the Section “Recognition of Qualifications” the Republic of Belarus carried out the following events and activities:

– English-language section of the ENIC Belarus webpage was developed; it provides information about the procedures of recognition of foreign educational certificates in the Republic of Belarus (<http://nihe.bsu.by/foreign-diplomas-and-degrees-recognition>);

– on October 18, 2018 within the frameworks of technical assistance mission provided to the Republic of Belarus by Erasmus+ the international information workshop “Recognition of Prior Learning” was conducted for representatives of universities ([http://nihe.bsu.by/news-instituta/2248-mezhdunarodnyj-seminar-priznanie-predshestvuyushchego-obrazovaniya?fbclid=IwAR3VXRoIIUc3Pw5Ac5W\\_gx47KfwTuqIwEInuA5dd5Gqu0lMOgTAoKRW6pxU](http://nihe.bsu.by/news-instituta/2248-mezhdunarodnyj-seminar-priznanie-predshestvuyushchego-obrazovaniya?fbclid=IwAR3VXRoIIUc3Pw5Ac5W_gx47KfwTuqIwEInuA5dd5Gqu0lMOgTAoKRW6pxU)); the international expert Sandra Kraze, project manager in international affairs of the School of Business and Finance of Latvia, international expert for higher education of Latvia, Germany and SHARE (the EU programs for higher education support for the ASEAN region) took part in the workshop.

Besides, to facilitate of the contractual framework on mutual recognition of educational certificates drafts of corresponding agreements were developed with the following countries: Turkey, Zimbabwe, Uzbekistan and Georgia.

The Republic of Belarus joined the project “TPG-LRC: Thematic Peer Group on the Implementation of the Lisbon Recognition Convention in EHEA Countries” (Peer Support Group B). The aim of the project is to promote the implementation of the Bologna Process with regard to the key commitment 2 on National legislation and procedures compliant with the Lisbon Recognition Convention.

## 6. Transparency Tools

In implementing the *Strategic Action Plan* provisions of the Section “Transparency Tools” the following events and activities were carried out:

– developing new content of higher education study programmes in compliance with G3+ (generation 3+) educational standards<sup>i</sup> and curricula with a strong focus on learning outcomes and ECTS; for this purpose the following documents were approved by the Minister of Education:

the Guidelines for Drafting New Educational Standards and Curricula (G3+) (approved on May 30, 2018);

the Layout of Educational Standard of Higher Education in Cycle I (approved by Order No. 594 of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Belarus as of July 18, 2018);

the Layout of the Typical Curricular for Specialties of the first cycle of higher education (approved by Order No. 594 of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Belarus as of July 18, 2018);

the Layout of Educational Standard for the Master’s Degree (approved by Order No. 611 of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Belarus as of July 23, 2018);

the Layout of the Typical Curriculum for Specialties of the Master’s Degree (approved by Order No. 611 of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Belarus as of July 23, 2018);

the Procedure of Development and Approval of Curricula and Individual Study Plans of Master’s Degree Students for Implementing Higher Education Programs of Cycle II (approved on December 3, 2018);

– within the frameworks of the implementation of the project “Fostering Competencies Development in Belarusian Higher Education (574087-EPP-1-2016-1-ES-EPPKA2-CBHE-SP)” study visits were organized for representatives of Belarusian higher education institutions to European universities for the purpose of sharing best practices in designing higher education content based on learning outcomes (University of Turku, Finland on April 16-20, 2018; University of Bialystok, Poland on April 23-27, 2018; the Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences, Lithuania on June 11-15, 2018);

– on August 22, 2018 the international workshop was carried out, which was dedicated to the issues of developing and revising study programmes in the field of human rights by OSCE/ODIHR.

Within the implementation of the project “Drafting Proposals and Plan for Implementing the Monitoring System of Employment of University Graduates in Belarus” (on the basis of the grant issued to the World Bank by the British Embassy) by March 2019 the World Bank will prepare guidelines for academic staff on the use of teaching technologies aiming at formation of modern universal competences and on the methodology of designing learning outcomes. Within the process of implementation of this project on October 8, 2018 the international workshop “Enabling Evidence-Based Higher Education Policies for Better Employment: Focus on Learning Outcomes and Graduate Tracking” was held for representatives of HEIs; reports on the Belarusian and international practices of

monitoring the employment of graduates, on practices of designing the content of education based on learning outcomes were presented.

For the purpose of developing and introducing the Diploma Supplement in the digital form in 2018 the Republic of Belarus applied for the technical assistance mission project within Erasmus+ (TAM). With taking into account the preliminary information received, the international TAM workshop “The prospects of Higher Education digitalization: modernization of educational tools, teaching methods and the diploma supplement” will take place in September-October 2019 in Vitebsk State Technological University.

Besides, within implementation of the project “Modernization of the Higher Education System in the Republic of Belarus” the World Bank provides for carrying out the project sub-component “Internationalization”, which includes development and implementation of the digital Diploma Supplement and creation of the national automated system ensuring the process of filling out and storing Diploma Supplement in the digital form.

## **7. Mobility of Higher Education Staff and Students, Internationalization**

For the purpose of expanding the academic mobility in the Republic of Belarus the following was done:

- extending the practice of providing training in English (1,708 people in 29 education institutions in 93 specialties). The issue of extending training in English for foreign nationals was discussed during the meeting of the Presidium of the Republican Council of Rectors of Higher Education Institutions of the Republic of Belarus on December 19, 2018 (<http://www.srrb.niks.by/solution/2018-12-19-1.pdf>);

- the State Program “Education and Youth Policy for 2016-2020” provides for allocation of the budget finances to fund academic mobility of Belarusian higher education teaching staff and students;

- the Regulation on Internships Abroad for Teaching Staff was drafted, it defines the procedure of selecting and funding the academic mobility for higher education staff;

- 416 representatives of HEIs took part in international internships (higher education teachers of general professional and specialized subjects) in 23 countries in 2018;

- cooperation of Belarusian and foreign HEIs is carried out within frameworks of 4,011 agreements and contracts.

It is noteworthy that the disparity of students’ incoming and outgoing mobility remains. In 2018 the number of students who went abroad within academic mobility was 4,662, and the number of international students who came to Belarus to get education was 3,368 people.

In addition, for the purpose of internationalization of the national higher education system and raising interest among foreign nationals in getting their education in Belarusian higher education institutions the Republic of Belarus will be issuing grants to international students (in compliance with the Decree of the President of the Republic of Belarus No. 232 as of June 12, 2018 “On Study Grants” and Resolution of the Council of Ministers No. 646 as of September 7,



2018 “Regulation on Procedure of Selecting Foreign Citizens and Stateless Persons Permanently Residing outside the Republic of Belarus for Training at the Expense of Grants in State Higher Education and Secondary Specialized Education Institutions of the Republic of Belarus”). Starting from September 1, 2019 up to 100 grants will be annually issued to foreign nationals: international students will get a scholarship as well as allowances for excellence in training, research and public activities.

## **8. Lifelong Learning and Social Dimension of Higher Education**

For the purpose of forming the basis for organizing activities aimed at legal support of recognition of prior learning the international information workshop “Recognition of Prior Learning” was conducted for representatives of universities on October 18, 2018 ([http://nihe.bsu.by/news-instituta/2248-mezhdunarodnyj-seminar-priznanie-predshestvuyushchego-obrazovaniya?fbclid=IwAR3VXRoIIUc3Pw5Ac5W\\_gx47KfwTuqIwEInuA5dd5Gqu0lMOgTAoKRW6pxU](http://nihe.bsu.by/news-instituta/2248-mezhdunarodnyj-seminar-priznanie-predshestvuyushchego-obrazovaniya?fbclid=IwAR3VXRoIIUc3Pw5Ac5W_gx47KfwTuqIwEInuA5dd5Gqu0lMOgTAoKRW6pxU)); the international expert Sandra Kraze participated in the workshop as a speaker.

Implementing *the Strategic Action Plan* provisions for the revision of the current system of university graduates’ first job placement the following events and activities were carried out in 2018:

– Resolution No. 527 of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus as of July 12, 2018 introduced amendments into legal acts regulating the procedure of determining university graduates’ first job placement. For instance, the category of tuition-paying graduates entitled for equal rights to first job placement (alongside the state-funded graduates) was extended;

– the Federation of Trade Unions of Belarus started operation of the website “Go&Work.Bel” (<https://gowork.1prof.by/>), which provides assistance for university graduates in searching for their first job placement by uploading students’ CVs and questionnaires and providing this information to prospective employers;

– the Belarusian State University launched the website “E-Catalogue of University Graduates’ CVs” (<https://cv.bsu.by/>), which allows graduates to search for their first job placement taking into account employers’ demands in professional competences;

– on October 8, 2018 the international workshop “Enabling Evidence-Based Higher Education Policies for Better Employment: Focus on Learning Outcomes and Graduate Tracking” was organized in Minsk by the World Bank, where different models of monitoring graduates’ employment were discussed with the invited international expert Ms. Ramina Miarelli (London School of Economics). Interviewing of HEI representatives with regard to the current practices in Belarus was conducted in focus groups;

– within the frameworks of the implementation of the project “Drafting Proposals and Plan for Implementing the Monitoring System of Employment of University Graduates in Belarus” by March 2019 the World Bank will prepare a reference book on international practices of monitoring employment of university graduates.

It is noteworthy that Belarus is represented in the international QS Graduate Employability Rankings 2019 by the Belarusian State University that is listed in TOP-500 best world universities by employability rate indicator (in Group 301-500).

## 9. Fundamental EHEA Values

In 2018 the activities were carried out within the frameworks of developing students' potential. The following events and activities took place:

- on June 14, 2018 a meeting was held with Mr. Manel Sanchez, director of the European Youth Card Association (EYCA), where possibilities of introduction of youth cards in the Republic of Belarus were discussed;

- on October 8, 2018 the Country Sheet on Youth Work in Belarus was published;

- in November 2018 the work on *the Strategy of Development of State Youth Policy of the Republic of Belarus – 2030* started.

The activity of student associations and organizations enhanced:

- on August 22, 2018 the Student Council of the Latvian University visited the Belarusian State University (BSU) for the purpose of learning about the BSU student self-governing bodies and identifying areas of cooperation;

- on September 12-15, 2018 in BSU students from Belarus, Ukraine and Germany exchanged opinions on the project “Tandem Partnership Germany-Ukraine-Belarus”, which aims at extending the interaction of students in the area of students self-governing and peer learning in the area of developing joint student projects;

- on October 29-30, 2018 the BSU Student Assembly organized the III International Youth Forum “M.I.R” (70 leaders of student organizations from 16 countries participated), thematic workshops were carried out on “Participation of Students in Creating the University’s Business Ecosystem”; “Informal Education of Youth as Component of Comprehensive Business Administration Staff Training”; “Project Activities, Funding of Students Participation in International Programs and Projects”; “Volunteering and Student Volunteer Initiatives”. The Forum’s key event was a round-table discussion on developing student self-governance and further cooperation with the BSU Student Assembly.

It is noteworthy that on December 14-15, 2018 the National Youth Student Forum took place for the first time in Belarus. Representatives of self-governing student bodies from all HEIs, members of the Republican Public Student Council, representatives from the Parliament and the Ministry of Education participated in it. During the Forum the students were informed about the draft of *the Strategy of Development of State Youth Policy of the Republic of Belarus – 2030*. They participated in four discussion panels on the following topics: “Role of Youth Public Associations in Developing Social Activism”, “System of Interaction between Student Self-Governing Bodies and Administration of Higher Education Institutions”, “SMM Fundamentals (Marketing in Social Media), SEO (Internet Resources Optimization), Copywriting, Blogging, PR”, “Youth Parliamentarianism as a Form of Implementation of Youth Policy”

([https://nchtdm.by/meropriyatiya/pervyj\\_nacionalnyj\\_molodezhnyj\\_studencheskij\\_forum/](https://nchtdm.by/meropriyatiya/pervyj_nacionalnyj_molodezhnyj_studencheskij_forum/)).

## **10. Cooperation with the BFUG**

The representative of the Republic of Belarus in the Bologna Follow-Up Group Elena Betenya, Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs of the Education Institution “Minsk State Linguistic University” took part in the BFUG meeting in Vienna, Austria, on September 27-28, 2018.

First Deputy-Minister of Education

I.A. Starovoitova

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<sup>i</sup> An educational standard is a regulatory legal act determining the content of an educational programme by setting requirements for the educational process and learning outcomes.