

Review of Proposals, Schemes, Ideas and Concepts for the Educational Reform in Belarus

by Svyatlana Krupnik, Uladzimer Matskevich, Maksim Zhbankou*

4

Stage 1 (1991–1994). Search for approaches, intensive, however non-systemic actions. New scientific, educational and research centers established to replace those in Moscow, which had determined the development of the educational system in our country before 1991 (institutes of education¹, of tertiary education, of vocational training, and of further job training). A new education law. Increased unofficial initiatives in the educational sphere. First private educational institutions, from preschools to tertiary education facilities. New types of educational institutions (*lyceum*² and *gymnasium*³). Belarusification of instruction, although non-systemic, begins. Belarus became involved in international academic exchanges and education programs, and joined key international conventions in the area of education.

Culmination: Managerial seminar on the ‘Development of the System of School Education: Current State and Prospects’, held by the Ministry of Education and the Agency of Human Technologies on October 25, 1994.

After the declaration of independence, Belarus needed urgent reform of its educational system. That was caused by two reasons. Before 1991, the educa-

* Thanks to Mikhail Gusakouski, Alyaksandr Palonnikau and all those who took part in our discussion of the educational reform.

¹ Institutes and universities are both tertiary learning establishments, with universities enjoying higher status (transl.).

² Equivalent of ‘senior high’ (US) or ‘secondary school’ (UK) – ed.

³ Equivalent of ‘junior high’ (US) or ‘middle school’ (UK) – ed.

tional system of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic (BSSR) had been a regional subdivision of the Soviet educational system, and it was absolutely unsuited in its capacities to the needs of a sovereign country.

As of 1991, the year of the Soviet Union's collapse, the educational system of the USSR and that of the BSSR was in the process of reform, chronically unsuccessful, inconsistent and far from being completed. This means that the new Belarusian state in fact inherited an educational reform from the BSSR.

It became clear almost immediately that Belarus could not continue the Soviet educational reform initiated in 1984, as all bearers of reform's ideas, authors of reform projects and concepts, organizers and managers were in Moscow, and Minsk was a mere implementor. Belarus' national reform makers began to crop up in 1989, but the reform itself had not taken shape before the declaration of independence.

Newly established political organizations also addressed education problems. For instance, the 1989 program of the Belarusian Popular Front 'Adradzhenne' featured educational reform among other issues.

The Supreme Soviet enacted an education law⁴ sponsored by the faction of the Belarusian Popular Front, which set the basis for building a national educational system. The new education law provided for state and public forms of supervising the educational sector, and for establishing non-state educational institutions.

Public activity led to:

- the establishment of associations and NGOs in the sphere of education;
- formation of temporary work teams that embarked on tasks that governmental agencies could not cope with. In particular, they elaborated concepts and programs of education development in the country. At least, three such temporary creative teams should be mentioned:

1. The group led by Uladzimer Parkhomenka and Alyaksandr Kazulin. In 1992, this group developed the 'Concept of Education and Upbringing in Belarus', adopted by the Council of Ministers of Belarus on March 26, 1993⁵. Using that con-

⁴ Закон «Об образовании» Республики Беларусь. Мн. 1991.

⁵ «Адукацыя і выхаванне» 1993, № 10.

cept, the same group elaborated the ‘State Comprehensive Program for Developing Education and Upbringing in Belarus until 2000’, adopted by the Council of Ministers on November 15, 1993⁶.

The main idea was to transform the educational system in the country into a fully-fledged national system, adjust the educational sector to the needs of Belarus, and overcome the legacy of the Soviet educational system. However lacking a developed theoretical substantiation, the concept declared democratic, liberal and humanistic principles that would form the basis for Belarusian education. Those principles would ensure evolutionary de-Sovietization and Belarusification of schools at all levels.

A strength of the concept lay in its organizational aspect which was in harmony with the slow changes characteristic of all social spheres in the country in that period. The concept could be quite successfully implemented by the-then serving personnel of central government and the educational sector. Developed in a comprehensive action program until 2000, the concept was officially approved for implementation. However, it had many flaws and deficiencies which revealed themselves in 1994 (see: section about the education ministry’s managerial seminar).

2. The National School of Belarus. This group was led by Alyaksandr Kazulin (coordinator) and Mikhail Husakouski (scientific director). It authored and released the ‘Theoretical Foundations of the National School Concept of the Republic of Belarus’⁷ in 1992 and the ‘Concept of the National School of Belarus’⁸ in the following year.

That concept was aimed at supporting trends defined by the authors as:

- establishing national and cultural identity;
- modernization (the incorporation of Belarus as a state and nation into the world community and culture).

The concept gave top priority to pedagogical techniques. Much space was devoted to philosophical and psychological substantiation of existing pedagogi-

⁶ «Адукацыя і выхаванне» 1994, №№ 7–8.

⁷ «Адукацыя і выхаванне» 1992, № 12.

⁸ *Фактары станаўлення і развіцця нацыянальнай школы Беларусі. Матэрыялы навукова-практычнай канферэнцыі 11–13 мая 1994, Мн., ІПК, 1994, с. 104–155.*

cal techniques and those yet to be developed. The concept almost did not touch on the organizational, managerial, financial or legal aspects of the reform.

Therefore, the two concepts complemented each other and, if necessary, could serve a basis for a more holistic approach.

3. The group led by Alyksandr Rastunou elaborated the 'Concept of Tertiary school Development in the Republic of Belarus in the New Environment'. The group teamed up with other scholars (Valyantsina Badun and others) to devise the 'Concept for Developing Secondary Vocational Education in the Republic of Belarus'. Later, the Rastunau team drew up the 'State Program for Developing Tertiary Education in the Republic of Belarus in a Market Environment'⁹.

The essence of those concepts was to democratize and liberalize higher and secondary vocational education. Top priority was given to the problem of survival, very acute for educational institutions in 1991–1993. The other problem was with academic liberties and freedom of creative activity of scientists and educators. Hence, the most developed parts of the document concerned diversification of sources of finance, and legal and organizational aspects of tertiary education's administration. That concept could not be used in practice as it failed to keep pace with the changes that had occurred by the time it was released. In particular, the concept did not take into consideration the emergence of private institutions of tertiary education and fee-paying students.

Apart from the above-stated concepts, widely covered by the media, those years saw local products such as the 'Educational and Methodological Concept'¹⁰ – a process designed for working on modern school books and didactically-founded means of educational provision, authored by Leanid Frydman, Barys Palcheuski and Barys Tsytovich. Simultaneously, several creative groups in different institutions started developing educational standards.

In October 1994, the new minister of education, Vasil Strazhau, commissioned the Agency of Humanitarian Technologies with the task of organizing

⁹ «Адукацыя і выхаванне» 1994, №№ 9–10.

¹⁰ «Тэхналагічная адукацыя» 1996, №№ 3–6.

a managerial seminar on the 'Development of the System of School Education: Current State and Prospects'. The seminar was conducted in the form of an organizational game. Participating in the game were: 1. a group from the Ministry of Education (minister, deputy ministers, departmental chiefs and senior experts); 2. heads of national institutes of tertiary education, vocational education and further job training; 3. representatives of local governmental agencies (regional, district and city education departments); 4. directors of state and private schools, university rectors; 5. authors of the former two concepts mentioned above; 6. representatives of the pedagogical science; 7. representatives of non-governmental organizations and foundations; 8. journalists.

Given that some of the seminar participants were members of political parties and the trade union of educators, and many were the parents of students, it is safe to say that all the stakeholders interested in the development of education were represented at the seminar.

Five working groups were formed at the seminar.

1. Investment and financial aspects of supervising education;
2. Legal aspects of supervising education;
3. Structural and functional aspects of supervising education;
4. Conceptual and planning aspects of supervising education;
5. Supervision and control of the educational provision quality.

Results of the seminar were set out in a report titled 'On Educational Reform in Belarus, 1994' also known as the 'Green Notebook'¹¹. The Green Notebook was sent out to the president of Belarus, the chair of the Supreme Soviet's standing Committee on Education, Science and Culture, minister of education and science, president of the Academy of Education, chair of the trade union of educators, chair of the independent trade union of teachers, and chair of the Council of Head Teachers.

The conclusion of the report was that nobody in the country had answers to key questions regarding each of the working groups.

¹¹ *О реформе образования в Беларуси образца 1994 года. («Зелёная тетрадь»)*. Агентство гуманитарных технологий. Мн. 1994.

1. Investment and financial aspects of supervising education: how much does Belarusian education cost?
2. Legal aspects of supervising education: how should legal relations be regulated between all the stakeholders in education?
3. Structural and functional aspects of supervising education: what principles should govern interaction and cooperation between various institutions that influence the educational sphere in the country?
4. Conceptual and planning aspects of supervising education: what is the plan of the educational reform? What conceptual approaches should it be based on?
5. Supervision and control of educational provision quality: what are the national criteria, methods and standards for evaluating the quality of the process and product of education?

All papers presented at the seminar were non-comprehensive in vision, mutually discordant and sometimes even conflicting. The concepts, plans and programs presented by participants and experts had to be seen as semi-finished products based on incomplete or unreliable information.

Actually, the establishment of the national system of education and educational reform in Belarus had to re-start.

Stage 2 (1995–1996). All initiatives originating from the preceding period were discouraged and blocked at the government level. It marked an end to Belarusification. All innovations were forced into the non-governmental sphere, the third sector. The Belarusian Soros Foundation and other alternative sources of finance appear. The private sector gained strength. A new education law was drafted.

This period ends in the dissolution of the Supreme Soviet.

The 'State Comprehensive Program for Developing Education and Upbringing in Belarus until 2000' was never implemented, however approved by the Council of Ministers of Belarus, along with many others of the kind drafted in late 1980s and early 1990s. The 1991 Education Law, which opened up broad opportunities for development and innovations, failed to respond to the accumulated changes and innovations.

National research institutes established in the first years of independence – those of basic, tertiary and vocational education, and further job training never became real centers on a national scale. Suffice it to look at subjects of dissertations of *kandidat's*¹² and *doctor's*¹³ degrees in those institutes to understand that Belarusian pedagogical analysts did not address real problems of the educational reform. Not a single thesis was presented regarding the educational process at the national level. All the themes were at the level of individual student-and-educator, or individual educational institution. The broadest-themed dissertation dealt with the structure of educational supervision in Minsk.

Since the Belarusian pedagogical science in its institutional forms remained unprepared to face the challenge of the times, subsequent steps toward the educational reform were taken outside of official scientific institutions. The following activities and centers should be pointed to when discussing the period under review:

1. Further work by the group led by Mikhail Husakouski. The work was commissioned by one of the leaders of this group, Alyksandr Kazulin, who became deputy minister of education and later rector of the Belarusian State University. The work was pursued at the Belarusian Lyceum, National Institute of Education, center of further training for senior education officials, Belarusian State University with the use of their facilities.
2. Work on a new approach to educational reform, which was initiated by Vasil Strazhau, minister of education and science. This work was mainly done by officials. Established on Strazhau's instructions to replace the Coordinating Council for Scientific Studies in Education and founded on June 14, 1993, the Belarusian Academy of Education was deemed inefficient and closed.
3. Work on a new education law initiated by the Supreme Soviet of Belarus. A special working group was formed. It included many former participants of the above-mentioned seminar.

¹² Equivalent to a PhD. degree (ed.)

¹³ Equivalent to PhD. or *doktor habilitowany* (Pl)

4. The Belarusian Soros Foundation's programs. In the framework of one of these, the 'Program of Updating Liberal Education' coordinated by Uladzimir Matskevich¹⁴ worked on the 'Concept of Updating Liberal Education'. By the end of 1996, the scope of this concept was expanded, and it started being regarded as a general concept of a national educational reform.
5. Work on an alternative scheme of educational reform, commissioned by Vasil Strazhau with a group of experts (Uladzimir Matskevich, Barys Palcheuski, Leanid Frydman, Svyatlana Krupnik, and Henadz Pyatrouski) at the end of 1995. 'Organizational Scheme of Educational Reform in the Republic of Belarus'¹⁵.

None of those activities would stand any chance of success if conducted separately. Educational reform could start and end successfully only if supported by both the government and the society. However, such concord was never reached because of both positive and negative factors, with the latter being predominant.

Positive factors:

- Sufficient experience and input had been accumulated in previous years.
- Flaws and deficiencies in what had already been done were known. It was clear how they should be eliminated.
- Most of the experts were in various forms involved in all the above activities. Participants in each of the above-mentioned activities were somehow involved in other activities.

Negative factors:

- The country was experiencing an ideological crisis, which was exacerbating. This resulted in a political upheaval at the end of 1996.
- All concepts based on national priorities, democratic and liberal values were ideologically unacceptable for the new regime, while others did not exist.

¹⁴ Информационно-аналитический бюллетень «Обновление гуманитарного образования» 1997, № 11; гл. таксама: *Всемирная энциклопедия: философия*, Москва «АСТ» – Минск «Харвест», 2000. Статья: *Образование, Педагогика*.

¹⁵ В. В. Мацкевич, Б. В. Пальчевский, Л. С. Фридман, С. А. Крупник, Г. Н. Петровский, *Оргпроект реформы образования Республики Беларусь*, Мн., 1995.

- A conflict broke out between Education Minister Strazhau, who was supervising some activities, and Deputy Minister Kazulin, who was supporting others. Although this conflict bore no relation to ideology, it considerably impeded all work.
- The conflict between the Supreme Soviet and the president's 'vertically integrated' government administration was gaining momentum. The chairman of the Supreme Soviet's education committee, who shared the administration's stance, in fact sabotaged work on the new education law.

As a result, two more years were lost. With the dissolution of the Supreme Soviet in November 1996, everything was back to square one. The 'Concept of the National School of Belarus' by Husakouski and others and the 'Organizational Plan of Educational Reform in the Republic of Belarus' by Matskevich and others were ultimately rejected. Established in place of the Supreme Soviet, the House of Representatives of the National Assembly rejected the existing version of the new Education Law and started drafting a new law.

The group of Husakouski limited its work to the premises where its members worked officially, and later became a subdivision of the Belarusian State University. The Agency of Human Technologies (led by Matskevich) transformed into the Belarusian Soros Foundation's 'Program of Updating Liberal Education'. Its operation stopped with the closure of the Belarusian Soros Foundation in early 1997.

The only entity that continued to function at the national level was the Ministry of Education. There was no other alternative.

Stage 3 (1997–1999). The government establishes tight control over education. Private education and the third sector still exist.

This was a 'dead season' for educational reform. It had some peculiarities.

The non-state sector was still surviving and even expanding despite the lack of a legal framework, bureaucratic obstacles, fiscal burden, and economic stagnation. There was a rise in demand for non-state education, and the education market responded by expanding the range of provision.

Russian influence on Belarusian education strengthened. This affected the conceptual, organizational and technological aspects of education. Both education standards and school textbooks were borrowed from Russia.

All democratic achievements in public education were reversed. In this period, the government ultimately rejected the principle of state and public control that had been laid down by the 1991 Education Act. Academic liberties were mere declarations. In schools and universities, the authorities started implanting units of the Belarusian Youth Union and the Belarusian Patriotic Youth Union, politicized organizations loyal to the regime, which were immune to the ban on political activity in educational institutions. Orthodoxy acquired the status of government-supported religion. The Russian Orthodox Church started to filter into schools, which was a breach of the Education Act and the Freedom of Religion Act.

This period spawned the Council of Ministers' Directive No. 500 dated April 12, 1999, entitled, 'On the Development Guidelines for the National Educational system'¹⁶. That directive in fact rejected all that had been done since 1991 and revived the ideas of 1984, when the USSR started its failed educational reform.

To clarify the directive's vision, it is enough to cite an excerpt: 'The achievement of the goal of reform envisages:

- preservation and development of the best qualities of the educational system that emerged in the Soviet period;
- the educational system's advancement and adequate reaction to social and cultural transformations;
- formation of an educational and upbringing system that would meet the aims of the new stage of societal development¹⁷'.

The expressions 'advancement and adequate reaction to social and cultural transformations' and 'new stage of societal development' were not clarified.

Stage 4 (since 2000). The state and unofficial education sectors completely separated. The 'reformed' education sector and the new education law leave no room for private and unofficial education, Belarusification, or real reform.

The current period in education is officially called 'reform'. The Council of Ministers' Development Guidelines for the National Educational system provide for a number of activities and measures to preserve the current state of affairs.

¹⁶ Пастанова Рады Міністраў Рэспублікі Беларусь ад 12 красавіка 1999 г., № 500 *Аб асноўных кірунках развіцця нацыянальнай сістэмы адукацыі.*

¹⁷ Ibid.

Considering that no real reform has taken place, some concepts and ideas proposed in previous years continue to be relevant. Among them are:

The 1993 Concept of the National School of Belarus. It is still the basis of activity for the Center of Education Development Issues at the Belarusian State University, which employs some of the members of the National School of Belarus group.

The 1995 Organizational Scheme of Educational Reform in the Republic of Belarus. This organizational scheme was designed as a basic framework to incorporate all thoughts and ideas concerning the development of the educational sector. It envisages interactions between entities of the civil society in reforming the education and state systems. The National Institute of Education and the Academy of Post-Graduate Training were guided by this scheme in their work. Provisions of the scheme are used in training education managers at the Academy of Post-Graduate Training and the Institute of Vocational Training (IVE), and in training for master's and *kandidat's* degrees. The theme of 'functional literacy' was elaborated in the framework of this scheme – in the IVE laboratory of vocational education methodology since 1997, later in the Education Ministry's department of analytical and legal work, and then in the sociology department of the Academy of Post-Graduate Training that employs experts or trainees of the Academy of Human Technologies, which has been an 'invisible college' rather than an official organization since 1997. A report on 'Functional Literacy in Belarus' was commissioned by UNESCO. The report, presented at the UNESCO annual conference in Warsaw in 2000, included the 'possible scenario of eliminating functional illiteracy in the event of changes of external political and economic factors' as an integral part of the educational reform in the country¹⁸.

The 1996–1997 Concept of Updating Liberal Education. Designed for implementation through the Belarusian Soros Foundation, this concept, after the Foundation's closure, laid the foundation for activities of several NGOs (for instance, the Association for Updating Liberal Education and the Belarusian Associa-

¹⁸ В. В. Мацкевич, С. А. Крупник, *Функциональная грамотность в системе образования Беларуси*, Мн., АПО, 2003.

tion of Innovative Schools). This has been the most radical concept ever proposed in Belarus.

Political parties have been mentioning education in their programs, but none of them elaborated on education issues. Nevertheless, political parties and non-governmental organizations have supported specific projects, in civic education above all. For instance, the Khartiya-97 group provided assistance in setting up the people's university 'Society of Philomats' which teaches courses in all regional and many district cities and towns. Independent and free trade unions also organized courses not only on specific topics, but also on basic subjects such as law, computer training and environment. A number of NGOs specializing in civic education were established with support from the Belarusian Popular Front (BPF), United Civic Party (UCP) and other parties. But, neither political parties nor public movements have a comprehensive concept or a plan of actions in the area.

Educational System Diagnosis

by Maksim Zhbankou,
Alyaksandr Palonnikau

The whole post-Soviet period is associated with various attempts to reform the educational system, which had the following objectives

‘De-ideologization’ aimed to emancipate the education contents from constraints of the Communist ideology. De-ideologization was originally targeted at humanities, but its application turned out to be much wider than originally designed, and affected general upbringing (role models and values) and basic objectives of the Belarusian education as a whole. It is impossible to overlook considerable success of de-ideologization.

‘Depoliticization’ was aimed at purging schools of Communist party political institutions and its branches, such as youth and children’s organizations. The objective was not attained completely, because some relicts of Communist children’s organizations, such as young pioneers, continue to function and even seek to increase their influence.

‘Belorussification’ sought transition to Belarusian-language instruction at all education establishments. Transition was expected to take 10 years. The decade saw attempts to write Belarusian-language books for all levels of education, switch to Belarusian in official documents, and improve teachers’ knowledge of the Belarusian language and culture. These efforts have been ineffective. The authorities abandoned the program.

‘Diversification’ is associated with structural changes in Belarus’ educational system. The effort resulted in the emergence of new types of schools such

as *gymnasiums*, *lyceums*¹⁹, colleges, and education conglomerates (combining vocational schools, technical schools and tertiary establishments), many institutes were transformed into universities and academies, and the curricula changed according to the education level and major subjects. On a mass scale, secondary schools began opening specialized streams for chemists, economists, lawyers, firefighters, musicians etc. The reform gave rise to private commercial establishments and thus impacted the education services market. The structural reform affected all types of schools, including the system of additional and out-of-school education.

'Computerization' was aimed at supplying all schools with computers and teaching computer skills to students and teachers alike. Despite considerable efforts, results of the initiative are negligible, especially in rural schools.

The Belarusian educational system could be described as under-reformed, while the reform could be described as stagnant. Superficial administrative innovations did not affect the essence and forms of the education process.

The educational system in any modern society, including Belarusian, is becoming less and less able to perform its fundamental functions. To redress this:

- firstly, education should foster permanent renewal of information resources needed for occupational, social and political activities of individuals and social groups;
- secondly, education should ensure replenishment of human resources in the society. In other words, each individual should find his or her place in a concrete social order and obtain access to training in various social (including occupational) techniques;
- thirdly, the educational system is a natural breeding ground for the national elite, which sets out the priorities and guidelines of the nation's development;
- fourthly, tertiary education establishments, also referred to as the Higher School, have traditionally been the area for activities of scientific and scholar communities involved in research, not merely in teaching.

¹⁹ Cf. footnotes on p. 215 (ed.).

The educational system's smooth functioning requires efficient management and self-administration mechanisms capable of ensuring its evolution in a rapidly developing post-Soviet society. The existing system is fundamentally flawed and cannot perform these functions. A thorough analysis of each of the above-mentioned points proves this.

Renewal of information resources

There are three aspects to the issue: informational (the contents of education), methodological (training techniques), and technological (access to information resources).

Practically at all levels, the contents of education is superfluous, curricula are overload with largely outdated information while lacking up-to-date and well-presented information. This seems to be an absolutely natural course of things for the Belarusian society that came to a standstill at the early stage of its 'post-colonial' existence.

In the early 1990s, a whole gamut of content and subjects taught at schools in the previous epoch was deconstructed. The perestroika idealism inspired teachers at local tertiary education establishments to creating new courses and write new textbooks. Paradoxically, the new generation of textbooks was created by 'old school' authors, practically unacquainted with the new trends in humanities, almost completely unaware of the original sources and sticking to quasi-Marxist thinking patterns.

The general inertness of thought, lack of incentives for improving professional skills, non-transparent and clannish allocation of lucrative assignments for writing textbooks and absence of adequate expertise have produced a situation where information presented at schools has turned into 'information noise'. The supply of textbooks nominally satisfies market demand. But in fact, there are no original Belarusian textbooks on a variety of subjects including philosophy, social anthropology and culture. A number of advanced textbooks, on Belarusian history for instance, has not been published due to of opposition from hard-liners. The undemocratic and non-transparent procedure of textbook pre-

paration rules out open competition among groups of authors and their ideas. The country has no textbook writing standards.

Despite a heterogeneous general informational environment, each educational establishment clings to a set of 'its own' textbooks. In general, the country may be said to lack a whole range of necessary new textbooks.

The 'distorted', locally produced information environment creates the necessary prerequisites for Russia's informational expansion: Russian textbooks, often as 'parochial' in contents as most Belarusian ones take center stage in the marketplace with their use of up-to-date scientific terminology and broader range of sources. In result, Belarusian students get 'two in one': a Russian-produced information package stuffed with the ideology of the former 'Big Brother'.

The education technologies were affected by both the education ministry's uniformity policies and chaotic experimentation by private schools of all levels.

The educational system is characterized by alleged plurality of educational technologies: state establishments stick to traditional teaching methods, some enthusiastic teachers invent new techniques, while private schools adopt Western methods.

The above-mentioned approaches are simply inadequate. Copying Soviet or Western methodologies proved absolutely inefficient, but there are still no constructive adoption mechanisms. Patchy educational techniques, conflicting in the teacher's mind and in general practice of educational facilities alike, hamper effective communication and impair education quality. At best, teachers and students have a very vague idea of how to present and learn a subject. At worst, they just 'speak different languages' due to being in parallel communicative dimensions.

The legacy Soviet system for training teachers makes it difficult for them to master advanced teaching techniques. The system openly discriminates against professionals working for private schools because they are required to pay for refresher courses, while teachers working in state establishments can take courses free of charge. Many skilled and experienced teachers quit facilities providing refresher and training courses for teachers because of low pay.

The skills of teachers and students to use information sources do not meet present-day requirements due to the following factors:

- poor knowledge of foreign languages (as well as of the Belarusian mother tongue);
- computer illiteracy;
- limited access to Web resources outside large cities;
- lack of computer hardware at most educational institutions;

The inefficient state system for training the trainers helps little in improving teaching quality, computer skills and access to information databases.

The formerly used centralized system of assigning teachers to refresher courses no longer exists; therefore, administrators of education establishments have no interest in raising the quality of teaching in their institutions. Moreover, teachers are often reluctant to sign up for refresher courses. The contents of such courses are outdated and often biased.

Even if innovative programs of retraining and further education are implemented, they conflict with the provincial teacher's real working conditions.

The general conclusion here is that the modern Belarusian school is involved in copying government-authorized standard methods and techniques, or resorts to a chaotic combination of borrowed information and methodological resources. The educational information space is heterogeneous and plagued by internal conflicts. These factors intensify the trend leading to a major crisis of Belarus' educational system.

Replenishment of human resources

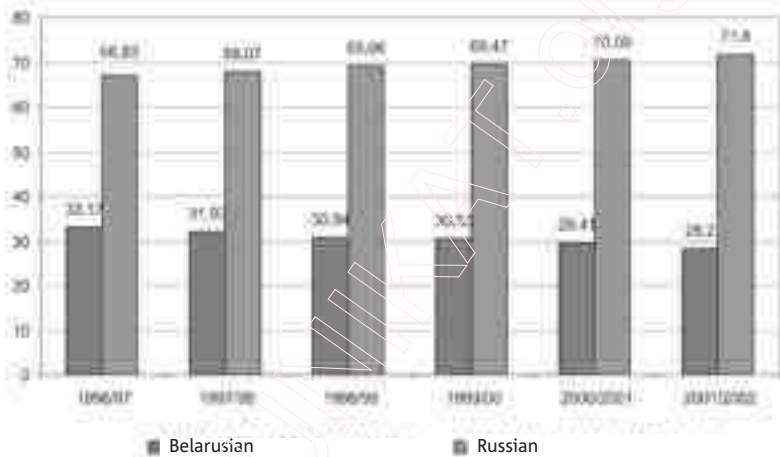
The Belarusian educational system, reliant on administrative tools, is a classical example of a system that produces 'one-dimensional people' (after G. Maruze).

In terms of influence on students and evaluating their performance, Belarusian education retains core features of the Soviet educational system, such as:

- authoritarianism;
- lack of incentives and opportunities for creative work both for students and teachers;

- ideology being an important element of the educational process;
- lack of real opportunities to receive instruction in the native languages for both the Belarusians and ethnic minorities.

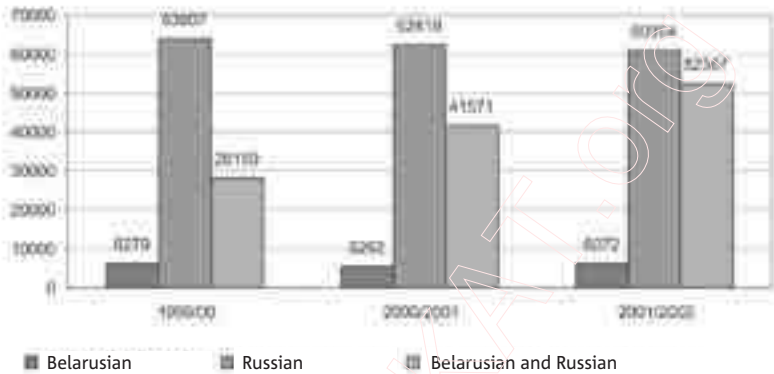
Chart 1: Language of Instruction in General Education Schools (percentage of the total number of students, National Average)



Source: Chief Information and Analytical Center of the Ministry of Education

As far as the content of education is concerned, both state and private schools tend to cram students with as much information as possible, rather than develop their creativity. Use of new sources, including texts in European languages, rearrangement of schooling hours to favor self-instruction were an additional burden on students who have not a slightest notion of what analytical work and analytical writing consist in. Crammed space, cribbing, truancy and other forms of quiet sabotage are widely used as self-defense against educational innovations of the kind.

Chart 2: Language of Instruction in Tertiary Education (thousands students)



In such a system, there is high demand for qualities such as obedience, loyalty, devotion to administrative staff, readiness to ‘follow the general party line’ rather than independent thinking, critical mind and ethnic identity. In fact, it indicates the retrospective orientation of the educational process: instead of raising free citizens of an independent European state, schools produce timid conformists, new soldiers for a non-existing empire. Mentally, these are the people of the past, completely incapable of living in a post-industrial society.

Absence of distinct national priorities in education policies reveals itself in attempts to tie the Belarusian and Russian systems together by introducing uniform educational standards. In fact, it implies the transformation of the Belarusian educational system into an ideological and informational appendix to Russia’s educational institutions. The Belarusian educational establishments produce either potential intellectual émigrés, i.e. labor force for Russia and – to a lesser extent – for Europe, or human resources for preserving the status quo. In both cases, the educational system objectively encourages a ‘cleansing’ of the Belarusian culture from potential reformers, i.e. those creatively thinking intellectuals who advocate European values.

It is also necessary to mention low prestige of the teacher's profession. A drastic decline in teachers' living standards in mid-1990s caused fragmentation of this once well-off social group, followed by the outflow of most active and enterprising people to private companies and schools. The teachers may be divided into well-off administrators with direct access to financial resources, involuntary workaholics doomed to work hard for multiple educational establishments, and 'serfs', or misfits in terms of either category because of age or character.

On the one hand, spontaneous social divisions affect students' outlook and level of education, and contribute to plurality of lifestyles and behavioral models. On the other, there have been similar divisions among teachers who form various groups as diverse as the administrative elite that combine education with business, and 'intellectual shuttle workers' who rush from one educational institution to another in pursuit of additional income. At the same time, existing uniform models and standards in education are not adjusted to this stratification.

The present forms of education cannot offer adequate training to new generations of Belarusians to make them a competitive labor force in Europe. They cannot teach them to survive in a post-Soviet society or absorb ethnic and cultural identity principles. Thus, a possible conclusion is that the educational system in Belarus in its present state is largely decorative, and cannot supply the Belarusian nation with what is required of modern-day human resources.

Forming a new national elite

The educational system traditionally generates human resources for the national elite. In Belarus, it implies training highly-educated professionals and managers capable of making decisions with due regard for local conditions.

The current situation in the education sector is characterized by tight administrative controls, uniform standards and methods coupled with declining quality, lack of efficient international contacts, and inadequate informational support for the education process. The system is focused on providing knowledge

rather than stimulating thinking; it makes little use of advanced education and information technologies and is under-funded. All these factors prevent it from working efficiently to sustain the national elite.

Also, it should be understood that the whole Belarusian elite is not interested in renewal, primarily because of the traditionally clannish organization of the top strata in the Belarusian society keen to maintain their leading roles. In a society without democratic traditions, the elite of all kinds – from artillery generals to theater managers – ignore people’s interests and are guided by the self-preservation instinct only. Belarus has never seen a natural dynamic change in generations of the elite or expanded creation of new jobs, especially in administration, which is unnatural for a growing society. It means that each subsequent generation has a chance to realize their ambitions through conflicts only, i.e. by ousting representatives of the older generation from their positions.

In this sense, important skills are those of scheming, dirty backstage games, bribery, guessing the momentary balance of conflicting forces to curry favors with those at the top, or finding ways to defame perceived competitors, i.e. qualities that have nothing to do with education. The ruling circles in today’s Belarus are in great demand of behavioral patterns of a ‘provincial charismatic figure or ‘cautious trickster’. Mid-level positions are usually occupied by ‘one track ponies’ devoted to their bosses.

In current setting, the new elite either keep a low profile (the newly rich Belarusians conceal their profits and assets abroad, new media- and advertising executives etc.) or function within the government system. Emergence of the new elite obviously contradicts interests of the political regime that exercises monopoly over the evolution of society and the inert, Soviet-style mass mentality. New, active minorities have almost no career opportunities and have to sell their intellectual potential abroad, mainly in neighboring countries.

Conclusion: Belarus’ national elite does not evolve or revitalize the way it would in an ‘open’ society (K. Popper). Consequently, the Belarusian society faces a natural identity crisis. The current outmoded elite are neither able to adjust themselves to societal processes nor elaborate and carry out an effective social development scenario.

One of the key factors that keep the society stagnant is the absence of a well-developed system for educating elites that would be capable of supplying top levels of social structures with competent executives.

Academic research



Research is a traditional function of the educational system, mainly characteristic of tertiary education facilities. A combination of teaching and research creates a real opportunity for testing new products in the process of teaching.

Belarus' educational system, however, doesn't offer incentives for productive research, especially and chiefly in departments specializing in humanities.

Teachers are burdened by excessive workload and a very complicated reporting system. Besides, they need to pursue additional sources of income. State sector's research assignments, with the exception of those based in ideology, are not funded properly. Most frequently, results of research made on these assignments do not find practical application and are shelved in the form of reports. The so-called research plans are carried out on paper only, while scheduled research themes are replaced with available publications.

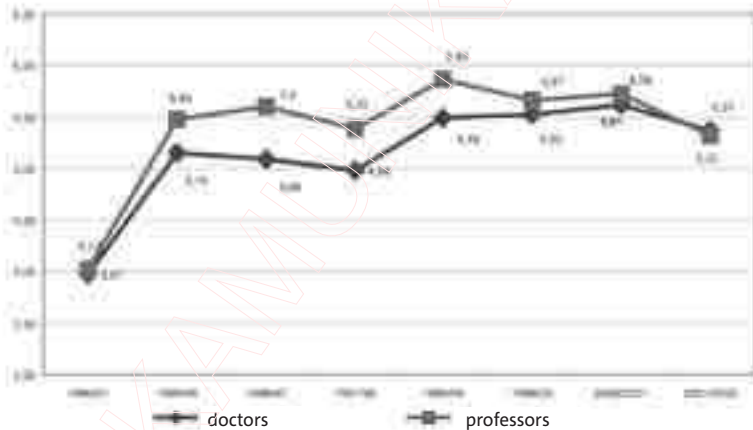
Academic research has been sidelined in result of reduced publishing activity in scientific literature and lessened international contacts, 'window dressing' seminars, readings, and conferences. The State finances science (including tertiary schools) according to the 'residue' principle, where funds are made available when left over from other top priority allocations, with very small percentage of commercial assignments and absence of visible achievements. Academic research programs attract scribblers, aficionados, or academic bureaucrats.

One of the main reasons of the academic crisis is in the lack of equipment and supplies for research work, especially at in-field institutions, irregular renewal of library stock and electronic databases. Research teams have no opportunity to work on commercial basis and use the proceeds to finance further research.

The existing system of awarding scientific degrees and titles also restrains growth of the research potential. The ageing of academicians pursuing doctor's

degrees and shrinking numbers of post-graduate students is linked, to a certain extent, with lack of career and pay prospects. Scholars are reluctant to spend several years on *kandidat* or *doktor's* dissertations²⁰. The reluctance also stems from unfair treatment of researchers by the Supreme Commission of Evaluation, known for its severe criticism of truly innovative and interesting works. Surprisingly, it appears to be much easier to defend a *doktor's* thesis in Moscow or St. Petersburg than Minsk. These problems discourage PhD. and *kandidat* degree holders from working creatively. While older generations abandon academic science on retirement, younger generations prefer business to science. As a result, the instruction and research level has become mediocre.

Chart 3: Doctoral Degree Holders and Professors as Percentage of Tertiary Schools' Core Personnel



Source: Chief Information and Analytical Center of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Belarus

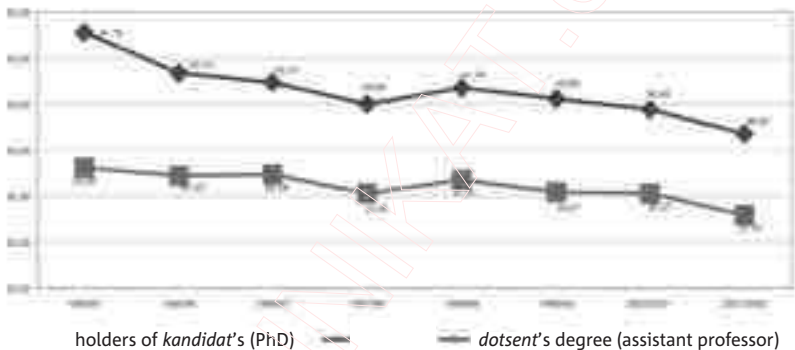
Due to reasons beyond their control, major players in the educational system are old conformists rather than active young scholars. Quite often, these

²⁰ Cf. footnotes on p. 220 (ed.).

are people with an ‘ideological background’, who obtained their degrees for work on ‘scientific Communism’ and Marxist-Leninist philosophy.

The system of academic degrees and titles is at variance with European standards and, unlike in Europe, degree awarding is centralized.

Chart 4: Kandidat (PhD) and Dotsent (Assistant Professor) Degree Holders as Percentage of Tertiary Schools’ Core Personnel



Source: The Main Information and Analytical Center of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Belarus

Another obstacle to academic research is in the increasing standardization of education and control over the education process. Administrators demand that teachers follow canonic rules at work; their critical and suspicious attitude to innovations and experiments rules out creativity.

Under the existing system of annual evaluation of teachers, their pay and career do not depend on their academic performance. Many active scholars conduct independent research, while passive ones feign creative work, plagiarize and compile others’ ideas. Both types of scholars work outside of the system, and tackle their individual problems within the framework of global educational cycles.

This means that, in the Belarusian educational system, the notion of a ‘scientific community’ can be applied to tertiary schools with certain reservations. In practice, there is a certain corporate unity devoid of sustainable inner motivation for creative development and improvement of research potential. To the external eye, the system seems to offer incentives such as state assignments, bilateral and multilateral programs within the CIS, and Western grants. Creativity has been substituted by accountability, while scientific research has been replaced by the desire to guess the customer’s wish. Consequently, tertiary education establishments, former think tanks and research laboratories have transformed into service providers, with servility being their principal merit.

Administration and self-management²¹

Article 44 of the education law stipulates that the educational system is administered by central and local government. However, regulations regarding local government bodies are adopted by the Ministry of Education, which guarantees total governmental control over local educational authorities.

The Belarusian educational system remains largely centralized and unaccountable to the public. The government has curtailed reforms and programs launched immediately after the country’s declaration of independence. The government’s reform efforts included switchover to 12-year primary and secondary education, 5-day schooling week, 10-grade performance rating system and, at tertiary education establishments, a multi-level teaching system (courses for bachelor’s and master’s degree and subject specialization). These reforms were superficial.

Current legislation on education is anachronistic. New laws replicate the basic principles of command and administrative control of education establishments. A new version of the Education Act contains no article allowing education establishments to pursue provision for a fee. Under the law, the Ministry of Education is not accountable to the parliament. The law is quite vague on academic freedoms in education establishments and hampers real educational reforms.

²¹ Svyatlana Krupnik and Uladzimer Matskevich contributed to this section.

In fact, it has re-established the Soviet-era classification of educational stages (technical secondary education, vocational education etc.), provides no opportunities for extramural studies and lacks precision regarding master's degree studies. Current classification of education establishments is not in line with European standards and does not ensure continuity of education.

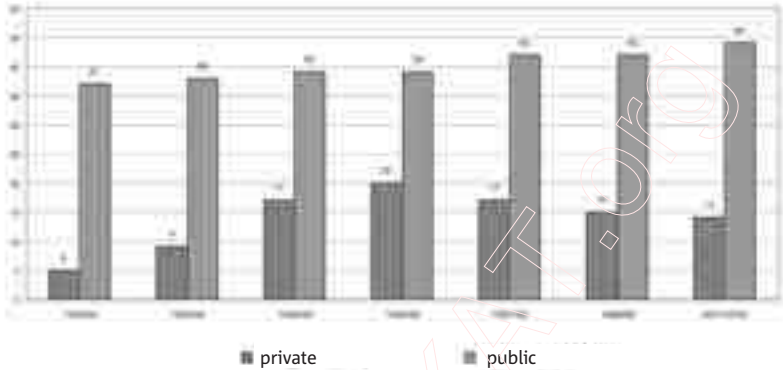
The administration system is similar to Alyaksandr Lukashenka's 'vertically integrated' presidential administration which rules out feedback. Its bulky structure contains elements such as municipal, district and regional Public Education Authorities, which give priority to control and ideology rather than provide expertise and support in methodologies of provision. Also, the existing system doesn't envisage elements of self-management. The notion of academic freedoms still remains a far-off prospect and makes no sense for most education administrators.

Excessive centralization of the educational system, lack of transparency coupled with a sharp fall in teachers' living standards and the emergence of an authoritarian educational elite created conditions for rampant corruption, extortion under the guise of 'payable services' and 'voluntary donations,' and expansion of the shadow sector in education. The practice of taking bribes in exchange for high grades at entrance exams or supporting students in education has become widespread recently, as is the case of administrators redistributing proceeds in their favor. Corruption may be said to have skyrocketed in tertiary schools.

The government's desire to establish full control over all forms of education reveals itself in discrimination against private schools (refusal to issue licenses, inspections, class-room rent denials etc.). The political regime seeks by all means to limit private schools' influence and to subordinate them to authorities.

Meanwhile, a number of private education projects cropped up in the early 1990s. Projects like the European Humanities University, the Institute of Parliamentarianism and Enterprise, the Institute of Modern Knowledge etc. combined new market-based mechanisms with the interests of the 'revamped' *nomenklatura* of the old educational system. This marked the emergence of an education services market and competition among education institutions. However, the State sector prefers administrative pressure over fair play.

Chart 5: Number of Education Establishments



Source: Chief Information and Analytical Center of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Belarus, the National Supervisory Center

The under-reformed educational system is characterized by co-existence of educational establishments and methodology research centers of different generations, with Soviet-style vocational and secondary schools on the one hand, and Western-style *gymnasiums*²² and colleges on the other; traditional teacher training colleges and new marketing and management schools, the National Institute of Tertiary Education and independent analytical groups. The educational system is superfluous, overloaded and needs to be cleansed of inefficient components. There is a need to arrange the system so as to ensure its integrity, transparency and proportionality of all forms of education.

The current educational system is not run by specially trained administrators. The notion of 'managing the educational sector' is absent from Belarus as there are no education establishments that train education managers. Also, there is no mechanism for selecting candidates for administrative positions. Administrative positions in education are held by non-professionals: either job-hunters,

²² Cf. footnote on. p. 215 (ed.).

seeking to achieve personal gains regardless of means or end, or people loyal to their superiors, holding no personal opinions, or else individuals from outside of the professional community. At any rate, accidental persons appointed to administrative positions in education are unable to work efficiently.

The educational establishments' growing fee-paying business stems from their administrators' ambitions rather than their actual needs. 'For fee' projects usually have nothing to do with the educational process and do not attract funds. Quite on the contrary, they feed 'parallel budgets.' For example, the Belarusian State University has been involved in a variety of commercial projects, from beauty contests to running the Unistar radio station. Simultaneously, funding for educational activities, support of the educational process with information resources, and lecturers' salaries fall short of the affirmed 'top university' status.

The system of statistical accountability does not provide correct representation of the educational system's actual state.

There are no clear guidelines on teaching workload standards. The current standards (550 academic hours at tertiary education establishments vs. 150 academic hours in the US) are too high for both lecturers and students, and are at variance with European standards. This proves that the Belarusian educational system is costly and pursues inefficient personnel management policies.

Current educational administration is a combination of 'window dressing' bureaucratic activity and improvised authoritarian management style, waste of scarce budget resources and chaotic business experimentation. In fact, the administration of Belarusian education cannot ensure efficiency or stimulate the development of the system. Within strict State policy limits, administrators can hardly manage to keep their institutions afloat, yet they cannot substantially improve quality of education. The educational system appears to be inefficient not only in methods and informational support, but also in administration and business management.

General Conclusions

The Belarusian educational system is in deep crisis. Instead of offering information support, it offers information noise; instead of encouraging creative thinking, it produces either conformists or intellectual émigrés; instead of raising the new elite it replicates bureaucrats. It disperses and socially degrades the teaching personnel. The Belarusian educational system's inefficiency lies not only in low quality of its final product, but also in complete inability of administrators to ensure effective operation of this bulky and outdated system. Mechanisms of education function beyond their service life, therefore they continue creating 'people of the past'.

4

Rationale and Incentives for a Reform

Conservation of the present-day educational system would lead to poorer quality and greater provincialism of education. Inevitably, an unreformed system would have adverse effects on the Belarusian society and its consequences will extend beyond the educational system.

Reform disincentives

The existing stagnant and retrospective educational system coupled with importation of post-Soviet and post-imperial models from Russia would fuel tensions between the ruling 'colonial' elite and national culture, as well as between the ruling elite and new generations of the Belarusians. As is, the educational model will destroy the system of cultural reference points and aggravate the ethnic identity crisis. As a result, the Belarusians will lose their historic roots and historic prospects.

The authoritarian educational system produces conformists and hampers the formation of new generations of the national elite and civil society. In the long run, this implies that Belarus may turn in a Third World country, supplier of low-skilled labor force to more developed neighboring countries.

The domination of Russian education theories, techniques, standards and information resources breeds a colonial-type asymmetric culture, thus increasing the country's informational and ideological dependency on Russia. The educa-

tional system would not be conducive to establishing a national identity and forming civic conscience; it will rather continue to replicate 'aboriginal' mentality of a 'small and imperfect nation' ready to follow orders of representatives of 'big' (meaning 'alien') culture.

Unwillingness or inability to bring the educational system into line with European standards would increase the cultural gap between Belarus and Europe and lead to a decline in the overall level of education and functional skills. In long term, due to potential lack of a real link between education and social success, this might impair the quality of provision and reduce the value of education in the eyes of the Belarusians and the European Community given potential incompatibility of Belarusian tertiary education with foreign opposite numbers, and ultimately lead to ghettoization of Belarusian education.

The authorities' extreme reluctance to accept new-generation education theories and techniques, lack of funds for raising efficiency in education, and disintegration of the postgraduate and retraining system may turn Belarus into a country of incompatible education certificates or into an un-reformable country of no interest to the international community as an economic or cultural partner or political ally.

If the current educational system remains as is, the gap may widen between the society's real life priorities and those taught at school. This condition may be dubbed 'progressive cultural schizophrenia' or loss of national culture and identity. On the one hand, the general public would be encouraged to look for new ideas (some may choose radical and socially dangerous ideas in the end) while, on the other, the distance between real life and the education content will grow, thus leading to a complete mystification of the latter.

If Belarus' educational system will continue copying various European models and practices without due assessment of their advantages and disadvantages, the system may lose its cultural distinction, erode and assimilate.

Therefore, conservation of the present-day educational system would aggravate the cultural crisis and would not contribute to social stability. This represents a real threat to social, political, economic and cultural development of the Belarusian society.

Reform incentives

Interaction of the educational system with European, rather than just Russian practice will intensify cultural identity process and open the society.

More specifically, the educational reform is needed:

- to restore the disrupted link between generations, implant national cultural and historical traditions in the minds of new generations, develop national feelings and civic self-consciousness.
- as a means of integrating Belarusian education facilities into the European educational system. The integration would change the content and methods radically and allow for recognition of Belarusian education certificates, allowing the Belarusians to access the European labor market, with new opportunities open for business and cultural contacts. The education sector would be more appealing for those who seek to realize their potential or pursue a career.
- as a means of helping new generations of Belarusians in tapping into their creative potential. Instead of conformists, the educational system should rear individuals with the energy and will to realize their goals in this country. The reform that may trigger a cultural outbreak that would spur the society towards development.
- to raise young ambitious intellectuals. The reform would enable them to create decent jobs for themselves in Belarus and become major players in the country and impact its future image.
- to set the stage for developing the civil society based on personal responsibility and free personal choice. It would help convert the ‘electorate’ into people who can decide on their own fate.
- to encourage competition of education services and practice, which would help to improve education quality and enable the educational system’s competitiveness on an international scale.

The educational reform should help the Belarusians to overcome their cultural inferiority complex and become equal partners in the European and international communities. An educational system based on national values would dispel the myth of integration [with Russia] rooted in the collective mindset and the political elite.

Ideal Model of the Educational Reform

by Svyatlana Krupnik
and Uladzimer Matskevich

Reform purposes and objectives

Education policies based on national ideals of independence and sovereignty, historic and cultural heritage, aimed at achieving high social standards, can rally and inspire the Belarusians to building an effective society.

J. Dewey noted that two major objectives for education are social aptness of the individual and ‘culturization’ (shaping cultural identity). The challenges of modern post-industrial and information society seem to highlight the importance of the former. But, the ethnic and cultural identity problems in Belarus add to the significance of the latter, making it at least as important as the first objective.

A priority of the educational reform in Belarus should be to provide mind-set-forming and information tools for re-establishing ethnic and cultural identity of the nation, and turning it into a driving force in the society.

Basic characteristics of reformed education

International commitments

1. Belarus’ educational system should be placed in the European context and meet international education standards laid down in the following documents and instruments:

- The Lisbon Convention on Recognition of Qualifications Concerning Tertiary Education in the European Region.
- The 1999 Bologna declaration, Magna Charta Universitatum of 1888.
- Programs such as COMET (co-operation between universities and industries), ERASMUS (European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students), LINGUA (a language reinforcement program), TEMPUS (the trans-European cooperation scheme for tertiary education in the Western Balkans, Eastern Europe and Central Asia), SOCRATES (cooperation in the field of instruction) and LEONARDO (vocational education) or analogous national programs.
- Recommendations of international conferences held in Hamburg in 1997 on adult education and in Dakar in 2000 on education for everyone.
- ISO 9000:2000 standards.
- A credit system analogous and compatible with the ECTS (European Credit Transfer System).

The documents mainly refer to university education in Europe. However, compliance of the tertiary educational system with the above-mentioned agreements would set a certain standard for secondary and primary schools and show the direction for the educational reform.

National and cultural features

All education in the country should be Belarusian in essence, which does not mean that it should be self-contained. That does not imply any form of self-isolation or provincialism, but rather the orientation of objectives and output of education towards strengthening Belarusian sovereignty and establishing Belarus as a new independent state in Europe. Education should promote patriotism, national traditions, historical and cultural heritage in line with the national interests. It should help in consolidating national identity of individuals and facilitate national homogenization within the framework of a civil society.

Social and political features

The educational system alone cannot pave the way for democratic changes in the society. Yet, if education lags behind in the democratic transition, it may slow down the adoption of democratic principles in other areas.

Abandoning the totalitarian past proves to be a very lengthy and painful process. Events of the last decade both in Belarus and in some other countries with a similar historic background prove that expecting instant success in building a civil society and democratic rule of law is wishful thinking. Short-term achievements, at times followed by a relapse into authoritarian and totalitarian practices, do not matter as much as steady progress towards democracy. Slow as it might appear, it is better than a oscillating between totalitarian regime and democracy.

In the least, the educational system should produce independent individuals rather than conservative, apathetic and paternalistically-minded consumers. School and university graduates may not be actively involved in politics, yet they should take responsibility for their own life and be able to tackle their problems themselves.

For this reason, education in Belarus must be available to everyone, whereas professional training should meet labor market requirements. School and university graduates should have a good chance of finding a job (i.e. they need adequate skills and training), or continue their education (i.e. they need sufficient knowledge and competences).

Political parties and governmental institutions should take considerable interest in education. Political party platforms and individual politicians should give prominence to education. Otherwise, education can hardly ever become a matter of primary concern to the general public. When public awareness of education issues is raised, the government's education policies will be overseen by the civil society, and both central and local authorities will make decisions in the interests of Belarusians.

Economic features

Education may be free of charge but this does not mean that it does not entail a certain cost.

Central and local governments should be able to cover education costs. Average income families should be able to afford tuition-based educational services. Every Belarusian should be entitled to his or her share of the public education expenditure regardless of opting for a State-funded or private university. The mechanisms to ensure this right are well-known and diverse.

The government's investment in education should pay off, not necessarily through GDP growth, but rather through reduced expenditure on combating unemployment, poverty, juvenile delinquency, social insecurity, migration, etc.

Individual investment in education should be sound. Generally, time spent on education should be proportionate to the social status that a graduate may achieve, i.e. every additional year spent studying should offer additional economic advantages such as better skills, a pay rise, higher competitiveness in the labor market, social mobility, etc.

Education administration

Administration in general and education administration in particular is always multi-structural. To reform the educational administration network, it is necessary to follow certain principles:

- democracy. It implies administration that would allow for a wide range of possibilities of compromise between the majority and the minority, as well as between different minorities. The principle of democracy is in line with the open society concept. In education, this principle can be effective if the legislative and conceptual framework of education meets the interests of all the stakeholders, rather than just the State.
- a combination of state and public administration. It implies that the two should reasonably share their responsibilities in solving problems of education rather than one prevailing over the other.

Article 44 of the Education Act stipulates that the educational system is administered by central government and local self-management bodies and affinity groups. However, regulations regarding such bodies and groups are passed by the Education Ministry, which diminishes the public's role in administering education and guarantees the government's total control over local education authorities.

An education administration reform should begin by establishing combined state and public administration mechanisms and removing conflicting clauses from laws. Paradoxically enough, the initiative in initiating work on such mechanism is on the government's side, since the government should become interested in establishing public administration. Alternatively, the process may be initiated by the civil society represented by trade unions, associations, various foundations, organizations, etc., which are to express the interests of stakeholders in the educational process and the society. They can ask experts to examine laws or draft new legislation. They should be entitled to initiating changes in the law. A nationwide State and public evaluation of the education quality provision could be the top priority in order to put such a combined State and public mechanism into action.

The evaluation should cover areas such as graduates' academic standards and professional skills, teaching and learning techniques, as well as human and moral aspects of education. The State and the civil society should work together to produce the Education Memorandum and the Education Doctrine for the reform period.

The new education administration network will have to cope with a number of complicated tasks of the transition period, such as:

- adopting a new legislative framework for the educational reform;
- combining educational developments with the system's functioning;
- transition to basically innovative syllabi and curricula, new teaching theories and techniques, and new structures and types of educational establishments;
- establishing a mechanism to enforce education standards;
- providing resources for education in transition from a State-controlled system to an education market.

Education in transition requires a much more complicated administration network because new temporary authorities in charge of the educational reform and development would have to be established and will function alongside permanent education authorities. The latter should gradually take over functions of the former. This is to say that during reform, the administration network should be infrastructural and horizontal, rather than vertically structured.

An authoritative expert opinion network is an important part of the education administration. Experts (philosophers, experts on methodology and specific aspects of education) in possession of the most advanced knowledge on educational reform and contemporary education provide their services to education administrations in the capacity of consultants, analysts, project designers, experts, etc. During the reform, these experts do not necessarily have to be employed by the Ministry of Education, but they should have some weight, such as to impact the education market.

It is desirable to outline clearly the education administrations' functions and powers. In particular, it is necessary to determine who should commission the reform, who should perform these assignments and who should be in charge of the reform. The government represented by the president, the Parliament or the Cabinet should mandate the undertaking. A general executive agency should translate the reform into a succession of defined tasks and carry them out. The general executive agency could be (an) organization(s) established with the sole purpose of preparing and implementing reform projects and programs. Forming such (an) organization(s) could be within the Parliament's remit. For the time being, the structure of a general executive agency may be described as follows:

1. The Steering Committee, which should include the chair of the parliamentary commission for education, education minister, president of the Academy of Sciences, and author of the educational Reform concept (or know-how owner).
2. A team of civil servants and NGO representatives working to prepare the Declaration and Memorandum on Educational Reform.

3. A team of education professionals to develop the reform concept, a business plan including a budget, and a new education law.
4. A team for planning the structural outline of the educational system.
5. A team in charge of education standards and qualification assessment.
6. A temporary resource center to offer teachers adequate training and possibilities to improve their skills during the reform. In addition, the center should offer advice to academic research and development institutions, teacher training colleges and universities, etc.

While working according to their own plans, all the teams should closely cooperate with each other at every stage of the reform. Their cooperation is coordinated by the Steering Committee.

With the Steering Committee established and the Declaration and Memorandum on Educational Reform adopted along with the initial concept outline, the preparatory stage will take approximately a year. There will be ca. one thousand staff involved in the preparatory stage. In addition to work on the reform plan and the other documents mentioned above, the preparatory stage includes organizational measures, consultations, and coordinating procedures, not to mention efforts to clarify the reform's aims and objectives. The efforts will include seminars, consultative meetings, adoption of new regulations, and teachers' resource books, as well as lobbying, coordinating and obtaining official approvals for the reform. It will be impossible to coordinate and administer all this complicated work unless the process is highly focused. It may sound reasonable to introduce an interim, two-three year position of minister in charge of the educational reform.

Also, education authorities must be reorganized. The Ministry of Education should be transformed into the Ministry of Education and Research entitled to standardize and license education establishments. The Ministry of Education's personnel should be screened to assess knowledge and skills. It is necessary to strip the new Ministry of Education and Research of its function of tight administration and control of the education sector. Instead, the ministry should enforce educational standards as stated in the education law and other acts. The ministry should likewise develop mechanisms and procedures to put the law into effect. Schools that provide compulsory education should remain directly

accountable to the Ministry of Education while occupational/professional training colleges, universities, and research and development institutions should be granted academic freedoms. The government, represented by the Ministry of Education, should act in accordance with market principles. It can commission or set up education establishments, etc., but it should follow the principles of market economy. The ministry should not impose its will or dictate conditions to the education establishments. Local authorities should play a greater role in education administration than they do now. They should be entitled to found, finance and run local education establishments.

The existing district, city, and regional education authorities should be abolished or restructured, i.e. they should no longer perform controlling or ideological functions. Regional inspectorates should be established to administer, consult, provide information, and audit schools. The restructuring of regional education administration bodies should run in parallel with territorial and administrative reform in Belarus.

The government should stop restricting and interfering with the work of private education establishments. Legislation should provide for diverse forms of education, including religious, secular, business, adult and continuous education.

The Ministry of Education should classify education establishments and establish a framework for the nomination, re-nomination and licensing of various types of schools. The classification principles have been formulated by the research team of Uladzimer Matskievich. These principles may be used to distinguish instruction from education, teaching from upbringing and providing a basic standard of literacy. The principles will help in making a distinction between different types of education establishments, such as tertiary education institutes and universities, colleges and technical schools, comprehensive schools, *gymnasiums* and *lyceums*²³. It also helps to establish the basic framework and criteria for syllabi and curricula at various education establishments. In a market environment, the main principle to be applied by education administration bodies is that of diversity of educational services.

²³ Cf. footnote on p. 215 (ed.).

Research institutes together with teachers' training universities obtain special status during the reform. Teacher training colleges should be reformed the same way as the whole educational system. Consequently, subjects of research during the reform should change.

Training education managers according to new administration principles becomes one of the key points in the administration infrastructure. The Post-graduate Education Academy, the Belarusian State University, teacher training colleges, private universities, etc., working closely with interim and permanent education authorities and leading experts should be able to breed a new generation of education managers.

At present, Belarus has several curricula to prepare education managers. Despite different approaches and technologies, they would enable implanting new ways of thinking among managerial staff.

To launch market principles in education, a major change in its subsidizing patterns is necessary. The market-oriented model conflicts with the rigid command-cum-administrative system.

Firstly, education sector financing should undergo radical changes. The national budget should have separate expenditure items for educational system maintenance and educational reform. Part of the budget should be spent directly on maintaining education establishments, while another part should be distributed among students in the form of vouchers. Students will be free to invest their vouchers in a school of their choice. As a result, the latter will be financed from various sources, i.e. by the government and by students.

It is also necessary to establish an education lending system. Loans should be available both to educational establishments and students or their parents. Local budgets should be relatively independent from the central level, so that regional governments will be able to spend in accordance with the requirements of regional legislation.

Education content

The Bologna declaration established the framework for changing education content in Europe. Meanwhile, every national educational system has its own

specific features. Taking European standards as a benchmark, Belarus has to find solutions to legacy problems of the Soviet educational system.

The educational reform's essence in Belarus is in its transition from knowledge-oriented to activity- and thinking-oriented paradigms. Belarusian educators inherited a stereotype whereby knowledge teaches one to think and one can be taught to act through knowledge only. Combined with the rigid system of class sessions and curricula structured into separate disciplines, for a long time the knowledge-oriented pattern allowed for bringing up 'young builders of Communism'. They did not have to think as they had the Communist Party and the government to think for them, but they had to know the instructions and follow them strictly. Consequently, by the early 1990s most Belarusians were unprepared to accept changes in the society or adjust their lives to new circumstances. Despite having a wealth of knowledge, Belarusians are unable to make decisions or adjust to changes. They could not communicate in a correct and civilized way and, for a long time, had no access to the greater part of global culture.

Due to the knowledge-oriented paradigm, Belarusian teachers do not see the difference between a variety of education objectives and processes. The notions of teaching and upbringing, educating and training, and literacy mean the same to them. Meanwhile, 'education content' denotes the bulk of material in the curricula and textbooks; 'activity' is restricted to skills, whereas 'education theory and techniques' stand for teaching methods. Such a narrow-minded approach to education content complicates reforms at the grass-root level of each school and student, of curricula and syllabi, and education theories and techniques.

Thus, the first step to reforming the education content is to retrain all teachers and education managers. The step can be called 'enlightening teachers' or 'dispelling myths'.

However, before the reform starts, it is necessary to change the content of pedagogy (education theories) and other disciplines such as philosophy, methodology, and psychology. It is necessary to introduce epistemology, hermeneutics, logic, social science, semantics, semiology, rhetoric and other subjects in teachers' training programs.

Thus, before the whole of the education content is changed, the content of teacher's education needs revamping.

Instituting the activity-oriented paradigm means that acting and thinking rather than knowledge should become the target of education.

The reform of the education content in Belarus should include the following stages:

1. Revision of teachers' and post-graduate training in terms of its content, theories and techniques.
2. Reform of research and methodology departments within the educational system, shifting from the knowledge-oriented to activity-oriented paradigm.
3. Developing a new standards, textbooks and courses.
4. Preparing criteria for a new education content and establishing analysis, licensing, inspection, and accreditation departments and an education quality monitoring network.
5. Gradually creating the education market.

Pedagogy

It is for Belarusian scholars to address problems of the Belarusian educational system. Textbooks for Belarusian schools are to be written by Belarusian authors. Reform and development of the educational system should become subjects of research at national research centers. Its outcome should be reflected in the curricula of universities and teacher training colleges. Current research in Belarusian pedagogy is limited to problems of isolated lessons, courses or schools. Education management on the national or even regional level, and the educational reform have been overlooked by Belarusian researchers. However, this being a complex discipline, pedagogy should provide foundation for the development of all areas of education. Sadly enough, at present it is restricted to didactics (techniques of teaching provision), school studies, and psychology. Legislative, social, cultural, anthropological aspects, as well as problems of marketing and management in education have not been studied properly, yet.

There should be a constant exchange of ideas, people, knowledge and skills among R&D institutions and universities. University faculties and researchers should enjoy a higher degree of social, professional and geographic mobility. Belarusian researchers and university faculty representatives should be given an opportunity to work and be trained in Europe, as well as move freely within the country, working at different universities and research centers.

Human aspects (family values, personal interests, and the children's rights)

For the past 20 years since the last educational reform in the USSR, a lot has been said about the human approach and the rights of the child, but nothing has been done, yet. Democracy can guarantee respect for the freedom of individuals and the rights of the child. A democratic educational system should be well-organized and function properly. It is impossible to guarantee respect for the interests of the individual, or the child in particular unless children and their representatives (parents in the first place) can influence decision-making in education. This is one of the goals of the educational reform.

Ways of reforming the educational system

Reform priorities

Although it is widely thought that education is in cause-and-effect relations with other public sectors, the real relationship is much more complex. The cause-and-effect relations are often used as ideological substantiation for the educational reform or, conversely, as an argument against such reform.

There are two widespread and conflicting opinions on the link between education and the economy:

- good education propels economic development;
- sound economy allows the public to afford a good educational system.

Advocates of the former opinion insist on an immediate educational reform regardless of the country's economic condition. Those in favor of the latter sug-

gest postponing the reform and insist that education should end the list of financing priorities.

Developing a perfect and, by consequence, efficient model of educational reform requires achieving public consent as to the goals and fundamental principles of education in the first place. A perfect model is not a panacea suitable for any country in any circumstances, but a compromise in outlining general priorities of the nation's development. For this reason, a concept of educational reform should include a strategy for reaching such compromise. The strategy presupposes mechanisms of at least three types:

- Democratic mechanisms include broad public discussion, compliance with the law in decision-making both on the national and local levels, equal rights in accessing education, where education is exposed to criticism and public control, and attributing political weight to educational issues.
- Market mechanisms include a balance of supply and demand in educational services, investments in education as viable business initiatives (both for the society and the individual: one should see benefits of education, i.e. 'the more you study, the more you earn', but not vice versa), and enabling national education to compete in the world market of skills, qualifications and educational services.
- Professional mechanisms include the state of pedagogy as a discipline, teachers and education managers' competences and qualifications, policy makers' competences in the educational field, and raising national education standards to European or international levels.

Problems and obstacles

Simultaneous operation of the three mechanisms may come up against various obstacles. Market mechanisms are frequently associated with unpopular methods, thus breeding opposition of both democratic and undemocratic majorities. Democratic mechanisms cause resistance on the part of the professionals who may find themselves incompetent or functionally illiterate as conditions change. Yet, they should be involved in the democratic decisions-making process.

All this has led to a paradoxical situation where most education professionals and the public realize the need for reforms, yet this majority may not share reform objectives and ideals or even stick to conflicting views on reform, and do not share the reformers' principles.

Let us recall the four educational reform plans mentioned above:

1. The Council of Ministers' Resolution N500 'On Priorities of National Educational System Development' dated April 12, 1999, officially declared as school reform.

2. 'The Concept of Education and Upbringing in Belarus', adopted by the Council of Ministers of Belarus on March 26, 1993, and 'The State Comprehensive Program for Developing Education and Upbringing in Belarus until 2000', adopted by the Council of Ministers on November 15, 1993.

3. 'Theoretical Basis of the Concept of National School of the Republic of Belarus', and 'The Concept of National School of Belarus' 1993.

4. 'The Organizational Project of Educational Reform in the Republic of Belarus', 'The Concept of Renewing Humanitarian Education', and various complements to these programs such as 'The Concept of Occupational Educational Reform', and 'The Possible Scenario of Liquidating Functional Illiteracy in the Event of Change in the External Political and Economic Setting'.

Not only are the three latter concepts little known to the general public and professionals, but they also differ substantially in implementation mechanisms, philosophical and theoretical substantiation, goals, values and principles.

Each concept has its supporters and opponents, and there is a certain group of interests behind these proposals. Therefore, none can be used in reforming the educational system immediately, without discussion, assessment or further improvements that would produce several guiding documents for the reform.

Documents outlining objectives

1. An education doctrine is to state the values, models, fundamental principles, and ideals of a renovated and reformed education, as well as European and international standards it is to be oriented towards. Seemingly un-

Table 13. Reform Principles, Hindrances and Fundamental Documents on Educational Reform

	Basic principles for implementing the educational reform	Some hindrances in implementing the principles
1.	Democratize education	The professional community's corporate isolation, reluctance to admit 'non-professionals' to solving educational problems, illiteracy in terms of legislation.
2.	Decentralize administration of the education	Unwillingness to share power, combined with the inability to exercise authority, fear of unemployment among some mid-level officials, education managers' incompetence.
3.	Academic freedoms and autonomy	The same hindrances as in democratizing education in general; fear of competition; expectations of paternalism at the universities; university administrations' incompetence.
4.	Politics-free education	Illiteracy in terms of legislation.
5.	Secularization	The vacuum of ideologies and values is being filled with religious ideology, with different denominations starting to compete for influence on education.
6.	Establishing Belarusian-oriented education so as to mould Belarusian cultural identity	Tendencies to impose Russian culture; bias and conventions, linguistic illiteracy, loss of competence.
7.	Diversifying the syllabi (introducing alternative course books and curricula)	Resistance to competition, some teachers' incompetence and low qualifications; unpreparedness to design new curricula and course books on a large scale; habit of following conventional models.
8.	Competition in the education market	Anti-market and socialist tendencies and ideas, inability to compete.
9.	System changes	Incompetence and functional illiteracy, corporate interests.
10.	Making the syllabi and curricula open and compatible with those adopted in Europe	Conservatism, orientation towards Soviet education standards, functional illiteracy.

complicated and brief, such a document is bound to trigger off heated debate, with agreement on all issues being extremely difficult to achieve.

2. A reform concept is to provide theoretical grounds for new content in reformed education, and its structural and organizational network. It is to describe units, links and relations within the system and outline basic processes and functions. The Concept of Reform marks the cornerstone for training teachers and upgrading teaching qualifications during the reform.
3. A memorandum on educational reform is to guarantee that the reformed education and the reform itself meet the requirements and expectations of all social groups without infringing anyone's interests. It is to set the basic principles and limits that shall not be overstepped in implementing the reform, as well as outline duties and responsibilities of reform participants.

Mid-term reform priorities

Once the government has identified the objectives and elaborated the Reform Concept in the first place, it should then devise state Education Standards outlining quality requirements for new education, and proceed to drawing up an Organizational Plan detailing the structure, functioning and administration principles for the reformed educational system.

Theoretical foundations, a national education philosophy, and key points and propositions of the concept formulated for the system as a whole should also be specified for each level of education and all types of schools, regions, authors of textbooks and curricula.

This work will be time and effort-consuming and calls for involving highly skilled specialists, researchers and teachers. It may be successful only after all teachers' training facilities and methodological centers adopt the Education Doctrine, the Reform Concept and endorse the Memorandum on Educational Reform. All these establishments will need to bring their research themes and methodological documents in line with these instruments. It will be

necessary to conduct special courses for teachers, specialists, and university lecturers.

1. Education Standards may guarantee irreversibility of the educational reform. The standards should be compatible with European education standards. The point is not that standards should be better or worse. The goal of standardization is to ensure the educational system's compatibility with other systems. Current standards differ very much from those applied in Europe and are based on the Soviet content and principles of education. Therefore, efforts should aim at adjusting European standards to the national environment and available resources.
2. The Organizational Plan should be based on the know-how adopted for the reform.

Program of transition from old to new educational system (reform program)

The program should include documents that determine:

1. the structure of interim education authorities during the reform (see Reform of Education Administration);
2. functions, powers and responsibilities of all entities implementing the reform;
3. action plan;
4. the reform timetable;
5. principles, means and mechanisms for supervising and guiding the reform.

These working documents will add to concept feasibility. The public should be involved in drafting these documents in line with the Doctrine, Concept and Memorandum. The papers should help thousands of specialists in switching to new methods.

Belarus' educational system is characterized by traditionally weak administrators at all levels, from head teachers to education authorities, including the Ministry of Education. Especially incompetent and low-skilled are mid-level ad-

ministrators at regional, district and city education authorities, research and methodological institutions and centers. Administrators have poor access to information, are not used to using analytical skills and making decisions.

Incompetence may create paradoxical situations. For instance, Belarusian schools switched from 5- to 10-point performance grading scale on September 1, 2002. Yet, schools received instructions on how to apply the 10-point system only one month into the school year.

Prepared in haste, the instructions were of little help to teachers and students. Likewise, methodologists were not ready for adopting the 10-point scale. Schools were in chaos for half a year. Some schools were forced to cancel all grading for six months.

Schools are often told to introduce new subjects, with relevant textbooks still unpublished or even unwritten, and no teachers trained. Such administration can undermine any reform and discredit any concept, however brilliant. Unsurprisingly, a poll of late 2002 indicated that ca. 80 percent of Belarusians opposed the educational reform.

Comparative qualification requirements

The reformers and all employees of the reformed educational system should meet qualification requirements that have yet to be developed.

The paramount requirement for the reformers is that they must know and act in line with reform concepts and programs. The requirement applies, above all, to administrators, officials and politicians (elected officials and the minister of education).

It was stressed above that education administrators are poorly trained for the job, while the reform will require efforts of thousands of specialists. It will be easy to find several dozen professionals to run interim education authorities, but it will be absolutely impossible to replace thousands of education ministry employees, managers of all levels and methodologists. Shortage of competent personnel will seriously threaten the reform's success.

Table 14.

Reform principles	Official reform	Education concept	National school concept	Humanitarian education renewal concept
Democratization	No mention	Contains limited measures	Calls for democratization	
Decentralization of education administration	On the contrary, suggests greater centralization	Does not stress decentralization		Calls for decentralization
Academic autonomy and freedom	Limited	Call for academic autonomy and freedom		
De-politicization	Measures declared, but not taken	Calls for de-politicization	Does not stress de-politicization	
Secularization	Declared, but steps are being taken in opposite direction	Does not stress secularization		Calls for secularization
Belarusification (establishment of Belarusian cultural identity)	No steps proposed	Moderate steps	Active measures	
Diversification of the education content (alternative textbooks and curricula)	Limited	Envisages measures to this end		
Competition of education services and products	None		Call for competition	
Systemization (analysis required)	Views on systemization differ			
Openness and compatibility of education curricula of all levels with European standards	Various concepts declare steps in this direction albeit of little difference			

Personnel will need intensive and fast training. They will need theoretical and methodological assistance in the form of methodological booklets, instructions and visual aids. The material could be prepared rapidly only upon specification of qualification requirements. Qualification requirements for all education workers represent, in fact, national standards in education and in the training of trainers.

Draft budget for the educational reform

The process of drafting a budget for education has not changed since the Soviet era, although the economics of education has changed radically under market influence. Principles for drafting national and regional education budgets should be adjusted to the economic reality. Modern forms of education financing (vouchers and education loans) should be used.

Costs and capital expenditure on reform

Educational reform cannot last forever. The government should not include reform expenditure in the general education budget. It should approve a separate reform allocation. Therefore, it is necessary to estimate the cost of reform. Drafting concepts and plans is the cheapest part of the reform. Measures set out in the Organizational Plan and the Reform Program will account for the greater part of the expenditure. It will be possible to assess the costs once all measures and the timetable have been finalized.

On the other hand, available public funds and investment will determine the scope of the reform.

Cost estimates will add to feasibility of the Reform Concept. Without cost estimates, any concept is merely of academic interest.

Draft education law

The 1991 Education Act opened up great opportunities for changing the educational system. The 2002 Education Act, on the contrary, limited these opportunities. It is designed to keep the system 'as is'.

There are two options: a new law can be adopted before the reform to set the stage for evolution and regulate the reform. It may be passed after the reform to 'certify' the changes.

Both options have advantages and disadvantages. In the first case, the law can be detached from the Reform Concept and the Reform Program, and encourage the system to evolve and change. The problem is that if the evolution is fact-paced, the law may become obsolete and slow down the reform. It would take much time and effort to draft and pass the law after the reform. In that case, the legislation will be closely linked with the Reform Concept and the Reform Program, and its adoption will depend on the reform's assessment. Nevertheless, the latter option seems to be more reasonable. If the law crowns the reform, it could specify how the system will evolve in the future.

A decision whether a new education law should be adopted before or after the reform should be made with due account taken of the educational system's condition at the reform's outset, and will depend on the education model available, if any.

Long-term prospect

The reform should bring the system to a normal state of operation. In its result, the system should self-regulate, adapt and evolve in tune with global processes.

The Belarusian educational system has been in reform for 20 years already; alas, without any positive results. Education is one of the most conservative social institutions. Respect for traditions, stability and reliability are signs of a good educational system and good education establishments. Education traditions in Belarus have not yet been rooted. Although the history of education spans about 1,000 years, the oldest tertiary and secondary education schools were set up just about 80 years ago. There are no schools that can be regarded as successors to the Vilnya (Vilnius) University, the Polatsk Collegium or other ancient education establishments. The Horki Agricultural Academy was completely restructured three times. The oldest secondary and tertiary scho-

ols were set up by Soviet authorities and are based on Soviet rather than national traditions.

Resources for the educational reform

'Resources' are not a fixed notion, as the same object or property can serve as a resource for achieving one objective, but is of no use for another. Therefore, a well-substantiated definition of an objective is the basis for identifying resources. This is especially true for preparing a plan and program for transforming the system.

In general, resources should include the following:

- people ready to devote their time and effort;
- clear understanding by these people of goals and purposes of the educational reform;
- the people must be educated and qualified to fulfil their tasks;
- expertise in how, according to which plan and principles the reform will be carried out;
- sufficient funds to turn potential reserves into resources.

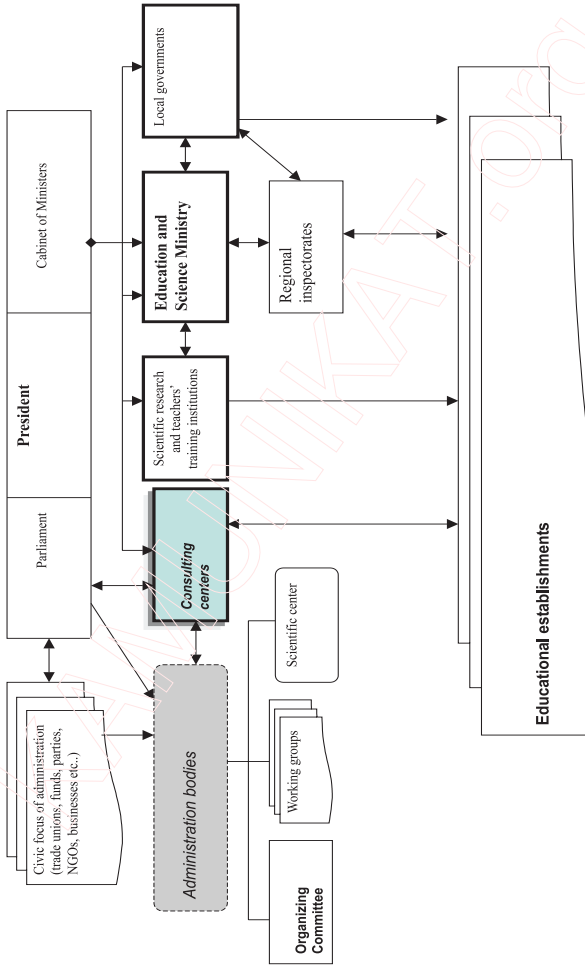
None of the above represents a stand-alone resource. The elements turn into resources only when combined in the same place and time for the same task. Belarus has enough reserves to embark on the reform.

Launching reform

A real reform can only start with radical changes having been made to education administration – the system that makes decisions and draws up programs and plans. An education administration reform was described in detail in Section 4.

Below is the diagram of the administration system.

Education administration during reform



An administration like this would launch a reform involving a wide range of civil society stakeholders. The administration would coordinate efforts of institutions, the government, political parties, experts, local authorities and all parties concerned.

See the table below for the sequence of steps and stages of the reform.

Table 15. Sequence of Reform Steps and Stages

Objectives	How to achieve the objectives	Results Documents that should be adopted	
Stage 1: Identifying purpose, needs and priorities of reform. Reaching civic consent as regards education reform.			
			Needs
			Framework
	Setting the goal	Doctrine	Ideals
			Orientation of education reform to standards
	Democratization	Memorandum	Achieving civic accord and adopting Doctrine and Concept in a democratic environment
			Theoretical substantiation
	Theorization	Concept	Structure of new education content
			Organization of education
			Education basics for reform period
Stage 2: Systemic planning and programming of reform. Personnel support for reform.			

Characteristics, properties and qualities of new education	Standardization	Standards	Standards, patterns, approaches that ensure convertibility of diplomas and integration into world education system
	Making plans	Draft reform plant	Implemented Concept (Structure and content of new education)
work			Structure of temporary administration bodies
	Programming	Reform program	Functions, rights, powers of reformers
			Scheme of reform
Stage 3: Retraining trainers, managers and other education specialists. Teaching them key skills necessary for reforming the educational system and acting within the reformed system.			
Qualification of reformers			Qualification requirements for reformers
			Trained specialists and professionals who carry our reform
	Retraining	Education reformers	Characteristic of skills of education workers
			Teachers in a reformed educational system
Stage 4: Resources and financing of reform.			

	Budgeting	Draft budget	Composition and structure of education budget provisions
	Calculations	Cost estimates	Amount of capital expenditure on reform less expenses on system's operation
Stage 5: Legislation for a reformed educational system.			
Legislative support	Drafting laws	Draft education law	Establishing legal framework for reformed education
Stage 6: Consistent implementation of plan and program of reform. Management, monitoring, adjustment.			

It should be born in mind that these steps and stages may coincide in time.